GLOBAL SOCIAL WORK STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

Global Social Work Statement of Ethical Principles:

This Statement of Ethical Principles (hereafter referred to as the Statement) serves as an overarching framework for social workers to work towards the highest possible standards of professional integrity.

Implicit in our acceptance of this Statement as social work practitioners, educators, students, and researchers is our commitment to uphold the core values and principles of the social work profession as set out in this Statement.

An array of values and ethical principles inform us as social workers; this reality was recognized in 2014 by the International Federation of Social Workers and The International Association of Schools of Social Work in the global definition of social work, which is layered and encourages regional and national amplifications.

All IFSW policies including the definition of social work stem from these ethical principles.

Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that facilitates social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing.
http://ifsw.org/get-involved/global-definition-of-social-work/

Principles:

Recognition of the Inherent Dignity of Humanity
Social workers recognize and respect the inherent dignity and worth of all human beings in attitude, word, and deed. We respect all persons, but we challenge beliefs and actions of

those persons who devalue or stigmatize themselves or other persons.

Promoting Human Rights
Social workers embrace and promote the fundamental and inalienable rights of all human beings. Social work is based on respect for the inherent worth, dignity of all people and the individual and social /civil rights that follow from this. Social workers often work with people to find an appropriate balance between competing human rights.

Promoting Social Justice
Social workers have a responsibility to engage people in achieving social justice, in relation to society generally, and in relation to the people with whom they work. This means:

3.1 Challenging Discrimination and Institutional Oppression

Social workers promote social justice in relation to society generally and to the people with whom they work.

Social workers challenge discrimination, which includes but is not limited to age, capacity, civil status, class, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, nationality (or lack thereof), opinions, other physical characteristics, physical or mental abilities, political beliefs, poverty, race, relationship status, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, spiritual beliefs, or family structure.

3.2 Respect for Diversity

Social workers work toward strengthening inclusive communities that respect the ethnic and cultural diversity of societies, taking account of individual, family, group, and community differences.

3.3 Access to Equitable Resources

Social workers advocate and work toward access and the equitable distribution of resources and wealth.

3.4 Challenging Unjust Policies and Practices

Social workers work to bring to the attention of their employers, policymakers, politicians, and the public situations in which policies and resources are inadequate or in which policies and practices are oppressive, unfair, or harmful. In doing so, social workers must not be penalized.

Social workers must be aware of situations that might threaten their own safety and security, and they must make judicious choices in such circumstances. Social workers are not compelled to act when it would put themselves at risk.

3.5 Building Solidarity

Social workers actively work in communities and with their colleagues, within and outside of the profession, to build networks of solidarity to work toward transformational change and inclusive and responsible societies.

Promoting the Right to Self-Determination
Social workers respect and promote people's rights to make their own choices and decisions, provided this does not threaten the rights and legitimate interests of others.

Promoting the Right to Participation
Social workers work toward building the self-esteem and capabilities of people, promoting their full involvement and participation in all aspects of decisions and actions that affect their lives.

Respect for Confidentiality and Privacy
6.1   Social workers respect and work in accordance with people's rights to confidentiality and privacy unless there is risk of harm to the self or to others or other statutory restrictions.

6.2 Social workers inform the people with whom they engage about such limits to confidentiality and privacy.

Treating People as Whole Persons
Social workers recognize the biological, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions of people's lives and understand and treat all people as whole persons. Such recognition is

used to formulate holistic assessments and interventions with the full participation of people, organizations, and communities with whom social workers engage.

Ethical Use of Technology and Social Media

8.1 The ethical principles in this Statement apply to all contexts of social work practice, education, and research, whether it involves direct face-to-face contact or through use of digital technology and social media.

8.2 Social workers must recognize that the use of digital technology and social media may pose threats to the practice of many ethical standards including but not limited to privacy and confidentiality, conflicts of interest, competence, and documentation and must obtain the necessary knowledge and skills to guard against unethical practice when using technology.

Professional Integrity

9.1 It is the responsibility of national associations and organizations to develop and regularly update their own codes of ethics or ethical guidelines, to be consistent with this Statement, considering local situations. It is also the responsibility of national organizations to inform social workers and schools of social work about this Statement of Ethical Principles and their own ethical guidelines. Social workers should act in accordance with the current ethical code or guidelines in their country.

9.2 Social workers must hold the required qualifications and develop and maintain the required skills and competencies to do their job.

9.3 Social workers support peace and nonviolence. Social workers may work alongside military personnel for humanitarian purposes and work toward peacebuilding and reconstruction. Social workers operating within a military or peacekeeping context must always support the dignity and agency of people as their primary focus. Social workers must not allow their knowledge and skills to be used for inhumane purposes, such as torture, military surveillance, terrorism, or conversion therapy, and they should not use weapons in their professional or personal capacities against people.

9.4 Social workers must act with integrity. This includes not abusing their positions of power and relationships of trust with people that they engage with; they recognize the boundaries between personal and professional life and do not abuse their positions for

personal material benefit or gain.

9.5 Social workers recognize that the giving and receiving of small gifts is a part of the social work and cultural experience in some cultures and countries. In such situations, this should be referenced in the country's code of ethics.

9.6 Social workers have a duty to take the necessary steps to care for themselves professionally and personally in the workplace, in their private lives and in society.

9.7 Social workers acknowledge that they are accountable for their actions to the people they work with; their colleagues; their employers; their professional associations; and local, national, and international laws and conventions and that these accountabilities may conflict, which must be negotiated to minimize harm to all persons. Decisions should always be informed by empirical evidence; practice wisdom; and ethical, legal, and cultural considerations. Social workers must be prepared to be transparent about the reasons for their decisions.

9.8 Social workers and their employing bodies work to create conditions in their workplace environments and in their countries, where the principles of this Statement and those of their own national codes are discussed, evaluated, and upheld. Social workers and their employing bodies foster and engage in debate to facilitate ethically informed decisions.

Spanish translation – Traducción Español

Classic Chinese Translation 全球社會工作倫理原則聲明 (繁體字譯本)

The Global Statement of Ethical Principles was approved at the General Meetings of the International Federation of Social Workers and the General Assembly of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) in Dublin, Ireland, in July 2018. IASSW additionally endorsed a longer version: Global-Social-Work-Statement-of-Ethical-Principles-IASSW-27-April-2018-1

National Code of Ethics
National Codes of Ethics of Social Work adopted by IFSW Member organisations. The Codes of Ethics are in the national languages of the different countries. More national codes of ethics will soon be added to the ones below:

Australia

Canada | Guidelines for ethical practice

Denmark

Finland (Englis)

Finland (Finish)

France

Germany

Ireland

Israel

Italy

Japan

Luxembourg

Norway

Puerto Rico English | Spanish

Portugal

Russia

Singapore

South Korea English | Korean

Spain

Sweden English | Swedish

Switzerland German | French | Italian

Turkey English | Turkish

USA

United Kingdom

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