

UAA Professional Certification

Code of Ethics
& Professional
Conduct



INTRODUCTION

This Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct applies to ALL participants within the Utility Vegetation Management Professional Development Program, including but not limited to the Professional Certification Holders, Board of Governors, Committees, Volunteers and Staff.

We are committed to: *Respect; Fairness; Honesty & Responsibility*

UAA Professional Certification

Code of Ethics &
Professional Conduct

VISION & PURPOSE

As practitioners of utility vegetation management, we are committed to doing what is right and honorable. We set high standards for ourselves and we aspire to meet these standards in all aspects of our lives – at work, at home, and in service to our profession.

The Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct describes the expectations that we have of ourselves and our fellow practitioners in the utility vegetation management industry. It articulates the ideals to which we aspire as well as the behaviors that are mandatory in our professional and volunteer roles.

The purpose of this Code is to instill confidence in the utility vegetation management profession and to help an individual become a better practitioner. We do this by establishing a profession-wide understanding of professional and appropriate behavior. We believe that the credibility and reputation of the utility vegetation management industry is shaped by the collective conduct of individual practitioners.

We believe that we can advance our profession, both individually and collectively, by embracing this Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. We also believe that this Code will assist us in making wise decisions, particularly when faced with difficult situations where we may be asked to compromise our integrity or our values.

Our hope is that this Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct will serve as a catalyst for others to study, deliberate, and write about ethics and values. Further, we hope that this Code will ultimately be used to build upon and evolve our profession.

Each section of the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct includes both aspirational standards and mandatory standards. The aspirational standards describe the conduct that we strive to uphold as practitioners. Although adherence to the aspirational standards is not easily measured, conducting ourselves in accordance with these is an expectation that we have of ourselves as professionals—it is not optional.

The mandatory standards establish firm requirements, and in some cases, limit or prohibit practitioner behavior. Practitioners who do not conduct themselves in accordance with these standards will be subject to disciplinary procedures before Utility Vegetation Management Professional Development Program Board of Governors Review Committee.

RESPECT

Respect is our duty to show a high regard for ourselves, others, and the resources entrusted to us. Resources entrusted to us may include people, money, reputation, the safety of others, and natural or environmental resources.

An environment of respect engenders trust, confidence, and performance excellence by fostering mutual cooperation – an environment where diverse perspectives and view are encouraged and valued.

Aspirational Standards

As practitioners in the utility vegetation management industry:

- We inform ourselves about the norms and customs of others and avoid engaging in behaviors they might consider disrespectful

- We listen to others' points of view, seeking to understand them.
- We directly approach those persons with whom we have a conflict or disagreement.
- We conduct ourselves in a professional manner, even when it is not reciprocated.

Mandatory Standards

As practitioners in the utility vegetation management industry, we require the following of ourselves and our fellow practitioners:

- We negotiate in good faith.
- We do not exercise the power of our expertise or position to influence the decisions or actions of others to benefit personally at their expense.
- We do not act in an abusive manner toward others.
- We respect the personal and property rights of others.

FAIRNESS

Fairness is our duty to make decisions and act impartially and objectively. Our conduct must be free from competing self interest, prejudice, and favoritism.

Aspirational Standards

As practitioners in the utility vegetation management industry:

- We demonstrate transparency in our decision-making process.
- We constantly re-examine our impartiality and objectivity, taking corrective action as appropriate.
- We provide equal access to information to those who are authorized to have that information.
- We make opportunities equally available to qualified candidates.

Mandatory Standards

As practitioners in the utility vegetation management industry, we require the following of ourselves and our fellow practitioners:

- **Conflict of Interest Situations**

- We proactively and fully disclose any real or potential conflicts of interest to the appropriate stakeholders.
- When we realize that we have a real or potential conflict of interest, we refrain from engaging in the decision-making process or otherwise attempting to influence outcomes, unless or until: we have made full disclosure to the affected stakeholders'; we have an approved mitigation plan; and we have obtained the consent of the stakeholders to proceed.

- **Favoritism and Discrimination**

- We do not hire or fire, reward or punish, or award or deny contracts based on personal considerations, including but not limited to, favoritism, nepotism, or bribery.
- We do not discriminate against others based on, but not limited to, gender, race, age, religion, disability, nationality, or sexual orientation.
- We apply the rules of the organization (employer, Utility Vegetation Management Professional Development Program, Utility Arborist Association, Utility Vegetation Management Association, or other group) without favoritism or prejudice.

HONESTY

Honesty is our duty to understand the truth and act in a truthful manner both in our communication and in our conduct.

Aspirational Standards

As practitioners of the utility vegetation management industry:

- We earnestly seek to understand the truth.
- We are truthful in our communications and our conduct.
- We provide accurate information in a timely manner.
- We make commitments and promises, implied or explicit, in good faith.
- We strive to create an environment in which others feel safe to tell the truth.

Mandatory Standards

As practitioners in the utility vegetation management industry, we require the following of ourselves and our fellow practitioners:

- We do not engage in or condone behavior that is designed to deceive others, including but not limited to, making misleading or false statements, stating half-truths, providing information out of context or withholding information that, if known, would render our statements as misleading or incomplete.
- We do not engage in dishonest behavior with the intention of personal gain or at the expense of others.

RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility is our duty to take ownership for the decisions we make or fail to make, the actions we take or fail to take, and the consequences that result.

Aspirational Standards

As practitioners in the utility vegetation management industry:

- We make decisions and take actions based on the best interests of safety, environmental stewardship, public interest and industry best practices.
- We accept only those assignments that are consistent with our background, knowledge, skills, experience, and qualifications.

- We fulfill the commitments that we undertake—we do what we say we will do.
- When we make errors or omissions, we take ownership and make corrections promptly. When we discover errors or omissions caused by others, we communicate them to the appropriate body as soon as they are discovered. We accept accountability for any issues resulting from our errors or omissions and any resulting consequences.
- We protect proprietary or confidential information that has been entrusted to us.
- We uphold this Code and hold each other accountable to it.
- We remain current with industry standards and best practices.
- We take responsibility for our personal and professional development by encouraging life-long learning opportunities for practitioners.
- We encourage industry advancement through participation in industry-related organizations.

Mandatory Standards

As practitioners in the utility vegetation management industry, we require the following of ourselves and our fellow practitioners:

- **Regulations and Legal Requirements**

- We inform ourselves and uphold the policies, rules, regulations, and laws that govern our work, professional, and volunteer activities.
- We report unethical or illegal conduct to appropriate management and, if necessary, to those affected by the conduct.

- **Ethics Complaints**

- We bring violations of this Code to the attention of the appropriate body for resolution.
- We only file ethics complaints when they are substantiated by facts.
- We pursue disciplinary action against an individual who retaliates against a person raising ethics concerns