

**The Nursing Council of
The Commonwealth of The Bahamas
(NCCB)**

CODE OF ETHICS FOR NURSES

2025



The Nursing Council of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas

The Nursing Council of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas (The “Council”) is a statutory body established under The Nurses and Midwives Act 1971 and continued under The Nurses and Midwives Act 2023. The Council is charged with the regulation of the Nursing profession in The Bahamas, including the registration, licensing, enrollment, training and standards of practice for Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses, Midwives and other Advanced Practice Nurses.

One of the inherent roles of the Council is to protect the public’s health and welfare by ensuring safe and competent nursing and midwifery care. As such, the publishing of a national code of ethics for nurses and midwives is an imperative responsibility of the Council in providing the professional and ethical framework to guide Nursing practice across the diaspora of specialties and settings, and assist in the navigation of ethical dilemmas.



The Code of Ethics for Nurses

Overview of The Code

The Revised Code of Ethics for Nurses 2025 (The “Code”) embodies a comprehensive ethical framework designed to navigate healthcare's multifaceted and evolving landscape in The Bahamas. The Code articulates the unwavering commitment of the Nursing profession to uphold the sanctity of human dignity, advocate for equitable healthcare, and pursue excellence in all facets of Nursing education, administration, research and practice. It serves as a beacon, guiding nurses towards ethical comportment, interaction and care that aligns with the highest standards of professional integrity. Moreover, the Code encapsulates the core values and guiding principles intrinsic to Nursing developed to facilitate informed, ethical decision-making, accountability and professionalism.

Although the International Council of Nurses Code of Ethics for Nurses (ICN - Revised 2021) serves as a foundational guidance for the nursing profession, the National code of ethics provides the additional culturally adapted guidance to assist today's Nurses in their complex roles in patient care, education, research and some aspects of management of healthcare systems in the country.

Dissemination of The Code

The Code of Ethics for Nurses must be taught in Nursing curricula across the country, shared by The Nurses Association of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, and be utilized in the clinical practice, administrative and research environments by Nurses, Midwives, Nursing Students, and Nursing Interns. The Code must also be made available for public, employer, and interdisciplinary consumption to promote shared awareness and understanding of the ethical standards of Nursing and enhance Nursing accountability. The Code is not a code of conduct, but may be utilized as a guideline for professional standards regarding ethical behavior, practice and decision making.

Application of The Code

The ethical values of Nursing apply across the Nursing profession, including to nursing students, educators, clinicians, administrators, researchers and even to professional associations. As the elements of this code are closely related to the elements represented in the ICN Code of Ethics for Nurses 2021, the guidelines for application across the Nursing profession in the ICN document should be referred to in order to facilitate the translation of ethical standards to practice.



PREAMBLE

The Nursing Council of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas upholds the preamble of the International Council of Nurses [ICN] Code of Ethics preamble as follows:

“From the origins of organized nursing in the mid-1800s and recognizing nursing care is deeply rooted in the traditions and practices of equity and inclusion and in the appreciation of diversity, nurses have consistently recognized four fundamental nursing responsibilities: to promote health, to prevent illness, to restore health, and to alleviate suffering and promote a dignified death. The need for nursing is universal.

Inherent in nursing is a respect for human rights, including cultural rights, the right to life and choice, the right to dignity and to be treated with respect. Nursing care is respectful of and unrestricted by considerations of age, color, culture, ethnicity, disability or illness, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, politics, language, race, religious or spiritual beliefs, legal, economic or social status.”



Core Elements of the Code of Ethics for Nurses

The Code of Ethics for Nurses in The Bahamas has four core elements that act as a framework for ethical conduct of Nurses and Midwives. They are as follows:

- 1) Prioritizing Trustworthy Patient Centered Care**
- 2) Ensuring Safe & Sound Practice/ Practice Environments**
- 3) Promoting a Respected Profession**
- 4) Committing Strongly to National & International Health & Wellbeing**

1. Prioritizing Trustworthy Patient Centered Care

- 1.1 Nurses consider the customs, values and spiritual beliefs of patients/clients in planning patient care. The Nurse accesses appropriate resources and takes proactive measures to address any concerns or objections when necessary.
- 1.2 Nurses should ensure that the provision of care is equitable and inclusive for all patients regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, immigration status, cultural background, religion, political affiliation, health status and any other social or economic discriminant.
- 1.3 Nurses engage in end-of-life care with compassion and sensitivity, respecting patient autonomy, values and legal frameworks around advanced directives guided by ethical clarity and respect for life.
- 1.4 Nurses ensure the patient and family have access to comprehensive accurate information in a manner considerate of their cognitive, cultural, psychological and physical needs to facilitate informed decision making.
- 1.5 Nurses uphold confidentiality by safeguarding personal information and respecting the privacy and interests of patients in all legal aspects of handling, accessing, storing, and disclosing personal data.
- 1.6 Nurses ensure patient information is kept private and confidential except where disclosure is required by the law, by the order of a court or is necessary in the public interest.



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- 1.7 Nurses provide evidence-informed, patient centered care in health promotion, prevention and treatment.

2. Ensuring Safe & Sound Practice/Practice Environments

- 2.1 Nurses must ensure that no action or omission in their sphere of influence is detrimental to the condition or safety of patients.
- 2.2 Nurses should avoid abuse of the professional relationship with patients/clients including the privileged access allowed to their property, residence or workplace.
- 2.3 Nurses carry personal responsibility for professional growth and maintaining professional competence through continued professional development and lifelong learning.
- 2.4 Nurses' rights are included under human rights, and should be upheld and protected.
- 2.5 Nurses take appropriate actions to safeguard the individual when their care is endangered by a co-worker or other person, policy, practice or misuse of technology.
- 2.6 Nurses should have regard for the Nursing work load and pressures and take appropriate action to prevent abuse of colleagues and avoid jeopardizing safe standards of practice.
- 2.7 Nurses assume leadership in determining and implementing evidence-informed, acceptable standards of clinical nursing practice, management, research and education.
- 2.8 Nurses practice within the limits of their individual competence and regulated or authorized scope of practice and use professional judgement when accepting and delegating responsibility.
- 2.9 Nurses share their knowledge and expertise and provide feedback, mentorship, and support for the professional development of student nurses, novice nurses, colleagues and other health care providers.



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- 2.10 Nurses ensure the confidentiality and integrity of patient information across digital platforms including the judicious use of digital health records and telehealth services.
 - 2.11 Nurses contribute to a positive practice environment, advocating for respect, addressing incivility, and promoting collaboration across disciplines to enhance patient care and professional development.
 - 2.12 Nurses avoid, oppose and advocate against the abuse of authority, with malicious or bullying intent, to maintain a positive practice environment.
 - 2.13 Nurses ensure that the use of technology, inclusive of artificial intelligence is compatible with the safety and dignity of the patient, and merely supports care, ensuring most care is primarily based in human relationships.
 - 2.14 Nurses may conscientiously object with good reason to participating in particular procedures but must facilitate respectful and timely action to ensure that people receive care appropriate to their individual needs.
 - 2.15 Nurses are aware of and reduce as far as possible any potential for harm associated with practices. This includes actively seeking and participating in remediation and training after errors or near misses.

3. Promoting a Respected Profession

- 3.1 Nurses have the obligation to demonstrate honesty, integrity, empathy, compassion, caring, respect and trustworthiness at all times.
- 3.2 Nurses uphold the image, trustworthiness, and moral compass of the profession in person and in all forms of media including social media.
- 3.3 Nurses respect the privacy and confidentiality of colleagues while they are accessing health care.
- 3.4 Nurses refuse to accept any gifts, favors or hospitality which might be interpreted as seeking to exert undue influence to obtain preferential consideration.
- 3.5 Nurses avoid the use of professional qualifications in advertisements and the promotion of commercial products in order to support independent judgement and prevent bias.



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- 3.6 Nurses participate in the profession's effort to establish and maintain equitable social and economic working conditions within Nursing.
 - 3.7 Nurses are active in expanding research-based, current professional knowledge that supports evidence-informed practice.
 - 3.8 Nurses participate in the profession's efforts to improve standards and practice of nursing.
 - 3.9 Nurses always maintain standards of personal conduct that reflects well on the profession and enhance its image and public confidence.
 - 3.10 Nurses should respond to any complaints made against them professionally, never allowing the complaint to affect the care or service provided to recipients.
 - 3.11 Nurses engage and support the professional organization in advocating for safe efficient patient care, practice environments, improved health funding, opportunities, national and international representation, advancements and protections for Nurses of The Bahamas.

4. Committing Strongly to National/International Health & Wellbeing

- 4.1 Nurses engage in self-care and self-reflection practices to support and preserve personal health, well-being, integrity and resilience.
- 4.2 Nurses prepare for and respond to emergencies, disasters, conflicts, epidemics, pandemics, social crises and conditions of scarce resources.
- 4.3 Nurses adhere to ethical principles even in emergencies, ensuring decisions respect human dignity and advocate for the most vulnerable of persons, balancing care needs with available resources.
- 4.4 Nurses value health care as a human right, affirming the right to universal access to health care for all.
- 4.5 Nurses recognize the significance of the social determinants of health and contribute to and advocate for policies and programmes that address them.



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- 4.6 Nurses contribute to the attainment of the global health agenda, inclusive of the sustainable development goals (SDGs), Health in All Policies (HiAP), as well as other global social, economic and environmental health priorities.
 - 4.7 Nurses collaborate across countries to promote human rights, equity, fairness and to maintain global health.
 - 4.8 Nurses are called upon to champion policies and practices that foster sustainability and enhance environmental health.
 - 4.9 Nurses contribute to promoting healthier communities and a more sustainable future by integrating principles of ecological stewardship into healthcare delivery, underscoring the profession's commitment to holistic health and well-being.
 - 4.10 Nurses advocate for and actively promote mental wellness for themselves, their patients and their colleagues regardless of setting inclusive of efforts to eliminate the stigma associated with mental health issues.
 - 4.11 Nurses collaborate with members of the healthcare professions to encourage community participation in promoting local and national efforts to meet the health needs of the public; recognizing and respecting their particular contribution within the health care team.

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