

Code of Ethics and Conduct

1.0 Principle, Spirit and Intent

The profession of Forensic Anthropology demands a high level of scientific competence and an ethical practice that is beyond reproach. Forensic anthropologists shall maintain a high level of personal and professional integrity in accordance with the trust placed upon them by the government, the legal system and the public.

2.0 Purpose and Scope

Because the search for and the recovery, analysis, and identification of human remains are complex procedures, often performed for diverse jurisdictional entities, this document outlines general principles to assist Forensic Anthropologists in performing their work in an ethical manner. In the absence of specific guidelines or procedures, the principle, spirit and intent of this code should be met.

3.0 Code of Ethics and Conduct

Forensic Anthropologists shall not misrepresent themselves or their work, misappropriate tangible or intellectual property, evade the truth, conspire to deceive, demonstrate disrespect to the dead or their family members, or otherwise betray the confidence placed in them by the public. Specifically, Forensic Anthropologists shall:

- 1) Treat all human remains with respect and dignity.
- 2) Respect the privacy and beliefs of the family of the deceased.
- 3) Treat all evidence with the care and control necessary to ensure its integrity.
- 4) Comply with all pertinent jurisdictional laws and guidelines regarding the collection, use, and disposition of evidence, particularly those related to human remains.
- 5) Ensure that all analytical techniques and methods used are appropriate, accurate and reliable to current scientific standards.

- 6) Treat all information received from an investigating agency or client with the confidentiality required.
- 7) Fully and completely disclose all findings to the submitting agency.
- 8) Testify in a clear, straightforward manner and refrain from speculation beyond their scope of expertise and professional competence.
- 9) Ensure that personnel under their direction are appropriately trained and are vetted prior to assisting with anthropological casework.
- 10) Maintain intellectual independence and impartiality during the analysis of the evidence.
- 11) Carry out the duties of their profession in such a manner so as to instill the confidence of the public, the forensic science community, and the medicolegal system.
- 12) Report violations of the Code of Ethics using the appropriate mechanism.
- 13) Refrain from professional or personal conduct adverse to the best interests of the profession of Forensic Anthropology, including illegal or unethical conduct and the use of their name and credentials in support of illegal or unethical activity.
- 14) Refrain from misrepresenting their education, training, experience, or expertise.
- 15) Refrain from knowingly engaging in misrepresenting data upon which expert opinion or conclusion is based. This includes plagiarism, failure to appropriately credit work done by others, falsification of data, falsification of the conditions under which data were obtained, falsification of the results derived from the data, exceeding the limitations of the science, employing unreasonable levels of certainty, or creating false and unreasonable expectations in terms of capability.

- 16) Avoid actual or apparent undue internal and external political, commercial, financial, and other pressures, influences, and conflicts of interest adversely affecting the quality and integrity of their work.
- 17) Avoid or disclose involvement in any activities diminishing confidence in their competence, impartiality, independence of judgment, or operational integrity.
- 18) Refrain from unauthorized data collection.
- 19) Refrain from extrajudicial statements relating to on-going investigations except those that a reasonable person would expect to be disseminated by means of public communication. Refrain from unauthorized statements relating to on-going investigations that do more than state without elaboration the factual and analytical information contained in a public record.
- 20) Avoid solicitation of work when doing so runs counter to the public interest.
- 21) Not render services on a contingency fee basis.