

Ethics Self Assessment

How to use the self assessment

Members and credentialed nonmembers of the American Health Information Management Association agree, as a condition of membership and certification, to abide by AHIMA's *Code of Ethics*. This self-assessment is developed to help you identify your areas of strength in ethics and areas you might wish to strengthen.

This tool is intended for personal use only. We hope that you find this self-assessment useful as well as stimulating for you in the area of ethics, and we thank you for taking time to complete it.

After completing the self-assessment

Once you have completed the self-assessment, please review your responses, noting which statements you answered "**Occasionally**" or "**Almost Never**." In some situations, these answers are suitable, however, in other situations, an answer of "occasionally" may raise an ethical red flag. This instrument does not have a scoring mechanism which was purposely done as this is your personal ethics self assessment, designed for your own use only. We are confident that you may uncover a few red flags and that if you do, you will willingly and appropriately address them. We encourage you to use AHIMA's ethics resources to help strengthen areas of your practice.

Ethics Self-Assessment

Please check one answer for each of the following questions.

Each statement has 5 options attached: Always, Usually, Occasionally, Almost Never, Not applicable. Please check the one that most accurately represents you.

I. Privacy/Confidentiality

	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Almost Never	Not Applicable
1. I protect all confidential patient information to include personal, health, financial, genetic, and outcome information, regardless of the medium in which the information is stored.					
2. I protect the confidential or proprietary information obtained in the course of professional service.					
3. I disclose only information that is directly relevant or the minimally necessary to achieve the purpose of disclosure.					
4. I promote the obligation to respect privacy in the following ways: by respecting confidential information shared among colleagues while responding to requests from the legal profession, the media, or other non-healthcare related individuals; during presentations or teaching; and in situations that could cause harm to persons.					
5. I take precautions to ensure and maintain the privacy and security of information transmitted, transferred, or disposed of, including that in the event of a termination, incapacitation, or death of a healthcare provider or the termination of a practice.					
6. I inform workforce members of the limitations and risks associated with providing services via electronic media (such as computer, smartphones, cell/telephone, fax, video, etc.).					
7. I engage in evaluation or research that ensures the anonymity or confidentiality of participants and of the data obtained from them by following guidelines developed for the participants in consultation with appropriate institutional review boards.					

II. External Relationships

	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Almost Never	Not applicable
1. I anticipate, clarify, and avoid any conflict of interest, to all parties concerned, when dealing with vendors and consumers; consulting with competitors and clients; or in providing services requiring potentially conflicting roles.					
2. I do not permit my private conduct to interfere with my ability to fulfill my professional responsibilities.					
3. I do not take unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploit others to further my personal, religious, political, or business interests.					

III. Adherence to AHIMA Code of Ethics/Professionalism

	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Almost Never	Not applicable
1. I act with integrity, behave in a trustworthy manner, elevate service to others above self-interest, and promote best standards of HIM practice in every setting.					
2. I am aware of the profession's mission, values, and ethical principles, and practice in a manner that is professional and ethical.					
3. I am honest, treat others with respect, and am accountable for my actions.					

IV. Work Environment

	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Almost Never	Not applicable
1. I ensure that the working environment is consistent and encourages compliance with the AHIMA Code of Ethics, taking reasonable steps to eliminate any conditions in my organization that violate, interfere with, or discourage compliance with the code.					
2. I take reasonable steps to provide or arrange for continuing education and staff development, addressing current knowledge and emerging developments related to health information management practice and ethics.					
3. I am willing to take action to address organizational practices which are not consistent with the AHIMA Code of Ethics, accreditation/licensing standards, and/or federal or state regulations.					

V. Interpersonal Relationships

	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Almost Never	Not applicable
1. I am willing to take adequate steps to discourage, prevent, expose, and correct the unethical conduct of co-workers and colleagues.					
2. I am knowledgeable about established policies and procedures for handling concerns about colleagues' unethical behavior. These include policies and procedures created by AHIMA, licensing and regulatory bodies, employers, supervisors, agencies, and other professional organizations.					
3. I seek resolution if there is a belief that a colleague has acted unethically or if there is a belief of incompetence or impairment by discussing my concerns with the colleague when feasible and when					

such discussion is likely to be productive.					
4. I am sensitive to employees who have ethical concerns and facilitate resolution of these concerns.					
5. I consult with a colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action when there is direct knowledge of a health information management colleague's incompetence or impairment.					

VI. Self Reflection

	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Almost Never	Not applicable
1. I take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work I actually perform or to which I contribute.					
2. I continually develop and enhance my professional expertise, knowledge, and skills (including appropriate education, research, training, consultation, and supervision).					
3. I participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the well-being of patients by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of those involved in decisions related to patients.					
4. I treat each person in a respectful fashion, being mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity.					
5. I promote the value of self-determination for each individual.					
6. I fulfill the promises I make.					

VII. Compliance

	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Almost Never	Not applicable
1. I advocate for changes in policy and legislation to ensure protection of patient privacy and security, coding compliance, and other issues that surface as advocacy issues, as well as facilitate informed participation by the public on these issues.					
2. I base practice decisions on recognized knowledge, including empirically based knowledge, relevant to health information management and health information management ethics.					
3. I do not participate in, condone, or associate with fraud or abuse.					
4. I speak on behalf of AHIMA and AHIMA sponsored organizations, accurately representing the official and authorized positions of the organizations.					
5. I make clear distinctions between statements made and actions engaged in as a private individual and as a representative of the health information management profession, a professional health information organization, or the health information management professional's employer.					

VIII. Sustaining the Profession Through the Support of Educational Opportunities

	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Almost Never	Not applicable
1. I am a mentor for students, peers and new health information management professionals to develop and strengthen skills.					
2. I provide directed practice opportunities for students.					
3. I am responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries for students.					
4. I assign students only to official duties and do not					

ask them to assist me with work on behalf of my family, friends or associates.					
7. I do not engage in any relationship with students in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the student.					
8. I evaluate students' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful when functioning as an educator or clinical internship supervisor.					
9. I advocate for the profession in all settings and participate in activities that promote and explain the mission, values, and principles of the profession to the public.					

IX. AHIMA Membership Responsibilities

	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Almost Never	Not applicable
1. I perform responsibly all duties as assigned by the professional association.					
2. I will resign from a position if unable to perform the assigned responsibilities with competence.					
3. I claim only those relevant professional credentials actually possessed and correct any inaccuracies occurring regarding credentials.					
4. I submit complete and accurate information to maintain my continuing education requirements.					
5. I claim and ensure that my representation to patients, agencies, employers, and the public of professional qualifications, credentials, education, competence, affiliations, services provided, training, certification, and other relevant professional experience are accurate.					

X. Management/Leadership

	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Almost Never	Not applicable
1. I encourage innovation even when maintaining the status quo would be an easier choice.					
2. I use an ethically sensitive approach to conflict resolution.					
3. I initiate and encourage discussion of the ethical aspects of management/financial/HIM issues.					
4. I am successful in finding an effective resolution process and ensuring it is followed when an ethical dilemma confronts me or my organization.					
5. I promote professional development for staff, for their benefit and the benefit of the organization.					
6. I assign staff only to official duties and do not ask them to assist me with work on behalf of my family, friends or associates.					