

Guidelines for Professional Conduct

The AAIDD is an organization that works to improve the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They have created a list of rules to guide how professionals should behave when working with these individuals.

Here are the key rules in simple terms:

- **Listen and communicate:** Always try to understand what the person needs and wants, using whatever communication methods work best for them.
- **Respect choices:** Honor and uphold the person's values and decisions.
- **Be honest:** Share clear and complete information so people can make their own informed decisions.
- **Protect privacy:** Keep personal information confidential and explain any limits to that privacy.
- **Avoid conflicts of interest:** Always act in the best interest of the person being served and be open about any situation that could get in the way of that.
- **Prevent abuse:** Watch for and quickly respond to any signs of physical, mental, sexual, or financial abuse or exploitation — and never engage in it yourself.
- **Stay qualified:** Keep learning and only work within your area of expertise. Ask for help or refer to others when needed.
- **Be reliable and fair:** Follow through on commitments and treat everyone equally, regardless of race, religion, age, gender, or disability.
- **Use respectful language:** Use people-first language (e.g., "person with a disability") and avoid outdated or offensive terms.
- **Stay current:** Keep up with the latest research and best practices and apply them in your work.
- **Welcome feedback:** Ask for input from the people you serve and your teammates and use it to improve.

Professionals in this field should always put the person first—their dignity, their choices, and their wellbeing.
