

The Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct: Q&A

October 5, 2022

1. Can I share the Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct with people who are not a member of HRPA?

Yes. Our Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct are available to everyone. Our Practice Standards and Practice Guidelines are as well. Having them publicly available helps show the public what is expected of registered HRPA members and students and the accountability they have. Any one can access the Code and Rules as well as our professional guidance at: www.hrpa.ca/guidance.

Additionally, we have new public-facing resources to help explain what the Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct mean, as well as what they can expect from registered HRPA members and students on specific guidance topics, such as workplace investigations. This can be accessed at: www.hrpa.ca/resources.

2. Is there any protection in a case when the employer reprimands an HR professional for refusing to do something illegal?

As an employee in Ontario, you are legally entitled to a workplace where you are free from that kind of harassment. The HRPA is always willing to speak to the employer on behalf of any registered HRPA members or students to explain registered HRPA professionals' obligations. You may also wish to speak with an employment lawyer in these circumstances.

The general principle HRPA has is the expectation that registered HR professionals provide advice that aligns with HRPA's Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct, recognizing that if you are not the decision-maker, this could be overturned, but you did what you could to try and have the right thing occur.

It is also suggested that you document what you've done, so that your advice, which should be clear about what the risks are, why the right way of doing it is the right way – is well documented in case you are ever subject to a complaint.

Documentation is always good to have, including for contentious or difficult decisions.

3. Does HRPA have legal counsel that members and students can access for free?

No, we do not. There is a Law Society Referral Service that provides you with free legal services for up to 30 minutes in Ontario. For more information, you can visit the [Law Society of Ontario's Website](#).

4. If you are to be the subject of a complaint for an alleged breach of HRPA's Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct, does the copy of the complaint against you include the name of the complainant?

Yes, in order to be fair and transparent, those who are subject to a complaint will receive the name of the complainant. This enables those subject to the complaint to provide a full response to the allegations at hand. Of course, that does not mean you should contact the complainant directly. Communication about the complaint should be directed to the HRPA.

5. How often do complaints to the HRPA come up on a yearly basis?

This varies a little bit from year to year. Generally, somewhere between 8-15 complaints, with an average of 12. We have the lowest complaints rate of any regulatory body in Ontario.

6. For the guidance coming in the New Year, will this be posted online?

Yes, all professional guidance will be posted, once available, at: www.hrpa.ca/guidance.

7. Is there a service where I can talk through my situation with someone from HRPA to discuss who the Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct may apply to?

Yes, we are happy to talk through these types of situations. You can contact us at guidance@hrpa.ca to discuss further by email or to arrange a phone call.

8. Are there plans at HRPA to advertise/educate the value of certified HRPA members and students?

Yes. We're always looking at ways to ensure there's more public awareness, including from employers, about why it is so important to hire registered HRPA members or students and how they compare to non-registered HR professionals who aren't held to the same standards.

To help with this, we are beginning to launch [public-facing resources](#) and have also established a Public Advisory Forum to hear from members of the public and receive their input into our initiatives, including awareness-building campaigns.

9. Does the HRP A provide sample policy statements related to electronic monitoring/surveillance of employees?

No, we do not have sample policy statements on this topic, as every organization is different and will have different practices. We do however have a resource to help guide you when working on such a policy that can be accessed here: <https://www.hrp a.ca/hr-policy-templates-for-members/>.

10. How many members and students does the HRP A currently have?

Currently, we have between 22,000–23,000 members and students.