

CDECA Canadian Decorators' Association

Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

1.0 Preamble

The reputation and credibility of CDECA is based on our Members' total commitment to ethical and professional business practices. Ethical behavior goes beyond following the letter of the law. It means practicing our profession with honesty, equity, dignity, integrity and social responsibility in a manner that fosters the respect of clients, colleagues, industry affiliates and the general public. Our Members' recognize that while we serve our individual enterprises, we also act as stewards of our profession. It is the individual responsibility of each member of the Canadian Decorators' Association to uphold the Code of Ethics and Bylaws of the Association.

Clients who wish to report an alleged violation by a CDECA member should contact the CDECA Director of Ethics at 4195 Dundas St. W. Suite 346, Toronto, Ontario M8X 1Y4 to request a copy of the CDECA Official Complaint Form. The Ethics Committee will only address complaints that are made by submitting this form. Please note that CDECA is a non-regulatory professional association and not a governing body. Fee structure and contracts are the responsibility of our members and their clients.

Members are encouraged and invited to enhance the mandate and works of the Association by volunteering their services such as joining a committee(s). Members may apply for a position on the Board of Directors; the majority of Directors on the Board must be accredited.

2.0 Terminologies

The following terminologies are applicable where used in the Code of Ethics:

2.1 Member: A current member of CDECA. The levels of membership are Accredited Member, Student Member, Affiliate Member, Educator Member and Retired Member. Only Accredited Members have voting status. (See www.cdeca.com for membership criteria and benefits).

2.2 Interior Decorator / Interior Decorating: The majority of CDECA members are Interior Decorators. They have graduated from College programs ranging from 7 month course Certificates to 2 year Diplomas in Interior Decorating. Some Members have many years of experience and

have gained their accredited membership through submission of a portfolio and letters of reference; reviewed by the Membership Committee. Some Members of CDECA are graduates of interior design diploma or degree programs. The vast majority of accredited CDECA Members are graduates of recognized Canadian educational programs (see www.cdeca.com for a current listing).

- 2.3** Interior Decorator: Someone who is trained in surface design, with expertise of window treatments, textiles, colors, paint, flooring, lighting, wall coverings, furnishings, antiques, etc. Interior Designer: Someone who has completed a 3 year diploma, a 4 year or higher level of education resulting in a university / college degree standing. Interior designers have expertise in building codes and construction, drafting, CAD applications and commercial (contract) design. To be able to call oneself an “interior designer” in some provinces in Canada requires membership in the respective provincial interior design Association.
- 2.4** Firm: A proprietorship, partnership or corporation engaged in the practice of interior decorating or design.
- 2.5** Colleague: Any other individual or firm engaged in the practice of interior decorating, design, or a related design profession.
- 2.6** Client: An individual or entity that retains a member or a firm for the performance of interior decorating or design services.
- 2.7** Public: Concerning people as a whole, as in “general public”; the community in general, or members of the community.
- 2.8** Board of Directors: The Board is responsible for the overall policy, direction, property and business of the Association (CDECA). The Board must be comprised of at least 7 Directors, and must meet at least quarterly to discuss the affairs of the Association.
- 2.9** Director: A Director must be 18 years old and have power under law to contract. Directors are elected for a 2 year term by the Members at an Annual General Meeting, and can be eligible for reelection for two more consecutive 2 year terms. A Director serves without remuneration or without profit due to their position.

3.0 Responsibility to the Public

- 3.1** Members shall comply with all existing laws, regulations, and codes governing business procedures and the practice of interior decorating and design, as established by the jurisdictions in which the practice.
- 3.2** If a Member becomes aware of a situation that impacts the health, safety, and welfare of the public, then the Member has an obligation to notify the appropriate parties.
- 3.3** Members shall neither offer, nor make any payments or gifts to any public official, nor take any other action, with the intent of influencing the official's judgment in connection with an existing or prospective project in which the Members are interested.
- 3.4** Members shall disclose all relevant information which may be deemed as a conflict of interest.
- 3.5** Members shall not make misleading, deceptive or false statements or claims with regard to their professional qualifications, membership category, experience or performance, or those of other members of their firm. This includes, and is not limited to advertising and promotional activities. Student members may only identify themselves as a "student member of CDECA" in communications with their clients and the public; and in all their promotional and/or marketing materials.
- 3.6** Members shall not seal or sign drawings, specifications, or other interior decorating or design documents unless they have personally prepared, supervised or professionally reviewed and approved such documents.
- 3.7** Members shall not permit their names to be used in conjunction with any decorating or design project in which they have not been directly or indirectly involved.
- 3.8** Members shall not engage in any professional conduct involving deceit, fraud, misrepresentation, or dishonesty.
- 3.9** Members must recognize that they give up rights to the usage of the CDECA logo and/or claims of association with CDECA upon cessation of membership by any means.

4.0 Responsibility to the Client

- 4.1** Members shall undertake only those professional responsibilities that they are qualified and competent to carry out; through training, education and/or experience.
- 4.2** Before accepting an assignment, Members shall define comprehensively to the client the scope and nature of the project, the interior decorating / design services to be performed, the method of remuneration for those services, as well as a discussion / communication on all necessary aspects concerning a budget.
- 4.3** Members shall treat all client information (both professional and personal) including all visual and written documentation as confidential; and shall not divulge such information without the written consent of the client. It is the Members responsibility to ensure that all employees are also bound to total confidentiality.
- 4.4** In the case of a dispute not directly involving a Member during a project, the Member shall maintain an independent position in total fairness to the parties in the dispute.
- 4.5** Members must obtain written consent from their client(s) to use their client's project for promotional purposes.

5.0 Responsibility to other CDECA Members & Interior Decorators / Designers

- 5.1** Members shall not initiate or participate in any discussion or activity which might result in harm to another interior decorators /designers or colleagues reputation or business relationships.
- 5.2** Members may enter into work on a project upon being personally satisfied that the client has severed contractual relationships with a previous interior decorator / designer.
- 5.3** Members shall not engage in unfair competition practices that would harm the reputation of another interior decorator / designer or the profession as a whole.
- 5.4** Members may, when requested and when it does not represent a conflict of interest, render a second opinion to a client, or serve as an expert witness in a judicial or arbitrational proceeding.
- 5.5** Members shall only take credit for work or use work that has actually been created by that Member or the Member's firm and under the Member's direction.

6.0 Responsibility to the Profession

- 6.1** Members agree to maintain standards of professional conduct that will positively reflect on CDECA and the profession.
- 6.2** Members shall seek to continually upgrade their professional knowledge and competencies.
- 6.3** Members agree, whenever possible, to encourage and contribute to the sharing of knowledge and information between interior decorators, designers, students, and other allied professional disciplines.
- 6.4** Advertising by Members must meet the following criteria:
 - (a) the advertising preserves the public interest by reporting accurate and factual information which neither exaggerates nor misleads.
 - (b) all advertising undertaken must encourage and promote the dignity of the profession.
- 6.5** Accredited Members may identify their membership and/or use of the CDECA logo for marketing and promotional purposes. This includes, but is not limited to advertising, stationery, signage, and media.
- 6.6** Members shall not claim to be an official spokesperson(s) for CDECA without the written authorization of the Board of Directors.
- 6.7** Members shall not interfere with the performance of another interior decorator's or designer's or colleague's contractual or professional relationship with a client.