

NASW Code of Ethics Practice Exam Sample Study Guide



EVERYTHING you need from our exam experts!

**Featuring practice questions, answers, and explanations
for each question.**

**This study guide is a SAMPLE. Visit
<https://naswcodeofethics.examzify.com> to get
the full version available exclusively to
Examzify Plus pass holders .**

Copyright © 2025 by Examzify - A Kaluba Technologies Inc. product.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transferred in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, web distribution, taping, or by any information storage retrieval system, without the written permission of the author.

Notice: Examzify makes every reasonable effort to obtain from reliable sources accurate, complete, and timely information about this product.

SAMPLE

Questions

SAMPLE

- 1. What is the Ethical Principle for the value of competence in social work?**
 - A. Practicing only in paid settings**
 - B. Limiting professional growth to basic skills**
 - C. Practicing within areas of competence and enhancing expertise**
 - D. Seeking promotional opportunities in management**
- 2. What can social workers do to prevent misunderstandings when providing access to records?**
 - A. Discuss the contents later**
 - B. Assist in interpreting the records**
 - C. Leave it up to the clients to figure out**
 - D. Restrict access until the client asks questions**
- 3. What should social workers ensure about documentation in client records?**
 - A. Documentation can be vague**
 - B. It is optional to maintain documentation**
 - C. Documentation must be accurate and reflect services provided**
 - D. Only positive outcomes need to be documented**
- 4. What should social workers discuss with clients regarding confidentiality?**
 - A. The reasons for confidentiality**
 - B. The potential limitations of confidentiality**
 - C. The benefits of sharing personal information**
 - D. The legal authority to breach confidentiality**
- 5. What is the stance on dishonesty within the profession of social work?**
 - A. It can be acceptable in certain situations**
 - B. It should never be condoned or participated in**
 - C. It is permissible if it helps clients**
 - D. It is often overlooked in private practice**

- 6. How should social workers describe their payment structures to clients?**
- A. Clearly and transparently**
 - B. In vague terms to avoid misunderstandings**
 - C. With the intent to negotiate**
 - D. Using legal jargon**
- 7. How do social workers demonstrate respect for diversity in a global context?**
- A. By promoting development projects that ignore local customs**
 - B. By increasing apprenticeships for select clients only**
 - C. By advocating for international policies that enhance cultural competency**
 - D. By favoring majority ideas and cultures over others**
- 8. What is a best practice for social workers as field instructors regarding boundaries?**
- A. Set boundaries that are flexible and change frequently**
 - B. Define clear and culturally sensitive boundaries**
 - C. Use vague terms to facilitate communication**
 - D. Ignore personal boundaries in favor of friendship**
- 9. Which of the following is NOT a way social workers are ethically responsible to their colleagues?**
- A. Sexual relationships with colleagues**
 - B. Confidentiality in communications**
 - C. Referral for services when necessary**
 - D. Interdisciplinary collaboration**
- 10. How should social workers approach their instructional methods?**
- A. Relying on anecdotal evidence**
 - B. Using the most current information available in the profession**
 - C. Prioritizing personal teaching styles over standardized practices**
 - D. Focusing mainly on past success stories**

Answers

SAMPLE

- 1. C**
- 2. B**
- 3. C**
- 4. B**
- 5. B**
- 6. A**
- 7. C**
- 8. B**
- 9. A**
- 10. B**

SAMPLE

Explanations

SAMPLE

1. What is the Ethical Principle for the value of competence in social work?

- A. Practicing only in paid settings**
- B. Limiting professional growth to basic skills**
- C. Practicing within areas of competence and enhancing expertise**
- D. Seeking promotional opportunities in management**

The value of competence in social work emphasizes that practitioners should work within their areas of expertise and continuously enhance their skills and knowledge. This principle underscores the importance of maintaining professional standards and remaining updated on best practices and developments in the field. By practicing within their areas of competence, social workers ensure they can provide the most effective and ethical services to their clients. Additionally, enhancing expertise aligns with the commitment to lifelong learning, which is essential in social work due to the evolving nature of societal issues and empathy for diverse client populations. This continuous professional development allows social workers to meet the complex needs of their clients while adhering to the ethical standards set by the NASW Code of Ethics. The other choices do not reflect the comprehensive understanding and commitment to competence required in social work practice.

2. What can social workers do to prevent misunderstandings when providing access to records?

- A. Discuss the contents later**
- B. Assist in interpreting the records**
- C. Leave it up to the clients to figure out**
- D. Restrict access until the client asks questions**

Assisting in interpreting the records is essential for preventing misunderstandings when providing clients access to their records. Social workers have a responsibility to ensure that clients fully understand the information contained in their records. This guidance is crucial because records can often include complex terminology or technical terms that may not be clear to clients. By actively helping clients interpret these documents, social workers empower them to engage meaningfully with their own information, fostering transparency and trust in the client-worker relationship. This approach is consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics, which emphasizes the importance of client understanding and participation in their own care. Making records accessible without adequate support can lead to misinterpretation and confusion, which could hinder a client's ability to make informed decisions about their care or services. By providing assistance in interpreting records, social workers can enhance client autonomy and comprehension, ultimately leading to better outcomes in the therapeutic or service process.

3. What should social workers ensure about documentation in client records?

- A. Documentation can be vague**
- B. It is optional to maintain documentation**
- C. Documentation must be accurate and reflect services provided**
- D. Only positive outcomes need to be documented**

Documentation in client records is essential for several reasons, and ensuring that it is accurate and reflects the services provided is a fundamental responsibility of social workers. Accurate documentation serves multiple purposes: it provides a clear account of the services delivered, facilitates continuity of care, and upholds accountability within professional practices. It also protects both the client and the social worker by ensuring that there is a reliable record of decisions made and actions taken. Having precise records also enhances communication among interdisciplinary teams involved in a client's care, ensuring everyone is aware of the client's situation and progress. Furthermore, with ethical considerations and legal requirements in mind, maintaining accurate documentation demonstrates professionalism and adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics, which emphasizes the importance of integrity and transparency in practice. This responsibility can significantly impact clients' outcomes, as it influences the planning and assessment of ongoing support services. Vague documentation, optional records, and only reflecting positive outcomes would not provide a comprehensive overview of a client's needs or the interventions that have taken place, thereby compromising the effectiveness and integrity of social work practice.

4. What should social workers discuss with clients regarding confidentiality?

- A. The reasons for confidentiality**
- B. The potential limitations of confidentiality**
- C. The benefits of sharing personal information**
- D. The legal authority to breach confidentiality**

Discussing the potential limitations of confidentiality with clients is a critical component of ethical practice for social workers. This conversation is essential because it helps clients understand that while confidentiality is a fundamental aspect of the therapeutic relationship, there are certain circumstances under which confidentiality may be breached. These circumstances might include situations involving harm to self or others, child abuse, or when there are legal obligations to report. By addressing the potential limitations upfront, social workers not only promote transparency but also empower clients by allowing them to make informed decisions about what to share. This understanding fosters trust and openness in the therapeutic relationship, which is vital for effective intervention. Engaging clients in discussions about these limitations helps set realistic expectations about what confidentiality entails, ultimately leading to a more productive and respectful partnership. It is a crucial aspect of informed consent in social work practice.

5. What is the stance on dishonesty within the profession of social work?

- A. It can be acceptable in certain situations**
- B. It should never be condoned or participated in**
- C. It is permissible if it helps clients**
- D. It is often overlooked in private practice**

The NASW Code of Ethics emphasizes integrity as a fundamental value within the profession of social work. Dishonesty undermines the trust that is essential to the client-social worker relationship and can jeopardize the effectiveness of social work practice. By denouncing dishonesty outright, the Code guides social workers to uphold honesty in all facets of their professional duties. Maintaining transparency and truthfulness is vital not only for the protection of clients but also for the credibility of the profession as a whole. Social workers are expected to adhere to ethical standards that foster accountability and promote the dignity and worth of individuals. Therefore, dishonesty is never acceptable, as it contradicts the core principles of social work and can cause harm to clients and communities. The viewpoint that dishonesty could be permissible under certain conditions, or during private practices, misunderstands the ethical obligations that social workers must uphold. Social work practice is committed to ethical behavior consistently across all situations, reinforcing the necessity of honesty as a pillar of effective and respectful practice.

6. How should social workers describe their payment structures to clients?

- A. Clearly and transparently**
- B. In vague terms to avoid misunderstandings**
- C. With the intent to negotiate**
- D. Using legal jargon**

Social workers should describe their payment structures to clients clearly and transparently to ensure that clients fully understand the financial aspects of the services being provided. This approach aligns with the ethical principles of honesty and integrity, which are foundational to the social work profession. By being transparent, social workers empower clients to make informed decisions regarding their care, fostering trust and open communication. Clear communication about fees and payment structures also helps to prevent misunderstandings that may arise later in the relationship. Clients have the right to know how much they will be charged, the frequency of payments, and any possible additional costs. This transparency enables them to plan their financial obligations accordingly. In contrast, vague descriptions could lead to confusion and mistrust, creating barriers in the client-worker relationship. Similarly, negotiation of payment terms should be approached with clarity rather than ambiguity, ensuring clients feel secure and informed about the agreements they enter into. Legal jargon, on the other hand, can complicate understanding and distance clients from the services being offered, which is not conducive to a solid therapeutic alliance. Overall, clear and transparent communication about payment structures is vital for ethical practice in social work.

7. How do social workers demonstrate respect for diversity in a global context?

- A. By promoting development projects that ignore local customs
- B. By increasing apprenticeships for select clients only
- C. By advocating for international policies that enhance cultural competency**
- D. By favoring majority ideas and cultures over others

Social workers demonstrate respect for diversity in a global context by advocating for international policies that enhance cultural competency. This approach recognizes the importance of understanding and valuing the diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and practices of individuals and communities around the world. By promoting cultural competency, social workers can engage effectively with different cultures and adapt their practices to meet the unique needs of clients from varied backgrounds. This not only fosters inclusivity but also supports social justice and equal access to services. Furthermore, advocating for policies that enhance cultural competency can help to address systemic inequalities and promote understanding between different cultural groups, which is essential in a globally interconnected society. By focusing on advocacy, social workers can contribute to an environment where diverse perspectives are acknowledged and valued, ultimately leading to more effective and respectful practice.

8. What is a best practice for social workers as field instructors regarding boundaries?

- A. Set boundaries that are flexible and change frequently
- B. Define clear and culturally sensitive boundaries**
- C. Use vague terms to facilitate communication
- D. Ignore personal boundaries in favor of friendship

Defining clear and culturally sensitive boundaries is essential for social workers as field instructors because it establishes a framework that guides the professional relationship between the instructor and the students. Clear boundaries help to create a safe and respectful environment, which fosters learning and allows for the open exchange of ideas. It also protects both the instructor and the student from potential ethical dilemmas that could arise from ambiguous roles or mixed relationships. Cultural sensitivity is particularly important as social workers often engage with diverse populations. By considering the cultural contexts and backgrounds of students, field instructors can set boundaries that honor the values and norms of different cultures, thereby enhancing the learning experience and promoting inclusivity. Having flexible boundaries can lead to confusion and lack of professionalism, while vague terms may result in misunderstandings and ineffective communication. Ignoring personal boundaries can compromise the professional nature of the relationship, potentially resulting in ethical breaches and unprofessional behavior. Overall, setting clear and culturally sensitive boundaries upholds the integrity of the social work practice and enhances the educational experience for students.

9. Which of the following is NOT a way social workers are ethically responsible to their colleagues?

- A. Sexual relationships with colleagues**
- B. Confidentiality in communications**
- C. Referral for services when necessary**
- D. Interdisciplinary collaboration**

The choice regarding sexual relationships with colleagues is the correct answer because social workers are expected to maintain professional boundaries and avoid situations that could create conflicts of interest or jeopardize the integrity of their work environment. Engaging in sexual relationships with colleagues can lead to ethical dilemmas, such as compromised objectivity and favoritism, which violate the ethical standards laid out in the NASW Code of Ethics. In contrast, maintaining confidentiality in communications is crucial for fostering trust and security among colleagues. Upholding confidentiality ensures that sensitive information remains protected and that professional relationships are built on respect and integrity. Referring clients for services when necessary is also a key ethical responsibility, as it demonstrates a commitment to ensuring that clients receive comprehensive support. Social workers must recognize their professional limits and facilitate access to the appropriate resources. Interdisciplinary collaboration is equally championed within the profession, as it promotes a holistic approach to client care. By working together with other professionals, social workers can enhance service delivery and improve client outcomes. Overall, while confidentiality, referrals, and collaboration are all integral to ethical relationships amongst colleagues, engaging in sexual relationships undermines the professionalism expected within the social work field.

10. How should social workers approach their instructional methods?

- A. Relying on anecdotal evidence**
- B. Using the most current information available in the profession**
- C. Prioritizing personal teaching styles over standardized practices**
- D. Focusing mainly on past success stories**

Social workers should approach their instructional methods by using the most current information available in the profession. This emphasis on current information ensures that practitioners are basing their teaching and practice on the latest research, techniques, and evidence-based interventions. Staying updated with contemporary practices not only enhances the effectiveness of the methods employed but also aligns with the ethical responsibility of social workers to provide competent services. It reflects a commitment to professional development and to the clients served, ensuring that they receive the most informed and effective assistance possible. Additionally, relying on anecdotal evidence, prioritizing personal teaching styles, or focusing mainly on past success stories can lead to outdated or biased information, which may not serve the best interests of clients or advance the practice. These approaches could hinder the development of evidence-based practice and compromise the quality of services offered. By prioritizing current, evidence-informed practices, social workers affirm their commitment to ethical standards and the advancement of the field.