



# The Code

## ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

The ACM Code of Ethics expresses the conscience of the computing profession, and it affirms an obligation of computing professionals both individually and collectively to use their skills for the benefit of society.

Computing professionals' actions change the world. To act responsibly, they should reflect upon the wider impacts of their work, consistently supporting the public good. The Code is designed to inspire and guide the ethical conduct of all computing professionals, including current and aspiring practitioners, instructors, students, influencers, and anyone who uses computing technology in an impactful way.

### 1. GENERAL ETHICAL PRINCIPLES.

*A computing professional should...*

- 1.1 Contribute to society and to human well-being, acknowledging that all people are stakeholders in computing.
- 1.2 Avoid harm.
- 1.3 Be honest and trustworthy.
- 1.4 Be fair and take action not to discriminate.
- 1.5 Respect the work required to produce new ideas, inventions, creative works, and computing artifacts.
- 1.6 Respect privacy.
- 1.7 Honor confidentiality.

### 2. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES.

*A computing professional should...*

- 2.1 Strive to achieve high quality in both the processes and products of professional work.
- 2.2 Maintain high standards of professional competence, conduct, and ethical practice.
- 2.3 Know and respect existing rules pertaining to professional work.
- 2.4 Accept and provide appropriate professional review.
- 2.5 Give comprehensive and thorough evaluations of computer systems and their impacts, including analysis of possible risks.
- 2.6 Perform work only in areas of competence.
- 2.7 Foster public awareness and understanding of computing, related technologies, and their consequences.
- 2.8 Access computing and communication resources only when authorized or when compelled by the public good.
- 2.9 Design and implement systems that are robustly and useably secure.

### 3. PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES.

*A computing professional, especially one acting as a leader, should...*

- 3.1 Ensure that the public good is the central concern during all professional computing work.
- 3.2 Articulate, encourage acceptance of, and evaluate fulfillment of social responsibilities by members of the organization or group.
- 3.3 Manage personnel and resources to enhance the quality of working life.
- 3.4 Articulate, apply, and support policies and processes that reflect the principles of the Code.
- 3.5 Create opportunities for members of the organization or group to grow as professionals.
- 3.6 Use care when modifying or retiring systems.
- 3.7 Recognize and take special care of systems that become integrated into the infrastructure of society.

### 4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE.

*A computing professional should...*

- 4.1 Uphold, promote, and respect the principles of the Code.
- 4.2 Treat violations of the Code as inconsistent with membership in the ACM.

Find resources to aid ethical decision making at:

<https://ethics.acm.org>

- **Case Studies** - demonstrating how the Code can be applied to specific ethical challenges
- **Ask an Ethicist** - helping professionals to navigate ethical choices that arise in everyday practice

[www.acm.org/code-of-ethics](http://www.acm.org/code-of-ethics)



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