



Advisors for Supported Employment in New Zealand
(A Committee within NZDSN)



Code of Ethics and Code of Practice for Practitioners in Supported Employment Services

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Introduction:

ASENZ (The Advisors for Supported Employment in New Zealand) represents the Supported Employment Practitioners in NZ.

ASENZ are a committee within the New Zealand Disability Support Network (NZDSN).

The Code of Ethics and Code of Practice outline principles and ethical commitments that demonstrate the competence and responsibilities required of practitioners delivering Supported Employment in NZ.

The Code of Ethics and Code of Practice provides guidance to those working in Supported Employment and can be used as guidelines for self-assessment and as a quality improvement tool.

This Code of Ethics and Code of Practice demonstrates the values underpinning supported employment, upon which practitioners develop their everyday practice.

These Codes will provide both general principles and guidelines to cover professional situations and activities when delivering supported employment services.

These Codes will be a key point of reference in regard to the "Framework for Supported Employment" (The Development of Quality Assurance for Supported Employment in New Zealand, the six Principles of Supported Employment, and the two Supported Employment specific qualifications - Certificate and Diploma).

The Principles of Supported Employment

- 1) Open waged employment: Supported Employment is based in the open labour market; same rewards, same conditions as everyone else
- 2) Individualised – based upon partnership: Supported Employment services are expected to meet a client's individual support needs (whether employer or job seeker). They fundamentally represent a partnership
- 3) Direct access to employment pathways: Supported Employment services will facilitate direct access to the labour market (optimally within 4 weeks) developing and utilizing a precise job/person match – without insistence upon prolonged "getting ready" activities or pre-vocational training
- 4) Inclusive services: socially inclusive outcomes: No clients will be "screened out" or denied service based upon a perceived severity of challenge or disadvantage
- 5) "Life match" through choices: Work is a means to an end and should complement and enhance a person's life and well-being, and the achievement of their aspirations and potential
- 6) Ongoing workplace support: Support services and strategies are designed to achieve the best possible outcome for both employer and employee, and promote the development of natural supports, which may lead to the withdrawal of formal support services

Objectives:

- Promoting all aspects of Supported Employment
- Facilitating sound effective practice that suits the context in which it occurs
- Promoting the value of professional supported employment practices which are responsive to the needs of people with a disability
- Providing for practitioners, employers and the public, a collective identity for practitioners through which a high level of trust, integrity, and professional growth can be maintained
- Ensuring that the professional conduct and integrity of practitioners is beyond reproach

PART ONE: Code of Ethics - General Principles:

1) Professional Competence

Practitioners will:

- Maintain the highest levels of competence in their work, and will recognise the need to update their knowledge in the key areas of Supported Employment
- Be responsible for their own continuing professional development and will attend appropriate training and other learning events and consult with other Practitioners to exchange information, share good practice and develop professional and technical expertise
- Seek out regular formal supervision of practice

2) Integrity

Practitioners will:

- Be honest, fair and respectful of others in their professional activities
- Conduct their activities in ways that inspire trust and confidence

3) Opportunity and Equality

Practitioners will:

- Advocate social justice, principles of inclusion and choice for all members of society
- Respect the rights, dignity and value of clients, employers, colleagues and others involved in their work
- Not discriminate on the grounds of gender, age, religion, race, ethnicity, political opinion, disability, sexual orientation, health condition, dependents or social status. Refer to the Code of Health and disability Services Consumer Rights - <http://www.hdc.org.nz/the-act--code/the-code-of-rights>
- Be sensitive and responsive to cultural, spiritual and individual differences and needs and provide equality of opportunity for employment outcomes

4) Respect

When working with clients, practitioners will demonstrate honesty, empathy and integrity at all times and will respect:

- Their dignity and personal rights
- Their right of self determination
- Their cultural requirements

5) Cultural awareness

Practitioners will recognise the cultural diversity of all clients. This will include:

- Active understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi and current issues relevant to iwi and other cultural groups
- The development of active and positive relationships with local iwi and other significant cultural groups
- Service delivery approaches that are responsive and reflective of the cultural backgrounds/values of clients and their families
- Active development of services for Maori, by Maori, and similarly for other cultural groups
- Personal involvement in an ongoing programme of cultural awareness training

6) Autonomy, Empowerment and Self-advocacy

- Practitioners will actively promote the maximum participation, decision-making and autonomy of individuals within the supported employment process
- Practitioners will respect the client's right to make decisions that affect their own lives, including the service providers they wish to engage with

7) Propriety

Practitioners will work from the principle that:

- The positive growth and development of the client shall take precedence over the practitioner's own interests and the interests of the employer
- The acceptance of employment in an organisation implies that the client is in agreement with that organisation's general policies and principles
- They act without bias as providers of accurate and up-to-date information to both clients and to employers

8) Social Responsibility

- Supported Employment practitioners will be aware of the impact they have on people's lifestyle and on the communities in which they live and work
- They will accept the responsibility to contribute to social inclusion through employment

9) Confidentiality

Practitioners will:

- Ensure that confidential/sensitive information is protected
- Ask for agreement from the client (or their legal representative) regarding matters relating to disclosure
- Maintain information gathered in the course of working with a client in a secure place
- Only reveal information to others with the expressed permission of the client concerned, or that client's legal representative
- Practice in line with the Health Information Privacy Code 1994 (2008 edition). See here: <http://www.privacy.org.nz/the-privacy-act-and-codes/codes-of-practice/health-information-privacy-code/>

PART TWO: Code of Practice:

a) Definition of the term "Clients"

In these Codes of Ethics and Practice for Practitioners in Supported Employment Services, the 'client' refers to a job seeker who is the recipient of the supported employment service.

The client may also be seeking self-employment or employment as part of a small business.

b) General Awareness/Knowledge

Practitioners will demonstrate knowledge and awareness of supported employment activities in New Zealand including:

- Factors that led to the development of supported employment and acknowledge the point of difference between supported employment and other employment services
- The definition, characteristics and principles of supported employment and its underpinning values
- Informed choice, self-determination and active participation throughout the supported employment process
- The roles and responsibilities of all key stakeholders in delivering and facilitating supported employment opportunities
- The rights and responsibilities of clients in supported employment.
- Recognised best practice and current research

c) Legal Obligation

Practitioners will have a good understanding of legal issues specific to Supported Employment practice. By doing so they will:

- Maintain up to date knowledge of legal changes, (particularly employment law) as it is available
- Be able to offer information or advise where to obtain legal information and resources e.g. EMA, Chamber of Commerce, Community Law Centre's
- Observe all statutory and legal obligations and if in doubt, the practitioner will consult with relevant legal authorities

d) Employment and Career Planning

Practitioners will have the ability to undertake employment and career planning in accordance with the client's interests including:

- Undertaking effective and meaningful strengths based assessment/exploration in partnership with client
- Adopting a Person Centered Planning approach to all parts of the supported employment process
- Supporting and encouraging clients to develop personal career goals and meaningful and realistic career plans to maximise their potential
- The facilitation of on the job assessments, work experience placements, workplace support and job carving
- Developing partnerships with appropriate agencies, organisations and networks to enable career advancement

e) Job Searching and Marketing

Practitioners will be able to deliver a wide range of effective job searching and marketing techniques including:

- Creating effective marketing strategies for supported employment
- Producing marketing materials suitable for employers
- Recognising and using both formal and informal job searching methods
- Involving the client in the job search process
- Understanding the local labour market and workplace cultures
- Identifying the needs of employers
- Conducting their contact with employers in a professional and businesslike manner
- Assisting clients to compete in the open labour market promoting their strengths, skills and abilities
- Assisting with the negotiation of terms, conditions and contracts of employment in accordance with relevant legislation
- Knowing about and understanding relevant legislation that impacts upon employment issues

f) On and Off the Job Training and Supports

Supported employment practitioners will be able to provide support in and away from the workplace adopting a range of activities including:

- Identifying and addressing the support needs of clients in the workplace
- Job analysing and job carving
- Identifying methods for establishing natural supports within the work place
- Identifying and developing workplace supports which address the needs of the client, employers and co-workers
- Delivering a range of on and off the job support strategies
- Providing advice and support regarding workplace aids, adaptations and job ergonomics to both employers and clients
- Assisting the client to recognise and adopt appropriate social behaviour and culture of the workplace
- Maximising job performance and workplace inclusion

g) Ongoing Employment Supports

Practitioners will be able to provide or identify resources to ensure the long-term support of their clients in the workplace, if required, including:

- Identifying sources and funding for long-term supports
- Completing a written agreement with both employers and clients regarding support services to be delivered
- Evaluating and reviewing the relevance and quality of services with clients and employers
- Establishing a support network to assist the client with any personal needs concerning employment

h) Organisational Awareness

Practitioners will be aware of the mission, role, objectives and activities of their organisation/agency in relation to:

- Understanding their role and responsibilities within the organisation/agency
- Acknowledging the boundaries and role limitations of their organisation/agency in relation to supported employment activities
- Working as a member of a team to achieve organisational/agency objectives
- Contributing to system change within communities

i) Responsibility for Self

- Practitioners take responsibility for their own emotional, mental and physical health
- Practitioners will acknowledge that there are limits to the service they can provide, and when they experience difficulties in regard to this, it is their responsibility to seek guidance and support from others
- Practitioners will act with integrity at all times, and in the knowledge that their standards of behaviour also reflect on the Supported Employment profession

j) Supervision/Mentoring

- Consistent ethical practice will be maintained by the inclusion of appropriate arrangements for supervision/mentoring of practice
- The objectives of supervision/mentoring will be competency, accountable practice, continuing professional development and education
- Supervision/mentoring will be directed towards competent practice, client well-being, the development and well-being of the practitioner, and towards organisational and industry learning
- Supervision/mentoring will occur within a professional relationship between one or several supervisees and one or several supervisors/mentors

k) Communication

Practitioners will demonstrate advanced communication skills that:

- Support client self-determination in employment and support
- Enhances a positive culture within their organisation/agency
- Emphasises their professionalism with employers and other relevant external organisations

l) Quality Practice

Practitioners will be able to demonstrate their understanding of quality issues in the provision of supported employment services by actively participating in their organisations quality improvement plan

m) Leadership

Practitioners will:

- Demonstrate their awareness of the concept and importance of leadership in the provision of supported employment services
- Support clients to ensure that employers human resource practices follow current employment law
- Actively participate in the process of business and strategic planning within their own organisation/agency
- Actively participate in change management within their organisation/agency

n) Networks

Practitioners will recognize that a vital component of their work is the recognition of supported employment practice with a broader focus than just employers and people with a disability, this includes:

- Vocational rehabilitation
- Education
- Research
- Private practice
- Public service
- Non-governmental organizations

o) Conduct

Supported employment practitioners will:

- Conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times
- Support other practitioners, and related professionals, where practicable
- Provide input to the development of public policy as it affects supported employment practice, where appropriate
- Foster an awareness of the aims of supported employment within their community at all times

p) Professional Responsibility

- Supported Employment practitioners are personally responsible for the professional decisions they make
- Practitioners will acknowledge the boundaries of their professional expertise and make every effort to ensure that their services are used appropriately
- Practitioners will work to maintain the highest standard of their profession and commit to excellence

q) Responsibility to Colleagues

- Practitioners will relate to colleagues with integrity, respect, courtesy, openness and honesty
- Practitioners will respect and seek to understand differences of opinion and practice, and express constructive feedback of each other in a responsible manner
- Senior Practitioners will assist junior practitioners to develop high standards of ethical behaviour, methods of learning, analytical ability, knowledge and skills

r) Research

Practitioners will encourage and support research to enhance the body of knowledge that informs and enables them and colleagues to effectively carry out their role and function

s) Breaches of the Code

- Instances of professional misconduct or unethical behaviour must be brought to the attention of the persons manager
- All practitioners will acknowledge and comply with their organisations/agency's process and policies for investigating their practice
- Failure to observe the above may result in matters being referred for the attention of the Ministry of social development

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