

*TDCJ FORMED THE "A.C.E."
ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
ETHICS IN 1996 TO
ADDRESS ISSUES WITHIN
THE AGENCY.*

1. "If I have a question regarding an ethical issue, to whom do I address it?"

You may contact the A.C.E. in writing; they will give you a written response and will post it on the opinions link on the website. Request for opinion form is available on the A.C.E. website.

2. "What if I don't want to give my name?" Anonymous letters regarding ethical issues will be addressed through A.C.E. Opinions. Request for opinion form is available on the ACE website.

3. "I don't want to be known as a snitch." Unethical practices place everyone at risk. By not reporting unethical behavior you are in essence condoning the behavior.

4. "What if I'm unsure if my concern is an ethical issue?" After your request is received, it will be screened and a determination will be made if the concern is an ethical issue; if isn't then you will be informed what recourse you should take.

Additional References:

ED-02.01 TDCJ Ethics Policy
PD-12 Equal Employment Opportunity
PD-13 Sexual Harassment
PD-31 Discrimination in the Workplace
PD-32 Whistleblower Act



ACE
Advisory Council on Ethics
<https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/ace/ace-home.htm>
Mainframe e-mail: **ETHICS_ACE**

ETHICS

Knowing what is right
versus
Doing what is right

Understanding Ethics

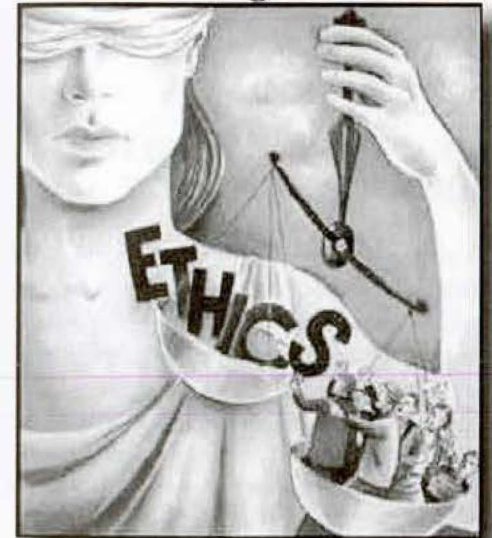


Illustration by Terry Great-Ellner

Texas Department of Criminal Justice
P.O. Box 99
Huntsville, Texas 77342-0099

ETHICS WITHIN THE WORKPLACE

ETHICS IS THE PRACTICE OF GOODNESS.

Justification of wrongdoing is a common practice that every society deals with. Criminal justice organizations are no exception. Peer pressure may influence the actions of many.

WHY IS THERE A NEED FOR PROFESSIONAL ETHICS?

It contributes to the image of criminal justice as a profession. What you do outside of work has an effect on the image of agency employees. What people see and hear is important. Perception and appearance of wrongdoing influences what people think about the criminal justice profession. Conduct yourselves in a professional manner at work and outside work.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT ETHICS

- Ethics is a matter of personal opinion and belief.
- If it's legal it must be ethical.
- If it isn't specifically forbidden, then it's okay to do it.

ETHICS BEGINS AND ENDS WITH YOU!

COMMON EXCUSES FOR NOT REPORTING WRONGDOING:

- I don't want to get involved
- What will others think?
- It's not my job.
- I won't snitch on another co-worker.
- Peer pressure to comply.

THE REAL CAUSE IS LOYALTY

Loyalty is why some employees will not report the wrongdoings of others. Loyalty is important in TDCJ, and situations occur that often test an employee's loyalty. Loyalties to the agency, loyalty to fellow employees, and loyalty to the profession, are three different levels of loyalty.

DO THE RIGHT THING

KNOWING THE RIGHT THING TO DO AND DOING IT

Have the conviction to do the right thing. Employees with integrity will not fear reprisal or retaliation.

If something is jeopardizing their safety, your safety or the safety of others, you have an obligation to report it.

ETHICS IS NOT SOMETHING WE CAN EXPECT FROM OTHERS, ETHICS IS SOMETHING WE EXPECT FROM OURSELVES.

Our behavior is emulated by our fellow employees as well as by the offenders.

There are rules and it is important to follow the rules. We need to conduct our business above board. When you operate outside of the rules you jeopardize your integrity and the integrity of the agency.

Ethical issues have a direct impact on the reputation of the individual and the agency.

DISCRETION

The use of discretion may reflect positively or negatively to the agency. What is the motivation of your use of discretion? Is it based on what you don't want to do or is it based on a legitimate reason?

Ethics cannot replace the rules; rules are necessary in criminal justice. Ethics can make the rules more acceptable.

Ethical behavior is always your best option.

MAKE ETHICAL CHOICES