

Code of Ethics for the Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist



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Preamble

Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) practice nursing by providing anesthesia and anesthesia-related services. They accept the responsibility conferred upon them by the state, the profession, and society. The American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA) has adopted this Code of Ethics to guide its members in fulfilling their obligations as professionals. Each member of the AANA has a personal responsibility to uphold and adhere to these ethical standards.

1. Responsibility to Patients

CRNAs preserve human dignity, respect the moral and legal rights of health consumers, and support the safety and well being of the patients under their care.

- 1.1 The CRNA renders quality anesthesia care regardless of the patient's race, religion, age, sex, nationality, disability, social, or economic status.
- 1.2 The CRNA protects the patient from harm and is an advocate for the patient's welfare.
- 1.3 The CRNA verifies that a valid anesthesia informed consent has been obtained from the patient or legal guardian as required by federal or state laws or institutional policy prior to rendering a service.
- 1.4 The CRNA avoids conflicts between his or her personal integrity and the patient's rights. In situations where the CRNA's personal convictions prohibit participation in a particular procedure, the CRNA refuses to participate or withdraws from the case provided that such refusal or withdrawal does not harm the patient or constitute a breach of duty.
- 1.5 The CRNA takes appropriate action to protect patients from healthcare providers who are incompetent, impaired, or engage in unsafe, illegal, or unethical practice.
- 1.6 The CRNA maintains confidentiality of patient information except in those rare events where accepted nursing practice demands otherwise.
- 1.7 The CRNA does not knowingly engage in deception in any form.
- 1.8 The CRNA does not exploit nor abuse his or her relationship of trust and confidence with the patient or the patient's dependence on the CRNA.

2. Competence

The scope of practice engaged in by the CRNA is within the individual competence of the CRNA. Each CRNA has the responsibility to maintain competency in practice.

- 2.1 The CRNA engages in lifelong, professional educational activities.

- 2.2 The CRNA participates in continuous quality improvement activities.
- 2.3 The practicing CRNA maintains his or her state license as a registered nurse, meets state advanced practice statutory or regulatory requirements, if any, and maintains recertification as a CRNA.

3. Responsibilities as a Professional

CRNAs are responsible and accountable for the services they render and the actions they take.

- 3.1 The CRNA, as an independently licensed professional, is responsible and accountable for judgments made and actions taken in his or her professional practice. Neither physician orders nor institutional policies relieve the CRNA of responsibility for his or her judgments made or actions taken.
- 3.2 The CRNA practices in accordance with the professional practice standards established by the profession.
- 3.3 The CRNA participates in activities that contribute to the ongoing development of the profession and its body of knowledge.
- 3.4 The CRNA is responsible and accountable for his or her conduct in maintaining the dignity and integrity of the profession.
- 3.5 The CRNA collaborates and cooperates with other healthcare providers involved in a patient's care.
- 3.6 The CRNA respects the expertise and responsibility of all healthcare providers involved in providing services to patients.
- 3.7 The CRNA is responsible and accountable for his or her actions, including self-awareness and assessment of fitness for duty.

4. Responsibility to Society

CRNAs collaborate with members of the health professions and other citizens in promoting community and national efforts to meet the health needs of the public.

- 4.1 The CRNA works in collaboration with the healthcare community of interest to promote highly competent, safe, quality patient care.

5. Endorsement of Products and Services

CRNAs endorse products and services only when personally satisfied with the product's or service's safety, effectiveness, and quality. CRNAs do not state that the AANA has endorsed any product or service unless the Board of Directors of the AANA has done so.

- 5.1 Any endorsement is truthful and based on factual evidence of efficacy.
- 5.2 The CRNA does not exploit his or her professional title and credentials for products or services which are unrelated to his or her professional practice or expertise.

6. Research

CRNAs protect the integrity of the research process and the reporting and publication of findings.

- 6.1 The CRNA evaluates research findings and incorporates them into practice as appropriate.
- 6.2 The CRNA conducts research projects according to accepted ethical research and reporting standards established by law, institutional procedures, and the health professions.
- 6.3 The CRNA protects the rights and well being of people and animals that serve as subjects in research.
- 6.4 The CRNA participates in research activities to improve practice, education, and public policy relative to the health needs of diverse populations, the health workforce, the organization and administration of health systems, and healthcare delivery.

7. Business Practices

CRNAs, regardless of practice arrangements or practice settings, maintain ethical business practices in dealing with patients, colleagues, institutions, and corporations.

- 7.1 The contractual obligations of the CRNA are consistent with the professional standards of practice and the laws and regulations pertaining to nurse anesthesia practice.
- 7.2 The CRNA will not participate in deceptive or fraudulent business practices.

Adopted by the AANA Board of Directors in 1986.

Revised by the AANA Board of Directors in 1992, 1997, 2001, and 2005.