

# **Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct for the Ethiopian Translators Association (ETA)**

## **Purpose:**

This document provides detailed guidelines on **ethical behavior**, **professional standards**, and **disciplinary procedures** for members of the Ethiopian Translators Association (ETA). It ensures that all members adhere to the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and accountability in the translation and interpretation industry. To avoid misunderstandings, key terms are defined at the beginning of this document.

## **Definitions of Key Terms**

1. **Confidentiality:** The obligation to protect and not disclose any information obtained during professional work, unless authorized by the client or required by law.
2. **Accuracy:** The commitment to providing translations and interpretations that are precise, error-free, and faithful to the original meaning of the source material.
3. **Impartiality:** The duty to remain neutral and unbiased, ensuring that personal opinions, beliefs, or interests do not influence professional work.
4. **Professional Integrity:** Conducting professional activities with honesty, transparency, and adherence to ethical principles.
5. **Cultural Sensitivity:** The awareness and respect for cultural differences, ensuring that translations and interpretations are appropriate and respectful of the cultural context.
6. **Price Fixing:** An illegal agreement among competitors to set prices at a certain level, preventing fair competition.
7. **Anti-Competitive Practices:** Actions that restrict or distort competition in the market, such as monopolies, collusion, or unfair business practices.
8. **Unethical Behavior:** Actions that violate accepted moral or professional standards, such as dishonesty, fraud, or exploitation.
9. **Conflict of Interest:** A situation where a member's personal interests interfere with their professional duties, potentially compromising their impartiality or integrity.

10. **Intellectual Property Rights:** Legal rights that protect the creations of the mind, such as copyrights, trademarks, and patents.
11. **Professional Certification:** Official recognition of a member's qualifications and competence in translation or interpretation, often granted by a recognized authority or institution.
12. **Disciplinary Action:** Measures taken by the Association to address violations of the Code of Ethics, such as warnings, suspension, or expulsion.
13. **Stakeholders:** Individuals or organizations with an interest in the activities of the Association, including clients, colleagues, and the public.
14. **Continuous Professional Development (CPD):** Ongoing learning and skill development to maintain and enhance professional competence.
15. **Licensing:** Official permission granted by the FDRE Ministry of Culture and Sports to practice translation or interpretation, following the successful completion of required tests and qualifications.

## **1. Ethical Principles**

### **1.1. Confidentiality**

- Members must protect all confidential information obtained during their work. This includes written, spoken, or electronic information.
- Members must not share confidential information with unauthorized parties unless the client gives explicit permission or the law requires disclosure.
- Members must use secure methods to store and transmit sensitive information to prevent unauthorized access.

### **1.2. Accuracy**

- Members must ensure that their translations and interpretations are accurate and free from errors.
- Members must verify the correctness of their work and make corrections if errors are found.

- Members must not knowingly provide inaccurate or misleading translations or interpretations.

### **1.3. Impartiality**

- Members must remain neutral and avoid letting personal opinions, beliefs, or interests influence their work.
- Members must disclose any potential conflicts of interest to clients or the Association.
- Members must not favor one party over another in situations where impartiality is required.

### **1.4. Professional Integrity**

- Members must act with honesty and transparency in all professional activities.
- Members must not engage in deceit, misrepresentation, or fraudulent behavior.
- Members must respect intellectual property rights and avoid plagiarism or unauthorized use of copyrighted materials.

### **1.5. Cultural Sensitivity**

- Members must be aware of and respect cultural differences in their work.
- Members must avoid cultural bias, stereotypes, or offensive language in translations and interpretations.
- Members must strive to promote mutual understanding and bridge cultural gaps.

## **2. Professional Standards**

### **2.1. Qualifications and Competence**

- Members must only accept work that matches their skills, knowledge, and experience.
- Members must not misrepresent their qualifications or abilities to clients or the Association.

- Members must engage in continuous professional development to improve their skills and stay updated with industry trends.

## **2.2. Quality of Service**

- Members must provide high-quality translations and interpretations that meet client expectations.
- Members must meet agreed deadlines and inform clients promptly of any delays or issues.
- Members must use appropriate tools and technologies to enhance the quality of their work.

## **2.3. Professional Relationships**

- Members must treat clients, colleagues, and other stakeholders with respect and professionalism.
- Members must respond to client inquiries and concerns in a timely and courteous manner.
- Members must collaborate with other professionals to support the growth of the translation and interpretation sector.

## **2.4. Ethical Business Practices**

- Members must provide fair and transparent pricing for their services.
- Members must honor all contracts and agreements with clients and stakeholders.
- Members must not engage in price fixing or other anti-competitive practices.

## **2.5. Compliance with Laws and Regulations**

- Members must comply with all Ethiopian laws, regulations, and professional standards.
- Members must maintain valid licenses and certifications as required by the FDRE Ministry of Culture and Sports.
- Members must report any illegal or unethical activities to the relevant authorities.

### **3. Procedures for Handling Ethical Violations and Disputes**

#### **3.1. Filing a Complaint**

- Any member, client, or stakeholder may file a complaint against a member for violating the Code of Ethics.
- Complaints must be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee or the Disciplinary Committee.

#### **3.2. Investigation Process**

- The **Executive Committee** or **Disciplinary Committee** will investigate the complaint promptly and thoroughly.
- The accused member has the right to present evidence, call witnesses, and defend themselves during the investigation.
- The investigation will be conducted fairly, transparently, and impartially.

#### **3.3. Disciplinary Actions**

- **First Offense:** The member will receive a **written warning** and must take corrective actions (e.g., completing ethics training, correcting errors).
- **Second Offense:** The member will be **suspended** from the Association for **three to six months**.
- **Third Offense:** The member will be **expelled** from the Association, and the violation will be reported to the FDRE Ministry of Culture and Sports if it involves professional misconduct.

#### **3.4. Appeals Process**

- Members who are subject to disciplinary actions may appeal the decision to the **General Assembly** within **30 days** of receiving the decision.
- The General Assembly will review the appeal and make a final decision.

### **3.5. Reinstatement After Expulsion**

- Members who have been expelled may apply for reinstatement after **one year** by submitting a written request to the Executive Committee.
- The request must include evidence that the member has addressed the issues that led to their expulsion (e.g., payment of outstanding fees, completion of ethics training).
- Reinstatement will be subject to approval by the **General Assembly**.

## **4. Continuous Professional Development**

### **4.1. Commitment to Learning**

- Members must engage in continuous professional development to improve their skills and stay updated with industry trends and technologies.
- Members must participate in training programs, workshops, and seminars organized by the Association or other recognized institutions.

### **4.2. Certification and Accreditation**

- Members must seek professional certification and accreditation to demonstrate their competence and commitment to the profession.
- The Association will provide support and resources to help members obtain certification and accreditation.

### **4.3. Knowledge Sharing**

- Members must share their knowledge and expertise with colleagues and the broader professional community.
- Members must contribute to the development of the translation and interpretation sector by participating in research, publications, and professional forums.

## **5. Compliance with FDRE Ministry of Culture and Sports Directive**

### **5.1. Licensing Requirement**

- All members must hold a valid license from the FDRE Ministry of Culture and Sports.
- Members must provide proof of licensing during the application and renewal processes.

### **5.2. Verification of Licenses**

- The Executive Committee will verify the licenses of all members annually.
- Members who fail to provide proof of licensing will be suspended until the issue is resolved.

### **5.3. Consequences of Non-Compliance**

- Members who lose their license or fail to meet the Ministry's requirements will be terminated from the Association.
- The Association will report serious violations to the FDRE Ministry of Culture and Sports.

Approved by:

**Ethiopians Translators Association**