



PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR  
EQUINE FACILITATED WELLNESS

ASSOCIATION PROFESSIONNELLE DE  
MIEUX-ÊTRE FACILITÉ PAR LE CHEVAL

## **Pro-EFW Code of ethics**

### **1. Respect**

1.1 Members are guided by consideration for the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health of all involved.

1.2 Members serve individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, creed, gender, religion or sexual orientation.

1.3 Members ensure the respectful treatment of the equine as a sentient being, partner and co-facilitator. Members are aware of the impact of emotional work on equines and safeguard their physical, mental and emotional well-being.

1.4 Members obtain free, informed consent for all services provided, and, in the case of minors, obtain both the assent of the minors as well as the consent of their legal guardian(s).

1.5 Members respect participants' right to privacy and disclose information only with valid written

consent from participants and/or their legal guardians, in accordance with legal obligations and professional standards.

### **2. Professional Competence**

2.1 Members adhere to the highest professional standards in all aspects of their work with both equine and human participants.

2.2 Members accurately represent their level of education, experience and professional practice. Members only offer services within the scope of their expertise and competence as outlined in the EFW-CAN Scope of Practice agreement.

2.3 Members accurately represent to human participants the possible benefits, risks and outcomes of activities. Members strive to maximize benefits and minimize potential harm to both human and equine participants at all times.

2.4 Members always engage in responsible caring for human participants. Members must remain cognizant of the fact that clients are often vulnerable physically, mentally and/or emotionally and it is the duty of practitioners to ensure their safety and well-being at all times.

2.5 Members always engage in responsible caring for equine participants. Members understand that their equine partners are completely dependent upon their stewardship, and do their utmost to meet their psychological and physical needs. This includes ensuring that equines have adequate time for play, socializing, turnout, and rest, and that they are allowed to retire from this work when needed regardless of age. Additionally, members must have an in depth understanding of each equine's unique characteristics, as well as herd dynamics. Members engage with other professionals as needed to ensure equines are provided with appropriate day to day care, medical care, and any other care and support needed for their health and well-

being.

2.6 Members use the highest degree of professional judgment to determine the appropriate level of contact between humans and equines, and seek to avoid physical or psychological harm to humans and equines in all cross-species interactions.

2.7 Members strive to stop or offset any harm to human or equine participants immediately upon becoming aware of its likelihood or actual occurrence. This is to be done by terminating the activity or taking other appropriate remedial action.

2.8 Members maintain professional competency through continued education, skill development, personal growth, peer consultation, and supervision. At a minimum, members meet EFW-CAN's continuing education requirements.

2.9 Members maintain appropriate records of all equine facilitated wellness interactions and activities.

2.10 Members refer to other professionals when this is in the best interest of human or equine participants.

### **3. Integrity and Honesty**

3.1 Members aspire to the highest degree of integrity in all professional relationships. They take responsibility for their actions and would never take advantage of or otherwise exploit others for personal benefit.

3.2 Members demonstrate openness to and respect for colleagues and other professionals.

3.3 Members honour all professional and volunteer commitments.

3.4 Members negotiate and clarify the fee structure and payment policy prior to the initiation of service, and charges only for services rendered.

3.5 Members do not harass, intimidate, frighten, confuse, or otherwise act against the best interests of equine or human participants.

3.6 Members model fair and respectful interactions with all participants and are aware that both purposeful and incidental interactions communicate certain messages to human and equine participants.

3.7 Members avoid providing services to human participants with whom they have sexual relationships, either past or present. They follow relevant professional standards with regard to engaging in romantic relationships with former clients.

3.8 Members avoid dual relationships (familial, supervisory, financial, etc.) whether they are current or from the past, when these relationships may adversely affect the provision of professional services. Where a dual relationship exists, members take immediate steps to offset any harm that may occur.

3.9 Members agree to address any personal problems, substance use problems, mental health problems, psychological distress, or legal problems that may interfere with their judgment or performance. Members agree to immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action should their judgment or performance become impaired.

### **4. Responsibility**

4.1 Members commit to continuous professional development through ongoing education, consultation, and supervision.

4.2 Members agree to abide by this Code of Ethics for the protection of participants (human

and equine), the public, and the profession.

4.3 Members agree to provide training to all personnel and volunteers with regard to the content and application of the Code of Ethics, and to address any related questions or concerns.

4.4 Members agree to keep their memberships with EFW-CAN and other relevant professional organizations up to date.

4.5 Members take steps to ensure the culture and environment at the barns in which their equine partners reside are congruent with The Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Equines in Canada as developed by Equine Canada in 2014 and can be found at [http://www.nfacc.ca/codes\\_of\\_practice/equine](http://www.nfacc.ca/codes_of_practice/equine)

4.6 Members abide by all federal, provincial and municipal laws.

This Code of Ethics is intended to be used as a guide by EFW-CAN members to assist them in providing equine facilitated wellness services that reflect the highest standards of ethical practice, professionalism and integrity. This Code is intended to be used in addition to other applicable professional codes (counselling, social work, nursing, etc.). The Code of Ethics is based on **four principles** that are fundamental to the practice of equine facilitated wellness.

There are four main principles that are fundamental to Pro-EFW philosophy and approach to working with equines and humans in equine facilitated wellness (EFW) activities.

These principles emphasize the importance of treating human and equine participants with respect, dignity, honesty and integrity. They also underscore the need to ensure the safety and well-being of human and equine participants in all EFW activities.

These principles form the foundation of Pro-EFW Code of Ethics, and are explored in greater detail in our Pro-EFW PDF Information Package.

**Principle 1: Respect** for the rights and dignity of all individuals - both human and equine - and the promotion of well-being for all participants

**Principle 2: Professional Competence** and sound judgment in the service of responsible caring for human and equine participants

**Principle 3: Integrity and Honesty** in relationships with human and equine participants

**Principle 4: Responsibility** to society and the equine facilitated wellness profession