

Ethical Guidelines for ISP Assistants

Professional Standards and Code of Conduct

Purpose

These Ethical Guidelines establish the professional and ethical standards expected of ISP Assistants. Their purpose is to promote a safe, respectful, inclusive, and professionally responsible learning environment for all participants engaged in ISP training activities.

Assistants serve an important role within the training community and are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the ethical values of psychotherapy, education, and professional development.

1. Core Principles

- Respect the dignity, autonomy, rights, and welfare of all participants.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries in all interactions.
- Protect confidentiality and privacy.
- Avoid exploitation, coercion, discrimination, harassment, or abuse of power.
- Contribute to a safe and supportive learning environment.
- Recognize and appropriately manage power differentials.
- Act with honesty, integrity, fairness, and professionalism.
- Comply with applicable laws, institutional policies, and relevant professional ethical standards.

2. Confidentiality

- Treat all personal information, disclosures, case material, and experiences shared during training activities as confidential.
- Respect the privacy of all participants.
- Refrain from discussing confidential information outside the training context.
- Comply with applicable data protection and privacy regulations.
- Protect records, communications, and materials obtained through their role.

- Confidentiality may be limited where disclosure is required by law, institutional policy, safeguarding obligations, or concerns regarding serious risk of harm.

3. Respect for Human Dignity

- All participants shall be treated with fairness, respect, and dignity.
- Promote an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.
- Refrain from discrimination, harassment, bullying, intimidation, or prejudice.
- Respect diversity in culture, ethnicity, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, socioeconomic background, and clinical perspective.
- Encourage respectful dialogue across differing viewpoints.

4. Professional Boundaries

- Assistants must maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries with trainees, faculty members, and other participants.
- Avoid dual relationships that could impair objectivity or create actual or perceived conflicts of interest.
- Refrain from exploiting their role for personal, financial, romantic, sexual, social, or professional gain.
- Avoid relationships that may compromise fairness, trust, or professional judgment.
- Assistants shall not initiate, pursue, or engage in sexual or romantic relationships with any individual over whom they exercise evaluative, supervisory, instructional, mentoring, administrative, or other professional authority.
- Where a pre-existing relationship exists, the Assistant must disclose the conflict to program leadership and remove themselves from any role involving evaluation, supervision, mentoring, or influence over the individual concerned.

5. Electronic Communication and Social Media

- Maintain professional boundaries in electronic communications.
- Exercise discretion when interacting with participants through social media.

- Do not share photographs, recordings, screenshots, or identifying information from training activities without explicit permission.
- Respect the confidentiality of online learning environments.
- Communicate professionally in emails, messaging platforms, discussion groups, and social media.

6. Role Clarity and Competence

- Assistants clearly communicate the nature and limits of their role.
- Avoid representing themselves as licensed psychotherapists or mental health professionals if they are not appropriately qualified.
- Seek consultation or supervision when confronted with issues beyond their competence.
- Refer participants to qualified faculty members, supervisors, or professionals when appropriate.
- Assistants do not provide psychotherapy within the context of ISP training unless separately authorized and qualified to do so.
- Assistants shall not diagnose, assess, or provide clinical advice beyond the scope of their assigned role.

7. Psychological Safety

- Treat emotional vulnerability demonstrated during experiential exercises with sensitivity and care.
- Respect participants' rights to determine the extent of their personal disclosure.
- Avoid pressuring individuals to reveal personal information beyond their comfort level.
- Encourage participation without coercion or undue influence.

8. Respect for Physical Boundaries

- Obtain clear consent before any physical contact.
- Respect a participant's decision to decline or withdraw consent at any time.
- Never pressure participants to accept touch.
- Use touch only when appropriate within the educational context and consistent with ISP training protocols.

9. Integrity and Honesty

- Provide information that is accurate, evidence-informed, and responsibly presented.
- Acknowledge uncertainties, limitations of knowledge, and differing professional perspectives where appropriate.
- Avoid misrepresenting qualifications, experience, expertise, or authority.
- Act in ways that foster trust within the ISP training community.

10. Management of Risk and Crisis Situations

- Respond appropriately to indications of self-harm, harm to others, abuse, safeguarding concerns, or significant psychological distress. Engage lead assistants and teachers if significant signs of serious stress are prevalent.
- Seek supervision, consultation, or assistance from leading assistants and ISP teachers when necessary.
- Prioritize participant safety while respecting confidentiality requirements.

11. Responsible Use of Power

- Exercise authority fairly, respectfully, and transparently.
- Avoid intimidation, manipulation, coercion, favoritism, or misuse of authority.
- Provide feedback that is constructive, respectful, and relevant to learning objectives.
- Support participants' autonomy and professional development.

12. Exploitation and Abuse of Trust

- Assistants shall not use their position, access, influence, authority, or privileged information to pursue sexual or romantic involvement with trainees, clients, supervisees, or other individuals connected to the training program.
- Any attempt to exchange professional opportunities, evaluations, recommendations, access, influence, or favorable treatment for sexual or romantic engagement is strictly prohibited.

13. Commitment to Supervision and Self-Reflection

- Engage in continuous self-reflection regarding attitudes, biases, emotional responses, and professional conduct.
- Seek supervision and consultation when ethical concerns or role-related challenges arise.
- Remain open to feedback and professional development.
- Address personal issues that may significantly affect professional functioning.

14. Reporting Responsibilities

- Reports should be handled with respect for privacy, fairness, and due process.
- Reports should be reviewed in accordance with applicable institutional policies.
- Violations may result in corrective action, removal from Assistant responsibilities, disciplinary measures, or referral to relevant authorities.
- Assistants who become aware of serious ethical violations, harassment, abuse, discrimination, or safeguarding concerns should promptly report such concerns to designated ISP leadership.
- Individuals making reports in good faith shall not be subject to retaliation.

13. Professional Conduct

- Reliability and accountability.
- Punctuality and preparedness.
- Physical cleanliness, appropriate clothing and personal hygiene are important to embody respect, integrity and professionalism. They are non-negotiable and can lead to exclusion from the assistants position if students and other assistants are affected.
- Respectful and professional communication.
- Appropriate conduct in both in-person and online settings.
- Commitment to fostering a safe and supportive learning environment.
- Inclusive and free from discrimination.
- Respectful of differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, religion, disability, and identity.
- Supportive of open discussion without intimidation, harassment, or exclusion.

14. How to Contact Us

Should you have questions or concerns about these Ethical Guidelines for ISP Assistants, please email us at info@integralsomaticpsychology.com. You may also contact us by phone +1 (424) 256-9477. And by mail at:

Integral Somatic Psychology
PO Box 1332
Glastonbury CT 06033
USA

15. Effective Date

The Ethical Guidelines for ISP Assistants were implemented as of August 20, 2026.

16. Acknowledgment

By accepting and serving in the role of ISP Assistant, individuals acknowledge their responsibility to uphold these Ethical Guidelines and to contribute to a professional, ethical, and psychologically safe learning environment for all participants.