The NASW code of Ethics

Ethical Principles

Value: Social Justice

Ethical Principle

Social workers challenge social injustice. Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers' social change efforts are focused primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. These activities seek to promote sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers strive to ensure access to needed information, services, and resources; equality of opportunity; and meaningful participation in decision making for all people.

It's important to note there are Codes of Ethics which outline how we are to remain diligent in working with our individual clients but also the importance of understanding how to impact the community where the client resides subsequently impacting the client.

Ethical Standards

6. SOCIAL WORKERS’ ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE BROADER SOCIETY

6.01 Social Welfare

Social workers should promote the general welfare of society, from local to global levels, and the development of people, their communities, and their environments. Social workers should advocate for living conditions conducive to the fulfillment of basic human needs and should promote social, economic, political, and cultural values and institutions that are compatible with the realization of social justice.

6.02 Public Participation

Social workers should facilitate informed participation by the public in shaping social policies and institutions.

6.04 Social and Political Action (a)

Social workers should engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment, services, and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully. Social workers should be aware of the impact of the political arena on practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice.
NASW reminds us to remain vigilant to the needs of the larger community as well. As we provide individual services to our clients, we are responsible to ensure and understand how the community, systems, structures impede the individuals' client to actualize personal changes/growth. If we do not understand the systems impacting the individual, we are disserving our clients. They can complete our service plans, programming, feeling equipped to create a better life for themselves and family, only moving back into communities/programs that impede any true progress. We must be prepared to advocate for those individual clients in a macro manner.