

ETFO Code of Professional Conduct

Your Union Your Responsibility

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) is your professional and protective organization. ETFO is committed to advancing the cause of public education, promoting high professional standards, raising the professional status of ETFO members, and working for social justice.

ETFO has established specific obligations and responsibilities regarding member conduct. These obligations and responsibilities are referenced in the *ETFO Constitution*, a document that describes the fundamental principles of the organization.

Within the *ETFO Constitution* is the *Code of Professional Conduct*. This *Code* outlines your obligations within the Federation. As a member of ETFO you are expected to adhere to these obligations.

Why is the Code of Professional Conduct Important?

A Code of Professional Conduct is a framework that informs and guides your actions in relation to your colleagues, your union, and your profession.

The Federation can best accomplish its objectives when individual members adhere to the *Code of Professional Conduct*. Respecting the *Code* helps ETFO to work on your behalf to improve working conditions, to advance the profession, and to ensure a professional working environment. We all benefit from this individual responsibility within collective action.

A strong union is vital to quality education in the province.

What Happens if I Violate the Code?

As a member of a union, it is essential that you understand the importance of the *Code of Professional Conduct* and adhere to your responsibilities in order to reinforce the strength of the collective.

ETFO employs the principles of due process and natural justice in investigating alleged violations of the *Code*. Complaints must be submitted, in writing, to the General Secretary. The procedure for investigating formal complaints is outlined in Article VII of the *ETFO Constitution*.

ETFO may implement a range of sanctions for a breach of the *Code* that may include, but are not limited to:

- Letter of Concern
- publication of the member's name in a federation document
- denial of services for a specific period of time
- suspension of the right to hold office locally and provincially for a specific period of time
- monetary fines

ETFO Code of Professional Conduct (Article VI)

- 6.1 A member shall:
 - 6.1.1 recognize the Federation as the official voice of all the active members of the Federation;
 - 6.1.2 adhere to the *Constitution, Bylaws* and *Directives* of the Federation;
 - 6.1.3 support collective bargaining initiatives, including a strike authorized by the Executive;
 - 6.1.4 refrain from undertaking or supporting actions which undermine established bargaining procedures;
 - 6.1.5 honour the terms of the *Collective Agreement*;
 - 6.1.6 strive to eliminate all forms of harassment and discrimination between individuals in the educational system;
 - 6.1.7 endeavour to ensure equity and inclusiveness in the workplace; and
 - 6.1.8 strive to achieve and maintain a high degree of professionalism and to uphold the honour, dignity, and ethical standards of the teaching profession.
- 6.2 A member who is representing ETFO on the local executive and/or the Executive shall, in addition to 6.1:
 - 6.2.1 strive to achieve and maintain a high degree of professionalism and to uphold the honour, dignity and ethical standards of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario.

ETFO Disciplinary Procedures (Article VII)

- 7.1 A complaint alleging violation of the *Code of Professional Conduct* shall be submitted by a member, in writing, to the General Secretary of the Federation within 60 calendar days of the date of violation or within 60 calendar days of when a member ought reasonably to have become aware of the violation.
 - 7.1.1 For the purposes of complaints arising from job action including a strike, the 60 calendar days commence at the conclusion of the job action or strike.
- 7.2 The complaint shall state the facts, shall include evidence to support the alleged misconduct and shall indicate that a copy has been provided to the member about whom the complaint has been lodged.
- 7.3 The General Secretary or designate shall investigate the complaint and report with recommendations for further action to the Professional Relations and Discipline Committee.
 - 7.3.1 Should the General Secretary or designate, after investigation, deem that a complaint against a member is vexatious, frivolous or an abuse of process, the full-time released officers of the Federation will be informed of the complaint, the course of the investigation and the rationale for dismissal.
- 7.4 The Professional Relations and Discipline Committee shall consider complaints referred to the committee by the General Secretary and report with recommendations to the Executive.
- 7.5 The Executive shall determine the discipline to be enacted.
- 7.6 The principles of natural justice shall be followed in the disciplinary proceedings.
- 7.7 Members deemed to be in non-support during a job action may be subject to disciplinary procedures that include the possibility of a monetary fine of up to \$500 per day.
- 7.8 Members found to be in violation of *Article VI, Code of Professional Conduct*, shall be subject to a range of sanctions that may include, but is not limited to, publication of name in a Federation publication, suspension of the right to hold office in the Federation and suspension of Federation services except those required by law.

For further information contact your local ETFO president or Professional Relations staff at 416-962-3836 or 1-888-838-3836 at the provincial office.

LJL:ST:LMR:KH:LL:GW:TK:JS