

## **Council for Interior Design Qualification NCIDQ Certification Appellation Code of Ethics and Model Code of Professional Conduct**

*Approved by the CIDQ Board of Directors on August 1, 2026*

- 1. Purpose and Uses of this Document.** The Council for Interior Design Qualification (CIDQ) establishes standards for interior design and interior architecture professionals, including these *CIDQ Model Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct* that are intended to guide practitioners in carrying out their profession ethically and with integrity. NCIDQ Certificate Holders, as part of their right to use, or continue to use, the NCIDQ appellation are required to certify that they have read this *Model Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct*. In addition, state and provincial licensing boards with the authority to promulgate and enforce rules of conduct in their jurisdictions are encouraged to adopt this *Model Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct*.
- 2. Notes for NCIDQ Certificate Holders.** Individuals who have successfully completed the NCIDQ Exam and who maintain annual Active Certification Holder status with CIDQ, and as such has the right to use the appellation “NCIDQ” (“NCIDQ Certificate Holders”), must comply with all guidelines related to the use of this designation. Accordingly, NCIDQ Certificate Holders must certify, as a condition to use the NCIDQ appellation, that they have read and are aware of this *CIDQ Model Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct*. This certification of acknowledgment must be renewed annually.
- 3. Notes for Licensing Boards.** In furtherance of their duty to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public, North American state and provincial licensing boards that oversee the regulation of interior design professionals within their jurisdictions may wish to adopt this *CIDQ Model Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct*, in whole or with adaptations, under their own statutory and regulatory authority.
- 4. Drafting Conventions and Other Interpretive Notes.** In the *CIDQ Model Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct*, references to “interior designer” are intended to mean “NCIDQ Certificate Holder” when referenced by NCIDQ Certificate Holders, and “licensed,” “registered,” or “certified” interior designer when adopted by a jurisdictional licensing board. Each jurisdiction adopting the *Model Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct* should conform terminology to its applicable statute. Moreover, although these guidelines are written contemplating that state and provincial licensing boards may adopt these *CIDQ Model Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct* into regulations, state and provincial legislatures are also welcome to consider adopting these standards into law.

## **CIDQ Model Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct**

### **1. Competence and Professional Behavior**

- 1.1. An interior designer shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, or knowingly false or misleading statements in the provision of professional services.
- 1.2. In providing professional services, an interior designer's primary duty is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public within the interior designer's lawful scope of practice. In discharging that duty, an interior designer shall act with reasonable care and competence and shall apply the knowledge and skill ordinarily exercised by qualified interior designers providing similar services under similar circumstances.
- 1.3. An interior designer shall practice and undertake professional services only within their area of professional competency and statutory scope of practice.
- 1.4. An interior designer shall consult or engage appropriate professionals or advise a client or employer to engage a qualified professional with the necessary expertise when requested services fall outside the interior designer's area of professional competency or statutory scope of practice.

### **2. Conflict of Interest and Full Disclosure**

- 2.1. An interior designer shall not receive any form of compensation from anyone other than the client in connection with a project unless the nature of such compensation is fully disclosed to the client in writing prior to its receipt and accepted in writing by all parties.
- 2.2. An interior designer shall not knowingly make false, fraudulent, deceptive, or misleading representations regarding the interior designer's professional services, qualifications, education, experience, licensure, certification, or area of professional competency or the qualifications of any employee, associate, consultant, or collaborator of the interior designer.
- 2.3. An interior designer shall endeavor to have their contracts with clients clearly set forth the scope and nature of the project, the services to be performed, and all methods of compensation for those services.
- 2.4. An interior designer shall take credit only for work that has been created by that interior designer, by their firm, or under their immediate supervision, direction, and responsible control.
- 2.5. An interior designer shall disclose to an employer or client, prior to engagement, any direct or indirect financial interest they may have that could affect their impartiality in specifying project-related goods or services, and the interior designer shall not knowingly assume or accept any position in which their personal interest conflicts with their professional duty and shall withdraw upon objection to such conflict by the employer or client.
- 2.6. An interior designer shall protect the confidentiality of sensitive or privileged information obtained in the course of their professional activities and shall not disclose such information except with explicit client permission or as authorized or required by applicable law.
- 2.7. An interior designer shall act with fiscal responsibility and in the best interest of their clients, and maintain sound business relationships with professional colleagues, allied design and

construction professionals, suppliers, industry and trades, to provide service according to the highest industry standards to the public.

- 2.8. An interior designer who has direct knowledge of a condition within a built environment that the interior designer reasonably believes presents a serious risk to health, safety, or welfare shall notify the client or employer and, where required by law or reasonably necessary to prevent or mitigate the risk, the authority having jurisdiction, or other person with legal responsibility for the condition.

### **3. Compliance with Laws**

- 3.1. An interior designer shall comply with applicable federal, state, provincial, territorial, and local laws and regulations governing business practices and the practice of interior design in each jurisdiction in which they practice.
- 3.2. An interior designer shall not knowingly infringe on the intellectual property rights of others.
- 3.3. An interior designer shall not seek or attempt to obtain a contract to provide interior design services or other professional engagements for themselves or their firm through any unlawful means.
- 3.4. An interior designer shall not make any payment or offer any gift to any public official or take any other action with the intent of unduly influencing the official's judgment in conferring an existing or prospective project in which the interior designer is interested.
- 3.5. An interior designer shall not aid, assist, procure, or advise any individual to engage in improper or illegal conduct in connection with an interior design project.

### **4. Signing and Sealing Documents**

- 4.1. An interior designer shall sign and seal drawings, specifications, or other interior design documentation only where they or their firm have prepared, supervised, or professionally reviewed and approved such documents under the interior designer's responsible control as allowed by law.
- 4.2. An interior designer exercising responsible control over the work of another shall endeavor to ensure that such individual practices only within their area of professional competency and statutory scope of practice, as determined by such individual's certification status, education, training, continuing education, and experience.

### **5. Further Obligations to the Profession and the Public**

- 5.1. An interior designer shall provide information regarding an interior design licensure candidate's qualifications for NCIDQ Certification, professional organizational membership, or licensure to the Board and/or the Council for Interior Design Qualification in a timely and accurate manner.
- 5.2. An interior designer shall report direct knowledge of violations of a jurisdiction's laws or rules governing the practice of interior design to the appropriate authorities.
- 5.3. An interior designer shall not endorse the NCIDQ application, professional organizational membership, or application for licensure of an individual known to be unqualified with respect to education, experience, examination or character, and shall not knowingly misrepresent the professional expertise or moral character of any individual.