**Health Information Management**

**Student Handbook**



**FOREWORD**

The goal of the Health Information Management (HIM) Program at Collin College is to graduate competent health information management professionals for the healthcare workforce. The program follows the guidelines set forth by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM), the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), Collin College mission, and the Advisory Committee for the Health Information Management Program.

All students are treated with respect and dignity. Collin College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability or veteran status.

This handbook outlines many issues that are of interest to students enrolled in this program. The HIM program is a 60 credit hour program of online and professional practice experience instruction. Students who successfully complete all requirements are awarded the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Health Information Management degree and are eligible to take the Registered Health Information Technology (RHIT) national credentialing exam given by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA).

Please note that to be eligible for an AAS-HIM degree, a student must complete the requirements set forth by the college catalog. Please consult the college catalog for complete degree requirements.

This handbook is intended to serve only as a general guideline for the program. More specific policies may be found in several sources including the Collin College Catalog and the Collin College Student Handbook. In the absence of specific practices and procedures, the program director and/or college administration will decide various issues based on, but not limited to, the following guidelines:

a. Preservation of academic standards.

b. The present and future integrity of the program.

c. The ability of the program to carry out its goals and objectives.

The program may, at any time, enact new practices or procedures deemed necessary to maintain the above guidelines. Therefore, the information in this handbook is subject to change without prior written notice.

**Collin Mission Statement**

Collin County Community College District is a student and community-centered institution committed to developing skills, strengthening character, and challenging the intellect.

**Philosophy and Purpose Statement**

Through its campuses, centers and programs Collin County Community College District fulfills its statutory charge to provide:

* Academic courses in the arts and sciences to transfer to senior institutions.
* Technical programs, leading to associate degrees or certificates, designed to develop marketable skills and promote economic development.
* Continuing adult education programs for academic, professional, occupational and cultural enhancement.
* Developmental education and literacy programs designed to improve the basic skills of students.
* A program of student development services and learning resources designed to assist individuals in achieving their educational and career goals.
* Workforce, economic, and community development initiatives designed to meet local and statewide needs.
* Other purposes as may be directed by the Collin Board of Trustees and/or the laws of the State of Texas.

**Collin Core Values**

We have a passion for:

* Learning
* Service and Involvement
* Creativity and Innovation
* Academic Excellence
* Dignity and Respect
* Integrity

**ACCREDITATION**

# The HIM (associate degree) program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).

Students can apply for student membership with AHIMA using the Educational Program Code of 725.

**Associate HIM Curriculum Competencies – Domains and Subdomains**

1. Data Content Structure and Standards
   1. Classification Systems
   2. Health Record Content and Documentation
   3. Data Governance
   4. Data Management
   5. Secondary Data Sources
2. Information Protection: Access Disclosure Archival Privacy and Security
   1. Health Law
   2. Data Privacy Confidentiality and Security
   3. Release of Information
3. Informatics, Analytics and Data Use
   1. Health Information Technologies
   2. Information Management Strategic Planning
   3. Analytics and Decision Support
   4. Health Care Statistics
   5. Research Methods
   6. Consumer Informatics
   7. Health Information Exchange
   8. Information Integrity and Data Quality
4. Revenue Management
   1. Revenue Cycle and Reimbursement
5. Compliance
   1. Regulatory
   2. Coding
   3. Fraud Surveillance
   4. Clinical Documentation Improvement
6. Leadership
   1. Leadership Roles
   2. Change Management
   3. Work Design and Process Improvement
   4. Human Resources Management
   5. Training and Development
   6. Strategic and Organizational Management
   7. Financial Management
   8. Ethics
   9. Project Management
   10. Vendor/Contract Management
   11. Enterprise Information Management

#### The curriculum for accredited programs can be found at:

<http://www.ahimafoundation.org/downloads/pdfs/2014%20Final%20Associate_Level_Curriculum_Map.pdf>

#### GENERAL GUIDELINES

To facilitate the development and mastery of skills required of a Registered Health Information Technician, the following guidelines are mandated for all students enrolled:

##### Program Eligibility

Students should take the 3 pre-requisite classes BIOL 2404, HITT 1305, HITT 2471, and complete the TSI Math/English Assessment (unless otherwise exempt) through Academic Advising for placement in the appropriate level of Math and English courses. Students will need to be at the College Algebra level to take HITT 2443 and complete ENGL 1301 for program completion.

Once pre-requisites are complete, or you are finishing your last semester of pre-requisites (BIOL 2404, HITT 1305, and HITT 2471), students should complete an application. The application contains a number of forms including; photo release, Success in HIM, and Functional Abilities and Core Performance. Students will also be interviewed by HIM faculty/staff prior to admission into the program. Due to placement limitations at professional practice experience sites, the program is capped at 25 students a semester. You will be notified, via cougarmail, of your status in the program once the application process is complete.

If students are under current discipline action by the college, they are not eligible for admission into the program.

Students who have a history of disciplinary action, not currently active, are eligible to apply to the program provided they agree to conditional acceptance, in writing.

1. ***Program Progression***

Students’ progress through the AAS HIM curriculum should be in accordance with the Collin College catalog. A student should plan on accomplishing at least 18 hours in an academic year until program completion. Any student who is unable to complete the semester due to a temporary disability or condition may rejoin the program the next semester. A grade of F or W may be applied, depending on the circumstance.

If a student, for various reasons, does not satisfy the 18 hours per academic year criteria they will be categorized as “inadequately progressing”. In order to move into active status, a student **MUST** meet with the Director to re-formulate a succession plan to graduation. This may include taking courses again depending on circumstances.

Students must maintain a GPA of 2.5 or better. Any student who falls below that number will not receive a permit for PPE placement or the RHIT Competency review class.

The scheduled times for academic classes are listed in the college class schedule. All courses for the degree are offered in an online format. The Professional Practice Education component requires the student to participate at a healthcare facility. Student participation based on instructor syllabus and web course guidelines are mandatory. The program adheres to an online Code of Conduct and students are required to follow those policies.

1. ***Program Expectations***

Students are committed to timely completion of the program, once admitted (no more than 3 years). Students conduct themselves in a professional manner, regardless of setting. Students will sit for the RHIT exam or continue their education.

##### Attendance and Tardiness

Professionalism requires accountability and responsibility in on-site and online courses, as well as professional practice experience attendance. In order to meet professional practice experience objectives, absences are discouraged. See individual instructor syllabus for specific criteria.

###### *Student Employment*

Off campus employment is the student’s responsibility. Students in the HIM Program are frequently offered opportunities for employment in local healthcare facilities. Students should consider all commitments before agreeing to employment.

###### *Professional Organizations*

Membership in the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) is not required but highly recommended. Please visit www.ahima.org for more details. The EPC is 725.

###### *Transfer Credit*

Any student, who may have completed health information coursework at another accredited institution, may be able to obtain transfer credit. Students wishing to apply for consideration of prior coursework should contact the Program Director.

###### *Grades*

The final grade for HIM classes will be determined by the method shown on the syllabus. The final grade for professional practice experience practice will be determined by the method shown on the professional practice experience packet for the course.

The grading scale for all Health Information Management Program courses is as follows:

* + 1. 100 - 90 A
    2. 89 - 80 B
    3. 79 - 75 C\*
    4. 74-60 D
    5. Below 60 F

*\*The minimum competency level in all HIM courses is a grade of a C. Students scoring a grade of “D” or “F” in any HIM course may not progress to the next course(s) until that course is repeated, and passed with a minimum grade of C.*

1. ***Grade Reporting***

The Program will adhere to FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) and college guidelines when reporting grades.

Grades will be disclosed only to the student.

No electronic notification will be provided

###### *Academic Honesty*

See Collin College Handbook Section 7-2.2 for scholastic dishonesty information.

## *Code of Conduct*

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Below are a few guidelines that apply to the Health Information Management program:

***Teamwork***

Being part of a team means performing alongside persons of varying ethnic backgrounds, national origin, political and religious beliefs, as well as other differences. By communicating effectively, and working together smoothly, the group carries out its goals successfully. Many studies show that collaborative efforts improve outcomes, and therefore teamwork is often superior to individual efforts.

The cooperative and collaborative group is one that we will model in health information courses. **“Team First”** is our goal in order to foster a learning environment of excellence. Here are some dos and don’ts regarding teamwork in the program:

***Do:***  Put the needs of the group first.

***Don’t:*** Ask for special considerations.

***Do:***  Speak to fellow students in a respectful manner.

***Don’t:*** Bring personal feelings about other students to the academic setting.

***Do:*** Tell someone appropriately if you think the group is being negatively impacted by their behavior.

***Don’t:*** Criticize an individual.

***Do:*** Help fellow students struggling to understand a difficult concept.

***Don’t:*** Add extraneous information that confuses the topic.

***Do:*** Stop and ask relevant questions-- if you don’t understand, chances are others are wondering the same thing!

***Don’t:*** Waste group time on off topic questions or issues that involve only you.

1. ***Chain of Command***

Students in the program will follow the chain of command for grievances. ***Failure to respect the chain of command is considered unprofessional behavior.***

The chain of command is as follows:

* 1. Take a complaint to the instructor first. ***It is unprofessional to discuss issues or problems with those that are not directly involved.***
  2. The instructor will follow-up and give you a report.
  3. If the grievance remains unresolved, take the issue to the Program Director. After a period of investigation the appropriate person will report to you on the issue.
  4. If the situation remains unresolved, contact the Dean of Health Sciences.
  5. In the event that an individual is believed to have violated the code of conduct, that individual is subject to disciplinary action. The individual may be asked to participate in specific training geared toward helping the individual deal with difficult or challenging situations more appropriately. Repeated incidences may result in written advising, and/or (depending upon the seriousness of the problems) dismissal from the program.

**Professional Practice Experience (PPE)**

The Health Information Management student will receive instruction in the fundamentals of areas involved in health information management. To complement academic training, the student will rotate through an area healthcare facility for a total of 96 hours (HITT 1160 - 16 hours and HITT 2361 - 80 hours). This will help the student with his/her skills previously learned in the classroom/lab and is an unpaid professional practice experience rotation. The Director of the HIM Program or Professional Practice Experience Site Coordinator will make every effort to place the students at a facility near their home or work. If you are currently working at a healthcare facility, you will be placed in an alternate site. Only students that have satisfactory standing in all course work will be eligible to begin professional practice experience training.

### Professional Practice Experience Objectives (General)

1. To introduce the student to the healthcare environment and to familiarize him/her with the Health Information Management function.

2. To allow the student to develop rapport with members of the healthcare team.

3. To develop the student’s knowledge of medical ethics.

4. To develop psychomotor skills necessary to perform tasks effectively and efficiently.

5. To learn procedures and techniques used in the administration of health information.

6. To understand professional behaviors necessary to succeed in the workplace.

### Responsibilities of the PPE Facility

*Collin College has current affiliation agreements with all the professional practice experience facilities where our students conduct professional practice experience rotations. The professional practice experience affiliation agreement is the legally binding document that sets the guidelines for both the college and the facility. The following is merely a reflection of the agreement for clarification purposes and does not supersede the agreement:*

1. The Facility will permit students of Collin College to practice under the supervision of College faculty or designated individuals in the department. The individual faculty member will be responsible to the liaison person designated by the Facility for health information management student activities.

2. The period of assignments shall be during regular Collin College academic sessions.

3. Collin College will provide the Facility with the names of students who are entitled to use the resources of the Facility under the terms of their agreement.

4. The student agrees to abide by rules, regulations, and policies set forth by the professional practice experience site’s HIM department. The student is to respect the authority of the supervisor and chain of command while functioning in the professional practice experience facility. In the event professional practice experience affiliate policies or procedures seem to conflict with college policy, please notify the Program Director of the college immediately.

5. The Facility further agrees:

a. To maintain the criteria for accreditation as established by the Joint Commission for Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations or other appropriate accrediting agencies.

b. To provide Collin College the necessary space or facilities for conference and classroom areas for student teaching, as available.

c. To allow students and faculty members of Collin College to utilize the Facility’s eating facilities at the student and faculty’s personal expense (in some instances at a reduced rate consistent with employees).

1. ***Dress Code for PPE***

In keeping with the professional atmosphere of the healthcare institution, the student will adhere to the PPE Site dress code:

1. The name badge or ID, purchased from student activities, must be worn to PPE sites.

2. Any nametag supplied by the PPE affiliate must be worn according to that affiliate’s policy.

3. Clean and professional attire during all PPE hours. Most PPE sites require business casual attire.

If **ANY** of the policies listed above are not adhered to, the student will receive **ONE WARNING ONLY.** The next time, he/she will be sent home and counted absent from PPE. A student determined to be in violation of the dress code by a PPE preceptor or faculty member may be sent home from PPE assignment. The Collin College HIM faculty must be notified of any violation in the dress code. If a student is sent home, the time will be recorded as unexcused.

###### *II. Liability Insurance*

All students must carry malpractice liability insurance while enrolled in HITT 1160 and HITT 2361. It is assessed as a fee when you register for the class.

###### *III. Health Insurance*

Collin County Community College District does not make personal health insurance coverage available to its students; therefore, it is the student’s responsibility to provide for his/her own health needs. The college and the PPE affiliates (per our agreement with the facilities), have no responsibility for the student’s health care. Any personal, health related expenses incurred during the course of professional practice experience training are the responsibility of the student.

Students are required to have health insurance coverage while in PPE and will be asked to provide proof of personal medical coverage before starting PPE assignment.

***IV. Immunizations***

State law and Collin College Health Information Management Program require the following immunizations prior to assignment in PPE:

* Mumps, Measles, Rubella (two shot series) or titer showing immunity.
* Varicella (two shot series), or titer showing immunity.
* Tetanus/Diphtheria (within past ten years).
* Influenza (one dose seasonally as stated by the DFW Hospital Council).
* Hepatitis B series.***Please note that it may take 6 months to complete the series*.** The student will not be allowed to attend professional practice experiences until documentation of Hepatitis B is provided.
* All students must have a TB skin test annually. The results of these tests must be submitted to the Program Director to be eligible to enroll in HITT1160 and HITT 2361. The cost of these tests/immunizations is the student’s responsibility.
* Other vaccinations may be required of certain individuals, particularly those with health concerns. Please refer to the Texas Department of Health’s website <http://www.tdh.texas.gov/immunize/vischart.htm>

## *V. Drug Testing*

Hospitals, in conjunction with The Joint Commission (an organization that accredits hospitals) require pre-employment drug testing. Collin College Health Information Management program requires students to be drug screened prior to entering PPE. No student will be admitted to PPE that has either a positive test, fails to take the test, or has taken the test at some place or time other than prescribed by the program. Previous drug screens are unacceptable. Random drug screens may be done during the PPE. Students may also be required to retest following any PPE incident or infraction of PPE affiliate policies or regulations. Students are responsible for the cost of the drug screen test (approximately $30).

Students must submit to a drug screening on the date notified by the Program Director. The program may only give 24 hours’ notice to complete any drug screen. Failure to complete the drug test on the assigned date may be considered equivalent to a positive test.

A positive test means the student tested positive for THC, Cocaine, or other illicit substance. In the case of a positive test, the Medical Review Officer (MRO) of the participating lab may contact the student for information related to current and valid prescription drug use. The MRO will verify valid and current prescriptions with the student’s attending physician. In the case of a positive test, students may request a retest. Please note that hair analysis may be used for the retest and at the financial responsibility of the student.

## *VI. Background Check*

Students must submit to a criminal background check. Any criminal records are a matter of public record and are subject to disclosure to all facilities where students participate in professional practice experience. It will be the burden of the PPE site to reject or accept a student based on the information in the background check.

***VII. Badges***

As stated in the section on Dress Code, the ID badge identifying the student as a Collin College Health Information Management student must be visible at all times when in professional practice experience. In hospitals that require a badge for the facility, the student must wear the college identification badge as well as the badge hospital policy requires.

Students must return professional practice experience affiliate ID badges to the Program Director upon completion of the experience, or if terminating the program for any reason. Lost badges must be immediately reported to the Program Director.

##### VIII. Endorsements

The naming of specific product, procedure, or item of equipment does not constitute an endorsement of the same by Collin College.

##### IX. Parking at Professional Practice Experience Sites

Students are strongly encouraged to utilize parking facilities provided by hospital. Failure to follow the guidelines may result in the student’s vehicle being towed.

##### X. Professional Practice Experience Attendance

Attendance at PPE sites is an essential component of the student’s education. The student must be in his/her assigned area of assignment and prepared for instruction at the scheduled time for that experience. If a student is unable to be present at professional practice, it is his/her responsibility to report the absence to the instructor prior to the scheduled time for the rotation. **All absences must be reported to the designated site coordinator. If this does not occur, there will be a five (5) percent deduction from the final grade in the PPE course.**

Lastly, if the student is unable to complete his/her professional practice experience objectives, a failing grade will be given for the course.

##### Professional Practice Experience Evaluation

A PPE Evaluation Form will be used by your site coordinator to set up and monitor your professional practice experience. You will meet with your site coordinator in the first week to discuss performance objectives. It is important for you to demonstrate satisfactory performance on the program exit competencies. An additional aspect of the professional practice experience is the Student Portfolio. Materials added to your portfolio during professional practice should demonstrate your accomplishments to the program and future employers.

##### PPE Incidents

Violations occurring during PPE will be recorded on the Professional Practice Experience Incident Form. A copy of this form is included in this handbook.

**PPE Incident**

I. Any student committing any of the following offenses will be subject to immediate removal from the program (not necessarily Collin College).

a. A deliberate action, which has or has the potential to cause serious physical or emotional harm to patients or personnel.

b. Coming to the PPE sites under the influence of any non-prescribed drug that adversely affects the student’s performance during the professional practice experience rotation or bringing said drugs into the hospital or consuming drugs on hospital property.

c. A verbal or physical act of aggression against another person on hospital premises.

d. Theft of hospital, patient, student, or visitor property.

e. Deliberate destruction or damage to hospital, patient, student, or visitor property.

f. Deliberate falsification of hospital records either by omission or addition.

g. Any HIPAA violation at the PPE site.

II. The student committing any of the offenses listed will be subject to the following disciplinary actions: **First incident:** probation (probationary status will continue for the duration of the student’s enrollment in the program), **Second incident:** dismissal from the Program (not necessarily Collin College).

* + - 1. Causing damage to hospital, patient, student, or visitor property through negligence.
      2. Causing injury or potential harm to patient through negligence.
      3. Insubordination or refusal to obey an order from a superior or supervisor. There are two exceptions to insubordination.
         1. The student is not qualified to perform the task.
         2. When proper supervision is lacking.

III. A student committing the offenses listed below will be subject to the following disciplinary actions: **First incident:** verbal warning**, Second incident:** written reprimand**, Third incident:** dismissal from the Program (not necessarily Collin College).

a. Failure to follow published departmental rules or policies.

b. Failure to follow published program rules and policies.

NOTE: During professional experiences, it is important that serious incidents be documented at the College. A Professional practice experience Incident Form is included in this student handbook and must be completed and submitted to the Program Director within 24 hours of occurrence.

#### APPEAL PROCEDURE

The student may appeal PPE Incident action to the Program Director. If the student is not satisfied with the decision, he/she may initiate the Collin College Grievance Policy through the office of the Dean of Health Sciences. A copy of this policy can be found in the Collin College student handbook.

REVISED September 2014

**PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCE INCIDENT FORM**

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**Student Name** **CWID**

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**Date of Incident** **PPE Site**

# Description of Events:

*(Use additional sheet(s) if necessary)*

# Student Response:

*(Use additional sheet(s) if necessary)*

**Category of Incident:** \_\_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_\_ II \_\_\_\_\_\_ III

***This section for college use only.***

Incident appealed: \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date of Appeal

If yes, attach results of appeal and the action taken by the college to this sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature** **Date**

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**Preceptor/PPE Instructor Signature** **Date**

REVISED September 2014

HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

COLLIN COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Declaration Page

**I have reviewed this handbook and understand all the practices included within. I agree to abide by these practices while enrolled as a student in the Health Information Management Program at Collin College (CCCCD). I also agree to abide by procedures outlined in the Collin College (CCCCD) Student Handbook, as applicable to all Collin College (CCCCD) students. I authorize the release of my driver’s license and social security number to hospitals as is required to issue a badge for the facility.**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**CWID**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Student Signature Date**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Student Name (Printed)

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Program Director Date**

**This page must be returned to the Program Director upon declaration of the student as a major in Health Information Management.**

REVISED September 2014



**AHIMA Code of Ethics**

**The Code of Ethics and How to Interpret the Code of Ethics**

**Principles and Guidelines**

The following ethical principles are based on the core values of the American Health Information Management Association and apply to all AHIMA members and certificants.  Guidelines included for each ethical principle are a non-inclusive list of behaviors and situations that can help to clarify the principle. They are not meant to be a comprehensive list of all situations that can occur.

1. ***Advocate, uphold, and defend the individual's right to privacy and the doctrine of confidentiality in the use and disclosure of information.***

A health information management professional **shall**:

1.1. Safeguard all confidential patient information to include, but not limited to, personal, health, financial, genetic, and outcome information.

1.2. Engage in social and political action that supports the protection of privacy and confidentiality, and be aware of the impact of the political arena on the health information issues for the healthcare industry.

1.3. Advocate for changes in policy and legislation to ensure protection of privacy and confidentiality, compliance, and other issues that surface as advocacy issues and facilitate informed participation by the public on these issues.

1.4. Protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service. Disclose only information that is directly relevant or necessary to achieve the purpose of disclosure. Release information only with valid authorization from a patient or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of a patient or as authorized by federal or state regulations. The minimum necessary standard is essential when releasing health information for disclosure activities.

1.5. Promote the obligation to respect privacy by respecting confidential information shared among colleagues, while responding to requests from the legal profession, the media, or other non-healthcare related individuals, during presentations or teaching and in situations that could cause harm to persons.

1.6. Respond promptly and appropriately to patient requests to exercise their privacy rights (e.g., access, amendments, restriction, confidential communication, etc.). Answer truthfully all patients’ questions concerning their rights to review and annotate their personal biomedical data and seek to facilitate patients’ legitimate right to exercise those rights.

1. ***Put service and the health and welfare of persons before self-interest and conduct oneself in the practice of the profession so as to bring honor to oneself, peers, and to the health information management profession.***

A health information management professional **shall**:

2.1. Act with integrity, behave in a trustworthy manner, elevate service to others above self-interest, and promote high standards of practice in every setting.

2.2. Be aware of the profession's mission, values, and ethical principles, and practice in a manner consistent with them by acting honestly and responsibly.

2.3. Anticipate, clarify, and avoid any conflict of interest, to all parties concerned, when dealing with consumers, consulting with competitors, in providing services requiring potentially conflicting roles (for example, finding out information about one facility that would help a competitor), or serving the Association in a volunteer capacity. The conflicting roles or responsibilities must be clarified and appropriate action taken to minimize any conflict of interest.

2.4. Ensure that the working environment is consistent and encourages compliance with the AHIMA Code of Ethics, taking reasonable steps to eliminate any conditions in their organizations that violate, interfere with, or discourage compliance with the code.

2.5. Take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they actually perform or to which they contribute. Honestly acknowledge the work of and the contributions made by others verbally or written, such as in publication.

A health information management professional **shall** **not**:

2.6. Permit one’s private conduct to interfere with the ability to fulfill one’s professional responsibilities.

2.7. Take unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploit others to further one’s own personal, religious, political, or business interests.

1. ***Preserve, protect, and secure personal health information in any form or medium and hold in the highest regards health information and other information of a confidential nature obtained in an official capacity, taking into account the applicable statutes and regulations.***

A health information management professional **shall**:

3.1. Safeguard the privacy and security of written and electronic health information and other sensitive information. Take reasonable steps to ensure that health information is stored securely and that patients' data is not available to others who are not authorized to have access. Prevent inappropriate disclosure of individually identifiable information.

3.2. Take precautions to ensure and maintain the confidentiality of information transmitted, transferred, or disposed of in the event of termination, incapacitation, or death of a healthcare provider to other parties through the use of any media.

3.3. Inform recipients of the limitations and risks associated with providing services via electronic or social media (e.g., computer, telephone, fax, radio, and television).

1. ***Refuse to participate in or conceal unethical practices or procedures and report such practices.***

A health information management professional **shall:**

4.1. Act in a professional and ethical manner at all times.

4.2. Take adequate measures to discourage, prevent, expose, and correct the unethical conduct of colleagues.  If needed, utilize the [Professional Ethics Committee Policies and Procedures](http://www.ahima.org/downloads/pdfs/about/371PECPolicyProcedureFinal_093010.pdf) for potential ethics complaints.

4.3. Be knowledgeable about established policies and procedures for handling concerns about colleagues' unethical behavior. These include policies and procedures created by AHIMA, licensing and regulatory bodies, employers, supervisors, agencies, and other professional organizations.

4.4. Seek resolution if there is a belief that a colleague has acted unethically or if there is a belief of incompetence or impairment by discussing one’s concerns with the colleague when feasible and when such discussion is likely to be productive.

4.5. Consult with a colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action when there is direct knowledge of a health information management colleague's incompetence or impairment.

4.6. Take action through appropriate formal channels, such as contacting an accreditation or regulatory body and/or the AHIMA Professional Ethics Committee if needed.

4.7. Cooperate with lawful authorities as appropriate.

A health information management professional **shall not**:

4.8. Participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud and abuse, or deception. A non-inclusive list of examples includes:

* + - Allowing patterns of optimizing or minimizing documentation and/or coding to impact payment
    - Assigning codes without physician documentation
    - Coding when documentation does not justify the diagnoses or procedures that have been billed
    - Coding an inappropriate level of service
    - Miscoding to avoid conflict with others
    - Engaging in negligent coding practices
    - Hiding or ignoring review outcomes, such as performance data
    - Failing to report licensure status for a physician through the appropriate channels
    - Recording inaccurate data for accreditation purposes
    - Allowing inappropriate access to genetic, adoption, health, or behavioral health information
    - Misusing sensitive information about a competitor
    - Violating the privacy of individuals

Refer to the [AHIMA Standards for Ethical Coding](http://www.ahima.org/about/ethicsstandards.aspx) for additional guidance.

4.9. Engage in any relationships with a patient where there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the patient.

1. ***Advance health information management knowledge and practice through continuing education, research, publications, and presentations***.

A health information management professional **shall**:

5.1. Develop and enhance continually professional expertise, knowledge, and skills (including appropriate education, research, training, consultation, and supervision). Contribute to the knowledge base of health information management and share one’s knowledge related to practice, research, and ethics.

5.2. Base practice decisions on recognized knowledge, including empirically based knowledge relevant to health information management and health information management ethics.

5.3. Contribute time and professional expertise to activities that promote respect for the value, integrity, and competence of the health information management profession. These activities may include teaching, research, consultation, service, legislative testimony, advocacy, presentations in the community, and participation in professional organizations.

5.4. Engage in evaluation and research that ensures the confidentiality of participants and of the data obtained from them by following guidelines developed for the participants in consultation with appropriate institutional review boards.

5.5. Report evaluation and research findings accurately and take steps to correct any errors later found in published data using standard publication methods.

5.6. Design or conduct evaluation or research that is in conformance with applicable federal or state laws.

5.7. Take reasonable steps to provide or arrange for continuing education and staff development, addressing current knowledge and emerging developments related to health information management practice and ethics.

1. ***Recruit and mentor students, staff, peers, and colleagues to develop and strengthen professional workforce.***

A health information management professional **shall**:

6.1. Provide directed practice opportunities for students.

6.2. Be a mentor for students, peers, and new health information management professionals to develop and strengthen skills.

6.3. Be responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries for students, staff, peers, colleagues, and members within professional organizations.

6.4. Evaluate students' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful when functioning as educators or professional practice experience internship supervisors.

6.5. Evaluate staff's performance in a manner that is fair and respectful when functioning in a supervisory capacity.

6.6. Serve an active role in developing HIM faculty or actively recruiting HIM professionals.

A health information management professional **shall not**:

6.7. Engage in any relationships with a person (e.g. students, staff, peers, or colleagues) where there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to that other person.

1. ***Represent the profession to the public in a positive manner.***

A health information management professional **shall:**

7.1. Be an advocate for the profession in all settings and participate in activities that promote and explain the mission, values, and principles of the profession to the public.

1. ***Perform honorably health information management association responsibilities, either appointed or elected, and preserve the confidentiality of any privileged information made known in any official capacity.***

A health information management professional **shall**:

8.1. Perform responsibly all duties as assigned by the professional association operating within the bylaws and policies and procedures of the association and any pertinent laws.

8.2. Uphold the decisions made by the association.

8.3. Speak on behalf of the health information management profession and association, only while serving in the role, accurately representing the official and authorized positions of the association.

8.4. Disclose any real or perceived conflicts of interest.

8.5. Relinquish association information upon ending appointed or elected responsibilities.

8.6. Resign from an association position if unable to perform the assigned responsibilities with competence.

8.7. Avoid lending the prestige of the association to advance or appear to advance the private interests of others by endorsing any product or service in return for remuneration. Avoid endorsing products or services of a third party, for-profit entity that competes with AHIMA products and services.  Care should **also**be exercised in endorsing any other products and services.

1. ***State truthfully and accurately one’s credentials, professional education, and experiences.***

A health information management professional **shall**:

9.1. Make clear distinctions between statements made and actions engaged in as a private individual and as a representative of the health information management profession, a professional health information association, or one’s employer.

9.2. Claim and ensure that representation to patients, agencies, and the public of professional qualifications, credentials, education, competence, affiliations, services provided, training, certification, consultation received, supervised experience, and other relevant professional experience are accurate.

9.3. Claim only those relevant professional credentials actually possessed and correct any inaccuracies occurring regarding credentials.

9.4. Report only those continuing education units actually earned for the recertification cycle and correct any inaccuracies occurring regarding CEUs.

1. ***Facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration in situations supporting health information practice.***

A health information management professional **shall**:

10.1. Participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the well-being of patients by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of those involved in decisions related to patients.

10.2. Facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration in situations supporting health information practice**.**

10.3. Establish clearly professional and ethical obligations of the interdisciplinary team as a whole and of its individual members.

10.4. Foster trust among group members and adjust behavior in order to establish relationships with teams.

1. ***Respect the inherent dignity and worth of every person.***

A health information management professional **shall**:

11.1. Treat each person in a respectful fashion, being mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity.

11.2. Promote the value of self-determination for each individual.

11.3. Value all kinds and classes of people equitably, deal effectively with all races, cultures, disabilities, ages and genders.

11.4. Ensure all voices are listened to and respected.

A health information management professional shall:

1. ***Advocate, uphold, and defend the individual's right to privacy and the doctrine of confidentiality in the use and disclosure of information.***
2. ***Put service and the health and welfare of persons before self-interest and conduct oneself in the practice of the profession so as to bring honor to oneself, their peers, and to the health information management profession.***
3. ***Preserve, protect, and secure personal health information in any form or medium and hold in the highest regards health information and other information of a confidential nature obtained in an official capacity, taking into account the applicable statutes and regulations.***
4. ***Refuse to participate in or conceal unethical practices or procedures and report such practices.***
5. ***Advance health information management knowledge and practice through continuing education, research, publications, and presentations.***
6. ***Recruit and mentor students, peers and colleagues to develop and strengthen professional workforce.***
7. ***Represent the profession to the public in a positive manner.***
8. ***Perform honorably health information management association responsibilities, either appointed or elected, and preserve the confidentiality of any privileged information made known in any official capacity.***
9. ***State truthfully and accurately one’s credentials, professional education, and experiences.***
10. ***Facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration in situations supporting health information practice.***
11. ***Respect the inherent dignity and worth of every person.***