ICPHAA

Irish Counselling, Psychotherapy & Allied Healthcare Professionals Association

GOVERNANCE OF THE ASSOCIATION

Organisational Integrity

The standards of honesty, accountability and fairness that ICPHAA applies to its own conduct, including conflicts of interest, the treatment of staff and volunteers, equality and inclusion, and speaking up about wrongdoing.

REFERENCE	ICPHAA-POL-29	VERSION	1.0
EFFECTIVE	9 November 2026	NEXT REVIEW	9 November 2027
POLICY OWNER	ICPHAA Board of Directors		

GOVERNANCE OF THE ASSOCIATION · ICPHAA-POL-29

Organisational Integrity

APPLIES TO	The ICPHAA Board of Directors, committee and panel members, staff, volunteers and anyone acting on the Association's behalf; members in their dealings with the Association.
VERSION	1.0 · effective 9 November 2026 · next review 9 November 2027
POLICY OWNER	ICPHAA Board of Directors
CONTACT	ICPHAA Registry · admin@icphaa.ie

AT A GLANCE

- ICPHAA holds itself to the same ethical standards it asks of its members.
- Accountability runs through every level: Board to members, staff and volunteers to the Board, members through the Code.
- Conflicts of interest are declared and managed openly; gifts and hospitality are recorded.
- Staff and volunteers are treated fairly and lawfully, with dignity at work and no tolerance of bullying or harassment.
- Anyone can raise concerns about wrongdoing safely, consistent with the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 (as amended).

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1. Purpose

An association that sets ethical standards for others must meet them itself. This policy sets out the standards of integrity that the Irish Counselling, Psychotherapy & Allied Healthcare Professionals Association (ICPHAA) applies to its own conduct as an organisation. It covers accountability, conflicts of interest, gifts and hospitality, the treatment of the people who work and volunteer for the Association, equality, diversity and inclusion, and how concerns about wrongdoing can be raised safely.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the ICPHAA Board of Directors; members of any committee or panel; staff, whether employed or engaged on contract; volunteers; and anyone else acting on the Association's behalf. It also applies to members in their dealings with the Association, for example when serving on a panel or representing ICPHAA at an event. Members' professional conduct towards clients is governed by the ICPHAA Code of Conduct for Members.

3. Principles of organisational integrity

- **Honesty.** ICPHAA tells the truth about itself, its standards and its status, and corrects mistakes openly.
- **Accountability.** Everyone who acts for ICPHAA is answerable for their decisions and actions.
- **Fairness.** ICPHAA treats members, applicants, staff, volunteers and the public fairly and consistently.
- **Openness.** ICPHAA explains its decisions and publishes information about how it works, subject only to confidentiality and data protection.
- **Stewardship.** ICPHAA uses its resources, which come largely from members, carefully and only for its purposes.
- **Respect.** ICPHAA treats everyone with dignity, including in disagreement.

4. Accountability at every level

The Association's governance is built on the principle of accountability at every level:

WHO	ACCOUNTABLE TO	HOW
ICPHAA Board of Directors	The membership	General meetings provided for in the constitution; open reporting on activities and finances
Registry and Accreditation Department	The Board	Regular reporting; written delegations; performance review
Committees and panels	The Board	Written terms of reference; reports to the Board
Staff and volunteers	The Board, through those they report to	Role descriptions; supervision and support; this policy
Members	Clients, the public and the Association	The ICPHAA Code of Conduct for Members; the Complaints Procedures, Fitness to Practise Policy and Disciplinary Procedures

5. Conflicts of interest, gifts and hospitality

A conflict of interest arises where a person's personal, financial, professional or family interests could influence, or could reasonably be seen to influence, their judgement when acting for ICPHAA. Conflicts are not wrong in themselves; failing to declare and manage them is.

1. Board members, committee and panel members, staff and volunteers declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict at the earliest opportunity, and at the start of any meeting where it is relevant.
2. The declaration is recorded in the minutes and in the register of interests, which is reviewed at least once a year.
3. The person concerned takes no part in the discussion or decision, unless the Board or chair decides, and records, that the conflict is too remote to matter.
4. Where a conflict is continuing or significant, the Board decides what further steps are needed to manage it.

People acting for ICPHAA do not accept gifts, hospitality or benefits that could influence, or appear to influence, their decisions. Anything other than modest hospitality offered in the normal course of business is declared to the Registry and recorded. People acting for ICPHAA never offer or accept a bribe or any improper inducement. The Conflict of Interest Policy gives further detail.

6. Staff, volunteers and contractors

Where ICPHAA engages staff, whether paid or voluntary, it is committed to being a fair, respectful and lawful employer and host. Its people framework includes:

- open, fair recruitment and selection consistent with equality law;
- clear written terms of engagement setting out rights and responsibilities;
- induction to the Association's values, policies and data protection obligations;
- support, supervision and development appropriate to each role;
- a commitment to dignity at work, with zero tolerance of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment;
- fair procedures for raising grievances and for addressing conduct or performance concerns.

Volunteers make an important contribution to ICPHAA and are held to the same standards of conduct as paid staff. Each volunteer receives a clear volunteer agreement, induction and support, and access to the policies relevant to their role. Contractors acting for ICPHAA are expected to meet the standards in this policy and, where they handle personal data, to sign an agreement that meets data protection law.

7. Equality, diversity and inclusion

ICPHAA is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in its membership, governance, accreditation, events and public-facing activities. The commitment is rooted in the Association's value of justice and in Irish equality law, including the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 and the Equal Status Acts 2000–

2018. The Association does not discriminate on any ground protected by that legislation, including gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

People seeking help benefit from professions that reflect the diversity of Irish society. ICPHAA therefore works to remove barriers to joining and taking part in the Association, makes reasonable adjustments for members and applicants with a disability, encourages diversity in its governance and panels, and reviews its practices for unintended barriers.

Cultural competence is a core professional requirement. Members must be able to work effectively and respectfully with clients from diverse cultural, ethnic, religious and socio-economic backgrounds and should use CPD to develop that competence. ICPHAA provides guidance and resources to support this and reflects it in its accreditation standards.

8. Speaking up about wrongdoing

ICPHAA wants to hear about wrongdoing so that it can be put right. Anyone who works or volunteers for ICPHAA, or any member, who has a concern about fraud, a breach of law, a danger to health or safety, the misuse of the Association's resources, a cover-up or any other wrongdoing connected with the Association should raise it.

1. Raise the concern with the ICPHAA Registry at admin@icphaa.ie or directly with the chair of the Board. If the concern involves the Registry or the chair, raise it with another director.
2. The concern is acknowledged and assessed by someone not implicated in it, and is investigated proportionately.
3. The identity of the person raising the concern is protected as far as possible and as the law requires.
4. The person raising the concern is told, as far as is appropriate, what action has been taken.

ICPHAA does not tolerate any penalisation of a person for raising a concern in good faith. Workers are protected under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 (as amended), which also provides external channels for reporting relevant wrongdoing.

9. Responsibilities and breaches

The ICPHAA Board of Directors is responsible for setting the tone of integrity from the top and for making sure this policy is followed. Each person within the scope of this policy is responsible for meeting its standards in their own conduct and for raising concerns when they see something wrong.

A breach of this policy by a director, committee or panel member, member of staff or volunteer will be addressed by the Board through fair procedures. The person concerned will be told of the concern and the evidence for it, will have the opportunity to respond, and will receive a reasoned decision. Depending on the seriousness of the breach, the outcome may range from advice and additional support to removal from a role, and any wider lessons for the Association will be identified and acted on. A breach by a member acting in a professional capacity may also be considered under the Complaints Procedures or Disciplinary Procedures.

10. Monitoring and review

The Board monitors the operation of this policy through the register of interests, reports of gifts and hospitality, and the number and nature of concerns raised. The policy is reviewed by the date shown on the cover, and earlier if the law or the Association's structure changes.

READ ALONGSIDE

- Organisational Governance
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Vision Statement & Ethos
- Financial Risk & Compliance Policy
- Environmental & Social Governance Policy
- Public-Facing Transparency Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

VERSION	DATE	CHANGE	APPROVED BY
1.0	9 November 2026	Reissued in the ICPHAA policy framework (replaces the former ICPA version).	ICPHAA Board of Directors

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