



# CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT



## CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

The Australian Tattooists Guild (ATG) Code of Professional Conduct is based on principles of fairness, respect, integrity and responsibility. This code is a voluntary code which is self regulated by each signatory of this organisation. Ideally, this code can be used effectively in evaluation as a measure of quality, along with the Duty of Care statement.

### INTRODUCTION

The Australian Tattooists Guild and its members are dedicated to the advancement of tattooing through involved and innovative practice, with the aim of raising and maintaining all standards of the tattooing industry across Australia.

Tattooists who are ATG members commit themselves to the attainment of high standards in tattooing, and to maintain general wellbeing by upholding commonly agreed values of:

- Ethical behaviour;
- Equality of opportunity;
- Social justice;
- Aspiration to excellence, and
- Competent professional performance

They are expected to:

- Serve and advance the public interest through appropriate involvement in civic activities, as citizens and professionals;
- Encourage informal public debate on tattoo, art, and health issues;
- Encourage and maintain responsible and healthy work space and;
- Strive to contribute to the development of tattoo knowledge, culture and education.

In their professional lives, members of the ATG are bound by this Code of Conduct to uphold the integrity of the profession and to ensure client and community needs are respected and well served. The code establishes principles to which ATG members are required to conform. The code defines ethical standards to ensure the upholding of principles that address obligations to the public, the client, the profession, and colleagues.



Violation of any of these standards is grounds for disciplinary action, the potential consequences of which are detailed in the Guild's Constitution.

The Code of Professional Conduct of the ATG applies to all activities by its members in which tattooing is a component. It is intended to promote committed and responsible performance in tattooing and to ensure that the profession will acknowledge and meet the responsibility vested in it by the public.

## PRINCIPLE 1

### OBLIGATIONS TO THE PUBLIC

Members have obligations to the public to embrace the spirit and letter of the laws governing their professional affairs, and should thoughtfully consider the social, emotional and health impact of their professional activities.

- I) Members must neither communicate nor promote themselves or their professional services in a false, misleading or deceptive manner.
- II) Members must uphold the law in the conduct of their professional activities.
- III) Members must abide by the code of ethics and conduct of the ATG and laws enforced in the countries and jurisdictions in which they provide or intend to provide professional services.
- IV) Members must not be affiliated with any criminal organisation.
- V) Members must not use any form of persuasion or undue influence in securing and delivering services.
- VI) Members must refrain from physical contact that endangers, threatens, or harms the health or safety of any person, or behaviour that causes a reasonable person to fear such conduct.
- VII) Members must ascertain proof of age and identity to ensure the client is of age (see state laws regarding minors and tattoo age). Members must not tattoo minors under any circumstances.
- VIII) Members must not sell tattoo equipment to unlicensed or unprofessional persons, through an established supply company or privately



## PRINCIPLE 2

### OBLIGATIONS TO THE CLIENT

Members have obligations to their clients to carry out their professional work conscientiously, competently and in a professional manner. Members should exercise judgment with due regard to relevant technical and professional standards when performing all professional services. Learned and professional judgment should take precedence over any other motive in the pursuit of the art, craft and business of tattooing.

- I) Members must perform their professional work with due skill, care and diligence.
- II) Members must carry out their professional work without undue delay and, so far it is within their powers, within an agreed reasonable time limit.
- III) Members must keep their client informed of the progress of work undertaken on the client's behalf and any issues that may affect its quality or cost.
- IV) Members must disclose to clients significant circumstances known to them that could be construed as creating a conflict of interest, and must ensure that such conflict does not compromise the legitimate interests of such persons or interfere with the tattooist's duty to render impartial judgment in relation to services rendered.
- V) Members must at all times afford clients respect and equanimity, eschewing judgment and accepting differences in beliefs, values and perception.
- VI) Members must offer services to all persons irrespective of their ethnicity, age (tattooing of minors excluded), gender, religious or political persuasion. In engaging with others in tattooing work, artists should strive to create a climate of equality and openness in the client-professional relationship.
- VII) Members must communicate about tattooing sessions, offering clients a clear and concise description of what tattoo sessions involve and especially with respect to possible effects [focal and side effects] and professional fees.
- VIII) Members must be appraised of and utilize at all times the requirements of duty of care in all aspects of the relationship with clients. This includes attending to client needs prior to, during and post-sessions. Duty of care is or will be described both in state and federal legislation as well as in policy statements. See Australian Tattooists' Duty of Care Statement.
- IX) Members must ensure clients are aware of any potential effects on their health from the tattoo process should their current health be compromised by an existing condition which has been disclosed to the member. Members must not tattoo a client who is intoxicated.
- X) The services that a member delivers should be of a kind that preserves the dignity and autonomy of the client and in no way sully the privacy, physical, sexual, financial or psychological integrity of the client.



## PRINCIPLE 3

### OBLIGATIONS TO THE PROFESSION

Members have an obligation to uphold the integrity and dignity of the profession, and must in every circumstance conduct themselves in a manner that respects the legitimate rights and interests of others.

- I) Members must pursue their professional activities with honesty and fairness.
- II) Members must not take as a co-owner an unsuitable person such as: a person whose name has been removed from any ATG recognised register of tattooist otherwise than at his or her own request; a person disqualified from membership pursuant to the standards and process prescribed in the ATG's constitution; a person who is prescribed under current state legislation as a person or persons of a criminal organisation (or associate).
- III) Members must establish and maintain:
  - a) Adequate professional premises which are of appropriate size and facilities so as to optimise the delivery of services and maintenance of privacy.
  - b) Premises should embody standard occupational health and safety provisions as well as conforming to local fire and health department standards.
  - c) Care should be taken to ensure the public wellbeing whilst in professional tattoo premises, which can be hazardous at times. Particular care should be taken when allowing children in the premises.
  - d) Tattoo premises should be a sterile environment. Any outside elements that threatens the sterility of the tattoo premises, such as animals entering the premises should not be tolerated.
  - e) Appropriate written materials which describe the services offered and the fees required.
  - f) Records of client details and sessions in a form which is easily recoverable and which conforms to professional standards. These records should be safely stored and contained within the framework of confidentiality.



## PRINCIPLE 4

### OBLIGATIONS TO COLLEAGUES

Members have an obligation to respect and acknowledge the professional aspirations and contributions of their colleagues.

- I) Members must not discriminate on grounds of race, religion, disability, marital status, or gender.
- II) Members must not maliciously or unfairly criticise or attempt to discredit another tattooist of their work.
- III) Members must, if approached to undertake a piece for which it is known, or should reasonably be known, that another tattooist is currently working on or preparing for, request for the client to notify the other tattooist.
- IV) Members must provide their associates and employees with a suitable working environment, compensate them fairly, and facilitate their professional development.
- V) Members must not claim ownership of another tattooist's original design of published work through direct and obvious reproduction of said work.

The ATG's materials, including Internet pages, documents and online graphics, audio and video, are protected by copyright law. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced or re-used for any commercial purposes whatsoever without written permission of the ATG. Please acknowledge ATG when reproducing or quoting material from this material.