



Soroptimist International of the Americas®, Inc.

Member/Leader Code of Conduct

August 2025

VISION AND APPLICABILITY

Vision and Purpose

Soroptimist International of the Americas, Inc. ® (SIA) is committed to our organization's core values, as stated in our [strategic plan](#). Our value of DIVERSITY & FELLOWSHIP (Women from varied backgrounds and perspectives work together to improve the lives of women and girls) brings us together to provide women and girls with access to the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment.

As Soroptimists, we are committed to doing what is right and honorable. We set high standards for ourselves, and we aspire to meet these standards in all aspects of our lives—at work, home and in service to our respective professions.

This Member/Leader Code of Conduct describes our expectations of ourselves, articulates our ideals and defines the behaviors expected in our organization.

The purpose of this Code is to instill confidence in how we carry out SIA's business and to help individuals become better Soroptimists. We do this by establishing an organization-wide understanding of appropriate behavior. The collective conduct of individual members shapes SIA's credibility and reputation. Embracing this Member/Leader Code of Conduct can advance our work individually and collectively, and will also assist us in making wise decisions, particularly when faced with difficult situations in which we may be asked to compromise our integrity or our values.

Persons to Whom the Code Applies

The Member/Leader Code of Conduct applies to all SIA Members.

1. RESPONSIBILITY

Description of Responsibility

Responsibility is our commitment to take ownership of the decisions we make or fail to make, the actions we take or fail to take, and the consequences that result.

As members of SIA:

- i. We make decisions and take actions based on the best interests of Soroptimist and the women and girls we serve.
- ii. We fulfill our commitments – we endeavor to do what we say we will do, and proactively communicate when we cannot.
- iii. When we make errors or omissions, we take ownership and make corrections promptly. When we discover errors or omissions caused by others, we alert the individual(s) as soon as possible. We accept accountability for any issues resulting from our errors or omissions and any resulting consequences.
- iv. We protect the proprietary or confidential information entrusted to us.
- v. We strive to uphold this Code and hold each other accountable.
- vi. We inform ourselves and uphold the policies, rules, regulations, and laws that govern our work and volunteer activities.
- vii. We report unethical or illegal conduct to appropriate individuals.
Comment: These provisions have several implications. Specifically, we do not engage in any illegal behavior, including but not limited to theft, fraud, corruption, embezzlement, or bribery. Further, we do not take or abuse the property of others, including intellectual property, nor do we engage in slander or libel.

We do not condone or assist others in engaging in illegal behavior. We report any illegal or unethical conduct. Reporting is difficult, and we recognize that it may have negative consequences. Since recent corporate scandals, many organizations have adopted policies to protect individuals who reveal the truth about illegal or unethical activities. Some governments have also adopted legislation to protect individuals who come forward with the truth.
- viii. We bring violations of this Code to the attention of the appropriate body for resolution.
- ix. We only file ethics complaints when they are substantiated by facts.
Comment: These provisions have several implications. We cooperate with SIA concerning ethics violations and the collection of related information, whether we are a complainant or a respondent. We

also abstain from accusing others of ethical misconduct when we do not have all the facts. Further, we pursue disciplinary action against individuals who knowingly make false allegations against others.

- x. We pursue disciplinary action against an individual who retaliates against a person raising ethics concerns.

2. RESPECT

Description of Respect

Respect is our commitment to show high regard for ourselves, others, and the resources entrusted to us. These resources may include people, money, reputation, the safety of others, and informational resources.

An environment of respect engenders trust, confidence, and performance excellence by fostering collaboration—an environment where diverse perspectives and views are encouraged and valued.

As members of SIA:

- i. We inform ourselves about what it means to be diverse, inclusive, and equitable to foster respect.
- ii. We listen to others' points of view, seeking to understand them.
- iii. We directly approach those with whom we have a conflict or disagreement. When uncomfortable directly addressing conflicts or disagreements, we seek counsel from members in SIA leadership positions.
- iv. We conduct ourselves in a respectful manner, even when it is not reciprocated.
Comment: An implication of these provisions is that we avoid gossiping and making negative remarks to undermine another person's reputation. We also have a responsibility under this Code to address others who engage in these behaviors.
- v. We negotiate in good faith.
- vi. We do not exercise the power of our expertise or position to influence the decisions or actions of others to benefit personally.

3. FAIRNESS

Description of Fairness

Fairness is our commitment to make decisions and act impartially and objectively. Our conduct must be free from competing self-interest, prejudice, and favoritism.

As members of SIA:

- i. We demonstrate transparency.
- ii. We constantly reexamine our impartiality and objectivity.
- iii. We make opportunities available equally for all members.
- iv. We proactively and fully disclose any real or potential conflicts of interest to the appropriate individuals.

Comment: A conflict of interest occurs when we can influence decisions or other outcomes on behalf of one party when such decisions or outcomes could affect one or more other parties with which we have competing loyalties. For example, when we are acting as an employee, we have a duty of loyalty to our employer. When we are acting as a SIA volunteer, we have a duty of loyalty to Soroptimist International of the Americas. We must recognize these divergent interests and refrain from influencing decisions when we have a conflict of interest.

Further, even if we believe that we can set aside our divided loyalties and make decisions impartially, we treat the appearance of a conflict of interest as a conflict of interest and follow the provisions described in the Code.

- v. We do not discriminate against others based on, but not limited to, gender, race, age, religion, disability, nationality, or sexual orientation.
- vi. We apply the rules of our organization in a consistent manner.

4. HONESTY

Description of Honesty

Honesty is our responsibility to understand the truth and act transparently in our communications and conduct.

As members of SIA:

- i. We earnestly seek to understand the truth.
- ii. We endeavor to provide accurate information in a timely manner.

Comment: An implication of these provisions is that we take appropriate steps to ensure that the information we base our decisions upon or provide to others is accurate, reliable, and timely.

This includes having the courage to share bad news even when it may be poorly received. Also, when outcomes are negative, we avoid hiding information or blaming others. When outcomes are positive, we avoid taking credit for the achievements of others. These provisions reinforce our commitment to be both honest and responsible.

- iii. In good faith, we honor our commitments and promises.
- iv. We strive to create an environment where others feel safe sharing their understanding of the truth.
- v. We do not engage in dishonest behavior.

Comment: These standards exhort us to be truthful. Half-truths and non-disclosures intended to mislead stakeholders are as unprofessional as affirmatively making misrepresentations. We develop credibility by providing complete and accurate information.

5. LEADERSHIP

Description of Leadership

Leadership is a set of positive behaviors that help members align with SIA's mission, vision, core values, and strategic objectives.

As members of SIA:

- i. We practice proper use of authority and decorum.
- ii. We do not exercise individual authority over SIA, its region, clubs, or members except as explicitly set forth by SIA's bylaws and procedures.
- iii. We support the decisions set forth by our elected leadership and seek to understand the impetus for these decisions.
- iv. We are responsible for ensuring an excellent member experience.