

Virginia Environmental Education Certification Program Code of Ethics

Virginia Environmental Education Certification Candidates and Certified Environmental Educators share the responsibility of educating towards an environmentally literate citizenry—people who have “the knowledge, skills and dispositions to solve problems and resolve issues individually and collectively that sustain ecological, economic and social stability.”* By working as a Virginia environmental educator, you are accepting a position of public trust. In order to meet this obligation and uphold the dignity of the profession, environmental educators will:

- Respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty.
- Comply with standard practices and exemplify ethical conduct toward students, colleagues, school officials, parents, program participants and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom.
- Extend just and equitable treatment to all.
- Continually work with community partners to improve educational opportunities in the community.
- Encourage the use of sound environmental education principles in management decisions.

I. Professional Practice

Virginia Environmental Education Certification Candidates and Certified Environmental Educators will:

- Promote competence in the field of environmental education by supporting high standards of education, performance, and employment practices.
- Accurately and adequately represent the facts and results of research and not base decisions on theological or religious beliefs, political pressure, or client or supervisor pressure.
- Endeavor to avoid situations where a conflict of interest may arise.
- Protect confidential information of staff, program participants, and colleagues.

II. Professional Conduct

Virginia Environmental Education Certification Candidates and Certified Environmental Educators will:

- Conduct activities with honesty, fairness, and respect.
- Accept responsibility for behavior and decisions.
- Possess an adequate basis for professional judgment.
- Make no false, misleading or deceptive statements regarding personal qualifications.
- Respect the fundamental rights, dignity, and worth of program participants, program staff, colleagues, etc. and the environment.

- Be aware of how personal belief systems may affect professional activities.
- Not accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage.

III. Social Responsibility

Virginia Environmental Education Certification Candidates and Certified Environmental Educators will:

- Strive to be sensitive to cultural and individual differences including those due to age, gender, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and socio-economic status.
- Practice professional behavior that is free from sexual harassment or discrimination with respect to religion, gender, sexual orientation, race, national origin, age, or physical restrictions.

*Definition of Environmental Literacy provided by the Virginia Department of Education.