

Human Service Ethics

Advanced, Liberal, 4 credits

Human Service Ethics is considered to be an advanced level knowledge that is liberal. It represents higher level theory and concepts that human service workers have acquired through applied practice. Advanced level knowledge indicates that you are able to use terminology, concepts, and theory in an applied way. Human Service Ethics is more often about why we do things (i.e., liberal) and not necessarily how we do things (i.e., non-liberal). At Empire State College, the Human Service Ethics course is offered at the advanced level.

Please use the questions below to structure your PLA submission on the topic of Human Service Ethics. Copy each question and respond directly below it. If you utilize an outside source, such as a website or a book, make sure to reference this in your response. The responses to the questions should be submitted in a Word document and uploaded in PLA Planner. In PLA Planner, you would list the topic as Human Service Ethics, asking for 4 credits, and designate this as Advanced Level and Liberal.

Please note – responding to these questions is not a guarantee of credit. You will still be expected to speak with an evaluator and answer any supplemental questions that they may have. The evaluator would then make a credit determination.

Questions for Students to respond to

We suggest you save this document with your name and the title of the PLA (e.g., Smith Human Service Ethics PLA) and answer beneath each question below.

Name:

ID:

PLA Title: Human Service Ethics

Number of Credits Requested: 4

Type: Advanced, Liberal

1. Briefly describe your experiences working in the human services field.
2. The Human Services Code of Ethical Standards stipulate that human services are responsible to the following: to client, to community and society, colleagues, profession, employers, and self (National Human Services Organization, 2021; <https://www.nationalhumanservices.org/ethical-standards>).
 - Summarize each area.
 - Compare and contrast the areas – in human services practice, which do you find harder to do compared to others? And why?

3. Three case studies are presented below (Kenyon, 1999) – please select two to discuss. For each case study, please identify the ethical issues that are involved, explain the conflict between your personal values and the ethical obligation (if any), and describe the steps that you would take to resolve these issues.

a. I work in a residential setting with children who have developmental disabilities. Joe was badly in need of a pair of sneakers. Money for clothing allocated to each child on a weekly basis. I have been asking for money to get his shoes for almost three weeks and failed to get the money from my supervisor. I bought the shoes with my own money. Later I was reimbursed for the money I spent.

b. In residential programs (alcohol/mental health, crisis, acute care), often clients admitted without the knowledge of their family or significant others. The family or significant others, may be very concerned about the welfare of the client and may call the hospitals, clinics, law enforcement agencies, and residential programs in the community in their efforts to locate the person. Based on confidentiality, this information cannot be provided. As a human service worker, I hear and understand the fears and concerns of the callers.

c. My field practicum is an entry-level child-care worker. I wonder if I would be able to objectively discuss the subject of homosexuality with an adolescent who needs help and advice in identifying and accepting his or her sexual identity, particularly since my views are conservative towards the matter of homosexuality. Please explain your options in this matter.

4. Self-awareness and reflection is critical for human service workers. Please explain why you think your values and being self-aware of these values are an essential aspect of understanding your ethical responsibilities as a Human Service Professional. How does your personal values and biases impact professional applications or practice of human services?