

What is Professional Practice and Ethics in Architecture?

Worksheet

Professional practice and ethics in architecture are the legal and moral standards - licensure, contracts, codes of conduct, and duties to client, public, and profession - that guide how architects practice responsibly.

Questions

1. What is an architect's highest ethical priority?
 - A) Client profit
 - B) Public health and safety
 - C) Firm reputation
 - D) Project speed
2. What should an architect do when facing a conflict of interest?
 - A) Ignore it if the project is small
 - B) Disclose it to the client
 - C) Handle it privately without telling anyone
 - D) Cancel the project immediately
3. Who can legally seal architectural drawings?
 - A) Any team member
 - B) Only the licensed architect who reviewed and approved them
 - C) The client
 - D) The contractor
4. What is the purpose of a professional code of conduct?
 - A) To increase billing rates
 - B) To set enforceable ethical and legal standards for practice
 - C) To limit competition
 - D) To reduce design creativity
5. An architect discovers a structural risk that would cost the client extra money to fix. What should they do?
6. A firm is offered a project where the architect's spouse owns the construction company bidding on it.
7. An intern architect is asked to stamp drawings using a licensed architect's seal without review.
8. Define: What is the primary ethical duty of an architect?
9. Define: What is a conflict of interest?
10. Define: Who enforces professional codes of conduct?

Answer Key

1. B) Public health and safety - Codes of ethics place public welfare above client or firm interests.
2. B) Disclose it to the client - Disclosure lets the client make an informed decision; hiding it is unethical.
3. B) Only the licensed architect who reviewed and approved them - Sealing is a licensed responsibility tied to personal accountability.
4. B) To set enforceable ethical and legal standards for practice - Codes of conduct formalize ethical and legal expectations for licensed practice.
5. Step 1: Recognize the ethical duty - public safety outweighs client cost concerns. Step 2: Disclose the risk clearly to the client and relevant authorities. Step 3: Refuse to proceed with a design that knowingly endangers occupants, even if the client objects.
6. Step 1: Identify this as a conflict of interest. Step 2: Disclose the relationship to the client in writing before proceeding. Step 3: Let the client decide whether to continue, recuse from decisions, or select a different contractor.
7. Step 1: Recognize this violates licensure law - only the license holder may seal drawings they have reviewed and approved. Step 2: Refuse the request and report it if pressured. Step 3: Ensure only reviewed, approved work carries the professional seal.
8. To protect public health, safety, and welfare above other interests, including the client's.
9. A situation where an architect's personal or financial interests could compromise objective professional judgment.
10. Licensing boards and professional bodies like the AIA (US) or RIBA (UK).

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