



brem

Bridge to Registration and
Employment in Mental Health

BREM Code of Conduct and Professional Behaviour

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About the Document¹

The Program takes the position that Participants are adults, and therefore have an obligation to make ethical, legal and responsible decisions concerning their conduct. The Code of Conduct and Professional Behaviour (“Code”), together with BREM Program Policies, sets out expectations for Participant behaviour and prescribes processes for dealing with behaviour that is prohibited under the Code. It is a tool that may be activated when the rights of other program participants (“Participants”), the BREM (“Program”), Supervised Placement (“Placement”) and other community members are infringed upon by the behaviours of others.

This Code is aligned with the Human Rights Code of Ontario and is not a substitute for the Criminal Code of Canada or any other applicable law or regulation.

Each Participant is responsible to become familiar with the Code, comply with ethical and legal standards of conduct, and to lead by example throughout the full period of the Program. Violations of the Code and/or Program policies may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Why is it important to have a Code of Conduct and Professional Behaviour?

The BREM Program is a microcosm of a larger cultural, educational and professional environment. This Program creates a unique environment with new and, in some cases, different social norms than a Participant may have encountered previously. In order for newcomers to the Program environment to regulate and adapt their behaviour accordingly, it is often necessary to provide a clear set of rules and community standards.

It is important to note that the Code of Conduct not only outlines cautions for Participants but also identifies various Participant rights, and therefore protects and helps Participants with issues concerning other Participants.

Why does the Code apply to Participants alone and not to all Program members?

The rights, responsibilities and behaviours of BREM staff are addressed in various policies, contracts, and other terms and conditions which apply to them as employees of the University of Toronto. For this reason, BREM staff conduct is not addressed in this Code of Conduct.

¹ Adapted from Codes of Conduct by [Canadian Mental Health Association](#), [CIBC](#) and [University of Toronto](#)

Who can initiate an action under the Code of Conduct?

Any member of the BTMH, School or Placement Agency can bring forward a complaint under the Code of Conduct.

What you can expect from BREM Program Staff

BREM commits to providing all Participants with:

- A safe, healthy, respectful and productive learning environment
- A supportive and ethical approach by all staff and instructors.
- An environment free from oppression, discrimination and harassment that promotes and protects
 - equal opportunities
 - fair and equitable treatment
 - respect for diversity
 - ethical behaviour
- Protection from retaliation after disclosures of improper activities.

What BREM expects from you

BREM expects all Participants to:

- Follow the Code and all related Program policies.
- Operate within the law.
- Act with honesty and integrity at all times.
- Be present and productive during Program hours.
- Take personal accountability for their own actions within the Program.
- Demonstrate a sense of respect, loyalty, good faith and responsibility toward one another, the staff, the clients and the organization.
- Keep all classroom interactions and client information confidential.
- Report violations of the Code of Conduct and related policies to the appropriate staff person.

Handling Code Infractions

Whenever possible and appropriate, BREM will seek to address infractions through informal resolution and mediation before resorting to formal disciplinary procedures. Should the informal route fail, the Program will initiate a disciplinary procedure (as described in Program Policies).

Responsibility, Honesty and Integrity

Preserving trust and acting ethically are at the heart of professional behavior. Participants have a fundamental responsibility to act honestly and with integrity at all times. Participants are also required to uphold and comply with the law and any other requirements established by BREM (including Program policies, procedures, standards and professional guidelines). Participants must report any concerns about suspicious behaviour relating to the honesty and integrity of other Participants, Centre and Placement staff that have violated, or are about to violate, a law or a policy.

Examples of Acceptable Conduct	Examples of Unacceptable Conduct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Behaving in an honest and trustworthy manner. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maintaining integrity of communication (all information provided to the program must be correct and truthful). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complying with the law while engaged in the Program. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maintaining professional boundaries with other Participants, Centre and Placement staff and clients. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acting in a manner that meets the ethical standards of the profession, the Centre and the agency. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Taking responsibility for your own actions, mistakes and failures. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refraining from giving gifts beyond a nominal value of \$15 to Centre/ Placement staff or clients. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepting Gifts from clients only if those are of nominal value (less than \$15) and are not accepted in return for favouritism or for any other purpose. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Providing and documenting truthful, complete and correct information (e.g. in verbal report or in a client file). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using dishonesty, deception, falsification of records (including information contained in a resume or job application) and fraudulent behaviour. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stealing, using physical violence and any other illegal behaviour (based on the Canadian Criminal Code). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disregarding professional boundaries in relationships with Participants, instructors, supervisors, co-workers, clients and volunteers. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engaging in personal relationships with clients or Centre staff. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiating dual relationships (gifting, bartering, social relationships) with staff, supervisors or clients. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Breaching ethical standards of the profession, Centre or agency. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refusing to take responsibility for own actions, mistakes and failures; blaming others for things that went wrong due to own action. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Soliciting and/or accepting gifts from suppliers, or a business of any value in return for favours or for any other purpose. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepting gifts from clients in cash, or anything of equivalent value over \$15, including gift cards, gift certificates and tickets. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altering or omitting relevant information in a client file or submitting false information for or on any client record, report or document. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Knowingly or maliciously bringing a false accusation against other Participants, Centre or Placement staff.

Inclusion, Safety and Security

Each of us has the right to be treated fairly, with decency and with respect, and we must treat others, including Participants, instructors, guest speakers, Program and Centre staff, Placement Supervisors, clients, colleagues and the public, in the same way. In keeping with the vision and mission of the Centre, the BREM program will not accept discriminatory behaviours for any reason such as ethnicity, race/colour, religion/creed, political opinion, country of origin, immigration status, age, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic class, family status, type of housing, neighbourhood of residence, language, and ability.

Examples of Acceptable Conduct	Examples of Unacceptable Conduct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refraining from any physical abuse or violence or threats of violence in the workplace. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not engaging in bullying and harassing behaviour. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reporting behaviour that breaches legislation and Program policy. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Behaving in a manner that is respectful and culturally appropriate when interacting with staff, instructors, supervisors, clients, volunteers and the general public. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exploring and addressing differences that may lead to conflict; using a respectful approach to resolve conflicts. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communicating with Program and Placement staff using formal channels during work hours (as per Program Policy) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requesting meetings with staff, instructors and placement supervisors according to Agency standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using physical abuse, violence, threats of violence, bullying or intimidating behaviour aimed at or involving other Participants, staff or clients. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using threats, unwanted or unnecessary physical contact. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Practicing inappropriate touching and any other behaviours that might be perceived as harassment (sexual and other). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using bullying, harassing or demeaning behaviours or making comments that are culturally unwelcome and disrespectful. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using profane language, threatening or abusive language to anyone who comes in contact with the Participant throughout the period of the Program. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attempting to communicate with Program and Placement staff outside formal channels or outside of work hours (e.g., through personal phones, emails, social media etc.) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consistently using improper etiquette related to meetings, inquiries, complaints, requests etc.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Confidentiality and privacy are directly related to the value of trust and it is supported by legislation. Participants must take all reasonable steps to preserve the confidentiality and privacy of information they gain through contact with other participants, Program and Placement staff and clients. This includes accessing and using information only for the purposes intended, and sharing it only with those who have a genuine need and authority to know, consistent with those purposes.

Examples of Acceptable Conduct	Examples of Unacceptable Conduct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maintaining information about Participants, Program and Placement staff and clients, in compliance with the relevant privacy legislation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wearing Centre/Agency identification badge to ensure client is aware to whom they are speaking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Releasing information about Participants, clients and staff members without their consent and/or without the review/approval of the Program or Placement agency (including verbal, written, use of social media, etc.).

Attendance and Time Management

Attendance is one of the most valued employee work ethics. Attendance as a learning and work ethic includes following study and placement schedules, being ready to start classes and placement on time, and limiting use of leave.

Examples of Acceptable Conduct	Examples of Unacceptable Conduct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regular and punctual attendance. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arriving at and leaving Program activities according to specified Program hours. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informing Instructor/staff/supervisor ahead of time if you are going to be late or absent. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Providing a Doctor's note for sick leave as required. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completing and submitting all Program readings and assignments in a timely manner. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completing and submitting all Placement reports and time sheets accurately and in a timely manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Failing to arrive to class/placement punctually; arriving late on a regular or habitual basis, leaving early and without following established protocol. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Taking extended lunch or breaks beyond the allotted time. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Repeated absence from Program activities without authorization or justifiable reason. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Repeated failure to provide a doctor's note for absence due to illness, if so requested. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Repeated failure to submit assignments and placement documentation on time.

Conflict of Interest

Avoiding conflicts of interest goes a long way towards avoiding behaviour that is unethical or that otherwise violates the Code. Participants must avoid any situation where their personal interest may conflict, or could be perceived to conflict, with the interests of BTMH, the Centre, the placement agency, or a client.

Examples of Acceptable Conduct

- Immediately reporting any potential conflict of interest to BTMH/placement supervisor.
- Reporting any other employment or volunteer work, or personal relationships that may be perceived to be a conflict of interest and being guided by direction provided.
- Refraining from using information learned on clients through their placement for personal gain (e.g., offering clients to transfer to their private care or to other agency).

Examples of Unacceptable Conduct

- Failing to advise staff/supervisor of a potential conflict of interest situation or one that is a perceived conflict of interest (i.e., that may be seen by others to represent a conflict of interest).
- Engaging in other work without the supervisor's consent.
- Failing to advise supervisor of volunteer service.
- Failing to advise the supervisor if a Participant is in a relationship with a colleague, Manager, client or other person who could be viewed to be a conflict of interest.
- Improperly using a position to influence the hiring or awarding of a contract to a family member or friend.
- Disclosing confidential, privileged or proprietary information to advance your own interests.
- Engaging in activities outside of work that are in direct competition with agency activities.
- Counselling to family members, partners or close friends who are also employees of the agency.
- Failing to disclose a conflict of interest in recommending goods and services.

Care, Maintenance and Use of Property	
Participants are responsible to maintain all property of the Centre and the Placement through proper, authorized and respectful use.	
Examples of Acceptable Conduct	Examples of Unacceptable Conduct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Appropriately maintaining and using Centre property such as equipment, computers, copiers, kitchen appliances, furniture, grounds, supplies etc. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using of phones, computer, email, intranet and internet access for Program purposes only. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Failing to protect equipment as required, deliberately damaging Centre’s property and/or using Centre’s equipment, supplies, resources or property without authorization (e.g. using photocopy machine, using computers for personal purposes, making long distance phone calls on Centre lines). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessing websites that would be violations of the Human Rights Code and/or agency policies. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Loading software on the computer without the approval of BREM staff.

Academic Integrity	
Academic integrity is a set of conventions that scholars follow in their work, and which generates credibility, trust and respect within the professional community. The opposite of academic integrity is called Plagiarism, which involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward. In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud.	
Examples of Acceptable Conduct	Examples of Unacceptable Conduct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Creating original work as required by the Program. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paraphrasing (putting in your own words) when using external/professional sources and accrediting the source. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Limiting the amount of text copied from an existing source, and citing it using standard citation rules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Copying or stealing someone else’s work (the ideas or words of another) and passing it off as your own (e.g., copying assignment or exam). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using another's work/production without crediting the source (copying from an existing source, such as book or online resource, without paraphrasing or citing it). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Presenting an idea or product taken from an existing source as new and original.

Attitude Towards Learning

Participants in a bridge training program are expected to actively engage in all learning activities and pursue all learning opportunities towards personal, cultural and professional integration in the Canadian mental health sector.

Examples of Acceptable Conduct	Examples of Unacceptable Conduct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Taking personal responsibility for the learning process (keeping up with all instructed materials, completing all assignments on time, actively participating in interactive classroom activities, etc.) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Co-operating with Participants and co-workers in study and work-related activities. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Identifying own knowledge and skill gaps and working towards closing those gaps. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Actively participating in class and placement activities (e.g. discussions, role plays, educational events). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maintaining integrity in academic work (independent work, no plagiarism). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Showing positive attitude towards change (personal, cultural, professional) and taking steps to adapt behaviours as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consistently ignoring the requests and requirements of Program instructor and facilitators related to learning activities and materials. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refusing to actively participate in class and placement activities (e.g. discussions, role plays, educational events). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refusing to accept feedback from Program and Placement staff and/or acknowledge and address cultural, linguistic or professional gaps. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Openly and aggressively refusing to engage in processes of change and growth (personal, cultural, professional).

Use of Drugs and Alcohol

All and any use of drugs and alcohol is prohibited during Program hours.

Examples of Acceptable Conduct	Examples of Unacceptable Conduct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participants shall not be impaired by prescription or non-prescription medication(s), alcohol or other substances during Program hours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being under the influence of alcohol, or drugs to impair the ability to perform one's duties, or interaction with clients, the public, or other Participants.

Political or Religious Activity	
<p>While BREM respects Participants’ right to individual political and religious beliefs and practices, Participants must not carry on these practices in a way that reflects upon the Centre as an organization, or that affects other Participants, staff and members of the organization.</p>	
Examples of Acceptable Conduct	Examples of Unacceptable Conduct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conducting religious beliefs and practices in private, without obstructing the ongoing operations of the Centre or the Placement. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refraining from making requests for religious or political contributions of the Centre or placement agency staff or community members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carrying on political activities or engage in religious advocacy or fundraising on Centre /Placement premises or facilities, or while representing BTMH. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preventing other Participants, staff or members of the Centre community from privately engaging in their religious practices.

Program Representation	
<p>In the eyes of our partners, clients and the community, each of us represents the Program and the Centre. While BREM respects Participants’ right to publicly express their personal views, Participants must not, under any circumstance, participate in activities that are illegal or may compromise the Centre’s image or reputation.</p>	
Examples of Acceptable Conduct	Examples of Unacceptable Conduct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using the Program’s name and trademark outside the Centre only as part of the regular Participant duties. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acting at all times in such a manner to represent the Program in the community in a positive manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participating in activities that would belittle, defame, embarrass or harass clients, employees, staff, and members of the Centre/Placement communities. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expressing damaging views of the Program by any medium, including in print, or via the internet (including blogs, social media, e-mail or on webpages).

Handling Code Infractions

Whenever possible and appropriate, BREM will seek to address infractions through informal resolution and mediation before resorting to formal disciplinary procedures. Should the informal route fail, the Program will initiate the following disciplinary procedure (as described in Program Policies, Section 12):

