

Shintaido of America

Ethics & Conduct Handbook

Article 1. Purpose and Scope

This Handbook establishes the ethical standards, confidentiality obligations, and complaint resolution procedures for Shintaido of America (“the Organization”). It applies to all instructors, students, staff and participants in any role, and any participants within the ethical complaint process.

The Handbook integrates three core elements:

1. **Code of Ethics and Conduct for Instructors** (standards and responsibilities).
2. **Confidentiality Agreement** (process integrity and protections).
3. **Ethics Complaint and Resolution Policy** (procedures for addressing concerns).

Article 2. Code of Ethics and Conduct

2.1 Shared Values

- Endeavors to demonstrate integrity, respect, and fairness in all relevant interactions.
- Commitment to inclusion, free of discrimination, harassment, or bullying.
- Leadership by example, in both words and actions.

2.2 Respect and Integrity

- Treat students, colleagues, and community members with dignity.
- Act with honesty and transparency in professional conduct.

2.3 Student Safety and Well-Being

- Prioritize both physical and emotional safety of students.
- Match teaching methods to student level and needs.
- Never use coercion, physical discipline, or verbal abuse.

2.4 Boundaries and Professionalism

- Maintain appropriate teacher–student boundaries.
- Avoid conflicts of interest or exploitation.
- Obtain informed consent (verbal or written) for any physical contact in instruction.

2.5 Accountability

All will endeavor to:

- Uphold this Code.
 - Participate in organizational review processes in good faith.
 - Accept the outcomes of the complaint resolution process.
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Article 3. Confidentiality in Ethics Processes

3.1 Purpose

All participants in an ethics complaint process must safeguard sensitive information to ensure fairness and trust.

3.2 Confidential Information

Includes, but is not limited to:

- Identities of complainant(s), respondent(s), and witnesses.
- Complaint details and supporting evidence.
- Testimony, interviews, findings, and deliberations.
- Interim or final decisions and sanctions prior to official publication.

3.3 Participant Obligations

By entering the process, all participants agree to:

- Maintain confidentiality of all information.
- Use information solely for purposes of the review.
- Refrain from discussing the case with unauthorized parties.
- Report breaches immediately to the Ethics Officer.

3.4 Duration

Confidentiality obligations remain in effect indefinitely unless released by the Organization.

Article 4. Ethics Complaint and Resolution Policy

4.1 Filing a Complaint

- Complaints must be submitted in writing to the designated **Ethics Officer**.
- Should verbal complaints be made, the Ethic Officer will request a written statement

- Acknowledgment of receipt of written complaint will be sent within five (5) business days via email to the complainant.

Required documentation includes:

- Date of complaint.
- Names of parties involved.
- Nature and details of the complaint.
- Supporting evidence.
- Signed Confidentiality Agreement (see Article 3).

4.2 Non-Retaliation

Retaliation by any party against complainants, witnesses, or respondents is strictly prohibited.

4.3 Review and Resolution Process

1. **Preliminary Review** – Ethics Officer reviews each complaint for completeness.
2. **Investigation** – A committee will be convened to gather evidence and conduct interviews.
3. **Confidentiality** – All parties involved in this review and resolution process must sign the Confidentiality Agreement.
4. **Findings and Recommendations** – Committee issues findings and recommends corrective actions or sanctions.
5. **Board Decision** – The Board reviews and makes the final determination.
6. **Notification** – Both complainant and respondent receive written notice of the outcome.

4.4 Appeals

- Either party may appeal in writing within 15 days of the date of the written notice
- Grounds for appeal: procedural error, new evidence, or disproportionate sanction.

4.5 Recordkeeping

All complaints and resolutions will be documented and retained in secure organizational records for at least seven years.

Article 5. Enforcement

Violations of the Code of Ethics or this Handbook may result in:

- Corrective feedback.

- Additional training requirements.
- Suspension of instructor status or organizational privileges.
- Removal of instructor or membership status.

Sanctions will be determined through the process outlined in Article 4.

Article 6. Acknowledgment and Agreement

All instructors are required to:

1. Acknowledge receipt of this Handbook.
2. Commit to upholding its standards.
3. Participant in periodic training