



Association of Social Work Boards

ACE Resource

***Independent Contractor, Sole Proprietors:
Organization, Promotion, Advertising, Grievances
Requirements***

This ACE Resource is intended to clarify ACE policy and use of terms related to independent contractors and sole proprietors.

1. Independent Contractor: The ACE provider presents courses through hosting organizations and/or agencies with whom s/he contracts for service.

Organizational Chart

The organizational chart is intended to describe (graphically) the continuing education programming functions of your organization. A well-planned and executed organizational chart, accompanied by a process-oriented, step by step narrative description will give the ACE committee an understanding of how your organization creates continuing education programming.

Use the chart to show the functional organization of continuing education programming: the flow of the process, timeframes, who works with whom, who reports to whom. Be sure to identify in the organizational chart all individuals and/or departments mentioned in the narrative and elsewhere in the application.

For small organizations or sole proprietors applying for ACE approval

If the organizational chart includes only one or two employees, use the chart and the narrative to describe interactions of any involved individuals or groups in the process, including input from advisory groups, consultants (either formal or informal), part time staff or volunteers, presenters, etc.

Narrative to accompany the organizational chart

The narrative describes all the functions and individuals illustrated in the organizational chart. The narrative describes the functional organization of continuing education programming: the flow of the process, timeframes, who works with whom, who reports to whom.

In the narrative, be sure to identify all individuals and/or departments related to continuing education programming, who are identified in the organizational chart and/or mentioned elsewhere in the application.

2. Promotional materials: Independent Contractors or sole proprietor who present courses through hosting agencies/organizations must adhere to ACE standards in the promotion and advertising of the courses they provide. ACE standards require that adequate advance information be provided to prospective course participants. The responsibility for following ACE guidelines and policy regarding promotional materials must be addressed by the ACE provider. Please contact ACE office for assistance.

Promotional materials: (e.g. brochures, advertisement, memoranda, web sites or other announcements) must include the following:

- Educational goals and specific learning objectives of the course
- Course target audience

- Targeted social work practice levels, e.g. entry-level, intermediate level, or advanced level social workers
- Instructors and their credentials
- Course fees, including what is covered, and deadlines for cancellations and refunds
- Course syllabus or agenda
- Continuing education hours offered
- ASWB course approval number and expiration date
- Instructions for requesting accommodations for disability (ADA)
- Course completion requirements; e.g. complete course evaluation, participate in all sessions or assignments
- Statement of when and how certificate will be awarded
- Where both educational and non-educational sessions are offered, the courses for credit must be clearly identified
- Instructions for addressing grievances

If the hosting agency/organization is providing ALL the promotional material, and any of the ACE required promotional information is not included, then –**as part of the course hand-outs**– the instructor must include the statement, “If you have questions or concerns about the course content, references or content evaluation, contact (your email address) instructorname@info.net If you have questions or concerns about registration, facilities or course administration, contact (the contracting agency) independentmgtcorp@info.net.”

- **Independent Contractor information:** “If you have questions or concerns about the course content, references or content evaluation, contact (your email address) instructorname@info.net”
- **Host Agency or organization information:** If you have questions or concerns about registration, facilities or course administration, contact (the contracting agency) independentmgtcorp@info.net).

2. Grievance Policy: Continuing Education providers who operate as a sole proprietor or independent contractor must adhere to ACE standards in the event of a complaint from a course participant, a regulatory board, or ASWB. The ACE provider must respond appropriately in a timely and ethical manner.

Your written Grievance Statement (“If you have questions or concerns, please contact _____”) must be mentioned to participants in your promotional materials. Your written Grievance Policy must be available upon request.

In the instance of a complaint or grievance involving the independent operator, it is imperative to have a **social worker consultant or advisory group** (colleagues, supervisor, etc) available to mediate a dispute, and/or to provide support during the resolution of the complaint.

When a CE Director is also the SW Consultant, and especially when that individual is also the course instructor, it is **necessary** to have an additional social worker consultant or advisory group as “back-up.” This “back-up” social worker/advisory group must be available to consul in a situation where a grievance might involve the instructor.

The overall participation of the social worker consultant or advisory group will

- Maximize objectivity related to planning, presenting, monitoring, and evaluating programs, content, complaints, etc.
- Remove the possible perception of bias
- Lessen risk for the instructor/social work consultant/CE Director
- Provide additional perspective to the resolution of the problem
- Strengthen the decision

A record of each complaint and the resolution must be kept and reported within the ASWB ACE approval renewal application.

As part of your application for ACE approval, submit a document advising ACE of the following:

- Outline of plan for addressing resolution of problems such as described above
- Name and credentials of individual/advisory group designated as the “back-up” consultant

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