

# RBT<sup>®</sup> Ethics Code



The RBT<sup>®</sup> Ethics Code describes the ethical requirements for both RBTs and RBT applicants. All RBTs and RBT applicants must agree to abide by this code. Because RBTs are **not independent practitioners** and must receive ongoing supervision of their practice, those who supervise RBTs must also be familiar with this code.

In addition to the specific code elements below, all RBTs and RBT applicants must:

- provide truthful and accurate information to the BACB;
- report the following to the BACB within 30 days: legal charges (and subsequent related actions and documents as requested by the BACB); investigations and disciplinary actions by employers (e.g., suspensions and terminations for cause), governmental agencies, educational institutions, and third-party payers; a physical or mental condition that impairs the RBT's ability to safely work; or a change of name, mailing address, or email address;
- adhere to all requirements regarding use of BACB intellectual property (see 10.03 of the *Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts*);
- adhere to the rules of the BACB and approved testing centers including, but not limited to, rules related to cheating, falsifying information, and unauthorized collection, use, or distribution of exam materials; and
- comply with all BACB requirements for RBT training, assessment, audits, and supervision.

## Section 1 – Responsible Conduct

- 1.01 RBTs uphold and promote the values and core principles of behavior analysis.
- 1.02 RBTs have an obligation to remain familiar with this code. Lack of knowledge or understanding of this code does not excuse unethical conduct.
- 1.03 RBTs are truthful and honest and create an environment that promotes truthful and honest behavior in others. They promote an ethical culture in their work environments and make others aware of this code.
- 1.04 RBTs act in a way that conforms to the legal and ethical codes of the professional and social communities where they are members. They do not lead others to engage in fraudulent, illegal, or unethical conduct.
- 1.05 If RBTs' ethical responsibilities conflict with employer policies, RBTs must bring the conflict to their supervisor's attention, document that they did so, and document the resolution.
- 1.06 RBTs avoid multiple relationships with clients and supervisors. If they find that a multiple relationship has developed due to unforeseen circumstances, they inform their supervisor and work to resolve it. If the multiple relationship involves their supervisor, the RBT should report it to the person to whom their supervisor reports.
- 1.07 RBTs do not engage in sexual relationships with clients or supervisors. RBTs refrain from sexual relationships with former clients or supervisors for at least two (2) years following the date the working relationship ended.
- 1.08 RBTs recognize that their personal problems and conflicts with others may impact their ability to perform their duties and refrain from providing services when this is the case.
- 1.09 RBTs follow through on obligations and contractual commitments with high quality work and they do not make commitments they cannot keep.
- 1.10 RBTs do not make false, deceptive, misleading, exaggerated, or fraudulent public statements about their work or qualifications.
- 1.11 RBTs provide a current and accurate set of credentials (e.g., degrees, certifications) to clients, employers, and supervisors upon request. Changes to certification status must be immediately reported to employers and supervisors.
- 1.12 RBTs obtain permission to use trademarked or copyrighted materials as required by law. RBTs provide citations that recognize the intellectual property of others, including trademark and copyright symbols.
- 1.13 RBTs attempt to resolve issues informally when possible, without violating confidentiality, by first bringing the issue to the attention of their supervisor and then the individual involved. RBTs document their efforts to address any of these issues. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, they report it to the appropriate authority (e.g., employer, director, regulatory authority). If the matter meets the reporting requirements of the BACB, RBTs must submit a formal complaint to the BACB.

## Section 2 – Responsibility to Clients

- 2.01 RBTs support the legal rights and preferences of clients.
- 2.02 If RBTs become aware that a client’s legal rights are being violated, or if there is risk of harm, RBTs must take the necessary action to protect the client. This includes but is not limited to: (1) contacting relevant authorities; (2) following organizational policies; (3) consulting with their supervisor; and (4) documenting their efforts to address the matter.
- 2.03 When providing services, RBTs do not discriminate against, demean, or harass individuals or groups on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, socioeconomic status, or any other basis forbidden by law. RBTs recognize their own limitations and obtain the proper training, consultation, or supervision when providing behavior technician services to protected individuals or groups.
- 2.04 RBTs do not accept gifts from or give gifts to clients.
- 2.05 RBTs may not share identifying information about clients on social media. They must avoid creating situations where such information could be shared by others, including, but not limited to, written information, photos, or videos.
- 2.06 RBTs always obtain permission from clients and staff to record interviews and service delivery sessions. Consent must be specifically and separately obtained from each individual.
- 2.07 RBTs protect the confidentiality and privacy of their clients. RBTs only use relevant identifying information in their job-related communications (e.g., consultation, emails, reports). Confidentiality and privacy requirements may be established by law or by an organization’s policies.
- 2.08 RBTs only discuss confidential information with those who need to know that information. They share information for job-related purposes only. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: (1) information about anyone with whom the RBT works; or (2) information about anyone to whom the RBT provides services. RBTs maintain confidentiality when handling records under their control. This includes records that are written, electronic, or in any other format. Handling a record may include creation, storage, access, transfer, or disposal.
- 2.09 RBTs never disclose confidential information without consent from the client. Exceptions are made as required by law, or where allowed by law for a valid reason. This includes, but is not limited to: (1) providing needed services; (2) obtaining appropriate consultations; and (3) protecting the client or others from harm.
- 2.10 RBTs create, maintain, distribute, store, retain, and dispose of records and data relating to their services (1) in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies; (2) in a way that complies with the requirements of this code; and (3) in a manner that allows for appropriate transition of service at any given time.

## Section 3 – Competence and Service Delivery

- 3.01 RBTs only practice under the close, ongoing supervision of a qualified supervisor.
- 3.02 RBTs follow the direction of their supervisors and inform them when they are asked to do something that goes beyond the scope of their certification.
- 3.03 RBTs must be competent in the areas in which they provide behavior technician services.
- 3.04 RBTs may not practice with new client populations without proper training and oversight.
- 3.05 RBTs provide behavior technician services only within defined roles.
- 3.06 When RBTs provide services, they communicate with clients in a simple and easy-to-understand way.
- 3.07 RBTs collect and display data in a way that allows for decisions and recommendations to be made for program development.
- 3.08 If RBTs are involved in the delivery of non-behavior-analytic interventions, they do not make reference to, display, or otherwise use their RBT in that practice.

Approved by the BACB’s Board of Directors on December 17, 2018.

This document should be referenced as follows: Behavior Analyst Certification Board. (2018). RBT ethics code. Littleton, CO: Author.