

Personal Professional Ethical Values  
for Emergency Management

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**Guiding Principles – Respect, Commitment, Professionalism**

**Framework – Aligned with Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery**

1. ***Authenticity above all else:*** *I remain familiar with my personal gifts and blind spots such that my ethical analysis is begun from my authentic self and not unduly influenced by situational detail.*
  - a. To be true to my ethical values and myself it is necessary to know those baseline aspects of the values that influence my decision making process, absent of any other details. A person who understands that they are limited by blind spots, risks, double standards, vices, and biases, prior to entering a decision making situation, can effectively prioritize information and make value-driven decisions.
    - i. Notice my immediate response to the situation. Name the response as accurately as possible—even if the response is not positive.
    - ii. Pause and become aware of my intuitive nudge toward action. Do not initially act upon the nudge or even judge whether it is right or wrong.
    - iii. Test my intuitive nudge against the aspirational values of the other ethical lenses. What action will get mutually good results? What action will be a caring response? How can I care for those without power? What action will allow me to demonstrate excellence in my role?
    - iv. Choose the path forward that allows me to act courageously from my authentic self.

- b. Knowing I bias towards the left side of many political issues, it will be immediately evident that I should exercise caution when making decisions that have a conservative or liberal side.

**2. *I will maintain technical and vocational competence***

- a. I will engage in continuing study and education to maintain and/or enhance the knowledge and skills necessary to provide high quality emergency management services.
- b. Knowledge, the ability to predict or anticipate, and understanding the long-term consequences of action or inaction have profound impacts on the results of decisions by emergency managers.

**3. *My integrity is unwavering***

- a. I will strive to do the right thing despite the implications of whether or not the public is likely to be informed of my actions.
- b. If given the opportunity to wield great power over decision making for contracting, financial aid and grants, or other forms of power brokering, while simultaneously holding the autonomy that often comes with rank or position, integrity is the key to respecting the community, the government, and myself.

**4. *I value the harmony achieved through listening to others as they express their perspectives***

- a. Listening to other perspectives helps me to better understand their preferred course of action, not based on my own frame of reference alone, but rather based on their core values, ethics, and frameworks.
- b. American citizens have significantly different norms and needs than a Haitian or other international citizen might. Noting the difference in these experiences is relevant and important.

**5. *Situational Awareness***

- a. Given certain situations, I will acknowledge my ethical responsibility to act.
- b. If I have knowledge of or am able to predict an emergency or disaster; if I have the capability of making a decision and acting on it; if I have free choice- that is, I could have chosen otherwise; if my decision has value consequences- it affects lives, welfare, and rights of other persons.

**6. *I will remain accountable for all financial actions and decisions, and I maintain the utmost financial propriety in all situations***

- a. I will be answerable to both those who receive assistance and to those who finance it. I will act as a responsible steward of the public resources entrusted to me.

- b. Emergency managers and government agencies control funding streams that come from the people, to the people.

**7. *I have a duty to the public welfare that is above all others***

- a. I will embrace the public welfare as my primary professional responsibility.
- b. While I am currently a Naval Officer with many primary and collateral duties, first and foremost is to protect the public welfare through emergency management.

**8. *Impartiality***

- a. I will respond promptly, expertly, and without prejudice or partiality to all community needs associated with a disaster or hazardous incident.
- b. San Juan, Puerto Rico contains people who are the same level of American as Paradise, California.

**9. *Hazard Mitigation***

- a. Foster hazard mitigation efforts that contribute to sustainability, including those linked to the natural resource environment that will maintain or enhance it's protective features.
- b. Climate change is upon us and we must mitigate these hazards locally while broadly addressing structural and systematic detractors within current policy.

**10. Recognition and Ownership of Vulnerability**

- a. I will ensure that development planning protects the best interests of the community, particularly those most vulnerable and unable to cope with the impact of a disaster or hazard. This includes not shifting potential disaster risks to other communities, to at risk or vulnerable populations within the community, or to future generations.
- b. Working to identify vulnerable populations and communities can identify hazards and risks that can be mitigated or eliminated. Those most affected by disaster are often minorities, women, children, and elderly. Sending the homeless to California is not the answer.