



Association of Professional Piercers Members' Principles of Ethics & Code of Conduct

2022-2023 Update (as of October 25, 2022)

Section I: Mission Statement

Established in 1994, the Association of Professional Piercers (APP) is a California-based, international non-profit organization dedicated to the dissemination of vital health and safety information about body piercing to piercers, health care professionals, legislators, and the general public.

Section II: Values & Ethics

The Association of Professional Piercers (APP) is an international health and safety organization. It is a nonprofit voluntary alliance dedicated to the dissemination of information about body piercing. Governed by a voluntary elected Board of Directors, the APP is a united group of piercing professionals that freely shares information to help fellow members, piercers, health care professionals, legislators, health inspectors, and the general public get the best and most up-to-date information about body piercing.

Piercing industry professionals hold a notable position of trust with the general public and those seeking piercing information and services. On account of this trust, it is imperative for piercing industry professionals to uphold high standards of professional conduct and ethics.

Members, who have strived to meet or exceed standards set forth by the organization, should be empowered to embody the mission and values of the organization. This may be in everyday studio practices, getting involved in the organization, performing safe piercing outreach to communities and individuals near and far, and conducting ourselves, online or in-person, as conscientious professionals. We all have a unique opportunity to nurture this organization and community, with compassion and humanity for others, learning to do less harm, and more good, while we, united, come together to make piercing safer.

Section III: Code of Professional Conduct

The APP requires acknowledgement of this agreement on record from each individual Member. Adherence to this agreement and maintenance of all [membership requirements](#), personal and environmental, is necessary to maintain membership in good standing.

The Board of Directors must uphold the policies, bylaws, and legal requirements of the organization. The Board of Directors, as elected volunteers, shall strive to fulfill the APP's



mission in line with our values of health, safety, and education. Violation of these critical health, safety, and conduct requirements is grounds for action, up to and including termination of membership.

1. I agree not to use [ear piercing guns](#) or other similar hand pressure systems or devices in my studio.
2. I agree that all needles will be sterilized, used on one person only in one sitting, and will be immediately disposed of in a securely mounted, medical sharps container.
3. I agree that all tools including, but not limited to, forceps, tubes, and tapers will be sterilized and used on only one person in one sitting. After one such use, instruments will be either
 - 3.1 appropriately reprocessed¹ and sterilized in an autoclave, or
 - 3.2 disposed of immediately.
4. I agree that as many supplies as possible including gauze, CSR wrap, cotton swabs, etc., should be sterile and disposed of immediately after a single use.
5. I agree to follow manufacturers' recommendations on any and all products, instruments, and equipment utilized.
6. I agree that a new pair of medical-grade gloves (sterile and/or non-sterile) will be donned appropriately and worn for every procedure and that gloves will be changed whenever there is the slightest chance for contamination.
7. I agree that the room used for piercings will be an enclosed room
 - 7.1 designated for body piercing and related services, and
 - 7.2 where no other services that may compromise cleanliness should be provided such as hair dressing, tattooing, and/or instrument reprocessing, etc.²
8. I agree that the piercing room, sterilization room, bathrooms, and all other common areas will be kept scrupulously clean and shall be disinfected frequently. All surfaces shall be nonporous thus allowing them to be cleaned with an EPA-approved disinfectant solution throughout the day and whenever contamination might occur.
9. I agree that all jewelry for initial piercings will be sterilized prior to insertion.
10. I will use only appropriate jewelry for initial piercings as listed in the current [APP minimum standard](#). I recognize that this standard may change periodically. I will be informed of any changes and will update my practices accordingly.
11. I agree that all piercings performed in the studio, whether by a Member or a non-member, will only use appropriate jewelry for initial piercings as listed in the [current APP minimum standard](#). Any use of non-compliant jewelry for initial piercing by any person, Member or non-member, in the studio is considered a breach of [environmental standards](#).

¹ Some tools are not intended for reprocessing and should be disposed of after a single use.

² Contact the APP's Membership Committee for the most current environmental guidelines or if you have any questions



12. I agree not to be under the influence of legal or illegal substances which might compromise my abilities to work safely.
13. I agree to maintain my certification in First Aid, CPR, and Bloodborne Pathogen training.
14. I agree to maintain, at minimum, the APP's guidelines for biological (spore) testing, or international equivalent, of all autoclaves in use at the studio.
15. I agree to meet or exceed all health, safety, and legal standards as required by my state and local authorities.
16. I agree not to misrepresent myself, my abilities, or my standards in any way.
17. I agree to consider all new health and safety suggestions, as they become known to me, and to make appropriate changes in my technique as applicable.
18. I agree that it is the moral, ethical, and professional responsibility of all piercers to continue to seek out, absorb, and share health and safety information relevant to the craft throughout my career.
19. I agree to adhere to the APP name and logo usage guidelines, as such
20. I agree not to use the APP Members' Logo to advertise membership at studios without a current Business Member in good standing on staff.
21. I agree to provide a work environment that is free from discrimination, abuse of authority/power and harassment; and promotes the fair and respectful provision of feedback on performance.
22. I will not discriminate, harass, or abuse my authority/power over employees, contractors, clientele, or others based upon an individual's race, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, religion, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, size, age (except where legally required), disability or genetic information, or any other legally protected characteristic(s).
23. Declining to perform a piercing on an individual (who has provided legally required valid identification) based on minimum age requirements, anatomy viability assessment, or potential health complications³ is not considered a violation of the APP code of conduct, unless it is done to explicitly discriminate against a legally protected characteristic. Refraining from piercing when there is a reasonable risk that the piercing will fail or result in complications is considered appropriate, safe, and ethical piercing practice.
24. By becoming an APP Member, I understand the importance of health, safety, and education, as well as professionalism, community, and collaboration. I agree that my personal and professional interactions should reflect these values. I understand that my conduct and actions as a member, online and in person, may reflect on the organization. As such, I will refrain from engaging in harassment, discrimination, abuse, or bullying of professionals, within and outside of the piercing industry, including members, volunteers, contractors or employees of the APP.

³ All APP Members should familiarize themselves and stay compliant with all local, state, federal, provincial or regional discrimination laws, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).



Section IV: APP Name & Logo Usage Guidelines

APP Membership belongs to an individual, not a studio. Studios that APP Members operate out of regularly are reviewed by the APP to meet required [Environmental Criteria](#) standards.

The APP **does not** certify piercers or piercing studios; “APP Certified” should never be used. The APP **does not** train piercers; “APP Trained” is never acceptable.

The APP does provide seminars and education to piercers, industry professionals, and more. Having a certificate of attendance to one of our educational events, in person or online, courses **does not** constitute certification or membership. Participation in or attendance of courses from the APP **does not** constitute APP certification, training, or membership.

APP Member Name & Logo usage

When the membership logo is used, it **must be used in a way that clearly shows the membership belongs to the individual**, not the studio.

Are you a **Business Member, Business Member at Large, or Associate Member - Piercer** piercing in **multiple studios, temporarily or regularly?**

While membership belongs to the individual, APP membership is dependent upon adherence to not only the personal criteria set forth by the Association, but also the current environmental standards in which the Member operates. Therefore, individual membership is **only recognized and advertisable** when operating in a studio environment that has been reviewed by the APP to meet standards and has current **APP Business Members** on staff.

The Association recognizes that **Associate Members, Business Members, Business Members-at-Large**, may at times operate in studios that do not have current APP Business Members on staff and/or have had their facilities reviewed by the organization. It is integral to the principles of membership that advertisement of such is **not permissible** in association with these studios and procedures performed there.⁴

Print Advertising

If any APP Associate Member, Business Member, or Business Member-at-Large uses the Members’ Logo in any print advertising, the Member is making a commitment to maintain their membership through the end of that print run.

Failure of the member(s) to renew membership through the duration that the APP name or logo is used in print will result in the Member and/or studio being listed on the [impostors](#)

⁴ If you are a Business Member and do not have a primary studio in which you operate regularly, you may consider requesting a transfer to [Business Member-at-Large](#), as this may be a more appropriate membership type. Please see the APP’s website, www.safepiercing.org, for current policies.



[page](#) of the website, even if there were Members on staff at the time that the printing was done. This includes business cards, watermarks, flyers, print ads, local directory ads, and any other print and/or digital media.



PROUD MEMBER
VERIFY AT SAFEPIERCING.ORG

Anyone misusing the APP name or logo to falsely state or imply membership will be listed on the APP website as an impostor and may be subject to legal action. It is the responsibility of each individual APP Member to maintain an up to date logo in all print and digital media. The most current version of the APP logo can be found in the File Archive of the safepiercing.org Member's Area. Please replace all former logos with the current logos.

By acknowledging this agreement in the Member profile, the Member understands and agrees to adhere to the above APP Name and Logo Usage Agreement for the duration of membership. They agree to immediately discontinue use of the APP Members' Logo if membership in the organization is discontinued for any reason.

They also understand that prior written permission is needed from the Board of Directors to use the APP name or logo in any manner that is not listed above. Failure to comply with the APP Name and Logo Usage agreement could result in suspension or revocation of membership and/or listing as an Impostor. I agree that the APP is not responsible for any expenses I may incur from misuse of the APP name or logo.

APP Corporate Logo Usage

The Association of Professional Piercers freely licenses the use of its trademarked corporate logo (shown below) in all digital media on the condition that the trademark licensee uses the mark to point to the APP homepage, <http://safepiercing.org>, and only to the APP homepage. The APP retains full, unfettered, and sole discretion to revoke this trademark license for any



reason whatsoever or for no specified reason.



Simply stated, the APP gives free use of its logo to anyone, for any digital media, including, but not limited to, websites, social media and networking pages, blogs, etc., as long as the following conditions are met:

1. The logo must point to the APP homepage (<http://safepiercing.org/>).
2. The logo must not be used in any way that states or implies membership in the APP for any individual or organization.
3. This logo may not be used in print media without express written permission.
4. The APP name or logo may not be used in reference to piercing services or products of any kind

Patron Members may use the APP Corporate logo in the same fashion as non-members and the general public as described above.