

## CODE OF ETHICS

Members of the American Guild of Organists are bound by the Code of Ethics and guided by the Code of Professional Standards.

A violation of the Code of Ethics, as determined through the AGO Discipline, may subject a person to exclusion from membership.

**Adopted by the National Council on October 23, 1933 as revised through December 15, 2008.**

**Preamble:** The purpose of the American Guild of Organists is to promote the organ in its historic and evolving roles, to encourage excellence in the performance of organ and choral music, and to provide a forum for mutual support, inspiration, education, and certification of Guild members. Voting members are entitled to enjoy the privileges and are expected to accept the responsibilities of membership in the Guild. Members shall be considered equally for Guild offices and participation in Guild activities. These are the rules that shall be considered binding upon all voting members in good standing.

**RULE 1. Members shall promote good working relationships within the American Guild of Organists and shall respect the employment of colleagues. Members shall address differences between themselves and other members by following the procedures outlined in the Discipline.**

Question: What recourse is available to a member who has been wronged by another person who is not a member?

Answer: Nothing. The Discipline's primary sanction is exclusion from membership. Therefore, the Discipline cannot terminate a non-member, although an expelled member's reinstatement could be in jeopardy.

**RULE 2. Members shall not seek or appear to be seeking employment for themselves, a student, or a colleague, in a position held by someone else. Members shall apply for employment only for a position which the employer, with the knowledge of the incumbent musician, has officially and publicly declared vacant by announcement of the vacancy.**

Question: Can a member circulate a written announcement to prospective religious institution employers having incumbent employees stating that s/he is looking for employment?

Answer: No.

**RULE 3. In cases pending under the Procedures or in cases where the National Council has determined that a position has been made vacant by wrongful termination of a member of the American Guild of Organists, members shall not seek or accept regular or permanent employment for themselves, a student, or colleague at that Institution until the National Council is satisfied that differences between the Guild and the Institution have been resolved. Interim services may be provided for a period of 90 days.**

Question: May two or more members furnish their services to the Institution for an aggregate period which exceeds ninety days.

Answer: No.

**RULE 4. Members shall obtain the approval of the incumbent musician before accepting an engagement for a wedding, funeral, or other service requested by a third party. In such cases, the incumbent should receive his/her customary fee, and the third party is expected to provide it. It is the responsibility of the guest member to inform the third party of this rule. Members are advised to protect themselves as incumbents in this regard by negotiating employment contracts which secure these fees and which provide some responsibility, oversight, and control as to choice of music, etc.**

Question: Does this rule give members authority over the choice of music?

Answer: No. The Rule merely advises members to protect themselves with written contracts which provide authority over the choice of music, directly when they play and indirectly when they have oversight in situations involving a guest organist.

**RULE 5. Members shall conduct professional activities with truthfulness, honesty and integrity, and shall maintain sensitivity in matters of a personal or confidential nature.**

Question: Does conviction of a crime violate this Rule?

Answer: Not necessarily. The Rule applies to “professional activities.” Also, the Rule is limited to matters of “truthfulness, honesty and integrity.”

**RULE 6. Members shall not discriminate against others on the basis of race, national origin, age, religious affiliation, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, or medical condition (including, but not limited to, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome).**

Question: May a chapter schedule a program at a venue which is not wheelchair-accessible?

Answer: This would be a violation of both the letter and the spirit of the Rule.