

# Professional Conduct

Professional Research Standards | General company policy

Atlantic Research and Field Services (ARFS) expects dependable, honest and respectful conduct from its Owner and Director, employees, contractors and field associates. This policy applies to client work, field assignments, research activities and business relationships.

## Work honestly and accurately

Represent ARFS, qualifications and project purposes truthfully. Follow authorized research protocols, including any approved limits on disclosure in observational or mystery shopping assignments. Never fabricate responses, observations, hours, expenses or results. Record work accurately, disclose errors and limitations, and correct mistakes promptly.

## Respect people and protect information

Treat clients, participants, colleagues and the public courteously. Discrimination, harassment, intimidation and retaliation are not acceptable. Respect consent, privacy and confidentiality, use information only for authorized purposes, and follow the separate Privacy and Data Protection, Accessibility, and Diversity and Inclusion policies.

## Keep judgment independent

We approach each assignment with an open mind, consider different perspectives fairly, and base findings on evidence rather than personal beliefs, assumptions or a preferred outcome. Disclose actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest before accepting work or as soon as they arise. Do not use a project or privileged information for personal advantage. Do not offer or accept bribes, improper payments, or gifts or benefits that could influence, or appear to influence, a decision. The Owner and Director records and addresses conflicts through disclosure, reassignment or other appropriate measures.

## Follow the assignment and act safely

Follow agreed scope, deadlines, client requirements, applicable law and site safety rules. Use client property and resources responsibly. Accept only work that can be carried out competently, complete required briefings, and seek clarification when instructions are unclear. Report delays, unsafe conditions and material problems promptly. Do not change methods, commit ARFS to additional work, appoint subcontractors or speak publicly for a client without authorization.

## Raise concerns and take responsibility

Report suspected misconduct, confidentiality incidents or pressure to misrepresent findings to Charles Batstone, Owner and Director, at charles@atlanticresearch.ca or 902-249-0002. Concerns are reviewed promptly and fairly, with confidentiality limited to those who need to be involved. Good faith reporting must not lead to retaliation. Corrective action may include guidance, retraining, removal from an assignment or ending a working relationship, as appropriate and subject to applicable agreements and law.

## Put the policy into practice

ARFS provides this policy to employees and contractors and requires acknowledgment before assignments. Project briefings identify any additional client conduct requirements. Charles Batstone oversees its application and reviews it annually and when requirements change.