

Professional Standards and Ethical Conduct – Applying the Code

This section is intended to help members interpret and apply the Code in practice. Any questions about how to apply the Code in a specific situation should be addressed to MSPA Administration Offices in each region.

Responsibilities to Clients

MSPA Members will:

- ensure that each project is conducted according to the client's specifications. Procedures will be implemented to verify that client specifications are being followed.
- observe confidentiality with all techniques or methodologies and with information considered confidential or proprietary. Information will not be revealed that could be used to identify clients or respondents without proper authorization.
- ensure that companies involved in mystery shopping, as well as their employees and subcontractors, take all reasonable precautions so that client confidentiality is protected.
- do not cause major disruption of client's normal operation.
- report mystery shopping results accurately and honestly. The mystery shopping process should be described in enough detail that a skilled researcher could repeat the project if necessary. Results will be presented clearly and fairly, including any that seem contradictory or unfavorable.
- not misrepresent themselves as having qualifications, experience, skills or facilities that they do not possess. Only legitimate academic degrees, clients and other qualifications will be claimed.

Responsibilities to Data Collectors

MSPA Members will:

- not agree to, or ask anyone else to, knowingly violate any of the points of the Code.
- communicate to every client that the client is responsible for the proper and legal use of mystery shopping information provided by MSPA members.
- notify clients that all requests must be in compliance with the Code and any applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances.
- notify clients that all requests must be in compliance with all safety regulations.
- collect detailed project specifications from clients to ensure data collectors can effectively complete projects. These specifications will be provided in written form to data collectors and then confirmed for their ability to implement and their agreement to comply.

Responsibilities to the Business Community

MSPA Members will:

- not intentionally abuse confidence in the business community. At no time is mystery shopping information to be used to intentionally mislead the business community. Instances of abuse in the business community undermine the credibility of our industry.