

Code of Ethics - Guiding Principles for Members

Preamble

We live in a world in which travel has become both increasingly important and complex in its variety of modes and choices. Travelers are faced with a myriad of alternatives as to transportation, accommodations and other travel services. Travelers must depend on travel agencies and others in the industry to guide them honestly and competently. All ASTA members pledge themselves to conduct their business activities in a manner that promotes the ideal of integrity in travel and agree to act in accordance with the applicable sections of the following Principles of the ASTA Code of Ethics. Complaints arising under this Code should be filed in writing with the ASTA Consumer Affairs Department.

ASTA has the following categories of membership: Travel Agent, Premium, International Travel Agency Company, International Travel Agent Associate, Allied Company, Allied Associate, Travel School, Senior [terminating 12/31/08] and Honorary.

Responsibilities of Travel Agent, Premium, International Travel Agency Company and International Travel Agent Associate Members:

- 1. Accuracy.** ASTA members will be factual and accurate when providing information about their services and the services of any firm they represent. They will not use deceptive practices.
- 2. Disclosure.** ASTA members will provide in writing, upon written request, complete details about the cost, restrictions, and other terms and conditions, of any travel service sold, including cancellation and service fee policies. Full details of the time, place, duration, and nature of any sales or promotional presentation the consumer will be required to attend in connection with his/her travel arrangements shall be disclosed in writing before any payment is accepted.
- 3. Responsiveness.** ASTA members will promptly respond substantively to their clients' complaints.
- 4. Refunds.** ASTA members will remit any undisputed funds under their control within the specified time limit. Reasons for delay in providing funds will be given to the claimant promptly.
- 5. Cooperation.** ASTA members will cooperate with any inquiry conducted by ASTA to resolve any dispute involving consumers.
- 6. Confidentiality.** ASTA members will treat every client transaction confidentially and not disclose any information without permission of the client, unless required by law.
- 7. Affiliation.** ASTA members will not falsely represent a person's affiliation with their firm.
- 8. Conflict of Interest.** ASTA members will not allow any preferred relationship with a supplier to interfere with the interests of their clients.
- 9. Compliance.** ASTA members shall not have been convicted of a violation of any federal, state and local laws and regulations affecting consumers. Pleas of nolo contendere, consent judgments, judicial or administrative decrees, or orders, and assurances of voluntary compliance and similar agreements with federal or state authorities shall be deemed convictions for purposes of these provisions.

Responsibilities of All Members:

1. Notice. ASTA members operating tours will promptly advise the agent or client who reserved the space of any change in itinerary, services, features or price.

2. Delivery. ASTA members operating tours will provide all components as stated in their brochure or written confirmation, or provide alternate services of equal or greater value, or provide appropriate compensation.

3. Credentials. An ASTA member shall not, in exchange for money or otherwise, provide travel agent credentials to any person as to whom there is no reasonable expectation that the person will engage in a bona fide effort to sell or manage the sale of travel services to the general public on behalf of the member through the period of validity of such credentials. This principle applies to the ASTA member and all affiliated or commonly controlled enterprises.

Conclusion

Failure to adhere to this Code may subject a member to disciplinary actions, as set forth in ASTA's Bylaws.