

Social Work Ethical Decision Making Model

Name: _____ Date: _____

Identify the problem and contributing factors

What is the primary ethical issue(s) you are facing?

What factors are contributing to this problem?

Identify involved persons and institutions

Who are the people involved in the issue(s)? List down all parties involved directly or indirectly?

What institutions are involved in the issue(s)?

Identify decision-makers

Who should be involved in the decision-making process? Decide who needs to be a part of the decision-making process. This typically involves individuals who hold critical roles or have important information related to the ethical issue.

Identify relevant values

What values are essential to each individual or institution involved? This may include values based on personal beliefs, culture, or institutional norms.

Person/Institution 1:

1.

2.

3.

Person/Institution 2:

1.

2.

3.

Person/Institution 3:

1.

2.

3.

Identify goals and objectives

What objectives do you believe, if achieved, may help resolve the problem? Define the goals or objectives that, once attained, might help to address or minimize the ethical issue. These could be changes in behavior, policy, or understanding

Identify alternative intervention strategies and targets

Brainstorm alternative strategies that could be effective in resolving the ethical dilemma. Also, consider the target(s) of these interventions - the individuals or aspects most likely to benefit from or be impacted by the strategy

Alternative strategy:

Targets of intervention:

Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of alternatives

Evaluate each strategy on the potential to achieve the set objectives. Assess the effectiveness (how well it solves the issue) and efficiency (how it makes the best use of resources)

Strategy 1:

Pro(s):

Con(s):

Strategy 2:

Pro(s):

Con(s):

Select the most appropriate strategy

Select the strategy that best aligns with the anticipated results and resources while causing the least harm and most benefit, given the ethical issue(s) at stake.

Selected strategy:

Reasoning:

Implement the strategy selected

Develop a clear action plan detailing the steps of implementation, the timeline, and who will be responsible for each task.

Action plan:

Timeline:

Responsibilities:

Evaluate the results and identify additional problems

What were the outcomes of the strategy implemented? Did it solve the initial problem or raise any new issues?

Evaluation of results:

Additional problems identified:

Additional notes

Ethical assessment screen

After finishing the template, reflect on the following questions:

- Identify your own relevant personal values concerning this ethical dilemma
- Identify any societal values relevant to the ethical decision to be made
- Identify the relevant professional values and ethics
- What can you do to minimize conflicts between personnel, societal, and professional values?
- What can you do to minimize conflicts between your client's, others', and society's rights and interests?
- Have you considered and weighed both the short and long-term ethical consequences?

Reference:

Dolgoff, R., Loewenberg, F., & Harrington, D. (2005). *Ethical decisions for social work practice*. Brooks/Cole – Thomson Learning.