



COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES BETWEEN MEMBERS OF THE OHIO COUNSELING ASSOCIATION (OCA)

The OHIO COUNSELING ASSOCIATION is the professional organization representing all licensed counselors and those in graduate training to be counselors, in Ohio. We believe that it is important for our members to have the opportunity to share ideas and information about the field of professional counseling with each other. To this end, there are a variety of means to help facilitate this communication.

- **Forums:** On the OCA website there are discussion forums established that allow members to post and respond to questions. Forums provide an avenue for an online discussion that can be viewed and followed by those interested in the topic. Currently, there is a forum for counseling referrals, advertising or seeking employment and for general discussions. Members must log onto their OCA account to participate in the forums. You may subscribe to any forum and receive an email update when it is posted to.
- **Blogs:** The OCA website maintains a News and Professional Development blog. Currently these are only accessible to the website administrator, but are available to view and/or subscribe to.
- **Listserv:** OCA provides members with the opportunity to communicate with each other by subscribing to the OCA Listserv. Questions and information can be sent to the Listserv and then distributed to all subscribed members via email.

Guidelines for Communication between OCA Members: In order to ensure the best possible experience for all members, we have established some basic guidelines for participation in these services. OCA reserves the right to monitor and delete any communications that are not in accordance with these guidelines or contrary to the standards of the counseling profession or mission of OCA.

- Only post items that are relevant to the field of professional counseling.
- Be mindful not to overwhelm others' with emails and posts and only share things that are of importance to the general membership as a whole.
- Do not post commercial messages or marketing of services/products.
- Do not "flame" others. These services are meant to stimulate conversation, not to create contention. Flaming includes the making of derogatory comments, ridicule, excessive sarcasm and innuendo.
- Use caution when discussing items. Information posted is available for all to see and not private.
- Do not distribute any SPAM, solicitation, jokes, chain letters, petitions for signatures, etc.
- Do not use the services to invite others to join your social network (Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn, etc). You may invite individuals to join your network but may not invite the entire list.
- Include a signature tag on all messages include your name, affiliation and email address.
- State concisely and clearly the topic of your comments in the subject line. This allows members to respond more appropriately to your posting and makes it easier to search and filter by subject.
- Do not "reply to all" when using the listserv. Send replies to the original sender only.
- Include only the relevant portions of the original message in your reply. Delete any header information, and put your response before the original posting.
- Send messages such as "thanks for the information" or "me, too" to individuals, not to the entire list.
- Do not send administrative messages, such as "remove me from the list", through the listserv. To unsubscribe from the list, follow the directions at the bottom of the listserv email message.

Participation in OCA communications via forums, blogs and the listserv implies that you have read and accepted the guidelines for use. Thank you for being aware of these guidelines and for being a valuable, productive contributor.