

The Professional Caregiver

Working in someone's home requires a unique balance. You are a guest, a medical provider, and a support system, but you must remain a **Professional** at all times.

1. Maintaining Professional Boundaries

Boundaries protect both you and the client. Crossing them often starts small but leads to serious ethical violations.

- **No Financial Ties:** Never borrow money, lend money, or accept expensive gifts. Never share your own financial struggles with a client.
- **No Personal Sharing:** Do not discuss your personal problems, politics, or religious debates. Your focus is the client's well-being.
- **Physical Boundaries:** Respect personal space. Always explain what you are doing before touching a client for care.
- **Social Media:** Do not "friend" clients or their family members on personal accounts.

2. Ethical Decision Making

Ethics is doing the right thing, even when no one is watching.

- **Autonomy:** Respect the client's right to make their own choices, even if you disagree.
- **Beneficence:** Always acting in the best interest of the client.
- **Reliability:** Being on time and completing all assigned tasks is an ethical duty. The client depends on you for their safety.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT: Accepting a client's "tip" or cash gift is a violation of agency policy and can be considered exploitation. Politely say, "I appreciate the thought, but my agency doesn't allow me to accept gifts."

Quiz Prep Scenario: A client asks you to stop at the store on your way to work to buy them cigarettes with your own money, promising to pay you back.

Correct Action: Politely decline. This violates financial boundaries and agency policy. Report the request to your supervisor.