INTRODUCTION

IMA® (Institute of Management Accountants) is committed to advocating the highest standards of ethical business practices, both for our members and the profession at large.

This commitment dates from the organization’s founding in 1919. In the early 1980s, IMA took an even bolder leadership role in the ethics area by developing the organization’s first written code of ethics: Standards of Ethical Conduct of Management Accountants. This code of ethics was revised in 2005 to better reflect the changing ethical climate. The new code, now called the IMA Statement of Ethical Professional Practice, binds each IMA member to a commitment to the highest ethical behavior.

IMA has developed a variety of resources to support our members’ commitment to these principles. Following are resources that help members navigate ethical dilemmas and respond in a manner that upholds their professional standards.
IMA Ethical Professional Practice

In the wake of global financial scandals and with increasing awareness of the need for more direct ethical guidelines, IMA made a bold decision in 2005 to issue new guidance related to ethics. The result was the IMA Statement of Ethical Professional Practice, which emerged after a nearly three-year effort of research and deliberation by IMA’s Committee on Ethics, and it’s intended to encourage members, other professionals, and organizations to adopt, promote, and implement business practices that incorporate the highest ethical standards. The new Statement is more concise, simpler to understand and apply, and more fully reflects the global scope of management accounting than the association’s original, groundbreaking code of ethics.

Briefly put, the Statement commands that “Members of IMA shall behave ethically. A commitment to ethical professional practice includes overarching principles that express our values, and standards that guide our conduct.”

Principles
IMA’s overarching ethical principles include: Honesty, Fairness, Objectivity, and Responsibility. Members shall act in accordance with these principles and shall encourage others within their organizations to adhere to them.

Standards
A member’s failure to comply with IMA’s ethics standards may result in disciplinary action. The standards cover guidance areas including (1) competence, (2) confidentiality, (3) integrity, and (4) credibility.

Visit the IMA Statement to see the full text, including instructions on the Resolution of Ethical Conflict.

IMA Committee on Ethics
The IMA Committee on Ethics encourages organizations and individuals to adopt, promote, and execute business practices consistent with high ethical standards by providing valuable insight in response to our changing profession. The Committee upholds the Statement and provides subject-matter expertise to IMA members for resolution of ethical conflicts.

IMA Ethics Helpline
IMA offers an Ethics Helpline service to its members and other professionals. It provides free, confidential guidance on ethical issues.

After a preliminary discussion of the problem to determine the kind of ethics matter being reported, IMA’s Committee on Ethics will submit a response to the caller.

Confidentiality is maintained at all times. IMA
will not provide a specific resolution but will explain how the dilemma relates to the provisions of the *IMA Statement*.

To access the Helpline in the U.S., please call (800) 245-1383.

Individuals outside of the U.S. and Canada may have to dial another toll-free access code before dialing the hotline (see IMA’s website for instructions).

For additional information related to this resource, visit the Ethics Center on IMA’s website.

**MONTHLY COLUMN IN STRATEGIC FINANCE MAGAZINE**

Each month, a leading educator in the field of ethics, Curtis C. Verschoor, CMA, CPA, authors a column on the topic of ethics in IMA’s flagship, award-winning magazine, *Strategic Finance*.

Verschoor is the Emeritus Ledger & Quill Research Professor, School of Accountancy and MIS at DePaul University in Chicago. He also is a Research Scholar in the Center for Business Ethics at Bentley University in Waltham, Mass. Verschoor is a founding member of IMA’s Committee on Ethics and has been recognized by Trust Across America—Trust Across the World as one of North America’s Top 100 Thought Leaders in Trustworthy Business Behavior for his instrumental role in developing IMA’s thought leadership in business ethics.

The topics discussed in his column range from commentary on breaking news to analysis of pressing ethical dilemmas practitioners face.

**STATEMENTS ON MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING (SMAs)**

IMA periodically issues Statements on Management Accounting (SMAs), which are leading-edge, practice-based monographs on critical issues that affect the profession, including ethics.

In addition to the *IMA Statement*, IMA has authored an SMA titled *“Values and Ethics: From Inception to Practice,”* which identifies the issues driving the increased attention to ethical conduct and how they impact risk management and internal controls. This SMA explains the steps required for organizations to clarify, define, and develop their values and create their codes of ethical conduct.
IMA Ethics Resources for Accounting and Finance Professionals

CONTINUING EDUCATION

As part of the association’s ongoing commitment to ethics, all of IMA’s certified members are required to take at least two hours of ethics continuing professional education (CPE) annually. To assist members in meeting this requirement, IMA offers many opportunities to earn these credits at various events, including IMA’s Annual Conference & Exposition and events sponsored by IMA’s regional councils or local chapters.

The IMA Learning Center also offers an educational series devoted exclusively to ethics issues. The IMA Ethics Series currently includes six courses: (1) Embracing Ethics, (2) Corporate Ethics: From Policy to Practice, (3) Success Without Compromise, (4) Fraud in Financial Reporting; (5) A Prescription for Prevention, and (6) A Pathway to Excellence. New courses are added annually to ensure members receive the latest in ethical education.

CARL MENCONI CASE WRITING COMPETITION

The aim of this annual competition is to develop and distribute cases that focus on business ethics with specific application to management accounting and finance issues. The cases must utilize the IMA Statement as a guidance tool or reference and should be suitable for undergraduate or graduate classroom use and/or for IMA chapter continuing education programs.

Organized by IMA’s professor-in-residence and its Committee on Ethics, this program is named in memory of Carl Menconi, who held leadership positions within IMA for many years and also served as Chair of the Ethics Committee. A practitioner who highly valued education, Menconi also taught part time at his alma mater, Northern Illinois University.

The winning case of the Carl Menconi Case Writing Competition is featured in Strategic Finance magazine, and the case author or team is recognized at IMA’s Annual Conference & Exposition and awarded a cash prize.

For more information, please visit IMA’s website.
IFAC MEMBERSHIP

In 2013, IMA was named a member of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), one of only two U.S.-based associations to be granted this honor. Inclusion in this organization affirms IMA’s high standards for management accounting certification, continuing education, and ethical business practices for its members and the profession as a whole.

IFAC is an internationally recognized and respected organization currently composed of 179 members and associates in 130 countries and jurisdictions, representing approximately 2.5 million accountants in public practice, education, government service, industry, and commerce. It’s considered the global organization for the accountancy profession dedicated to serving the public interest by strengthening the profession and contributing to the development of strong international economies.

ABOUT IMA

IMA is the association dedicated to empowering accountants and financial professionals in business to become “trusted business advisors” by playing an active role in their organizations’ business success. With a network of more than 70,000 professionals worldwide, IMA provides a dynamic forum for professionals to advance their careers through CMA® (Certified Management Accountant) certification, professional education, networking, and advocacy of the highest ethical and professional standards.

For more information about IMA, please visit www.imanet.org.