



FRAMEWORK FOR ETHICAL DECISION MAKING

Identify the significant facts of the case

- What are the relevant facts of the case?
- What individuals/groups have an important stake in the outcome?

Identify all the values at risk.

- Name the values at stake.
- Include ethical values (eg, autonomy, beneficence, justice) as well as organizational values.

Determine the major value conflict(s)

- What is the “ethical” issue at hand?
- Is there a conflict of values and/or are there competing values?
- Is the choice between the lesser of two “bad” choices or the greater of two “good” choices?
- How does the decision affect people? The organization?

Identify possible courses of action/decisions/alternatives

- Which alternative promotes the most good/does the least harm?
- Which alternative respects the rights and dignity of all stakeholders?
- If someone is “left out”, how is that person’s situation addressed?
- Which alternative promotes the common good and the responsible stewardship of resources?

Choose one course of action

- Which of the alternatives identified is the “right thing to do?” Why is this choice better than others?
- Support of the decision by identifying the values that support it.
- Support the decision by identifying the probable consequences of the decision.

Act, then reflect on the outcomes of the decision.

- Be clear on what needs to happen to carry out the decision.
- Plan a time/meeting when you reflect on how the decision turned out for all concerned.
- If you had to confront this issue again, what would you do differently?