Risk Management
Clinical, Ethical, & Legal Guidelines for Successful Practice
(Second Edition)

William F. Doverspike, PhD, ABPP

For those already in practice or for students who will become practitioners, the revised and expanded second edition of this practical guide addresses ethics from a risk-management perspective. With the idea that it is easier to avoid an ethics complaint than it is to defend one, Dr. Doverspike presents some basic common sense principles. Incorporating these principles into your practice patterns can offer you a greater degree of protection while offering your clients a higher standard of care. This edition also includes a CD-ROM with 57 reproducible practice forms along with a Powerpoint® file containing slides that provide an outline of the chapters. These can be used to print handouts and create presentations for use in the classroom and in ethics seminars. The files may be easily modified by the user to suit his or her instructional needs.

“This book is written for everyone . . . this claim is often made and means one size fits all. The Doverspike book really is written for everyone at an individualized and personalized level. How can that be? We are familiar with competency models for training. This book is a competency model for practice. Practitioners at all levels of expertise, all subject matter areas, and all phases of practice from early career to the very experienced will find specific, unique, and comprehensive direction for their practices in ways that have not occurred to them. For example, even those not intending to practice telepsychology find themselves in a phone conversation or responding to a text from a client. How to decide about fees, boundaries, acceptable topics, and record retention are questions thoroughly explained. In each chapter, Doverspike provides essential concepts for thinking about the subject and then walks the reader through, step by step. Regardless of the reader’s level of expertise, it is not possible to read a page of this book without learning something.”

Linda Campbell, PhD, Professor and Director, Center for Counseling and Evaluation, University of Georgia

“Once again Bill Doverspike has created a book that should be sitting on the desk of every mental health professional. From beginning to end, the second edition of Risk Management: Clinical, Ethical, & Legal Guidelines for Successful Practice is filled with practical advice on how to safely practice psychology in a fashion that is not only in the best interest of the client but also that of the practicing psychologist. Chock-full of valuable resources, this is a must read.”

Jeffrey N. Younggren, PhD, ABPP, Clinical Professor, UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine

“Dr. Doverspike has written a comprehensive, intelligent and thoughtful guide to dealing with the complex ethical, legal and clinical issues that frequently confront the mental health professional. It is filled with both in-depth analysis of the issues and practical advice on proper and effective risk management. I highly recommend it.”

Robert B. Remar, JD, Partner, Rogers & Hardin LLP, Atlanta; Legal Counsel, Georgia Psychological Association

About the Author:
William F. Doverspike, PhD, is a licensed psychologist and Diplomate in Clinical Psychology, American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP) and Diplomate in Neuropsychology, American Board of Professional Neuropsychology (ABPN). He is an Adjunct Professor at Emory University in Atlanta, where he teaches professional ethics and legal standards in the clinical psychology doctoral program. He is also an Adjunct Professor at Richmont Graduate University in Atlanta, where he teaches professional ethics, psychopathology, and addictions in the professional counseling program. Dr. Doverspike is currently a member of the Georgia licensing board for psychologists. He is a former President of the Georgia Psychological Association (GPA) and has served on the GPA Ethics Committee. He has authored over 100 articles and chapters on a variety of topics ranging from professional ethics and spirituality to neuropsychology and psychotherapy. He maintains a private practice at the Atlanta Counseling Center.
# Clinical, Ethical, & Legal Guidelines for Successful Practice

## Table of Contents

**Chapter One**
**ETHICAL RISK MANAGEMENT:**

Some Personal Reflections
- Understand Ethical and Legal Standards
- Practice Within Your Area of Competence
- Supervise Only What You Know
- Obtain Adequately Informed Consent
- Beware of Child Custody Evaluations
- Maintain Clear Boundaries With Clients
- Use Projective Retrospective Thinking
- Consult Regularly With Colleagues
- Document Your Decisions in Writing
- Keep Communication Channels Open
- Aspire to a Standard of Excellence
- Ethical Risk Management Made Ridiculously Simple
- Summary of Ethical Risk-Management Considerations
- Points to Remember

**Chapter Two**
**MANAGING BOUNDARIES:**

Staying Off the Slippery Slope
- Privacy, Confidentiality, and Privilege
- Boundary Crossings
- Dual Relationships
- Risk Factors and Unhealthy Boundaries
- Sexual Impropriety
- Special Considerations
- Boundary Management Made Ridiculously Simple
- Summary of Managing Boundaries
- Points to Remember

**Chapter Three**
**ETHICAL DECISION MAKING:**

Doing the Next Right Thing
- Principle Ethics and Virtue Ethics
- Teleological and Deontological Ethics
- Doing the Next Right Thing

**Chapter Four**
**RESOLVING PROBLEMS BEFORE THEY ARISE**

Ethical Decision Making Made Ridiculously Simple
- Summary of Decision-Making Guidelines
- Points to Remember

**Chapter Five**
**CONSULTING WITH COLLEAGUES:**

Don't Worry Alone
- Common Ethical Dichotomies
- Top 10 Reasons Not to Consult a Colleague
- Top Reasons to Consult a Colleague
- Psychological vs. Legal Consultations
- Consulting With Colleagues Made Ridiculously Simple
- Summary of Consulting With Colleagues
- Points to Remember

**Chapter Six**
**DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD KEEPING:**

Putting It in Writing
- Record Retention
- Child Records
- Protected Health Information
- Psychotherapy Notes
- Progress Notes
- Risk-Managed Notes
- Summary of Records
- Disclosure of Information
- Client Access
- Written Reports
- Record Keeping Made Meticulously Simple
- Summary of Documentation and Record Keeping
- Points to Remember

**Chapter Seven**
**RESPONDING ETHICALLY TO ETHICS COMPLAINTS**

Respond to the Notice of Investigation
- Remember There is No Such Thing as a Frivolous Complaint
- Be a Colleague, Not an Adversary
- Be a Behaviorist
- When Explaining Details
- Explain in Writing What You Did and Why You Did It
- Be Sure to Cite the Standards
- Do Not Blame the Client
- Show Concern for Your Client’s Welfare
- Learn How to Turn Errors Into Amends
- Be Able to Note Peer Consultations
- Think In Terms of Aspirational Behavior
- Be Aware of Procedures and Deadlines
- Understand the Committee Findings
- Turn a Negative Into a Positive
- Responding to Complaints Made Ridiculously Simple
- Summary of Responding to Ethics Complaints
- Points to Remember

**Chapter Eight**
**THE MYTH OF RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Myth of Risk Management
- The Curse of Risk Management
- The Worst of Risk Management
- Summary of an Alternative View of Risk Management
- Points to Remember

**REFERENCES • AUTHOR INDEX • SUBJECT INDEX**

---

**Order Code RMC2, Paperbound: $49.95 $49.95**
406 pp.  2015

Please send me:

| Copies RMC2 (Paperbound): | $49.95 $49.95 each + shipping* |

*Shipping in US: Orders up to $49.99, add $6.50; Orders $50-$99.99, add 9% of subtotal.
Free ground shipping within US on orders over $100.
Air Shipping and Foreign orders, call or email for charges.

All orders from individuals and private institutions must be prepaid in full. Prices and availability subject to change without notice. Errors and omissions on credit card computations will be automatically corrected.

Credit card orders only:
CALL 1.800.443.3364, FAX 1.866.804.4843, or Email to: cs.prpress@gmail.com

**Order Form**

Name ____________________________

Company Name (if bus. addr.) ____________________________

Address ____________________________

City/State/Zip ____________________________

Daytime Phone # ____________________________

Is this your home or office? yes no

Profession ____________________________

Payment:

___ Check (in US funds) payable to PRP

___ Charge my VISA, MasterCard, American Express

Acct # ____________________________

Exp. Date ________ Signature ____________________________

If different from above:

Address where credit card company sends statement ____________________________

---

For information on all our titles, please visit our website: www.prpress.com