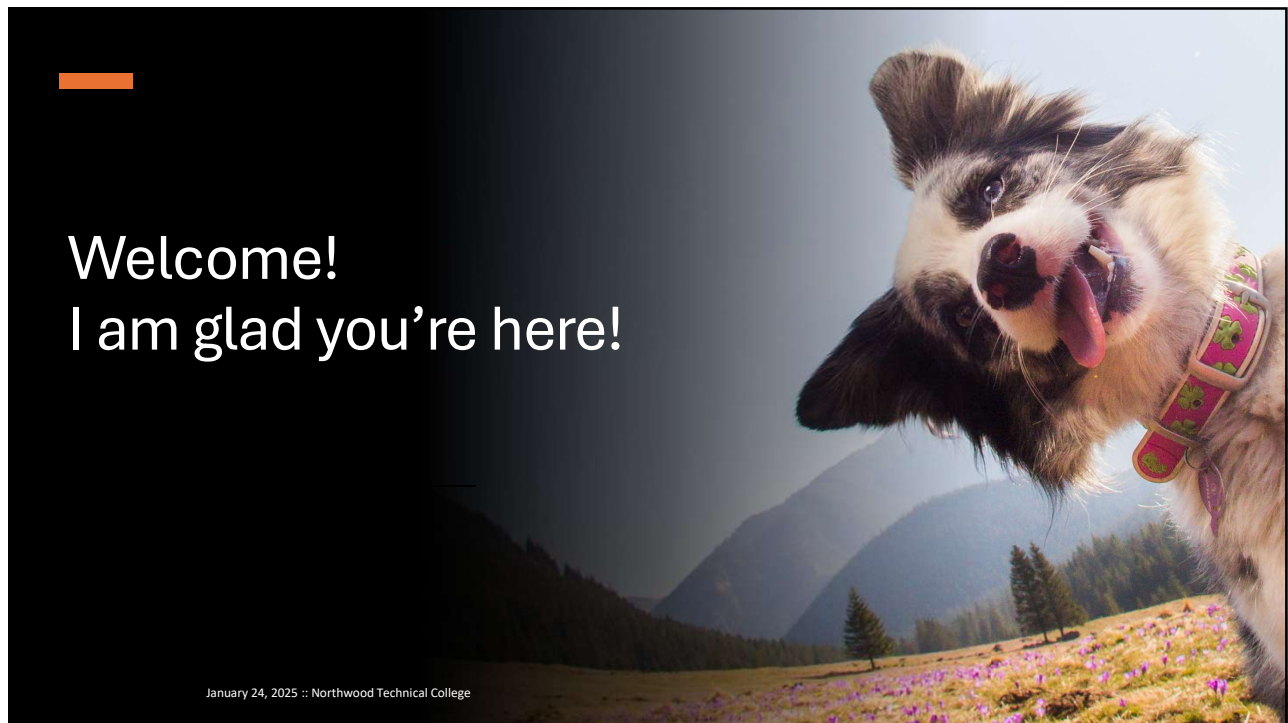


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Workshop Agenda

- NASW Code of Ethics 101
- What does it mean to be rural?
- Privacy & Confidentiality
 - Confidentiality and Informed Consent
 - Telehealth
- Resources
 - Distributive justice
- Boundaries & Dual Relationships
 - Types of boundaries and dual relationships
 - Guidelines, Considerations, and Strategies to Setting Healthy Boundaries
- Case Study & Reamer's Ethical Decision-Making Model
- Wrap Up

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Introductions

- Let's go around Zoom and share:
 - Your name,
 - The type of work you do, and
 - What fictional workplace would you love to work in?
 - Not limited by skill, training, reality
 - Can be picked because you like the characters, or storyline



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Why ethics & boundaries?

- Ethical Dilemma
 - Dilemma : two horns
 - Equal in size, equal in complexity
- Lifelong learning
- Licensure
- Consultation
- Self assessment



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Why is Ethical Practice Important?

- **Helping professionals confront unique and difficult problems.**
- **Obligations to clients, their families, communities, society**
- **Issues:**
 - **Confidentiality**
 - **Informed Consent**
 - **Client Self-Determination**
 - **Responsibility to Protect**
 - **Value Differences**



6

“The NASW Code of Ethics offers a set of values, principles and standards to guide decision-making and everyday professional conduct of social workers. It is relevant to all social workers and social work students regardless of their specific functions or settings.”

Retrieved from <https://www.socialworkers.org/about/ethics/code-of-ethics>

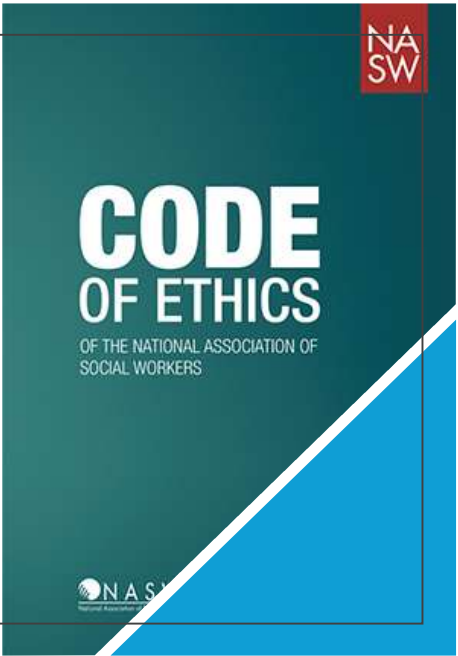
NASW Code of Ethics

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NASW Code of Ethics

- Identify professional core values
- Summarize ethical principles and standards to guide practice
- Assess ethical/unethical conduct
- Inform the general public for professional accountability.



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Content of the Code of Ethics

“The NASW Code of Ethics is intended to serve as a guide to the everyday professional conduct of social workers.

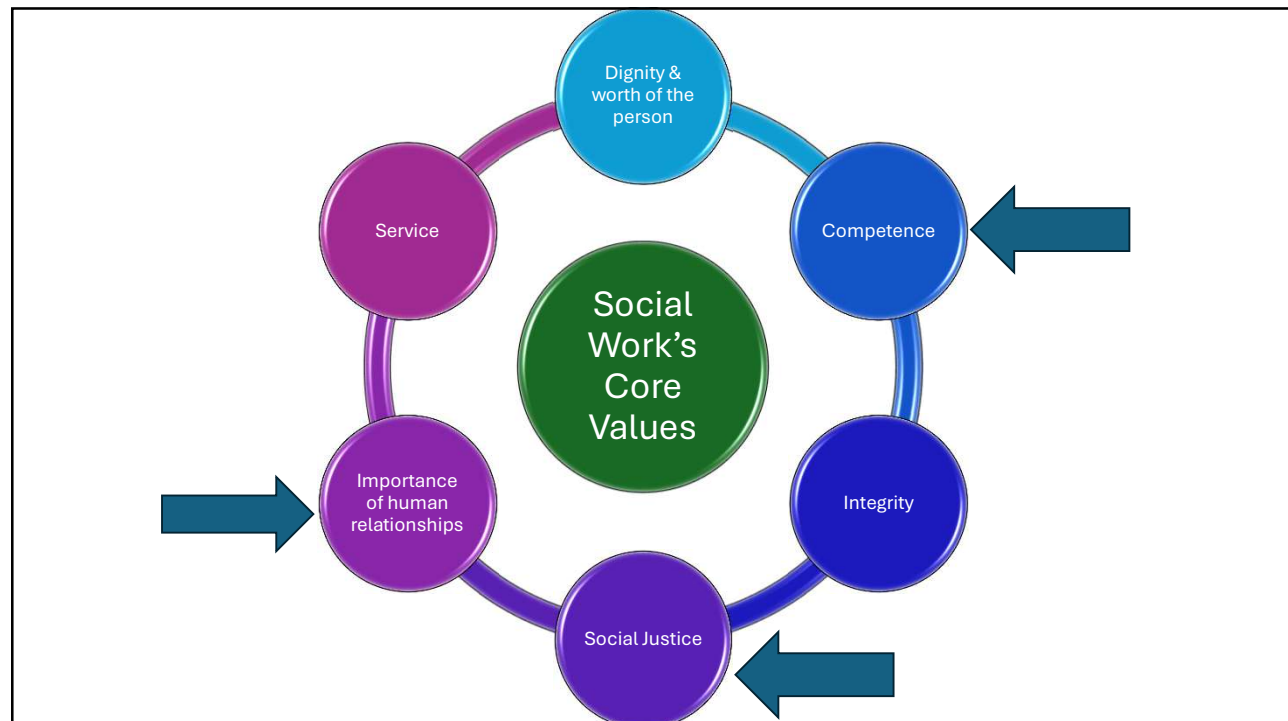
The Code has four sections:

- 1. Preamble - summarizes the social work profession's mission and core values.
- 2. Purpose - provides an overview of the Code's main functions and a brief guide for dealing with ethical issues or dilemmas in social work practice.
- 3. Ethical Principles - presents broad ethical principles, based on social work's core values, that inform social work practice.
- 4. Ethical Standards - includes specific ethical standards to guide social workers' conduct and to provide a basis for adjudication.”

Retrieved from <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

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Ethical Standards

Section IV of the NASW Code of Ethics contains the Ethical Standards.

The Ethical Standards are broken into six specific areas of concern:

- (1) Social workers' ethical responsibilities to clients
- (2) Social workers' ethical responsibilities to colleagues
- (3) Social workers' ethical responsibilities in practice settings
- (4) Social workers' ethical responsibilities as professionals
- (5) Social workers' ethical responsibilities to the social work profession
- (6) Social workers' ethical responsibilities to the broader society

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2021 NASW Code of Ethics Revisions

Recent revisions to the NASW Code of Ethics include:

- **Self Care as a key aspect of professional, ethical practice**

“ETHICAL PRINCIPLE: Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner. Social workers are continually aware of the profession’s mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards and practice in a manner consistent with them. Social workers should take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally. Social workers act honestly and responsibly and promote ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which they are affiliated.”

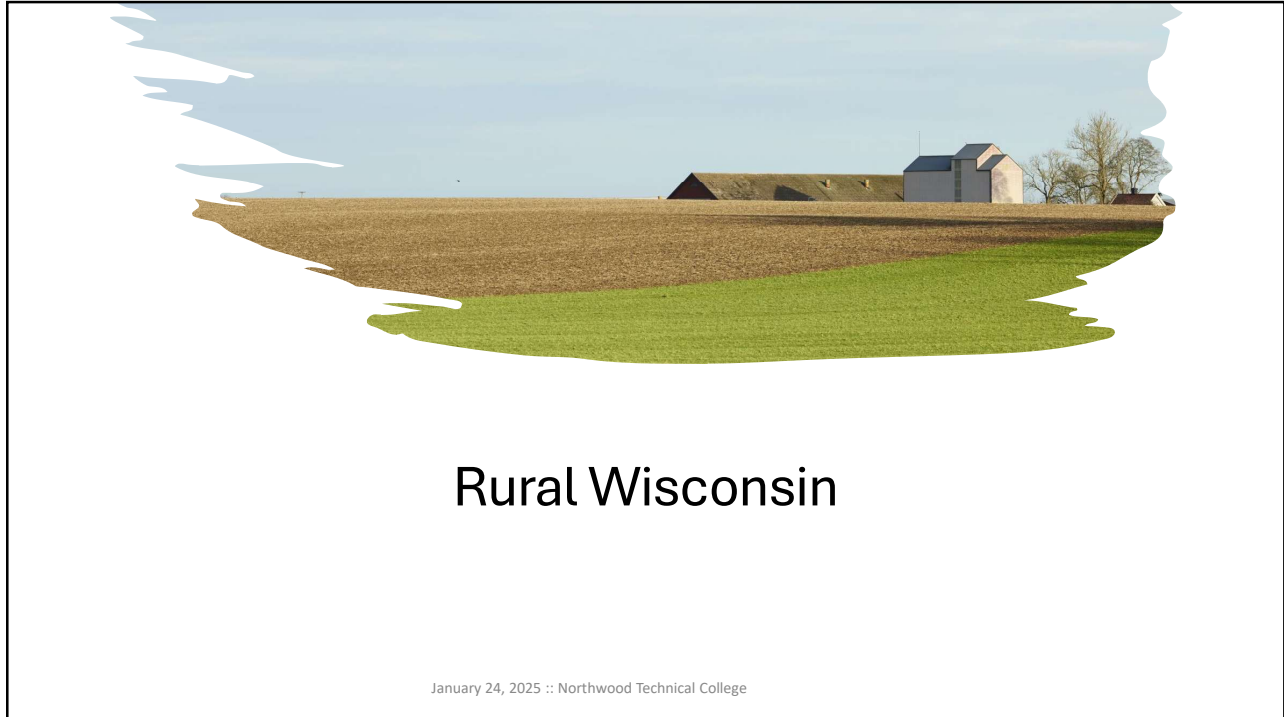
- **Reintroduction of cultural competence**

“1.05 Cultural Competence (c) Social workers should demonstrate awareness and cultural humility by engaging in critical self-reflection (understanding their own bias and engaging in self-correction); recognizing clients as experts of their own culture; committing to life-long learning; and holding institutions accountable for advancing cultural humility.”

Retrieved from https://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=UyXb_VQ35QA%3d&portalid=0

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Rural Wisconsin

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What is rural Wisconsin?

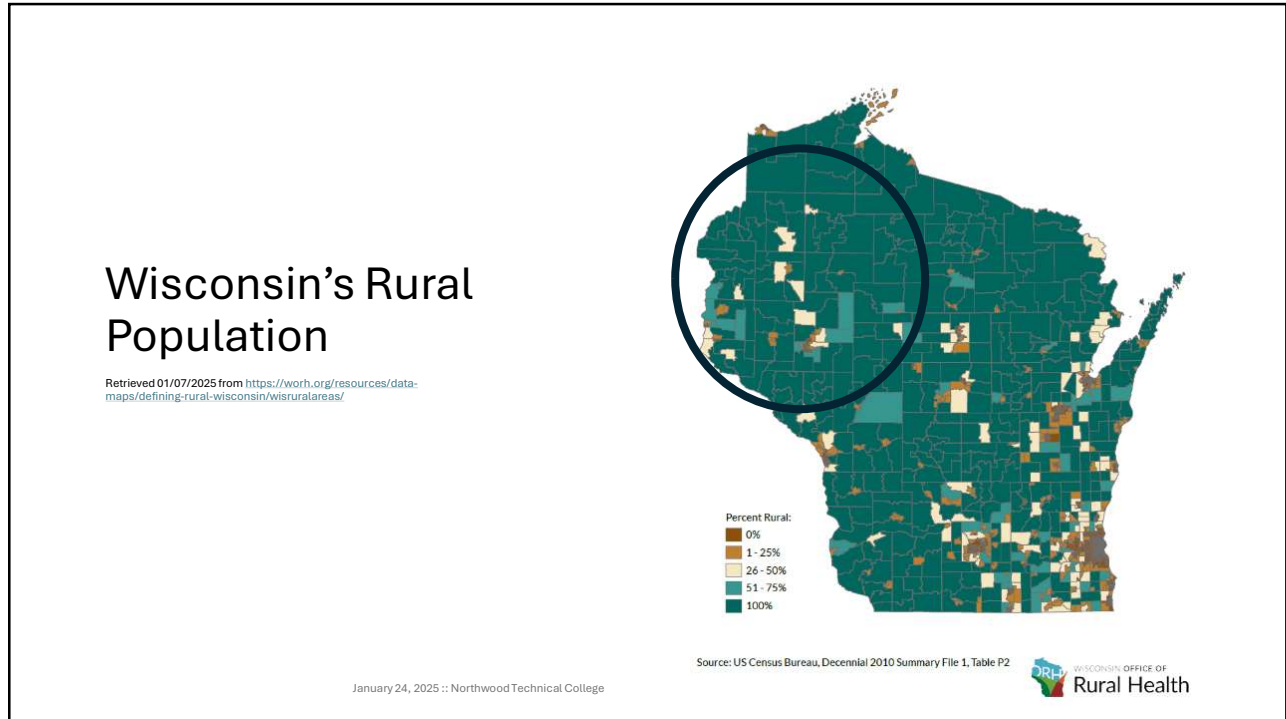
- Different perspectives based on
 - Population density
 - Place that is NOT part of a city/town of at least 2,500 people
 - Proximity to urban centers
 - Commuter areas
 - Remoteness and access to services
 - Deer and cattle per person
 - Types of land use



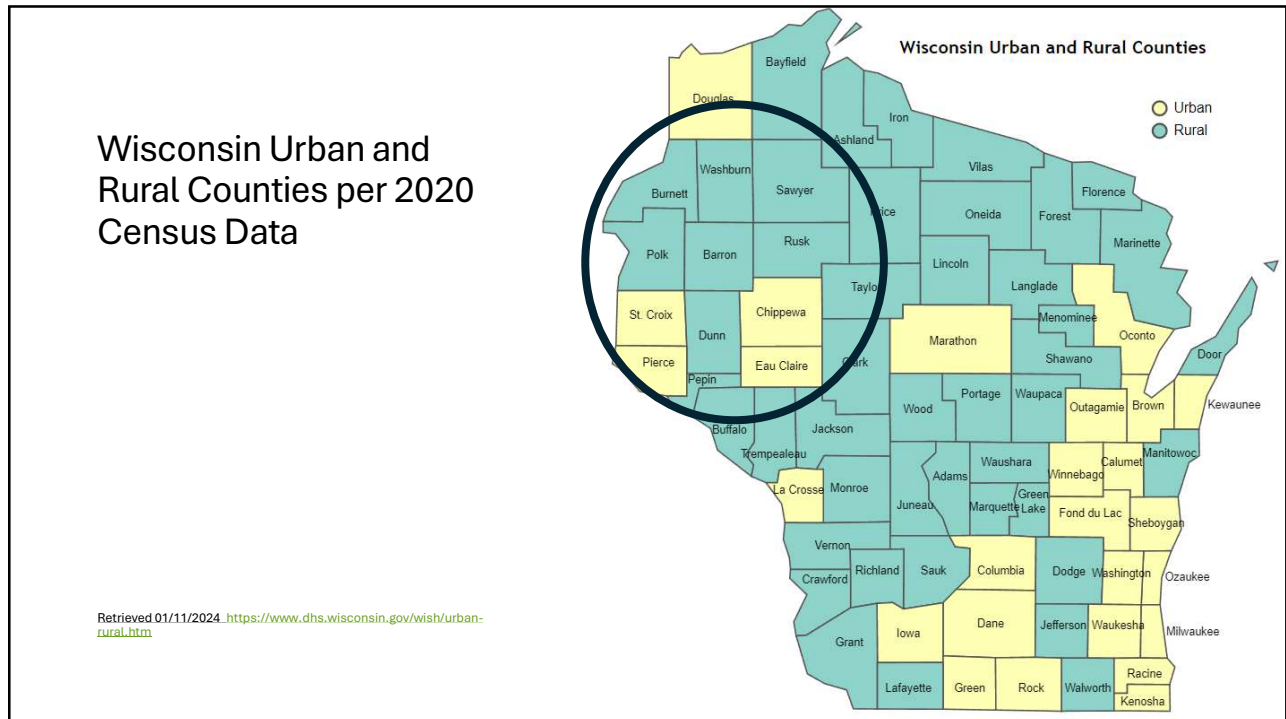
Retrieved from: <https://www.wiscontext.org/putting-rural-wisconsin-map>

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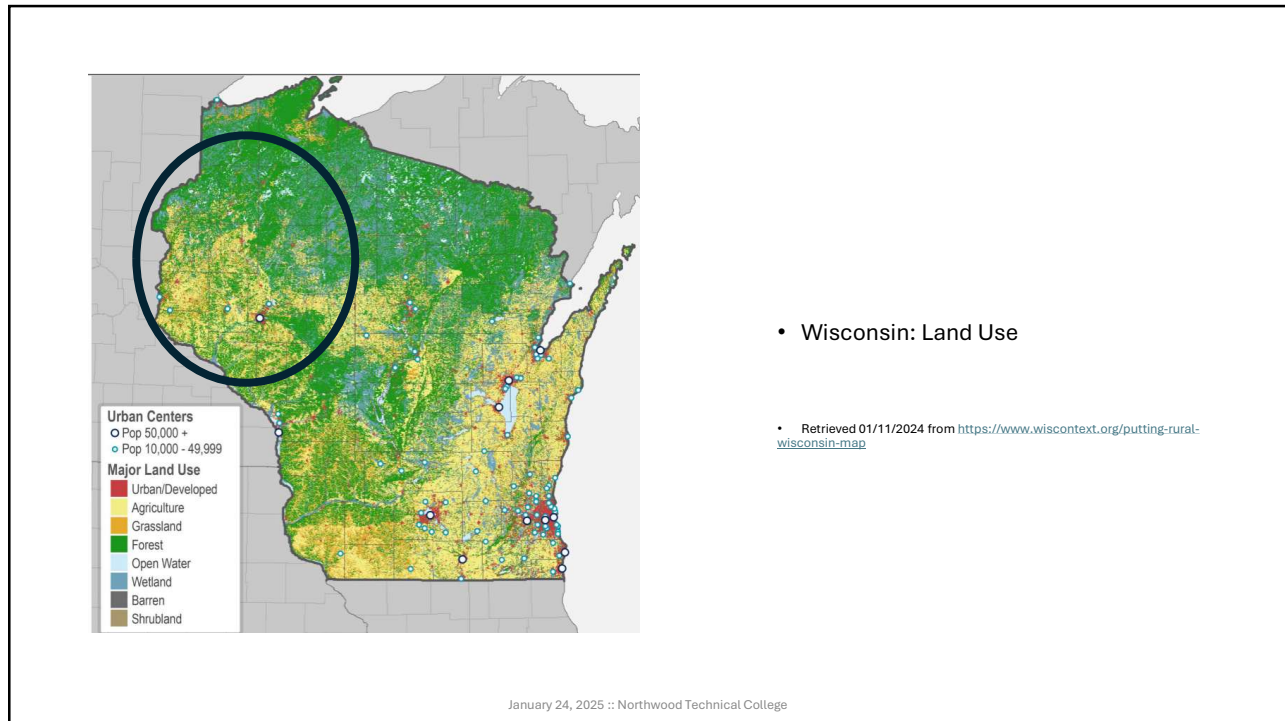
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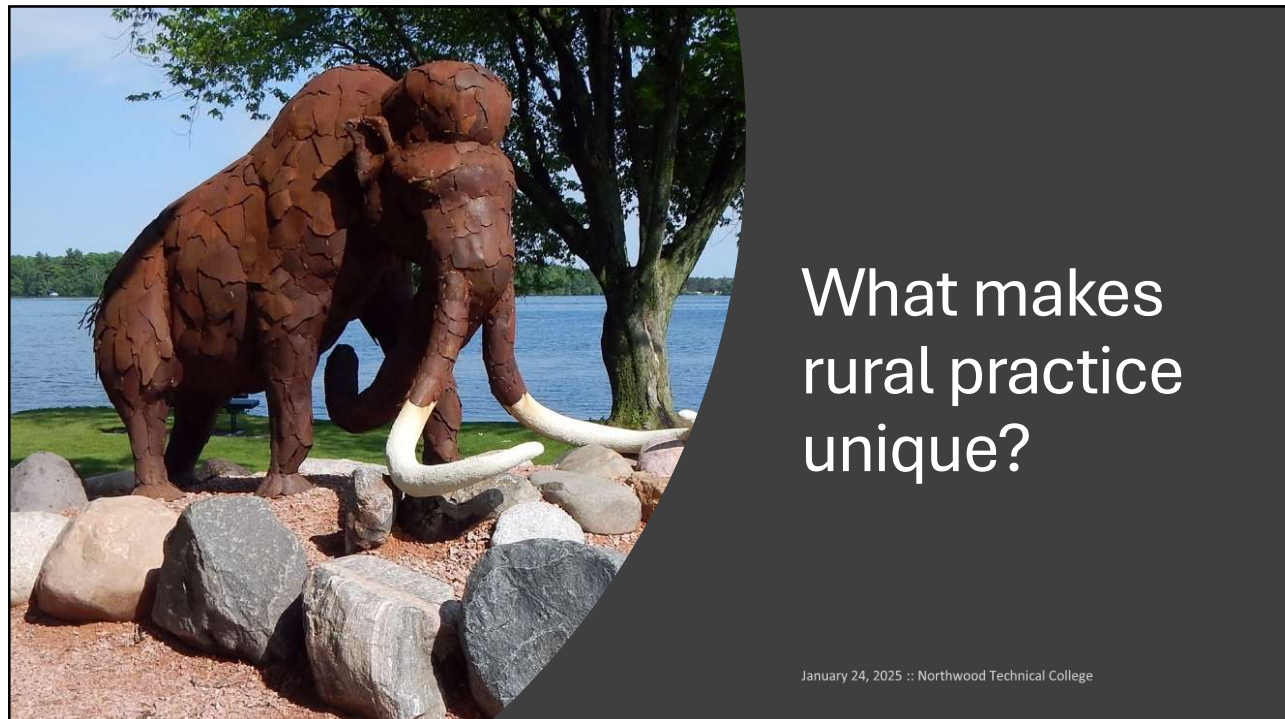
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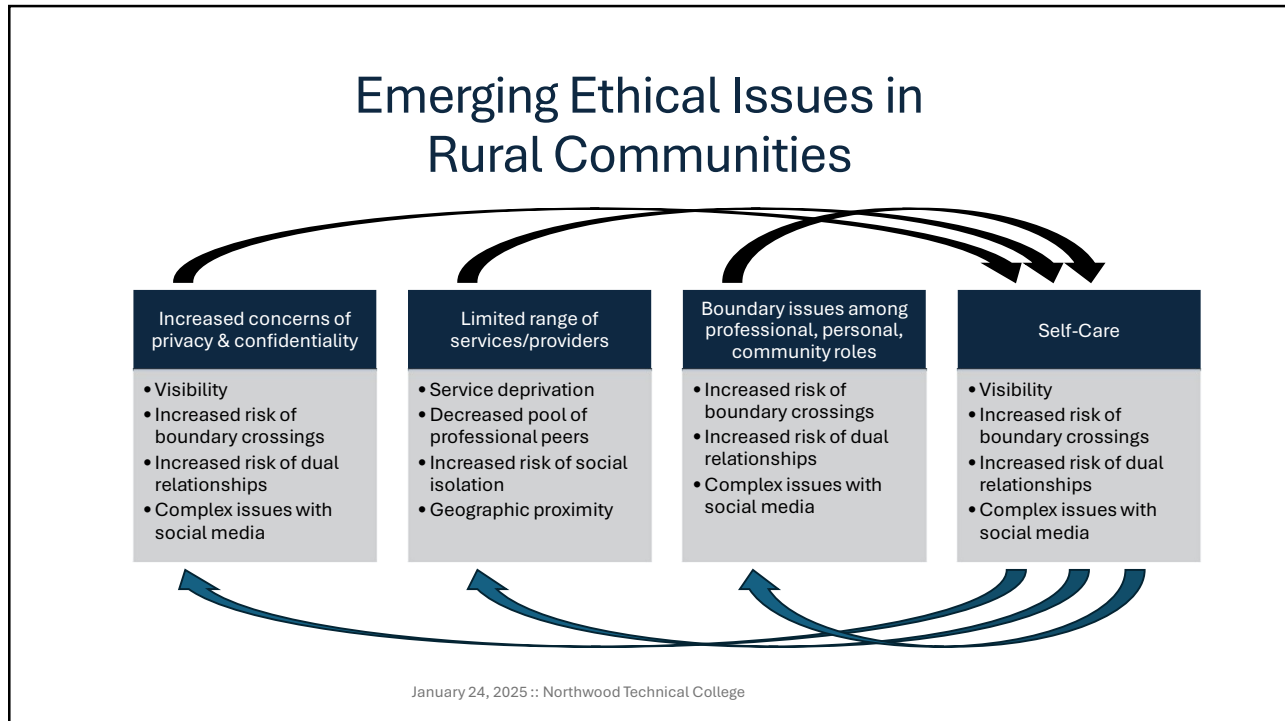
Why is rural important?

- Wisconsin ranks in the top 10 states for its number of rural places (WORH, 2024)
 - Rural places have *different* needs than urban places
 - Rural places have *different* challenges than urban places
 - Rural places have *greater* needs than urban places (due to being underserved)
 - Physical health
 - Dental health
 - Mental Health
 - Emergency Health
 - Education
 - Economic security

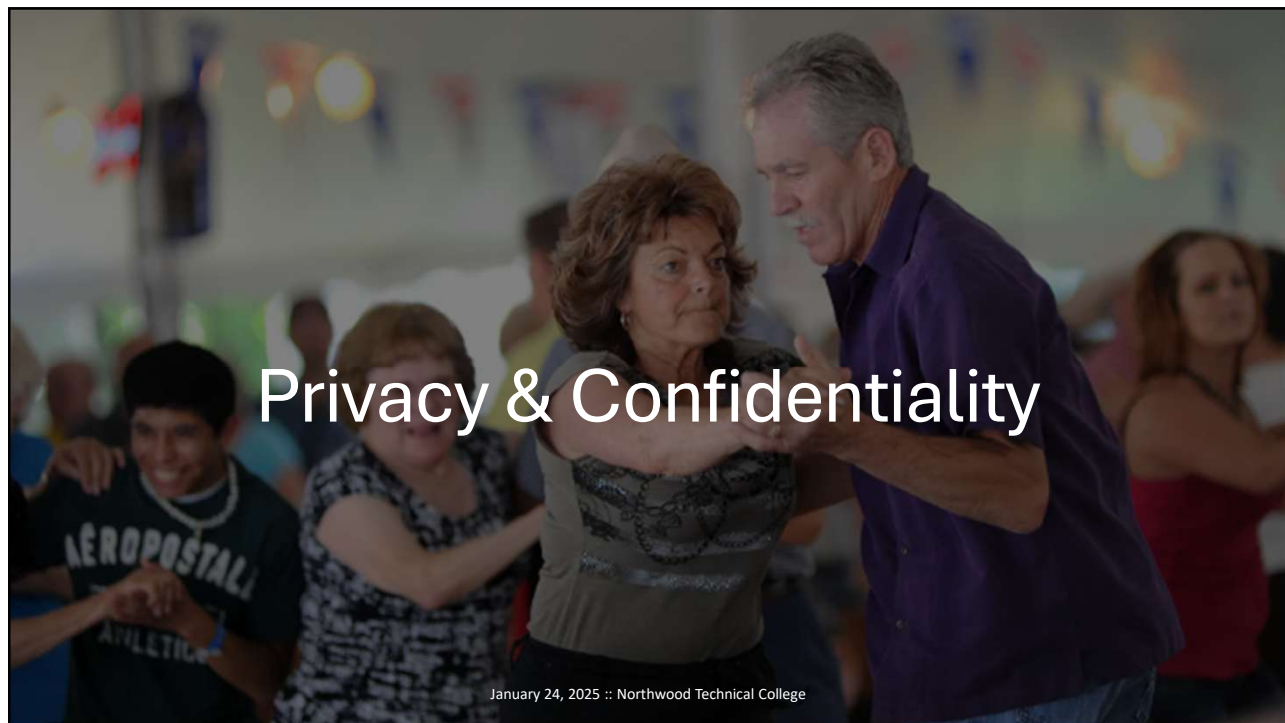
Retrieved on 01/11/2024 from <https://worh.org/resources/data-maps/defining-rural-wisconsin/wisruralareas/>

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Group Discussion

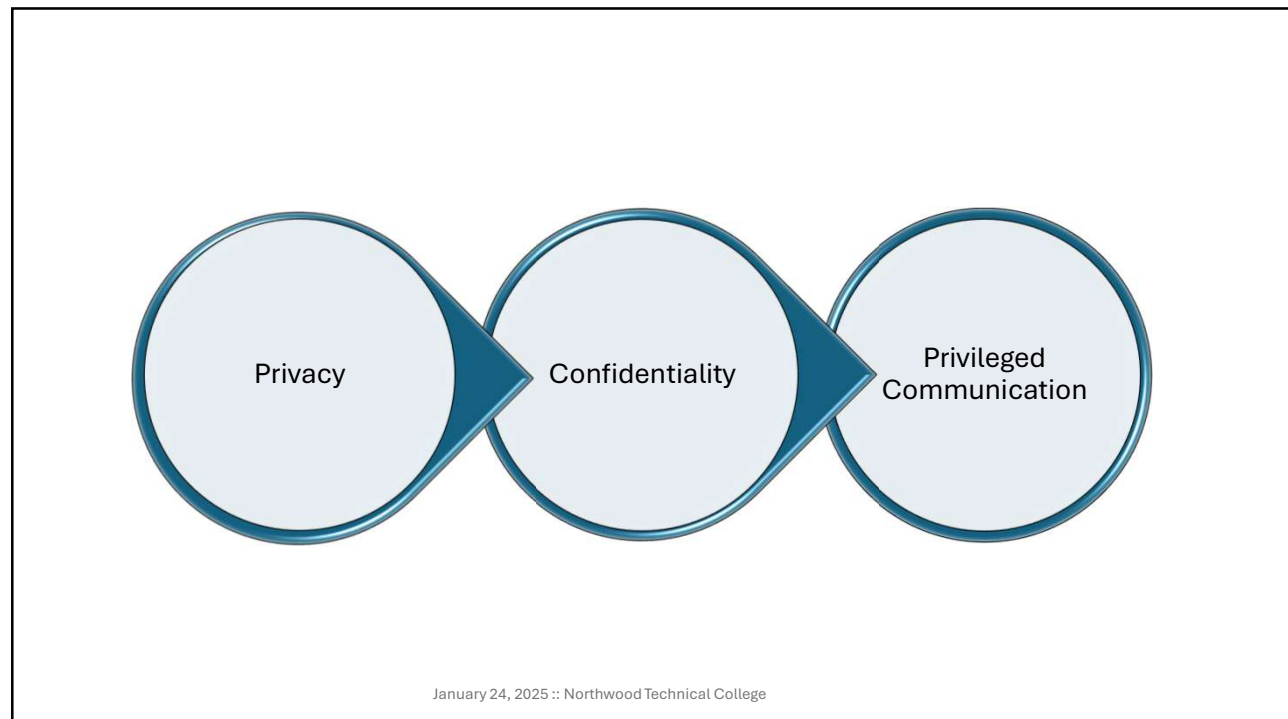
When you think about:

- Your client's privacy & confidentiality,
- Your privacy & confidentiality.

What has been a challenge and a benefit when you live in a small town?

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Client Privacy

- **Rural practice:** What do we know before we ask
- How do we handle “what we know” with what “we need to know.”
- Clients are entitled to privacy
 - **Need to know**
- NASW Standard 1.07(a): “Social workers should respect client’s right to privacy. Social workers should not solicit private information from clients unless it is essential to providing services or conducting social work evaluation or research. Once private information is shared, standards of confidentiality apply.”



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Guidelines for Privacy



Ask only what is required, needed to complete work



Information gained through previous personal or professional interaction may not be included in current interaction (different unit, different job...)

Statutes on privacy
Agency policy



Information gained through shared experiences, history, may not be included in current interaction

Agency policy
Right to privacy

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What is Confidentiality?

Confidentiality means that any helping professional is not to divulge any information to anyone that has been shared by a client, without the client's informed consent.

NASW, 2021



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Confidentiality

- Professionals need explicit written permission from clients to share information
- Clients should have access to records concerning them
- Care should be taken to protect the confidence of others contained in records
- Informed consent for recording clients
- Safeguarding of electronic communications
- “Relative confidentiality”
 - Not absolute
 - Has Limits



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Confidentiality in the Engagement Process



Explain legal or ethical responsibilities related to confidentiality at the first visit.



Explain the responsibilities of both the worker and client



Secure the client's signature on any releases of information



Explain what can or cannot be held in confidence

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Confidentiality & Telehealth

- Policies
 - Confidentiality
 - Storage
 - Security
- Technology
 - Inclusive and equitable distribution
- Patient informed consent
 - Including safety
- Training for **all (competence!)**

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Our Privacy: Social Media & Technology

- **Our social media accounts**
 - Locked
 - Appropriate
 - Factual
- **Posting on public social media accounts**
 - Appropriate
 - Factual
 - No client information
- **Not a forum for client engagement (NASW, 2021)**



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Limited Resources




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Discussion

 What resources are most needed?

 What are some of the ethical decisions you've had to make?

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ACCESS to Limited Resources

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Access as Distributive Justice

- Distributive Justice (Reamer, 2015)
 - “Involves the use of ethics concepts and criteria to determine how scarce resources should be divided among people, groups, organizations, and communities.”
 - Not always unique to rural practice
 - Early days COVID-19 vaccines
 - Shelter beds
 - Greater likelihood
 - Mental Health, Health Care, and Dental Health
 - Poverty (US Dept of Ag, rural poverty 4% higher than metro areas)
 - Child Abuse (US Dept of HHS, 1.7X higher than urban areas)
 - Greater risk of dying of drug overdose and suicide
- <https://socialworkonline.uky.edu/resources/article/rural-social-work/>

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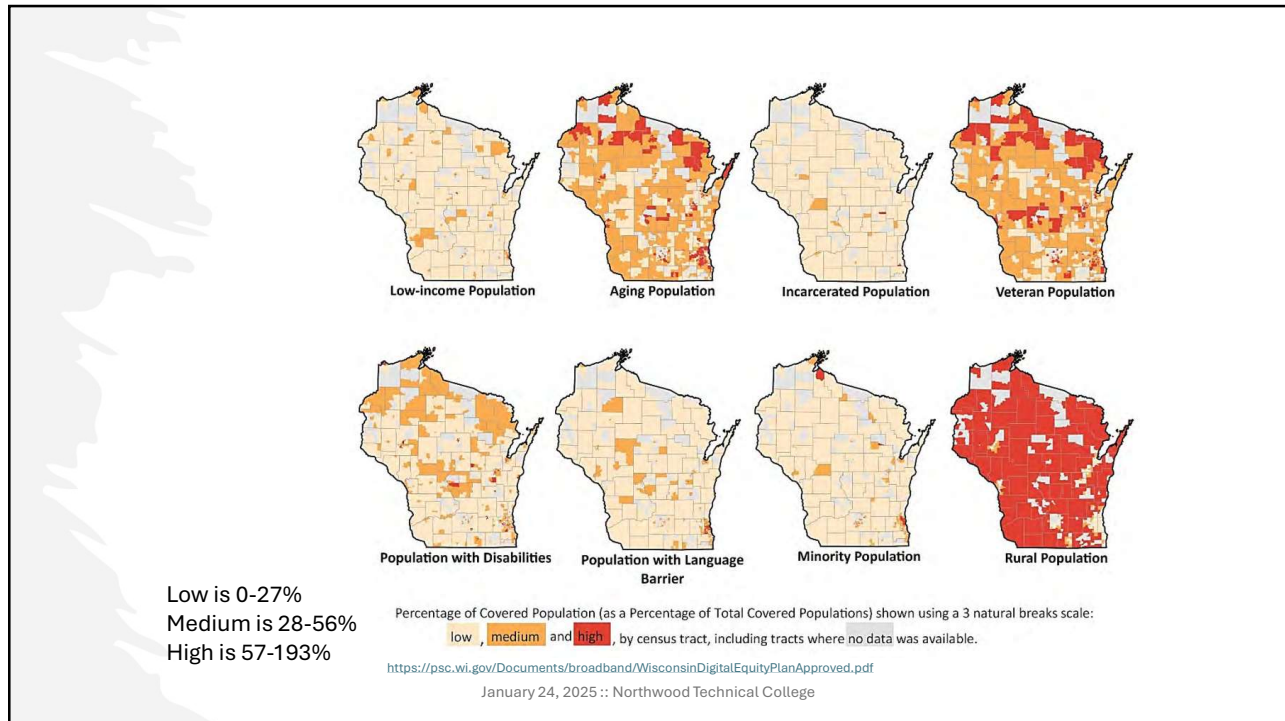
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Broadband & Rural Wisconsin

- Broadband is an essential component of modern life
 - Critical for
 - Wisconsin is ranked 48th for 1G internet access
 - Wisconsin is ranked 38th for 100 Mbps internet access
- Goal by end of 2025 for all Wisconsin to have internet access
- Wisconsin’s Digital Equity Plan prioritizes eight populations including
 - People in poverty
 - Aging (60+)
 - Veterans
 - People with disabilities
 - Rural residents

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Wisconsin & Rural Access to Healthcare

Primary Health Care Shortage Areas

Health Professional Shortage Areas
Primary Health Care

Retrieved from:
<http://www.worh.org/library/health-professional-shortage-area-primary-health-care-0>

If telehealth is available,

- Internet
- Lack of feeling connected to physician
- Awareness of telehealth

<https://socialworkonline.uky.edu/resources/article/rural-social-work/>

■ Shortage Area
 ▲ Facility-based Shortage Area

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Wisconsin & Rural Access to Healthcare

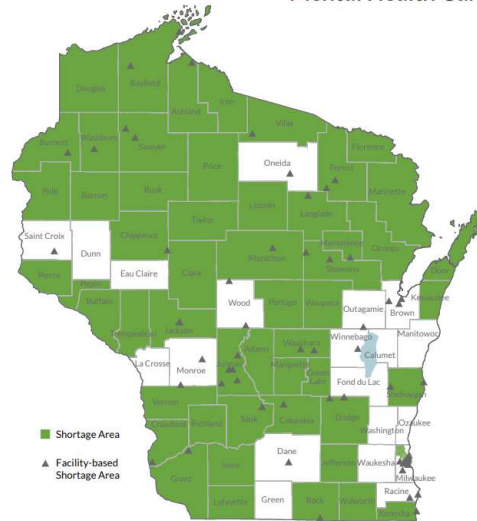
Mental Health Care Shortage Areas

Retrieved from:
<http://www.worh.org/library/health-professional-shortage-area-mental-health-care-0>

- 69% nonmetropolitan counties without psychiatrists
- Expand telehealth (442% increase between 2019 and 2020)

<https://socialworkonline.uky.edu/resources/article/rural-social-work/>

Health Professional Shortage Area: *Mental Health Care*



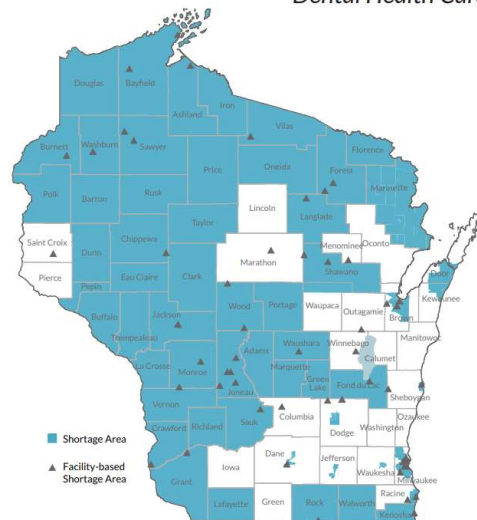
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Wisconsin & Rural Access to Healthcare

Dental Care Shortage Areas

Retrieved from:
<http://www.worh.org/library/health-professional-shortage-area-dental-health-care-0>

Health Professional Shortage Area: *Dental Health Care*



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Distributive Justice & Resources



- Relevance
- Availability
- Accessibility
- Eligibility
- Applications
 - Fee
- Feasibility

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Strategies for Distributive Justice

Policy	Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure agency has clear policy on how to prioritize client access to limited services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social justice → taking action on local, state, federal levels to increase access, services

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Competence: Key Terms



Professional Domain

- The profession's area of expertise.

Professional Drift

- Neglect of profession's traditional purpose and functions in favor of activities associated with another setting.

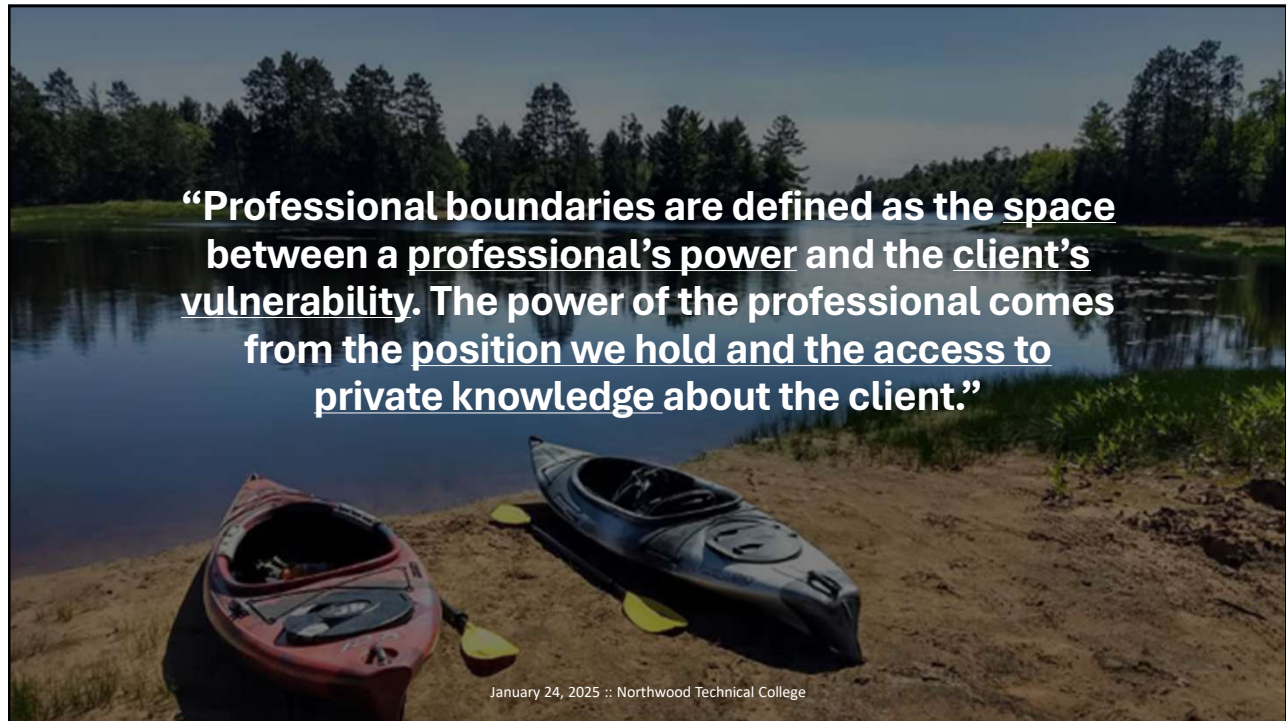
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Boundaries & Dual Relationships

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Professional Relationship Considerations

- **Boundaries exist on a continuum**
 - Can be hard to know if someone has blurred or violated boundaries
- **If you are bending rules toward the personal:**
 - Reflect on why you are doing this.
 - Utilize consultation/ Point out concerns of colleague
- **Be aware of relationships that are conducive to becoming personal:**
 - Type of setting
 - Specific professional role

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Boundaries



Healthy Boundary the respected space between the worker's power and the client's vulnerability.



Overlapping Boundary having contact with clients outside the professional relationship where there is **no significant role conflict** or boundary crossing.



Boundary Crossing departing from or **not supporting** commonly accepted practices or safe connections.



Boundary Violation acts or actions that moves professional relationships to the unprofessional.

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Overlapping Boundaries

Think about a time you or a colleague experienced an overlapping boundary or potential boundary crossing.

- Talk about it in small groups:
 - How did it occur?
 - How did you navigate it?
 - What did you learn from the experience?



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Sexual Boundaries

- No Sexual Contact with Clients
- NASW Code- 1.09:
 - No engagement in sexual activities with current clients, whether consensual or forced
 - **Worker assumes full burden of setting boundaries**
 - No sexual activities with former clients
 - No services to a person they have had a prior relationship with.
- 2.06 (a):
 - Workers should not engage in relationships with those they are supervising or teaching

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Other Boundary Issues

- **Overfamiliarity**
 - Discussions of topics unrelated to services
- **Personal Gain**
 - Taking advantage of a professional relationship
 - Conflicts of interest
- **Gift Giving**
 - Giving or accepting goods and services
- **Providing Services to Family and Friends**
- **Social Contact**
 - Contact with clients outside professional relationship

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Boundaries & Self-Disclosure

- Brief, infrequent, and relevant
- Consider impact to boundaries
- Be ready to deflect, limit questions
 - “Your mom died a few months ago, tell me how...”
 - “Didn’t your step-son go to rehab too?”

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Consequences of Boundary Violations

Client Consequences

- Worker dependency
- Physical and emotional stress
- Regression
- Develop feelings of mistrust

Worker Consequences

- Negative impact on Career
- Implications for license/certification
- Burn-out
- Negative impact on professional reputation

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What is a Dual Relationship?

When multiple roles exist between a professional and a client.

Client is also a student, friend, family member, employee or business associate of worker.



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Types of Dual Relationships

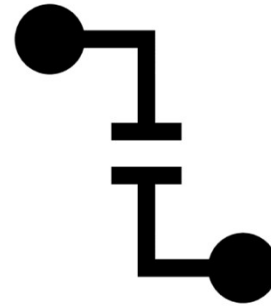
- **Social** Worker & client are friends or have some other social relationship.
- **Professional** Worker and client are colleagues in some capacity
- **Communal** Worker and client live in the community, belong to the same church, etc.
- **Supervisory** relationships with multiple roles, loyalties, responsibilities and functions.
- **Digital** Relationships that take place online, such as social networking sites

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Managing Dual Relationships

1. Be alert to potential or actual conflicts of interest.
2. Inform clients and colleagues about potential or actual conflicts of interest; explore alternative remedies.
3. Consult with others in complex cases and document clearly.
4. Study the complexities of entering a dual relationship.
5. Create policies that include the risks of dual relationships.
6. End any dual relationship that causes conflict of interest, harm or distress.



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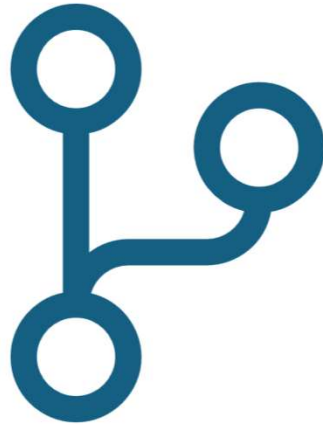
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Case Study

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Case Study

- Read the case study (handout)
- Review the NASW Code of Ethics
<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>
- Review Reamer's Ethical Decision-Making Model (handout)
- Impact of dual relationships, boundaries, and distributive justice

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1. Identify the ethical issues, including the social work values and ethics that conflict.
2. Identify the individuals, groups, and organizations that are likely to be affected by the ethical decision.
3. Tentatively identify all possible courses of action and the participants involved in each, along with possible benefits and risks for each.
4. Thoroughly examine the reasons in favor of and opposed to each possible course of action, considering relevant (a) ethical theories, principles, and guidelines; (b) codes of ethics and legal principles; (c) social work practice theory and principles; and (d) personal values (including religious, cultural, and ethnic values and political ideology).

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Background: Maria, a 34-year-old single mother, has been receiving services from a social worker, Jenna, for the past six months. Maria is struggling with financial insecurity and emotional distress after losing her job. During this time, Jenna has built a trusting relationship with Maria and has provided referrals for community resources to find employment, manage stress, and parenting support.

Recently, Jenna learned that Maria's brother, Luis, who is a member of the same community, is seeking social services for a variety of issues, including substance abuse treatment and legal troubles. Luis shared with Jenna that he and Maria have a complicated history, having grown up in an abusive home where they experienced neglect and violence.

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Privacy and Confidentiality: Jenna's client, Maria, has *not* shared sensitive information with her in confidence, including her struggles with domestic violence and the trauma from her childhood. However, when Jenna meets Luis in a separate setting while working on his case, he mentions Maria's situation briefly and shares additional information about their childhood that would be useful in providing appropriate services for Maria.

Dual Relationships: Jenna also volunteers at Head Start where Maria's children attend 3K and 4K. One day, Jenna learns that Head Start is looking for volunteers to build a new, much needed mentoring program to help single parents find meaningful employment. Jenna, who is passionate about this cause, considers signing up as a volunteer.

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Group Discussion

- What did your group discuss concerning the impact of
 - dual relationships,
 - privacy, and
 - resource distribution?
- Reamer's Ethical Decision-Making Model, NASW Code of Ethics
- Can you summarize:
 - Decision in each scenario

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Wrap Up

- Take good care!
- Thank you for the important work you do!

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Thank you kindly!

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