1. Identify the problem.
   a. Outline the facts, separating out innuendos, assumptions, hypotheses, or suspicions.
   b. Ask yourself: Is it an ethical, legal, professional, or clinical problem? Is it a combination of more than one of these?
   c. Be sure to seek legal advice should you have any legal questions.

2. Apply the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics.
   a. Consider any other state or professional codes that apply.
   b. If the problem is not resolved by reviewing the ACA Code of Ethics, then proceed with additional steps outlined in the ethical decision-making process.

3. Determine nature and dimensions of dilemma.
   - Review the relevant professional literature.
   - Consult other professional counselors (those who abide by ACA Code of Ethics).
   - Consult state and national professional associations.

4. Generate potential courses of action.

5. Consider potential consequences of each course of action for all parties involved.

6. Evaluate the selected course of action.
   - Consider Justice: In applying the test of justice, assess your own sense of fairness by determining whether you would treat others the same in this situation.
   - Consider Publicity: For the test of publicity, ask yourself whether you would want your behavior reported in the press.
   - Consider Universality: The test of universality asks you to assess whether you could recommend the same course of action to another counselor in the same situation.

7. Implement your course of action.

References:

White paper available at counseling.org/EDM