**WHAT IS DECLARATION OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES?**

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**What is Declaration of Professional Services?**

A Declaration of Professional Service is a document that specifically outlines products or services offered by an individual or a company. It also describes the professional relationship between the service provider and the client. The document also includes specific information on billings and fees for the service or goods provided, terms and conditions for the relationship, range of services provided, parties’ responsibilities, agreements and signatures from both parties.

This document is usually provided by a service provider to a client mainly to ensure that there is no misunderstanding between the client and the company, since it provides all the information for clarity. It also serves as a legally binding agreement between the two parties, for providence of the service and also compliance from the client to provide relevant information concerning the service provided. For the professional, the document provides important background information, including specific areas of expertise, educational background, in some instances, even previous jobs done, to give confidence to the client on the professional relationship.

The document is usually provided by a service provider serving as evidence that the professional offers a particular service and is competent in a specific field. It also shows that they have completed a task to satisfactory standards. It also shows the how and when they provided a specific service to a specific client. The document is a strategy used by professionals or companies to prevent ethical issues. If problems are to arise between the two parties, the document can serve as evidence in legal proceedings to determine wrongdoing on either side of the parties.

The use of this document could be traced in ancient times by consultants in different fields. These professionals would provide the document to show specialized skills and knowledge in fields of medicine, law matters, financial management etc. As mankind became more competent and more specialized in skill, professionals and even companies began to boost their standards in their specified skills to provide quality services to their clients. Today, the Declaration of Professional Service document is used as communication between the two parties for a smooth professional relationship. It portrays commitment to providing meaningful services to the client.

**Components of a Declaration of Professional Service.**

**1. Introduction.**

This section is the opening to the document. It provides the name of the service provider, his/her physical/postal address and Academic Qualifications. It usually shows an overview of the document’s purpose.

**2. Description of Services.**

This section describes specific services offered by explaining his/her area of expertise. This section consists of many components that define what the service provider does in detail and his/her method of work. He/she specifies the field of works and also provides referrals of previous works done for confirmation of his/her professionalism. The professional, in this section, also provides a method of which he/she works with, the working environment and also explains what he /she could do for you to ensure that you are able to receive maximum results from the job required. Basically, this is a platform for the professional to be able to sell his/her capabilities to prospective clients through basic academic information and establishment of specific trainings and experience

**3. Client Responsibilities.**

This part of the document discloses what the professional expects from the client in terms of compliance for efficient results. This part also defines what the service provider requires during the job engagement in terms of data collection, provision of specific documents and small services provided from the client to the professional. The client is also required to specify working boundaries and time of availability for consultation between the two parties.

The client is expected to be honest in terms of information provided for work efficiency. He/she is also required to provide a 24-hour notice for cancellation of appointments outlined in the document.

**4. Code of Conduct.**

A code of conduct is part of the Declaration of Professional Services document that spells out that the relationship between the two parties is a professional one. This is to assure the client that the engagements will not cross the lines of the service being provided and that both of them are bound by a code of conduct. The professional’s office should make sure that the client is provided with a copy of the guidelines concerning responsible conduct.

The code of conduct can also go as far as stating the inappropriate activities that one may be involved with the client. Also, an address/ a telephone number should also be provided for either a governing body or the professional’s company if his /her misconduct grievances are not listened to. If the report is made, the code of conduct part of the document can be used for legal proceedings for both parties and specific action can be taken.

**5. Confidentiality.**

This is the part of the document whereby the terms of confidentiality to both parties are discussed. This simply means that information provided by the client, if need be, will be kept confidential. It also means that if there is information the professional wants kept private, the client is obligated to maintain confidentiality.

In this part, the service provider informs clients of the limits of confidentiality. For example, in any involvements of the professional, if he/she commits a crime, the client is obligated to report the crime, without fear of him/her breaching any part of the contract. This also means that the document should contain a clause stating instances whereby information of engagement will be shared.

**6. Appointments, fees and emergencies.**

In this section, the professional simply states the appropriate times whereby he/she makes appointments on all schedules of work. If the client is not comfortable, the times could be changed to favor both of them. Also, the fees/charges of every appointment are stated and payment methods are also provided.

In case of emergencies, the client is provided with contact information whereby he/she could be assisted. This part of the document should be brief and straight to the point.

**7. Signatures, Date and Distribution**

The document should be signed by two parties, preferably at the onset of the job; that is the client and a witness of his/her choosing. A witness’ signing is very important for if an issue arises between the professional and the client, the witness, on reading the terms of the document, can be able to testify on behalf of the case. In addition, the witness should be physically present on signing of the document to ensure forgery is not practiced. A copy should be provided to the client and another should remain with the professional for personal filing.

The document explained above is a sign of pure professionalism and should be treated as a contract between the client and service provider for provision of goods or services in an ethical manner. It is also admissible in court, if breach of contract is found.

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