



Dear AGTA Member,

Founded in 1981 by members of the natural gemstone trade, AGTA's fundamental purpose is predicated upon increasing the knowledge of natural gemstones and cultured pearls. Our commitment to integrity and ethics in sales and marketing our products is paramount within the Trade at large.

In 1983, AGTA introduced our first **CODE OF ETHICS AND PRINCIPLES OF FAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES (COE)**. This ground-breaking ethics code set the highest standard for professional conduct, not just within the colored gemstone trade but as a standard for the entire jewelry industry.

The core construct of the COE rests upon our Members' expertise in gemstones and each Member's commitment to protect consumers at all levels of the marketplace by providing full disclosure information regarding the gem materials we sell.

In 1985 the AGTA developed the first **GEMSTONE INFORMATION MANUAL (GIM)**. This manual specified treatments and terminology for a comprehensive array of gemstones, gem materials and cultured pearls. It was adopted by the entire industry as the standard for informing and protecting consumers from inaccurate or outright fraudulent information at points of sale.

Your Board of Directors now presents our latest edition of AGTA's Code of Ethics & Best Business Practices. Each year AGTA Members (gem traders, manufacturers, designers, retailers and laboratories who seek membership) must sign a pledge to follow this Code as our annual re-affirmation of the Code's standards and protocols.

Member signatures are our annually renewed pledge to adhere to our COE as follows: Each Member must:

1. Have knowledge of and inform their customers as to the treatments and conditions that define and support the value of the materials each Member sells.
2. Commit to full compliance with all laws; local, state and federal.
3. Demonstrate strict adherence to Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and other applicable industry guidelines and standards.
4. Be in full compliance with the laws of the countries from which we import and distribute, including those laws relating to labor and environmental protection.

5. Pledge that we shall neither support tacitly nor actively, nor participate in any illegal activities wherever such activity is known to exist in any commodity and any location where gem materials are offered to Members or by Members for purchase and/or sale.

The American Gem Trade Association's Code of Ethics clearly states and affirms our long-standing commitment to educate the trade, to protect and strengthen the marketplace, and to give back to the global community of which we are an integral part.

Although you may have already signed your Code of Ethics for this year, we are asking for your signature on the new version. Your signature will be in effect for the following twelve months. The Code of Ethics can be found on the AGTA website at:

<http://agta.org/about/ethics.html>.

[Please click here for the signature page.](#)

Thank you for your continued support of AGTA, and the ethical foundation on which we stand.

Sincerely,

AGTA Board of Directors