

# Virtual Mentor

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## THE CODE SAYS

### **The AMA *Code of Medical Ethics*' Opinions on Respect for Civil and Human Rights**

#### **Opinion 9.03 Civil Rights and Professional Responsibility**

Opportunities in medical society activities or membership, medical education and training, employment, and all other aspects of professional endeavors should not be denied to any duly licensed physician because of race, color, religion, creed, ethnic affiliation, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or handicap.

Updated November 2007.

#### **Opinion 9.12 Patient-Physician Relationship: Respect for Law and Human Rights**

The creation of the patient-physician relationship is contractual in nature. Generally, both the physician and the patient are free to enter into or decline the relationship. A physician may decline to undertake the care of a patient whose medical condition is not within the physician's current competence. However, physicians who offer their services to the public may not decline to accept patients because of race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other basis that would constitute invidious discrimination. Furthermore, physicians who are obligated under pre-existing contractual arrangements may not decline to accept patients as provided by those arrangements.

Based on the report, "[Modification of Ethics Policy to Ensure Inclusion for Transgender Physicians, Medical Students, and Patients](#)," adopted November 2007.

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