As Wilma thought about Carla's absence from work last week, she noted the following points:

- Carla's absence was not authorized and was in violation of agency policy.
- Carla's behavior was unethical and unprofessional.
- Carla may have harmed her clients by failing to provide them with regular service.
- Carla had not told the truth when she claimed that she had been sick.
- Carla was her best worker, and Wilma did not want to lose her.
- Other workers probably also misused sick leave but were not caught. Would making an example of Carla persuade others to desist from this unethical behavior? If Wilma does so, what will be the cost? Would making an example of Carla be unethical because her privacy would be violated?

EP 2.1.3

One of the assignments of an agency director is to staff the board of directors, the agency's policy-making group. Establishing a good working relationship with board members is essential for every successful agency director. At times, the agency director will encounter ethical dilemmas because of conflicting ethical principles. Consider Exemplar 10.15. What are the ethical problems that this exemplar raises, and how would you address them?

### 10.15 | THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

EP 2.1.2

The Alzheimer's Association is a local, voluntary agency established about 10 years ago to provide a wide range of community services to caregivers of people with Alzheimer's disease. At last night's meeting, the board of directors voted to eliminate all homemaker services because the insurance carrier had again raised the premium for liability insurance that homemakers must carry. You, the agency director, know that the demand for homemaker services has always exceeded the staff available. It is not only a popular service, but a resource that has enabled many families to keep their relative with Alzheimer's disease at home instead of placing him or her in an institutional facility. You know that the agency provides other services for which there are fewer demands; reducing these services could pay for the higher insurance premiums. These other services, however, are of special interest to several board members; they will do anything to protect their favorite services.

## SUPERVISOR ETHICS AND LIABILITIES

Ethics complaints and legal actions can be brought by clients and employees against supervisors that allege ethical breaches or negligence by the supervisors and by those whom they supervise. Supervisors are affected by two types of liability. **Direct liability** may be charged when harm is caused by the supervisor's acts of omission or commission, such as when the supervisee is assigned duties for which the supervisee is inadequately trained or experienced, or when supervisors do not follow supervision guidelines promulgated by their state boards and/or professional associations. Supervisors may also be charged when the supervisee makes mistakes. Some claims may