



# **CODE OF CONDUCT**

**FOR**

**THE CORPORATION OF THE SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF BRISBANE**

### ***Application of this Code***

This Code of Conduct will apply to paid and unpaid persons not otherwise covered by the provision of a Faithfulness in Service document or another Code of Conduct approved for use in the Commission or Agency by the Director of Professional Standards and Diocesan Services Commission.

### ***Purpose***

This Code is intended to identify those professional and personal behaviours which will enable Diocesan staff, paid and unpaid, to serve the needs of others, including clients, colleagues and the public. The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to encourage the commitment, contribution and development of each employee in striving to achieve best practice and an exceptional quality of service.

The objective of defining a framework of conduct and ethical standards is:

- to ensure that staff act responsibly in carrying out our duties in a courteous, professional and honest way and to use official information, equipment, goods or services for the manner in which they are intended;
- to uphold the individual rights of staff as private citizens;
- to ensure each one of us comply with our responsibility to act honestly and exercise due diligence and a high degree of care;
- to provide a guide to identifying and resolving situations which could result in:-
  - a conflict of interest;
  - impropriety;
  - improper use of a person's position;
  - improper use of Diocesan resources.
- to assist us to act in ways which enhance both client and general public perception and confidence in the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane.

### ***Clarification of the Code***

If there is any conflict between this Code and applicable legislation, the legislation will prevail. If a staff member is in doubt about the interpretation of this Code then the matter should be discussed with a more senior staff member. If this matter cannot be clarified at a local level, the matter should be referred to the Executive Director of the Diocesan Services Commission or the Director of the Diocesan HR or the General Manager of the Diocese.

### ***Professional Accountability***

Staff who are members of, or who are registered through, a Professional Body or Association, will have a code of professional conduct or similar to which you must align your performance. The Code of Conduct is to be read in collaboration with the Professional Standards that apply to applicable Professional Bodies or Associations. You have a personal responsibility to practice at the levels the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane would expect from a competent and fully qualified person in the applicable role.

***Conflict of Interest***

A conflict of interest is a situation in which someone has competing professional or personal interests. Such competing interests can make it difficult to fulfil his or her duties impartially. A conflict of interest exists even if no unethical or improper act results from it. A conflict of interest may create an appearance of impropriety that may undermine confidence in the person or the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane. In all cases where it is believed that a conflict of interest may occur this should be promptly provided to the General Manager of the Diocese in writing.

Conflicts and perceptions of conflicts should be managed in accordance with the principles enunciated in the ethical principles of good Governance.

***Respect for the Law and the System of Government***

Diocesan staff will uphold all duly constituted laws that apply. We will follow all work-related instructions that are lawful.

***Respect for Persons***

We will treat fellow staff, clients, families, contractors or visitors honestly and fairly, and with proper regard for their rights irrespective of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious belief or sexual identity.

We will at all times act responsibly in the performance of our duties without misuse of power or position.

***Integrity***

We will at all times seek to maintain or enhance public confidence in the integrity of the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane's services, including the keeping of accurate records. We will undertake our work with honesty, reliability, respect and impartiality.

***Diligence***

We will exercise due diligence, care and attention, and at all times seek to achieve high standards in the performance of our duties.

We will:

- make sure that we have the knowledge, skills, judgement, energy, experience and motivation to do our job;
- accept the need to undergo ongoing training and skills development;
- work within our scope of practice and skills;
- be prepared to seek and implement guidance from supervisors/managers.

***Employment Decisions***

Staff adhere to the highest ethical standards when participating in employment related decisions, when seeking employment or when planning to resign from a position. When participating in employment related decisions staff make every effort to ensure equal opportunity and fair treatment to all.

When seeking employment, prospective employees provide accurate and complete information on their professional qualifications and experiences.

***Gifts and Benefits***

In the course of your role and as a representative of your Agency, you may accept the hospitality of other organisations for an event provided such action does not place you or the Diocese in a conflict of interest situation.

We will not:

- use our position to gain advantage or to influence other staff, clients, their families, their carers, suppliers or other persons for the purpose of private gain or personal benefit;
- by virtue of our position, accept or acquire a personal profit or advantage of a material value;
- accept personal gifts or money, except as provided in the guidelines below;
- under any circumstances accept or coerce an invitation to become a recipient of a bequest in a client's Will.

It is acceptable to receive the occasional token gift on behalf of your team (e.g. flowers, chocolates, handkerchiefs, alcohol, etc) not exceeding a value of \$50. The local service may establish a local protocol regarding the dispersal of such gifts. Equally, staff may politely decline any gifts.

Where offered a gift, other than as detailed above, we must:

- establish for whom the gift is intended and exercise discretion as to whether the gift should be personally accepted, considering:
  - the size of the gift;
  - the intentions and circumstances of the giver, including frequency of gifts;
  - the risk of your integrity being compromised; and
  - whether acceptance of the gift would cause scandal and embarrassment if known publicly.

We will disclose the offer or receipt to our supervisor/manager.

***Use of Diocesan Resources***

In the course of our duties, we will use available resources wisely and for the purpose for which they are intended.

***Use of Information***

We must:

- comply with the provisions of the Privacy Act and National Privacy Principles except where over-ridden by other applicable legislation (e.g. to avoid the risk of serious injury or harm to any person). These provisions are available at <http://www.privacy.gov.au/law>;
- use information gained in the course of our duty for only our professional duties;
- treat staff and client information with the strictest confidence.

***Particular Obligations of Staff:***

We will:

- make ourselves aware of the various Acts, regulations, policies, delegations and protocols that relate to our duties. This responsibility is shared with the Diocese through your line management who will draw these provisions to your attention and ensure understanding;
- avoid public criticism of other staff, clients and the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane;
- avoid making promises to the public, clients, other staff, and members of other organisations which are outside the delegated authority of our position or knowingly cannot be kept;
- avoid making any comments to the media, unless delegated to do so, and then only with prior approval of the Archbishop or his delegate;
- implement fully the lawful decisions, policies, delegations and practices of the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane;
- avoid behaviour that could give the impression of favouritism and inappropriate relationships;
- use computers and related ICT equipment in accordance with the Diocesan ICT Acceptable Use Policy. The current version of this is available from the Diocesan ICT Department.

***Reporting of Corrupt or Inappropriate Conduct***

Where we know or have good reason to suspect any fraud, theft or corrupt, criminal or unethical conduct, we will report it immediately to the General Manager of the Diocese.

***Working with Children***

Staff directly working with children must conform to the appropriate sections of the Child Safety Amendment Legislation Act 2005 or similar for Child Care Centres and the Protection Policy for Children and Young People controlled by the Director of Professional Standards of the Diocese.

***Personal and professional development***

- Look for, and take advantage of, opportunities to maintain and enhance skills appropriate to the responsibilities of your role, through:
  - regular learning and ongoing professional development;
  - professional supervision / consultation;
  - peer support;
  - having a mentor; and
  - regular feedback including an annual review.

***Personal Behaviour***

We will be aware that personal behaviours, especially in small communities, will impact on the reputation and well-being of the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane.

Therefore, we and the Diocese will not tolerate:

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- bullying;
  - emotional abuse;
  - harassment;
  - physical abuse; or
  - sexual abuse.
- If another person indicates by their words or actions that they feel bullied or harassed by me, I will review my conduct. If in doubt, I will cease the conduct and seek advice from my Line Manager, the General Manager of the Diocese or the Director of Professional Standards.
  - I will ensure that any consumption or use of alcohol and other legal mind altering or addictive substances or product (e.g. gambling) does not impact on my well-being or that of others when I am in the workplace. I will seek professional help if the use of these substances or products or anger management or other significant problems adversely affects my work capacity or the workplace and working relationships.
  - I will be sensitive to the effect of my language on others and will avoid using language that is culturally insensitive or that is, or could be, interpreted as discriminatory, bullying, threatening, belittling, humiliating or causes unnecessary offence or embarrassment. I will refrain from using:
    - any offensive language or action;
    - language or actions that could be interpreted as sexual harassment; and
    - language or actions that could be interpreted as derogatory as defined under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991.
  - Without a legitimate purpose I know I am not to view, possess, produce or distribute restricted material. I will disclose the purpose and circumstances in advance to a Line Manager to avoid any misunderstanding and to obtain approval.
  - I will be sensitive to the effect of my dress on others and dress appropriately to the context (e.g. modestly), having regard for health & safety.
  - I will comply with copyright legislation and ensure that any licences for the use of copyright material are current and complied with and that copyright is duly acknowledged.
  - I will comply with workplace health & safety legislation and provisions.
  - I acknowledge that I must not engage in any unlawful activity e.g. tax evasion, theft, fraud, etc.
  - I will avoid personal advantage or financial gain for me or my family or other persons through my position beyond my wage and recognised allowances and deductions.
  - I will not be influenced by offers of money, financial or other non-financial rewards.
  - I will avoid situations of conflict between my personal financial interest and my work responsibilities.
  - I will minimise the risk of myself and other staff being accused of or engaging in financial impropriety by adhering to the applicable Policy directive for:
    - ensuring that cash is kept secure at the workplace;

- ensuring that money is not taken home;
- ensuring that all money received is banked promptly;
- ensuring that Diocesan Credit and Debit Cards are not misused;
- ensuring that proper accounting records are kept for transactions, in the form of receipts, diary entries, tax invoices, accounts and account statements.

***Fidelity Provisions***

The following is contained within all Letters of Offer for employees and form part of the Code of Conduct:

*“The contractual relationship between the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane and its employees is founded on trust. Any breach of this trust, such as the unauthorised disclosure to a third party of confidential matters connected with the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane, will render the employee liable to disciplinary action, and/or civil proceedings to restrain the employee from disclosing information to a third party, or from making personal use of it without authority from the General Manager of the Diocese, or for damages if loss to the organisation results from unauthorised disclosure.*

*All confidential records, documents and other papers, together with any copies of extracts thereof, made or acquired by you in the course of your employment with the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane, will be the property of the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane and must be returned on the termination of your employment.*

*You agree that any invention or intellectual property made or created by you arising from your work and activities remains the property of the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane.*

*Further, you will not engage in any activities which in any way might give rise to a conflict of interest with or be detrimental to the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane.”*

***Breaches of this Code***

Action will be initiated if this Code or any relevant Act, Regulation or Policy is breached. Depending on the nature of the breach, action may include counselling, disciplinary action (including termination of employment), the laying of criminal charges, and/or the taking of civil action.

APPENDIX A

**DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS**

**abuse** in relation to an adult means the following conduct:

- bullying;
- emotional abuse;
- harassment;
- physical abuse;
- sexual abuse; or
- spiritual abuse.

**bullying** means the repeated seeking out or targeting of a person to cause them distress and humiliation or to exploit them. It includes:

- exclusion from a peer group;
- intimidation;
- extortion.

**Diocese** means The Corporation of the Synod of the Diocese of Brisbane.

**harassment** means unwelcome conduct, whether intended or not, in relation to another person where the person feels with good reason in all the circumstances offended, belittled or threatened. Such behaviour may consist of a single incident or several incidents over a period of time. It includes:

- making unwelcome physical contact with a person;
- making gestures or using language that could reasonably give offence including continual and unwarranted shouting;
- making unjustified or unnecessary comments about a person's capacities or attributes;
- putting on open display pictures, posters, graffiti or written materials that could reasonably give offence;
- making unwelcome communication with a person in any form (for example, phone calls, email, text messages); and
- stalking a person.

**offensive language** includes verbal harassment, racial and other forms of vilification, personal insult or comment and obscene words.

**physical abuse** means any intentional or reckless act, use of force or threat to use force causing injury to, or involving unwelcome physical contact with another person. This may take the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving or grabbing. An injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures.

**prohibited material may include:**

- making available to a person or persons publications, films and computer games that have been classified by the Office of Film and Literature Classification as being unsuitable for that particular group to read, see or play;



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- any other images or sounds not subject to classification by the Office of Film and Literature Classification that are considered by the Diocese to be unsuitable; and
- any substance or product whose supply to or use by certain individuals is prohibited by Law;
- items inappropriate to be used, stored, displayed or shared within a workplace and especially a church-based organisation;
- Items referenced within the ICT Acceptable Use Policy (Copy available from the Diocesan ICT Department).

**prohibited substance** means any substance banned or prohibited by law for use or consumption.

**restricted material** means:

- publications, films, and computer games that have been classified as Category 1 or 2 restricted, X or RC classification by the Office of Film and Literature Classification; and
- any other images or sounds not subject to classification by the Office of Film and Literature Classification (for example, internet material) that are considered with good reason within the Diocese as being offensive on the grounds of violence, sex, language, drug abuse or nudity.

**sexual abuse of an adult** means sexual assault, sexual exploitation or sexual harassment of an adult. See Diocesan Protection documents from the Director of Professional Standards for further clarification of the definition of sexual abuse of a child.

**sexual assault** means any intentional or reckless act, use of force or threat to use force involving some form of sexual activity against an adult or child without their consent that is punishable under Law.

**sexual harassment** means unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether intended or not, in relation to an adult where the person reasonably feels in all circumstances offended, belittled or threatened. Such behaviour may consist of a single incident or several incidents over a period of time. It includes:

- asking a person for sex;
- leading a person to understand that you would like sexual favours from them;
- making any gesture, action or comment of a sexual nature to a person directly or making a comment of a sexual nature about them in their presence;
- making jokes containing sexual references or innuendo using any form of communication;
- exposing a person to any form of sexually explicit or suggestive material;
- making unwelcome physical contact such as touching, pinching, or patting;
- making unwelcome or unnecessary inquiries about or attempts to discuss personal matters of a sexual nature;
- deliberately intruding on an individual's personal space;
- staring at or secretly watching a person for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification; and
- stalking a person.

APPENDIX B

**DECLARATION BY EMPLOYEE / VOLUNTEER**

I, ....., acknowledge that I have been provided  
(Full Name)

with a copy of the Code of Conduct and that I have read through this document. Any aspect that I am unsure of I have sought clarification from my Manager or someone in authority in my workplace. I understand that if I am unclear of any of these aspects or whether a future action may breach the Code of Conduct that I must discuss the matter with my Manager or equivalent who may refer the matter to the Executive Director of Diocesan Services Commission or the Director of Diocesan Human Resources as needed.

.....

Signature

...../...../.....

date

*(This page should be handed to your local Manager or equivalent for retention in your Staff File.)*