



Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy

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Background

Working for a publicly funded community-based organisation carries with it a special obligation to the public and the community interest. This demands that people working on behalf of Family Services Illawarra, T/A Family Services Australia, demonstrate standards of conduct and ethics that maintain both public and community confidence and trust.

As a part of Family Services Australia you have an obligation to the public and the community to carry out the work of the Service with honesty, integrity, fairness, efficiency, and compassion. You are also expected to act with loyalty to the interests of the local community. This code is based on the Model Code of Conduct for the NSW public sector.

Policy

This Code of Conduct applies to every individual elected, employed, appointed or otherwise attached to Family Services Australia.

1. Integrity all staff and Volunteers will:

- Consider people equally without prejudice or favour;
- Act professionally with honesty, consistency and impartiality;
- Take responsibility for situations, showing leadership and courage;
- Place the public interest over personal interest.

2. Trust all staff and Volunteers will seek to:

- Appreciate difference and welcome learning from others.
- Build relationships based on mutual respect.
- Keep confidential any information relating to users of the Services.
- Uphold the law, institutions of government and democratic principles.
- Communicate intentions clearly and invite teamwork and collaboration.
- Provide apolitical and non-partisan advice.

3. Service all staff and Volunteers will seek to:

- Provide services fairly with a focus on customer needs.
- Be flexible, innovative and reliable in-service delivery.
- Engage with the government and business sectors to develop and implement service solutions.
- Focus on quality while maximising service delivery.

Protecting Confidential Information: Unless authorised to do so by legislation employees must make sure that they do not disclose or use any confidential information without official approval. All employees must make sure that confidential information, in any form (such as computer files) cannot

be accessed by unauthorised people and that sensitive information is only discussed with people, either within or outside Family Services Australia, who are authorised to have access to it.

Staff and Volunteers will not discuss personal details relating to other staff or volunteers with service users or people outside the organisation.

Staff and Volunteers will not disclose information to others outside the Service without permission except in the following circumstances:

- The worker believes children or young people are at risk.
- The worker believes a service user is a risk to themselves.
- There is a threat to the safety of other people by the service user.

Non-Exploitation of Service Users: Staff and volunteers will not exploit people with whom they have or had a professional relationship they will not engage in sexual activity with a client or anybody who is closely related to one of their clients.

Corporate Responsibility: All staff and volunteers will seek to contribute to a work environment that is positive, constructive, respectful and harmonious and where performance management is seen to be a regular part of day-to-day work. Staff and Volunteers will not engage in activities that may bring adverse publicity to Family Services Australia or result in adverse impacts to our reputation.

Conflicts of Interest: Staff and volunteers may not use their position to gain profit or advantage. They will be aware of circumstances where a possible conflict of interest may arise and declare it if necessary.

Acceptance of Gifts and Benefits: Employees should not accept a gift or benefit that is intended to or is likely to cause them to act in a partial manner in the course of their duties. The Managing Director or Services Managers may approve the acceptance of token gifts or benefits under certain circumstances provided that there is no possibility that the recipient might be, or might appear to be, compromised in the process.

Use of Organisational Facilities and Equipment: Staff members are expected to be efficient and economical in their use and management of publicly funded resources, including their own work time. Organisational facilities and equipment should only be used for private purposes when official permission has been given by the Managing Director.

Discrimination/Harassment: Employees must not harass or discriminate against their colleagues or members of the public on the grounds of sex, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, ethno-religious identity, descent, age, disability, homosexuality, trans-sexuality or carer's responsibility. Such harassment or discrimination may constitute an offence under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977. In addition, employees must not harass or discriminate on the grounds of religious or political conviction.

Bullying: Workplace bullying is behaviour that is usually repeated, that is inappropriate, unreasonable and possibly aggressive and that creates a risk of physical and/or psychological harm. Family Services Australia seeks to build and maintain a culture of safety and respect, bullying in the workplace will not be tolerated.

Drugs and Alcohol: Staff and Volunteers must remain free from the influence of alcohol and illegal drugs while working. Alcohol and illegal drugs are not to be brought into the grounds or premises of Family Services. The use of legal or prescription drugs which influence the staff or volunteer's ability to work in a safe manner will cause them to absent themselves from work.

Duty of Care: Duty of care is the use of care and skill which can reasonably be expected in the circumstances from someone who has professional training or skills. Failure to exercise this duty of care is negligence. Staff and volunteers are expected to comply with all relevant legislative, industrial, policy or administrative requirements.

Breaches of Code: Staff or volunteers breaching the Code of Conduct can expect disciplinary action. Gross misconduct may result in termination of employment in line with the disciplinary procedures of Family Services Australia.