

Code of Conduct for staff

Scope and Purpose

This Code of Conduct applies to all staff of Inclusion Melbourne and sets out the expected standards of behaviour for all staff. It forms part of the employment contract and reflects the basic requirements of professionalism, integrity and courtesy needed to ensure that a quality service is provided to the people we support and all other stakeholders. Its purpose is to assist employees to know and understand the minimum standards of behaviour expected of them. It ensures that a pleasant, professional and safe working environment exists for all staff and that Inclusion Melbourne's organisational values are upheld.

Guiding values

Inclusion Melbourne's values guide the conduct of employees as they provide support to the people served by the organisation. All volunteers, staff and service users have shared expectations that all parties will uphold the organisation's values and seek to provide exceptional service.

Integrity: Performing responsibilities and duties honestly and efficiently, respecting the rights of the people we support, colleagues and all other stakeholders, including members of the community.

Potential: Ensuring that we provide the people we support with opportunities to build skills and live inclusively and independently.

Individuality: Recognising and understanding the unique attributes and abilities of the people we support to ensure the service provided to them meets their individual wants and needs.

Relationships: Developing and maintaining a mutually positive and professional relationship with the people we support, all staff and volunteers, and the wider community.

Shared Expectations

Inclusion Melbourne will function effectively and provide quality services when there is a shared expectation between Inclusion Melbourne and its employees and volunteers.

Responsibilities

Expectations of employees

Inclusion Melbourne expects all staff to:

- Work within the law with honesty and integrity.
- Comply with all reasonable and lawful instructions.
- Comply with the policies and procedures of Inclusion Melbourne, including the conditions of employment related to alcohol and drugs
- Comply with the duties stated in your position description
- Provide a quality service to the people we support, stakeholders and colleagues.
- Respect the rights of the people we support, stakeholders and colleagues.
- Ensure that the safety, health and wellbeing of the people we support and all other stakeholders is upheld to a high standard, in accordance with Inclusion Melbourne's policies and procedures.
- Utilise the training opportunities provided by Inclusion Melbourne and proactively seek information to support them in their role.

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Obligations of Inclusion Melbourne to employees

The organisation has an obligation to behave in a fair and reasonable manner towards its staff and it is committed to meeting the following staff expectations:

- Equal opportunities for employment
- Impartial and open selection and appointment procedures
- Fair rates of remuneration for skills, responsibilities and performance
- Up-to-date job descriptions that provide clear statements of staff duties and expectations
- Adequate training and equipment to complete staff duties
- Regular and appropriate feedback on staff work performance
- Effective communication of information
- Pleasant and safe working conditions
- Freedom from bullying, harassment or discrimination in the workplace
- Appropriate procedures for feedback, complaints, staff disciplinary and disputes

Appropriate relationships with the people we support

All staff should recognise the sensitivity of working with vulnerable people and show respect for, and protect, their dignity.

- Staff have a professional relationship with the people they support. As such, staff must not have a sexual, family or financial relationship with the people they support.
- All staff must inform their supervisor if they begin to work with or for any person to whom they are related or with whom they have previously had a personal or financial relationship.

Respect for the Rights of Others

While employed by Inclusion Melbourne, all staff have a duty to treat all the people we support, colleagues, stakeholders and the public with courtesy, respect and professionalism.

At all times, staff are to conduct themselves in a manner that will not jeopardise or undermine the reputation or privacy of Inclusion Melbourne. This applies to all activities, comments, posts or discussions in the public arena, such as social media websites, industry meetings, public presentations, media interviews, etc. This Code of Conduct does allow staff to act in a private capacity to positively influence public opinion or promote issues of interest. However, staff should still ensure that their conduct is consistent with the responsibilities described above.

Conflicts of Interest and Integrity

Staff are expected to be honest, fair and impartial when carrying out their duties.

This means that:

- Staff will inform their manager if they have a personal or financial interest or commitment that could be seen as a conflict of interest.
- Staff will treat all individuals and organisations equally.
- Staff are not to lend, borrow, or otherwise enter any financial arrangement with a person we support.

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- Staff may not seek any form of reward (including gifts, favours, prizes or fees) for performing their duties.

Staff should speak to their manager if they are unsure if a situation is, or could be, a conflict of interest.

Privacy, Security and Confidentiality

Inclusion Melbourne acknowledges and respects the privacy of individuals' and adheres to the Privacy Principles of the Health Records Act 2001; the Information Privacy Act 2000; the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 and the Australian Privacy Principles. These control the way Inclusion Melbourne collects, stores, uses and discloses personal information.

Staff will be expected to:

- Ensure information held regarding the people we support, employees and volunteers is stored securely.
- Use or disclose personal information only for the purpose for which it was collected.
- Take reasonable steps to protect personal information from; misuse, loss and unauthorised access, modification and disclosure.
- Take reasonable steps to make sure that the personal information collected, used or disclosed is accurate, complete and up-to-date.
- Take reasonable steps to destroy or de-identify personal information that is no longer required for the purpose it was held.

Inclusion Melbourne is committed to ensuring that the privacy and confidentiality of all people we support, staff, volunteers and business information is maintained by all associated with Inclusion Melbourne. This form is to be completed by the following people who may have access to information relating to business operations, the people we support, staff, volunteers, and associated third parties:

- Inclusion Melbourne staff and students
- Contractors/consultants engaged in Inclusion Melbourne project work
- Temporary staff employed via an external agency

Zero tolerance of abuse of people with a disability

Zero tolerance of abuse obliges all staff supporting people with a disability to uphold the human rights of people with a disability. A worker must not commit any form of abuse, harassment, exploitation or neglect. A worker must also **actively report cases of abuse or neglect and speak up if they suspect that abuse is occurring.**

1. All staff must provide services without engaging in abuse, exploitation, harassment or neglect.

Staff are expected to:

- Never abuse, exploit, harass or neglect a person with a disability
- Always take report to your supervisor if you have any reason to believe the person you are supporting has been abused, exploited, harassed or neglected, to ensure they receive appropriate support (for example, medical support, counselling and support to report abuse to the police)

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2. Staff must report any form of abuse or suspected abuse

Staff must:

- Take all allegations of abuse seriously
- Report any abuse or suspected abuse to your supervisor or manager and, if necessary, other relevant authorities in line with your organisation's reporting policy and procedures. This includes reporting incidents that raise concerns about the support provided by another colleague, worker, volunteer, family member, carer, people with a disability or a community member

2. Staff must report any form of abuse or suspected abuse (continued)

Staff must:

- If you think your immediate supervisor has not acted on your first report and people with a disability are at risk, report the abuse or suspected abuse to other authorities such as the Disability Services Commissioner
- Facilitate access to independent support, such as an advocacy service or the Office of the Public Advocate, where a person's rights are not being upheld.
- Participate in training, information sessions and supervision provided by your employer that assists you to understand:
 - What abuse is and its various forms
 - The application of this code of conduct.

3. Staff must not engage in sexual abuse or misconduct and must report any such conduct by other workers, people with a disability, family members, carers or community members

Staff must:

- always report sexual misconduct and abuse
- recognise the power imbalance between you and a person receiving your support and how this affects the kinds of behaviour that are appropriate
- never engage in any sexual conduct with a person who you support, including actions committed by force, intimidation, coercion or manipulation
- Never engage in any form of sexual activity or behaviour with a person who you support. This includes sexual advances and sexual, personal or erotic comments.

4. A disability support professional must show respect for people's cultural and linguistic background, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, age, gender identity, sexual orientation and abilities when providing services.

Staff must:

- Be aware of and actively listen to the expressed needs, values and beliefs of people from cultural, religious and ethnic groups that are different from yours, about culturally relevant needs that affect the delivery of support services. This includes people with a disability, their families, carers and advocates
- Consult with families, carers, advocates and other supports to clarify cultural expectations when these are unclear or not currently being met
- Respect religious or spiritual beliefs and practices that are different to your own
- Ensure cultures that are different from your own are acknowledged and respected.

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5. Staff must act ethically, with integrity, honesty and transparency

Staff must:

- Respect the privacy of people with a disability and their families, carers and advocates
- Display professionalism while providing support services
- Communicate in a language, form, manner and tone that enables people with a disability to understand the information provided and to make their preferences known
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries, and act at all times to protect the boundaries of the professional relationship
- Always recommend and provide supports that serve the needs and interests of people with a disability
- Never use the power you have over people with a disability you support for personal gain.

Declaration

I understand the requirements placed on me by Inclusion Melbourne under the provisions of the Principles contained in the Privacy Act 2001 in relation to all the people we support, staff and volunteers, and information related to business operations and associated third parties.

I understand that any breach of these practices by me will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Inclusion Melbourne disciplinary procedure policy or letter / contract of engagement and that my relationship with Inclusion Melbourne may be terminated.

I acknowledge that I have read and agree to abide by the conditions as set out in this *Code of Conduct for Staff*.

Name of employee

Signature of employee

Date

Name of witness to signature

Signature of witness

Date

Please note this document forms part of the contract of employment.