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| ***POLICY AND PROCEDURE – HR001.17***  ***CODE OF CONDUCT*** |

**POLICY STATEMENT**

The Code of Conduct for Community Connection employees sets out the behaviours, attitudes and ethical practices that guide employees on what the organisation expects of them in the workplace and as representatives of Community Connection in the community.

The Code of Conduct applies to all paid employees with the exception of members of the Board, for whom there is a separate Code of Conduct.

Our employees are expected to operate according to the Code of Conduct at all times they are representing Community Connection.

**PROCEDURE**

All Community Connection employees have a number of responsibilities and need to understand these responsibilities and take them very seriously – as a breach of the Code of Conduct could lead to disciplinary action.

Community Connection encourages all employees to apply the very highest standards of behaviour and performance in their dealings with individuals, their families and fellow work colleagues. Therefore, all employees are required to:

* Act honestly, in good faith and in the best interests of Community Connection;
* Carry out their duties according to law, using due care and diligence;
* Use their best endeavours to avoid conflicts of interest and declare potential conflicts of interest as soon as they arise, including gifts and other employment;
* Carry out their duties to ensure behaviour is appropriate and safe with respect to children, particularly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and children with a disability; and
* Act in a way that does not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, race, sex, sexual preference, marital status, religion or other attribute as identified in the [Equal Opportunity Act 2010](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/eoa2010250/) – (Qld).

This includes to:

* 1. Safeguard and uphold the human rights of individuals, including children;
  2. Respect the dignity and worth of each person;
  3. Promote and advocate for better standards of care for individuals, their families and for the broader community;
  4. Ensure freedom from discrimination, abuse, harassment and bullying at all times;
  5. Report any breach of responsibilities, serious incident or misconduct to the Operations and/or Strategic Manager as soon as you become aware of an issue;
  6. Handle commercially sensitive or confidential information acquired in the course of employment in a secure manner and only for the purposes for which it was received;
  7. Respect the privacy of others, particularly individuals and their families. Hold all personal information as confidential and not disclose that information to third parties without the consent of the individual concerned or a specific legal authorisation or requirement to do so; and
  8. Not engage in any sexual conduct with an individual. Sexual conduct with individuals is prohibited even where the individual consents.

In addition, all new employees during their induction will receive training in the Code of Conduct. The Code of Conducted will be provided to the new employee for them to read and sign off that they understand the content. A signed copy of this commitment will be placed in each employees personnel file.

There are five obligations for Lifestyle Assistants:

1. They must provide services without engaging in abuse, exploitation, harassment or neglect.
2. They must report any form of abuse or suspected abuse.
3. They must not engage in sexual abuse or misconduct and must report any such conduct by individuals with a disability, family members, or other work colleagues.
4. They must show respect for cultural differences when providing services.
5. They must act ethically, with integrity, honesty and transparency.

A non-definitive list of unacceptable behaviours is detailed below. Any employee found engaging in these behaviours or other unlawful or unethical practices, including those related to children, may be subject to disciplinary action:

* + Assaulting or abusing employees or visitors;
  + Abusing a child, that is, an act that endangers a child or young person’s physical or emotional health or development. Child abuse can be a single incident, but usually takes place over time;
  + Being absent from work without a valid reason;
  + Wilfully damaging, destroying or stealing property belonging to individuals and/or their families other individuals, fellow work colleagues or visitors to Community Connection;
  + Engaging in discriminatory, harassing and/or bullying manner;
  + Making unauthorised statements to the media;
  + Failing to maintain a professional manner when dealing with individuals, their family, employees, visitors and the general public;
  + Failing to abide by Community Connection’s policies, procedures, guidelines and lawful work instructions;
  + Fighting or engaging in disorderly conduct;
  + Refusing to follow or failing to carry out the reasonable instructions of a member of the Management Team;
  + Ignoring work duties or wasting time during working hours;
  + Attending work under the influence of alcohol or any non-prescribed drug or bringing alcoholic beverages or non-prescribed drugs on to a Community Connection workplace;
  + Intentionally giving any false or misleading information to obtain a leave of absence;
  + Swearing, using threatening or abusive language towards an individual, their family, a fellow employee or visitor;
  + Violating fire safety regulations;
  + Wilfully or habitually violating occupational health and safety regulations;
  + Regularly being late;
  + Taking unauthorised absences from work;
  + Not taking proper care of, neglecting or abusing Community Connection equipment;
  + Using Community Connection equipment in an unauthorised manner;
  + Possession of and/or distributing pornographic or other inappropriate material;
  + Breaching the privacy of individuals and/or employees;
  + Possessing weapons of any kind on a Community Connection property or in the course of your duties;
  + Theft or other fraudulent behaviour affecting individuals, their family, Community Connection or others;
  + Dressing inappropriately and not presenting in a clean, neat and tidy manner; and
  + Taking, accessing, requesting or receiving money or possessions belonging to an individual, their family, Community Connection or other people for personal benefit.

*Breaches of Code of Conduct*

Community Connection deals with allegations of breaches fairly and appropriately. If an employee is aware of a possible breach of the Code of Conduct, advise a Lifestyle Coordinator or delegate who is responsible for the area in which you work, or to Human Resource Coordinator via the Complaints Report.

A breach in conduct will result in Community Connection taking action relevant to the employee and their involvement with Community Connection.

Any personal threats, emergencies and serious incidences where the law has been broken will be reported to the police. This Code of Conduct does not stop employees taking an action external to Community Connection processes.

A failure to comply with this Code of Conduct will be viewed seriously and may lead to disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment or suspension from Community Connection. An allegation of a breach of this Code of Conduct which is made vexatiously, maliciously, frivolously, mischievously, and/or without reasonable cause may constitute misconduct and a breach of this Code of Conduct. Unlawful conduct will result in criminal proceedings, in accordance with the relevant legislation and related processes.

Responsibility for Implementation, Compliance Monitoring, Measuring and Continual Improvement

Lifestyle Coordinators are responsible for communicating Community Connection’s expectations to their employees. Also, they are responsible for supporting Lifestyle Assistants performance of their duties.

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTING POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

Lifestyle Assistants, Lifestyle Coordinators and Strategic Manager

**RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES**

[Human Services Quality Framework Standards:](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/human-services-standards)

* Human Services Quality Standard 1 – Governance and Management
* Human Services Quality Standard 3 – Responding to Individual Need
* Human Services Quality Standard 4 – Safety, Wellbeing and Rights
* Human Services Quality Standard 5 – Feedback, Complaints and Appeals
* Human Services Quality Standard 6 – Human Resources
* SD001.12 – Preventing and Responding to Abuse, Assault and Neglect
* SD001.13 – Protection of Children and Young People
* HR001.6 – Employee Misconduct and Discipline
* HR001.12 – Disciplinary Action and Dismissal

**RELATED LEGISLATION**

* Disability Services Act (2006) QLD
* NDIS Act (2013)
* Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2011

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| **DATE OF BOARD ENDORSEMENT** | 06/02/2019 |
| **LAST REVIEW DATE** | 06/02/2019 |
| **NEXT REVIEW DATE** | This policy and procedure will be reviewed on an 18-month basis.  However, if at any time the legislative, policy or funding environment is so altered that the policy is no longer appropriate in its current form, the policy and procedure will be reviewed immediately and amended accordingly. |