



# Toukley Neighbourhood Centre

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*TNC is the heartbeat of a connected, supported, empowered, inclusive and thriving community. We partner with the broader community to share what we can and provide a hand up to those in need, so they can Wallamba-bayn (come back) and join us in delivering our vision.*

## POLICY – CODE OF CONDUCT

### Policy Information

<b>Title:</b>	Code of Conduct
<b>Effective Date:</b>	17-Mar-2025
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Chairperson, Board of Management
<b>Applies To:</b>	All staff and volunteers
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	31-Mar-2026

### Change Control

Effective Date	Author	Approver	Comments
11-Mar-2024	Bronwyn Evans	BoM	Update TNC vision Correct typos Remove duplicated wording
17-Mar-2023	Lucille Yabsley Bronwyn Evans	BoM	Initial document
17-Mar-2025		BoM	Align to new template Minor refinements to wording



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## Policy Overview

### Purpose

This policy sets out Toukley Neighbourhood Centre's policy for a Code of Conduct. This is to ensure all staff, volunteers, contractors, students and clients understand the standards of ethical and professional conduct that are required of everyone undertaking activities and/or working in/for Toukley Neighbourhood Centre, the outcomes we are committed to, and the behaviours which are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

### Context

At Toukley Neighbourhood Centre (TNC), policies are developed in alignment with the [TNC Policy Framework](#).

TNC Policy documents are developed to:

- Assist TNC to meet the objects of the organisation and manage risk effectively
- Assist TNC staff and volunteers in performing their duties
- Outline how TNC will meet governance expectations
- Provide transparency and clarity to TNC staff and volunteers.

TNC is bound by the [Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 \(Cth\)](#) and regulated by the [ACNC](#).

### Overview

The CoC requires staff/volunteers to adhere to the standards set out in this policy. The standards in this CoC also apply to social activities that take place outside TNC premises but under TNC auspices, and to the making of comments about other staff/volunteers, clients on social media where the status of the person making the comments as a TNC staff/volunteer is indicated or can be inferred.

### Definitions

Term	Explanation
ACNC	Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission
BoM	Board of Management
CoC	Code of Conduct
TNC	Toukley Neighbourhood Centre
WHS	Work Health and Safety

## Introduction

### A Message from the Board of Management

Our objectives, per TNC's Constitution are:

- To provide safe, inclusive spaces, opportunities, programs, activities and events that encourage community involvement, interest in planning and volunteering, whereby members of the local community can also participate in the association.
- To provide locally targeted services following best practice principles to achieve a more positive impact on outcomes for vulnerable families, young people and children within the local community, in a client-centred manner and that reflect current data evidence of gaps and needs.
- To outreach to local preschools, schools and communities to provide information, advice and referral services to vulnerable families, where these services do not exist within that local community.
- To seek partnerships with other local service providers in order to work collaboratively, minimise duplication and increase accessible and appropriate service delivery.
- To evaluate and improve services based on practitioner reflection, evidence and best practice principles.

We believe that everyone has the right to aspire to, and achieve, the best possible outcome to:

- Fulfil their future potential
- Make the best choices in their own life
- Be treated with dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality
- Be valued
- Access services on a non-discriminatory basis
- Access services that are accountable, responsive and inclusive.

To achieve our vision, everyone working in TNC must promote a positive working environment where everyone's contribution is valued. Teamwork and respectful staff/volunteers' relations are essential.

Everyone working for TNC should expect to be treated, and must treat others, with respect, dignity, and fairness. Professional standards of workplace practice and conduct improve staff/volunteers' morale. They also produce more effective working relationships and enhanced client/community outcomes. Bullying and / or harassment will not be tolerated.

This CoC seeks to provide the basis for developing a positive workplace culture – a culture which reflects our core values of Collaboration, Openness, Respect and Empowerment and builds upon the Government Sector core values of Integrity, Trust, Service and Accountability.

All staff and volunteers are to make themselves aware of the CoC, implement and adhere to the CoC's provisions and sign and register their understanding of the CoC.

### Why do we have a CoC?

We have a CoC to ensure all staff, volunteers and clients understand the standards of ethical and professional conduct that are required of everyone undertaking activities and/or working in/for TNC, the outcomes we are committed to, and the behaviours which are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

The intent of the CoC is to provide a framework to promote ethical day-to-day conduct and decision making. It does not, and cannot, cover every situation that can arise in the workplace. The CoC does not replace the need for common sense in how staff/volunteers conduct themselves. If staff/volunteers are in doubt as to what conduct is appropriate in any situation, or how the CoC should be applied, they should seek advice and direction from the Executive Officer or a member of the BoM.

Managers have a key role in ensuring staff/volunteers understand the CoC and in enforcing the standards it sets, consistently and fairly. However, the most important responsibility of managers, and their most valuable contribution to ensuring that the standards set out by the CoC are implemented, is to lead by example.

The CoC also provides guidance on how to raise and report breaches of the standards it sets.

## Applying the CoC

### Who does the CoC apply to?

This CoC applies to:

- Persons who are employed (staff) by TNC whether on a permanent, casual, or temporary basis
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Work Experience Students, and
- Members of the BoM

who will be referred to as 'staff/volunteers', throughout the CoC.

### Responsibilities under the CoC

All staff/volunteers are responsible for applying and complying with the CoC.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that the staff/volunteers who they supervise are aware of and understand their responsibilities under the CoC.

### What happens if there is a breach of the CoC?

There are a range of consequences for breaches of this CoC depending on the nature and seriousness of the matter.

Managers/supervisors and/or BoM have a responsibility to address alleged breaches of the CoC promptly, and in a fair and reasonable manner. They need to assess the seriousness of any alleged breaches, and how they should be dealt with.

Outcomes for staff/volunteers who have breached the CoC may be:

- Counselling
- Performance improvement plans
- Formal disciplinary action
- Referral to the police in cases of suspected possible criminal activity
- Termination of employment/volunteering.

Certain sections of the CoC reflect the requirements of legislation, and breaches of these conditions may be punishable under law.

### What to do if you are concerned about a breach of the CoC

Staff/volunteers should report any breach or concerns about a breach of the CoC to the Executive Officer.

If they are not comfortable about reporting to their manager/supervisor, they should report the matter to a member of the BoM.

### Protection for people who raise concerns about a breach of the CoC

TNC is committed to protecting any person who raises concerns about a breach of the CoC from retaliation or reprisals. Any attempt to take detrimental action against a person who raises a legitimate breach of the CoC will be treated seriously and may lead to disciplinary action.

## TNC Values

TNC core values build upon the Government Sector core values of integrity, trust, service, and accountability.

We strive to reflect these core values in our workplaces and in our conduct by demonstrating the following characteristics:

### Collaboration

- We are an organisation that believes in its people and is people centred.
- Our managers are role models for our core values, and they are accountable.
- We willingly work in a team-based approach
- Our teams are strong and successful because we all contribute and always seek ways to improve.
- We encourage and recognise outstanding performance.

### Openness

- We want our community to have confidence in TNC.
- We foster greater confidence and cooperation through open communication.
- Our performance is open to community scrutiny through surveys and feedback.
- We encourage those around us to speak up and voice their ideas as well as their concerns by making it clear that speaking up is worthwhile and valued.
- We communicate clearly and with integrity.

### Respect

- We never lose sight of our clients' fundamental right to be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect.
- We listen to clients, the community and each other.
- We welcome innovative ideas and ways of doing things to improve our work with our community.
- We treat our colleagues and our community with dignity and respect, and care about those around us.
- Each of us is responsible for workplace culture and performance.
- We have zero tolerance for bullying and no-one, no matter how senior, is exempt.

### Empowerment

In delivering the best possible services to the community:

- We believe that everyone is empowered to make a difference including decision making and innovation.
- We accept that with decision making comes responsibility.
- We make best use of resources and experience to meet client and community expectations.
- As individuals, we can improve the culture and performance of TNC.

### Collaboration

- TNC is a **people-centred organisation** that values and invests in its people.
- Our managers lead by example, embodying our core values and taking accountability for their actions.
- We embrace teamwork, fostering a collaborative environment where every individual's contribution is valued.
- Our teams succeed because we are committed to continuous improvement and shared success.
- We actively recognise **and celebrate outstanding performance**, encouraging excellence across the organisation.

### Openness

- At TNC, we believe that **transparency builds trust** within our community.
- We foster confidence and collaboration through open, honest, and clear communication.

- Our performance is subject to community feedback, and we actively seek input through surveys and engagement initiatives.
- We create a culture where speaking up is valued, ensuring that all voices—ideas, concerns, and perspectives—are heard and respected.
- Integrity is at the heart of our communication—we are committed to clarity, honesty, and ethical engagement.

## Respect

- Respect is the foundation of everything we do.
- We uphold our clients' fundamental right to be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect.
- We actively listen to our clients, colleagues, and the broader community to continuously improve our services.
- We welcome innovation and diverse perspectives, recognising that new ideas drive positive change.
- We treat everyone—colleagues, clients, and community members—with professionalism, care, and respect.
- Each of us is responsible for maintaining a positive workplace culture and high performance standards.
- We have zero tolerance for bullying, and this principle applies to all, regardless of position or seniority.

## Empowerment

- We believe in **empowering individuals to make a meaningful impact**.
- Everyone at TNC has the authority and responsibility to contribute to decision-making and innovation.
- We recognise that with decision-making comes accountability, and we uphold the highest standards of ethical responsibility.
- We make optimal use of our resources, expertise, and experience to meet client and community expectations.
- As individuals, we play a crucial role in shaping the culture and performance of TNC, ensuring a positive and impactful workplace.

## Code of Conduct Principles

Policies always contain a set of principles that provide information relating to the rationale for the document. Staff and volunteers must consider and comply with these guiding principles when performing their duties.

### TNC Code of Conduct

#### Principle 1: Principle 1: Demonstrate Honesty and Integrity

Staff and Volunteers Must:

- Avoid conflicts of interest, including receiving gifts or benefits that may influence their decisions. Any real or perceived conflicts must be **immediately disclosed** to a manager.
- Refrain from **handling client finances**, except where necessary and in the client's best interest, and report all financial dealings to management.
- Ensure all actions and decisions are **free from self-interest, bias, or improper influence**.
- Not accept **bribes, inducements, or gifts** intended to influence decision-making. **Token gifts** (e.g., chocolates) may be accepted as gestures of appreciation.
- Maintain professional boundaries when interacting with **former TNC staff or volunteers**, ensuring no undue advantage or access to privileged information.

Upon Leaving TNC, Staff and Volunteers Must:

- Not use or disclose **confidential information** obtained during their tenure.
- Not remove **TNC property, including documents or intellectual resources**.

#### Principle 2: Principle 2: Act Professionally and Ethically

Staff and Volunteers Must:

- Uphold **TNC's duty of care** to clients and the community, ensuring a safe and supportive environment.
- **Refrain from alcohol or drug use** while on duty or representing TNC.
- Not smoke in **TNC premises, vehicles, or in the presence of clients and their families**.
- Be **fit for duty**, ensuring they are in a condition suitable for their responsibilities.
- Dress in a manner that is **appropriate, professional, and safe** for their role.
- Carry out duties **diligently, efficiently, and responsibly**.
- Adhere to all **lawful and reasonable instructions** from managers and senior personnel.
- Maintain **professional knowledge and skills**, ensuring compliance with best practices.
- **Follow all applicable laws, professional codes of conduct, and ethical standards**.
- Avoid conduct that may **damage TNC's reputation**, including misconduct on **social media**.
- Only provide **official comments on TNC matters if authorised** to do so.
- When engaging in **public or political discussions**, not imply that personal views represent TNC.
- Report **any criminal charges** punishable by 12+ months imprisonment to the **Executive Officer within seven (7) days**.
- Report any **misconduct** (e.g., fraud, corruption, maladministration) to the Executive Officer or Board.

#### Principle 3: Principle 3: Maintain Professional Relationships with Clients

Staff and Volunteers Must:

- Maintain **professional boundaries** with clients and community members, avoiding **exploitation or inappropriate relationships**, including online interactions.
- **Never engage in sexual interactions** with a client or community member during a professional relationship.



#### Principle 4: Protect Children Engaging with Us

TNC is committed to ensuring a **safe and child-friendly environment** in line with **NSW Child Protection laws and standards**.

**Staff and Volunteers Must:**

- **Hold a valid and current Working with Children Check (WWCC)** before engaging in child-related work.
- **Complete child protection training** as required to understand their legal and ethical obligations.
- **Maintain professional boundaries** in all interactions with children, ensuring safety, respect, and trust.
- **Report any concerns of child abuse, neglect, or harm** to the appropriate authority, in line with TNC's **Child Protection Policy**.
- **Take all allegations of misconduct seriously** and follow TNC's **reporting and response procedures**.

#### Principle 5: Promote a Positive Work Environment

**Staff and Volunteers Must:**

- Treat clients, colleagues, and community members with respect, courtesy, and cultural sensitivity.
- Foster harmonious working relationships, promoting collaboration and teamwork.
- Not engage in or tolerate bullying, harassment, or discrimination based on protected attributes under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW) and the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth).
- Address disputes professionally through appropriate channels, acknowledging all perspectives.

#### Principle 6: Use Resources Lawfully, Efficiently, and Responsibly

**Staff and Volunteers Must:**

- Use TNC resources **efficiently** and only for **authorised purposes**.
- Not use TNC resources for **personal businesses, political activities, or religious promotion**.
- Ensure personal use of resources (e.g., computers, phones, photocopiers) is **reasonable and does not impact work performance**.
- Adhere to all **usage policies** for official resources, including vehicles.

#### Principle 7: Act with Environmental Responsibility

**Staff and Volunteers Will:**

- Minimise waste generation and adopt sustainable practices.
- Follow TNC's environmental guidelines, including proper waste disposal.
- Suggest improvements for reducing waste and participate in sustainability initiatives.
- Undertake training on environmental responsibility where provided.

#### Principle 8: Observe Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) Practices

**Staff and Volunteers Must:**

- Follow Work Health and Safety (WHS) policies and procedures, in line with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth).
- Report any safety hazards or risks to the Executive Officer.
- Participate in WHS training and consultation.
- Promote and observe safe working practices.

#### Principle 9: Maintain Confidentiality and Data Security

**Staff and Volunteers Must:**

- Protect all personal and sensitive information of clients, staff, and volunteers, in compliance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

- Not discuss, share, or post confidential information (including on social media) that could identify clients or compromise privacy.
- Ensure secure handling of records and communication devices containing confidential data.
- Upon leaving TNC, not disclose, misuse, or exploit information obtained during employment.

#### **Principle 10: Comply with Copyright and Intellectual Property Laws**

##### **Staff and Volunteers Must:**

- Observe **copyright laws** under the **Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)** when using or producing TNC materials.
- Ensure all materials produced for TNC by **staff, volunteers, or contractors** remain **TNC's intellectual property**.
- Obtain **permission** for the use of copyrighted materials in TNC documents and resources.
- In case of copyright disputes, **seek advice from the Australian Copyright Council** or legal guidance.