



**YOUR VILLAGE TRAINING
AND SUPPORT**
IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO GROW

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YOUR VILLAGE Training and Support

Staff Code of Conduct

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Staff Code of Conduct Outline

The **Staff Code of Conduct** serves as a guide to the expected behaviours of all employees, volunteers, and contractors working with **Your Village Training and Support**. This Code is designed to ensure that all staff uphold the values of the organisation while maintaining the highest levels of professionalism and integrity in all interactions.

The key objectives of this Code are to:

- Safeguard the safety and well-being of clients, colleagues, and other stakeholders.
- Protect and uphold the reputation of **Your Village Training and Support**.
- Foster a positive, respectful, and inclusive work environment.
- Define legal, professional, and ethical responsibilities for all staff members.
- Provide a clear framework for addressing ethical challenges and expected conduct in a variety of workplace situations.

This Code applies equally to all employees, volunteers, and contractors, regardless of position or length of tenure, and sets a high standard for how we interact with clients, colleagues, and external stakeholders.

Context

Your Village Training and Support is committed to providing professional services that support individuals in overcoming personal challenges and achieving growth. Our core mission is to empower and assist clients in their journey towards self-sufficiency and well-being. As an employee or contractor, you are entrusted with the responsibility of upholding the organisation's values by providing quality service and care.

Our reputation is built on the conduct and professionalism of our staff. This Code of Conduct will guide employees in maintaining high standards in their day-to-day duties and interactions. Whether you are interacting with clients, families, or external organisations, you are expected to reflect the values of respect, integrity, and professionalism.

Intended Use

This **Staff Code of Conduct** is designed for all employees, volunteers, and contractors at **Your Village Training and Support**. It provides clear guidelines on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The Code should be referred to regularly to ensure that the conduct of staff remains aligned with organisational values.

The Code is intended to:

- Be introduced during induction and training.
- Serve as a reference tool to clarify the organisation's expectations.
- Form the basis for performance management and address areas of professional conduct.

It will also be used during staff performance reviews to assess compliance with the organisation's ethical standards and behavioural expectations.

Preface

Compliance with the **Staff Code of Conduct** is a condition of employment or engagement with **Your Village Training and Support**. The Code outlines behaviours that reflect our values, ensures that our workplace is safe and inclusive, and protects the reputation of the organisation.

By accepting a role within **Your Village Training and Support**, you agree to:

- Understand and comply with the Code.
- Regularly reflect on your behaviour and ensure it aligns with the values and standards of the organisation.
- Recognise that breaches of this Code may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment or contract.

Code of Conduct Compliance

It is expected that all staff, volunteers, and contractors will always comply with this Code. Compliance is not just about following rules; it's about upholding the integrity of the organisation and delivering the highest quality of care to clients.

Failure to comply with the Code may result in:

- **Corrective actions:** Such as retraining, supervision, or additional performance management.
- **Disciplinary actions:** Ranging from written warnings to termination, depending on the severity of the breach.
- **Legal actions:** In cases where a breach of the Code involves unlawful conduct, civil or criminal proceedings may occur.

All disciplinary measures will follow established organisational procedures, ensuring fairness and due process.

Contractors and Visitors

Contractors and visitors, while on the premises or engaged in work for **Your Village Training and Support**, are also required to follow the principles outlined in this Code. It is the responsibility of staff to ensure contractors and visitors are aware of their obligations regarding professional conduct and behaviour while engaging with the organisation.

Contractors and visitors must:

- Follow all organisational safety, privacy, and confidentiality protocols.
- Behave in a professional manner that supports the values of **Your Village Training and Support**.
- Be mindful of the impact of their behaviour on clients and staff.

Staff who supervise or engage with contractors and visitors must ensure that they comply with the standards of the Code. Breaches of the Code by contractors or visitors may result in the termination of their engagement with the organisation.

General

1. What is expected of you as an employee?

As an employee or contractor of **Your Village Training and Support**, you are expected to uphold the highest standards of professionalism. This includes:

- **Conducting yourself with integrity:** Your actions should reflect the values of honesty, fairness, and respect.
- **Following all organisational policies and procedures:** These include safety protocols, confidentiality guidelines, and client engagement policies.
- **Striving for personal and professional excellence:** Commit to your own development and seek opportunities for growth through feedback and professional development.
- **Being accountable:** Take responsibility for your actions and decisions and be prepared to justify them if required.
- **Respecting diversity:** Embrace the diversity of your colleagues and clients, ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and fairness.

Example:

If a client expresses frustration or anger, a staff member is expected to remain calm and professional, using appropriate de-escalation techniques rather than reacting emotionally. The situation should be handled with care, ensuring that the client feels heard and supported, while also maintaining personal and professional boundaries.

2. What happens if I breach the Code of Conduct?

Breaches of the Code of Conduct will be addressed based on the nature and severity of the breach. Possible outcomes include:

- **Verbal or written warnings:** For minor infractions or first-time breaches.
- **Performance management:** This may include retraining or increased supervision.
- **Suspension or termination of employment:** For serious breaches, such as misconduct or breaches of confidentiality.
- **Legal action:** If the breach involves criminal behaviour, such as theft, fraud, or assault, the organisation may take legal action.

Each breach will be thoroughly investigated, and decisions will be made based on the findings of the investigation. Outcomes will depend on factors such as the nature of the breach, whether it was intentional, and whether it poses a risk to the organisation, staff, or clients.

3. Required Reporting

As an employee, you have an obligation to report any breaches of this Code, as well as any other incidents that may compromise the safety or well-being of clients, colleagues, or the organisation. These include:

- **Criminal charges:** If you are charged with or convicted of an offence, you must inform the organisation immediately.
- **Client safety concerns:** Any concerns about the safety or well-being of a client must be reported to your supervisor.
- **Breaches of the Code by colleagues:** If you witness or are aware of a breach by another staff member, you are required to report this to management.

Failure to report such incidents may result in disciplinary action.

4. Respect for People

All staff are expected to always treat others with respect and dignity. This applies to interactions with clients, colleagues, and external stakeholders. **Your Village Training and Support** has zero tolerance for:

- **Discrimination:** Any form of discrimination based on race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or any other characteristic is strictly prohibited.
- **Harassment:** This includes sexual harassment, bullying, or any other form of intimidation or abuse.
- **Bullying:** Bullying behaviour, whether physical, verbal, or emotional, will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Example:

If a colleague makes an inappropriate or discriminatory comment, it is your responsibility to report the incident to management. By addressing such behaviour early, you contribute to a safer and more inclusive work environment.

5. Duty of Care and Work Health and Safety

Duty of Care

Employees and contractors have a duty of care to clients, always ensuring their physical and emotional safety. This includes taking proactive steps to identify potential risks and address them before they become harmful. Examples of duty of care include:

- **Maintaining a safe environment:** Identifying and removing hazards in the workplace.
- **Monitoring clients:** Ensuring clients are appropriately supervised and that their needs are being met.
- **Responding to incidents:** Taking immediate action if a client is at risk of harm.

Work Health and Safety

In addition to duty of care, employees must also adhere to work health and safety (WHS) regulations. This includes:

- **Following safety protocols:** Adhering to workplace policies related to safety equipment, emergency procedures, and risk management.
- **Reporting hazards:** Notifying management of any potential hazards or unsafe conditions.
- **Ensuring your own safety:** Taking responsibility for your own well-being by following WHS guidelines and using equipment correctly.

Supervision of Clients

Clients should be always supervised appropriately. The level of supervision required will depend on the client's individual needs and the activities they are participating in. Staff must ensure that:

- Clients are never left unattended in situations where they could be at risk.
- Activities are well planned and consider the safety of all participants.

Example:

During an outdoor activity, if a staff member notices a client wandering towards a hazardous area, they are required to intervene immediately to prevent harm. This may include physically redirecting the client to a safer area or alerting additional staff for assistance.

6. Professional Relationships between Employees and Clients

Supervision of Clients

Staff must avoid being in situations where they are alone with a client in a private space, unless it is a necessary part of their job, such as providing personal care to a client in their home and they live alone.

Physical Contact with Clients

Physical contact should be kept to a minimum and should only occur when it is necessary for the client's safety or well-being. If physical contact is required (e.g., assisting with mobility), staff should:

- Explain their actions to the client.
- Seek consent from the client wherever possible.
- Ensure that the contact is appropriate and respectful.

Relationships with Clients

Personal relationships with clients that extend beyond a professional capacity are strictly prohibited. Romantic relationships or overly familiar interactions can create conflicts of interest and may compromise the care provided to clients. Staff should always maintain professional boundaries to protect both themselves and the client.

Child Protection (if applicable)

If you work with children or vulnerable individuals, you are legally required to follow child protection policies. You must:

- Report any suspicions of abuse, neglect, or harm to the appropriate authorities.
- Avoid situations that could be perceived as inappropriate or that compromise the safety of the child or vulnerable person.

Example:

If a client begins to exhibit signs of inappropriate behaviour or seeks a personal relationship with a staff member, the situation must be reported to management immediately. Steps will be taken to address the situation while protecting both the client and the staff member from harm or discomfort.

7. Appropriate Use of Electronic Communication and Social Networking Sites

Electronic communication, including emails, text messages, and social media, must be used responsibly and professionally. Staff are expected to:

- **Use professional language:** Ensure that all communications are respectful and in line with the organisation's values.
- **Avoid engaging with clients on personal social media accounts:** Do not accept friend requests or engage in personal communication with clients via social media.
- **Exercise caution in digital communication:** Be mindful that emails and messages may be retained and could be subject to legal review if necessary.

Example:

If a client attempts to contact you via your personal social media account, you must decline the interaction and inform management. Maintaining professional boundaries is essential to protect both yourself and the client.

8. Use of Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco

Drugs

The possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs is strictly prohibited in the workplace or during any work-related activities. Any staff member found in breach of this policy will face immediate disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment, and the matter may be reported to the authorities.

Alcohol

Staff must not consume alcohol or be under the influence of alcohol while on duty or during work-related events unless it has been approved by management (e.g., at social functions). The consumption of alcohol in the presence of clients is prohibited.

Tobacco

Smoking is not permitted in any area of the workplace. Staff who smoke must do so during designated breaks and in designated smoking areas, away from clients and other staff members.

9. Identifying and Managing Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest arises when an employee's personal interests interfere, or have the potential to interfere, with their professional duties. Examples of conflicts of interest include:

- **Financial interests:** Having a personal financial stake in a company that does business with **Your Village Training and Support**.
- **Personal relationships:** Employing or promoting a friend or family member within the organisation.

All actual or perceived conflicts of interest must be disclosed to management. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest may result in disciplinary action.

Example:

If you are offered a financial incentive from a client or supplier in exchange for preferential treatment, you must report this to management immediately. Accepting such offers would create a conflict of interest and could undermine the integrity of the organisation.

10. Declaring Gifts, Benefits, and Bribes

Staff members must not accept gifts or benefits from clients, suppliers, or contractors if it could influence, or be seen to influence, their professional judgment. Gifts with a value over \$100 must be reported to management. Accepting bribes or any form of payment in exchange for preferential treatment is strictly prohibited and may result in termination of employment.

Example:

If a client offers you a valuable gift as a thank you for your services, you must inform management. The gift may be accepted on behalf of the organisation but accepting it personally could create a sense of obligation and compromise your professional relationship with the client.

11. Communication and Protecting Confidential Information**Communication**

Effective communication is essential in maintaining professional relationships. Staff must:

- **Maintain confidentiality:** Avoid discussing private matters related to clients, colleagues, or the organisation with unauthorised individuals.
- **Use respectful language:** Ensure all communications, whether verbal or written, are professional and courteous.

Confidential Information

Staff are entrusted with confidential information related to clients and the organisation. This information must be always protected and should only be shared with authorised individuals. Breaching confidentiality is a serious offence and may result in disciplinary action.

Privacy

Staff must respect the privacy of clients and colleagues. Personal information should not be disclosed without consent, unless required by law or necessary for the safety of the individual or others.

Example:

If you are approached by a family member seeking information about a client, you must ensure that you have the proper authorisation to share any details. Always check with management before disclosing any confidential information.

12. Record Keeping

Maintaining accurate and up-to-date records is essential to the operation of **Your Village Training and Support**. All staff are responsible for:

- **Creating accurate records:** Ensure that all information is truthful and complete.
- **Storing records securely:** Ensure that sensitive information is protected from unauthorised access.
- **Complying with organisational policies:** Follow all procedures regarding record retention and disposal.

Example:

When documenting client progress, ensure that your records are detailed, accurate, and objective. Avoid making subjective or biased statements and ensure that all information is stored in accordance with organisational protocols.

13. Copyright and Intellectual Property

Any intellectual property created during your employment with **Your Village Training and Support** belongs to the organisation. This includes training materials, documents, and other resources developed for use in your professional capacity.

You must not use organisational intellectual property for personal purposes without the written consent of management.

Example:

If you develop a training program for use with clients, the intellectual property rights to that program belong to **Your Village Training and Support**. You cannot distribute or use the program for personal gain without prior approval from management.

Acknowledgement

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agree to comply with the terms of this **Staff Code of Conduct**.

Staff Member or Contractor Name:

Staff Member or Contractor Signature:

Date:

Witness Name:

Witness Signature:

Date: