

Code of Conduct

As employees in ARAS we are all part of a team that aims to meet the needs of Consumers and to achieve our vision of a community in which all older people are valued and respected and to meet our purpose statement which is to *“encourage and support older people and community to uphold the rights of older people through information, education, advocacy and personal empowerment”*.

The Code of Conduct states who we are and how we conduct ourselves at work on behalf of, and in any situation where employees act as a representative of, ARAS. It represents the culture of the organisation and provides a shared standard of behaviour for each employee as individuals. It guides how employees behave towards each other, clients, stakeholders and the community at large.

The Code of Conduct supplements legal obligations in areas such as Equal Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination, Workplace Health & Safety, and Privacy, to name a few. *It applies to all employees, every day.*

ARAS employees are in a unique position of trust, and their role requires standards of behaviour that reflect community expectations as well as standards of professional practice. Therefore, we have worked together as a team to develop the following behaviours to demonstrate our values.

The following are the principles, values and key behaviours that underpin this Code of Conduct;

Integrity – *I maintain high standards of work and personal behaviour.*

I will:

- be honest and authentic (genuine) in all my dealings with others;
- do what I say I will do, and follow through or renegotiate when I can't do what I have committed to;
- acknowledge, take responsibility and be accountable for my actions, feelings and behaviours;
- always follow organisational procedures as they are built on legal, ethical and moral obligations;
- show understanding and recognition of the different roles within the organisation, and actively strive to help my colleagues and the organisation to succeed;
- approach all communication in a positive manner; be open to listening and responding in a positive manner;
- be transparent in decision making and be prepared to explain and discuss why a decision has been made.

Inclusiveness– *the way I work values my colleagues and consumers and helps empower others.*

I will:

- welcome and support new employees and value their diversity, experience and knowledge;
- ask others if they are ok, listen to the response and provide appropriate support;
- offer and openly accept constructive feedback in a respectful manner;
- actively contribute to a positive work environment;
- challenge negative talk/behaviour by having the confidence to intervene, confront or walk away;
- use communication skills such as active listening and holding the other person with unconditional positive regard, and consider issues from the other person's perspective before responding;
- be present and mindful in team meetings and accept the diversity of opinion without judgement; demonstrate self-awareness, and reflect on my emotional reaction;
- take the time to say thank you and praise others for their achievements;
- create a sense of belonging by being warm, engaging, and caring for others e.g. saying good morning/good night to all.

Justice – helping each other and our consumers with a concern for justice, and genuine respect for people.

I will:

- treat people (consumers, work colleagues, family and friends) how I want to be treated;
- listen carefully to people's needs and concerns and ensure they are genuinely considered with well thought out solutions;
- treat everyone in the workplace fairly;
- speak up when I see someone breaching organisational policies;
- take a consultative approach to reaching agreement about mutual expectations, and regularly review timeframes and outcomes;
- do my fair share of the work and offer to help others when I can.

Respect – showing someone that I value their feelings and thoughts. A universal value that each person desires not only to embody, but also to receive. Showing others that I take their feelings and thoughts into consideration to the benefit of the organisation, other employees and consumers.

I will:

- acknowledge individual, cultural and community differences and respond in a manner that respects other people's value systems, recognises diversity, and is aligned with the organisation's values;
- listen to other people's ideas without judgment, and value and acknowledge their contributions;
- treat others fairly (even-handed), courteously and with respect to promote a culture of trust;
- value personal and professional boundaries by sharing information that builds positive relationships and rapport;
- contribute to and support my colleagues in achieving organisational goals.

Breach of the Code of Conduct

ARAS takes breaches of this code seriously. Anyone who works within ARAS, in any capacity, has a responsibility to behave in a manner consistent with the expectations set out in this Code. Failure to comply with these expectations may lead to disciplinary action or even termination of employment, the end of a volunteer agreement or the cancellation of a service contract and any breach of the law will be referred to the police or relevant legal authority under ARAS's legal obligations.

Procedure for reporting a breach of this Code

There are informal and formal ways of raising a breach of this Code. If an employee believes a breach of the Code has occurred, they are encouraged to raise their concerns where they feel confident to do so, in the first instance directly with the person, or with their manager. If the breach involves their manager, they should raise it with the next manager in the 'chain of command'. Where an employee feels unable to raise their concerns as outlined, they should contact Human Resources or a member of the Executive Team.

An employee who suspects or becomes aware that this Code of Conduct is being breached must report the matter to their line manager immediately, including any information or evidence that they have.

Where an employee is unsure of their own conduct in relation to the operation of this Code of Conduct Policy, they must bring the matter to the attention of their line manager or Human Resources for discussion and clarification of the policy and its application to their particular circumstances, as soon as they become aware of a breach, or potential breach.

The Workplace Grievance Policy can be used to raise any formal complaint. This code does not in any way affect your rights to approach any relevant external agency in relation to your complaint.

Employees who are in breach of this Code of Conduct Policy, or suspected of being in breach of this policy, will be dealt with in accordance with the normal disciplinary processes that apply at ARAS. In severe or repeated instances, or where a fundamental breach of the employment contract occurs, termination of the employment contract may occur.

A copy of this Code of Conduct Policy is to be published and displayed at all ARAS offices by suitable means to allow all employees to become aware of their responsibilities and to enable compliance with its terms and conditions.

In addition, each employee will be provided with a copy which they must read and sign to indicate a full understanding of this policy and the consequences of any breach. This signed copy will then be retained on their employee file. Alternatively, employees may be provided an e-copy via on-line training platform Sentrient. An employee's completion of the Code of Conduct training module will be taken to mean they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the policy.

Associated Documents

Confidentiality Policy
Counselling & Disciplinary Policy
Employment Contract
Workplace Grievance Policy

References

ARAS Enterprise Agreement 2011-2015
Fair Work Act 2009
Fair Work Amendment Act 2013
Fair Work Regulations 2009

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

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