

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct sets the standards for the way all staff are expected to work at Patches and the values that Patches holds as an organisation. It provides a practical set of guiding principles to help staff make decisions in their day-to-day work and outlines the expectations and rights of all Patches staff and contractors.

By conducting ourselves and carrying out our role in a professional and ethical manner at all times, we reflect our values, and the principles contained in this Code of Conduct. This will contribute to a positive organisational culture and result in a professional, safe and healthy work environment.

A breach of the Employee Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary action which may include reprimand, warning, or in severe cases instant dismissal. If an employee has queries about any aspect of this code, he or she must seek clarification from the line manager.

This policy supports Patches to apply NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Practice Standards for Rights of Participants and Responsibilities of Providers, Provider Governance and Operational Management and Provision of Supports.

Code of Conduct Principles

- treat participants, their families and carers, and people from other organisations with respect and dignity;
- to act with integrity and professionalism in the performance of their duties and be scrupulous in the proper use of company information, equipment and facilities
- to exercise fairness, equity, proper courtesy, honesty, integrity, consideration and sensitivity in the course of carrying out duties
- to avoid real or perceived conflicts of interest
- be alert to areas in which services could be improved or in which difficulties are experienced;
- strive to continually improve the services provided;
- provide an environment that is free from harassment or discrimination on the grounds of gender, marital status, sexual preference, pregnancy, race, age, impairment, religious or political conviction.

Conduct towards Clients

It is expected that all employees will:

- ensure that participants are informed of their rights and responsibilities and what participants and families can do if they have a complaint or concern with an individual or Patches;
- respect participants rights and opinions and encourage participation in decisions which affect them;
- immediately report any incident that appears to involve clients or staff;
- not engage in mistreatment or inappropriate behaviour in any form;
- not sexually harass or discriminate against participants on the grounds of gender, marital status, sexual preference, pregnancy, race, age, impairment, religious or political conviction;
- never swear, shout or be verbally/physically abusive in any way towards clients;
- display a positive attitude towards clients and their families;
- maintain confidentiality on matters of a personal nature that relate to participants;
- not take advantage of participants or their families in financial or other matters.

Conduct towards Fellow Staff

It is expected that all employees will:

- treat staff and volunteers with respect and courtesy, not sexually harass or discriminate against them on the grounds of gender, marital status, sexual preference, pregnancy, race, age, impairment, or religious or political conviction;
- only discuss concerns involving another staff member with that staff member and/or management, not with other staff members;
- maintain confidentiality on matters of a personal nature relating to staff;
- not allow personal relationships, inside or outside the work environment to adversely affect your work performance or that of other staff.

Responsibilities

- to comply with all lawful directions of Patches
- to promote the interests of Patches
- to perform their duties with skill, honest, care and diligence, using authority in a fair and equitable manner

- to observe Patches's required standards of performance and behaviour and act in accordance with the Patches policies and procedures (as amended from time to time).

Conflict of Interest

While working at and on behalf of Patches, employees and contractors will devote their full attention to company duties and not undertake any paid or unpaid activity which may be damaging to the interests of Patches without prior approval from Patches. It is the employee's responsibility to raise any potential conflicts of interest promptly with the line manager for consultation with the CEO.

Confidentiality

Employees must not use or disclose information obtained through their employment other than in the proper course of their duties. Information obtained in the course of employment must not be used to obtain financial reward or other benefit, to take advantage of another person.

Company Property

Company property, funds, facilities and services must be used only for authorised purposes. Employees abide by Patches policies and must not neglect or abuse company equipment or tools. Unless governed by law, or otherwise agreed in writing, any intellectual property developed by an employee during or as a result of his or her employment by Patches is the sole property of Patches.

Equal Opportunity and Harassment

All employed and contracted employees agree to support and contribute to the success of the Patches Equal Opportunity, Bullying and Harassment policies and principles.

Compliance

Employees must be aware of, and adhere to, company policies relating to risk management, health and safety, technology use and workplace behaviour. In the course of their duties, employees must comply with legislation relevant to Patches. If you become aware of any cases of non-compliance, you must forward details to your manager.

Breaches of the Code

Employees have a duty to observe the Code of Conduct and ensure that no breaches occur. Breaches require immediate attention and employees have a duty to report known or suspected breaches of the Code. A complaint or disclosure about an alleged breach of the code should be in writing and contain details about the date, time and nature of the alleged breach and include any available supporting material. The complaint should be made to the employee's line manager.

Code of Conduct Terms

Ethical principles: workplace behaviour and respect for all people

Values: honest, unbiased and unprejudiced work environment

Accountability: taking responsibility for your own actions, ensuring appropriate use of information, exercising diligence and duty of care obligations and avoiding conflicts of interest

Standard of conduct: includes complying with the job description, commitment to the organisation and proper computer, internet and email usage

Standard of practice: includes current policies and procedures and business operational manual

Disciplinary actions: includes complaints handling and specific penalties for any violation of the code.

Related legislation and standards

- Carers' Recognition Act 2004
- Disability Services Act 1993 (WA)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)
- Fair Work Act 2009
- NDIS Act 2013
- National Standards for Disability Services
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2021
- Privacy Act 1988

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