

Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy Template

Purpose:

To establish ethical standards, professional behaviour expectations, and accountability for all employees, volunteers, and contractors to ensure integrity, respect, and compliance across all aged care operations.

Scope:

Applies to all employees, contractors, consultants, agency staff, and volunteers engaged in any capacity on behalf of the organisation.

Policy Statement:

The organisation commits to maintaining a high standard of ethical conduct that:

- Respects the rights, dignity, and confidentiality of residents and colleagues.
- Promotes professionalism, honesty, and accountability in all work practices.
- Ensures compliance with the Aged Care Quality Standards, organisational values, and relevant legislation.
- Prohibits behaviours such as discrimination, harassment, bullying, exploitation, and abuse.

Legislative Context:

- Aged Care Act 1997 (Cth)
- Aged Care Quality Standards (Standard 2 – The Organisation; Standard 1 – The Person)
- Charter of Aged Care Rights
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013 (Cth)

Definitions:

- **Ethical Conduct:** Acting with honesty, integrity, fairness, and in the best interests of residents and the organisation.

- **Conflict of Interest:** A situation where personal interests could improperly influence professional duties.
- **Misconduct:** Behaviour breaching policy, law, or professional standards.

Key Principles:

1. Treat all residents, families, and colleagues with respect and courtesy.
2. Provide quality care and services in accordance with policies, procedures, and the Aged Care Quality Standards.
3. Uphold privacy and confidentiality at all times.
4. Avoid conflicts of interest and declare any potential conflicts promptly.
5. Act with honesty, transparency, and integrity in all professional activities.
6. Report unethical, illegal, or unsafe conduct using appropriate channels.
7. Comply with mandatory reporting obligations under SIRS.

Responsibilities:

- **Approved Provider / Board:** Promote a culture of integrity and approve the Code.
- **Managers and Supervisors:** Lead by example, support adherence, and address breaches promptly.
- **Employees and Volunteers:** Follow the Code and report potential violations or unethical conduct.
- **Quality & Compliance Manager:** Monitor compliance, review investigations, and ensure continuous improvements.

Procedures:

1. Provide a copy of the Code during induction; staff to sign acknowledgement on commencement.
2. Conduct annual refresher training covering ethics, boundaries, and professional expectations.
3. Report breaches to the immediate supervisor or designated Whistleblower Protection Officer.
4. Investigate alleged breaches following principles of confidentiality, fairness, and due process.

5. Implement disciplinary action or mediation based on investigation outcomes.
6. Evaluate lessons learned from incidents and update the Code or related training as needed.

Unacceptable Behaviour Includes:

- Physical, verbal, or emotional abuse.
- Harassment, discrimination, or bullying.
- Breach of confidentiality or misuse of information.
- Theft, dishonesty, or fraudulent acts.
- Substance abuse impacting work performance.
- Inappropriate relationships or boundary violations with residents.

Monitoring and Review:

- Annual review of this policy and staff compliance.
- Regular internal audits assessing staff awareness and adherence.
- Integration of findings into training and continuous improvement activities.

Associated Policies:

- Whistleblower Policy
- Workforce Training and Competency Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Feedback and Complaints Management Policy
- Human Rights and Dignity Policy

Evidence and Records:

- Signed staff acknowledgements
- Code of Conduct induction records
- Breach investigation reports
- Training attendance registers
- Annual compliance review reports

Policy Control:

| Version | Effective Date | Review Date | Policy Owner | Approved By | Status |
|---------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|--------|
| 1.0 | 20 January 2026 | 20 January 2027 | Quality & Compliance Manager | Approved Provider Board | Draft |

Compliance Summary:

| Entity Type | Entity Name | Completion Rate | Status |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Policy | Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy | 100% | FULLY COMPLIANT (100%) |