

CODE OF CONDUCT

HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS

Policy

We expect our workers¹ to meet a standard of ethical behaviour, formalised through our Client Code of Ethics. In the case of community work, ethical behaviour is essential because we often work with (or for) the most vulnerable and marginalised groups of people in our society.

Our Professional Code of Ethics sets the foundation for exemplary community work and is the benchmark for all our workers.

All our workers are expected to acknowledge and respect the worth of all individuals, regardless of race, religion, culture, age, gender, sexual and gender diversity, and other individual differences.

Conduct opposed to the full recognition of human dignity and individual rights within the worker's professional practice will be considered improper and unacceptable.

Principles underlying the Client Code of Ethics

1. Every human being, regardless of race, religion, culture, gender, age, sexual and gender diversity, or other individual differences has a right to maximise his or her potential providing it does not infringe upon the rights of others.
2. Social inclusion is a human right. Every individual has an active role to play in society and has the expectation of full social, educational and economic participation. An inclusive society is based on the fundamental values of equity, equality, social justice, and human rights and freedoms, as well as on the principles of tolerance and embracing diversity. Every society has an obligation to provide for (and deal equitably with) all its members and to make extra provision for those who are excluded or disadvantaged.
3. Every person is legally protected against discrimination based on age, sex, culture, race and disability and their universal human rights are inviolable.
4. We recognise Australia's first people and their right to self-determination.

Why a Code of Conduct?

Our Code of Conduct:

- is a central guide and reference for workers in support of day-to-day decision-making. The document clarifies our objectives, values, vision and mission and links them with standards of professional conduct.
- is an open disclosure of the way we operate. It provides visible guidelines for behaviour and reflects our commitment to the well-being of workers, our service standards and our relationship with the community.

¹ Worker is defined as: Director, employee, volunteer, consultant, contractor, subcontractor, outworker, apprentice, trainee and student.

- is intended to assist workers to deal with the ethical dilemmas, prejudices and grey areas that are encountered in everyday work. A Code of Compliment compliments relevant standards, policies and rules and does not substitute them.
- offers an invaluable opportunity for Accordwest to create a positive public identity in the community and an increased level of public confidence and trust among important stakeholders (including our valued clients).

Our Values

Caring

People matter. We listen, respect and care about your wellbeing from the first contact.

Innovative

We believe there are always better ways to achieve results and we challenge ourselves to find them.

Responsive

We know one size never fits all. When we notice your needs change, so will we.

Results Focused

Everything we do is driven by our commitment to achieving results.

Integrity

Our values, ethics and professionalism are everything. We do what we say we will do.

Our Vision

To be recognised as a provider of excellence in community services.

Our Mission

Empowering individuals and families to develop resilience.

Accountabilities & Responsibilities

All workers

- Be aware of and comply with the Code of Conduct.
- Report behaviour that may be contrary to the Code of Conduct.
- Role model the required behaviours and standards defined in the Code of Conduct.
- Model our organisational values.
- Comply with regulatory requirements, including mandatory reporting requirements.

Managers

- Be aware of and comply with the Code of Conduct.
- Role model the required behaviours and standards identified in the Code of Conduct, including when managing workers.
- Model our organisational values.
- Ensure all workers are aware of the Code of Conduct and associated expectations.
- Ensure all workers have access to copies of the Code of Conduct and other relevant documents and policies.
- Take appropriate steps to resolve conflict that arise in the workplace to ensure a healthy a
- harmonious work environment.
- Take appropriate action to address breaches of the Code of Conduct by workers.
- Comply with regulatory requirements, including mandatory reporting requirements.

Corporate Services

- Provide advice to workers in relation to the Code of Conduct and its application.

Our Code of Conduct

Personal and professional behaviour

- All workers are expected to maintain a standard of professional behaviour that maintains and promotes confidence and trust in the work of Accordwest.
- Our personal and professional conduct must strive to create a harmonious, safe and productive workplace which models our organisational values.
- We must:
 - Uphold the highest standards of honesty and integrity in the conduct of duties.
 - Respect the dignity of the community, our clients and colleagues by providing them with a well-resourced and quality service.
 - Deliver community services respectfully, honestly and at the direction of the client.
- Treat others in the workplace fairly and with respect.
- Exercise our best judgment in the interests of our clients and our organisation.
- Make decisions ethically, fairly and without bias using the best factual information available.
- Comply with any legislative, industrial or administrative requirements, and all lawful and reasonable directions given by persons in authority.
- Comply with all Accordwest policies and procedures relevant to the person's position.
- Act responsibly in the event of becoming aware of any unethical behaviour or wrong-doing by any other employee or volunteer and report such conduct or activities to the appropriate level of management.

Use of information

All workers must:

- Protect confidential information.
- Only access confidential information when it is required for work purposes.
- Not use confidential information for any unofficial or non-work purposes.
- Only release confidential information if authorised to do so.
- Only release confidential information in accordance with established policies and procedures.

Conflicts of interest

- The Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the *Conflict of Interest Policy & Procedures* and applies to all workers.
- Under no circumstances are workers permitted to develop personal relationships with clients, including after-hours and using digital and social media.
- A personal relationship is an association between two or more people that may be based on liking, love, some other type of social commitment or regular business interactions. Personal relationships may include a relationship between two parties that can have the unintentional effect of influencing judgment or behaviour, or creating a perception of influencing judgment or behaviour.
- Where a worker has a pre-existing relationship with a client that has been disclosed to and approved by the respective manager, the worker must not disclose any information obtained from the workplace to that client.
- When a worker is involved in a decision relating to the selection, appointment or promotion of a person with whom he or she shares a personal relationship, the relationship must be immediately declared in writing to the respective manager prior to the decision.
- Accordwest treats any conflict of interest in this regard extremely seriously and any instance of non-disclosure may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Use of resources

- Accordwest equipment, funds, facilities and other resources are to be used:
 - effectively, economically and carefully;
 - for the benefit of the client; and
 - for the benefit of the organisation.
- Minimal use of telephones, computers, the Internet, photocopiers or similar equipment for private purposes is acceptable in accordance with established policy.

Public comment

- All workers must ensure that public comments (either verbal or written) made in a private capacity are not attributed as official comment of Accordwest. In this

regard, workers are not permitted to use official stationery for private correspondence or for purposes not related to official duties. This prohibition extends to the provision of references for current and/or former workers.

- Workers should only publish information which is considered ethical and lawful.
- Workers must abide by the *Media & Social Media Policy & Procedures* when using social networking sites and commenting on the organisation in any manner.

Acceptance of gifts & benefits

- It is unethical for workers to solicit any gifts, benefits or additional money for themselves or colleagues.
- Under no circumstances are workers to accept gifts or benefits, or any inducement which might in any way obligate, compromise or influence our organisation or that person in their official capacity.
- The Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the *Gifts & Benefits Policy & Procedures*.

Secondary employment

- Workers (excluding senior executives) are permitted to engage in outside employment, provided that the employment does not have a detrimental impact on the worker's ability to meet the requirements of the Accordwest role or give rise to a conflict or potential conflict of interest.
- Before engaging in secondary work, workers must seek written permission from their respective Manager. .

Responsibilities after leaving Accordwest

- Workers must not disclose any official information after leaving Accordwest, that was non-disclosable during the term of engagement with the organisation.

Breach of Code of Ethics

When a breach of this Code of Ethics is alleged, Accordwest will investigate, make decisions and act in accord with the *Underperformance & Misconduct Policy & Procedures* and other relevant Accordwest policies.

Related Policies

Workers are expected to comply with all Accordwest policies and procedures, including (but not limited to):

- Conflict of Interest Policy & Procedures
- Fraud Control & Corruption Prevention Policy & Procedures
- Gifts & Benefits Policy & Procedures
- Grievance Resolution Policy & Procedures
- Media & Social Media Policy & Procedures
- Underperformance and Misconduct Policy & Procedures
- Whistle-blower Policy & Procedures



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If you are deaf, or have difficulty speaking or hearing English,
we are committed to helping you to access our services.

Accordwest acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander peoples as the first inhabitants of the nation and
traditional custodians of the land we live, learn and work.



Agencies for South West Accommodation (ASWA) Inc. trading as Accordwest
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