



## **WA HEALTH CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Our Code of Conduct**

WA Health's Code of Conduct identifies the values that we collectively hold as fundamental in our work and describes how these values translate into action. We are all responsible for our conduct in the workplace. We aim to encourage each other to uphold the principles and responsibilities outlined in our Code of Conduct and ensure that our behaviour is above reproach and able to withstand public scrutiny.

Our clients, their families, carers and other users of the health system are foremost in our decisions and actions.

### **Who does the Code apply to?**

This Code of Conduct applies to all WA Health employees, whether permanent, temporary, full-time, part-time, contract or casual.

WA Health incorporates the following entities:

- Department of Health
- Metropolitan Health Services
- Peel Health Service
- WA Country Health Service.

### **Our responsibilities under the Code**

As employees of WA Health, we are all responsible for ensuring that our behaviour reflects the standards of conduct embodied in the Code.

Managers and supervisors have a special responsibility to support employees in achieving these goals, by leading by example and assisting employees to understand the Code. Managers and supervisors also have a duty to investigate and act accordingly where allegations of breaches of the Code of Conduct are raised.



## Western Australian Public Sector Code of Ethics

The Western Australian (WA) Public Sector Code of Ethics specifies the minimum standards of conduct and integrity required of all public sector bodies and employees. Under section 9 of the Public Sector Management Act 1994, all public sector bodies and employees must comply with the Code of Ethics and their own codes of conduct.

The Code of Ethics can help us to understand what is appropriate behaviour and help build respect and trust within the community.

The standards of conduct and integrity all public sector employees must comply with are expressed in the following principles:

### **Personal Integrity**

We act with care and diligence and make decisions that are fair, honest, impartial, and timely and consider all relevant information

### **Relationships with Others**

We treat people with respect, courtesy and sensitivity and recognise their interests, rights, safety and welfare

### **Accountability**

We use the resources of the State in a responsible and accountable manner that ensures the efficient, effective and appropriate use of human, natural, financial and physical resources, property and information.

Further details on the Code of Ethics can be found on the Office of the Public Sector Standards Commissioner (OPSSC) website at:

<http://www.opssc.wa.gov.au/documents/ethicsintegrity/Code%20of%20Ethics%2008.pdf>

The WA Health Code of Conduct has been developed to complement these principles together with those categories of appropriate behaviour outlined in the OPSSC Conduct Guide (2008):

<http://www.opssc.wa.gov.au/documents/ethicsintegrity/Conduct%20Guide.pdf>

## Our Values

**Care** by demonstrating commitment and consideration to others as we work.

**Respect** for each other, our clients and their families, carers and the community by preserving individual dignity and supporting the right of everyone to make choices.



**Excellence** by providing high quality, accessible, integrated and safe health care to the community. We believe in working in partnership with clients to improve their health.

**Integrity** by providing quality services and advice for the common good and having honest dealings and communication with other people.

**Teamwork** by valuing the contribution of the team, working safely and cooperatively and communicating effectively with the team.

**Leadership** by communicating WA Health's vision, taking responsibility for our actions and decisions and displaying trust in our colleagues.

These values underpin our commitment to demonstrate:

### ***Responsible Care***

Responsible care means protecting and managing with care and diligence the human, natural and financial resources of the State. We will:

- Base all human resource practices, including recruitment, selection and appointment, on merit and equity, ensuring they are free from bias.
- Use our initiative, skills and expertise in competently performing our jobs with care, diligence and impartiality.
- Ensure public money and assets are utilised efficiently, effectively and in accordance with statutes, regulations and government policies.
- Have due regard for the safety and security of government resources.
- Ensure decisions made are fair and transparent and demonstrate accountability in our work practices, consulting those affected where possible.
- Work safely in a manner that protects and promotes the health and well being of individuals and the environment.
- Ensure that our personal choices including use of alcohol and other substances do not affect work performance or endanger the health and safety of others.
- Maintain confidentiality about any personal or other information that becomes available to us in the course of our duties, and only use the information in connection with our duties and/or with proper authorisation.

### ***Respect for people***

Respect for people means being honest and treating people courteously and considerately, so that their dignity is maintained and their rights are upheld. We will:

- Treat clients, colleagues and members of the public with respect, courtesy, honesty and sensitivity.
- Respect the rights of others and act to empower them to claim and uphold their rights if they need assistance.



- Respect different values, beliefs, cultures and religions.
- Be open and honest in our communication with other people.
- Value the contribution of our fellow workers and endeavour to work cooperatively with each other.
- Be considerate of the needs of our colleagues to balance their work and other life responsibilities and commitments.
- Not participate in or tolerate any form of bullying, harassment or discrimination and report instances where they occur.
- Act to resolve issues, grievances and concerns effectively, fairly and promptly.

## ***Ethical Behaviour***

Ethical behaviour means being honest, showing integrity and upholding the laws of the organisation and land. We will:

- Behave in an ethical and professional manner at all times and not act in any way that brings WA Health into disrepute.
- Maintain loyalty to WA Health by performing our roles with integrity.
- Comply with all state government policies, standards and Australian laws.
- Understand and comply with all WA Health business, administration and operational directives and policies.
- Conduct our business fairly and openly without favour or prejudice.
- Disclose any personal or professional matters that may lead to actual or perceived conflicts of interests.
- Report any unethical or inappropriate behaviour we become aware of at work.
- Ensure that the use of equipment, facilities and other resources is only for the purposes for which they are intended.
- Not comment or provide information to the media without proper prior authorisation.
- Not seek to derive benefit from our employment as public officers.
- Not accept any unauthorised gifts in the course of our employment.
- Protect and responsibly manage the intellectual property developed in, or used by WA Health. The intellectual property we create in the course of our employment may remain the property of WA Health.
- Abide by the principals of contact between lobbyists and government representatives in accordance with the Contact with Lobbyists Code.  
<https://secure.dpc.wa.gov.au/lobbyistsregister/>

## **What happens if there is a breach of the Code?**

The Code is not intended to be, and must not be, used to intimidate or threaten employees. It is the responsibility of each employee to disclose suspected improper, unethical or unlawful behaviour. *Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who attempts to intimidate, coerce or take reprisal against an employee who has disclosed suspected improper, unlawful or unethical behaviour.*

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Page 4 of 6



All allegations of breaches of the Code will be forwarded in the first instance to Corporate Governance.

Managers must ensure their decisions are fair, transparent and consistent in response to an allegation of a breach of the Code and the action to be taken. In determining the action to be taken, the nature and seriousness of the breach will be considered.

All allegations of a breach of the WA Sector Code of Ethics or WA Health Code of Conduct will be referred in the first instance to WA Health Corporate Governance. Consequences of a breach include:

- informal or formal counselling
- performance management processes
- disciplinary action under the Public Sector Management Act 1994
- referral to Corruption and Crime Commission
- referral to the police (in cases of suspected criminal offence).

## Supporting Legislation/Documents

*Public Sector Management Act (1994) (WA) (as amended)*

Western Australian (WA) Public Sector Code of Ethics

<http://www.opssc.wa.gov.au/documents/ethicsintegrity/Code%20of%20Ethics%2008.pdf>

Office of the Public Standards Commissioner Conduct Guide (2008):

<http://www.opssc.wa.gov.au/documents/ethicsintegrity/Conduct%20Guide.pdf>

## Related Policies

Public Sector Standards in Human Resource Management (WA)

(<http://www.wa.gov.au/opssc/index.htm>)

WA Health Employee Discipline and Misconduct Policy

WA Health Employee Grievance Resolution Policy

WA Health Prevention of Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination by Employees in the Workplace Policy

Area Health Services local Workplace Aggression and Violence Policies and Guidelines



## Authority

<b>Endorsed by:</b>	Director General on 15 September 2008
<b>Review Date:</b>	15 September 2010  This document has been developed in accordance with the WA Health Workforce Policy Development Framework. This policy remains effective until a subsequent version is endorsed by the Director General.  File name and path: S:\BUnit\HR\Policy\Whole of Health\Code of Conduct\2010.06.02 WA Health Code of Conduct 20081104v1.0 .doc
<b>Accessing Policies</b>	via the Whole of Health Holii Policies link at: <a href="http://intranet.health.wa.gov.au/policies/doh_policy.cfm">http://intranet.health.wa.gov.au/policies/doh_policy.cfm</a>
<b>Primary Contact:</b>	Branch: Human Resources Branch Directorate: Workforce Directorate Phone: 9222 2405 Email: <a href="mailto:policyofficer@health.wa.gov.au">policyofficer@health.wa.gov.au</a>

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