

# **CODE OF CONDUCT**

This Code of Conduct (“the code”) sets out the standards of conduct, professional and personal behaviour the Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn requires of its employees to uphold and encourage a safe, supportive, productive and harmonious workplace. Employees have a responsibility to uphold these standards including upholding the teachings and values of the Catholic Church and to avoid by word, action or public lifestyle, behaviours which are contrary to those teachings and values. In this Code, a reference to “employee” includes secular, clergy and members of religious congregations. “Employment” includes services provided for or on behalf of the Archdiocese, whether for remuneration or otherwise. A reference to vulnerable people should be taken to refer to a person who is below the age of eighteen years or an adult in the ACT who is accessing a service related to the disadvantage.

## **1.0 SCOPE**

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees members of the Archdiocese. It outlines the obligations, responsibilities and standard of behaviour the Archdiocese requires of all employees to uphold the values, integrity and reputation of the Archdiocese.

Employees are to make themselves familiar with the requirements of this document and ensure they comply with the behaviours and obligations outlined within it.

Failure to comply with the responsibilities and obligations outlined in this document may result in disciplinary action being taken, including termination of employment, notification to external agencies and/or criminal charges.

## **2.0 LAWFUL COMPLIANCE**

Employees must act lawfully and comply with all legislative, contractual and industrial requirements while engaged by the Archdiocese. Employees must also comply with archdiocesan policies and follow all reasonable and lawful directions given by their employer.

## **3.0 IMPLEMENTATION**

### **3.1 Ethical Behaviour**

Employees are expected to:

- respect the dignity, rights and views of others;
- listen and seek to understand different points of view (this does not necessarily mean agreeing with the point of view);
- act respectfully at all times, including respecting cultural, ethnic and religious differences;
- acknowledge the genuine contributions that others make;
- express constructive feedback considerately and in a moderate tone;
- not harass, bully or discriminate against colleagues, clients or members of the public;
- be courteous, fair, sensitive and considerate to the needs of others;
- be honest and act with integrity at all times; and
- actively assist in managing workplace conflict that personally affects them or staff members under their supervision to create positive and constructive outcomes.

Employees must not act or otherwise conduct themselves in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing the Archdiocese, or any agency of the Archdiocese, into disrepute. In particular, employees must not act in a manner which could reasonably be taken as being inconsistent with the teachings of the Church.

### **3.2 Professional Behaviour & Development**

Employees are expected to:

- maintain a high standard and quality of work;

- maintain and develop knowledge and understanding of their area of expertise;
- continuously seek to improve work performance and bring about improvements in the workplace;
- exercise care, responsibility and sound judgement when carrying out their duties;
- ensure procedural fairness is followed in all processes;
- maintain adequate documentation to support any decision making;
- take reasonable care of their safety and health;
- take reasonable steps that their acts/omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others;
- comply and cooperate with any reasonable instruction, policy or procedure, including with respect to work health safety matters;
- refrain from carrying out their duties under the influence of alcohol, any illegal substance, or any drug which impairs work performance or poses a safety risk to themselves or others;
- not ignore work duties or waste time during working hours;
- not take or seek to take improper advantage of any information gained in the course of employment;
- not take improper advantage of their position to benefit themselves or others;
- not allow personal political views/affiliations or other personal interests to influence the performance of duties or exercise of responsibilities;
- maintain confidentiality and privacy where required; and
- report to their immediate supervisor any instance where the employee believes they, or anyone within their workplace, have been treated in a discriminatory or harassing manner.

### **3.3 Conflicts of Interest**

A conflict of interest includes any circumstance, whether actual or perceived, arising from a conflict between the performance of an employee's professional duties with the Archdiocese and their personal interests. Employees are to take all appropriate steps to disclose a conflict of interest (or potential conflict) to their immediate supervisor as soon as the employee becomes aware of it.

A conflict can arise when there is a reasonable expectation of a personal benefit, direct or indirect, for an employee that could influence the performance of their duties. This benefit may be financial or non-financial.

Employees must take suitable measures to avoid, or appropriately deal with, any situation or relationship they may have where a conflict of interest could, directly or indirectly, compromise the performance of their duties.

Employees may ask themselves the following questions to assist in identifying whether a situation or relationship is potentially a conflict of interest:

- Do I have personal interests that may conflict, or be perceived to conflict, with my position with the Archdiocese?
- Could there be benefits for me now, or in the future, that could cast doubt on my objectivity?
- How will my involvement in the decision or action be viewed by others?
- Does my involvement appear fair and reasonable in all the circumstances?

### **3.4 Gifts and Benefits**

Employees must not solicit or accept gifts, benefits or hospitality which might be reasonably seen to either directly or indirectly compromise or influence their professional duties with the Archdiocese.

Gifts of a nominal value generally used for promotional purposes, or moderate acts of hospitality offered as a genuine thank you by a client, may be personally retained as long as they have not been solicited by the employee or could be seen to have comprised or unduly influenced the employee's professional duties with the Archdiocese.

Gifts or hospitality offered as an inducement to purchase, provide information or treat some-one favourably are not acceptable regardless of their monetary value.

Gifts, such as a Christmas hamper or a box of chocolates from a consultant, should be shared and made available for consumption by all employees in the group. Consideration should also be given to donating such gifts to charity.

### **3.5 Privacy & Confidentiality:**

Employees should maintain proper and appropriate levels of privacy, confidentiality and trust in the course of employment. Staff members must not divulge, either during employment or after, any confidential information gained as an archdiocesan staff member.

### **3.6 Use of Resources:**

Employees should use any and all resources provided by the Archdiocese prudently and justly.

In particular, employees are required to utilise IT resources (including email, mobile phones and internet) in a responsible, ethical and lawful manner. A person who is authorised to use IT resources may also use them for limited, incidental personal purposes. Such use remains conditional on the use being lawful (e.g. IT resources cannot be used (i) for private commercial purposes, (ii) to intimidate or harass another person whether or not an employee of the Archdiocese, (iii) to pass on confidential information, (iv) to download material in breach of copyright, etc), that it does not negatively affect the professional responsibilities of the employee, that it does not impact negatively on other employees, and that it in no way could reasonably damage the reputation, image or operations of the Archdiocese. The relevant manager will determine whether or not the private use of IT resources is “reasonable”.

### **3.7 Confidentiality**

Employees must not divulge, either during employment or after, any confidential information gained as an employee of the Archdiocese.

### **3.8 Due Process**

With respect to any concern, inquiry, grievance or complaint involving the Archdiocese, one of its agencies or one of its employees, “due process” shall be the norm. In the absence of any pre-existing policy and procedure (e.g. as found in the archdiocesan *Conditions of Employment* or the ACBC document *Integrity in Ministry* or *Integrity in the Service of the Church*), under this Code, upon the formal lodging of any concern, inquiry, grievance or complaint with the relevant officer of the Archdiocese (e.g. the Archdiocesan Financial Administrator, Chancellor, or the Vicar General), due process will provide that there shall be reasonable opportunity for a proper hearing, involving all relevant parties, of the concern, inquiry, grievance or complaint (e.g. in the form of a mediation or arbitration) as well as the adequate provision of reasons for any decision(s) thereby taken.

This Code is intended to offer general guidance for all who work for, or who provide services, in any capacity, to or on behalf of the Archdiocese. Should an employee have a particular query or concern, or wish to have clarified any matter raised in the Code, they should direct it, in the first instance, to their manager or Chancellor.

### **3.9 Protected Disclosures**

In reporting any suspected improper use, fraud, waste or abuse of resources, corrupt conduct, inadequate administration or accountability, employees are entitled to seek support and protection when making such disclosures, and to be notified of the action taken in relation to the disclosure.

Employees are not entitled to protection for disclosures which, on investigation, are found to be vexatious or malicious allegations, and may be liable for disciplinary action as a result.

### **3.10 Secondary Employment**

Employees engaged on a full-time basis must seek and obtain approval in writing from their employer prior to engaging in any secondary employment or business activity, including employment within a family company.

Part-time and casual employees must also seek approval to undertake secondary employment from their employer (parish priest, agency manager) if the employment may result in potential conflicts of interest that could adversely impact on the employee's ability to perform their duties with their immediate employer, including work, health & safety concerns, or where the secondary employment may affect the employer's financial position, services, clients or standing in the community.

Approval for secondary employment is still required when employees are on leave, including periods of leave without pay.

Where an employee is already involved in secondary employment, they must provide details of the secondary employment to their employer and obtain the necessary approval.