

CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

Jesse's Voice Statement of Values and Ethics

All people are created equal. All people are created in the image of God. All people have a right to education, work, adequate standard of living, physical wellbeing and health and social security.

Seniors, peoples with disabilities, carers, youth, children and women are supported, recognised and encouraged to participate in their community. We endorse services and assistance that help people to: participate actively in community and economic life; gain an education, gain interdependence; access a responsive and sustainable safety net; develop their capabilities; offer choice and opportunities; help children have the best possible start in life; promote healthy family relationships; help families adapt to changing economic and social circumstances; take an active part in the community; assist families with the costs of children; help homeless people and low-income households to gain affordable and appropriate housing; promote community partnerships; and encourage participation in the local community by individuals, families, business and government.

We value individual life and pledge to uphold the value of "survival of the race, not survival of the fittest".

Implement best practice on a world level; with

- **Respect;** We respect our persons-in-care, stakeholders and each other
- **Collaboration;** We value collaboration with our persons-in-care, colleagues, key partners, agencies and the community
- **Professionalism;** We value professionalism, integrity and responsive service to the government of the day under God
- **Results;** We will deliver results and improve outcomes for our persons-in-care through appropriate processes and structures
- **Innovation;** We value innovation, creativity and continuous improvement

Code of Conduct and Ethics provides a framework to guide our actions and decision-making. It reflects the values and principles within our community and outlines the minimum standard of behaviour we are all expected to follow. The application of this Code will help to create and maintain a high level of public confidence, trust and satisfaction.

All staff members are expected to be familiar with, sign and comply with the code of conduct and ethics policy. The Code will be a living document, with contributions from staff adding to its value over the years.

No Code of Conduct can address all the issues you might come across in your working life. However there are some general principles that all staff can refer to when faced by an ethical dilemma. No staff member should ever be in doubt as to what is the right and proper thing to do in any given situation. If there is any confusion, advice should always be sought from a senior staff member.

Bullying means:

- Repeated inappropriate behaviour, whether direct or indirect; whether verbal, physical or otherwise
- Conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment
- Which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to a safe and reasonable place of employment.
- It includes behaviour that makes the workplace or the association with the workplace unpleasant, humiliating or intimidating.

Confidentiality means disclosing to persons (either inside or outside Jesse's Voice) who have no proper or lawful right to it:

- Information or material related to clients or other employees
- The business or trade secrets of Jesse's Voice
- Which you are aware of because of your role with Jesse's Voice.

Conflict of interest arises when someone has a personal interest in a matter, which could improperly influence or appear to influence the performance of his or her duties.

Corrupt conduct (fully defined in the Independent Commission against Corruption Act 1988) includes:

- Any dishonest or improper use of position or resources, including the misuse of information or material acquired in the course of official duties - even where this misuse occurs when the person no longer undertakes those duties
- Conduct by a staff member which might lead directly or indirectly to the dishonest or improper use of position by a staff member undertaking official duties
- Conduct which might directly or indirectly interfere with the carrying out of responsibilities by a public official, including bribery or violence.

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Dignity of risk is the principle, which says that people have a right to the dignity that comes from learning from life situations, even if this involves some risk.

Discrimination for the purposes of this Code means treating someone unfairly or harassing them directly or indirectly because of their sex, pregnancy, race, disability, homosexuality, marital status, transgender, carers' responsibilities or age. It also applies when the unfair treatment happens because of a relationship with or association with a person from one of the groups listed above.

Duty of care is the obligation to take reasonable care to avoid causing harm to another person. 'Reasonable' in this context means the degree of care that could be expected from a competent and skilled person in the particular job. Duty of care is breached if action taken does not reach the required standard of care, or if there is a failure to act when it could reasonably have been expected.

Ethics and ethical conduct refers to the standards of behaviour which govern the way in which we operate in dealing with our stakeholders, including persons-in-care, employees, colleagues, services providers, the whole of government, families and the wider community. Ethical conduct is underpinned by the principles of integrity, impartiality, responsiveness to the public interest, accountability and honesty.

Harassment means any unwanted behaviour which offends, humiliates or intimidates someone and targets them because of sex, pregnancy, race, disability, homosexuality, marital status, transgender, carers' responsibilities or age. It also applies when the unwanted behaviour happens because of a relationship with or association with a person from one of the groups listed above.

Official information and trade secrets means information and knowledge obtained in the course of or arising out of employment with Jesse's Voice, including documents that are obtained or generated, and is information that is not publicly available.

Protected disclosure means one made within the meaning of the Protected Disclosures Act 1994. The object of this Act is to encourage and make possible a disclosure, made in the public interest, of corrupt conduct, maladministration or serious and substantial waste. The Act makes it a criminal offence to take 'detrimental action' against another person/s because they have made a protected disclosure. Detrimental action includes:

- Injury, damage or loss
- Intimidation or harassment
- Discrimination, disadvantage or adverse treatment in relation to employment
- Dismissal from, or prejudice in, employment
- Disciplinary proceeding

Reasonable personal use means use of work related property in a manner that a reasonable person would consider appropriate in the circumstances. For example:

- To deal with urgent or emergency personal situations
- To deal with minor personal issues which cannot be dealt with on days or hours free from duty

Victimise is to impose a hardship on, or punish, or discipline, or make an example of, or single out anyone because they have acted on the rights given them by law or by this Code of Conduct, or because they have supported someone else acting on their rights.

General Principles

I understand that as a staff member or manager/supervisor of Jesse's Voice, this Code of Conduct commits me:

- To act in a lawful manner and according to this Code
- To act in an ethical manner
- To not act corruptly or support anyone else acting corruptly
- To take all necessary steps to ensure the health and safety of myself and others whilst at work
- To comply with all proper instructions and directions, while being free to follow up any concerns with the appropriate manager/supervisor
- To not misuse or support the misuse of official information or resources
- To not manipulate persons-in-care for my own advantage
- To expect that I will be treated fairly and equitably with my peers
- To ensure that my claims for work related expenses are accurate
- To not attend work under the influence of alcohol or other drugs
- To be open and honest when confronted by ethical dilemmas and seek to resolve these by consulting management
- To recognise that the Managing Director and the Board of Directors have the ultimate right to determine what is to be done in the planning and provision of services to persons-in-care

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- Provide leadership, information, resources, training support and the relevant policies and procedures to assist all staff members to reach the required level of performance in a fair and consistent manner
- Treat all staff members and others concerned with fairly and equitably, in accordance with policies and procedures
- Identify myself to all persons
- Act with courtesy, promptness, fairness, efficiency and impartiality
- Respect individual differences and not discriminate against, harass or bully people
- Respect the rights and dignity of persons-in-care
- Act in the public interest and not my private interest
- Give to the best of my ability full information and advice clearly, simply and in the most appropriate form
- Maintain confidentiality and privacy of official information and trade secrets
- Seek to understand others' positions
- Seek to find solutions to problems
- I will not have a financial relationship with persons-in-care that benefits me
- I will not provide advice to persons-in-care on financial matters (including advice or assistance with respect to wills or property) unless otherwise directed by the Managing Director
- I will not accept any appointment that has the potential for conflict of interest (e.g. in relation to a persons-in-care, I will not be sole signatory to a bank account, act as Power of Attorney or as an Executor of an estate)
- I will not provide services for which I do not have the appropriate authorisation and/or skills and/or training
- I will treat my colleagues with courtesy and respect
- I will respect individual differences
- I will not engage in discriminatory or harassing or bullying behaviour and not accept such behaviour in the workplace
- I will work cooperatively as a member of a team which includes accepting a fair share of the workload, being punctual and honouring commitments
- I will contribute to the creation and maintenance of a safe working environment.
- Adhere to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity and Equity and Diversity
- I will ensure that staff members know what their job entails, how they are expected to do it, what results they are accountable for, and how their performance will be managed
- I will provide supervision to the staff members for whom I have responsibility and act to recognise satisfactory performance and assist/correct unsatisfactory performance
- I will assist staff members to identify their learning needs and goals and support them
- I will ensure the creation and maintenance of a safe working environment
- I will recognise the importance of quality and not just the quantity of performance
- I will encourage open communication
- I will manage change as an ongoing, continuous and positive aspect of the work environment
- I will ensure that this Code of Conduct is brought to the attention of staff all staff members

How should I deal with an ethical dilemma?

There may be times during employment when you will be concerned about whether your actions are ethical.

- Is the decision or conduct lawful?
- What will the outcomes be for myself, my work colleagues and other parties?
- Can the decision or conduct be justified in terms of public interest and would it withstand public scrutiny?

What is a conflict of interest?

A conflict of interest arises when a staff member has a personal interest in a matter, which could improperly influence or appear to influence the performance of their duties, other than in situations of personal emergency. In many cases only the specific staff member will be aware of the potential for a conflict of interest. It is their duty to avoid these situations or to disclose them to a manager/supervisor as soon as they become apparent. It is the manager/supervisor duty to be vigilant in responding to real and perceived conflicts of interest and in striving to ensure that the potential for these situations to arise is minimised.

Some situations that may give rise to a conflict of interest include:

- Personal beliefs or attitudes that influence the impartiality of advice given
- Personal relationships which lead to the perception that the relationship can or may influence

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- Secondary employment or outside business activities that adversely affect the performance of duties and responsibilities
- Party political activities or making adverse political comments

Confidentiality and privacy

- Official information must be kept confidential and not used or be permitted to be used to gain an improper advantage for myself or any other party
- I will comply with the Privacy Act and Code of Practice by ensuring that personal details of persons-in-care and of staff members (for example home phone numbers/names/ages) will remain confidential and will not be disclosed to members of the public or to other staff or other employees without consent or authority
- I will protect the security of my computer (for example by keeping my password private, and by password-protecting my screen saver)
- I will comply with the State Records Act by keeping full and accurate records and by ensuring they are kept in safe custody
- I will only pass on information about clients to other organisations, for example government departments, non-government organisations or other service providers when consent or authority is given

Duty of care

As part of the Jesse's Voice duty of care I am obliged to take appropriate care in balancing dignity of risk with the welfare of the person-in-care. Person/s have a right to learn from life situations even if, with support, this involves some risk. However the welfare of the persons-in-care outweighs dignity of risk.

Gifts and benefits

Staff members are paid to perform jobs. Therefore gifts or benefits are inappropriate.

- I will not seek or accept gifts or benefits intended to or likely to influence the way I carry out my duties
- I will not seek or accept gifts from any current or past persons-in-care or their relatives or accept gifts or benefits from their deceased estate

- The manager/supervisor may in certain circumstances approve the acceptance of token gifts or benefits but only if they cannot be seen as compromising Jesse's Voice or staff members. In such circumstances the manager/supervisor will record these gifts on a register.
- I will always inform my manager/supervisor if I have been offered or given a gift or benefit
- Where there is any offer that may constitute corrupt conduct I will report it immediately to my manager/supervisor, or directly to the Independent Commission Against Corruption

Intellectual property and copyright and trade secrets

- Copyright of any material I produce in the course of my work belongs to Jesse's Voice and permission must be gained from the Managing Director before it can be disclosed or published. This includes research, training programs, software and audiovisual material as well as any written work.
- Copyright restrictions mean that I must seek permission from the responsible authority or copyright holder before reproducing materials

Public comment on the work of Jesse's Voice

I understand that:

- As a member of the community I have the right to enter into public debate on political and social issues. However in situations where private comment may appear to be official comment, I will introduce my remarks by noting that what I say is made in a private or union capacity and does not represent the official view of Jesse's Voice.
- I will not make any comment about Jesse's Voice or any people associated with Jesse's Voice to the media (unless delegated to do so).
- Public comment includes, as well as all news or current affairs media, comments made in journals, books, via computers (in chat rooms/emails/forum/blogs for example) or other publications, or in public speaking engagements
- I will not disclose information or material (other than that which is publicly available) obtained in the course of employment unless this is in the normal course of duties, or required by law or with prior approval.