

OPS-005 Employee Code of Conduct and Values

Authorised by: PWDA Board
Applies to: All PWDA workers and volunteers
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Policy Approver: CEO

Contents

Purpose.....	2
Scope	2
Policy Statement	2
Employee Values.....	3
Employee Code of Conduct	4
Roles and Responsibilities	10
Breaches of this Code	12
Related Documents.....	12

Purpose

This Employee Code of Conduct and Values set out the core behaviours and principles that underpin PWDA's work. It provides guidelines for professional and ethical standards of conduct and behaviour to reflect PWDA's commitment to building a harmonious, productive and diverse workplace, where everyone's contribution is valued and respected.

Scope

This Code applies to:

- all employees, independent contractors, subcontractors and consultants (collectively “workers”), and
- all volunteers and students (collectively “volunteers”)

Policy Statement

PWDA's purpose, as a leading disability rights and advocacy organisation, is to realise our vision of a socially just, accessible and inclusive community.

Our workers and volunteers are expected to:

- work efficiently, fairly, respectfully and with integrity
- support PWDA's purpose and core values
- contribute to a positive work culture; and by doing so,
- promote confidence and trust in the organisation.

The Code is one part of PWDA's good corporate governance practices, supported by a range of policies and procedures. All workers and volunteers are expected to act in accordance with the Code.

PWDA will investigate any allegation of behaviour or conduct that is contrary to this Code of Conduct and Values. Workers and volunteers found to have breached this Code may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or termination of their Agreement.

Employee Values

Community focused – We take pride in delivering high-quality service to our customers, colleagues, clients, members and broader disability community.

- We continually improve through innovation, excellence, and solution-focused thinking.
- We are pro-active and actively listen to our community, using their feedback to shape responsive and meaningful services.
- We anticipate needs and support ideas that enhance efficiency, resolve issues early, and add value.

Work as a team – We work together as a team. We are empowered, accountable and respectful of each other.

- We collaborate, share our workload and help each other achieve our team goals.
- We create a positive culture by being respectful, approachable and welcoming.
- We use good communication skills to listen to each other, co-operate and work together.

Act with integrity – We are responsible for our own actions and do what is right.

- We are honest and transparent in our work, support colleagues, and seek feedback when needed.
- We take responsibilities for our actions and decisions and acknowledge mistakes.
- We demonstrate the values in our behaviour every day and lead by example.

Champion inclusion – We contribute to a workplace where all people feel respected, valued, and are able to contribute.

- We celebrate diversity and value different perspectives, experiences, and identities.
- We actively listen and create space for everyone to participate and contribute to group work and decision-making.
- We use language that is respectful, accessible and inclusive to all team members and clients.

Employee Code of Conduct

1. Promote harmony in the workplace

Workers and volunteers are encouraged to contribute to a positive, collaborative and respectful workplace by:

- treating colleagues with courtesy, kindness and consideration
- recognising and valuing the contribution of every role
- embracing and celebrating diversity across the organisation
- raising and responding to workplace concerns in a timely, transparent and solutions-focused way
- ensuring social and team activities are inclusive and welcoming to all
- engaging in constructive, supportive communication
- choosing behaviours that strengthen teamwork, trust and morale.

2. Promote a positive image of PWDA

Workers and volunteers are encouraged to uphold and promote a positive image of PWDA by:

- presenting themselves professionally, including maintaining good personal hygiene, grooming and attire
- contributing to clean, organised and welcoming workspaces
- speaking about PWDA in a respectful and constructive manner
- being well-informed, confident and prepared when engaging with clients, members, directors, the public and external agencies
- communicating with all stakeholders in a courteous, respectful and responsive way.

3. Promote a positive image of people with disability

Workers and volunteers are encouraged to actively promote a positive and respectful image of people with disability by:

- clearly articulating and applying a contemporary social model of disability in all aspects of their work
- using positive, accurate and respectful language when communicating about people with disability
- choosing terminology that reflects dignity, inclusion and current best practice
- engaging in humour and conversation that is inclusive and respectful
- communicating in ways that support autonomy, respect and equal participation.

4. Exercise professional competence and duty of care

Workers and volunteers are encouraged to demonstrate a high level of professional competence, judgement and care in their work by:

- taking reasonable steps to ensure the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of others in the workplace
- maintaining and continually developing their professional knowledge, skills and capabilities
- seeking guidance and collaborating with colleagues and leaders when navigating sensitive, complex or challenging matters
- supporting the independence and autonomy of clients and others with disability, applying the principle of the least restrictive alternative and upholding dignity of risk
- actively engaging in a culture of continuous quality improvement
- aligning their work with PWDA's vision, purpose, policies, procedures and strategic direction.

5. Support work colleagues, directors and staff with a disability

Workers and volunteers are encouraged to foster an inclusive, supportive and barrier-free workplace by:

- actively ensuring their actions and practices do not create barriers to the full participation of employees, directors and members with disability

- providing any formal workplace adjustments they are responsible for in a timely, respectful and supportive manner
- offering informal assistance and support to colleagues and others with disability, where appropriate
- ensuring workplace social activities are accessible, welcoming and inclusive of employees with disability on an equal basis.

6. Maintain an appropriate relationship with the Board of Directors

Workers and Volunteers are encouraged to support a constructive, professional and respectful relationship with the Board of Directors by:

- recognising and upholding the Board's governance role
- treating board directors with courtesy and respect, and responding to reasonable requests for information or assistance
- demonstrating professional loyalty to the Board as a whole
- protecting sensitive or confidential information, particularly client information, and sharing it with board directors only when it directly relates to their governance responsibilities, and through formal channels such as board reports by the relevant Executive leader
- maintaining appropriate boundaries and not engaging in discussions about confidential or sensitive Board matters
- promptly reporting any grievance or dispute involving a board director to the CEO
- promptly reporting through their leader to the CEO any direction given by a board director, to confirm the appropriate response
- promptly reporting any ethical issues arising from interactions with board directors through their leader to the CEO.

7. Maintain appropriate professional boundaries

Employees and volunteers are encouraged to maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries with PWDA members, board directors, clients, associates and colleagues. This helps ensure safe, ethical and respectful working relationships.

Maintaining professional boundaries means avoiding personal relationships that could, whether intended or not:

- compromise professional judgement or decision-making
- create an actual or perceived conflict of interest
- influence the way duties are carried out or lead to deviation from established procedures
- result in exploitation, misuse of power, breach of trust or any form of harm including sexual, physical, psychological or financial harm
- create dependence on an employee outside their professional role

Employees must promptly disclose to the Director of People and Culture any personal relationship that has created, or may create, any of the above circumstances.

Employees are expected to follow any reasonable direction provided by the Director of People and Culture in response to such a disclosure.

8. Maintain a boundary between an employee role and their role as a PWDA member

Where an employee or worker is also a PWDA member, they are encouraged to maintain clear and transparent boundaries between their member role and their professional responsibilities. This helps ensure fairness, impartiality and trust across the organisation.

Employees and volunteers who are also PWDA members are expected to:

- demonstrate professional loyalty to the elected Board, leaders and colleagues, even when they may hold different personal views as a member
- keep all sensitive or confidential information gained through their employee role private, and not use or disclose it in their capacity as a member

- remain neutral and not become involved in disputes or grievances between members, between a member and a director, or between a member and an employee, unless specifically authorised by the CEO
- promptly report to the CEO any grievance or dispute involving a member, enabling the CEO and President to determine an appropriate resolution process
- refrain from active participation in Board elections or other membership decisions, other than casting a confidential vote — including not campaigning, endorsing, nominating or seconding candidates
- avoid expressing personal views or participating in campaigns on matters raised for member decision
- act in an impartial, transparent and professional manner in any interactions related to issues being considered by, or discussed with, PWDA members.

9. Exercise restraint in political and civic participation

Employees and volunteers have the right to engage in political and civic activities in their personal capacity. To ensure that PWDA's work is carried out in a fair, impartial and politically neutral manner, employees are encouraged to:

- keep personal political or civic communications — including calls, emails and messages — separate from work time and PWDA equipment
- temporarily stand aside from their role during any period in which they are a candidate for political office
- avoid engaging in contentious interactions with agencies or officials while seeking political office
- protect sensitive or personal information gained through their PWDA role, ensuring it is not used or disclosed in personal political or civic activities.

Employees are encouraged to seek advice from their leader or the Director of People and Culture if they have any concerns about whether a personal political or civic activity may conflict with their professional responsibilities, and to follow any reasonable direction provided.

10. Use PWDA property appropriately

Employees and volunteers are encouraged to use PWDA resources and equipment responsibly, safely and efficiently. This includes vehicles, laptops, access cards and other workplace tools.

Employees and volunteers are expected to:

- use equipment in line with operating instructions
- seek approval before removing PWDA property from any premises, and notify the Corporate Services Unit so that removal and return dates can be recorded
- return equipment promptly once it is no longer required
- report any damage, loss or malfunction of PWDA property to the Senior Manager, Corporate Services, regardless of the cause
- ensure PWDA property and equipment are used only by authorised individuals, when unsure, check with the Senior Manager, Corporate Services
- leave all facilities, including motor vehicles and meeting spaces, clean and tidy after use
- keep keys, security passes and access cards secure at all times.

11. Deal positively with feedback or complaints

Employees and volunteers have a right to be given clear guidance about what is expected of them in their role and the level of performance required. Within a framework of continuous improvement of our services, employees are expected to receive, reflect, and act upon constructive feedback. This means:

- striving to fulfil their duties within the framework of PWDA's policies and procedures
- immediately reporting any complaints or critical feedback they receive about their work to their leader whether from within the organisation or from a client or other external person
- cooperating in a constructive and reflective way in responding to feedback or complaints
- viewing complaints and feedback as a positive opportunity for professional growth and a way to improve the quality of services that PWDA provides.

Employees and volunteers have a right to have any complaints or feedback made against them dealt with in a fair, confidential and prompt manner.

12. Report breaches of the Code of Conduct

Employees and volunteers are asked to immediately report any actual or apparent breaches of this Code to the Director of People and Culture for investigation.

If the conduct involves the Director of People and Culture, then a report should be made to the CEO.

Employees and volunteers have a right to raise these issues in an environment which is not threatening and without fear of retribution. Please also refer to PWDA's **Whistleblower policy**, which outlines protections for current or former employees who disclose actual or possible wrongdoing which has happened, or is happening, within PWDA.

13. Comply with the law and PWDA's policies and procedures

Employees and volunteers must maintain good standing and always abide by the law. They must comply with PWDA's policies, procedures and any reasonable lawful instructions as introduced and amended from time-to-time. In line with this, employees must:

- make sure they are familiar with the relevant laws and policies that relate to their work, as communicated by the organisation and as outlined during induction
- immediately notify People and Culture if they are convicted of an offence that may affect their ability to carry out the inherent requirements of their role
- ask advice or seek support from their leader if they are unsure about how to carry out responsibilities.

Employees should notify and seek support from their leader if they believe certain policies, procedures or laws hinder them from effectively performing their role.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following positions have responsibilities relating to this Code of Conduct and Values:

CEO

is responsible for:

- role modelling the Employee Code of Conduct and Values throughout the organisation
- ensuring that the general conduct and management of PWDA are in accordance with the Code; and
- responding to any serious breaches of the Code.

Director of People and Culture

Is responsible for:

- role modelling the Employee Code of Conduct and Values throughout the organisation
- promoting and implementation of the Employee Code of Conduct and Values
- ensuring that the general conduct of all PWDA workers and volunteers is in accordance with this Code, and
- responding to any serious breaches of the Code.

Leaders

Are responsible for:

- role modelling the Employee Code of Conduct and Values throughout the organisation
- leading and promoting implementation of the Employee Code of Conduct and Values in their teams; and
- recognising and promoting individual and team conduct that exemplifies the Code.

All Workers and Volunteers

Are expected to role model the Employee Code of Conduct and Values throughout the organisation. They are to demonstrate a high level of personal conduct consistent with the Employee Code of Conduct and Values.

They are encouraged to:

- seek assistance if they are unsure about how to implement the Code, and

- report possible breaches of the Code to their leader, the Director of People and Culture or the CEO.

Breaches of this Code

Breaches of this Code will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy.

Related Documents

- PWDA Enterprise Agreement
- Employment contracts
- Conflicts of Interest Policy
- Staff Grievance Policy and Procedure
- Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Technology Code of Conduct
- Disciplinary Policy
- Performance Management Policy.