

POLICY NUMBER: 4.4
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AUTHORISED BY: BAH Board

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. PURPOSE

This policy establishes a Code of Conduct to guide all employees of Baptcare Affordable Housing (BAH) and to all subcontractors and volunteers who act on its behalf, that is consistent with the values of the organisation: Respect, Justice, Commitment, Integrity, Accountability and Cooperation.

This policy also provides a guide to renters, applicants and other stakeholders of the standards of behaviour they can expect in their interactions with BAH staff, volunteers and subcontractors who act on its behalf.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all people who are engaged to deliver BAH services.

3. PRINCIPLES

BAH expects the following from staff, volunteers and subcontractors:

- To behave in a respectful, honest and courteous manner when dealing with renters, other employees and people from external agencies.
- To uphold people's human rights by treating them in a just, fair and equitable manner
- To show commitment to their work by working towards agreed work objectives
- To act with integrity
- To be accountable for their actions
- To give guidance and support to each other, ensure appropriate training and development and recognise each other's results and achievements.

4. CODE ELEMENTS

Professional conduct

Staff, volunteers and subcontractors are required to demonstrate the following behaviours:

- Only claim to have those skills that they can demonstrate
- Perform their duties unaffected by alcohol or illicit drugs

- Attend work at times agreed with managers
- Comply with relevant job standards
- Follow all lawful or reasonable instructions from a manager
- Notify managers when absent from work

Discrimination and harassment

All staff, volunteers and subcontractors will work towards eliminating discrimination and harassment from the workplace by:

- Respecting diversity within the workplace, including in their interactions with renters, applicants and other stakeholders
- Not using their position to exert undue and inappropriate influence over others

Occupational health and safety

All staff, volunteers and subcontractors will:

- Seek to minimise any adverse environmental effects of their actions in accordance with the BAH Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Will observe the relevant provisions for conditions of employment and safety as described in the Occupational Health and Safety Policy.

Child protection

Where staff, volunteers and subcontractors have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or youth is at risk of significant harm they should immediately report those concerns to the Head of Housing and Homelessness.

Use of equipment and resources

All staff, volunteers and subcontractors will

- Conserve and efficiently use resources through recycling, energy saving and waste minimisation.
- Ensure they have the appropriate authority to authorise expenditure
- Only use BAH materials, facilities, funds and equipment for authorised purposes and will take responsible steps to prevent misuse by others.

Privacy and confidentiality

Whenever staff, volunteers and subcontractors in their activity with renters become exposed to sensitive information concerning renters and applicants, as well as with information that is confidential to BAH:

They must:

- Ensure they are familiar with and uphold the provisions of the BAH Privacy and Information Security Policy.

- Only disclose sensitive or confidential information when prior consent has been obtained or where it is required by law
- Not use any information obtained at work either for financial reward or gain or for taking advantage of another person.
- Ensure they are familiar with BAH policies regarding information management and follow BAH practices in the collection, storage and disposal of files and other records.

Gifts and hospitality

Staff, volunteers and subcontractors must not accept gifts, hospitality or other benefits from renters, applicants or other stakeholders that might influence or give the appearance of influencing their ability to act impartially and with fairness.

There may be some circumstances when to decline a gift of limited value may cause offence, for example, a box of chocolates at Christmas. Such gifts may be accepted.

Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest occurs when a staff, volunteer or subcontractor's personal interests conflict with his/her responsibility to act in the best interests of renters, prospective renters and BAH more broadly.

BAH expects staff, volunteer and subcontractor to work within the parameters of the Conflict of Interest Policy at all times.

5. BREACHES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

BAH takes seriously any breaches of the Code of Conduct. Accordingly, when breaches are reported or made known, it will take appropriate action. Depending on the nature of the breach, this could involve:

- Disciplinary actions, including the issuing of verbal or written warnings
- Undertakings to correct behaviour
- Attending training or mentoring to improve behaviour
- Counselling
- The laying of criminal charges
- The cancellation of service contracts

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS, STANDARDS AND LEGISLATION

BAH Occupational Health and Safety Policy
BAH Privacy and Information Security Policy
Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)
Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 (Vic)
Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
Privacy Act 1988 (Cwlth)
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
Victorian Housing Registrar Performance Standards
DHHS Victorian Housing Register Operational Guidelines

7. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if the legal, regulatory and contractual environment requires.

8. TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESSIBILITY

This policy will be available on the BAH website: www.baptcare.org.au/services/housing/affordable-housing