
P 2.7.4 BOARD CODE OF CONDUCT

1. PURPOSE:

This policy has been designed with recognition Open Minds Board Members should maintain a professional relationship with employees, service users, people who support the organisation and the general community. This policy is implemented in conjunction with the Board Charter, Committee Charters and position descriptions to ensure this objective is upheld.

The purpose of this policy is to set an expected level of personal and professional behaviour for all Board Members of Open Minds. This is to ensure all Board Members exercise the highest degree of honesty, dedication, confidentiality and professionalism.

2. SCOPE:

This policy applies to all Board Members. The Chair of the Open Minds Board is responsible for the implementation of this policy and for taking appropriate disciplinary action where required. Failure by any Board Member to adhere to this code of conduct, Board or Committee Charters or relevant position description may result in disciplinary action being taken for unsatisfactory performance.

3. PRINCIPLES:

3.1. Core Standards of Behaviour

All Board Members are expected to exercise the following core standards of behaviour when undertaking any Board related activity on behalf of Open Minds:

- i. To uphold the law;
- ii. To act honestly, in good faith and in the best interests of the organisation as a whole, reflecting the mission and values of Open Minds
- iii. To use due care and diligence in fulfilling the functions of office and exercising powers attached to the office
- iv. To use the powers of office for proper purpose, in the best interest of the organisation as a whole
- v. To understand and have empathy with the organisation's inheritance
- vi. To take personal responsibility for contributing impartially to the decisions of the Board with no thought given to personal gain
- vii. To not allow personal interests or the interest of any associated person to conflict with the interest of the organisation
- viii. To be independent in judgement and actions and to take all reasonable steps to be satisfied as to the soundness of all decisions taken by the Board
- ix. To actively seek adequate knowledge about the business of the organisation
- x. To provide positive input into the development of organisational policy
- xi. To provide strong support for the agreed strategies of the organisation
- xii. To accept the need to sufficiently prepare for Board meetings and to seek sufficient or additional information to enable informed debate and decision making
- xiii. To perform the assignments delegated by the Board
- xiv. To delineate and state personal views as distinct from organisational views on controversial matters to enable the Board to make informed decisions for the betterment of the organisation
- xv. To devote sufficient time to the duties of a Board member
- xvi. To uphold high ethical standards at the Board level
- xvii. To tender a resignation if unable to uphold any of the above standards of behaviour.

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3.2. Values and Principles

- i. Board Members are required to treat all employees and service users of Open Minds (including parents, carers, guardians, family members and advocates), any referring agency, other supported persons and the community equally and with respect. This entails the following:
 - a. Displaying courtesy and responsiveness when dealing with others;
 - b. Being fair to all people by ensuring actions and decisions are reasonable, fair, transparent and appropriate to the circumstances, based on consideration of all relevant facts and supported by adequate documentation
 - c. Maintaining and promoting positive working relationships with employees, supported persons, their families and carers and colleagues and perform their duties in a professional and responsible manner;
 - d. Engaging in discussions allowing alternative views to be expressed and considered;
 - e. Eliminating and avoiding behaviour which may be viewed as harassment, bullying or intimidation;
- ii. Board Members are required to uphold the principles of privacy and confidentiality in accordance with the **National Privacy Principles** [*Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000*] and Open Minds policy. This includes maintaining strict confidentiality in all matters relating to present, past and potential supported persons. This applies to written, spoken and observed information and information stored and transmitted electronically.

3.3. Propriety

- i. Board Members are required to carry out their duties and representations with diligence and professionalism. This includes:
 - a. Directing time and attention to ensuring work is carried out efficiently, effectively and economically;
 - b. Exercising care for others in Open Minds related activities and services;
 - c. Reporting fraudulent or corrupt conduct directly to the Chair;
- ii. Board Members are not to take any punitive or reprisal action against a person who reports abusive behaviour, corrupt activities or breaches of the code of conduct;

3.4. Integrity

- i. Board Members are expected to demonstrate honesty by carrying out their duties in a manner which avoids conflict of interest between their private interests and the interests of Open Minds with respect to:
 - a. Personal relationships;
 - b. Sexual relationships;
 - c. Financial relationships and responsibilities;
 - d. Receipt of gifts and rewards;
 - e. Use of confidential or copyright information obtained in the course of activities undertaken on behalf of Open Minds.
- ii. Board Members are required to inform the Chair or Company Secretary in the event any possible or actual conflict of interest arises.
- iii. Board Members are not authorised to make any public comment or release information to the media about any activity related to Open Minds without approval from the Chair.

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4. REFERENCES

Privacy Act 1988

Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000

Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards Board)

Code of Ethics (Australian Psychological Society)

AASW Code of Ethics (Australian Association of Social Workers)

5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

P 2.7.2 Board Charter

P 2.7.6 Finance, Compliance & Risk Committee Charter

P 2.7.10 Governance Committee Charter

PD 1 Board Member Position Description

PD2 Chair Position Description

PD3 Deputy Chair Position Description

PD4 Treasurer Position Description