



Fresh Start - Code of Conduct



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### INTRODUCTION

Fresh Start recognises the importance of a work environment which actively promotes its values of *innovation, integrity, compassion and continuous care*. This Code of Conduct describes the standards of behaviour and conduct expected from Fresh Start's Employees/Volunteers in their dealings with customers, suppliers, clients, co-workers, management and the general public. This Code of Conduct applies to all Fresh Start Employees, including casual employees and contractors, and Volunteers to observe the standards set out in this Code of Conduct. Noncompliance may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment. Whilst they are required to comply with this policy, which may be updated and amended from time to time, it does not form part of any Employee's contract of employment or other contract and does not create or confer any entitlement, legal right or enforceable benefit.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to provide an ethical framework for decisions and actions. It is not possible for this Code to address all ethical questions or behaviour that Employees/Volunteers may encounter. Employees and Volunteers therefore need to be aware of, and comply with, relevant legislation and Fresh Start policies and guidelines as they relate to Fresh Start's business. Managers will assist Employees and Volunteers in maintaining an awareness of standards of conduct and in resolving ethical dilemmas. However, this does not remove any person's responsibility for being accountable for their own actions and decisions.

### BREACHES OF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT

Our Employees/Volunteers hold a position of trust and are therefore accountable for their actions. Consequences of inappropriate behaviour and breaches of this Code are described in the various employment legislation and regulations, and in corresponding policies. Managers have a responsibility to address a possible breach of this Code by any person as soon as they become aware of it and to report this possible breach to the CEO. Each case should be determined on the facts and circumstances when deciding on the appropriate action to take. Employees/Volunteers are also expected to report possible breaches by colleagues to their manager. If the possible breach is by a manager, then it should be reported to the Work, Health and Safety Officer who will inform the CEO.

The factors that the CEO (in consultation with the appropriate manager) will consider when deciding what action to take include:

- the seriousness of the breach
- the likelihood of the breach occurring again
- whether the person has committed the breach more than once
- the risk the breach poses to other people
- whether the breach would be serious enough to warrant formal disciplinary action.

If an investigation proves that the Code of Conduct has been breached, the outcome can include management or remedial action, or disciplinary action ranging from a caution and reprimand to summary dismissal.

## STATEMENT OF VALUES

Values define our organisation. They underpin how our people deal with each other, with other organisations and the public. They also form the basis for our vision, planning and priorities. Fresh Start's values are:

*Innovation - We are committed to ongoing research and leadership in clinical practice.*

*Integrity - We endeavour to align our practise with our values.*

*Compassion – We have compassion for all who come to Fresh Start for help.*

*Continuous Care - We have a commitment to our clients' needs for the journey of their recovery.*

## PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR

To demonstrate commitment to the highest ethical standards, all employees/volunteers are required to:

- perform their duties impartially, with professionalism, objectivity and integrity
- work effectively, efficiently and economically
- be honest and fair in dealings with supporters, stakeholders, clients, suppliers, co-workers, management and the general public
- display the appropriate image of professionalism in the workplace
- ensure clothing and appearance is neat and tidy
- promptly report any violations of law, ethical principles, policies and this Code
- refrain from any form of conduct which may cause any reasonable person unwarranted offence or embarrassment or give rise to the reasonable suspicion or appearance of improper conduct or biased performance
- not fight or swear in the workplace. Other expectations are covered in this Policy.

## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Employees/Volunteers should attend work on their ordinary days of work. Employees/Volunteers are expected to be punctual and work for the full day (or as otherwise agreed with their manager from time to time). Employees/Volunteers must report planned or unplanned absences from work as soon as is reasonably practicable, and provide supporting evidence where requested. Planned absences must have manager approval in accordance with the Leave Policy.

## STANDARD OF PERFORMANCE

Employees and volunteers should endeavour to maintain and enhance their skills and expertise and keep up-to-date with the knowledge associated with their particular field or area of work. High standard of performance and focus on our mission are expected. Employees and volunteers should not allow outside work or other commitments to interfere with their performance.

## FAIRNESS AND EQUITY

Employees/Volunteers should undertake their work and make decisions consistently, promptly and fairly. This involves dealing with matters in accordance with approved procedures, in an impartial, non-discriminatory manner. Employees/Volunteers should apply the principles of procedural fairness/natural justice and reasonableness when exercising discretionary powers.

## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest exists where there is a conflict between the personal interests of an individual and their responsibility to Fresh Start, or where the professional judgment of the individual may be influenced, or perceived to be influenced, by their own interests. It is the responsibility of employees/volunteers to ensure that these interests do not create a conflict of interest. For more information, see the Conflict of Interest Policy.

## USE OF RESOURCES

Fresh Start resources (including funds, staffing, computers, photocopiers, equipment, stationery, travel and motor vehicles) must be used effectively and economically on work-related matters. Employees/Volunteers are responsible for safeguarding Fresh Start property. The resources provided by Fresh Start that are required for completing work-related activity are significant. Employees/Volunteers therefore have a responsibility to ensure that these resources are managed effectively and without harm to the community or the environment.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Although Employees/Volunteers have the right as private citizens to express their personal views through public comment on political and social issues, they must not make or appear to make statements on behalf of Fresh Start. Public comment includes public speaking engagements, comments in the media, views expressed in letters to newspapers, online services (such as social media) or in publications. Unless Employees/Volunteers have received media training at Fresh Start, they should not speak to media about Fresh Start's business. Requests for media statements should be referred to the Marketing Coordinator and the CEO. Employees/Volunteers may make an official comment when authorised to do so or when giving evidence in court. Fresh Start's media guidelines must be followed in any dealings with the media. If an Employee/Volunteer is required to make contact, please contact the CEO to seek approval and receive appropriate training. Employees/Volunteers must not access, use, disclose or release any internal Fresh Start documents or privileged information unless they need to do so in the course of their work or are authorised to do so. They must protect the privacy of client information as required by Fresh Start's Privacy Policy.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidential information must not be disclosed other than in the course of work, when required by the law or when authorised. Employees/Volunteers must ensure that confidential information in any form (e.g. documents, computer files) cannot be accessed by unauthorised persons. It should be securely stored overnight or when unattended. Confidential information must not be discussed except in the course of work and must not be misused to gain personal advantage. Information about Fresh Start employees, Board members, volunteers or clients is subject to Fresh Start's Privacy Policy, privacy and other workplace legislation and guidelines. In some instances, information regarding an individual's employment will be provided to external bodies (e.g. superannuation funds and the Australian Taxation Office) and Fresh Start will confirm details held by financial institutions if a person has applied for a loan/credit.

## DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

The use and misuse of alcohol and other drugs can affect the work performance of people at Fresh Start and jeopardise the safety and welfare of colleagues. Employees/Volunteers must not perform their work, remain in the workplace or undertake work-related activities if they are impaired by alcohol or other drugs. Employees/Volunteers have an obligation to behave appropriately when

representing Fresh Start at events and functions and alcohol consumption should be limited. Alcohol should not be provided at functions or events held on Fresh Start premises during work hours, or at the conclusion of training programs. If alcohol is served at any function, a person with a responsible service of alcohol qualification must be present and responsible. It is mandatory that Employees/Volunteers who consume alcohol responsibly at business functions may only return to work with a zero blood alcohol level. Suitable non-alcoholic beverages should be served at all Fresh Start functions. Whenever alcoholic beverages are present, non-alcoholic beverages are to be equally accessible and featured as or more prominently than alcoholic beverages. Fresh Start funds must not be used to purchase alcohol for employees, volunteers or anyone else in the community.

### **SMOKE FREE WORKPLACE**

Employees/Volunteers should be aware that there is a genuine risk they may damage Fresh Start's public authority and credibility if they are observed smoking, particularly at or near a Fresh Start building, shop, vehicle or event. Smoking is not permitted inside or within 5 metres of any Fresh Start office, shop, vehicle or event, unless there is an officially designated smoking area within that boundary. Regardless of location, employees and volunteers must not smoke if they are wearing any clothing, or other item, or carrying any equipment or items that may link them to Fresh Start.

### **APPLICATION AND REVIEW DATE**

This Code of Conduct Policy was last updated in January 2022 and will be reviewed on or before December 2025.

### **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- Work Health and Safety Policy – Manual and Agreement
- Employee Handbook
- Anti-Discrimination, Harassment and Equal Opportunity Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Data Breach Response Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality