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RELATED DOCUMENTS	<p>Diocesan Safeguarding Framework Policy</p> <p>Fitness for Work Policy</p> <p>Conflict of Interest Policy</p> <p>Delegation of Authority Policy</p> <p>Grievance Resolution Policy</p> <p>Complaints Resolution Policy</p> <p>Counselling and Disciplinary Policy</p> <p>Whistleblower Policy</p> <p>Fraud and Corruption Control Policy</p> <p>Media Policy</p> <p>Risk Management Policy</p> <p>Workplace Surveillance Policy</p>

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1. Purpose

Message from the Bishop

I am pleased to introduce the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle (CDMN) Code of Conduct (Code) which provides guidance on the expected standards of conduct, professional and personal behaviour CDMN requires of its workers.

The Code is aimed at modelling and building a contemporary Catholic workplace that is safe, supportive, collaborative and compliant with all relevant laws.

The Code is consistent with the teachings and values of the Catholic Church and the principles and values detailed in *Integrity in the Service of the Church*.

Our Diocesan values of Compassion, Hope, Integrity, Justice and Participation are reflected within this Code together with the five basic principles for Church workers being:

- A commitment to justice and equity
- Upholding the dignity of all people and their right to respect
- A commitment to safe and supportive relationships
- Outreach to those who are poor, alienated or marginalised, and
- Striving for excellence in all their work.

2. Scope

- 2.1. The Code applies to all workers of CDMN. Workers include paid employees, religious, volunteers, contractors and students on work placements. Reference to religious does not include reference to priests or deacons operating in the Diocese in that capacity (noting they are governed by other conduct documents).
- 2.2. The Code outlines the obligations, responsibilities and standards of behaviour CDMN requires of all workers, to uphold the values, integrity and reputation of CDMN. It does not form part of an employee's contract of employment.
- 2.3. Workers are to make themselves familiar with the requirements of the Code and ensure they comply with obligations, responsibilities and standards of behaviour outlined within it. If workers do not understand this Code or require clarification, they must seek answers to their questions.
- 2.4. Certain sections of the Code reflect the requirements of legislation, and breaches of these conditions must be punishable by law.

3. Policy Principles

3.1. Commitment to Safeguarding

- 3.2. CDMN is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable persons, particularly those who participate in the life of the Diocese. CDMN understands that there is an inherent imbalance of power and position experienced by children and vulnerable persons when interacting with adults placed in positions of authority and responsibility. CDMN has zero-tolerance of any abuse.

3.3. Workers of CDMN are expected to:

- 3.3.1. Foster a safeguarding culture that recognises and upholds the dignity, diversity and rights of all children and vulnerable persons, with particular attention to those who have increased individual vulnerabilities.
- 3.3.2. Empower children and vulnerable persons to have their say and to be listened to.
- 3.3.3. Encourage open communications with families and communities to enable their participation in decisions about the safety of children and vulnerable persons.
- 3.3.4. Foster safe and supportive relationships between diocesan workers, children and vulnerable persons, both in person and online.
- 3.3.5. Be aware of the causes and signs of abuse and indicators of increased situational and individual risk in the physical and online environments.
- 3.3.6. Respond to a disclosure of abuse from a child or vulnerable person appropriately, with the upmost care and support.
- 3.3.7. Ensure that concerns for the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable persons are reported to the Office of Safeguarding and external authorities in accordance with the worker's legal, professional and policy obligations.
- 3.3.8. Support Police and other statutory and diocesan authorities who are conducting inquiries into alleged criminality or abuse against children and vulnerable persons.
- 3.3.9. Participate in safeguarding training in accordance with diocesan expectations.
- 3.3.10. Support diocesan assessment and management of elevated risks to children or vulnerable persons.
- 3.3.11. Act in accordance with diocesan policies and procedures in managing complaints.
- 3.3.12. Contribute to diocesan compliance with NSW Child Safe [NSW Child Safe Standards](#) and the [National Catholic Safeguarding Standards](#).

3.4. Lawful Compliance

- 3.5. Workers must act lawfully and comply with all legislative, contractual and industrial requirements while engaged by CDMN.

3.6. Workers must comply with the CDMN’s policies and follow all reasonable and lawful directions given by CDMN.

3.7. Ethical Behaviour

3.8. Workers of CDMN are expected to:

- 3.8.1. Respect the dignity, rights and views of others.
- 3.8.2. Listen and seek to understand different points of view (this does not necessarily mean agreeing with the point of view).
- 3.8.3. Be honest and act with integrity at all times.
- 3.8.4. Act respectfully at all times, including respecting cultural, ethnic and religious differences.
- 3.8.5. Conduct themselves in a manner which will not bring CDMN into disrepute and or damage the reputation of CDMN including in a privacy capacity.
- 3.8.6. Work collaboratively and acknowledge the genuine contributions that others make.
- 3.8.7. Express constructive feedback considerately and in a moderate tone.
- 3.8.8. Not harass, bully or discriminate against colleagues, students, people we support or members of the community.
- 3.8.9. Refrain from making vexatious or malicious allegations against other workers of CDMN
- 3.8.10. Be courteous, fair, sensitive and considerate to the needs of others.
- 3.8.11. Actively assist in managing workplace conflict that personally affects them or workers under their supervision to create positive and constructive outcomes.

3.9. Professional Behaviour and Development

3.10. Workers of CDMN are expected to:

- 3.10.1. Maintain a high standard and quality of work.
- 3.10.2. Maintain and develop knowledge and understanding of their area of expertise.
- 3.10.3. Continuously seek to improve work performance and bring about improvements in the workplace.
- 3.10.4. Within the scope of their role, provide employees with guidance, training, support and supervision.
- 3.10.5. Exercise care, responsibility and sound judgement when carrying out their duties.
- 3.10.6. Ensure procedural fairness is followed in all processes.
- 3.10.7. Take reasonable care of their safety and health at all times.
- 3.10.8. Take reasonable steps that their acts/omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others.

- 3.10.9. Comply and cooperate with any reasonable instruction, policy or procedure, including with respect to work health and safety matters.
- 3.10.10. Refrain from carrying out their duties under the influence of alcohol, any illegal substance, or any drug which impairs work performance, impacts behaviour or judgement, or poses a safety risk to themselves or others.
- 3.10.11. Not ignore work duties or waste time during working hours.
- 3.10.12. Not take or seek to take improper advantage of any information gained in the course of their engagement.
- 3.10.13. Not take or seek to take improper advantage of their position to benefit themselves or others.
- 3.10.14. Not allow personal political views/affiliations or other personal interests to influence the performance of duties or exercise of responsibilities.
- 3.10.15. Where relevant, adhere to any dress code requirements of CDMN.
- 3.10.16. Maintain confidentiality and privacy where required.
- 3.10.17. Report to CDMN any instance where the worker believes they, or anyone within their workplace, has breached an obligation under this policy.

3.11. Conflicts of Interest

- 3.12. A conflict of interest includes any circumstance, whether actual or perceived, arising from a conflict between the performance of a worker’s professional duties with CDMN and their personal interest.
- 3.13. Workers are to take all appropriate steps to disclose a conflict interest (or potential conflict) to CDMN as soon as the worker becomes aware of it.
- 3.14. A conflict of interest can arise where there is a reasonable expectation of a personal benefit, direct or indirect, for a worker that could influence the performance of their duties. This benefit may be financial or non-financial.
- 3.15. Workers must take suitable measures to avoid, or appropriately deal with, any situation or relationship they may have where a conflict of interest could, directly or indirectly, compromise the performance of their duties.
- 3.16. A worker may ask themselves the following questions to assist in identifying whether a situation or relationship is potentially a conflict of interest:
 - 3.16.1. Do I have personal interests that may conflict, or be perceived to conflict, with my position at CDMN?
 - 3.16.2. Could there be benefits for me now, or in the future, that could cast doubt on my objectivity?
 - 3.16.3. How will my involvement in a decision or action be viewed by others?

3.16.4. Does my involvement appear fair and reasonable in all the circumstances?

3.17. Related Party Transactions

3.18. A related party transaction is the transfer of resources, services, or obligations between related parties. It does not have to include a financial payment.

3.19. Related parties include:

3.19.1. Spouse, child, parent and sibling.

3.19.2. Anyone who lives in the household of the worker.

3.19.3. Any company or business in which the worker, or someone who lives in the household of the worker holds, shares or has responsibility for.

3.19.4. Other family related by blood or marriage but this may depend on context.

3.19.5. An agency, school, or parish that is part of the Diocese.

3.20. A related party transaction can include:

3.20.1. Purchases, sales or donations.

3.20.2. Receiving goods, services or property.

3.20.3. Leases.

3.20.4. Transferring property, including intellectual property.

3.20.5. Loans.

3.20.6. Providing employees or volunteers.

3.20.7. Providing shared services such as accounting or legal services at a discounted rate or for free.

3.21. Workers must disclose a related party transaction and obtain appropriate approval to enter into a related party transaction.

3.22. Workers must maintain substantial evidence to show a decision was made at 'arms length'.

3.23. A transaction is at 'arms length' if the relevant parties have dealt with each other as parties normally do when they are not related, so that the outcome of their dealing is a matter of genuine bargaining and includes terms that might reasonably have been agreed between arm's length parties.

3.24. Gifts and Benefits

3.25. Workers must not solicit or accept gifts, benefits or hospitality which might be reasonably seen to either directly or indirectly compromise or influence their professional duties within CDMN.

3.26. All gifts from external parties must be brought to the attention of the relevant manager who will decide how the gift should be treated, in line with the financial protocols and policies of CDMN.

- 3.27. Generally gifts of a nominal value or moderate acts of hospitality offered as a genuine thank you by a client, may be personally retained as long as they have not been solicited by the worker or could be seen to have comprised or unduly influenced the worker's professional duties with CDMN.
- 3.28. Gifts or hospitality offered as an inducement to purchase, provide information, or treat someone favourably are not acceptable regardless of their monetary value. Examples of inducement include a recruitment agency offering theatre tickets for each temporary person engaged.
- 3.29. Gifts such as a Christmas hamper or a box of chocolates from a consultant, should be shared and made available for consumption by all workers. Consideration should also be given to donating such gifts to charity.

3.30. Secondary Employment

- 3.31. Workers employed on a full-time basis must seek and obtain approval in writing from CDMN prior to engaging in any secondary employment or business activity, including employment with a family company.
- 3.32. Part-time and casual workers must also seek approval to undertake secondary employment from CDMN if the employment may result in potential conflicts of interest that could adversely impact on the worker's ability to perform their duties with CDMN, including work, health and safety concerns, or where secondary employment may affect CDMN's financial position, services or standing in the community.
- 3.33. Approval for secondary employment is still required where workers are on leave, including periods of leave without pay.
- 3.34. Where a worker is already involved in secondary employment, they must provide details of the secondary employment to CDMN and obtain the necessary approval.
- 3.35. Current and former workers are to seek and obtain approval in writing from CDMN to act in the capacity of a volunteer.

3.36. Social Media

- 3.37. Workers should not use social media in a manner which may bring CDMN into disrepute. Refer to the CDMN Media Policy and associated documents in this regard.

3.38. Public Comment

- 3.39. Only authorised workers are permitted to make public statements or give interviews on behalf of CDMN to a media representative.

3.40. Management of Time and Resources

- 3.41. Workers must use CDMN resources economically and ethically. Such resources include money, facilities, equipment (e.g. phones, computers, iPads, and fax machines), vehicles, services (e.g. internet) and any other property which is owned or is the responsibility of CDMN.
- 3.42. Workers also have a duty to ensure the resources of CDMN are used only for their intended purpose, are well maintained and secured against theft or misuse.
- 3.43. Workers are fully accountable for the use of CDMN work time and resources. Workers should not use CDMN work time or resources for an outside interest, secondary employment or personal gain, such examples include the development of a new commercial idea or writing a book.
- 3.44. Workers have a duty to report to CDMN any improper use, waste or abuse of resources, corrupt or fraudulent conduct or inadequate administration or accountability.

3.45. Protected Disclosures

- 3.46. In reporting any suspected improper use, fraud, waste or abuse of resources, corrupt conduct, inadequate administration or accountability, workers are entitled to seek support and protection when making such disclosures, and to be notified of the action taken in relation to the disclosure.
- 3.47. Workers are not entitled to protection for disclosures which, on investigation, are found to be vexatious or malicious allegations, and may be liable for disciplinary action as a result.

3.48. Confidentiality

- 3.49. Workers must not divulge, either during employment or after, any confidential information gained as a worker of CDMN.

3.50. Workers of CDMN are expected to:

- 3.50.1. Abide by the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) found in the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) in the conduct of their work.
- 3.50.2. Treat confidential and personal information about colleagues, volunteers, students, people we support and other members of the community respectfully.
- 3.50.3. Exercise caution and sound judgement in discussing other people's confidential and personal information.
- 3.50.4. Comply with relevant laws and regulations regarding the collection, dissemination, use and security of all such information.
- 3.50.5. Only use such information for work-related purposes.
- 3.50.6. Only communicate such information to those who need to know it in order to perform their role.

3.51. Sharing of confidential and personal information with external persons or agencies may only occur:

3.51.1. Within the established guidelines for such communication, or

3.51.2. In accordance with any relevant legislation relating to the provision of such information.

4. Consequences of Breaching this Policy

4.1. Any worker found to be in breach of this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action including but not limited to counselling, performance management, a warning, suspension or dismissal. This could also result in the notification to external agencies.

5. Notations

5.1. If there is any inconsistency between a Policy Document in existence before the commencement of this Policy, and a Policy Document developed after the commencement of this Policy, the later applies to the extent of the inconsistency.

6. Document Review

6.1. This Policy will be reviewed when there is a legislative change, organisational change, delegations change, technology change or at least every 3 years to ensure it continues to be current and effective.

REVISION NO.	PREPARED/REVISED BY AND DATE	AMENDED SECTION(S)	AMENDMENT DESCRIPTION	APPROVED BY AND DATE
1.	Senior Policy Advisor, August 2023	Various	Minor updates.	CEO, October 2023