

Code of Ethical Behaviour

Policy background and purpose

This Code of Ethical Behaviour (Code) is an important document for everyone in this organisation. It applies all relationships- between managers and non-managers, staff and clients, volunteers and students, board members, and the executive team, service delivery partners, suppliers and contractors.

This Code supports the organisation's legal requirements such as Privacy Amendment Act 2000 (Private Sector), Equal Opportunity Act 2010 and Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004. Many areas of the BSL also have their own Codes, such as The Australian Early Childhood Association Code of Ethics. There are also policy and procedure manuals for individual work areas, and the BSL Human Resources Policy Procedures manual for the organisation as a whole.

Whistleblowers are protected under the Protected Disclosure Act 2012 and the BSL is committed to ensuring all staff are able to express their opinions in an open and supportive environment. For information on legal expectations and policy and procedures that apply your daily work, please see your manager or contact Human Resources.

Policy objectives

This policy sets out the principles and behaviours that are expected to be displayed at all times.

How to use this policy

- If you have an ethical concern in your workplace you can choose to:
- Discuss the issue with the person concerned
- Discuss the issue with your manager or supervisor
- Use the whistleblower service
- Raise the issue at a staff meeting
- Speak to a General Manager
- Contact people services

Be Inclusive

Principle 1

Treat each other and all BSL clients with integrity, honesty, dignity and respect.

Example behaviours:

- **Integrity**
 - Respect each other's customs and differences for example, language, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, preferred music and foods
- **Honesty**
 - Respect each other's feelings, work needs and privacy
- **Dignity**
 - Treat others as you would like to be treated
 - Demonstrate integrity in all communication and action by avoiding malicious gossip and undermining behaviour and by raising any concerns through the appropriate channels

Principle 2

Treat the organisation in a way that encompasses integrity, honesty, dignity and respect

Example behaviours:

- Treat organisational property equipment in a way that maintains its usefulness to others
- Be professional and fair in any conversations and actions (internal and external) when representing BSL.
- Do not use any information or your position or connection with BSL for improper advantage or private gain
- Apply yourself with dignity during the hours of work eg. keep personal phone calls & conversations to a minimum

Principle 3

Ensure that all BSL clients and individuals are treated by the organisation with honesty, integrity, dignity and respect

Example behaviours:

- Share information and resources to ensure that staff have equal opportunity to participate
- Ensure that policies and procedures are designed not only in accordance with legislative requirements but also to capture the culture and values of the organisation eg. the Vision statement and this Code of Ethical Behaviour

Ethical Dilemma

You notice that your colleague has taken a dislike to one of BSL's clients. They treat this client differently from others, often being abrupt, at times quite hostile and generally unhelpful. It has reached the stage where you feel uncomfortable to be around them at the same time. However, you have a good personal relationship with your colleague and do not want to jeopardise it. What do you do?

Act Compassionately

Principle 4

Treat each other and all BSL clients with justice, equity, fairness and empathy

Example behaviours:

- **Justice**
 - Value and acknowledge each other's contribution, provide feedback and encouragement
 - When expressing constructive criticism of others, focus on the behaviour and not the individual
- **Equity**
 - Ensure that many perspectives are considered in decision-making, in order to develop a balanced and non-judgmental view
- **Fairness**
 - Show understanding empathy and support in times of personal difficulty
- **Empathy**
 - Treat all clients fairly and provide all possible and appropriate assistance

Principle 5

Demonstrate consistent employment practices that embrace justice, equity, fairness and empathy

Example behaviours:

- Follow organisational policies regarding work practices
- Encourage different and creative ways of approaching work situations to ensure people have the opportunity to balance personal and private needs and work in way that suit them best
- Ensure BSL staff at every level are able to participate in organisational activities
- Ensure that individuals are given the support they need, including training and opportunities to debrief

Be Connected

Principle 6

Have a shared sense of responsibility and accountability

- **Shared Responsibility**
- **Equality**
- **Accountability**

Example behaviours:

- Take responsibility for ensuring you work in ways that ensure the safety and well-being of yourself and others
- Recognise that you are part of a broader organisation by working collaboratively with others, sharing information and being accountable
- Ensure that decision-making processes encourage consultation and shared responsibility

Principle 7

Develop and maintain relationships with individuals and organisations external to the BSL based on a commitment to a shared responsibility and accountability.

Example behaviours

- Be willing to share information and resources when working with other organisations, but with respect to privacy issues
- Seek our relationships with other organisations in the spirit of collaboration and cooperation, as opposed to competition
- Ensure that clients' needs, strengths and interests are acknowledged and used to focus BSL projects
- Be accountable for the use of funds from private, corporate and government sources

Principle 8

Seek relationships with ongoing suppliers, contractors and corporate partners who share our understanding of a shared responsibility and accountability

Example behaviours:

- Commit to processes that encourage socially responsible supply chain management (suppliers and contractors) with a focus on the impact on the environment and employment conditions.
- Be aware of who supplies the goods and services in your area and the labour and environment conditions under which they may be produced or delivered
- Discuss BSL values with potential ongoing suppliers, contractors and corporate partners in order to ascertain common ground and difference.

Ethical Dilemma

The BSL has been invited to join a consortium of other organisations in submitting a combined tender for government funding. You feel that the combined effort of all the groups would mean much greater outcomes for clients. However, you have been informed, (by a government employee working on the tender), that the government department involved prefers to work with individual's organisations rather than large complex groups. You realise that the BSL would have a greater chance of winning the tender if they put in a submission alone. What do you do?

Work Sustainably

Principle 9

- **Harmony** Work in ways that foster sustainability and harmony with the wider environment

Example behaviours:

- Ensure that the environmental and social implications of decisions and activities are considered and acknowledged

- Ensure the appropriate use of resources and reduce/reuse/recycle where possible
- Investigate the use of sustainable alternatives eg. energy providers who have demonstrated their commitment to 'green' practices

Ethical Dilemma

You discover that the paper your area buys is made by a company that uses trees from rain forests in Indonesia. Although the activity is illegal, the manufacturers manage to maintain their supply through corruption and bribery. You check out other paper suppliers and discover that the environmentally friendly alternative is more expensive. Your area uses a lot of paper and has an extremely tight budget. What do you do?

Policy Information

Approved by	Jenny Grayling Group General Manager Organisational Services
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Authorising Department	People Services
Prepared by	Michelle Dervan, Senior Manager People Services
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Superseded documents	NA

Policy Changes

Date	Reason for Change	Made By
	<i>This Code of Ethical Behaviour has been developed in consultation with staff, volunteers, clients and Board members and completed in June 2003. The Code was updated in October 2014</i>	
24 July 2017	Updated format	Michelle Dervan