



**Policy Title: IAHA CODE OF CONDUCT (MEMBERS / BOARD OF DIRECTORS / EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS / EMPLOYEES)**

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**1. POLICY STATEMENT**

All of the above have a responsibility for IAHA's overall success in meeting its objectives and strategies. Therefore, all have individual responsibilities to ensure they are undertaking their roles in accordance with legal requirements; and, agreed ethical standards and in accordance with IAHA's Code of Conduct.

In IAHA we are committed to providing the best allied health support possible, and to the goals of protecting and improving the health of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through a holistic and culturally responsive strengths based approach. To achieve this, everyone who is part of IAHA must promote a positive working environment where all contributions are valued.

High standards of workplace practice and conduct assists to maintain high morale and produce more effective working relationships and enhanced stakeholder outcomes. In particular, discrimination, bullying and/or harassment will not be tolerated.

**2. PURPOSE**

This Code seeks to provide the basis for developing a positive organisational culture, a culture which reflects our core values of Respect, Cultures, Inclusiveness, Accountability, Collaboration and Innovation. Our IAHA principles also lay the foundation of integrity as a national member based organisation and direct us in achieving our vision and purpose.

The IAHA Code of Conduct defines standards of ethical and professional conduct that are required of everyone working in, and with, IAHA in any capacity; the outcomes we are committed to; and, the behaviours which are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The intent of the Code is to provide a framework to promote ethical day-to-day conduct and decision making. It does not and cannot cover every situation that can arise in the workplace. The Code does not replace the need for common sense in how individuals conduct themselves personally and professionally.

All persons or organisations undertaking or providing contracted services, with IAHA must abide by the Code of Conduct and the core values and principles that it promotes.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

**Executive:** The current IAHA Board of Directors.

**Management and Supervisors:** Current IAHA employees with specific roles determined by the relevant staff dispositions.

**Whistle-blower:** Is a person being a Board Director, Member, Manager, employee or contractor of an entity who, whether anonymously or not, makes attempts to make or wishes to make a report in connection with reportable conduct and where the whistle-blower wishes to avail themselves of protection against reprisal for having made the report.

**Conflict of Interest:** Means a situation where there is an actual, potential or perceived divergence between the individual interests of a Board Member or employee and their professional and work related obligations to IAHA, such that an independent observer might reasonably question that the Board or employees member's conduct may have been influenced by his or her own private interests or personal circumstances.

**Chief Executive Officer (CEO):** Chief Executive Officer of IAHA.

**Secretariat:** Current IAHA employees.

### 4. POLICY / PROCEDURES

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring that the Code is promulgated throughout IAHA. All persons or organisations undertaking or providing contracted services, in IAHA must be given a copy of the Code of Conduct to read and sign on commencement of work in IAHA.

#### 4.1 Responsibilities under the Code

All persons are responsible for applying, and complying with, the Code.

The Chairperson and CEO are responsible for ensuring that the Board, members, employees and service providers are aware of, and understand, their responsibilities under the Code.

#### 4.2 What happens if there is a breach of the Code?

There is a range of consequences for breaches of this Code depending on the nature and seriousness of the matter.

The Chairperson and the CEO have a responsibility to address alleged breaches of the Code promptly, and in a fair and reasonable manner. They need to assess the seriousness of any alleged breaches, and how they should be dealt with.

Possible outcomes for those who breach the Code may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- counselling;
- performance improvement plans;
- formal disciplinary action;
- referral to the police in cases of suspected possible criminal activity;
- referral to other Government agencies, such as the Independent Commission Against Corruption; suspension of membership;
- termination of Board directorship; or
- termination of employment.

Certain sections of the Code reflect the requirements of legislation, and breaches of these conditions may be punishable under law.

#### **4.3 What to do if you are concerned about a breach of the Code?**

Any breach or concerns about a breach of the Code should be reported to the Chairperson, CEO or their manager respectively. If they are not comfortable about reporting to the Chairperson, CEO or their manager, they should report the matter to the Board of Directors.

In some circumstances, such as allegations of corruption, there is a mandatory requirement to report matters to external agencies.

#### **4.4 Protection for people who raise concerns about a breach of the Code**

IAHA is committed to protecting any person who raises concerns about a breach of the Code from retaliation or reprisals. Any attempt to take detrimental action against a person who raises a legitimate breach of the Code will be treated seriously and may lead to disciplinary action.

Further, it is a criminal offence to take reprisal against a whistle-blower under Section 20 of the Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 where a disclosure falls within the scope of that Act.

### **5. IAHA CORE VALUES**

We value and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander:

- Cultures & Identities
- Knowledges & Perspectives
- Sharing & Relationships

We believe that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing can influence and transform systems through collective action and partnership. We will collaborate with integrity, find strength in and value diversity, and will seek and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led strategies to meet local needs.

We strive to reflect these Core values in our workplaces, communities, families and in our conduct by demonstrating the following principles:

#### **Culture as central to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing**

- IAHA recognises culture is foundational to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing.
- We believe in the holistic view of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing that relates to the physical, emotional, spiritual and cultural wellbeing of the individual and community.

#### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and self-determination**

- We support and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, strength, resilience and self-determination.
- We affirm that health is a fundamental human right and every human being is entitled to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health conducive to living a life in dignity.

- As Indigenous Peoples, we have the right to determine the strategies and priorities of our own health and wellbeing to ensure our individuals, families and communities are strong and thriving.

### **Culturally-informed, strengths-based practice**

- IAHA will embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, perspectives and innovations in everything we do.
- We commit to engaging our members to ensure their voice is heard in our written policy submissions, advocacy and programs.
- We commit to continuously learn and develop, while keeping our cultural practice and knowledge at the core of our work.

### **Partnership and Collaboration**

- IAHA will work collaboratively together as members, with our partners and wider health sector to achieve our vision and purpose.
- We believe that trust and equality is at the centre of building strong, lasting relationships with mutual respect.
- We will be open to new knowledge and provide opportunities for members to engage in meaningful and supportive ways.
- We are an organisation that believes in its people and is people centred.
- Our leaders are role models for our core values and they are accountable.
- We willingly work in partnership to provide excellent levels of support and service.
- We all actively contribute and always seek ways to improve.
- We encourage and recognise outstanding performance and achievements.

### **Accountability and Responsibility**

- IAHA commits to base our efforts on a foundation of evidence with active engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in collaborative and inclusive decision-making.
- We commit to being reliable partners through effective and transparent good governance practices. Our performance is open to public scrutiny through member and stakeholder surveys.
- We commit to support our members with a strong organisation that is fiscally responsible and accountable. We accept that with local decision making comes responsibility and accountability.
- We foster greater confidence and cooperation through open two-way communication.
- We recognise that accountability is reciprocal and must include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities.
- We work within good governance practices and continually monitor our progress, reporting and requirements as a national leading organisation.

### **Respect**

- We never lose sight of people's fundamental right to be treated with dignity, compassion and respect.
- We listen to the community and each other.
- We welcome new ideas and ways of doing things to improve service delivery.
- We treat our colleagues and stakeholders with dignity and respect, and care about those around us.
- Each of us is responsible for workplace culture and performance.

- We have zero tolerance for bullying, harassment, racism or discrimination and no-one is exempt.

## **6. THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Code requires all to adhere to the standards set out below.

The standards in this Code also apply to social activities that take place outside work premises but under IAHA auspices, and to the making of comments about other employees, Board Directors or members on social media where the status of the person making the comments as an IAHA Director, employee or member is indicated or can be inferred.

### **6.1 Promote a positive work environment**

All must:

- treat all people stakeholders with courtesy and respect and with due sensitivity to the needs of those with diversity of backgrounds and cultures;
- treat all others in a way that promotes harmonious and productive working relationships, and a collaborative teamwork approach;
- not bully or harass others, or discriminate against them on the basis of their sex, race, ethnic or ethno-religious background, marital status, pregnancy, disability, age, homosexuality, transgender or carers' responsibilities;
- not encourage or support others in harassing or bullying, or in acting in a way that is contrary to harmonious working relationships between others;
- where appropriate, attempt to settle any complaints, disagreements or grievances involving others in the first instance; or pursue such matters through the Chairperson or CEO in a way which is proportionate to the issues raised, utilises applicable IAHA policies, and recognises that in any process, to resolve such matters others also have perspectives and rights.

### **6.2 Demonstrate honesty and integrity**

All must:

- avoid situations which may give rise to pecuniary or other conflicts of interest, and should any conflicts or possible perceptions of such conflicts arise declare them immediately to their manager;
- ensure that their actions and decisions are not influenced by self-interest or considerations of personal gain or other improper motives;
- not accept bribes or inducements that are intended to influence their decisions or actions;
- not accept gifts where they are, or could be reasonably interpreted as being, designed to secure influence or preferential treatment in favour of the giver, which means that token or inexpensive gifts offered as an expression of gratitude can be accepted; and
- provide honest and accurate comments when giving references.

### **6.3 Acting professionally and ethically**

All must:

- comply with all applicable IAHA policies and procedures;

- avoid conduct that could bring IAHA or any of its employees, Board of Directors or members into disrepute, including when using social media;
- act in a way which protects and promotes the interests of IAHA;
- only provide official comment on matters related to IAHA if authorised to do so;
- when making public comment on issues or participating in political or industrial activities, not indicate or imply that their views are those of IAHA;
- carry out their duties or responsibilities in a politically neutral manner;
- report criminal charges or convictions against them involving offences punishable by imprisonment for 12 months or more to the CEO within 7 days of the charge being laid or a conviction recorded;
- report to the Chairperson, CEO, manager and/or to the appropriate external statutory body any misconduct by others of which they become aware, such as corruption, fraud, maladministration, and serious or substantial waste; and,
- conduct themselves in a manner which does not damage or undermine the reputation of IAHA its members, Board or employees, avoiding actual impropriety and any appearance of improper behaviour.

#### **6.4 Use official resources lawfully, efficiently and only as authorised.**

All must:

- use IAHA resources efficiently;
- use all equipment, goods, resources and materials provided for work-related purposes only, and not for outside business practice or political purposes: for example, employees cannot operate a private business from the workplace. However, reasonable personal use may be made of equipment (such as phones, computers or photocopiers) provided that work performance is not affected and any instructions about such personal use are followed.
- follow any special directions or conditions that apply to the authorised use of official resources for non - official purposes; and
- not use IAHA internet and email resources for accessing, transmitting, storing or downloading pornographic, sexually explicit or otherwise inappropriate material.

#### **6.5 Maintain the security of confidential and/or sensitive official information.**

All must:

- keep confidential all personal information and records including Board papers, discussions, decisions and related correspondence;
- not use or release official information without proper authority, such as discussing or providing information on social media that could identify stakeholder information;
- maintain the security of confidential and/or sensitive information, including that stored on communication devices; not disclose, use or take advantage of information obtained in the course of official duties, including when they cease to work in IAHA;
- make only proper use of information acquired as a Board member; and,
- do not disclose the contents of any correspondence received by IAHA, except until such time, where appropriate, it is public record.

#### **6.6 Maintain professional relationships with all stakeholders.**

All must:

- not take an unfair advantage of, or exploit any relationship with stakeholders in any way, including not engaging in on-line friendships with stakeholders via social media;
- not have any sexual relationship with a stakeholder during a working relationship.

### **6.7 Responsiveness to IAHA members.**

All must:

- Ensure that IAHA activities are responsive to the needs and interests of members;
- Ensure that the Board of Directors are accountable to the members by documenting and communicating actions and decisions, as appropriate;
- Apply the principles of equality and diversity, and ensure that IAHA is fair and open to all sections of the organisation in all of its activities; and,
- Actively seek input and communicate with IAHA membership.

### **6.8 Effective Board Performance.**

All must:

- Ensure co-operation of all Board members to manage the Board's own operations;
- Strive to attend all Board meetings, contribute to meetings by reading Board papers and adequately prepare for meeting discussion;
- Make informed decisions and give due consideration to differing points of view on the Board and amongst members;
- Accept and support the decision of the majority; and,
- Work co-operatively with the Secretariat, recognising their role and responsibilities.

## **6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES**

IAHA Organisational Chart  
 IAHA Conflict of Interest Policy  
 IAHA Complaints Policy  
 IAHA Grievance Policy  
 IAHA Representation Policy  
 IAHA Conflict Resolution and Mediation Policy  
 IAHA Harassment Policy  
 IAHA Outside Employment Policy  
 IAHA Risk Management Policy  
 IAHA Safe Driving Policy  
 IAHA Work Health & Safety Policy  
 IAHA Whistleblower Policy  
 IAHA Racism Policy  
 IAHA Discrimination Policy

## **7. RELATED LEGISLATION**

Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994  
 Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)  
 Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic)  
 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)  
 Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

**8. DEVELOPED:**

Effective Date:	19 May 2014
Reworked/redeveloped:	1 October 2017
Re-endorsed by the Board on:	24 May 2018
Review Date:	24 May 2019

Signed by the Chief Executive Officer:

Date: 24 May 2018



Signed by the Chairperson:

Date: 24 May 2018

