

OUR CODE OF CONDUCT

ONE MISSION, ONE TEAM.

St Vincent de Paul Society
VICTORIA
good works

To make a difference through compassion, respect and integrity.



GOOD WORKS – THE RIGHT WAY

At St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria and across VincentCare Victoria and VincentCare Community Housing we share a common goal: to make a difference through compassion, respect and integrity. Across our employees, members and volunteers, we share one mission, as one team.

Our ***Code of Conduct*** is more than a set of rules.

It's a shared promise for how we work together with integrity, compassion and respect and in accordance with our mission, vision and values.

Why it matters:

- Trust is at the heart of everything we do.
- The code protects that trust by setting clear expectations for behaviour that is respectful, ethical and inclusive.
- When we all live by the same standards, we create an organisation where people thrive and our mission flourishes.

Our *Code of Conduct* helps us:

- Create safe, welcoming environments for everyone – physically, emotionally and psychologically.
- Build consistency and fairness across our Society and communities.
- Empower each of us to make confident, values-driven decisions.
- Strengthen our reputation as a trusted, caring organisation.

What's new:

- We've brought together multiple stand-alone policies into one simple, united *Code of Conduct* for all: members, volunteers, employees and directors.
- The new code is clear, easy to read and grounded in *The Rule* and our shared mission and values.
- It helps us work as one team, across all parts of the Society.

This code sets clear expectations and helps uphold a culture grounded in respect, fairness and safety – where everyone can thrive.

The code gives us guidance and confidence to act with care and good judgement, no matter the situation.

When we all live by the same standards:

- We protect one another.
- We strengthen our culture of respect, inclusion and safety.
- We ensure that our good works are always done the right way.

Let's continue our mission – doing good together with integrity and heart.

SECTION 2

This code guides our day-to-day behaviour, conduct and decision-making.

CODE OF CONDUCT



1. Purpose

The code is inspired and guided by *The Rule*[1], the foundational governing document of the St Vincent de Paul Society. It defines the standards of behaviour expected across the organisation and offers clear, practical guidance for acting with integrity, professionalism, good judgement and care. It brings together our ethical responsibilities and legal obligations under workplace, privacy, discrimination and safety laws.

The code should be read alongside relevant organisational policies, procedures and professional codes. While it outlines essential expectations, it cannot anticipate every situation. All our people are expected to apply sound judgement and act in alignment with our values, responsibilities and obligations.

This code is about setting clear expectations and upholding our commitment to a culture grounded in respect, fairness and safety – where everyone can thrive.



2. Scope

This code applies to everyone who is part of St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria and its corporate entities ('the Society') – this includes our members, directors, employees, volunteers and contractors ('Our People'). Regardless of role or responsibility, all Our People have a part to play in fostering a safe, respectful and inclusive environment. This code is about setting clear expectations and upholding our commitment to a culture grounded in respect, fairness and safety – where everyone can thrive.

[1] *The Rule* of the St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia

The code applies to all the spaces where we work and connect, and to the many ways Our People represent and contribute to the Society. This includes, but is not limited to:

- When working at or visiting any of our workplaces or sites.
- During offsite work connected to the Society, such as home visitations, outreach activities, and community-based services, even if these take place outside standard hours.
- While attending Society-related events like meetings, training, conferences, religious functions, and social gatherings.
- Any time a person is identifiable or presents as a representative of the Society.
- In informal or community settings where the person is reasonably perceived as representing the Society.
- In the use of digital platforms and social media where the individual is:

  i) Identifiable as part of the Society;
  ii) Presenting themselves as connected to the Society;
  iii) Carrying out work for the Society; or
  iv) Communicating in connection with Society work or responsibilities.



3. Standards of conduct

In their work, all Our People will:

- Promote and model the Society's values in all personal interactions, including with the people we work with and support, as members, volunteers, employees and in the broader community.
- Uphold and promote the integrity and good reputation of the Society.
- Observe the highest standards of honesty and integrity.
- Respect the law and abide by all legal obligations.

People leaders have an important role in modelling this code and supporting others to uphold it.

CODE OF CONDUCT



Respect

In their work, Our People will:

- Welcome and celebrate diversity in cultural background and ethnicity, gender identity, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, physical and cognitive abilities, mental or cognitive health status, age, faith or non-faith, political conviction, family or caring responsibilities or any other attribute protected by law.
- Speak and communicate with others in a courteous and respectful manner.
- Contribute to an inclusive organisational culture where all people feel safe, valued, respected and free from discrimination.
- Never bully, harass or unlawfully discriminate against anyone.
- Respect the privacy, dignity and rights to freedom of expression and self-determination of others.
- Comply with all the Society's behavioural policies including but not limited to the Respectful Behaviour Policy (Prevention & Management of Bullying, Harassment & Unlawful Discrimination).
- Use language that is considerate and affirming of a person's identity.



Integrity

Our People will:

- Behave ethically, responsibly and with integrity at all times.
- Respectfully raise or challenge any behaviours which are not in accordance with this code.
- Report any dishonest, fraudulent, bullying or otherwise unlawful or unsafe behaviour through the appropriate channels and in accordance with this code.



Work Health & Safety (WHS)

We are committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment. To uphold this commitment, Our People are required to:

- Comply with WHS Policies & Procedures. Adhere to all workplace health and safety policies, standards, procedures and other requirements.
- Report Hazards & Incidents. Report any workplace hazards, unsafe conditions or incidents in accordance with the Society's requirements.
- Participate in WHS Training. Attend and actively participate in all mandatory WHS training sessions to ensure awareness and understanding of safe work practices and requirements.
- Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Wear and maintain any required PPE as instructed for specific tasks or environments.
- Promote a culture of safety. Encourage and support a culture of safety (both physical and psychological) by cooperating with colleagues and management to maintain a safe workplace for all.
- Follow Emergency Procedures. Familiarise themselves with and follow all emergency procedures, including evacuation plans and first aid protocols.
- Avoid Risky Behaviour. Refrain from engaging in activities or behaviours that could place themselves or others at risk in the workplace.



Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults[2]

In their work, Our People will:

- Treat children, young people and vulnerable adults with dignity, respect and compassion, responding appropriately and with care to each person's background, culture and circumstances.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from any form of harm.

[2] A person aged 18 years or over who, for any reason, is unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against harm or exploitation.

- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of vulnerable adults, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children and young people who identify as LGBTQIA+ or who come from LGBTQIA+ families and children with disability.
- Immediately report any concerns for the safety of children, young people or vulnerable people which they witness or of which they become aware to the relevant authorities and internally, in accordance with relevant organisational policies.
- Ensure that all required checks—such as a Working with Children Check or other relevant background screenings—are completed and current before working with children or other vulnerable adults.



Performance of duties

In their work, Our People will:

- Contribute to an inclusive, collaborative and productive environment.
- Take reasonable care for their own health, safety and wellbeing, and for that of others; and ensure their work does not place anyone at risk of harm.
- Carry out their work efficiently, effectively and strive to achieve the highest possible standard.
- Undertake work activities and follow reasonable management direction when undertaking those duties.



Use of resources

Our People will:

- Use our organisation's resources responsibly, effectively and with care, acknowledging that donated, gifted or granted funds are entrusted to us to assist people in need.

Providing care, support and understanding through our good works.



- Spend or authorise expenditure of our organisation's funds only in accordance with their delegated authority.
- Respect and preserve the environment and use resources cautiously and efficiently.
- Maintain the integrity and security of all personal information, commercial information and intellectual property.



Fitness for work and substance use

We encourage Our People to speak up early if they need support and we are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment. Our People will:

- Be capable of performing their work safely and effectively.
- Not attend or undertake work or volunteering activity affected by alcohol, illegal drugs or any substance that impairs judgement or performance.
- Manage fatigue and personal wellbeing in a way that supports workplace safety.
- Seek support if experiencing health or substance use issues that may impact their ability to undertake their role safely.



Conflicts of interest

Conflicts of interest can arise. Our People are expected to be transparent and take active steps to manage them appropriately. Our People will:

- Take reasonable steps to avoid any conflict of interest (actual, potential or perceived) in connection with their work.
- Declare any conflict of interest, whether financial, personal or other to the organisation and appropriate leader.
- Carefully manage any declared conflict of interest.

Our People must not use their role, status or association with the Society to seek or obtain any personal gain or benefit for themselves or any other person.

Our People must not accept gifts in connection with their work other than modest ‘tokens of appreciation’ for special occasions. Gifts must not be received on a regular basis. Gifts or benefits received (including invitations to events such as sporting events or concerts, discount vouchers, meals) with a market value of over $100 must be declared and reported to the Company Secretary via the Gift Register.



Media and public commentary

Our People must not release Society information (including confidential, sensitive or personal information) which is not in the public domain or make public commentary on behalf of the Society unless authorised to do so.



4. Breaches of this code

A breach of the code is a serious matter. It affects not just individuals but the trust we’ve built as a community.

All concerns will be addressed fairly and respectfully, in line with organisational procedures and with procedural fairness. Substantiated breaches of the code and/or related policies may result in formal consequences:

- For Members and Associate Members: will be addressed in accordance with *The Rule* and Society processes, potentially leading to suspension and/or termination of membership.
- For Employees: May lead to disciplinary action, including a formal warning and potentially termination of employment.
- For Volunteers: May result in a formal warning and/or the cessation of their volunteer involvement with the organisation.
- Individuals are also encouraged to speak up about suspected misconduct or breaches. The organisation will treat reports seriously and in accordance with the Whistleblower Policy. Individuals who report in good faith are protected from retaliation.

5. Definitions

Table One – Definitions

WORD/TERM	DEFINITION
Our People	Members, Associate Members, Volunteers, Directors, Employees, Consultants and Contractors of the St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria and/or its corporate entities.
The code	Code of Conduct
People Leader/Manager	Any employee (or volunteer) who has at least one direct report.
Vulnerable Adult	A person aged 18 years or over who, for any reason, is unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against harm or exploitation.



6. Supporting documentation

- *The Rule*
- Respectful Behaviour Policy (Prevention & Management of Bullying, Harassment & Unlawful Discrimination)
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Child Safe Policy
- Fraud & Corruption Prevention & Response Policy
- Whistleblower Policy

7. Legislative, regulatory obligations and quality alignment

This code supports the Society's alignment with the following legislation and regulatory requirements:

- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
- Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)
- Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (Cth)
- Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Governance Standards
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Family Violence Protection Act 2008
- QIC Health and Community Services Standards
- QIP Rainbow Tick Accreditation Standards
- Performance Standards for Registered Housing Agencies
- Social Services Standards
- Child Safe Standards (Vic)
- National Catholic Safeguarding Standards





NOTES

Our *Code of Conduct* reminds us that how we work is just as important as what we do.





"Vincentians should never forget that giving love, talents and time is more important than giving money." — *The Rule*

If you have any questions, please reach out to your HR Business Partner.

St Vincent de Paul Society VICTORIA *good works*

VincentCare

VincentCare Community Housing