

CODE OF CONDUCT

2.1 Code of conduct

2.1.1 Statement

Breakaway Toowoomba Inc is committed to Breakaway Toowoomba Inc. being a leading community service organisation providing services to the disadvantaged, and others in need in the community.

In order to do this Breakaway Toowoomba believes in the need to develop performance and behaviour-based culture, which seeks to ensure that the performance of the organisation is consistent with our vision, mission and values and that our behaviours reflect these.

2.1.2 Purpose

Breakaway Toowoomba Inc's Code of Conduct seeks to establish a foundation for staff and volunteer behaviour and give meaning and form to our work and activities, which are at the core of all out services and behaviours.

2.1.3 Introduction

In order to support our Vision, Mission and Values, and the achievement of organisational goals, as employees of Breakaway Toowoomba Inc we must perform all duties associated with our roles skilfully, impartially and diligently.

This code aims to clarify for all employees and volunteers the conduct and behaviours to be exhibited in the performance of duties. In keeping with our Code of Conduct, we will maintain public trust and confidence in the integrity and professionalism of the services provided by us to the community and those we support.

Our Code of Conduct is articulated as a set of general principles rather than detailed prescriptions and does not attempt to address all possible issues, which we may face in our work at Breakaway Toowoomba Inc.

The successful development of an ethical environment relies upon our commitment to our principles and the Code of Conduct. If there is any doubt as to the applicability of the code, or the appropriate course of action to be adopted, the matter should be discussed with the Executive Officer.

2.1.4 General Guidelines

Breakaway Toowoomba Inc's Code of Conduct is a key component of the organisation's approach to Performance Management. It articulates what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for staff and volunteers. These behaviours are based on the core values of the organisation as defined in our Values Statement.

These behaviours are fundamental in building healthy and positive relationships with our clients, their families and friends, but also governs the way we, as employees and/or volunteers, are to relate to other staff, professionals, visitors and other stakeholders.

The Code of Conduct applies to all employees and volunteers of Breakaway Toowoomba Inc and its individual services.

The Code is to be distributed to all employees, volunteers and contractors during induction. In Breakaway Toowoomba Inc's Letter of Appointment, new employees are directed to become familiar with the Code of Conduct and how it relates to their working life at Breakaway Toowoomba Inc. The Code of Conduct must be addressed during induction and orientation and where appropriate integrated through our various staff education programs.

The Code of Conduct is an authoritative document outlining Breakaway Toowoomba's expectations for the conduct and behaviour of employees and volunteers and one which the supervisors and Executive Officer can refer to during the Performance Review process. Behaviour that breaches the spirit or the stated requirements of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action.

2.1.5 Personal and Professional Behaviour

As employees and volunteers of Breakaway Toowoomba Inc, our personal and professional conduct must strive to create a harmonious, safe and productive workplace, which models our ethos and organisational values. As employees and volunteers it is incumbent upon us to:

- Respect the dignity of the public, our clients, volunteers and other employees by treating them with courtesy, honesty and sensitivity to their rights.
- Treat others in the workplace fairly and with respect. In accordance with anti-discrimination legislation employees and volunteers are not to harass, victimise, bully or discriminate against fellow employees or volunteers, clients or others who may work at or visit our work places or services on the grounds of sex (including pregnancy), sexuality, transgender status, race, colour, ethnic, ethno-religious background, descent or national identity, marital status, disability, age, political conviction or religious belief, or other grounds that may be covered by relevant legislation.
- Maintain and develop knowledge in our field and area of responsibility.
- Exercise our best judgment in our interest of Breakaway Toowoomba Inc and our clients.
- Make decisions ethically, fairly and without bias using the best factual information available.
- Maintain adequate documentation to support decisions made.
- Comply with any legislative, industrial or administrative requirements, and lawful and reasonable directions given by personal in authority.
- Be aware of the requirements of Anti-Discrimination and Occupational Health and Safety legislation and the responsibilities these place on each of us.
- Implement and abide by Breakaway Toowoomba Inc's policies and procedures.
- Act responsibly when becoming aware if any unethical behaviour or wrongdoing by any other volunteer or employee and report such conduct or activities to the State or State Manager.
- Comply with any and all conditions of access to Breakaway Toowoomba Inc's communication systems including e-mail.

All employees have a right to expect confidentiality and privacy in respect to personal information obtained by other members of the organisation in the course of their employment. As such, we will respect the personal privacy of others. Employees and client records must comply with the organisation data protection and privacy policies and employee and client records policies. Likewise, each employee and volunteer has a duty to maintain the confidentiality, integrity and security of official information for which we are responsible.

Unless authorised to do so, no employee or volunteer is to disclose or use official information (in the form of paper, documents, registers, files, photographs, microfilm, data or information stored in hardcopy or electronic form or passwords), which would not normally be available to the public, or other employees other than as part of official duties. Formal disclosure mechanisms include legislation or court orders such as subpoenas.

As employees we must never take advantage of any official information, which we may have access to as a result of our work, in order to gain a financial or other benefit for ourselves or any other person or group. To do so may be in breach of privacy legislation and lead to criminal prosecution including fines and imprisonment.

2.1.6 Publication of Information

Care should be taken at all times when publishing information, to ensure that employees only engage in practices which would be considered ethical and lawful.

2.1.7 Conflict of Interest

Where an employee engages in activities or advances or inhibits personal interests at the expense of Breakaway Toowoomba Inc's interests or the interests of other employees, formal disciplinary action will be taken which may result in the termination of the employee's services.

As employees and volunteers we are required to disclose to our supervisor or the Executive Officer immediately any financial, personal or other interest or potential interest which could directly or indirectly compromise the performance of our duties or conflict with Breakaway Toowoomba Inc's interest. Supervisors must report to the Executive Officer any conflicts of interest that arise in their work areas and take the necessary action to effectively resolve these issues when they arise. Possible action in consultation with the Executive Officer may result in arrangements being made to remove the employee from the duties where the conflict has arisen. Conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Personal Interests**

No employee is to use or manipulate his or her position in order to gain personal benefit.

- **Relationships Between Employees and Clients**

Under no circumstances are employees permitted to develop personal relationships with clients, including after hours. Employees found to breach Breakaway Toowoomba Inc's policy with respect to relationships with clients will be terminated.

- **Personal and Family Relationships Between Employees**

Breakaway Toowoomba Inc. is aware that situations may well occur where employees are working with family members or with persons with whom they develop close relationships. Where such relationships exist between employees or with prospective employees, the matter must be dealt with by the supervisor responsible for that program or employee.

Breakaway Toowoomba Inc does not wish to interfere unnecessarily but stresses relationships may have the potential to create conflict of interest where an employee is:

- Involved in a decision relating to the selection, appointment or promotion of another.
- In a supervisory relationship to another and is responsible for the employment related decisions.

- **Financial Interest**

Where an employee who has a financial interest in a company is in a position to influence contracts for business between that company and Breakaway Toowoomba Inc.

In many cases only the individual employee will be aware of the potential conflict and each individual's situation will be different. Those responsible for resolving any conflict of interest must ensure that the process is conducted fairly, that information disclosed is treated confidentially and a resolution sought that is agreeable to all concerned and the conflict of interest resolved.

2.1.8 Public Comment

All employees and volunteers must ensure that our public comments (either verbal or written) made in a private capacity are not attributed as official comment of Breakaway Toowoomba Inc. In this regard, employees are not permitted to use official stationary for private correspondence or for purposes not related to our official duties, including references.

2.1.9 Use of Breakaway Toowoomba Inc's Resources

It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure that resources (e.g. materials, funds, personnel, equipment, plant, facilities, e-mail, internet, organisation logo and letterheads, etc) entrusted to them are used efficiently, carefully, lawfully and honestly. Unless authorisation has been granted, Breakaway Toowoomba Inc resources are not to be used for private purposes.

2.1.10 Acceptance of Gifts and Benefits

It is unethical for employees or volunteers to solicit any gifts, benefits or additional money for ourselves or another employee. Under no circumstances are employees to accept gifts or benefits, where others could see a gift as an inducement or which might in any way obligate, compromise or influence Breakaway Toowoomba Inc or them in their official capacity. Employees must not influence or try to influence their work colleagues by giving them gifts or other inducements.

Gifts of nominal value generally used for promotional purposes be the donor or moderate acts of hospitality may be accepted. Often it is difficult for individuals to determine whether they have been compromised through receipt of a gift or benefit, Gifts of more than nominal value and benefits or other inducements offered or received by employees should be reported to the Executive Officer. If in doubt, guidance should be sought from supervisor/s or the Executive Officer in specific instances.

2.1.11 Alternate Employment and Private Practice

Breakaway Toowoomba Inc employees are permitted under certain conditions to engage in outside employment, provided such employment does not adversely affect their work performance or give rise to a conflict or potential conflict of interest.

2.1.12 Responsibilities after Leaving Breakaway Toowoomba Inc

As employees and volunteers we must not disclose any official information after leaving the organisation that was our duty not to disclose whilst in the employ of Breakaway Toowoomba Inc.

Former employees should not use or take advantage of personal, confidential or official information they have obtained in their capacity as organisation employees. Furthermore, all employees must be careful in their dealings with former employees and make sure they do not give them favourable treatment or access to personal, confidential or official information,

Employees must not use their position to advance their prospects for future employment, or allow their work to be influenced by plans for, or offers of, external employment which could conflict or compromise in any way the best interests of Breakaway Toowoomba Inc.

2.1.13 Responsibilities of Supervisors

Supervisor’s responsibilities include, but are not limited, to:

- Setting an example to other staff and volunteers in their own observance of this Code of Conduct,
- Ensuring that staff have access to copies of the Code of Conduct and other relevant documents and policies.
- Ensuring that the requirements of the Code of Conduct are reflected in the day-to-day management and leadership of staff.
- Ensuring staff at all times maintain high standards of conduct in the workplace.
- Report corrupt conduct and ensuring that staff who disclose information regarding corrupt conduct are supported.
- Taking appropriate steps to resolve any conditions that arise in the workplace and ensuring that all efforts are focussed on maintaining a healthy and harmonious work environment.

2.1.14 Failure to Comply with Requirements

This Code of Conduct is designed to reinforce the organisation’s needs for the adoption of ethical behaviour by all employees and volunteers. Where it is established that an employee or volunteer has wilfully breached the Code of Conductor related Breakaway Toowoomba Inc’s policies, they may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Such action may include disciplinary action for “misconduct” or “serious misconduct” as detailed under Breakaway Toowoomba Inc’s discipline and termination policies and procedures.

Code of Conduct – Employee Agreement

I, _____ (Please Print Name), agree to work according to the conditions stated in the Code of Conduct for Breakaway Toowoomba Inc.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Version 1

Author:	CEO
Breakaway	
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