



63 Professional Ethics and Code of Conduct Policy			
Version	APPROVAL	Effective Date	REVIEW DATE
001	CEO	1 May 2024	Every 2 years

ASES Standard	Standard 2: Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirement 2.2 Policy and Procedure Standards Standard 4: People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirement 4.1 Human Resources Standards
NRSCH Standard	P O 4 Governance b P O 5 Probity a
Contractual Obligation(s)	NSW FACS Specialist Homelessness Services (SHSs) Funding Agreement: Lead Entity and/or Joint Working Agreements
Related Policies	03 Board Confidentiality Policy 04 Board Conflict of Interest Policy 50 Performance Management 48 Grievance Complaints and Disputes 49 Disciplinary Policy

1. Scope

This policy applies to all directors, employees, volunteers, agents and contractors acting on behalf of SEARMS, collectively referred to as '**workplace participants**'. The Code is included in an employee's contract of employment.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the professional conduct and ethical standards (Code) within which SEARMS operates.

SEARMS is committed to managing its services and assets effectively, fairly, impartially and with integrity. As a dedicated community housing provider for the Aboriginal community, SEARMS makes decision that influences the lives of people in the community. SEARMS holds an important position in the community that requires transparency, honesty, respect and fairness for all people we engage, support and serve.

The Code reflects the integral core of SEARMS and its dealing with tenants, clients and the public in general.

3. Policy

This policy ensures that all workplace participants understand what is expected of them as they undertake their duties and behave in a manner that is consistent with ethical practise.

Employees agree to operate according to the Code when they are first employed. All employees are responsible for upholding the integrity of the organisation and complying with the Code in the course of their duties. Employees should allow the Code to guide their behaviour and decision making and assist them to display the highest reasonable standards of professional and personal conduct while service the needs of the customers, tenants, the community and stakeholders.

All workplace participants are expected to observe the highest standards of ethics, integrity, behaviour and cultural sensitivity during the course of their employment or engagement with



SEARMS. This Code provides an overview of SEARMS fundamental business values. It is by no means exhaustive, but summarises some of SEARMS most important policies, which are based on standards that underlie business ethics and professional integrity, standards that apply to all workplace participants.

As representatives of SEARMS, all workplace participants are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner and observe the following standards of behaviour both inside the workplace and outside the workplace where the workplace participant can be perceived as representing SEARMS.

Compliance with this Code is expected. Workplace participants who do not adhere to the Code of Conduct will face disciplinary action, which may result in termination of employment; contract for services.

4. Conduct requirements

All workplace participants are expected to:

- Comply with all laws, SEARMS policies, procedures, rules, regulations and contracts.
- Comply with all lawful and reasonable directions from SEARMS.
- Be honest and fair in dealings with customers, clients, suppliers, co-workers, management and the general public.
- Display the appropriate image of professionalism at the workplace. Wear the required uniform, safety equipment or work clothes, and if a workplace participant wears their own clothes, ensure their appearance is neat and tidy.
- Treat tenants, clients, suppliers, co-workers, company management and the general public in a non-discriminatory manner with proper regard for their rights and dignity. In this regard, discrimination, victimisation or harassment based on a person's race, colour, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family responsibilities, pregnancy or potential pregnancy, union membership or non-membership, mental or physical disability, or any other classification protected by law will not be tolerated.
- Promptly report any violations of law, ethical principles, policies and this Code.
- Maintain punctuality. If a workplace participant is late or cannot report for work, please telephone and let the supervisor know as soon as possible.
- Do not use work time for private gain this includes not conducting private business from the organisation's premises or using the organisation's resources for private business. If a workplace participant is required to leave the work premises for personal reasons they should advise their Manager well in advance.
- SEARMS has a legitimate interest in the private activities of workplace participants where such activities may bring disrepute upon SEARMS in its relationships with tenants, clients, suppliers, and the general public at large and may possibly call the workplace participant's fitness for continued employment or to provide services into question.
- Maintain and develop the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out duties and responsibilities.
- Observe health and safety policies and obligations, and co-operate with all procedures and initiatives taken by SEARMS in the interests of work health and safety.
- Be truthful in all dealings with persons encountered at the workplace. Workplace participants must not make false or misleading declarations during the performance of their duties or when providing services on behalf of SEARMS. A declaration can be considered to be misleading if



information is omitted or presented in a manner that enables a misleading view of the situation to be formed. This including failure to comply with reporting requirements and falsifying records and other documents.

- Refrain from any form of conduct which may cause any reasonable person unwarranted offence or embarrassment or give rise to the reasonable suspicion or appearance of improper conduct or biased performance.
- Not act for an improper or ulterior purpose to the detriment (whether perceived or actual) of SEARMS.
- Workplace participants must not abuse the advantages of their position for private purposes, or solicit or accept any gift or benefit in connection with their employment or engagement which might compromise, or be seen to compromise their integrity or SEARMS reputation.
- Respect SEARMS ownership of all of its property including but not limited to funds, equipment, supplies, books, records and confidential information (however described).
- Maintain during employment with SEARMS and after the termination of employment, the confidentiality of any confidential information, records or other materials acquired during the employment with SEARMS.
- While employed at SEARMS, not accept any employment with another organisation that is a supplier or competitor of SEARMS, or any other employment that is in conflict with your position at SEARMS.
- Not make any unauthorised statements to the media about SEARMS business (requests for media statements should be referred to the line manager).
- Do not fight in the workplace.
- Do not use inappropriate language in the workplace.
- Never report for work in circumstances where there is a risk that you could be affected by or 'under the influence' of illicit drugs or alcohol (e.g. if you have ingested or otherwise taken drugs or alcohol the night before or in the period leading up to your next work period). If a workplace participant is taking prescription medication, they must inform their manager at the commencement of their working day. Workplace participants may be required to produce medical evidence to prove their medication does not affect their capacity to perform their duties in a safe manner without harm to themselves or others.
- Do not smoke during working hours unless it is during prescribed breaks and within designated areas.
- following any grievance procedures in the interest of resolving conflicts with staff, members of the organisation or potential participants
- declaring any potential for a conflict of interest when it is likely that the staff member could be influenced, or be observed as influenced, by a personal interest when performing their duties
- reporting any potential conflict of interest to the Chief Business Officer and/or the Board
- not providing information or commenting on matters concerning the organisation, unless it is required in the course of duty or by a court of law

5. Executives, Managers and Supervisors

Executives, Managers and supervisors should:

- a) Promote a team spirit.



- b) Maintain confidentiality so far as is reasonably practicable when conducting investigations into grievances and disputes.
- c) Avoid bias in decision making.
- d) Ensure compliance with procedures when carrying out counselling and discipline.
- e) Exercise objectivity when administering rewards or discipline.
- f) Not condone, permit, or fail to report any breaches of the Code as outlined above by workplace participants under their supervision.
- g) Perform your duties to the best of your ability and be accountable for your performance

6. Procedure

Newly appointed SEARMS Directors, Employees, Volunteers will be asked to sign the letter of offer, the duty statement and this Code on commencement. They will be offered the opportunity to seek clarification and ask questions about the Code. The sign-off section for the Code will state that the person has read, understood and had the opportunity to clarify the Code before signing.

Thereafter, ongoing workplace participants will re-sign their agreement to adhere to the Code at least every two years thereafter.

Should the Code be sent via the HR platform for acknowledgement to an individual, this record will be deemed to be a signed statement by the individual acknowledging and agreeing to the Code.

Workplace participants will receive a copy of the agreement, with the original document retained in the employees' personal files.

Contractors/trades will be required to agree to the Code on appointment to supplier panel/commencement of contract.

7. Responsibilities

Responsibility	Delegation
Maintain professional and ethical conduct	Chief Business Officer
Manage ethical conduct breaches	Chief Business Officer

8. Legislation

For more information on related legislation, please see:

- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* No. 52
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2014C00014>
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* No. 4
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2014C00002>
- *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* No. 45
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00143>
- *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999* No. 91
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2009C00329>
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* No. 48
<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/inforce/f38c7dc7-ba45-ee6e-d61f-9c8e3cbd52cf/1977-48.pdf>
- *Fair Work Act 2009* No. 28
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00323>



9. Appendices

- NIL.

10. Further resources

- Local Community Service Association: Sector Development, Policy Development
<https://www.lcsansw.org.au/>
- Institute of Community Directors: Policy Bank
<https://www.communitydirectors.com.au/icda/policybank/>

Version	APPROVAL	Reason	Effective Date	REVIEW DATE
Version 001	CEO	Reformat, update & rename ASES	1 May 2024	Every 2 years

11. Sign off Section by individual workplace participants (Directors, Employees, Volunteers)

SEARMS Professional Ethics and Code of Conduct Policy (Code) Statement

I have read, understood and had the opportunity to clarify the Code before signing.

Signed: Date:

To be signed on commencement and every two years thereafter.

A signed acknowledgement via the HR platform will be deemed to be this signed statement.