

Baptcare Affordable Housing Policy

Document Information

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Document Author:	Peter Andrews	Code of Conduct
Document Owner:	Cliff Barclay	
Contact details:	cbarclay@baptcare.org.au	
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Overview

Purpose

This policy establishes a Code of Conduct to guide all employees of Baptcare Affordable Housing (BAH) and all subcontractors and volunteers who act on its behalf, that is consistent with the values of Baptcare: Wellbeing, Ethics, Co-creation, Accountability, Respect, Effectiveness.

This policy also provides a guide for renters, applicants and other stakeholders to the standards of behaviour they can expect in their interactions with BAH staff, volunteers and subcontractors.

Who Does It Apply To?

This policy applies to all people who are engaged to deliver BAH services.

Definitions

Policy

Principles

BAH expects the following from its staff, volunteers and subcontractors:

- To behave in a respectful, honest and courteous manner when dealing with renters, other employees and people from external agencies
- To uphold people's human rights by treating them in a just, fair and equitable manner
- To show commitment to their work by working towards agreed work objectives
- To act with integrity
- To be accountable for their actions
- To give guidance and support to each other, ensure appropriate training and development, and recognise each other's results and achievements.

Code Elements

Professional conduct

Staff, volunteers and subcontractors are required to demonstrate the following behaviours:

- Only claim to have those skills that they can demonstrate
- Perform their duties unaffected by alcohol or illicit drugs
- Attend work at times agreed with managers
- Comply with relevant job standards
- Follow all lawful or reasonable instructions from a manager
- Notify managers when absent from work.

Discrimination and harassment

All staff, volunteers and subcontractors will work towards eliminating discrimination and harassment from the workplace by:

- Respecting diversity within the workplace, including in their interactions with renters, applicants and other stakeholders
- Not using their position to exert undue and inappropriate influence over others.

Occupational health and safety

All staff, volunteers and subcontractors will:

- Seek to minimise any adverse environmental effects of their actions in accordance with the BAH Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Observe the relevant provisions for conditions of employment and safety as described in the Occupational Health and Safety Policy.

Child safety

Where staff, volunteers and subcontractors have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or youth is at risk of significant harm they must immediately report those concerns to the Head of Housing and Homelessness and the organisational Child Safety Officer who will assist as appropriate with external reporting.

Use of equipment and resources

All staff, volunteers and subcontractors will

- Conserve and efficiently use resources through recycling, energy saving and waste minimisation
- Ensure they have the appropriate authority to authorise expenditure
- Only use BAH materials, facilities, funds and equipment for authorised purposes and take responsible steps to prevent misuse by others.

Privacy and confidentiality

Whenever staff, volunteers and subcontractors are exposed to sensitive information concerning renters and applicants, as well as with information that is confidential to BAH, they must:

- Ensure they are familiar with and uphold the provisions of the BAH Privacy and Information Security Policy
- Only disclose sensitive or confidential information when prior consent has been obtained or where it is required by law
- Not use any information obtained at work either for financial reward or gain or for taking advantage of another person
- Ensure they are familiar with BAH policies regarding information management and follow BAH practices in the collection, storage and disposal of files and other records.

Gifts and hospitality

Staff, volunteers and subcontractors must not accept gifts, hospitality or other benefits from renters, applicants or other stakeholders that might influence or give the appearance of influencing their ability to act impartially and with fairness.

There may be some circumstances when to decline a gift of limited value may cause offence, for example, a box of chocolates at Christmas. Such gifts may be accepted.

Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest occurs when a staff member's, volunteer's or subcontractor's personal interests conflict with their responsibility to act in the best interests of renters, prospective renters and BAH more broadly.

BAH requires staff members, volunteers and subcontractors to observe the Conflict of Interest Policy at all times.

Breaches of the code of conduct

BAH takes seriously any breaches of the Code of Conduct. Accordingly, when breaches are reported or made known, appropriate action will be taken. Depending on the nature of the breach, this could involve:

- Disciplinary actions, including the issuing of verbal or written warnings
- Undertakings to correct behaviour
- Attending training or mentoring to improve behaviour
- Counselling
- The laying of criminal charges
- The cancellation of service contracts

Rights and Responsibilities

Renters' rights and responsibilities are protected under the Residential Tenancies Act and other Acts of parliament.

It is important for renters to know and understand their rights and that along with rights come responsibilities. At the beginning of their rental, renters are given a series of documents including a 'Rights and Responsibilities' booklet. This booklet describes both the renter's and the rental provider's rights and responsibilities.

Information and support can also be obtained through Consumer Affairs Victoria and the Tenants Union of Victoria.

Consumer Affairs Victoria

1300 55 81 81

www.consumer.vic.gov.au

Tenants Union of Victoria

1800 068860

www.tenantsvic.org.au

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if the legal, regulatory and contractual environment requires.

This policy will be available on the BAH website: www.baptcare.org.au/services/housing/affordable-housing

Related Documents

- BAH Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- BAH Privacy and Information Security Policy
- Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)
- Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 (Vic)
- Housing Act 1983 (Vic)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cwlth)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Victorian Housing Registrar Performance Standards
- DHHS Victorian Housing Register Operational Guidelines

Revisions and History

Next Review Date:	March 2024	
Revision History	Section	Commencing
Policy no. 4.4, v.1- 6.1 6.2	Updates to Residential Tenancies Act	17/6/2021 21/3/2023

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