



Code of Conduct

Our Values in Action

About Afford

At Afford, we provide accommodation, support and employment services that support people with disabilities to live the lives they want to and achieve their personal ambitions. We take a rights-based approach to service delivery and engagement, that puts our clients at the centre of everything we do.

Our Mission

To provide innovative, flexible and high-quality support to enhance lifestyle, learning and vocational opportunities for people with disability, their families and carers.

Our Vision

Afford is the partner of choice, supporting people with disability to shape their own lives.

Our Values

Integrity, Cooperation, Empathy, Respect and Excellence.

Introduction

From the Chief Executive Officer

Our Code of Conduct reminds us that our words, actions and behaviours matter. It helps to identify how our values come to life.

We make commitments in our Code of Conduct about the following standards that apply to all of us here at Afford with respect to:

- > Being a client-focused workplace
- > Leadership
- > A zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment of our clients and our employees
- > Conflicts of interest
- > Criminal conduct
- > Gifts, benefits and donations
- > Public comment
- > Drugs, alcohol and smoking
- > Workplace surveillance

Having a set of values written down is important – acting on them and embodying those values through our behaviour, conversations, ways of working and engagement means that our values come to life in a meaningful way. It means that when you work in partnership with Afford, choose Afford to provide you with services, or choose to work at Afford you know what to expect.

Jo Toohey

Chief Executive Officer

Purpose

At Afford we are united by our shared vision of supporting people with disability to shape their own lives. To achieve this vision, maintaining client and public confidence and trust in our ability to deliver quality services is vital. We must act with high standards of honesty, responsibility and integrity when dealing with external stakeholders and each other.

Our Values in Action is our Code of Conduct, which sets the standard for our actions and provides a framework for making ethical decisions in line with our values. It is not exhaustive, but summarises some of Afford's most important policies and standards that apply to everyone. Each of us is responsible for demonstrating our values in action and working together to create a strong, values-based culture that we can all be proud of.

Scope

This policy applies to all Directors, Board Committee members, officers, employees, volunteers, students, contractors, consultants, suppliers and other persons that act on behalf of Afford such as agencies or brokers.



Our Values in Action

Our values	Living this value means that:	Your obligations are to:
<p>Integrity</p>	<p>We do what is right. Our business and personal principles reflect the highest standards of ethics and honesty. We are trustworthy and responsible and those who come into contact with us will experience us as open, just and reliable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Always act in the best interests of Afford and our clients. > Behave in a lawful, professional and reasonable way. > Act honestly and with high standards of personal integrity. > Comply with laws, regulations and industrial instruments that apply to Afford and its operations including, without limitation, laws, regulations and industrial instruments applying to your area of responsibility. > Not take advantage of your position or the opportunities arising from your position for personal gain. > Always act in a way that promotes and safeguards the human rights of clients.
<p>Respect</p>	<p>We value every person. We show regard and appreciation for all people from all walks of life and honour human difference and diversity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Treat stakeholders including without limitation, employees, clients and members of the public with courtesy and sensitivity to their rights, and refrain from any abusive, neglectful or exploitive behaviour. > Promote inclusiveness for all people, including diverse abilities, genders, sexual orientation and ages. > Respect each individuals' rights to privacy and keep personal information in confidence. > Refrain from any conduct which may cause any reasonable person unwarranted offence or embarrassment or negatively impact on a person's human rights.

Our values	Living this value means that:	Your obligations are to:
Empathy	We care for each other. We show understanding for one another through our decisions, actions, and words, and commit to appreciating the efforts of all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Appreciate the contribution of all team members equally. > Appreciate the valued role of all clients. > Our interactions with each other are done respectfully. > We recognise the daily challenges and support each other as colleagues. > Ensure we work as a team and recognise when a colleague may need a helping hand.
Cooperation	We work jointly with others. We believe that we can tackle things together, supporting one another to create a positive environment for everyone who comes into contact with us.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Consider the impact of our decisions and behaviours on the wellbeing of others. > Provide all necessary and appropriate assistance to members of the public. > Follow any lawful and reasonable direction given by a person authorised to provide that direction. > Keep up to date with relevant policies and procedures and know where to find them. > Foster an environment of teamwork and give credit to the contribution of others.
Excellence	We take pride in everything we do and strive to do our best, taking personal responsibility for quality, innovation and excellence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Holding ourselves to account for our outcomes and performance. > Always striving for value for money and avoiding extravagance and waste in our use of resources. > Take responsibility for the health and safety of ourselves and others as we carry out our duties. > Refrain from letting personal relationships affect professional relationships. > Maintain appropriate documentation to support decision making. > Striving to achieve the desired outcomes of our clients and being creative in how we support them to achieve them.

Policy Statements

1. Client focussed workplace

We are all responsible for prioritising client safety and wellbeing at all times.

- a. We must uphold our professional boundaries by acting appropriately and safely when working with clients
- b. We must follow the NDIS Code of Conduct which sets out how we treat clients in the NDIS.
- c. We are all responsible for reporting concerning behaviour, incidents or allegations to our manager or another appropriate person in Afford immediately.

2. Leaders at Afford

All managers are responsible for promoting and demonstrating our Values in Action and for leading by good example. Managers must:

- a. Be accountable, including for their actions and inactions.
- b. Raise employees' awareness of our policies and procedures, and inform employees of their duties, responsibilities and the standard of work and performance that is expected of them.
- c. Communicate acceptable standards and behaviours to employees.
- d. Take action where an employees' behaviour or performance is not at an acceptable standard.
- e. Promote a workplace that is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.

3. Bullying and harassment

In all work situations, including social events and social media communication that may affect the workplace, we will not behave inappropriately and will report all instances of inappropriate conduct to a manager. Afford does not tolerate unlawful discrimination, bullying, harassment (including sexual harassment) or vilification in the workplace. Any such behaviour is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.



4. Conflict of interest

All employees must inform their manager and get approval for activities that create a conflict of interest with their work at Afford. A conflict of interest occurs when an employee derives a monetary or other benefit from their work at Afford that they can use to gain benefit outside of their work. In other words, a conflict of interest where there is a conflict of loyalties between the activities at work and outside of work. An example of this would be when the employee, their family or friends, have a personal or commercial interest that competes with Afford's business, or their duties and responsibilities to Afford.

5. Criminal conduct

If an employee is charged with, or convicted of, a serious criminal offence they must disclose this to their manager whether or not it is related to their work. A serious criminal offence is an offence that is punishable by imprisonment. If Afford has evidence that an employee may have committed criminal conduct at work or related to work, disciplinary action may be taken and external authorities such as the police may be notified.

6. Gifts, benefits and donations

No employee is to accept any money, an opportunity or any other benefit which could be interpreted as a bribe, inducement or secret commission.

- a. Small gifts may still be accepted. If employees receive a small gift, they must inform their manager. The manager will decide whether the gift may be accepted and shared with the team or returned. Employees should be careful not to accept hospitality, entertainment or gifts over and above that required for the normal conduct of business, or that may compromise their impartiality.
- b. Afford has a policy that we must not accept bribes or secret commissions to further Afford's business interests. Depending on the circumstances, facilitation payments may breach anti-bribery laws.
- c. All employees must deal with politicians and government officials at arm's length and in accordance with relevant legislation to avoid any perception that Afford is attempting to gain advantage or to improperly influence the outcome of a government decision.
- d. Unless it is in a personal and private capacity unconnected to their role at Afford, employees must not make a financial contribution to a political party or election candidate or sponsor any organisation without seeking and obtaining prior approval from the CEO and Company Secretary.

7. Public comment

Employees have the ability to make public comment, participate in public life and participate in public debate about political and social issues. Public comment includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Speaking engagements.
- b. Comments on radio or television.
- c. Profiles or activities on social media.
- d. Expressing views in books, newspapers, internet sites or any other media where it is expected that the comments will spread to the community.

An employee must not make public comment on behalf of Afford unless they have been authorised to do this by the CEO and in line with the organisation's policies and procedures.

Media enquiries must be referred to the Director, Brand and Engagement. Where an employee can be identified as an Afford employee, then they are making public comment on behalf of Afford. They may be identifiable by having their job title or employment listed on a social media profile that they are making a public comment on, or through the use of Afford branding, including clothing.



8. Drugs, alcohol and smoking

The misuse of alcohol and drugs may lead to poor performance, less productivity and pose a risk to health and safety. An employee must not attend work while they are under the influence of illegal drugs, improperly used prescription medicine or alcohol.

- a. An employee needs to inform their manager if they have reason to suspect that an employee working for Afford is under the influence of drugs or alcohol while at work.
- b. Employees are encouraged to tell Afford if they have a drug or alcohol dependency so that Afford can take action, provide appropriate support and maintain a safe workplace.
- c. Where there is reasonable concern that an employee has attended work under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they may be directed to take personal leave or take a drug or alcohol test. Testing positive to a test or refusing to take a test may result in disciplinary action.
- d. Afford will not tolerate the use of illegal drugs or improperly used prescription medicine on Afford premises or when performing work for Afford, travelling on behalf of Afford, attending work-related functions or activities, or conducting business on behalf of Afford.
- e. Moderate consumption of alcohol may be permitted at work events where approved by a Director or Executive Director.
- f. The possession, use, sale or offering, or distribution of illegal drugs or other controlled substances on Afford premises or while performing work for Afford, conducting business for Afford, travelling on behalf of Afford or at work-related functions or activities is forbidden.

Smoking creates a personal and public health risk and is not permitted in any of our workplaces or within 15 metres of any of our buildings.

Smoking in front of clients is not permitted.

9. Workplace surveillance

Afford has security cameras operating on some of its premises and carries out both continuous and intermittent workplace surveillance of all employee computers, phone use and some travel, including GPS data on Afford vehicles.

All employees must read and be familiar with the Workplace Surveillance Policy.

Breach of Policy

Breaches of this policy by Directors and Board Committee Directors will be dealt with by the Chair of the Board. Breaches of this policy by employees will be dealt with by the CEO or Executive Directors.

Responsibilities

All Directors, Board Committee members, employees, volunteers, contractors, and students must adhere to this policy.

The Board Chair must ensure Directors and Board Committee members understand and adhere to this policy.

The CEO is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and up to date, and the Executive Director People and Organisational Development will monitor the policy for effectiveness and compliance.

Where a position or organisational unit title changes or is no longer the title that appears in a policy document, and where a position and/or deliberative body named in the policy approval pathway has changed, the nearest appropriate equivalent body or position will have the same role and/or responsibility until that policy is updated.

Associated documents

- > NDIS Code of Conduct
- > Afford's Bullying and Harassment Policy
- > Afford's Legal Policy
- > Afford's Conflict of Interest Policy
- > Afford's Media and Public Affairs Policy
- > Afford's Workplace Surveillance Policy
- > Afford's IT Acceptable Use and User Security Policy
- > Afford's Motor Vehicle Policy
- > Afford's Safeguarding frameworkTravel and Meal Policy
- > Afford's Reward and Recognition Policy

Exceptions

Any exception granted will require approval confirmed in writing via email by the CEO.

Consultation

The following were consulted during the development of this policy (whichever is applicable):

- > Board
- > People and Culture Committee
- > Executive Leadership Team
- > Document Review Group

Policy owner

The owner of this policy is the Board.


Policy approval

This policy was approved by Board.

Governance

Category	Corporate Governance
Approval date	24/08/2022
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Content enquiries	CEO or Executive Director, People and Organisational Development Contact: Katelyn Barakat Email: katelyn.barakat@afford.com.au
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Recent updates (version two and beyond)	Previously CG-P004. Updated to reflect Afford's current needs and requirements.



 3-7 Marianne Place
Minchinbury NSW 2770

 @affordau

 @affordau

 @australian-foundation-for-disability

 afford.com.au

 1800 233 673

 info@afford.com.au