

- **Metta Community Care
Sydney**

HOME CARE SERVICES EMPLOYEE **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Version 2.0

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1. INTRODUCTION

Metta Community Care Sydney, in collaboration with the Burmese Community Development Collaboration (BCDC), is committed to delivering high-quality, compassionate, and culturally responsive home care services. This **Code of Conduct** outlines the standards of professional behavior expected from all staff, volunteers, contractors, and representatives involved in the Home Care Services Program.

The Code reflects our shared commitment to:

- Respecting the dignity, rights, and diversity of every individual
- Upholding Australian laws, aged care regulations, and ethical standards
- Preventing harm and promoting safe, inclusive, and empowering environments
- Aligning with the **ACFID Code of Conduct** in areas such as safeguarding, accountability, and integrity

This Code serves as a practical guide for day-to-day conduct and as a foundation for trust and professionalism in our service relationships—with clients, families, colleagues, and the wider community. It is a living document and must be used alongside relevant organizational policies and procedures.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to establish clear standards of professional and ethical behavior expected from all employees, volunteers, and service contractors working under the Home Care Services Program of Metta Community Care Sydney in collaboration with the Burmese Community Development Collaboration (BCDC).

This Code provides a framework to:

- Promote respect, dignity, and fairness in all service delivery activities
- Uphold the rights, autonomy, and safety of care recipients
- Guide consistent and accountable conduct by employees
- Ensure compliance with Australian law, Aged Care Quality Standards, and ethical principles
- Align with the ACFID Code of Conduct, particularly in areas of integrity, respectful engagement, protection from harm, and effective governance

This Code reinforces Metta Community Care and BCDC's commitment to delivering inclusive, culturally appropriate, and rights-based care to all clients, particularly those from diverse backgrounds or vulnerable circumstances.

3. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This Code applies to:

- All Metta Community Care Home Care Services staff members, whether full-time, part-time, or casual
- Volunteers and interns engaged in service delivery or support roles
- Contractors and consultants working under Metta Community Care or in partnership with BCDC
- Any representatives acting on behalf of the Home Care Services Program

All individuals covered by this Code are expected to:

- Read, understand, and uphold the provisions of this Code
- Act with integrity, professionalism, and cultural sensitivity in all interactions
- Report any breaches, misconduct, or concerns in accordance with the Complaints and Whistleblower Policies

This Code complements, and must be read in conjunction with:

- BCDC and Metta Community Care Safeguarding Policies
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policies
- Human Resource and Volunteer Manuals
- The Aged Care Quality Standards (Australia)
- The ACFID Code of Conduct (where applicable)

Note: *Failure to comply with this Code may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or termination of employment or engagement.*

4. CORE EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF CONDUCT

All employees, volunteers, and representatives of Metta Community Care's Home Care Services Program must maintain high standards of professional, ethical, and culturally respectful behaviour at all times. The following expectations apply during working hours, while on duty, during client interactions, and at any time when representing the organization.

In accordance with this Code, all personnel must:

4.1 Uphold Respect, Dignity, and Rights

- Treat every client, colleague, and member of the public with courtesy, empathy, and fairness.
- Promote and protect the **dignity, independence, and personal choice** of care recipients.
- Respect the cultural values, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, and life experience of each individual.
- Refrain from any form of discrimination, racism, harassment, or degrading treatment.

4.2 Act with Honesty and Integrity

- Be truthful and transparent in all communications and record-keeping.
- Declare any conflicts of interest or personal relationships that may affect professional judgment or impartiality.
- Never engage in fraud, theft, deception, or misuse of organizational resources.

4.3 Ensure Confidentiality and Privacy

- Respect and protect the confidentiality of all client and organizational information, in accordance with privacy laws and policy.
- Refrain from discussing client details with unauthorized persons.
- Only access or share personal data when required for professional duties and with appropriate consent.

4.4 Promote Safe and Ethical Service Delivery

- Comply with all safety protocols and care standards relevant to aged care, disability, and community services.
- Immediately report any suspected abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm involving clients, staff, or community members.
- Follow organizational safeguarding and incident reporting procedures in good faith and without fear of retaliation.
- Refrain from engaging in any activity that may cause harm or create risk to clients, including verbal, physical, sexual, psychological, or financial abuse.

4.5 Maintain Professional Boundaries

- Avoid personal, romantic, or financial relationships with clients or their families that may compromise professional roles.
- Do not accept gifts, money, or favours from clients unless explicitly permitted by organisational policy.
- Use organisational equipment and resources (vehicles, devices, records) for official purposes only.

4.6 Demonstrate Accountability and Collaboration

- Carry out duties with diligence, timeliness, and care.
- Follow instructions from supervisors and participate in required training and supervision.
- Work cooperatively with colleagues and partners to uphold service quality and client wellbeing.
- Raise concerns constructively and contribute to continuous improvement and learning.

5. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

The following behaviors are strictly prohibited under this Code of Conduct. They violate the ethical, legal, and professional standards expected of employees, volunteers, and representatives of Metta Community Care and BCDC, and may result in disciplinary action, including termination or legal referral.

5.1 Abuse and Harm of Clients or Others

Employees must never:

- Physically, verbally, sexually, psychologically, or financially abuse or exploit a client, colleague, or member of the public.
- Engage in neglectful or degrading behaviour toward clients, including withholding care or ignoring needs.
- Use threatening, coercive, humiliating, or intimidating language or actions.
- Allow or tolerate harm or abuse by others without immediate intervention or reporting.

5.2 Discrimination and Harassment

It is unacceptable to:

- Treat clients or colleagues unfairly based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or age.
- Engage in sexual harassment, inappropriate jokes, unwanted physical contact, or suggestive comments.
- Isolate or exclude clients or team members based on prejudice or bias.

5.3 Breach of Confidentiality

The following actions are considered serious violations:

- Sharing personal, medical, or contact information of clients without consent or legal basis.
- Discussing client matters in public spaces or with unauthorised individuals.
- Misusing confidential organisational information for personal gain.

5.4 Conflict of Interest and Misuse of Power

Prohibited conduct includes:

- Using one's position to gain advantage, favors, or personal benefits from clients or their families.
- Soliciting or accepting bribes, gifts, or money beyond modest tokens permitted by policy.
- Favoring personal relationships in work decisions (e.g. scheduling, assessments, referrals).

5.5 Unprofessional Conduct

This includes:

- Arriving at work under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any impairing substance.
- Using abusive language, engaging in fights, or exhibiting aggressive behaviour.
- Failing to follow lawful directions from supervisors or refusing to participate in mandatory training.

5.6 Negligence or Dishonesty

The following behaviours are unacceptable:

- Falsifying reports, logs, or timesheets.
- Failing to report incidents, risks, or safety concerns.
- Misuse or theft of organizational property or client belongings.

All employees and representatives are required to report breaches of this Code of Conduct in accordance with Metta Community Care and BCDC's complaints and whistleblower procedures. Reports will be handled confidentially and without retaliation.

6. REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BREACHES OF THE CODE

Metta Community Care and BCDC are committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and accountable workplace and service environment. All employees, volunteers, contractors, and associated personnel have a duty to report conduct that violates this Code, whether observed directly or suspected in good faith.

6.1 Obligation to Report

All personnel are required to report:

- Any suspected or confirmed violation of this Code of Conduct;
- Any form of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm directed at a client, colleague, or other stakeholder;
- Concerns related to fraud, theft, or misuse of organizational resources;
- Breaches of confidentiality or privacy obligations;
- Discrimination, harassment, or bullying in the workplace.

Reports may relate to the behavior of colleagues, supervisors, volunteers, contractors, or external partners.

Failure to report serious misconduct—particularly where safeguarding or client wellbeing is at risk—may itself be considered a breach of duty.

6.2 How to Report

Reports can be made through one or more of the following channels:

- Directly to your **supervisor or team leader**
- To the designated **Safeguarding Officer** or **Program Manager**
- Through the **formal complaints** process described in the Metta Community Care or BCDC Complaints Handling Policy
- Anonymously via any established **whistleblower mechanism** (if available)

Where criminal conduct is suspected (e.g. abuse, assault, theft), reports may also be referred to relevant external authorities, including police or regulatory bodies.

6.3 Protection for Whistleblowers

Employees and volunteers who report concerns in good faith are protected against retaliation, victimization, or discrimination. All reports will be handled:

- **Confidentially**, with access limited to relevant personnel;
- **Fairly**, with the right to be heard for all involved parties;
- **Promptly**, following a documented and transparent process.

False or malicious reports made deliberately to harm others may themselves be subject to disciplinary action.

6.4 Consequences of Breaches

Breaches of this Code of Conduct will be taken seriously and may result in:

- Verbal or written warnings
- Suspension or termination of employment, contract, or volunteer role
- Referral to police, safeguarding authorities, or professional regulatory bodies

Actions taken will be proportionate to the nature and severity of the breach, and in accordance with Metta Community Care and BCDC's disciplinary procedures and legal obligations.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND COMPLIANCE

All staff, volunteers, contractors, and service partners working with or on behalf of Metta Community Care and BCDC's Home Care Services Program are required to acknowledge and comply with this Code of Conduct as a condition of their engagement.

7.1 Formal Acknowledgement

Upon appointment or induction, each individual must:

- Read and understand the Code of Conduct;
- Sign the **Code of Conduct Acknowledgement Form**;
- Participate in any orientation or safeguarding training related to this Code;
- Seek clarification from a supervisor or manager if any part of the Code is unclear.

This signed acknowledgment will be kept on file by the Human Resources or Program Administration team.

7.2 Ongoing Commitment

All personnel must:

- Continue to comply with this Code throughout the duration of their service;
- Reaffirm their understanding during periodic refresher training or as part of annual performance reviews;
- Stay informed about updates or revisions to the Code or related policies.

Changes to the Code will be communicated to all staff, and updated versions will be made available through internal communication channels or shared drives.

7.3 Responsibility to Uphold Organizational Values

By signing this Code, each individual agrees to uphold:

- The mission and values of Metta Community Care and BCDC;
- The principles of respect, safety, and service quality embedded in the Aged Care Quality Standards;
- The ethical and behavioral expectations outlined in the ACFID Code of Conduct (where applicable).

7.4 Acknowledgement Statement

All employees, volunteers, and contractors of Metta Community Care Sydney and BCDC are required to formally acknowledge that they have received, read, and understood the organizational documents, including this Code of Conduct.

To confirm their understanding and agreement, all personnel must complete and sign a separate Policy Sign-Off Form, which is provided during orientation or induction.

This signed form will be retained in the individual's personnel file as a formal record of their commitment to uphold the standards, responsibilities, and ethical expectations outlined in the above documents.

8. CONCLUSION

The success and integrity of Metta Community Care's Home Care Services Program rely on the collective commitment of all team members to uphold the standards set out in this Code of Conduct. These standards are not optional—they are essential to ensuring quality care, safeguarding vulnerable people, and earning the trust of the communities we serve.

By following this Code:

- We protect the wellbeing and rights of clients
- We promote a culture of accountability and respect
- We reflect the values of Metta Community Care, BCDC, and the ACFID development community

Everyone covered by this Code shares responsibility for reporting concerns, modelling ethical behavior, and contributing to a safe and supportive work environment. This Code is reviewed periodically to remain current with regulatory, legal, and practice developments.

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