

Procedure Name:	Code of Conduct	NO.	2.3.1
Approved By:	Risk Management and Controlled Documents Committee	Approval Date:	16/10/2025
Document Owner:	Director Corporate Services	Next Review Date:	16/10/2028
Related Policy:	2.3 Continuing Employment and Performance Development		

PURPOSE

This procedure aims to ensure that all QEC employees understand the importance of a positive, accountable workforce culture and environment and how we each contribute to this through our own behaviours and actions. We promote an organisation that is trusted by the community, and actively role model our organisational values, the Victorian Public Sector Code of Conduct and values, and the Child Safe Standards and we comply with the Health Complaints Act and Safer Care Victoria Clinical Governance Framework.

PURPOSE IN CHILD'S VOICE

I want to know that the people taking care of me are doing the right thing to keep me safe.

SCOPE

This procedure applies to all QEC employees.

DEFINITIONS

Child Safe Standards. - The Victorian Government Child Safe Standards aim to improve the way organisations that provide services for children prevent and respond to child abuse that may occur within their organisation. The standards are compulsory for all organisations providing services to children and aim to ensure that protecting children from abuse is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of leaders, staff and volunteers. This will assist organisations to:

- Prevent child abuse
- Encourage reporting of any abuse that does occur
- Improve responses to any allegations of child abuse.

The child safe standards are a central feature of the Victorian Government's response to the Family and Community Development Committee of the Victorian Parliament's *Betrayal of Trust: Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Non-Government Organisations* (Betrayal of Trust Inquiry).

The Code - is the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees

Employee - refers to a person employed by the Queen Elizabeth Centre (QEC) including students, volunteers, casuals and contractors.

Health Complaints Act. - The Health Complaints Act 2016 (the Act) came into effect on 1 February 2017. This provides framework to resolve complaints about health services, investigate and take regulatory actions against health service providers and contributes to health service quality improvements. The Act established a Health Complaints Commissioner to resolve complaints around health care, handling of health information, publishing standards and education/research to support health quality.

QEC's values – Listen, Embrace, Celebrate, Inspire, Nurture, Strive.

PROCEDURE

In accepting employment at QEC, all employees are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with:

- The Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees
- The Child Safe Standards
- The Health Complaints Act 2016 (Vic)



- QEC's values

QEC is committed to fostering a culture and environment that recognises the importance of providing safe, high-quality services and support to families to give children the best start in life. All employees must role model positive, honest, accountable behaviours and the highest standard of services and behaviour to deliver on this commitment.

All employees must ensure they are aware of their own responsibilities under the Child Safe Standards, Health Complaints Act and Mandatory Reporting requirements. Employees are encouraged to report any concerns regarding potential or actual risk to a child immediately and seek guidance from their manager if required.

QEC employees must adhere to the General Code of Conduct for General Health Services under the Health Complaints Act 2016 (Vic). Employees following the procedures outlined in 1.6.2 Consent, 1.2.22 Incident Management, 5.5 Emergency Management and 1.1 Infection Prevention and Control ensure their practice aligns with the requirements of the Act.

In representing QEC and our values, employees are expected to demonstrate behaviours that are positive, kind and respectful to each other, families, other stakeholders and the community at all times. We are committed to providing a supportive safe and welcoming culture and will actively address any concerns of poor behaviour or misconduct including but not limited to discrimination, bullying, harassment, sexual harassment or sex-based harassment, wilful breach of safety standards, theft or fraud.

Employee conduct and behaviour that is inconsistent with The Code, the Child Safe Standards, the Health Complaints Act and QEC values must be reported and will be addressed in accordance with relevant performance management procedures and may be subject to disciplinary action including and up to termination of employment. Employees should report any concerns to their direct manager or in accordance with 2.2.9 Employee Complaints procedure or 2.3.9 Public Interest Disclosures procedure as appropriate.

QEC ensures that the Code, the Act, the Child Safe Standards, policy 1.7 Child Safety and QEC's Values are widely communicated and reinforced to employees upon commencement of employment, at Corporate Orientation, referenced through various education programs and available on the QEC intranet. Employees may request a printed or hard copy at any time from People, Culture and Safety.

Child safety is one of QEC's highest priorities. All employees will act in the best interests and safety of children at all times. In the event concerns are identified regarding an employee's conduct towards a child or suspected of child abuse, these concerns will be reported and addressed in accordance with 1.7.1 Mandatory Reporting, 1.7.2 Reportable Conduct Scheme procedures and 2.3.6 Managing Improvement in Employee Performance and Behaviour.

All QEC employees also must adhere to a range of requirements that form part of their mandatory conditions of employment. These include, but are not limited to:

- Maintain a current Working With Children Check at all times
- Complete three-yearly criminal history check
- Maintain relevant professional registrations, clinical registrations and continuing professional development
- Maintain current health care worker immunisation
- Undertake mandatory training and education as required for the role
- Maintain fitness to meet the inherent physical and mental requirements of the role

If an event occurs that can (or has potential to) impact on a QEC employee's employment, ability to perform their role, or on QEC's reputation or ability to meet its legislative requirements, the employee must notify their manager or the Director of Corporate Services as soon as is reasonably practicable. QEC will handle the matter discreetly and sensitively in liaising with the impacted employee as the circumstances are assessed to determine any potential impact on the employee's work and if action is



required as a result. Upon receiving such a notification from an employee, QEC will provide support and a fair process to the employee, in assessing whether any action needs to be taken as a result of the event.

Examples of such events include (but are not limited to):

- Cancellation or revoke of a Working with Children Check
- Criminal charges are laid against an employee
- Bankruptcy of an employee
- Loss of drivers licence
- Notification of a reprimand or notification against AHPRA registration

RELATED QEC DOCUMENTS

- 1.1 Infection Prevention and Control
- 1.2.22 Incident Management
- 1.4.2 Family Feedback
- 1.6.2 Consent
- 1.7 Child Safety
- 1.7.1 Mandatory Reporting
- 1.7.2 Reportable Conduct Scheme
- 2.1 Recruitment and Selection
- 2.3 Continuing Employment and Performance Development
- 2.3.2 Mandatory Employment Requirements
- 2.2.3 Prevention and Management of Bullying and Harassment
- 2.2.9 Employee Complaints Procedure
- 2.2.10 Sexual Harassment – Prevention and Response
- 2.3.6 Managing Improvement in Employee Performance and Behaviour
- 2.3.9 Public Interest Disclosure
- 4.4 Clinical Governance
- 5.3.4 Fraud, Corruption and Other Losses

RELATED LEGISLATION AND EXTERNAL DOCUMENTS

- Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees (Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees – VPSC)
- Victorian Child Safe Standards
- Code of Conduct for General Health Services
- Health Complaints Act 2016 (VIC)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Bankruptcy Act 1966 (Cth)
- Worker Screening Amendment (Risk of Harm to Children) Regulations 2025 (Vic)

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Percentage of new employees completing Corporate Orientation each month (includes Code of Conduct education)
- No. employee complaints received per quarter (relating to conduct, bullying, discrimination)

KEY WORDS

Code, conduct, behaviour, disciplinary, child, safe, standards, values, complaints, legislation, public service

APPENDIX

- None



DOCUMENT HISTORY

	Date	Summary of Purpose/Changes
Document Created:	Prior to 2017	N/A
Reviewed:	25/3/2021	Cyclical review and clearer language about code of conduct compliance and signoff
Reviewed:	18/1/2024	Update to values and mention of adherence to Health Complaints Act Code of Conduct.
Reviewed:	19/6/2025	Minor word updates. Added reference to procedure 5.3.4 Fraud, Corruption and other Losses.
Reviewed:	16/10/2025	Added paragraph detailing that any concerns or allegations against QEC employees of child abuse will be addressed in accordance with 1.7.2 Reportable Conduct Scheme procedure.