

2024

Staff

Code of
Conduct

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FOREWORD

The Shire of Boddington Code of Conduct for Employees (the Code), has been adopted to ensure employees understand and respect their roles and responsibilities. This enables professional relationships to be established and maintained in the interests of providing good governance, overall integrity, and good government for the community.

Previously there was a single Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Employees, adopted by Council. New legislation now requires separate Codes: one for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates for Election, adopted by the Council, and another for Employees, adopted by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The Code sets out principles and standards of behaviour that employees must observe when performing their duties and is intended to promote accountable and ethical decision-making. The Code does not establish a rule for every situation an employee may face while performing their role and undertaking their duties daily.

The Code should be read in conjunction with the Local Government Act 1995, the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996, other legislation, Council Policy and Operational Practices that affect employees while performing their role and duties and the Code does not override or affect those provisions or requirements.

The Code contains certain matters for employees which must be addressed as a requirement of legislation, including gifts and conflicts of interest, as well as the standards around personal behaviour, which if breached, may lead to reporting and action being taken under the Code.

In view of this, the Code details explanatory matters around key areas of:

- professional conduct
- record keeping
- use of Shire resources and finances
- conflict of interest, gifts, and benefits
- reporting breaches of the Code

Employees of the Shire of Boddington (the Shire) are subject to the provisions of the Code upon their acceptance of employment and while they remain employed by the Shire.

The Code is an important document in outlining the expectations of employee behaviour and aims to ensure that the Shire residents, ratepayers, and stakeholders will recognise the high standards of service and ethical decision making by all employees.

If you have any concerns about anything in the Code of Conduct, please raise it with your Supervisor in the first instance.

Julie Burton
Chief Executive Officer

Shire of Boddington

1. Introduction

The Shire of Boddington Code of Conduct (Code) provides employees with clear guidelines for the standards of professional conduct expected of them in carrying out their functions and responsibilities.

The Code addresses the broader issue of ethical responsibility and encourages transparency and accountability. The Code expresses the Shire's commitment to high standards of professional behaviour and outlines the principles in which individual responsibilities are based.

The Code aligns with the principles set out in Section 1.4(2) of the Local Government Act 1995 and its associated regulations. These principles encompass four fundamental aims, guiding ethical behavior and decision-making:-

- a) better decision making by local governments; and
- b) greater community participation in the decisions and affairs of local governments; and
- c) greater accountability of local governments to their communities; and
- d) more efficient and effective local government.

2. Statutory Environment

The Code addresses the requirement in section 5.51A of the Local Government Act 1995 for the CEO to prepare and implement a Code of Conduct to be observed by employees of the local government, and includes the matters prescribed in Part 4A of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996.

The Code should be read in conjunction with the Local Government Act 1995 and associated regulations. Employees should ensure that they are aware of their statutory responsibilities under this and other legislation.

A copy of this Code of Conduct is to be placed on the local government's official website, pursuant to Section 5.51(3) of the Local Government Act 1995.

3. Application

For the purposes of this Code:

Employee refers to individuals employed by the Shire of Boddington, registered volunteers, or those engaged under a contract for services (contractors).

The Code applies to all employees, including the CEO, while on the Local Governments premises or while engaged in Local Government related activities. Clause 3.15 of this Code (Gifts) does not apply to the CEO.

4. Our Values

- Transparency: Being open and accountable
- Honesty: Acting with integrity and building trust
- Respect: Being tolerant, helpful and showing empathy and care for others
- Dedication: The continual pursuit of excellence
- Proactivity: Forward thinking and being positive
- Cohesiveness: Teamwork, unity and shared ownership

5. Code of Conduct

5.1 Role of the CEO

The role of employees in Local Government is determined by the functions of the CEO as set out in section 5.41 of the Local Government Act 1995:

- 1) *The CEO, as the local government's chief executive officer, is responsible for managing the local government's administration and operations.*
- 2) *The CEO's executive role includes the following –*
 - a. *Causing council decisions to be implemented;*
 - b. *Managing the provision of services and facilities that the council has determined the local government is to provide in the district;*
 - c. *Determining procedures and systems for –*
 - i. *Implementing the local government's policies as determined by the council; and*
 - ii. *Otherwise managing the local government's administration and operations;*
 - d. *Being responsible for the employment, management, supervision, direction and dismissal of other employees (subject to section 5.37(2) in relation to senior employees);*
 - e. *Ensuring that records and documents of the local government are properly kept for the purpose of this Act and any other written law.*
- 3) *The CEO is the council's principal advisor and, as such, does the following –*
 - a. *Advise, and procedures advise for, the council in relation to the local government's affairs and the performance of the local government's functions;*
 - b. *Ensures that the council has the information and advice it needs to make informed and timely decisions.*
- 4) *The CEO –*
 - a. *Liaises with the mayor or president on the local government's affairs and the performance of the local government's functions; and*
 - b. *Speaks on behalf of the local government if the mayor or president agrees.*
- 5) *The CEO performs any other function specified or delegated by the local government or imposed under this Act or another written law as a function to be performed by the CEO.*

5.2 Principles affecting employment by the Shire of Boddington

The principles set out in section 5.40 of the Local Government Act 1995 apply to the employment of the Shire of Boddington's employees:

- a) *Employees are to be selected and promoted in accordance with the principles of merit and equity; and*
- b) *No power with regard to matters affecting employees is to be exercised on the basis of nepotism or patronage; and*
- c) *Employees are to be treated fairly and consistently; and*
- d) *There is to be no unlawful discrimination against employees or persons seeking employment by a local government on a ground referred to in the Equal Opportunities Act 1984 or on any other ground; and*
- e) *Employees are to be provided with safe and healthy working conditions in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2020; and*
- f) *Such other principles, not inconsistent with this Division, as may be prescribed.*

5.3 Personal Conduct and Integrity

Employees of the Shire of Boddington are expected to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, honesty, and integrity in all aspects of their work. This includes:

- Act, and be seen to act, properly, professionally and in accordance with the requirements of the law, the terms of this Code and all policies of the Shire of Boddington;
- Perform their duties impartially and in the best interests of the Shire of Boddington, uninfluenced by fear or favour;
- Act in good faith (i.e. honestly, for the proper purpose, and without exceeding their powers) in the interests of the Shire of Boddington and the community;
- Make no allegations which are improper or derogatory (unless true and in the public interest);
- Refrain from any form of conduct, in the performance of their official or professional duties, which may cause any reasonable person unwarranted offence or embarrassment; and
- Always act in accordance with their obligation of fidelity to the Shire of Boddington.

Additionally, employees are expected to:

- Demonstrate the highest level of honesty and integrity, avoiding any behaviour that could be perceived as unethical or compromising these values.
- Communicate openly and truthfully with colleagues, fostering a culture of trust and professionalism.
- Report any instances of dishonesty or suspected misconduct by others to their Supervisor in line with this Code and relevant Shire policies.

5.4 Performance of Duties

While on duty, employees are expected to give their whole time and attention to the Shire of Boddington's business and ensure that their work is carried out efficiently, economically and effectively, and that their standard of work reflects favourably both on them and on the Shire of Boddington.

5.5 Compliance with Lawful and Reasonable Directions, Decisions and Policies

- a) Employees are expected to comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by any person having authority to make or give such an order, including but not limited to their Supervisor or the CEO.
- b) Employees are expected to give effect to the lawful decisions and Policies of the Shire of Boddington, whether or not they agree with or approve of them.
- c) Any concerns regarding the appropriateness of an order should be discussed with the Supervisor of the person who issued it. If the issue remains unresolved, it should be escalated to the Chief Executive Officer.

5.6 Administrative and Management Practices

Employees will ensure compliance with proper and reasonable administrative practices and conduct professional and responsible management practices.

5.7 Intellectual Property

The title to Intellectual Property in all duties relating to contracts of employment will be assigned to the Shire of Boddington upon its creation unless otherwise agreed by separate

contract.

5.8 Record Keeping

Employees will ensure complete and accurate local government records are created and maintained in accordance with the Shire of Boddington's Recordkeeping Plan.

5.9 Dealing with Other Employees

- a) Employees are expected to treat other employees with respect, courtesy and professionalism, and refrain from behaviour that constitutes discrimination, bullying or harassment.
- b) Employees must be aware of and comply with their obligations under relevant law and the Shire's policies regarding workplace behaviour and work health and safety.
- c) Employee behaviour should reflect the Shire of Boddington's Values and contribute towards creating and maintaining a safe and supportive workplace.

5.10 Dealing with Community

- a) Employees will treat all members of the community with respect, courtesy and professionalism.
- b) All Shire of Boddington services must be delivered in accordance with relevant policies and procedures, and any issues resolved promptly, fairly and equitably.

5.11 Professional Communications

- a) All aspects of communication by employees, including verbal, written and electronic, involving the Shire of Boddington's activities should reflect the status, values and objectives of the Shire of Boddington.
- b) Communications should be accurate, polite and professional.

5.12 Personal Communications and Social Media

Personal communications and statements made privately in conversation, written, recorded, emailed or posted in personal social media, have the potential to be made public, whether intended or not.

- a) Employees must not, unless undertaking a duty in accordance with their employment, disclose information, make comments or engage in communication activities about or on behalf of the Shire of Boddington, its Council Members, employees or contractors, which breach this Code.
- b) Employee comments which become public and breach the Code of Conduct, or any other operational practice, may constitute a disciplinary matter and may also be determined as misconduct and be notified in accordance with the *Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003*.

5.13 Personal Presentation

Employees are expected to comply with professional, neat and responsible dress standards at all times, in accordance with the Shire of Boddington's relevant policies and procedures.

5.14 Gifts

This section does not relate to the Chief Executive Officer, who is bound to a separate gift provision under the Local Government Act 1995. In this section, the Chief Executive Officer has determined a threshold for the provisions of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 regulation 19AF as being \$100.

5.14.1 Definitions

Activity involving a local government discretion means an activity —

- a) that cannot be undertaken without an authorisation from the local government; or
- b) by way of a commercial dealing with the local government;

[r.19AA of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996]

Associated person means a person who —

- a) is undertaking or seeking to undertake an activity involving a local government discretion; or
- b) it is reasonable to believe, is intending to undertake an activity involving a local government discretion

[r.19AA of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996]

gift —

- a) has the meaning given in section 5.57 [of the Local Government Act 1995]; but
- b) does not include —
 - i. a gift from a relative as defined in section 5.74(1); or
 - ii. a gift that must be disclosed under the Local Government (Elections) Regulations 1997 regulation 30B; or
 - iii. a gift from a statutory authority, government instrumentality or non-profit association for professional training; or
 - iv. a gift from WALGA, the Australian Local Government Association Limited (ABN 31 008 613 876), the Local Government Professionals Australia WA (ABN 91 208 607 072) or the LG Professionals Australia (ABN 85 004 221 818);

[r.19AA of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996]

gift means —

- a) a conferral of a financial benefit (including a disposition of property) made by 1 person in favour of another person unless adequate consideration in money or money's worth passes from the person in whose favour the conferral is made to the person who makes the conferral; or
- b) a travel contribution;

travel includes accommodation incidental to a journey;

travel contribution means a financial or other contribution made by 1 person to travel undertaken by another person

[Section 5.57 of the Local Government Act 1995]

relative, in relation to a relevant person, means any of the following —

- a) a parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant of the relevant person or of the relevant person's spouse or de facto partner;

- b) *the relevant person's spouse or de facto partner or the spouse or de facto partner of any relative specified in paragraph (a),*

whether or not the relationship is traced through, or to, a person whose parents were not actually married to each other at the time of the person's birth or subsequently, and whether the relationship is a natural relationship or a relationship established by a written law;
[Section 5.74(1) of the Local Government Act 1995]

prohibited gift, in relation to a local government employee, means —

- a) a gift worth the threshold amount or more; or
b) a gift that is 1 of 2 or more gifts given to the local government employee by the same person within a period of 1 year that are in total worth the threshold amount or more;
[r.19AA of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996]

reportable gift means:

- a) a gift worth more than \$24 but less than \$100 or;
b) a gift that is 1 of 2 or more gifts given to the local government employee by the same person within a period
c) of 6 months that are in total worth more than \$24 but less than \$100

threshold amount, for a prohibited gift, means —

- a) a gift worth the threshold amount or more; or
b) a gift that is 1 of 2 or more gifts given to the local government employee by the same person within a period of 1 year that are in total worth the threshold amount or more;
[r.19AA of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996]

5.14.2 Determination

In this section, the Chief Executive Officer has determined a threshold for the provisions of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 regulation 19AF as being \$100.00.

- a) An employee must not accept a prohibited gift from an associated person.
- b) An employee who accepts a reportable gift from an associated person is required to notify the CEO in writing within 10 days of receiving the gift and must include the following information;
- The name of the person who gave the gift;
 - The date in which the gift was accepted;
 - A description and estimated value of the gift;
 - The nature of the relationship between the employee and the person who gave the gift.
- c) If the gift is one of two or more accepted from the same person within a period of six (6) months that have a cumulative value above the notifiable reportable threshold, regardless of the value of each individual gift, the employee must provide the following information;
- A description;
 - The estimated value; and
 - The date of acceptance of each other gift accepted within the one year period.
- d) The CEO will maintain a register of reportable gifts and record relevant notification details.
- e) The CEO will arrange for the register of reportable gifts to be published on the Shire of Boddington's official website.

- f) As soon as practicable after a person ceases to be an employee, the CEO will remove from the register all records relating to that person. The removed records will be retained for a period of at least 5 years.

5.15 Conflict of Interest

An important consideration for any employee is to ensure that there is no actual (or perceived) conflict of interest between their personal interests and the impartial fulfilment of their professional duties.

- a) Employees are expected to not engage in private work with or for any person or body with an interest in a proposed or current contract with the Shire of Boddington, without first disclosing the interest to the CEO. In this respect, it does not matter whether advantage is in fact obtained, as any appearance that private dealings could conflict with performance of duties must be scrupulously avoided.
- b) Employees are expected to lodge written notice with the CEO describing an intention to undertake a dealing in land which is within the district of the Shire of Boddington, or which may otherwise be in conflict with the Local Government's functions (other than purchasing the principal place of residence).
- c) Employees who exercise a recruitment or any other discretionary function are expected to disclose any actual (or perceived) conflict of interest to the CEO before dealing with relatives or friends and disqualify themselves from dealing with those persons.
- d) Employees are expected to conduct themselves in an apolitical manner and refrain from political activities which could cast doubt on their neutrality and impartiality in acting in their professional capacity.

5.16 Confidential Information

Confidential information should only be shared by an employee with others when necessary for the performance of their duties. This includes information discussed in meetings that are closed to the public, as per the Local Government Act 1995, documents marked as confidential, or any other information acquired during work that could reasonably be considered confidential or sensitive.

Confidential or sensitive information must not be disclosed to council or committee members unless it directly relates to an item on the agenda for a meeting. Additionally, it should not be shared with employees who do not need it for their role or are not authorised to access it.

Employees with authorised access to confidential or sensitive information hold a significant responsibility in handling it appropriately. Any sharing of such information must comply with the guidelines in this Code of Conduct, the Shire of Boddington's policies and internal procedures. If there is uncertainty about whether information should be disclosed, caution should be exercised, as unauthorised disclosure is considered a serious violation of employee duties.

5.17 Secondary Employment

An employee must not engage in secondary employment (including paid and unpaid work) without receiving the prior written approval of the CEO.

5.18 Disclosure of Financial Interest

- a) All employees are expected to apply the principles of disclosure of financial interest as contained within the Local Government Act 1995.
- b) Employees who have been delegated a power or duty, have been nominated as 'designated employees' or provide advice or reports to Council or Committees, must ensure that they are aware of, and comply with, their statutory obligations under the Local Government Act 1995.

5.19 Disclosure of Interests Relating to Impartiality

R.19AA of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 states:

Interest —

(a) means an interest that could, or could reasonably be perceived to, adversely affect the impartiality of the person having the interest; and

(b) Includes an interest arising from kinship, friendship or membership of an association.

[r.19AA of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996]]

- a) An employee who has an interest in any matter to be discussed at a Council or Committee meeting attended by the employee is required to disclose the nature of the interest:
 - i. in a written notice given to the CEO before the meeting; or
 - ii. at the meeting immediately before the matter is discussed.
- b) An employee who has given, or will give, advice in respect of any matter to be discussed at a Council or Committee meeting not attended by the employee is required to disclose the nature of any interest the employee has in the matter:
 - i. in a written notice given to the CEO before the meeting; or
 - ii. at the time the advice is given.
- c) A requirement described under (a) and (b) excludes an interest referred to in Section 5.60 of the Local Government Act 1995.
- d) An employee is excused from a requirement made under (a) or (b) to disclose the nature of an interest because they did not know and could not reasonably be expected to know:
 - i. that they had an interest in the matter; or
 - ii. that the matter in which they had an interest would be discussed at the meeting and they disclosed the nature of the interest as soon as possible after the discussion began.
- e) If an employee makes a disclosure in a written notice given to the CEO before a meeting to comply with requirements of (a) or (b), then:
 - i. before the meeting the CEO is to cause the notice to be given to the person who is to preside at the meeting; and
 - ii. at the meeting the person presiding must bring the notice and its contents to the attention of persons present immediately before a matter to which the disclosure relates is discussed.
- f) If an employee discloses their interest in a matter during a meeting:
 - i. to comply with a requirement made under item (a), the nature of an employee's interest in a matter is disclosed at a meeting; or
 - ii. a disclosure is made as described in item (d)(ii) at a meeting; or

- iii. to comply with a requirement made under item (e)(ii), a notice disclosing the nature of an employee's interest in a matter is brought to the attention of the persons present at a meeting, the nature of the interest is to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

5.20 Use and Disclosure of Information

- a) Employees must not access, use or disclose information held by the Shire of Boddington except as directly required for, and in the course of, the performance of their duties.
- b) Employees are expected to handle all information obtained, accessed or created in the course of their duties responsibly, and in accordance with this Code, the Shire of Boddington policies and procedures.
- c) Employees must not access, use or disclose information to gain improper advantage for themselves or another person or body, in ways which are inconsistent with their obligation to act impartially and in good faith, or to improperly cause harm, detriment or impairment to any person, body, or the Shire of Boddington.
- d) Due discretion must be exercised by all employees who have access to confidential, private or sensitive information.
- e) Nothing in this section prevents an employee from disclosing information if the disclosure:
 - is authorised by the CEO or the CEO's delegate; or
 - is permitted or required by law.

5.21 Improper or Undue Influence

- a) Employees are expected to not take advantage of their position to improperly influence Council Members or employees in the performance of their duties or functions, in order to gain undue or improper (direct or indirect) advantage or gain for themselves or for any other person or body.
- b) Employees must not take advantage of their position to improperly influence any other person in order to gain undue or improper (direct or indirect) advantage or gain, pecuniary or otherwise, for themselves or for any other person or body.
- c) Employees must not take advantage of their positions to improperly disadvantage or cause detriment to the local government or any other person.

5.22 Use of Shire of Boddington Resources

Shire of Boddington resources includes local government property and services provided or paid for by the Shire of Boddington local government property has the meaning given to it in the Local Government Act 1995.

local government property means anything, whether land or not, that belongs to, or is vested in, or under the care, control or management of, the local government
[Section 1.4 of the Local Government Act 1995]

An employee of the Shire is required to use the Shire's resources appropriately and is not permitted to use them for personal or private purposes, except where specified in their employment contract or authorised by the CEO through other means.

Employees are also expected to:

- a) be honest in their use of the Shire of Boddington resources and must not misuse them or permit their misuse (or the appearance of misuse) by any other person or body;

- b) use the Shire of Boddington resources entrusted to them effectively, economically, in the course of their duties and in accordance with relevant policies and procedures; and
- c) not use the Shire of Boddington resources (including the services of employees) for private purposes (other than when supplied as part of a contract of employment), unless properly authorised to do so and appropriate payments are made (as determined by the CEO)

5.23 Use of Shire of Boddington Finances

- a) Employees are expected to act responsibly and exercise sound judgment with respect to matters involving the Shire of Boddington's finances.
- b) Employees are expected to use Shire of Boddington finances only within the scope of their authority, as defined in position descriptions, policies and procedures, and operational practices.
- c) Employees with financial management responsibilities are expected to comply with the requirements of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996.
- d) Employees exercising purchasing authority will comply with the Shire of Boddington's Purchasing Policy, and the systems and procedures established by the CEO in accordance with regulation 5 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996.
- e) Employees are expected to act with care, skill, diligence, honesty and integrity when using local government finances.
- f) Employees are expected to ensure that any use of Shire of Boddington finances is appropriately documented in accordance with the relevant policy and procedure, including the Shire of Boddington's Recordkeeping Plan.

Employees should ensure they are familiar with all relevant Shire Policies and Procedures, and direct any questions for clarification to their Supervisor or the CEO.

5.24 Reporting and Handling of Suspected Breaches of the Code of Conduct

Employees who suspect a breach of the Code of Conduct are encouraged to report their concerns to their Supervisor, or in the Supervisor's absence, to the CEO, in accordance with the Shire of Boddington's internal policies.

All reported breaches will be handled in line with the Shire's established policies and procedures, ensuring appropriate action is taken based on the nature and severity of the suspected breach.

5.25 Reporting and Handling of Suspected Unethical, Fraudulent, Dishonest, Illegal or Corrupt Behaviour

Employees who suspect unethical, fraudulent, dishonest, illegal, or corrupt behaviour should report their concerns to their Supervisor, or in the Supervisor's absence, to the CEO.

If the CEO has reasonable grounds to believe that the alleged behaviour may constitute misconduct under the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003, they will notify:

- a) The Corruption and Crime Commission for serious misconduct; or
- b) The Public Sector Commissioner for minor misconduct.

Employees or any member of the public may also directly report:

- a) Suspected serious misconduct to the Corruption and Crime Commission.

- b) Suspected minor misconduct to the Public Sector Commissioner.
- c) Concerns through a Public Interest Disclosure, using the Shire of Boddington's Public Interest Disclosure Procedures, available on the Shire's website.

All reports will be handled in accordance with the relevant Shire of Boddington policies and procedures and, where applicable, in compliance with the lawful directions of the appropriate statutory authority.