



Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct Statement of Commitment

Be Beyond Ordinary!

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1. Purpose

The Gladstone Community Linking Agency (GCLA) aims to provide the best possible customer experience whilst being a great place to work with a positive and engaging culture. Our culture is nurtured by the GCLA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct which provide a broad framework in which to define parameters of expected behaviour, mutual obligation, and shared responsibility. This will ensure we all:

- Achieve high standards of safe, quality care and support.
- Contribute positively to an inclusive and accountable culture.
- Perform our duties to the best of our abilities.
- Understand and are accountable for our actions, acts or omissions.
- Have an avenue to monitor, report and respond to any deviation from expectations.

2. Scope

All employees, volunteers and contractors of GCLA are required to become familiar with and abide by the GCLA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, as well as the Aged Care Code of Conduct, and the NDIS Code of Conduct whilst representing or engaged by GCLA. A number of elements, or standards have been outlined, and whilst not an exhaustive list, addresses key aspects of Ethical and Professional Behaviour.

This document has been laid out to provide a simple way to identify what is acceptable, what is not acceptable, and what should be considered whilst providing understanding as to why certain expectations exist as a standard requirement of GCLA.

Where aspects are related to the direct provision of care and support, a wider understanding of obligations across the organisation contributes to a Beyond Ordinary culture.

GCLA Behaviours

The following GCLA behaviours provides context to the practicalities of professional conduct through each and every interaction undertaken with all stakeholders, be it in person, verbally, in writing or online:

- Be Kind
- Be Helpful
- Be Thoughtful
- Be Accountable
- Speak Positive
- Provide Safe, Quality Care

3. Definitions: Simple Terminology

Refer to Appendix I

3.1 Individual Responsibility: Mandatory Obligations

Why this is important:

As both an Approved Aged Care Provider and Registered National Disability Insurance Scheme provider, GCLA has obligations to ensure the ongoing suitability of employees who work with GCLA customers and their support networks, aimed at safeguarding our vulnerable customers.

Do this:

- At all times maintain a current:
 - NDIS Worker Screening Check (NDIS Yellow Card).
 - Child Protection Screening Check (Blue Card).
 - Professional registrations relevant to role.
 - Valid driver's licence, vehicle registration and comprehensive car insurance if required to drive a vehicle as part of role with GCLA.
 - Current First Aid Certificate and CPR competency (as relevant for role).
- Undertake the NDIS Worker Orientation Training Module and Aged Care Code of Conduct Training module.
- Attend work in accordance with contracted or schedule hours and provide adequate notification of an inability to attend work.
- Attend mandatory training as scheduled and ask questions or clarify information if unsure of any work instruction or requirement.
- Report immediately any changes to circumstances regarding suitability to work in the Aged Care or Disability Sector, including immediately reporting if charged with any offence.
- Address any behaviour that is incompatible with this code, and both the NDIS and Aged Care Codes of Conduct.
- Act ethically with integrity and honesty and be accountable for all actions taken.
- Make informed decisions and seek assistance at any time if unsure about a decision.
- Report concerns, changes in a customer's condition, incidents and hazards.
- Complete documentation following the GCLA approved communication process.
- Maintain competence in areas of work and actively seek professional development opportunities.
- Comply with all relevant laws, and all company policies, processes and procedures, and report where this may not be possible or suitable.

Do not do this:

- Engage in any activity that is illegal under local, state, federal or international law whilst working or representing GCLA or when using GCLA owned resources.
- Participate in any activity for which you are not qualified or do not have a current competency (where one is required) whilst participating in employment activities with GCLA.

Think about this:

- All employees have a personal obligation to understand both the NDIS and Aged Care employees Code of Conduct, always apply the obligations and seek assistance if further clarity is required.
- The safety of our customers and the integrity of GCLA is maintained by ensuring we are all complying with these obligations and provide quality care and services.

3.2 The Work Environment

Why this is important:

A collaborative and positive work environment supports everyone to work together harmoniously to fulfill the Vision and Purpose of GCLA.

Do this:

- Treat everyone with kindness and respect.
- Actively contribute toward a harmonious, inclusive and high-performing work environment.
- Be on time for all scheduled work and ensure you fulfil the required length of time allocated for that working period and commit all working hours exclusively for GCLA.
- Be friendly, thoughtful, helpful and collaborative.
- Be open for communication and both seek to consult on and contribute to feedback.
- Raise ideas for improvement.
- Call out behaviours, or actions which do not align the GCLA behaviours.

Do not do this:

- Disrupt the workplace or present obstacles to colleagues, their work or the collective work of GCLA.
- Abuse your position within GCLA – (See 4.12 - *Acknowledgement and Management of Conflicts of interest Conflict of Interest*)
- Communicate poorly, use offensive language or speak negatively against GCLA to employees, customers or others in the community. This includes on social media or via other forms of technology both during and outside of working hours.
- Be complicit to actions which do not meet the GCLA Behaviours, Aged Care or NDIS Codes of Conduct.

Think about this:

It is best to identify and address behaviour as it occurs which may be as simple as acknowledging the behaviour and apologising. A formal grievance process is in place which provides for an investigation into allegations.

3.3 Professional Boundaries and Provision of Care and Support for Customers

Why this is important:

GCLA is committed to ensuring all staff adhere to the Child Safety Standards and relevant Codes of Conduct including both Aged Care and NDIS, as well as our own. These help guide and direct behaviours and ensure the interactions with our customers have their rights as a priority.

Do this:

- Demonstrate respect when interacting with our customers and have consideration to their freedom of expression, self-determination, choice, control and decision making.
- Ensure the privacy and dignity of GCLA customers (See Section 4.9 - *Protection of Confidential and Private Information*).
- Only provide care, support and services which you are able to do safely and competently - do this with care and skill.
- Become familiar with and follow the Care Plan or any schedule put in place by GCLA to ensure the provision of safe, quality care.
- Promptly take steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that may impact the quality and safety of care, support and services.
- Support the reputation of GCLA when obtaining feedback or responding to incidents and engage collaboratively so as to not unnecessarily burden customers with opinion or assumption.
- Advise GCLA where there is a conflict of interest. This could include family or community members who received support through GCLA.

Do not do this:

- Abuse or take advantage of any elder or person with a disability through any coercion, grooming or neglect.
- Discuss your personal matters, including your financial matters, your family matters or share personal information which may cause the customer to become concerned for your wellbeing.
- Discuss or disclose your employment conditions with customers, including any concern, grievance or investigation, or discuss or disclose any of this information about other staff members, including your own opinion in regard to other staff members.
- Seek or engage in any commercial dealing directly with customers.
- Discuss sensitive operational and business information of GCLA with customers.
- Accept invitations or invite customers to join you in social or other personal events, outings or develop personal relationships, or establish personal communication outside of service requirements which may instigate a conflict of interest.
- Sell or loan items to customers or take money from customers or their families.
- Participate in any other commercial venture with a customer (or their representative) which may be considered a conflict of interest.
- Engage in the provision of privately arranged care and services with customers.
- Engage in theft of GCLA information and intellectual information property (including customer details).
- Expect to be invited or attend customer events as a representative of GCLA.
- Post/make comments on social media that have the potential to damage GCLA's reputation, brand, image, commercial interests, or confidence of our customers.

Think about this:

Non-adherence to professional boundaries, may place customers at risk of financial, physical, emotional or psychological harm. Breaches of these requirements and participation in these activities that are listed as "Do not do this" may also result in GCLA disciplinary actions, criminal investigations and or result in an individual being reported to either the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission or the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. This could result in being listed on the register of "Banning Orders" and/or revocation of the NDIS Worker Screening or working with Children Care (Blue Card).

3.4 Protection and Safeguarding of Children

Why this is important:

GCLA provides care and support to children and has both legal and moral obligations to ensure the rights of children are upheld as a primary consideration in accordance with the UN Convention of the Rights of Children.

Do this:

- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse and neglect.
- Report and act upon any complaints, concerns or observations or reasonable suspicions, allegations of disclosure.
- If registered with APRHA, undertake any mandatory reporting required regarding child protection.
- Ensure you are monitoring the safety of any child or young person in your care to ensure:
 - They are participating in activities and opportunities that their parent or guardian is both aware of and approves of.
 - Constant supervision of the child.
 - The child is empowered in respect to opinion and requests.
 - Any toys, play equipment, or other items are safe and age appropriate for the child being cared for.
 - Any internet websites accessed are age appropriate and free of any potential harm and agreed with the authorised parent/guardian or responsible adult.

Don't do this:

- Take the child to any location, activity or other venue without the express consent and knowledge of both GCLA, the child's authorised parent/guardian or responsible adult.
- Leave a child unsupervised for any period of time.
- Leave the child in the care of any person other than the authorised parent/guardian or responsible adult.
- Leave the child unsupervised when using technology.
- Provide food/drinks or other food items to the child without authorisation of the authorised parent/ guardian or responsible adult.

Think about this:

Children are vulnerable to abuse, harm and neglect. It is essential that increased care, surveillance and reporting of any concerns or disclosures of children happen in a prompt and thorough manner. The act of supporting, supervising and caring for a child holds significant responsibility.

3.5 Work Health and Safety

Why this is important:

Everyone needs to contribute toward providing a safe & healthy work environment which supports everyone's wellbeing, health & safety. When we provide a safe working environment for our employees, our customers are more likely to also be cared for in a safe environment. Safety at work refers to all aspect of how we do what we do, the physical environment, the equipment or tools we use, the way we complete our work tasks. Also, the phycological factors that need to be considered & the way in which we interact with each other, with our customers or with any other person within our workspace. Safety is everyone's responsibility which is supported by legislation obligations for employees & through contractual arrangements with customers.

Do this:

- Have your tools of work with you for each shift / service including:
 - Your mobile phone charged and with Brevity "notifications" turned ON.
 - Any personal protective equipment (PPE) you are required to use for the services allocated.
 - Water, food or other refreshments you require.
 - Appropriate clothing and footwear to support safety.
- Assess your work environment every day and report any hazards or concerns and complete required safety assessment of each GCLA car/bus/van.
- Problem-solve if you are faced with a hazard to either eliminate the risk, mitigate the risk or minimize the risk.
- Ensure standard precautions are applied to prevent cross infection of infectious disease including: hand hygiene (washing and gloves)' PPE items (and other required items including goggles or protective apron, shoe covers); for services where there is a risk of body fluid contamination, and when handling and preparing foods (See Section 4.8 – Dress Code).
- Only use safe methods of work which you have received instruction to perform.
- Only use equipment for its intended purpose and that it is in good working order.
- When using electrical equipment in a GCLA premises, ensure you check that it has a current in date "tag and test" ticket attached.
- When using electrical equipment that belongs to a customer ensure there is an RCD or safety switch installed at the premises or on the power board in use.
- When attending to manual handling activities always follow the instructions provided for each individual customer and the equipment prescribed to assist with the task.
- Always ensure you are providing care and services in the location nominated as part of the customers service so that GCLA can account for each team members current location and whereabouts.
- Seek the appropriate services/assistance during an emergency and use your skills and knowledge to maintain the situation until assistance arrives.
- If you are involved in an incident ensure your own safety and wellbeing, seek appropriate first aid and then call GCLA for further assistance.

- In a medical emergency, ensure you follow standard response procedures in the first instance and then notify GCLA as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Adjust work activities to the weather conditions or any emergency notifications and follow emergency instructions.

Don't do this:

- Use faulty or visually damaged equipment, tools or devices or electrical equipment.
- Use electrical equipment:
 - if plugged into multiple adaptors at the outlet
 - near running water, or tubs/ sinks or other collections of water
- Participate in unsafe work practices.
- Attend to work if unwell, intoxicated, under the influence of a medication or drug which may impair your ability to safely work (See Section 4.7 - Substances, drugs, alcohol and cigarette products).
- Attend to activities you do not have the competency or training for.
- Cause harm, physical, emotional, psychological or other forms of harm to any staff or customers.
- Compromised the security, safety and comfort of staff by inviting customers into staff only areas, including tea, lunch and break areas frequented by all employees or individuals working spaces.
- Drive through flood waters, travel on roads which have been closed due to emergency situations or drive on roadways that are not designed for general motor vehicle use.

Think about this:

By maintaining a safe work environment, we are also working towards keeping our customers safe. We all have legal responsibility to ensure our acts or omissions do not put any other person at risk of harm.

3.6 Prohibition of Sexual and Workplace Harassment and Bullying

Why this is important:

GCLA must provide a work environment that is free of discrimination, bullying and unlawful harassment, aligned to the GCLA vision “Empowered People, Inclusive Communities”. Harassment on the basis of a person’s gender/gender identity, race, religious beliefs, culture, age, pregnancy, marital status, disability, or sexuality is a breach of antidiscrimination and human rights law and is strictly prohibited.

Do this:

- Be vigilant in noting changes to a staff member, or customer’s behaviour that may indicate they are the victim of any abuse, neglect or other behaviour which has a negative impact on their wellbeing.
- Ensure your actions and interactions with others cannot be misinterpreted as inappropriate by making comments, jokes or other forms of communication that may seem leading, harsh, harmful or derogatory.

Don't do this:

- Engage in any activity, interaction or discussion which may be considered, or perceived to be bullying, harassment, unlawful discrimination or sexual misconduct.
- Participate in activities that may be considered grooming towards an inappropriate relationship.
- Share imagery, online visual items, jokes, or other forms of communication of a sexual, racist or inappropriate nature.
- Participate in conversations, activities or use of technology where the subject matter is of poor repute or could be considered a harmful or a negative experience for the customer including, but not inclusive of: Pornography sites / Sites which promote hatred, abuse or violence / Sites which promote discrimination or vilification.

Think about this:

- GLCA has various legal obligations to ensure a safe workplace and takes all reports seriously and will afford natural justice to any investigation and determine outcomes using a balance of probabilities approach.

- Any act of inappropriate sexual conduct, grooming, harassment, workplace bullying, or other discriminatory actions may have both workplace disciplinary outcomes as well as considered a criminal offence, which may also be subject to legal prosecution.

3.7 Substances, drugs, alcohol and cigarette products

Why this is important:

To ensure the safety of staff, customers and the protection of the GCLA good standing in the community, being under the influence of drugs or alcohol which may adversely impact performance is strictly prohibited. As an organisation that promotes health and wellbeing, smoking or the use of e-cigarettes/vapes is not permitted at any GCLA location or during paid working time at GCLA.

Do not do this:

- Manufacture, distribute, possess, sell or purchase a controlled substance of abuse whilst an employee of GCLA.
- Be under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or substances of abuse on GCLA premises or when working for or representing GCLA.
- Be under any adverse influence of alcohol during working hours.
- Attend work while under the influence of prescription drugs that impair performance or compromise safety.
- Use tobacco products on GCLA property, when being paid by or representing GCLA or when providing services to customers.
- Use vaping products and such as e-cigarettes, vape pens, other electronic nicotine delivery systems during working hours or paid breaks.

Think about this:

GCLA will consider all requests for support with any addiction and allow all employees to utilise GCLA resources to connect to various services such as Quitline or Beyond Blue.

3.8 Dress code

Why this is important:

GCLA staff will represent the organisation in a professional, business-appropriate style, ensuring dress attire does not present a safety issue, nor negatively impact on the reputation of GCLA.

Do this:

- Maintain high standards of personal hygiene and grooming.
- Ensure any shorts or skirts worn are of a modest nature.
- Wear clothing in a tidy manner ensuring it is clean and well maintained.
- To ensure workplace safety, all employees must wear non-slip, enclosed shoes that provide adequate support at all times while on duty.
- Keep jewellery to an acceptable level, reflecting business standards.
- Wear PPE appropriate to the activity you are participating in, this might include:
 - Eye protection.
 - Disposable gloves.
 - A disposable apron and shoe covers.
 - Other appropriate items as required and instructed.
- Ground Control Staff PPE:
 - Boots with toe protection.
 - High Visibility long sleeved top.
 - Long trousers.
 - Protective eyewear and ear protection.
 - Protective gardening gloves.

- Where applicable sun protection hat and sunscreen.
- Wear any allocated protective clothing or equipment in the manner in which it was intended to provide protection.
- When participating in swimming activities, wear sun safe appropriate swimming attire, that has maximum body coverage, i.e. one-piece bathing suit, swim trunks, T-shirts and shorts, burkini, swim hijab, wet suit etc
- When participating in allied health or exercise activities, wear suitable attire that considers modesty and enables free and flowing movement.
- Cover any tattoos which may be considered offensive.
- Ensure any piercings are not visibly offensive nor cause risk to customers.

Do not do this:

- Misuse any personal protective clothing.
- Wear thongs during working hours.
- Wear shorts or skirts that are mid-thigh or higher.
- Wear tops or shirts that are revealing – i.e. either cut too low or show the midriff.
- Wear workout gear, skin-tight exercise clothing or sports bras.
- Wear swimming clothing such as bikinis, speedos, or nylon bathers.

Think about this:

GCLA does not mandate the wearing of a uniform, nor provide a uniform. Branded shirts are available for all staff; however, a customer may request these not be worn during a service.

3.9 Protection of Confidential and Private Information

Why this is important:

GCLA collects and stores personal and sensitive information to enable the delivery of care and support. As such, GCLA has an obligation to comply with the Privacy Act 1988 and the Australian Privacy Principles and ensure the protection, appropriate use, confidentiality and privacy of information in all formats.

Do this:

- Hold and maintain all private, sensitive, confidential and commercial information in the strictest of confidence and not disclose to any person other than for purposes directly related to their role.
- Promptly enter any GCLA related photos taken with a personal device (e.g. customer photos, customer documents etc) into the GCLA system, then delete immediately from any personal device.
- Meet with customers only in allocated customer meeting spaces so as to protect the confidentiality of any discussions and restricts unauthorised access to private and sensitive information.

Do not do this:

- Breach the confidentiality and privacy of customers, their families and colleagues.
- Utilise private, confidential or commercial information learned during the course of employment to benefit your own interests, or the interests or purposes of others not associated with GCLA. This strictly applies to all customer information.
- Share information about, or lists of, GCLA employees, customers, or other contacts to parties outside the GCLA, unless authorised to do so.
- Share or exploit any information or use any information which may be the Intellectual Property of GCLA, copyrighted or trade secret.

Think about this:

- Confidentiality relates to the transmission of personal, sensitive or identifiable information about individuals or organisations (confidential information), which comes into the possession of GCLA through its work.

3.10 Information Technology access and security

Why this is important:

- GCLA data stored on electronic and computing devices remains the sole property of GCLA, and must be protected from misuse, loss or virus attacks which may compromise network systems and negatively impact the security and privacy of confidential and sensitive information.

Do this:

- Remain vigilant to the ongoing threat of Information Technology security or cyber threat and take preventive precautions, particularly when opening files such as email attachments received from unknown parties.
- Maintain the security, integrity, and confidentiality of all data.
- Lock your computer session when not in attendance.
- Notify the IT service desk if you have access to an application not required to perform your role.
- Protect your GCLA identity, username and password and selecting a strong password (At least 8 letters, at least 1 upper case, 1 lower case, 1 symbol, 1 number).
- Promptly report any theft, loss or unauthorised disclosure of GCLA data.

Do not do this:

- Share or write down passwords, either physically or digitally.
- Use passwords which have been used for personal accounts.
- Share any active session with other users
- Disrupt or harm the GCLA company computer network.
- Distribute information to unauthorised distribution lists.
- Share information about, or lists of, GCLA employees, customers, or other contacts to parties outside the GCLA, unless authorised to do so
- Introduce malicious programs into GCLA devices, networks or systems (e.g. viruses, worms, Trojan horses, e-mail bombs, etc.).
- Use unauthorised web proxies or other services intended to bypass security controls or systems.
- Access data, a server, application or an account other than your own for any purpose other than conducting GCLA business.
- Allow any external parties to take control of GCLA owned equipment.
- Store data on unauthorised external media such as USB storage devices, or on any unauthorised cloud or software service including unauthorised, email and transfer services.
- Remove or delete GCLA data unless authorised to do so.
- Make fraudulent offers of products, items, or services originating from any GCLA account.
- Use the Internet for unauthorised activities such as gambling, adult services, or unlawful or illicit activities including child exploitation.
- Access, store, or spread material that could be considered to be rude, pornographic, discriminatory, harassing, threatening, inappropriate, in bad taste, or personal political or religious views.
- Undertake any actions or make omissions which may adversely impact IT security or disrupt the network communications.

Think about this:

All activities conducted on GCLA systems and data is monitored, recorded, and can be reviewed at any time without notice. Video surveillance may be used to record and store information at GCLA locations for security and safety purposes.

3.11 Use of GCLA resources, elimination of fraud, corruption and coercion

Why this is important:

GCLA's integrity is essential for maintaining trustworthiness and reputation. Employees should always do their work fairly, honestly, and legally. Reliability and adequate notice of an inability to attend work allows GCLA to make appropriate arrangements.

Do this:

- Be punctual and present to work as scheduled and ready to work at starting time each day or shift.
- Employees who are unable to work due to illness or an accident should notify their supervisor in a timely manner, and in any case/at least, prior to a shift.
- Only use GCLA resources in the manner that they were intended, for legitimate purposes, and in a way that causes no harm to GCLA, the community or environment.
- Ensure any personal use of GCLA resources does not impact productivity.
- Use the GCLA Brevity App to check in to shifts.
- When claiming reimbursement for kilometres, ensure they are assigned accurately.
- Only seek reimbursement for legitimate and pre-approved expenditure.
- Politely decline any offer of gifts/benefits and advise the giver that it is against GCLA policy to accept such a gift or benefit, so as to avoid compromising situations that may be perceived as corrupt or unethical.
- Where acceptance of a gift or benefit cannot be avoided (i.e. upsetting a customer by refusing) the gift must be disclosed to the Company Secretary (or supervisor) for notation in the Gifts Register.

Do not do this:

- Falsely log onto or off work, where the result is payment for services or support did not occur, to the extent of the shift requirements.
- Persuade someone to do something by using force or threats (coercion).
- Make excessive personal phone calls during working hours.
- Make personal phone calls whilst providing care or support to a customer.
- Use the internet excessively during working hours for personal reasons especially if it adversely effects productivity.
- Engage with social media during working hours, unless for the purpose of GCLA promotion.
- As a general rule and whenever practical, do not accept gifts and/or benefits from any customer.
- Take advantage of any customer or exploit their appreciation, gratitude or generosity.
- Sell to, or buy any goods or services to or from a customer

Think about this:

- Access to GCLA resources is provided for business purposes however some personal use is allowed provided it is not during paid working time, nor considered excessive, and is in compliance with all relevant policies. Acceptable personal use may include:
 - Reasonable use of the Internet and messaging applications such as email and Teams.
 - Phone calls within Australia.
 - Connecting personal devices to the company provided Guest Network.
- The consistency of services is dependent of scheduling, reliability and tardiness of employees. Absenteeism without sufficient notice may burden other employees, customer and GCLA.
- If an employee does not report for work and the company is not notified of an employee's status for 3 days, it is typically considered a job abandonment.
- Small mementos or tokens of appreciation may be accepted in some cases, i.e. gift for presenting at a conference, a gift bag for attendance at a conference, and must be under the value of \$20.
- Non-disclosure of gift and/or benefit may be considered misconduct and disciplinary action against individuals for not declaring such a gift or benefit may follow.

3.12 Acknowledgement and Management of Conflicts of Interest

Why this is important:

The reputation and good standing of GCLA in the community depends on the actions and integrity of its employees and volunteers. A conflict of interest may occur when an individual's personal interests – family, friendships, financial, or social factors – could compromise judgment, decisions, or actions. It may or may not provide an unfair benefit, advantage or perception of such.

Do this:

- Act in the best interests of GCLA.
- Notify your supervisor or the Company Secretary when other interests and/or commitments, conflict or may conflict with the best interests of the GCLA.
- Comply with any plan developed to manage any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest.
- Disclose any relationships between a colleague and a customer.
- Disclose any relationship between yourself and other staff, or applicants for employment with GCLA.
- Excuse yourself from any meeting, discussion or other activity where information in regard to your notified conflict of interest is occurring.
- Report any concerns, real or perceived in regard to the potential conflict of interest.

Don't do this:

- Use position or relationship with GCLA for personal gain.
- Use your position at GCLA to share our intellectual or business information that may lead to an unfair advantage to any other person or entity. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Contractors to GCLA.
 - Suppliers or equipment, consumables, foods or other items.
 - Competitors to GCLA.
 - Other organisations who may be affiliated, tendering, or in any other way participating with the work or potentially participating with the work of GCLA.
- Participate in activities with business beneficiaries of GCLA where your interaction is rewarded by gifts, money or other gratuities.
- Prevent “fair play” or “Equal opportunities” in regard to opportunities with GCLA for other staff, contractors or providers of services, consumables or other items.

Think about this:

GCLA is committed to ensuring that any conflict with the interests, be it actual, potential or perceived, are identified, reported and subsequently recorded and managed so that they do not affect services, activities or decision making.

4. Mandatory Reporting, Reporting Corrupt Conduct & Unacceptable Behaviour

GCLA is committed to establishing and maintaining a work environment where robust ethical standards are upheld and demonstrated through employee behaviour. All employees have a duty of care to support GLCA customers, understand and abide by the GCLA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and report any deviations from requirements including:

- any act or behaviours which is or may be perceived to be sexual harassment, workplace harassment or bullying.
- any suspicion that an act of abuse, harassment, or any form of discrimination or violation of a person's human rights have been or may be violated.
- any incident or complaint. Note some roles have additional mandatory reporting obligations as part of their individual professional registration.
- corrupt conduct or suspicion of corrupt conduct.

Supervisors have an additional obligation to lead by example and manage breaches of this policy as soon as practicable after a breach is observed or reported.

Breaches should be reported to your supervisor, or a Manager once known or suspected, or reported through other means including the CEO, Company Secretary or Board Chairperson.

5. Protections including Whistleblower Protections

GCLA supports a reporting culture and therefore all reports made by any employee **in good faith will be afforded protections from reprisal.**

Whistleblowers, or potential whistleblowers, are protected under the Corporations Act, and if there is any detrimental behaviour towards the whistleblower, in some cases, they can be compensated for any loss, damage, or injury they suffer. It is illegal to fire, harass or discriminate against a whistleblower or potential whistleblower because someone thinks they made a disclosure.

If a person breaches a whistleblower's confidentiality or causes detriment to a whistleblower because of their disclosure, the person faces criminal or civil penalties. Detrimental conduct could include dismissal of an employee, alteration of employee's position or duties, harassment or intimidation, or discrimination of that employee.

It is important to note, that personal work-related grievances do not qualify for protection under the Corporations Act. An example of a personal work-related grievance could be a complaint about the employee's current or former employment and tend to have implications for the *employee only*, but do not have any other significant implications for GCLA or relate to any conduct, or alleged conduct, about a disclosable matter.

6. Breaches of the Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct

Employees have a duty to observe this Statement of Commitment and ensure that no breaches occur. Failure to comply, based on a balance of probabilities, may amount to a breach of the Code and regarded as a serious matter and have serious consequences irrespective of whether the breach is unacceptable behaviour or corrupt conduct. Persons who have breached this Code may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

The GLCA Code of Ethics and Professional conduct is breached if an employee:

- Does not perform expected behaviours in this Statement of Commitment when it would be reasonable to do so in the circumstances.
- Engages in prohibited actions outlined in this GCLA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.
- Fails to comply with their mandatory reporting obligations.
- Acts or fails to act in a way that potentially or cause, harm to someone whom the person owes a duty of care.
- Fails to report professional boundary violations or behaviours of concern regarding colleagues and volunteers.

Breaches of these requirements and participation in these activities that are listed as "Do not do this" may also result in GCLA disciplinary actions, criminal investigations and/or result in an individual being listed on the register of "Aged Care Banning Orders" or have the NDIS (Yellow Card) or working with Children Care (Blue Card) revoked.

7. Statement of Commitment and Declaration

I, _____ (*print full name*), as an employee of the Gladstone Community Linking Agency (GCLA), declare and agree that:

- I have read and understood the contents of the GCLA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.
- I have read and understood the contents of the NDIS and Aged Care Codes of Conduct relevant to my role.
- I understand that the Commitment sets out standards of behaviour expected and required of me as an employee of GCLA.
- I understand that GCLA may amend or replace the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, or any part of it from time to time.
- I understand that failure to comply with the GCLA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and/or disclose any known breaches of the GCLA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct by myself or any other employee may be deemed to be a serious breach of the conditions of my employment which may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of my employment with GCLA.
- I will report any criminal convictions that may impact on my ability to continue working for GCLA.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix I. Definitions

- **Balance of Probabilities:** An investigation technique that determines the event was more likely than not to have occurred.
- **Bullying:** definition from the WHS Act Work–related bullying, which is repeated, and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or group of workers that creates a risk to health and safety.
- **Elder abuse:** is defined as any act within a relationship of trust which results in harm to an older person, it can be emotional, psychological, financial, physical or sexual abuse, or neglect.
- **Mandatory Reporting**
 - **SIRS: Serious Incident Response Scheme:** mandatory reportable incidents in aged care including:
 - Use of unreasonable force
 - Unlawful sexual contact or inappropriate sexual conduct
 - Neglect
 - Psychological or emotional abuse
 - Unexpected death
 - Stealing or financial coercion by a staff member
 - Inappropriate use of restrictive practices
 - Unexplained absence from care (missing consumers)
 - **Reportable incidents NDIS:** refers to any incident or act including:
 - The death of a person with a disability
 - Serious injury of a person with disability
 - Abuse or neglect of a person with disability
 - Unlawful sexual or physical contact with , or assault of a person with disability
 - Sexual misconduct, committed against, or in the presence of a person with a disability including grooming of the person with disability for sexual activity
 - Use of restrictive practice in relation to a person with a disability where the use is not in accordance with an authorisation (however described) of a state or territory in relation to the person, or if it is used according to that authorisation but not in accordance with a behaviour support plan for the person with disability
 - **Child abuse and neglect** is defined by The World Health Organisation as: “All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power”
- **Corrupt conduct** is defined as any conduct that adversely affects the honesty or impartiality of a public or GCLA official. Any person who does something that causes or could cause a public official or GCLA employee to behave dishonestly or show bias in the exercise of their official functions, powers or duties, could be engaging in corrupt conduct.
- **Disclosure** refers to the way children or persons of any age let other people know they are being or have been abused, neglected or have not had their human rights upheld.
- **Anti-Discrimination:** it is law in Australia to ensure people are not discriminated against based on a number of protected attributes with include, age, disability, race, sex, intersex status, gender identity, sexual orientation.

- **Social role valorisation** is working towards improving the lives of people who are of a lower standing in society, it is applicable to people who for any reason are disadvantaged, discriminated against, marginalized or otherwise consigned to a lower status in their society.
- **Human rights** are defined as the inherent value of each person, regardless of background, where we live, what we look like or what we think or believe, they are based on the principles of dignity, equality, and mutual respect.
- **Ethics and ethical behaviour** refer to acting with honesty, fairness and equity.
- **Whistle-blower** is a person who informs on a person or organisation regarding a genuine concern around potential unlawful, corrupt or immoral activity. Whistleblowers are provided protection where their report is made in good faith.
- **Prohibited Action** includes, but it not limited to, items identified as Do not do this.
- **Harassment** is effectively as simple as any unwelcomed and uninvited behaviour which reasonably makes a person feel offended, humiliated, intimidated or threatened.