

Employees Code of Conduct Policy

HR21-OP (Superseding OP231 Code of Conduct Employees Policy v1)



Hard copies of documents are uncontrolled and may not be current - please refer to the electronic version.

1. Purpose

To establish acceptable behaviours to be followed by members of the Council, Local Authorities, and Council Committees.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all MRC employees excluding the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

3. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- 3.1. Outline the expectations of employees for MRC, while carrying out their duties or representing MRC.
- 3.2. Ensure that conduct of all employees maintains the trust and confidence of the Council and the constituents of the MRC area.

4. Statement

- 4.1. To ensure the trust of the community and public, employees are expected to maintain high ethical standards in administering MRC business.
- 4.2. MRC will observe a separation of powers by ensuring all employees do not influence or interfere with the members of council including Councillors, Local Authority and Committee members.
- 4.3. MRC will ensure all decisions made and actions taken are lawful and consistent with MRC policies, procedures and guidelines.
- 4.4. Employees must act in the best interests of the MRC at all times.
- 4.5. Employees will follow lawful direction given by their supervisor or any person having the proper authority to give directions.

5. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Employee	Except where stated in this policy the term "employee" shall extend to cover contractors, volunteers and any person performing work for MRC.
Supervisor	Refers to a person employed at MRC in any of the following roles; CEO, Director, Manager, Coordinator and Team Leader.
Complaint	Any external expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an MRC employees conduct.
Serious misconduct	Serious misconduct is conduct that is wilful or deliberate and that is inconsistent with the continuation of the employment contract. It is also conduct that causes serious and imminent risk to the health and safety of a person or to the reputation, viability or profitability of the employer's business.

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6. Code of conduct

All MRC employees are expected to act with:

6.1. **Honesty and integrity**

6.1.1. All employees must act honestly and with integrity.

6.2. **Care and diligence**

6.2.1. All employees must act with reasonable care and diligence in performing their duties.

6.2.2. Promote an environment where people are encouraged to learn and improve.

6.3. **Courtesy**

6.3.1. All employees must act with courtesy towards other employees, members of council including Councillors, Local Authority members, MRC constituents, customers, stakeholders and members of the public.

6.3.2. All employees must refrain from conduct, which may cause any reasonable person unwarranted offence or embarrassment.

6.4. **Prohibition on bullying, harassment or discrimination**

6.4.1. All employees must not bully another person in the course of performing their duties.

6.4.2. All employees must not harass or discriminate against another person on the basis of protected characteristics which include a person's race, sex, pregnancy, marital status, family responsibilities, breastfeeding, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.

6.4.3. All employees must adhere to relevant council policies on Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination. Refer to policy CP146 Anti-Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment.

6.5. **Cooperative**

6.5.1. Employees should be friendly, responsive and communicate professionally to each other.

6.5.2. Employees should be respectful of other's time, by being punctual to their shift time, programs, meetings and any other agreed arrangements.

6.5.3. Employees should be respectful of each other in the workplace by minimising disruptions and exercising correct protocol on community.

6.6. **Respect for cultural diversity and culture**

6.6.1. All employees must respect cultural diversity and therefore must not discriminate against others, or the opinions of others, on the ground of their cultural background.

6.6.2. All employees must act with respect for cultural beliefs and practices in relation to other members, council staff, electors and members of the public. Refer to policy CP146 Anti-Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment.

6.7. **Conflict of interest**

6.7.1. A conflict of interest may arise if an individual, or their associate (e.g. relative, partner, friend, former partner, or employer) has a personal or financial interest in the outcome of a council decision or MRC operations.

6.7.2. All employees must avoid any conflict of interest, whether actual or perceived, when undertaking their duties.

6.7.3. If a conflict of interest exists, an employee must follow the relevant policy and declare any conflict of interest, and dependent on those conflicts, take action to mitigate those conflicts. Refer to policy HR23-OP Conflict of Interest Employees.

6.7.4. A conflict of interest may also arise where two or more family members are working for MRC. In the case that an employee is required to supervise a family member, professional relationships must be maintained in accordance with the relevant policy. Refer to policy OP229 Supervision of Family Members.

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6.8. **Respect confidentiality**

- 6.8.1. All employees must respect the confidentiality of information obtained in whilst carrying out their duties.
- 6.8.2. All employees must not make improper use of confidential information obtained while undertaking work for MRC to gain a private benefit or to cause harm to another.

6.9. **Gifts and benefits**

- 6.9.1. All employees must not solicit, encourage or accept gifts or private benefits from any person who might have an interest in obtaining a benefit from the council.
- 6.9.2. All employees must not accept a gift from a person that is given in relation to the person's interest in obtaining a benefit from the council.
- 6.9.3. All employees will follow the relevant gifts and benefits policy and when required declare any gifts or benefits received. Refer to policy HR24-OP Declaring Gifts and Benefits Policy – Employees.

6.10. **Accountability**

- 6.10.1. An employee must be prepared at all times to account for their performance, the use of council resources and take on feedback regarding their performance.

6.11. **Interests of the Regional Council to be paramount**

- 6.11.1. All employees must act in what they genuinely believes to be the best interests of the regional council.
- 6.11.2. All employees must exercise judgement that is honest, reasonable and properly informed when carrying out their duties as an employee of MRC.

6.12. **Professional Development**

- 6.12.1. All employees must undertake any compulsory training or professional development opportunities as relevant to their employment.

7. **Breach of the Code of Conduct**

- 7.1. Employees can report potential breaches of Code of Conduct to their supervisor and or Human Resources. Employees may refer to the HR22-OP Employee Complaints Management Policy for guidance.
- 7.2. Complaints made by the public into alleged and actual breaches of Code of Conduct will be handled in accordance with GS03-CP Customer Complaints and Feedback Policy.
- 7.3. Investigations into alleged and actual breaches of the Code of Conduct will be undertaken in accordance with the HR15-OP Staff Discipline Policy (and associated documents).
- 7.4. In accordance with the MRC Enterprise Agreement and the HR15-OP Staff Discipline Policy, breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in performance management and or disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

8. **Employee Declaration**

I acknowledge that I have read, understood and agree to the MRC Code of Conduct.

Employee Name	
Employee Signature	
Date	

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9. Policy Details

Replaces Policy No: (if applicable)	OP231 Code of Conduct Employees Policy v1
Responsible Directorate/Department:	Corporate Services - Human Resources
ELT Approval Date:	14 June 2022
ELT Minutes Reference:	Item # 3.4
Review Cycle:	June 2026 - Review every four (4) years or after changes to relevant legislation.

10. Legislation and References

Related Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 2021, s175(2)</i>
	<i>Fair Work Act 2009</i>
	<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i>
Related Policies:	HR14-OP Drug and Alcohol Policy
	HR15-OP Staff Discipline Policy
	HR22-OP Employee Complaints Management Policy
	GS03-CP Customer Complaints and Feedback Policy
Associated Documents:	HR15-P1 Serious Misconduct Procedure
	HR15-P2 Managing Unauthorised Absence Procedure
	HR15-G1 Managing Underperformance Guide
	HR23-OP Conflict of Interest Employees
	CP146 Anti-Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment
	OP229 Supervision of Family Members
	MRC Enterprise Agreement 2021

11. Version Control

Version No.	Approval Date	Policy No.	Minutes reference and Resolution number
1.	1 June 2015	OP231	N/A
2.	14 June 2022	HR21-OP	ELT Item # 3.4