

Staff Policy

Policy Title:	Code of Conduct Policy 2019
Responsibility:	Human Resources Manager
First Adopted:	July 2019
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1 Policy Objectives

- 1.1 The purpose of the Code of Conduct policy is to provide Ruapehu District Council (RDC) employees with standards of required behaviour, and the framework for conducting business with customers, other employees and other stakeholders.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 **RDC** means Ruapehu District Council.
- 2.2 **The Code** means (The Code of Conduct policy).
- 2.3 **PPE** means Personal protective clothing / equipment.
- 2.4 **H&S** means Occupational Health and Safety.
- 2.5 **Employee** means any person employed to carry out work for RDC.

3 Principles

- 3.1 This Code of Conduct (The Code) policy applies to employees.
- 3.2 All employees of RDC must ensure they adhere to high professional and personal standards.
- 3.3 All employees, whilst performing their work, shall behave in a manner which does not contradict organisational policies and procedures, The Code, and any relevant legislation.
- 3.4 All employees must uphold the values of RDC.
- 3.5 Employees who are unsure of the appropriate action to be taken should seek advice from their manager.

4 Background

- 4.1 This policy was created for all employees to outline the behaviour that is expected when working for RDC.

5 Policy Statement

5.1 EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1.1 Employees are required to:

- (a) Read and comply with RDC's Code of Conduct policy.
- (b) Perform their duties with skill, honesty, care and diligence, using authority in a fair and equitable manner.
- (c) Abide by policies and procedures, instructions and lawful directions that relate to their employment and duties.
- (d) Comply with relevant professional codes of conduct applying to professional bodies/registrations/memberships.

5.1.2 Employees will:

- (a) Treat colleagues, management, customers, volunteers, contractors and stakeholders with respect.
- (b) Refrain from causing, or being involved in any incident, issue, and/or behaviour which will cause detriment to the health, welfare, financial situation, and/or safety of others, or the organisation's reputation.
- (c) Abide by all relevant legislation and adhere to professional standards.

5.1.3 **Bullying and Harassment**

RDC applies a zero tolerance to bullying and harassment behaviours and therefore requires its employees to abide by all laws.

5.1.4 **Conflicts of Interest**

Employees will avoid any real or perceived conflicts of interest. This requires staff to make declarations of any perceived conflict to ensure community trust and confidence is maintained.

5.1.5 **Criminal Offences**

- (a) Employees shall not engage in any unlawful activity whilst in the workplace, whilst undertaking duties or functions for RDC, or representing RDC in any way (including traffic infringements).
- (b) Employees are advised to inform their Manager if they are charged with a criminal offence.

5.1.6 **Dress Code**

- (a) All employees shall maintain an appropriate standard of grooming and dress as per Councils Business Attire Policy. Dress must be respectful and appropriate.
- (b) When engaged in duties or functions for RDC, staff dress should present as professional and appropriate to perform the duties for which the employee is engaged.
- (c) Footwear should be fit for purpose.
- (d) The wearing of PPE is compulsory when required.
- (e) It is at the Managers discretion, and considering organisation policies, as to what may or may not be appropriate.
- (f) Tattoos and piercings are not an issue, however much like clothing they must be free of offensive words, pictures or logos if visible.

Note: Special consideration is given to dress up days.

5.1.7 **Discrimination**

- (a) RDC applies a zero tolerance to discriminatory behaviours and therefore requires its staff to abide by all laws in relation to direct, or indirect discrimination.

- (b) Discrimination is treating, or proposing to treat, someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic protected by law.
- (c) Neither prospective nor existing employees will be discriminated against based on their choice to wear cultural / traditional or religious dress.

5.1.8 Drugs and Alcohol

- (a) Employees are to carry out their work safely, and therefore shall not attend work or perform duties, or function in an official capacity for RDC while under the influence of alcohol or non-prescribed drugs.
- (b) Staff who are on prescribed medication that could affect their work performance, or the safety of themselves or others, are also encouraged to inform their Manager to ensure any necessary precautions or adjustments to work can be put in place.

Note: You will not be required to identify the diagnosis or medication unless you want to.

5.1.9 Financial Integrity

Employees will observe the highest standards of integrity in financial matters and comply with all RDC requirements of financial management, i.e. desist from fraud or misappropriation of funds.

5.1.10 Gifts and Benefits

Employees shall not generally accept gifts or monies and must declare these as soon as possible to their Manager in accordance with Councils Gifts Policy.

5.1.11 Honesty at work

Employees will act honestly in the performance of their duties, be open and transparent when making decisions, and give honest and current advice based on available facts and data. This includes the initiation and maintenance of accurate and reliable records (customer and other).

5.1.12 Occupational Health and Safety

Employees will comply with all H&S policies and procedures. This includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Identify hazards, manage controls and assess risks.
- (b) Participating in all H&S required activity, e.g. training and awareness sessions.
- (c) Where specified, or required, wearing personal protective clothing / equipment (PPE).
- (d) The requirements of infection control, i.e. application of universal precautions.
- (e) Wearing appropriate footwear.
- (f) Abiding by policy regarding smoke free environments; and
- (g) The reporting of incidents or near misses in the register provided.

5.1.13 Other Employment

Employees will only engage in other employment or business where the activity does not conflict with their role at RDC and after approval has been sought from their manager beforehand.

5.1.14 Service Delivery

Employees will:

- (a) Provide frank, impartial and timely advice to customers, colleagues and other stakeholders.
- (b) Provide high quality service.
- (c) Identify and promote best practice.
- (d) Support the values of RDC.

- (e) Exercise fairness, proper courtesy, consideration and sensitivity in dealing with customers, employees and other stakeholders.
- (f) Respect the rights of individuals to make informed decisions, understand and advance the concepts of empowerment, self-determination and autonomy.
- (g) Remain unbiased in their practice and refrain from imposing their personal values, morals, beliefs and preferences on customers, other employees and other stakeholders.
- (h) Utilise principles of sound judgement, honesty, safety and accountability.

5.1.15 Use of Information

- (a) Employees shall not make improper use (directly or indirectly) of any information acquired during the course of their employment.
- (b) Employees will only disclose information when required to do so by law, when consented to by a customer, when called to give evidence in court, or when proper authority has been given.
- (c) Employees will adhere to RDC's Information Management Policy.

5.1.16 Use of Power

Employees will use their powers responsibly, i.e. not in a way that provides benefit to themselves, their family, friends or associates or in a way that is not fair and reasonable.

5.2 MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.2.1 Managers are required to follow the responsibilities above and ensure that employees are aware of, and comply with The Code.

5.3 BREACH OF CODE OF CONDUCT

5.3.1 Reporting of Unethical Behaviour

RDC employees must report to their Manager any:

- (a) Improper conduct.
- (b) Behaviour that violates any law, rule or regulation.
- (c) The mismanagement of resources; or
- (d) Any potential for danger to public health or safety.

- 5.3.2 RDC will support employees who act within their obligations and authority, however employees acting without authority or unlawfully will not necessarily have support for their actions.

- 5.3.3 Where there is a potential breach of The Code, the matter is to be referred to your manager. When in doubt seek the advice of your manager, if this is not possible, seek the advice of the Human Resources Manager.

- 5.3.4 A proven breach of standards will result in the commencement of disciplinary action and serious and wilful misconduct may result in instant dismissal.

5.4 PROCEDURE

- 5.4.1 Where there is a potential breach of The Code the following procedure will be followed:
- (a) The employee will inform their Manager of any perceived breach of the Code.
 - (b) Employees will be, as a right, informed if they have been accused of a breach of The Code.
 - (c) All employees directly involved will be informed of the associated policy, procedure and other related information by their Manager.

- (d) Employees have the right to seek third party support or union representation during the process and will be informed of this.
- (e) On advice from the Manager an informal investigation will be undertaken, to determine whether a formal investigation should be undertaken.
- (f) If a breach is determined to have occurred and requires further action, the Manager will engage an independent investigator to undertake an investigation into the allegations of the potential breach.
- (g) The investigator will make recommendations to the Manager on the outcome of the investigation.

5.4.2 Outcomes may include continuation of normal duties; task re-assignment; job review; loss of responsibility; or cessation of employment.

6 Related Legislation or Council Policies

6.1 RELATED LEGISLATION

- 6.1.1 Employment Relations Act 2000
- 6.1.2 Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- 6.1.3 Health and Safety at Work (Worker Engagement, Participation, and Representation) Regulation 2016
- 6.1.4 Crimes Act 1961
- 6.1.5 NZ Bill of Rights Act 1990
- 6.1.6 Privacy Act 1993

6.2 RELATED COUNCIL POLICIES

- 6.2.1 Business Attire Policy 2018
- 6.2.2 Gifts Policy 2017
- 6.2.3 Harassment, Bullying and Sexual Harassment Policy
- 6.2.4 Human Resource Strategy
- 6.2.5 Information Management Policy 2019

7 Annotations

Date	Description
September 2019	Adopted at a Management Meeting, 6 September 2019