Code of Conduct

For Directors

Easy English version
How to use this document

This information is written in an easy to read way. We use pictures to explain some ideas.

This document has been written by Victorian Public Sector Commission. When you see the word ‘we’, it means Victorian Public Sector Commission.

Some words are written in **bold**. We explain what these words mean. There is a list of these words on page 15.

This Easy Read document is a summary of our official document – *Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities*.

You will find the official document on our website at [www.vpsc.vic.gov.au](http://www.vpsc.vic.gov.au)

You can ask for help to read this document. A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.
This guide is for Directors of a Board to follow.

A Board is a group of people who watch what an organisation is doing.

This guide will help you understand:

- the **Code of Conduct** (the Code)
- how to follow the Code
- how the Board must follow the Code
- what happens if you don’t follow the Code.
What is the Code?

The **Code of Conduct** sets the standard of behaviour we expect from:

- Boards
- Directors.

It includes roles and values found in the **Public Administration Act** (the Act).

The Act is a law for all **public entities** to follow.

A **public entity** is an organisation made by government to help the people.
Roles and values included in the Code are:

- the Directors’ **obligations** – things you need to do

- the Board’s obligations.

- **Public sector values** – ways a Director should think and act.

The Public Sector Values are:

- **Responsiveness** – offering good and quick advice to the Board

- **Integrity** – being open and honest
• **Impartiality** – making the best decisions for the Board you can

• **Accountability** – being responsible for what you do

• **Respect** – treating everyone well and the same

• **Leadership** – letting everyone know about these values

• **Human rights** – doing the right thing by others.
How do you follow the Code?

The Code talks about the behaviour we expect from Directors.

As a Director, you must:

- show public sector values
- follow the laws and rules of the public entity
- understand the business of the public entity
- understand the role of the Board
• regularly go to Board meetings

• act in the best interests of the public entity

• promote the best interests of the public entity

• use information how it’s meant to be used

• tell the Board if you plan to run in a government election
• act fairly

• look after money well

• follow the rules about conflicts of interest and duty.

You can find out more about conflicts of interest and duty in our other document – *Conflicts of interest and duty: A guide for Directors*. 
How does the Board follow the Code?

As a Director, you are a member of the Board.

Everyone on the Board needs to make sure the Board follows the Code.

You have obligations to make sure the Board follows the Code.

The Code expects the Board to:

- manage the public entity
- look after the public entity's money carefully
• manage the public entity’s **reputation** – what

• act in the best interests of the public entity

• manage any possible risks

• manage any conflicts of interest and duty

• manage the public entity’s relationship with **stakeholders**.
A stakeholder is a person who has an interest in an organisation.

Things the organisation does can affect them.

Things they do can affect the organisation.
What happens if you don’t follow the Code?

Directors must know and understand the Code.

If you don’t follow the Code, you might be asked to leave your job.

Directors are not allowed to:

- ask for benefits
- try to cause a problem for the public entity.

If you do, you might have to go to court – a place where legal problems are solved by a judge and/or a jury.
Word list

**Accountability**
Being responsible for what you do.

**Board**
A Board is a group of people who watch what an organisation is doing.

**Code of Conduct**
Standards of behaviour expected from Directors.

**Court**
A place where legal problems are solved by a judge and/or a jury.

**Human rights**
Doing the right thing by others.

**Impartiality**
Making the best decisions for the Board you can.
Integrity

Being open and honest.

Leadership

Letting everyone know about these values.

Obligations

Things you need to do.

Public Administration Act

The Act sets out rules for all public entities to follow.

Public entity

An organisation made by a government to help the people.
Public sector values
Ways a Director should think and act.

Reputation
What people think about the public entity.

Respect
Treating everyone well and the same.

Responsiveness
Offering good and quick advice to the Board.

Stakeholder
A stakeholder is a person who has an interest in an organisation. Things the organisation does can affect them. Things they do can affect the organisation.