

ARAS Member Code of Conduct

1. Code declaration

This Code guides expectations and prescribes a minimum standard of conduct from all ARAS members in their interaction with each other and with ARAS staff.

This Code constitutes a behavioural code enforceable under clause 5.9 of the ARAS Rules.

This Code is authorised by the Chief Executive and endorsed by the ARAS Board.

2. Background

ARAS is a rights-based organisation, which works to ensure older people are aware of, actively exercising and defending their individual rights in a community that respects, values and upholds the rights of older people.

ARAS values the contribution made by members on its various Committees, panels and other advisory bodies (internal and external) and generally, in progressing the ARAS mission and vision.

ARAS also values the diversity in its members and on its Committees. This diversity allows for greater experience and skills, identification of options and opportunities, and any associated risks/benefits. However, care must be taken to avoid diversity of opinion leading to disrespect and conflict between members, and between members and ARAS staff.

In addition, ARAS has a legal responsibility to ensure its workplace is safe for attending members.

This Code has been adopted to prescribe a minimum standard of conduct expected of members when dealing with each other, with ARAS staff and with external stakeholders when acting on behalf of ARAS. It is expected members will work with ARAS to apply and uphold the Code of Conduct.

3. Objectives

This Code aims to ensure all ARAS interactions are conducted with integrity and in a professional manner befitting the ARAS aims, vision and values.

4. Scope

This Code applies to all interactions involving ARAS members. It also applies to all individuals engaged as representatives on external bodies.

5. Out of scope

This Code does not apply to:

- a. any obligations incurred by members acting within their profession
- b. any matters not connected to ARAS, or
- c. any matters that are covered by any legal matters, including occupational health and safety matters (other than by reference to expected standards of behaviour).

Further, nothing in this Code derogates from those obligations expected at law, which must be read and dealt with independently of this Code.

6. Definitions

In this Code:

Committee - means any ARAS committee, and includes the ARAS Board, Board sub-Committees, Expert Committees, other Advisory Boards and Panels, as relevant and as updated from time to time.

Communication - includes public representation and comment without prior approval of the Chairperson or Board, including but not limited to discussions, interviews, articles, media, social media, 'background' or 'off the record' briefings related to ARAS or deliberations or proceedings of the Board.

Member - has the meaning given to that term in clause 5.1 of the Rules, and includes Associates and Honorary Members.

Media - online media enables easier communication via the internet and the sharing of information and resources in an interactive way. Media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts, and other multimedia communications. For the purposes of this policy, social media includes social networking.

Social Media - social networking is a service, platform, or site that focuses on building and reflecting social relations. Social network services include, but are not limited to, blogs, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Other terms used in this Code have the meaning given to them in Part 2.1 of the ARAS Rules. In the event of any inconsistency between this Code and the Rules, the Rules prevail.

All references in this Code are to this Code itself, unless otherwise indicated.

7. General principles

7.1 General conduct

When dealing with ARAS matters, members are expected to:

- a. act in ARAS's best interests
- b. act with a high degree of professionalism, integrity and mutual respect
- c. uphold ARAS's good reputation
- d. interact with other members and staff and external stakeholders in a constructive manner, especially when serving on Committees
- e. respect the fact everyone they deal with in ARAS is there for their skills, experience and abilities
- f. be responsive to other members, staff and other stakeholders, and to overall ARAS requirements, and
- g. understand that ARAS has limited resources, and to work within those resources (and understand and expect the same from other members and staff).

Members who are clients or become Members of ARAS will be afforded the same level of service as non-Members and are expected to undergo the same Intake processes to receive support and are

not entitled to preferential treatment. Should a Member be utilising ARAS services and have a complaint about that service the Member should utilise the client complaints process.

Members are expected to comply with the spirit and the letter of this Code.

7.2 Regulatory compliance

When dealing with ARAS matters, members must comply with:

- a. when on ARAS premises or performing ARAS duties, all ARAS policies as notified or as reasonably inferred as relevant, and
- b. all relevant laws and regulations.

7.3 Media/Communications

Members should be aware that:

- 7.3.1 Only the Chairperson and the Chief Executive can communicate on behalf of, and represent, the organisation
- 7.3.2 The Chairperson communicates on behalf of, and represents, the Board of Directors of the organisation
- 7.3.3 Members should refer all media enquiries to the Chairperson and/or Chief Executive. When in doubt, enquiries are directed to the Chairperson for Board matters and the Chairperson and Chief Executive for any other matters. This applies to all event invitations, media, public, management, staff, and other stakeholder requests and communication
- 7.3.4 No member is to participate in public (including media) discussions, interviews or articles or 'background' or 'off the record' briefings relating to ARAS or the deliberations or proceedings of the Board without the prior approval of the Chairperson of the Board
- 7.3.5 Members are required to observe the highest possible standards of conduct, including when using social media for ARAS related and approved purposes. It is important for members to recognise their use of social media may be interpreted to be associated with ARAS.
 - 7.3.5.1 When expressing personal views and opinions about ARAS and its work, members are required to include a disclaimer which states the views or opinions are personal and belong solely to the person expressing the views and do not represent those of the organisation.

7.4 Confidentiality

In performing their role or interacting with the ARAS, members may receive or have access to ARAS's confidential information. In this context confidential information includes all non-public ARAS information. Unless proven otherwise, all ARAS information is deemed confidential information.

Confidential information is proprietary and valuable, and unauthorised disclosure may cause ARAS damage.

Accordingly, members in receipt of ARAS information must keep it confidential, and only use or disclose it as necessary for the purpose it was obtained for, or as authorised.

7.4 Conflicts of interest

ARAS Members are required to declare any interests that could constitute an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest with respect to their participation in ARAS. Members must avoid conflicts of interests where possible, carefully manage any conflict of interest and identify and disclose any conflict of interest.

Such declarations must be made in relation to specific agenda items at the start of each meeting.

The ARAS Board will manage declarations of conflict of interest and determine how they are to be responded to which could include, but is not limited to;

- Whether or not the member can participate in a vote or debate
- Whether or not the member can be present during a debate or voting.

7.5 Proper use of authority

Members may be delegated authority by the ARAS Board or the Chief Executive. Such individuals must always ensure they act within this delegated authority for appropriate purposes.

No individual may use their position, their authority or any information received to obtain an advantage for themselves or detriment for others. Most members will not be ARAS directors, however they are expected to maintain those standards in their behaviour and activities when engaged in ARAS matters as required of ARAS Board members.

Importantly, proper functioning of ARAS requires adherence and respect to proper lines of communication, workflow and delegation. Outside of any express delegated authority, individuals must not direct other staff or members, the organisation or the Chief Executive to perform any work, or perform work in any particular matter.

8 Responsibilities

8.1 ARAS Board members

The Chair of the ARAS Board is responsible for enforcing this Code of Conduct within the ARAS Board. All ARAS Board members are responsible for enforcing these standards of behaviour within the ARAS membership, and for supporting management in dealing with member conduct matters.

8.2 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is responsible for enforcing the Code and elevating any concerns to the ARAS Board.

8.3 Members

Members are responsible for maintaining their standards of behaviour in accordance with this Code, and alerting the Chair of the ARAS Board of any digression.

9 Non-compliance with the Code of Conduct

A failure to comply with this Code may be met with disciplinary proceedings under clause 5.9 of the Rules.

10 Related policies, documents and legislation

10.1 Policies

ARAS Rules

ARAS Privacy Policy

ARAS Membership Policy

10.2 Legislation

Associations Incorporations Act 1985

9. Administrative procedures

10.3 Access to published Code

This Code will be available via the ARAS website and in hard copy if required.

11 Review of this policy

This policy will have a review cycle of two years.