



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

Code of conduct for employees of diocesan agencies

*Avoid anything in your everyday lives that would be unworthy of the gospel of Christ
(Philippians 1:27)*

8 April 2015

The need for a code and its application

1. The code of conduct outlines the standard of behaviour, motivated by the teachings of the Church, expected of employees of the Archdiocese of Melbourne. It is designed for no other purpose than to further the mission of the Church and is promoted for that purpose alone. It is designed to help you understand your responsibilities and provide guidance to you. Fundamental to the code is the requirement on all employees to understand the impact of the code on them and take all reasonable steps to comply.
2. It is directed at employees who work in the central agencies, departments and auspiced bodies of the Archdiocese of Melbourne¹. Most aspects of the code have Christian motivation and do not differ from that applying in secular organisations, where those accepting employment also accept a number of obligations and responsibilities to their employer. The code does not supersede canon or civil law nor can it cover every situation. If you are unsure of the appropriate response, you should discuss the situation with the person to whom you report.
3. This Code is not a term of any contract, including any contract of employment. It may be varied by the Archdiocese from time to time.

The mission of the Church directs our conduct

4. The conduct of all employees must be inspired by the Church's mandate. This requirement extends beyond the workplace as many external to the Church will often see you as 'the Church' even when you may not see yourself as such. Employee conduct, both public and private, has the potential to inspire and motivate people. Conversely, it can scandalise and jeopardise people's faith.
5. Central to the Church's mandate is the call to preach the gospel to all people *'Go therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'* (Matthew 28:19-20).
6. The Catholic Church of Melbourne is an Archdiocese. It is a portion of the people of God that is entrusted to the Archbishop who is your employer. It is in hierarchical communion. Its members consist of laity, clergy and religious. The lay faithful (laity) are those who have become members of the Church through baptism. From among these, by divine institution, men are chosen to serve as bishops, priests and deacons (clergy). There are also those who profess the evangelical counsels, and are consecrated to God in a special way (religious).
7. Not all of our employees are members of the lay faithful. However, all of our employees are engaged to promote the mission of the Church, even though that may not always be apparent to them in the normal course of their work, and all need to behave accordingly.

¹ Specifically it is applicable to those employees whose conditions of employment are covered by the *Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne Conditions of Employment for diocesan employees*, other employees as notified and volunteers who work beside them. It does not apply to clergy and religious as they are covered by the *Integrity in Ministry* protocol. It does not apply to contractors and employees of contractors, although depending upon the nature of the engagement some contractors and their employees may be required to abide by it and others may be required to acknowledge and respect it.

Personal and professional behaviour

8. Employees should strive to present and relate to the world with the Church's mission first and foremost in their language, symbols and actions. This will differ from role to role but you should strive to understand the Church's mission to save and serve all and your part in it. Mission by its very nature is robust, uncompromised and unapologetic. The reason for a particular Church endeavour and the way that activity is carried out need to be apparent and distinguishable.
9. Employees play a vital role in upholding the good name of the Church and instilling confidence. This may require you at times to champion or defend the Church but this should always be done in a manner appropriate to the circumstances.
10. You are expected to maintain high levels of professional competence and to attend to your own human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral wellbeing, and support others in their efforts. This could involve participating in activities such as Reflection Days.
11. Work with a generosity of spirit and reflect this by treating all you come in contact with respect, fairness, courtesy and sensitivity.
12. Be accountable not only for your work but your actions in general based on the concept of being a good citizen who sees his or her efforts as having greater meaning and value in respect of the common good.
13. Boundary awareness is important in all spheres of employment and it is your responsibility to maintain appropriate boundaries in your work such that you do not operate outside of your area of competence and you observe personal boundaries. This is particularly important for those involved in pastoral activities. In the Church, it is also important to observe the boundaries between the clergy and laity and for employees to understand the sacramental, teaching and governance roles that are the preserve of the clergy.
14. Alcohol, drugs or other substances must not adversely affect your work performance or official conduct.
15. If you are charged with a serious criminal offence you should immediately inform the person to whom you report.
16. You may use the Church's facilities and equipment including computers, email, internet access and mobile phones, that are provided for official purposes, for limited private use. This is a privilege and care must be taken not to abuse this and you should err on the side of restraint.
17. The Archdiocese has policies on appropriate use of email and the internet, and policies in relation to sexual harassment and bullying. You are required to observe these policies which can be accessed on the diocesan web site at <http://www.cam.org.au/policies>
18. You need to demonstrate a high level of honesty, integrity, impartiality and good stewardship of the Church's resources in your work. Avoid conflicts of interest and where they arise or you believe they have the potential to arise, you need to discuss the situation with the person to whom you report. In particular, you should not accept any gifts or favours or engage in other employment without making this known. Specifically, a gift or favour with a value in excess of \$250 is to be notified in writing to the agency

head, or if an agency head to his/her direct report, with reports being sent to the Human Resources Office at the end of the calendar year. Notification is not required for hospitality as part of normal business practice, provided the hospitality is occasional, appropriate and modest in the circumstances. You must not accept gifts or favours during tender and contract negotiations periods if it could or be seen to directly or indirectly influence the outcome of the decision.

19. Care needs to be taken in handling official information. All information obtained during the course of your employment is confidential and must not be used other than for official purposes. In particular, always treat personal information with respect and special care. Unguarded conversations regarding your work have the potential to compromise its effective implementation.
20. You need to be cautious when either initiating or responding to a request to make a public comment in the name of the diocese or diocesan organisation that you have the authority to do so. If you are in any doubt you should check this out in advance with the Vicar General. Public comment includes speaking engagements, comments on radio and television, and expressing views in letters to newspapers.
21. Like employees of any organisation, employees of the Archdiocese need to conduct themselves in both their private and public life in a manner that is in harmony with the employer's policies, (which in our context includes the Church's teachings), practices and interests.
22. Some examples of inappropriate conduct are listed below. This list is not intended to be exhaustive.
 - Promoting lifestyles that are incompatible with the Church's teachings on marriage and family, eg de facto domestic partnerships.
 - Taking a public position that is at odds with that taken by the Archbishop, or those acting on his behalf, or could reasonably be assumed to be his position.
 - Employees in leadership and advocacy roles taking an active role in politics in its many forms, where the public may not be able to distinguish their involvement as a citizen from their being a representative of the Church. All involvement in political affairs should be declared on an ongoing basis.
 - Employees in leadership and pastoral roles operating as civil celebrants performing ceremonies which in the Catholic Church are the exclusive domain of the clergy, in circumstances which may create the false impression of their being sanctioned by the Church, eg civil marriages. All involvement in such activities should be declared on an ongoing basis.
 - Engaging in activities that are blasphemous in nature.
 - Inappropriate dress and language.
23. Should you be experiencing difficulties adhering to some aspects of the code, you should not be afraid to make this known to the person to whom you report or, if you choose, the Human Resources Manager. A variety of support sensitive to your personal circumstances, can be made available. Alternatively, you may choose to take advantage of the diocese's employee assistance program offered by CatholicCare's Access Programs (phone 1300 66 77 00). This counselling service is confidential and the names are not disclosed to your employer. The employee is not charged for the service. Further information about Access Programs can be found at access@ccam.org.au