



CODE OF CONDUCT

OVERVIEW

Purpose

The Hunter Water Code of Conduct ('Code of Conduct') provides an ethical framework to govern and guide the decisions, conduct and behaviour of all who work for Hunter Water Corporation ('Hunter Water') in order to ensure that the highest standards of ethical behaviours, integrity and professionalism are observed at all times.

Scope

The Code of Conduct applies to all our people (as defined).

The Code of Conduct applies during all activities, interactions and decision making associated with normal day to day work. It also applies at any time in which our people are acting as a representative of Hunter Water, including, but not limited to:

- work related social activities
- work related travel
- seminars, training courses and conferences
- work functions, events or activities
- out of hours work functions, events or activities
- community events
- professional networking events
- when others may have reasonable grounds to believe someone is representing Hunter Water, such as when they are wearing a Hunter Water uniform.

The Code of Conduct is supported by the Code of Conduct Standard.

POLICY STATEMENT

To realise Hunter Water's vision and to fulfil our function and purpose, we need to be trusted by our communities, our stakeholders and our partners, to act ethically and with integrity and to be capable and reliable.

We can only do so if we act in a way that is consistent with our values and our Code of Conduct.

Accordingly, this Code of Conduct outlines the way in which our people are expected to behave when carrying out Hunter Water's functions, vision and purpose.

State Owned Corporation

The Code of Conduct recognises the important role that Hunter Water plays as a State Owned Corporation. The community expects our people to deliver services in the best interests of the public, whilst adhering to the highest ethical standards, ensuring that public monies are spent for their intended purposes, information is secured, and assets and resources are used appropriately.

Essential Services

The Code of Conduct also recognises the important role that all our people play in delivering essential services to the community. It supports Hunter Water's objectives by explaining what ethical obligations are required to ensure our responsibilities to ourselves, our colleagues, our customers, our stakeholders and our community are met.



TRUST



WELLBEING



INCLUSION



LEADING



LEARNING

HUNTER WATER



Hunter Water Values

The Hunter Water values shape and inform the principles outlined below and the actions, behaviours and decision making of all of our people in the course of their work. Our people are to uphold these values and speak up when our culture is threatened or compromised. Our values are:



WELLBEING

Wellbeing: we care for each other's wellbeing and that of our communities and our environment



TRUST

Trust: we are honest, open and ethical, we care and act in the best interests of the communities we serve, we are capable and can be relied upon



LEADING

Leading: we step up to face challenges, we take action and we are agile and resilient, we innovate and influence change



LEARNING

Learning: we enquire, listen, share and collaborate and have a thirst to better ourselves



INCLUSION

Inclusion: we recognise, value, respect and celebrate diversity and provide an environment in which everyone can contribute and achieve their potential.

APPLICATION OF POLICY

The Code of Conduct

All our people commit to the following principles:

1.	Agree to, understand and exhibit the requirements of the Code of Conduct.	Respect and diversity
2.	Exhibit fairness, impartiality, honesty, integrity, transparency and equity.	
3.	Treat others with dignity and respect.	
4.	Foster a collaborative, non-discriminatory and inclusive environment.	
5.	Communicate with others in a courteous and respectful manner.	



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6.	Perform duties in a way that protects the health, wellbeing and safety of those performing the actual work, colleagues and visitors.	Health, Safety and Wellbeing
7.	Be responsible for ensuring that alcohol, prescription or over the counter medication or any other substances do not affect their ability to conduct work safely and responsibly.	
8.	Comply with all relevant laws and regulations that apply to the business and their role.	Responsible actions, behaviours and decision making
9.	Abide by all relevant Hunter Water policies and standards and the requirements of Hunter Water's Operating Licence.	
10.	Follow all instructions that are reasonable and lawful and within their capability, authority and training.	
11.	Perform duties diligently, efficiently and effectively, striving to deliver the best outcomes.	
12.	Act with the best intent and with a social conscience, ensuring a commitment to sustainability for our environment and the preservation of human rights and freedoms, including identifying severe risks to human rights such as modern slavery.	
13.	Identify, disclose and manage any secondary employment, gifts and benefits offered or received and actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest.	
14.	Uphold all confidentiality and privacy obligations, including those related to the personal information of our people and customers, suppliers, contractors and stakeholders.	Responsible use of information and resources
15.	Maintain accurate records and ensure all information is kept safe and secure at all times, only using such information for authorised purposes.	
16.	Respect and uphold Hunter Water's intellectual property rights and protect commercially sensitive information.	
17.	Use Hunter Water assets and resources appropriately and efficiently and be accountable for their use.	
18.	Maintain a clean, tidy and professional image whilst complying with personal protective equipment requirements where relevant.	Corporate image and reputation
19.	Direct all media enquiries to the Hunter Water Communications & Engagement group and refer all contact from lobbyists to your manager.	
20.	Ensure that participation in political and community activities outside of work does not interfere with Hunter Water duties or bring the reputation of Hunter Water into disrepute or diminish confidence in Hunter Water.	
21.	Report situations that could be in breach of the Code of Conduct.	





Each of these principles are explained more fully in the Code of Conduct Standard and in the corresponding policies, standards and fact sheets listed in the Related Documents section below.

In addition to the above, Hunter Water directors, executives, managers and team leaders will:

1.	Facilitate and support a culture where the Hunter Water values and ethical conduct is both recognised and prioritised and where everyone feels comfortable to raise concerns.
2.	Ensure that they, and those within their area of responsibility, are aware of, understand and comply with the requirements of this Code of Conduct at all times.
3.	Actively support our people to be one team, focussed on delivering safe, high quality services to customers within an inclusive, entrepreneurial and learning focussed environment.
4.	Evaluate and measure the performance and conduct of those within their area of responsibility by referring to the Code of Conduct.
5.	Assist with any questions or concerns our people have about the Code of Conduct and actively participate in sharing learnings from any issues raised.
6.	Take the appropriate action as outlined in the relevant procedures if they become aware of actual or suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct.
7.	Demonstrate robust corporate governance.

BREACHES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Reporting a Breach

- Hunter Water strongly encourages its people to report any actual or suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct.
- Any actual or suspected breaches that are of a serious nature must be reported. Failure to do so may itself result in disciplinary or legal action.
- All reports are to be made by following the procedure outlined in the Complaints and Allegations Framework.
- The Managing Director of Hunter Water is required to report to the Independent Commission Against Corruption any matter that he or she suspects on reasonable grounds concerns or may concern corrupt conduct.
- It is Hunter Water's policy to report any actual or suspected crimes to the NSW police or Australian Federal Police, as applicable.
- The making of an intentionally false or malicious report or accusation may lead to an internal investigation of the person who made the report. This may in and of itself lead to disciplinary action up to and including the termination of employment. It could also result in criminal action against the reporter in the following situations:
 - if it relates to a public interest disclosure (see section 28 of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994* (NSW) and the Public Interest Disclosures Policy), or
 - if it relates to a report of actual or suspected corruption made to the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) (see section 81 of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988* (NSW) and the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy).

Management of breaches of the Code of Conduct

All reports of unlawful, unethical and inappropriate behaviour that may be in breach of the Code of Conduct will be managed by Hunter Water in a fair, efficient and effective manner and in accordance with the Complaints and Allegations Framework.



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A breach of the Code of Conduct or the Code of Conduct Standard may result in disciplinary action up to and including the termination of employment or legal action or both. Contractors may be subject to contractual action, including termination.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Interaction with Other Ethical Behaviour Policies

The Code of Conduct and its associated Standard are part of a broader system of policies, procedures and processes that have been developed as part of Hunter Water’s commitment to promote sound corporate governance. Therefore, the Code of Conduct and Standard do not operate in isolation. They are part of a larger group of ethical behaviour policies that are guided by the values of Hunter Water and provide standards for behaviour and decision making. These ethical behaviour policies help form the organisational culture that is fundamental to the success of the Code of Conduct. The other ethical behaviour policies, include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Fraud and Corruption Control policy
- Conflicts of Interest policy
- Fair and Just policy
- Diversity and Inclusion policy
- Bullying and Harassment Prevention policy
- Risk Management policy
- Performance Management, Misconduct and Disciplinary policy

Other Relevant Documents

Type	Title
Policy	Complaints and Allegations
Standard	Misconduct and Discipline
Standard	Sexual Harassment and Discrimination
Policy	Work Health and Safety
Policy	Procurement and Tendering
Policy	Information Security
FAQs	Whistleblower Service
Plan	Hunter Water Strategic Business Plan
Licence	Hunter Water Operating Licence
Contract	Hunter Water Customer Contract

ASSOCIATED LEGISLATION, REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS

Type	Title
Act	Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 (NSW)
Act	Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1998 (NSW)
Act	Ombudsman Act 1974 (NSW)
Act	State Owned Corporations Act 1988 (NSW)





Act	Hunter Water Act 1991 (NSW)
Act	Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)
Act	Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
Act	State Records Act 1998 (NSW)
Act	Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
Act	Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
Act	Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
Act	Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
Act	Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
Act	Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
Act	Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
Act	Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
Act	Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)
Act	Public Finance and Audit Act 1983 (NSW)
Act	Work Health & Safety Act 2011 (NSW)
Act	Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)
Act	Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (NSW)
Act	Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth)
Regulation	Hunter Water Regulation 2015 (NSW)
Regulation	Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (NSW)
Standard	Australian Standard 8001-2008, Fraud and Corruption Control

DEFINITIONS, ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Definition
Commercially sensitive information	Information that, if disclosed, could prejudice Hunter Water’s commercial interests e.g. trade secrets, plans, profit margins or new ideas.
Corporate governance	<p>1. The Institute of Internal Auditors defines corporate governance as: <i>The combination of processes and structures implemented by the board to inform, direct, manage and monitor the activities of the organisation toward achievement of its objectives.</i> ('International Professional Practices Framework')</p> <p>2. Justice Owen stated that corporate governance is: <i>The framework of rules, relationships, systems and processes within and by which authority is exercised and controlled within corporations. It encompasses the mechanisms by which companies, and those in control, are held to account.</i> (HIH Royal Commission, The Failure of HIH Insurance Volume 1: A Corporate Collapse and Its Lessons, Commonwealth of Australia, April 2003 at page xxxiv).</p> <p>3. The NSW Auditor General explains that corporate governance is: <i>Those high level processes and behaviours that ensure an agency performs by achieving its intended purpose and conforms by complying with all relevant laws, codes and directions and meets community expectations of probity, accountability and transparency.</i> (Report to Parliament Vol One 2015 Governance Lighthouse – Strategic Early Warning System)</p>





Employee	All permanent, temporary, fixed term and casual employees, as well as secondees, work experience students and volunteers.
Ethical behaviour	Acting in ways consistent with what society and individuals typically think are good values. Ethical behaviour involves demonstrating respect for key moral principles that include honesty, fairness, equity, dignity, respect, diversity, responsibility and integrity, while having proper regard for the interests, rights, safety and welfare of others.
Intellectual property	Creations of the mind used in Hunter Water’s business, such as: inventions; literary and artistic works; designs; and symbols; names and images, which are protected by the laws of patents, copyright and trademarks. Other examples that may be relevant to our work are the creation of templates, plans, concepts or ideas, training materials, manuals, brochures, other written works, logos, or promotional or informational videos.
Our people	For the purposes of this Policy, this includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • directors • permanent employees, whether full-time or part-time • temporary or casual employees • consultants • individual contractors working for or on behalf of Hunter Water • employees of contractors providing services to Hunter Water • volunteers, secondees, work experience students.
Record	Information created, received and maintained by Hunter Water and its representatives in the conduct of Hunter Water business activity and kept as evidence of this activity within the context in which it occurred. This encompasses both unstructured information in documents and files as well as structured data in computer systems. See <i>State Records Act 1998</i>
Supplier	All third party suppliers, consultants, business partners, contractors, subcontractors, outworkers, agents engaged to supply goods or services to or on behalf of Hunter Water.

Signed: _____
Managing Director

Approved by:	Managing Director, on behalf of the Board of Directors	Approved date:	14 April 2021
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