

Conduct of Members of the AASW

This statement describes expectations of member behaviour to promote and support a professional and respectful standard of conduct throughout the AASW. It is applicable to interactions between members, Officeholders and staff. This Statement sets out general guidelines for conduct, and the intention is to safeguard members/staff from being subjected to poor and disrespectful behaviour in any form.

1. The Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) is the professional representative body of Social Workers in Australia. It is a Company limited by member guarantees and subject to the requirements of the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth).
2. When applying for and accepting membership of the AASW, members are expected to commit to conduct themselves in a manner that upholds the integrity of the Company (AASW).
3. All members are expected to treat other members/staff in a professional manner and communications should, wherever possible, reflect a positive, non-discriminatory and respectful approach.
4. Officeholders, when appointed or elected, commit to additional responsibilities including complying with the scope of responsibility and functions described in the AASW's governing documents and in particular developing an understanding of fiduciary and legal responsibilities. In addition when undertaking official duties, Officeholders must always act in the best interests of the AASW, disclose any conflicts of interest and act in an unbiased manner without favour and in good faith.
5. Behaviour that would bring the AASW into disrepute would be seen as a breach of this conduct, and any members observing such behaviour should report it to the President, the Company Secretary or the Chief Executive Officer of the AASW, who will bring such a complaint to the AASW Board in a timely manner, with a recommendation as to how the complaint should be handled, such as dismissing the complaint, holding discussions with the parties, referring for mediation, or undertaking investigation including referral of criminal matters to the police.
6. Members should further recognise that a misuse of a complaints process through, for example, using it mischievously or without due cause, would also constitute a breach of conduct and would be considered seriously by the Board.
7. If mediation or independent investigation is considered appropriate, referral will be made to an accredited external Consultant from the Institute of Arbitrators and Mediators. Arrangements will be made for the engagement of this Company on an annual basis to provide the AASW with Conduct Investigation, Mediation and other services such as Employee Assistance as required.

Under the Constitution of the AASW, the Code of Ethics provides guidance and authority in relation to dealing with any matter that is seen as a breach of conduct. In particular this would ensure that any complaint must be given impartial consideration, and all parties involved would be protected by the principles of natural justice, particularly with respect to the right of appeal at every step of the process.