

1. PURPOSE

The Code of Conduct is a public statement of how we conduct our business and how we treat the public, our clients and colleagues. It also provides guidance on acceptable standards of behaviour and conduct whilst employed by Geelong Cemeteries Trust.

As an employee of GCT, you are required to provide services for the communities in which we operate. This places you in a unique position of trust, requiring standards of ethical behaviour that reflect community expectations.

To assist you to meet these expectations, an ethical framework has been developed, comprising seven main underpinning values:

- **Responsiveness:** providing frank, impartial and timely advice; providing high quality services; identifying and promoting best practice; to respond constructively as and when required; being open to change and evaluation of options, subject to customer demand.
- **Integrity:** being honest, open and transparent in their dealings; using powers responsibly; reporting improper conduct; avoiding real or perceived conflicts of interest; striving to earn and sustain public trust at the highest level.
- **Accountability:** working to order objectives in a transparent manner; accepting responsibility for their decisions and actions; seeking to achieve best use of resources; submitting themselves to appropriate scrutiny; implementing Government policies and programs equitably.
- **Respect:** treating others fairly and objectively; ensuring freedom from discrimination, harassment and bullying; using their views to improve outcomes on an ongoing basis; making decisions and providing advice consistent with human rights; actively implementing, promoting and supporting human rights
- **Environment Responsibility:** encourage all forms of recycling and re-use throughout the organisation; providing an ongoing tree planting/replacement program across all sites; implementing current best use practices for energy, land and water management.
- **Leadership:** actively implementing, promoting and supporting these values; considering and developing innovative work practices and equipment; working together as a team to provide the best outcomes for our customers; providing all goods and services to the highest standard – best practice; providing guidance, support and input into the operations of the industry.
- **Inclusivity:** to provide quality services to all sectors of the community; to provide quality services to current, new and emerging sector groups.

This Code outlines what these values mean for you, your work, and the values you should demonstrate whilst employed by GCT.

In addition to the values outlined above, employees are to be aware of and understand the following principles:

- **Confidential Information:** any confidential information in relation to the Trust or its customers is not to be used improperly. The information must only be used for the purpose for which it was collected, and Trust approval must be received prior to use of, or release of, confidential information.
- **Compliance with Australian Laws:** at all times, compliance with applicable Australian laws and regulations is mandatory. Trust Members and employees are to be aware of all laws and regulations

applicable to their position and to be sufficiently familiar with them to ensure they are able to comply. Trust Members and employees are to ensure they have access to the applicable laws and regulations and maintain their understanding through regular education programs and updates.

- **Care and Diligence:** at all times, due care is to be taken and diligence is to be maintained when dealing with clients and customers.
- **Acceptable Behaviour:** conduct yourself in public in a manner that will not reflect adversely on the Trust. This includes all functions that may be conducted out of hours.
- **Improper Use of Information:** Employees are not to make improper use of information, their duties or their authority to gain, or perceive to gain, a benefit or advantage to themselves or for any other person.
- **Conflicts of Interest:** these may arise where the interests of an employee is inconsistent with the interests of GCT and can be both actual and perceived. Employees are to disclose, and take reasonable steps to avoid, both real and perceived conflicts of interest and are not to seek or accept offers of gifts, money or favours that may influence or appear to influence any business decisions.

These values are generally in line with the Public Sector Values, as developed and published by the Victorian Public Sector Commission.

Payment of incentives and/or commissions to funeral directors and other third parties is unacceptable and not permitted by GCT, or by the Department of Health and Human Services, under any circumstances.

This Code sets out broad principles of behaviour rather than providing detailed rules for particular situations. Adherence to this Code will ensure GCT's operations are conducted legally, ethically and with integrity. At all times, employees are to comply with these values and treat colleagues and clients with dignity and respect.