



Code of Conduct inc. Child Protection Policy

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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the clear standard of behaviour which is expected of Royal South Street Society (RSSS) employees and volunteers. The clarification of these expectations reinforces our commitment to respect, fairness, and high social and ethical standards within the workplace. It is also designed to assist staff and volunteers in understanding what acceptable and unacceptable behaviours in the workplace are.

Code of Conduct Policy

This policy applies to all employees of RSSS. All non employees present on the worksite such as volunteers, contractors and suppliers will be expected to abide by this policy for the duration of their presence.

Vital for successful business practice is mutual trust, respect and integrity that we show our managers, volunteers, participants, customers, suppliers, associates and fellow employees. RSSS has a clear expectation of appropriate work standards so we can foster a positive work environment where everyone's rights are maintained and we all act lawfully and with integrity with all dealings within the company. Included in this policy is RSSS Child Protection Policy, as RSSS is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children. This will assist in fostering a collaborative and safe workplace for all employees and volunteers and a safe performance space for competitors.

Employees and volunteers of RSSS will

- Act in accordance to legislation and policies that are applicable within RSSS
- Follow lawful and reasonable directive from management
- Promote the interest of the business
- Be aware of and align with the RSSS mission and values
- Treat each other, clients, suppliers and contractors with respect, fairness and consideration
- Not tolerate misconduct or inappropriate behaviour and will inform a higher authority within RSSS if they do bare witness to it
- Maintain confidentiality, not disclosing or misusing RSSS information
- Not be involved in any activity that may cause conflict of interest
- Be accountable for your own action and decisions
- Be ever mindful of the health and safety of yourself and others in the workplace
- Uphold the principle of equal opportunity, not partake in victimisation, bullying, sexual harassment, discrimination or any other antisocial behaviours
- Perform their role with professionalism, care and responsibility

Child Protection Policy

Purpose

The Purpose of the child protection policy is

1. To facilitate the prevention of child abuse occurring within RSSS

2. To work towards an organisational culture of child safety.
3. To ensure that all workers, volunteers and contractors are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs.
4. To provide guidance to employees, volunteers and contractors as to the actions that should be taken where they suspect any abuse within or outside of the organisation.
5. To provide a clear statement to staff, volunteers and contractors forbidding any such abuse.
6. To provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated.

Policy

Child protection is a shared responsibility between RSSS and all employees, volunteers, participants, associates and contractors. RSSS is committed to promoting and protecting the best interests of children involved in its programs at all times.

All children regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, family, or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse. RSSS is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and providing them with a safe environment.

RSSS has zero tolerance for child abuse. Everyone working and volunteering at RSSS is responsible for the care and protection of the children within our care. RSSS workers and volunteers are also responsible for reporting information about suspected child abuse.

If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000.

Procedure

Responsibilities

The Board of RSSS has ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of child abuse and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place. The Board is also responsible for ensuring the appropriate updates are included in the child protection policy and the code of conduct.

The CEO of RSSS is responsible for:

- Dealing with and investigating reports of child abuse;
- Ensuring that all adults within RSSS are aware of their obligations to report suspected abuse of a child in accordance with this policy and procedure;
- Educate employees about the prevention and detection of child abuse;
- Providing support for employees, volunteers and contractors in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.

All Employees and volunteers must ensure that they:

- Promote child safety at all times;
- Report any suspicion that a child's safety is at risk;
- Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour of suspected abusive activities;

- Familiarise themselves with the child protection policy and procedure and comply with all requirements;
- Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.

All employees should be familiar with the types of abuse that might occur within RSSS and be alert for any indication of such conduct.

Reporting

Any staff member, volunteer or contractor who becomes aware of abusive activity must immediately notify the CEO (or RSSS staff member). The CEO (or staff member) must immediately notify the appropriate child protection service or the police.

In the situation where the CEO (or staff member) is suspected of involvement in the activity, or if the person having suspicion does not believe the matter is being appropriately addressed, the incident should be reported to the Chair of the Board of RSSS.

The CEO must report complaints of suspected abusive behaviour or misconduct to the RSSS board and also to any external regulatory body such as the police.

Volunteers must make a report to the CEO if the person has a significant concern for the wellbeing of a child in accordance with the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)*.

Investigating

If the appropriate child protection service or the police decide to conduct an investigation of this report, all employees, volunteers, and contractors must co-operate fully with the investigation.

Whether or not the authorities decided to conduct an investigation, the CEO will consult with the authorities to determine whether an internal investigation is appropriate. If it is decided that such an investigation will not conflict with any proceeding of the authorities, the CEO may decide to conduct such an investigation. All employees, volunteers and contractors must fully co-operate with the investigation.

The CEO will ensure that all investigations are confidential; however from time to time other staff members may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation.

After an initial review and a determination that suspects abuse warrants an additional investigation, the CEO shall co-ordinate the investigation with the appropriate investigators and / or law enforcement officials. Internal or external legal representatives will be involved in the process, as deemed appropriate.

All investigations will be conducted according to the Victorian and Commonwealth legislation.

Reviewing

Every two years, and following every reportable incident, a review shall be conducted to assess whether the organisation's child protection policy and procedure require modification to better protect the children under the organisation's care.

Breaching the code of conduct and/or the child protection policy

Any breach of RSSS policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. If it is alleged that an employee has breached the child protection policy they may be stood down. Disciplinary procedures that can be actioned by RSSS will be in line with the RSSS disciplinary policy.

Independent contractors, volunteers and other non-employees who are found to have breached this policy, and/or breached the child protection policy will result in the termination of their contract or services with RSSS.