



# Code of Conduct for Aged Care

A fact sheet for volunteer managers



## Who is the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission?

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (the Commission) is the national regulator of aged care services in Australia.

The Commission's purpose is to protect and enhance the safety, health, wellbeing and quality of life of people receiving government-funded aged care and services.

We do this by:

- approving providers to deliver aged care services
- monitoring aged care services' performance against the Aged Care Quality Standards
- handling complaints



- overseeing approved providers, their workers and volunteers' compliance with the Code of Conduct for Aged Care (the Code).

## What is the Code?

The Code sets out how aged care providers, their workers including volunteers are expected to behave and treat older Australians when providing care and services.

There are 8 elements to the Code.

The table below provides some practical examples of expected behaviours for each element and some examples that are inconsistent with the code. Refer to the [Code of Conduct for Aged Care Worker guidance](#) for more examples and a range of case studies.

Element	✓ Examples of expected behaviour	✗ Examples of unacceptable behaviour
<b>A.</b>  <b>Act with respect for people's rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making in accordance with applicable laws and conventions.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asking and listening to what older people need and want.</li> <li>• Talking in a way that is easy to understand.</li> <li>• Helping older people to make decisions when they need support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telling an older person to do something they do not want to.</li> <li>• Not including the older person in decisions about their care and services.</li> <li>• Keeping an older person away from places or activities they want to see or do.</li> </ul>
<b>B.</b>  <b>Act in a way that treats people with dignity and respect and values their diversity.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respecting an older person's social, cultural, religious and ethnic background.</li> <li>• Working in a way that helps older people feel comfortable and safe.</li> <li>• Encouraging older people to speak up about their likes and dislikes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making fun of an older person's social, cultural, religious, ethnic or health background.</li> <li>• Talking down to an older person or treating them in a disrespectful way.</li> <li>• Telling an older person their beliefs are wrong or silly.</li> </ul>

Element	 <b>Examples of expected behaviour</b>	 <b>Examples of unacceptable behaviour</b>
<p><b>C.</b></p>  <p><b>Act with respect for the privacy of people.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping personal information of older people safe in line with provider policies.</li> <li>• Being aware of the personal privacy needs and preferences of older people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not requesting permission of older people when providing personal care and services.</li> <li>• Providing personal care to older people in places that are not private.</li> </ul>
<p><b>D.</b></p>  <p><b>Provide care, supports and services in a safe and competent manner, with care and skill.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using equipment safely.</li> <li>• Having the right skills, experience and qualifications for the job.</li> <li>• Following provider policies about safe and up to date work practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing care or services you do not have the skills or qualifications to provide.</li> <li>• Not reporting unsafe equipment, unsafe practices or near misses to your provider.</li> </ul>
<p><b>E.</b></p>  <p><b>Act with integrity, honesty and transparency.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treating older people fairly and not taking advantage of them.</li> <li>• Being honest about your previous experience and training.</li> <li>• Helping older people understand more about their care and services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lying to your provider or to an older person about what you know, or what you hear or see.</li> <li>• Not disclosing a conflict of interest.</li> <li>• Asking or encouraging an older person to give you money or a gift.</li> </ul>
<p><b>F.</b></p>  <p><b>Promptly take steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that may impact the quality and safety of care, supports and services.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowing how and what to do if something happens.</li> <li>• Speaking up and reporting concerns to the provider to reduce risk of harm.</li> <li>• Making sure older people feel safe to speak up or make a complaint.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not taking action about a safety or quality concern.</li> <li>• Failing to be open and honest about a safety or quality concern.</li> <li>• Threatening or telling an older person not to complain or report a concern.</li> </ul>
<p><b>G.</b></p>  <p><b>Provide care, supports and services free from:</b></p> <p><b>i. all forms of violence, discrimination, exploitation, neglect and abuse and</b></p> <p><b>ii. sexual misconduct.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being alert to situations that may hurt, upset or take advantage of an older person.</li> <li>• Knowing what violent, abusive or neglectful practices look like.</li> <li>• Not committing or participating in any form of violence, discrimination, exploitation, neglect and abuse, or sexual misconduct.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physically forcing or threatening an older person to do something they do not want to.</li> <li>• Neglecting, taking advantage of, or abusing an older person.</li> <li>• Acting in a sexual way with an older person.</li> </ul>
<p><b>H.</b></p>  <p><b>Take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to:</b></p> <p><b>i. all forms of violence, discrimination, exploitation, neglect and abuse and</b></p> <p><b>ii. sexual misconduct.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following processes to help prevent harm to older people.</li> <li>• Taking action about a safety risk or concern in line with the provider's systems and processes.</li> <li>• Cooperating with the provider and with any investigation or enquiry.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not raising a suspicion or concern about violence, abuse or neglect of an older person.</li> <li>• Failing to report a serious or reportable incident to the provider.</li> <li>• Not supporting an older person to speak up about concerns of misconduct.</li> </ul>

**All volunteers in aged care should act in a way that is respectful, kind and consistent with the behaviours set out in the Code.**

## What are your responsibilities as a volunteer manager?

Volunteers engaged by an approved provider are *required* to always behave in line with the Code. Approved providers have responsibilities to ensure that volunteers and workers in their service uphold the Code.

If you aren't sure whether the organisation you work for or volunteer with is an approved provider, check with your organisation, to ensure you understand your responsibilities and those of the volunteers you manage.

The elements of the Code may be similar to, or expand on, any role-specific expectations that your organisation might ordinarily ask volunteers to uphold. If this is the case, both the role-specific expectations and the Code should be followed.

## What are the consequences of breaching the Code?

If the Commission becomes aware of conduct by a service provider and/or their staff who provide care (including volunteers) that is inconsistent with the Code, we can take action.

This may include:

- issuing caution letters to individuals
- issuing infringement notices and fines
- in severe cases, banning or restricting individuals from working in aged care on a temporary or permanent basis.

The Commission applies procedural fairness to any regulatory process, which means providers, workers and volunteers will be given a chance to respond to any concerns we investigate.

## How can you support your volunteers?

- Explain to your volunteers that they should always behave in line with the Code and provide them with information on the elements of the Code. A [quick guide](#) and volunteer factsheet are available on our website.
- If your organisation has specific behaviour expectations or a specific role description for volunteers, explain these expectations to them and highlight what the Code adds to these.
- Assist volunteers by ensuring that they can access training and resources to understand their responsibilities.
- Remind your volunteers that they should let you, your service provider or the Commission know if they see or hear something that concerns them.

## Need more information?

Further information about the Code, including [videos](#) and [guidance for workers](#) and volunteers, can be found on the Commission's website at [agedcarequality.gov.au](http://agedcarequality.gov.au).



Code of Conduct for Aged Care  
– information for workers  
[agedcarequality.gov.au/  
providers/code-conduct-aged  
-care-information-workers](http://agedcarequality.gov.au/providers/code-conduct-aged-care-information-workers)

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### Write

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