



# HR Policy Manual

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# Our Vision of How We Want to Be Perceived

"A statement of the company vision."

In order to achieve this, we will need to focus the way we work, both internally and in our external relationships. For Design By Indigo, this means that we will:

*(Examples of how this could be worded)*

- Treat all users of our services as valued clients and act accordingly.
- Value the efforts of all our employees and reward them accordingly.
- Develop supporting business plans to achieve this change.

For our clients, this means that our business processes will:

*(Examples of how this could be worded)*

- Be accessible to all.
- Be transparent and open.
- Be timely and responsive.

We will deliver these business processes through being:

*(Examples of how this could be worded)*

- Professional in everything we do.
- Efficient and ethical.
- Recognised as a preferred employer within the wider business community





# Code of Conduct

## Purpose and Scope

The Code of Conduct has been documented to ensure that practices are standardised and made consistent throughout the company. The Code has also been developed to ensure that legal areas are complied with at all times, especially those relating to the handling of confidential employer and employee information.

The Code incorporates a Professional and Ethical Framework to ensure that all employees are aware of the required standard of behaviour at Design By Indigo with respect to company-related actions and activities. Behaviour outside this Code may result in summary dismissal.

Managers take on additional responsibilities in relation to the expected standards of conduct. The following sections outline areas that have significant legal ramifications. Managers must not only ensure they adhere to the following policy and procedures themselves but must recognise they are responsible for the enforcement of these for the employees for whom they are responsible.

The following sections are also designed to assist in creating a culture within Design By Indigo of professionalism to both customers and fellow colleagues. As with all policies and procedures these standards apply to any person operating within the company's working environment; this includes contractors and visitors to Design By Indigo.

The Code forms part of the contract of employment for all employees within Design By Indigo.

## Application of the Code of Conduct

Design By Indigo's reputation and the trust and confidence of those with whom the company deals are among the company's most vital corporate resources. The company is committed to conducting its business in a uniformly ethical manner and pursuant to a standard of fundamental honesty and reasonable dealing. This standard requires adherence to all laws, regulations and normal ethical practices that apply to Design By Indigo's business activities.

Design By Indigo considers respect for the highest ethical standards to be more important than any short-term or temporary gain the company or the employee may receive. The company policy strongly suggests that employees act as leaders and set an example among their business, personal and professional acquaintances. All employees employed by Design By Indigo are expected to adhere to the standards set out in the Code which include compliance with all federal, state and local laws and regulations.

Design By Indigo values employees and recognises that they are the company's most valuable resource. Accordingly, the provision of supervision, support and a proper induction are seen as vital to ensuring employees carry out their roles and responsibilities properly and adhere to the Code.

To ensure all employees are aware of their professional and ethical responsibilities, employees will be asked to sign a statement that they have read and understood the Code when commencing employment or contract work for Design By Indigo. Please refer to the **HR Policies and Procedures Manual Acknowledgement Form**.

Design By Indigo considers any violation of this Code to be an important matter. Management may take appropriate disciplinary action, including demotion, reprimand and termination, in response to violations. Lack of knowledge of the Code will not be considered a legitimate excuse.

# Compliance with the Code of Conduct

The company recognises employees are independent moral agents and sometimes may have a personal, moral or ethical stance that conflicts with participation in, or compliance with, certain policies or procedures. Where an employee identifies a conflict of this type, it is the individual's responsibility to make their manager aware of the conflict as soon as possible. The manager will attempt to resolve the conflict or make alternative arrangements with the individual.

Any decision to remove an employee from a particular role or responsibility because of a personal, moral or ethical conflict of interest needs to take into consideration the responsibilities and obligations outlined in the employee's job description. Employees should not refuse involvement or compliance if there is any possibility of danger to the life, health or welfare of any person. Where the individual is unsatisfied with the outcome, the Complaints Procedure will apply.

## **Employee Behaviour**

Employees are expected to behave honestly and with integrity, care and diligence in the course of work for Design By Indigo. At all times, employees must promote and preserve the trust inherent in the service provider/client relationship and maintain a cooperative and collaborative approach to working relationships. Employees are expected to treat clients, employees and any other persons they come into contact with in the course of their work with respect and dignity.

## **Public Duty**

Employees should give priority to their appointed duties and responsibilities, except in emergencies. In the event of an emergency, such as a critical incident, employees may act in a manner that protects and preserves the safety, integrity and dignity of clients, other employees, Design By Indigo and the general public.

## **Privacy and Confidentiality**

Employees must ensure the privacy, autonomy and dignity of clients is maintained at all times. All employees should maintain privacy of personal information and client confidentiality. Personal information is collected, used, disclosed, stored and destroyed in compliance with relevant privacy legislation. Employees must also observe privacy and confidentiality in relation to other employees and any privileged organisational information.

## **Conflict of Interest**

Employees must disclose any conflicts of interest (real or apparent), or matters that may affect their capacity to act with impartiality.

Employees who perform any discretionary function (for example recruiting employees or contractors, providing advice, policy development or review, etc.) must declare any potential conflicts of interest to their manager or the [position]. Wherever possible, employees in such a position disqualify themselves from any dealings that may raise a real or perceived conflict of interest.

Situations where possible conflicts of interest may occur include but are not limited to the following:

- The recruitment of friends or family members into the company as employees or contractors.

- The provision of a service to family or friends.
- The provision of financial assistance by a service to family or friends.
- Employees being engaged in other employment of potential or perceived conflict.

### **Employees Performance**

Employees must fulfill their work obligations as outlined in their job description.

Employees must comply with lawful and reasonable direction given by someone who has authority to give the direction.

Employees should not be physically or verbally intimidating or abusive to other employees, clients, management or members of the public. Any employee whose behaviour is called into question in this regard may be subject to Design By Indigo's disciplinary procedures.

### **Equity Principles**

Employees must treat everyone with respect, impartiality and courtesy. In particular, employees must accord respect to the dignity, values, history, religion and culture of the people with whom they work, including clients, fellow employees, management, other organisations and members of the general public.

All employees take responsibility for creating a workplace free from bullying, harassment and discrimination based on age, gender, marital status, career status, pregnancy, parenthood, physical features, sexuality, sexual orientation, social and economic circumstances, race, disability, religious and political beliefs and activities, industrial activity or personal association with a person who could be discriminated against.

### **Responsive Service**

Employees must provide a flexible and responsive service to all clients, other employees and the general public, providing all necessary and appropriate assistance. Employees must provide information and assistance promptly and in a manner appropriate to the needs and situation of the person. The information is clear, accurate, current and complete, and does not convey the employee's own prejudices, assumptions or judgments.

### **Team Work**

In recognition of the critical role teamwork plays in the effective and efficient working of Design By Indigo, everyone at Design By Indigo is expected to contribute to a positive working environment within the team. Employees should be aware of the impact of their actions, behaviour and attitudes on other team members and should endeavour to minimise any negative impact on the team. Employees should engage in open and constructive communication with all other employees and management.

### **Capacity to Work**

Employees must notify their manager or supervisor if they become aware of a matter that may seriously impact their capacity to fulfill their role, or may in any way risk the health, safety or well-being of themselves, other employees, customers or members of the general public.

In addition, if a manager or supervisor becomes aware of an issue impacting on an employee's capacity to fulfill their role, they must raise the issue as soon as possible and in an appropriate forum.

Design By Indigo has a responsibility to ensure steps are taken to minimise risk or harm that may arise due to an employee's personal situation. Design By Indigo does not discriminate against employees due to such matters and endeavours to develop appropriate strategies to accommodate such changes to an employee's situation.

### **Use of Resources and Position**

Employees are required to keep up-to-date with changes in their area of work and to look for ways to improve performance and achieve high standards of work. Employees should use their authority, available resources and information for the work-related purpose intended. While private use of equipment and resources may be authorised by management, the needs of clients and the company always take precedence.

## **Private Business**

Employees should not engage in private business or work for other companies during their normal working hours.

# Managing Breaches in the Code of Conduct

Generally, Design By Indigo will manage breaches of the Code by investigating each alleged breach. The investigation will be conducted by the relevant manager who is required to investigate any alleged breaches of the Code and look at the evidence and information that substantiates the breach.

If the allegation is substantiated, then the perpetrator of the breach will be counselled as part of the warning process. This counselling process is informal and its purpose is to provide the employee with the opportunity to respond to the allegations and to find ways to prevent the breaches from re-occurring. While a warning is not an automatic outcome of investigation and counselling, it is a process that could occur at each stage of the investigation and counselling process.

## Learning

In cases where this policy is applied, a confidential and timely process of learning from and reflecting on its application will follow. The manager involved will guide this process. All employees are also expected to complete training in affirmative action, Work Health and Safety, Fair Trading and Privacy as required.

## Senior Management is responsible for the following actions.

- The speedy resolution of enquiries into breaches of the Code or serious misconduct.
- Ensuring that reports of serious misconduct or breaches in the Code are thoroughly investigated and appropriate action is taken in accordance with this policy.
- Giving employees, who breach the Code, warnings when appropriate.
- Suspending employees (when appropriate) under investigation for serious misconduct.
- Summarily dismissing employees who, after investigation and appropriate counselling, are found guilty of serious misconduct.
- Ensuring all warnings, suspensions and summary dismissals are properly documented.
- Ensuring all written records of warnings (except for ones relating to serious misconduct) are removed after the period of time set out in this policy.
- Ensuring employees are adequately trained in affirmative action, the prevention of workplace bullying and harassment and privacy policies.

## Managers are responsible for the following actions.

- Ensuring employees have read and adhere to the Code.
- Ensuring that management is made aware of serious misconduct and breaches in the Code as soon as they occur.
- Working together with management to develop a plan to manage the breach, while remaining supportive and respectful of the employee.



- Ensuring employees are provided adequate supervision and training to prevent breaches from occurring or re-occurring.

**All employees are responsible for the following actions.**

- Adhering to the Code.
- Reporting to their supervisor/manager any breaches they have witnessed which are considered to put at risk the health and safety of other employees, customers and the general public.

## Compliance with the law

Design By Indigo's policy is to obey the law and regulations of the Federal Government and the Governments of NSW. Design By Indigo recognises that with the law, many interpretations often exist and employees who are untrained in the law may find it difficult to distinguish proper from improper conduct.

In such cases, an employee should seek the advice of their manager before he or she acts. The guidelines are as follows.

- Employees shall not participate in any scheme with competitors to limit competition, fix prices or otherwise collude in the sale of products or services by Design By Indigo or others.
- Employees should not have an interest or equity in a business which has interests that conflict with those of Design By Indigo.
- Employees will not knowingly participate in any meetings, negotiations, or discussions where such practices are suggested, offered or planned. In the event that an employee is unknowingly involved in such discussions, they should promptly and unequivocally refuse to participate in such schemes and should promptly report the matter to [position].
- Employees should not use their position or authority to receive, request or contract any kickbacks or monetary gifts.

### Areas for Potential Conflict

Employees have a responsibility to work in the best interests of Design By Indigo and to avoid situations and actions that may be, or create the appearance of being, in conflict with the company's objectives and principles. The following are examples of activities that must be avoided.

- Holding a substantial financial interest in any enterprise with which Design By Indigo has business dealings (e.g. competitors, suppliers and clients).
- Hold concurrently another role which the company does not approve.
- Acceptance, directly or indirectly, from any vendor or supplier of services, by an employee or any member of an employee's immediate family, any vacations, cash payment, service or loan (except from financial institutions).
- Acting as an executive, officer and/or employee or otherwise for any business with which Design By Indigo has a competitive or business relationship, unless approved by management.
- Competing with Design By Indigo in the purchase or sale of any kind of service (tangible or intangible) or diverting a business opportunity from the company for the employee's personal interest.
- Using Design By Indigo's assets (e.g. funds, client information, facilities, know-how or personnel) for the benefit of other business or personal interests.

The employee should report to his or her manager any situation that is likely to cause the employee to have a conflict between the interests of Design By Indigo and another institution prior to dealings.

The manager must clear any such arrangement with [position]. Confirmation of this must be recorded in writing.

Managers must be sure that their employees understand and comply with this Code.

**Obligation to Report**

Each employee has the direct obligation and responsibility to report any real or apparent violations of this Code.

Employees should first report questionable practices to their manager.

Depending on the seriousness of the situation, the manager should quickly respond to the report and take all necessary action to make sure that any violation is corrected or the situation clarified. If an employee is not satisfied with the initial response, he or she should appeal directly to senior management.

# Enforcement

It is not acceptable to breach the Code and employees who frequently or seriously breach the Code may be subject to disciplinary action.

However, Design By Indigo will aim to resolve any breaches of the Code using a non-antagonistic and non-judgmental approach. To this end, Design By Indigo is committed to offering employees adequate support or training to assist in the non-punitive resolution of any work-related difficulties. Supervision can provide guidance and support to address issues relating to breaches of the Code. Except in the instance of serious misconduct, Design By Indigo will work with employees to develop a management plan for resolving problems, ensuring the plan reflects the needs of both the employees and the organisation.

## **The following procedures are to apply.**

- All written warnings will be issued using the Design By Indigo Warning Proforma.
- The warning process cannot be instigated without the involvement and approval of the relevant manager or [position].
- All employees will be informed of the nature of any warning meetings beforehand and will be given the opportunity to bring a support person or advocate to the meetings.
- Any disagreements relating to warnings will be documented in employees' personnel files and on the warning letters provided.
- Warnings are cancelled after a maximum of six months if the behavior ceases.

