



Code of Conduct

1. Purpose

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour, ethical principles and professional responsibilities expected of all employees, contractors, consultants and representatives of Family Bond Australia (“FBA”).

The Code exists to ensure:

- the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children;
- professional, impartial and ethical service delivery;
- respect, dignity and equity in all interactions;
- public confidence in Family Bond Australia’s operations.

This Code is informed by guidance from recognised sector frameworks, including the **Children’s Contact Services: Guiding Principles Framework for Good Practice**, developed through the Australian Government’s Attorney-General’s Department.

2. Scope

This Code applies to all persons engaged by Family Bond Australia, whether on a permanent, casual, contract or volunteer basis, and at all times while representing or performing duties for FBA.

Compliance with this Code is a condition of engagement.

3. Guiding Frameworks and Sector Alignment

Family Bond Australia’s practice is informed by sector-recognised guidance relevant to children’s contact services, including:

- the **Children’s Contact Services: Guiding Principles Framework for Good Practice**, which supports safe, consistent and child-centred practice, including child welfare, neutrality, risk awareness and cultural sensitivity;
- guidance from the **Australian Children’s Contact Services Association (ACCSA)**, a not-for-profit association supporting safe and ethical practice across the sector.

Reference to these frameworks informs the standards expected of staff; however, these frameworks do not override Family Bond Australia’s legal obligations, internal governance frameworks, policies, procedures or professional judgment.

4. Paramountcy of the Child

All persons bound by this Code must:

- place the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children above all other considerations;
- act in a manner consistent with the child's best interests;
- promote children's rights to safety, security and participation;
- avoid conduct that may expose a child to harm, distress, conflict or risk.

These principles reflect the core child-focused emphasis of the Guiding Principles Framework.

This includes Family Bond Australia's obligation to prioritise child safety over parental preferences, court process convenience, or service continuation.

5. Professional Conduct and Behaviour

Staff and contractors must:

- act honestly, respectfully and professionally at all times;
- treat children, families, colleagues and others with dignity and respect;
- communicate calmly, clearly and appropriately;
- avoid intimidating, threatening, aggressive or offensive conduct;
- comply with all lawful and reasonable directions issued by Family Bond Australia; and
- maintain professional boundaries at all times.

6. Independence, Neutrality and Impartiality

Persons engaged by FBA must:

- act independently and impartially;
- avoid favouring or appearing to favour any party;
- not accept gifts, benefits or inducements that may compromise neutrality;
- immediately disclose any actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest.

Neutrality is a key practice principle reflected in the AGD Framework.

7. Child Safety and Mandatory Reporting

All staff and contractors must:

- comply with Child Safe Standards and mandatory reporting laws;
- understand and fulfil their reporting obligations;
- immediately report safety concerns to Management; and
- cooperate fully with any safety investigations or reporting processes.

Failure to comply with child safety obligations may result in suspension or termination.

8. Cultural Sensitivity, Diversity and Inclusion

Staff and contractors must:

- demonstrate respect and cultural awareness in all professional activities;
- provide services equitably, without bias on the basis of race, religion, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, disability or locality;
- recognise and respond appropriately to the diverse needs of families and children.

These requirements reflect the Framework's emphasis on cultural sensitivity and access.

9. Confidentiality and Privacy

Staff and contractors must:

- protect confidential information obtained in the course of duty;
- only access, use or disclose information where authorised or required by law;
- comply with applicable privacy laws and record-keeping standards.

Confidentiality obligations continue after engagement ends.

10. Record Keeping and Accuracy

All Observational Notes and records must be:

- factual, accurate and contemporaneous;
- free from opinion, speculation or emotive language;
- completed according to organisational requirements and standards; and
- stored and handled securely.

Reckless or falsified records are serious misconduct.

11. Use of Authority and Decision-Making

Staff and contractors must:

- exercise authority reasonably, proportionately and in good faith;
- prioritise safety and dignity in decision-making;
- escalate concerns appropriately; and
- comply with lawful decisions by Management.

12. Use of Technology and Communication

Staff and contractors must:

- use electronic communication professionally and respectfully;
- not record parents, children or colleagues without authorisation;
- avoid communications that may expose children to harm or conflict.

13. Drugs, Alcohol and Fitness for Duty

Staff and contractors must:

- not attend work under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- present fit for duty at all times; and
- notify Management where illness or impairment may affect performance.

14. Breach of Code

Breaches of this Code may result in:

- corrective action;
- suspension, reassignment or termination of engagement;
- reporting to relevant authorities when required.

Serious breaches may result in immediate termination.

15. Review and Acknowledgement

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed periodically.

All staff and contractors must acknowledge that they have read, understood and agree to comply with this Code.