



# Code of Conduct

A guide to help you make appropriate, fair-minded decisions

## The Department of Emergency Services (DES)

The DES delivers ambulance, fire, search, rescue, emergency management and hazardous-materials services to the entire Queensland community. We have a responsibility to the community, and we also have a responsibility to you — our employees and volunteers. We are required to treat you with respect and dignity. And you, in turn, also have responsibilities.

You play a unique role in the Queensland community. There are very high expectations on you and your fellow officers to deliver services with integrity, sensitivity, efficiency, respect and great care.

The public expect you to be open and accountable. They expect you to make good decisions by considering all the relevant information available.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to identify:

- the values that guide decision-making
- acceptable standards of conduct
- the legal, moral and ethical obligations of employees and volunteers
- the endorsed ethical decision-making model
- the need for all employees and volunteers to be accountable for their decisions and the consequences of those decisions
- how to build trust, open communication and collaboration.

This code will help you meet your responsibilities and:

- make fair-minded decisions
- identify acceptable behaviour
- develop a positive culture in the department
- help other staff and volunteers improve their decision-making.

You will find the code useful when you have an important decision to make, as well as using it to make sure that everyday decisions are appropriate and fair-minded.

## Ethical decision-making – a problem-solving model

Risks to ethical decision-making are increased by things such as lack of knowledge, conflict, good intentions, and loyalty.

A problem-solving approach to decision-making reduces these risks.

When you need to make a decision, consider:

- Who will be affected?
- Am I being fair?
- Am I operating within the spirit of the code?
- Did I explore all reasonable options?
- Can I justify it?
- Do I want others to read about it in the newspaper?

To be an ethical decision-maker you need to:

- be responsible and accountable
- problem solve using logic and keeping an open mind
- think independently and question
- identify those potentially affected
- commit to the principles of procedural fairness

For further information:

- refer to the Code of Conduct book
- ask your supervisor/manager
- contact the Ethical Standards Unit  
[ethicalstandards@emergency.qld.gov.au](mailto:ethicalstandards@emergency.qld.gov.au)





### Respect for the law and system of government

You embrace your legal obligations when you:

- uphold the law
- respect the right of the department to determine policy
- constructively contribute to the policy
- accept responsibility and accountability for your decision-making
- exercise statutory powers in an appropriate manner
- are fair, just and reasonable in exercising of authority
- consider the rules of fairness in all decision-making by:
  - being open and honest
  - giving stakeholders the opportunity to be heard before making decisions
  - being objective in exercising of authority
- obey lawful directions
- accept that your decisions can be challenged
- provide accurate and timely information
- respect the privacy rights of others
- make public comment according to relevant policy.

### Respect for persons

You show respect for fellow staff and volunteers, members of the community, and clients when you:

- respect the dignity of others
- communicate with clarity, sensitivity and respect
- respect equity and diversity
- contribute to a safe working environment
- accurately advise others on rights and responsibilities
- are tolerant of the views and ideas of others
- model acceptable workplace conduct
- contribute constructively and fairly to resolve conflict
- respond to those who challenge you responsibly and accountably
- protect youth from any detrimental effect on their physical, psychological or emotional well-being arising from their participation in a departmental youth program
- ensure activities with youth are accompanied or observable by others.

### Integrity

You demonstrate your professional integrity when you:

- embrace the code
- are honest, impartial and fair
- consider the interests of the department
- use departmental resources as they were intended
- apply all relevant financial management practices
- use your authority with public interest uppermost
- report potential, actual or perceived conflicts of interest
- provide professional advice without fear, favour or deference
- model positive behaviour that enhances the department's reputation
- report and/or deal appropriately with all alleged inappropriate conduct.

### Diligence

You demonstrate your diligence when you:

- perform all duties with proper diligence, care and attention
- attend work in a fit state to correctly carry out your duties
- comply with all policies in relation to alcohol and drugs
- avoid private interests that compromise appropriate performance of your duties
- seek to achieve high standards of performance, professionalism and responsiveness
- develop and maintain relevant knowledge and skills
- avoid behaviour that reduces the diligence of others
- actively seek activities to develop skills relevant to your position
- respond appropriately to all lawful directions
- comply with relevant dress standards
- maintain confidentiality on relevant matters.

### Economy and efficiency

You demonstrate your commitment to using public resources in a way that is not wasteful, abusive or improper when you:

- seek to achieve the maximum return when using public resources (human, financial and physical)
- use financial resources for official purposes only
- protect and maintain assets
- avoid waste
- actively seek to improve efficiencies.

If uncertain, you can talk with:

- respected others
- your supervisor/manager
- regional HR staff
- Ethical Standards Unit staff
- your union/professional association.

### In summary

- You are required to read this brochure
- You have a shared responsibility to apply the principles
- You can be confident that the department will support you if you act in accordance with this Code
- You will receive the necessary training and equipment to support you to deliver our services

### The ethics principles

