

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre

# Policy and Procedure Manual



Adopted by the Committee of Management on 1<sup>st</sup> November  
2025

This manual is a project of the Joint Committee of Management of the Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre and Wendouree Neighbourhood Centre.

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## Message from the Chair

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Early in 2019, the Committee of Management approved a complete review and rewrite of the Policy and Procedure Manual. Version 1 was the first stage of this two-year project.

In 2021, an updated version of the Policy and Procedure Manual included

- the correction of minor formatting issues associated with using different Word versions in creating the manual;
- a review and update of all documents, templates and forms associated with the procedures of this manual; and
- feedback and suggestions for improving the manual.

In 2022, work commenced on version 2 of the Policy and Procedure Manual which included:

- an update of policies related to the new Victorian Child Safe regulations;
- the Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics rewritten and merged;
- a complete review and rewrite of HR related policies; and
- policies deemed missing from feedback and changes in BNC operations, were added.

Throughout 2024 and 2025, we continued to review and update both the manual and the Document Register, adopting an updated version with a new Privacy Policy, adding new documents and making other minor changes.

Version 3 of the Policy and Procedure Manual includes

- reformatting all policies to remove excess line breaks and format corrections
- a rewrite of the Child Safe and Privacy Policies
- the inclusion of a Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- strengthening of policies for cyber security, artificial intelligence and privacy breaches

Please keep this in mind, as you read the Policy and Procedure Manual, and provide your feedback to the Manager.

Thanks

Cameron Duthie

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# Introduction

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## About this Manual

Policies are the responsibility of the Committee of Management (CoM) who have ownership of this Policy and Procedure Manual.

This manual is designed to provide Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre Inc. (BNC) users with an understanding of our philosophies and general operations. It is readily available from the BNC website or BNC office for anyone to access.

All staff, CoM Members, and volunteers will be asked to participate in a brief induction program relevant to their involvement with BNC. Any feedback or further questions should be directed to the BNC Executive Officer (EO).

BNC draws on the insight and knowledge of our community to create an organisation which is responsive and flexible, in addition we draw on standards and concepts from around the world to govern our practice and philosophy.

Every policy, procedure, and code of our organisation is built on a foundation created by:

- World Health Organisation Social Determinants of Health
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
- Victorian Charter for Human Rights
- Neighbourhood House Coordination Program Guidelines, Community Development Practice Model and Sector Principles
- BNC Rules of Association - adopted May 8, 2019
- Collective Bargaining Agreements, Industry Awards and National Employment Standards
- Australian National Child Safe Standards
- Funding Guidelines and Agreements

Our organisational development and integrity stems from these foundational commitments, and this Policy and Procedures Manual defines the culture, behaviour, and standards we, as a community and as an organisation, hold ourselves to.

## Our Purpose

Neighbourhood houses are collaborative endeavours, built on the passion and commitment of many. Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre Inc exists to increase the social and economic participation of all people in our community.

We take a person-centred approach to:

- **EQUITY:** creating opportunities with fairness and consideration of each individual's needs.
- **EMPOWERMENT:** Enhancing individuals' capacity to have control of their own lives.
- **INCLUSION:** Embracing diversity in a respectful, safe, and welcoming environment.
- **COLLABORATION:** Working together to achieve common goals.

## Policy and Procedure Manual Application

This manual requires the following compliance responsibilities:

- CoM members are responsible for this Policy and Procedures Manual, and they must provide an annual review of this manual.
- Employees must read and indicate a clear understanding of their responsibilities under this manual.
- Volunteers are included as staff for the purposes of this Policy and Procedures Manual as they have many of the same entitlements, obligations and responsibilities as employees.
- Team and Project Leaders must ensure all employees and volunteers under their control are briefed on the terms of this manual and this is documented with a signed acknowledgement.
- EO is responsible for the updating and implementation of this manual.

While this Policy and Procedure Manual is available to everyone to access, the following table lists policies relevant to specific roles within BNC.



## Reading Requirements

| <b>Key: ALL - Everyone   COM - Committee of Management   SS - Specific Staff</b> |     |                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Introduction, Acronyms, Definitions                                              | ALL |                                                             |
| 1.1 Policy Development                                                           | COM | plus staff who write policies                               |
| 2. All Policies in this Section                                                  | ALL |                                                             |
| 3.1 Appropriate Use of Technology                                                | ALL |                                                             |
| 3.2 Child Safety and Wellbeing                                                   | ALL |                                                             |
| 3.3 Event Management                                                             | SS  | Events staff and volunteers                                 |
| 3.4 Facility Management                                                          | ALL |                                                             |
| 3.5 Asset Management                                                             | ALL |                                                             |
| 3.6 Feedback                                                                     | ALL |                                                             |
| 3.7 First Aid                                                                    | SS  | Staff & volunteers who administer First Aid                 |
| 3.8 Health                                                                       | ALL |                                                             |
| 3.9 Incident Reporting and Response                                              | SS  | Staff & volunteers responsible for incident reporting       |
| 3.10 Motor Vehicle                                                               | SS  | Staff & volunteers who use BNC or private vehicles for work |
| 3.11 Emergency Management Plan                                                   | ALL |                                                             |
| 3.12 Marketing and Communications                                                | SS  | Marketing staff                                             |
| 3.13 Organisation Structure                                                      | ALL |                                                             |
| 3.14 Privacy                                                                     | ALL |                                                             |
| 3.15 Social Media                                                                | ALL |                                                             |
| 3.16 Handling Child Complaints                                                   | ALL |                                                             |
| 3.17 Programs, Projects and Activities                                           | ALL |                                                             |
| 4. All Policies in this Section                                                  | COM |                                                             |
| 5.1 Grievance Resolution                                                         | ALL |                                                             |
| 5.2 Disciplinary and Performance Management                                      | SS  | Paid staff excluding BNC users                              |
| 5.3 Flexible Working Arrangements                                                | SS  | Paid staff                                                  |

| <b>Key: ALL - Everyone   COM - Committee of Management   SS - Specific Staff</b> |     |                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------------------|
| 5.4 Overtime and Time off in Lieu (TOIL)                                         | SS  | Paid staff                                   |
| 5.5 Performance Review                                                           | SS  | Paid staff                                   |
| 5.6 Induction                                                                    | ALL |                                              |
| 5.7 Leave and Wellbeing                                                          | SS  | Paid staff                                   |
| 5.8 Professional Development                                                     | SS  | Paid staff excluding BNC users               |
| 5.9 Recruitment and Appointment of Staff                                         | SS  | Paid staff                                   |
| 5.10 Worker Screening                                                            | ALL |                                              |
| 5.11 Safe Workplace                                                              | ALL |                                              |
| 5.12 Volunteers                                                                  | SS  | Volunteers and Staff working with volunteers |
| 5.13 Vocational Placement                                                        | SS  | Students and Staff working with students     |
| 5.14 Travel                                                                      | SS  | Staff & volunteers                           |
| 5.15 Epidemic/Pandemic                                                           | ALL |                                              |
| 5.16 Staff and Volunteer Exit                                                    | ALL |                                              |
| 6. All Policies in this Section                                                  | COM | plus finance and admin staff                 |
| 6.3.1.5 Reimbursement Procedures                                                 | ALL |                                              |
| 6.4 Fraud                                                                        | ALL |                                              |
| 6.7 Purchasing and Procurement                                                   | SS  | Staff purchasing for BNC                     |
| 6.8 Contracts, Agreements and MOU's                                              | SS  | Paid staff                                   |
| Documents Register                                                               | ALL |                                              |

## Acronyms

|           |                                                                                                                           |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ABN       | Australian Business Number                                                                                                |
| ACFE      | Adult, Community and Further Education                                                                                    |
| ACNC      | Australian Charities and Not-For-Profit Commission                                                                        |
| AGM       | The Annual General Meeting is a mandatory yearly gathering of the Committee of Management and members of the organisation |
| AI        | Artificial Intelligence                                                                                                   |
| ANZ       | Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited                                                                           |
| APP       | Australian Privacy Principles - Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)                                                                    |
| ATO       | Australian Taxation Office                                                                                                |
| BNC       | Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre Inc.                                                                                        |
| BNC Rules | Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre Inc. Rules of Association - adopted 8/5/2019                                                |
| BSL       | Brotherhood of St Laurence                                                                                                |
| BSCH      | Ballarat South Community Hub                                                                                              |
| CAV       | Consumer Affairs Victoria                                                                                                 |
| CBA       | Commonwealth Bank Group                                                                                                   |
| CCV       | Card Verification Value is the 3 or 4 digit number on the back of credit/debit cards                                      |
| CCYP      | Commission for Children and Young People                                                                                  |
| CHANH     | Central Highlands Association of Neighbourhood Houses                                                                     |
| CoM       | Committee of Management                                                                                                   |
| CRM       | Customer Relationship Manager                                                                                             |
| Cth       | Commonwealth Government of Australia                                                                                      |
| DRP       | Data Response Plan                                                                                                        |
| DET       | Department of Education and Training                                                                                      |
| DHHS      | Department of Health and Human Service (Victorian Government)                                                             |
| DFFH      | Department of Families, Fairness and Housing                                                                              |
| DJSIR     | Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions                                                                          |

|        |                                                                                                                           |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| EAP    | Employee Assistance Program                                                                                               |
| EFT    | Electronic Funds Transfer                                                                                                 |
| EFTPOS | Electronic Funds Transfer at Point Of Sale                                                                                |
| EO     | Executive Officer                                                                                                         |
| FAC    | Funded Agency Channel                                                                                                     |
| GPP    | Goal Performance Plan                                                                                                     |
| HR     | Human Resource/s                                                                                                          |
| IP     | Intellectual Property                                                                                                     |
| IPP    | Information Privacy Principles - Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)                                               |
| IT     | Information Technology                                                                                                    |
| MOU    | Memorandum Of Understanding, a non-binding agreement between two or more parties expressing mutual intent to collaborate. |
| NHACE  | Neighbourhood Houses and Adult Community Education                                                                        |
| NHCP   | Neighbourhood House Coordination Program                                                                                  |
| NHV    | Neighbourhood House Victoria                                                                                              |
| OAIC   | Office of the Australian Information Commissioner                                                                         |
| OH&S   | Occupational, Health and Safety                                                                                           |
| PD     | Position Description                                                                                                      |
| SAMS   | Service Agreement Management System                                                                                       |
| SDG's  | United Nations Sustainable Development Goals                                                                              |
| TOIL   | Time Off In Lieu                                                                                                          |
| WWC    | Working With Children                                                                                                     |

## Definitions

|              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Abuse        | <p>All forms of physical and mental abuse, exploitation, coercion or ill-treatment. This might include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical, financial or emotional abuse;</li> <li>threats of, or actual violence, verbal, emotional or social abuse;</li> <li>sexual harassment, bullying or abuse;</li> </ul> <p>sexual criminal offences;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cultural or identity abuse, such as racial, sexual or gender-based discrimination or hate crime;</li> </ul> <p>coercion and exploitation;<br/>abuse of power;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and neglect.</li> </ul> |
| Access       | Ensuring fair and equal access for all people to those services which are important for their quality of life.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Act          | Association Incorporation Reform Act 2012.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Adult        | A person who is not a child                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Asset        | An asset is a resource with economic value BNC owns or controls with the expectation it will provide a future benefit. Assets are reported on the balance sheet and are bought or created to increase a firm's value or benefit the firm's operations.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Assurance    | Assurance is the process of analysing and used in the assessment of accounting entries and financial records.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Audit        | The audit is the process of evaluating the accounting entries present in the financial statement of the company. Audit checks the accuracy of the financial reports.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Award        | The legal document setting out the terms and conditions of employment for a specific industry or job.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| BNC Users    | All people who attend BNC activities and programs, and who use BNC facilities including students, clients, volunteers and visitors.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Card Holder  | A BNC employee or Committee member who has been issued with a BNC debit card.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Card Receipt | A receipt showing the amount paid by card, to the payee, the date of payment and the card account number. Note: this is not necessarily a Tax Invoice.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Charge       | To impose or ask as a price or fee for the provision of goods or services.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

|                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Child / Children                | A person who is under 18 years of age.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Child Abuse                     | Is emotional abuse, neglect, physical abuse and/or sexual abuse (all as defined as abuse) to a child.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Child Safe Organisation         | <p>An organisation that consciously and systematically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creates conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children.</li> <li>• creates conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying and reporting of harm.</li> <li>• responds appropriately to disclosures, allegations and suspicions of harm.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Code Red Day                    | A day declared with the highest fire danger rating in Victoria. It signifies the worst conditions for bushfires or grassfires. A Code Red fire danger rating means if a fire were to start it will be uncontrollable, unpredictable, and fast moving; fire services will find it difficult to put out; there is a high likelihood people in the path of a fire will be killed or seriously injured; and even the best prepared homes will not be safe.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Collective Bargaining Agreement | An enterprise agreement negotiated by the parties through collective bargaining in good faith, primarily at the enterprise level.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Complaint                       | <p>Expression of dissatisfaction made to or about Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre, related to one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• our services or dealings with individuals</li> <li>• allegations of abuse or misconduct by a staff member, a volunteer or another individual associated with BNC</li> <li>• disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child or young person</li> <li>• the conduct of a child or young person at BNC</li> <li>• the inadequate handling of a prior concern</li> <li>• general concerns about the safety of a group of children or activity.</li> </ul> |
| Compliment                      | A compliment is an expression of praise, encouragement, or gratitude about a service which is funded, regulated, or provided. It may be about an individual staff member, a team, or a service.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Concerns                        | A concern refers to any potential issue which could impact negatively on the safety and wellbeing of children.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Conduct                         | The way a person behaves, especially in a particular place or situation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Consent                         | <p>Consent whether, express or implied, must involve the person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being adequately informed before giving consent</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

|                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• giving consent voluntarily</li> <li>• giving consent that is current and specific, and</li> <li>• having the capacity to understand and communicate their consent</li> </ul> <p>Consent can be verbally given or be in writing as in a signature or check box.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Contractor          | A person contracted to provide a specific service to BNC including facilities maintenance, IT services, cleaning, and financial services. It does not include people who deliver services, programs, or projects on behalf of BNC.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Credit              | The ability of a customer to obtain goods or services before payment, based on the belief payment will be made in the future.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Credit Note         | A receipt given by a shop to a customer, who has returned goods, to be offset against future purchases.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Cultural Safety     | Is about creating an environment safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This means there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity and experience. Cultural safety is about: Shared respect, shared meaning and shared knowledge                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Customer            | A person (including a client, student, visitor, volunteer or participant) who buys goods or services.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Debt                | A sum of money paid for the provision of goods or services which is owed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Debtor              | A person, or organisation owing money to BNC.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Defalcation         | Taking or illegal use of money by someone who has responsibility for it.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Delegated Authority | Delegation is the downward transfer of formal authority from one person to another. Superiors delegate authority to subordinates to facilitate the accomplishment of the assigned work.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Disclosure          | <p>A process by which a child, young persons or vulnerable person conveys or attempts to convey that they are being or have been sexually abused, or by which an adult conveys or attempts to convey that they were sexually abused as a child.</p> <p>This may take many forms, and might be verbal or non-verbal. Non-verbal disclosures using painting or drawing, gesticulating, or through behavioural changes, are more common among young children, children and vulnerable people with cognitive or communication impairments. Children, in particular, may also seek to disclose sexual abuse through emotional or behavioural cues,</p> |

|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                   | <p>such as heightened anxiety, withdrawal, aggression or inappropriate sexual behaviour.</p> <p>Disclosures can be intentional or accidental, and they might be prompted by questions from another person, or triggered by a memory of the abuse. A disclosure may also become a 'complaint' when made to BNC or a 'report' when made to an external authority or agency.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Emotional or Psychological Abuse  | <p>Serious psychological harm can occur where the behaviour of their parent or caregiver damages the confidence and self-esteem of the child, young persons or vulnerable person, resulting in serious emotional disturbance or psychological trauma.</p> <p>Although it is possible for 'one off' incidents to cause serious harm, in general it is the frequency, persistence and duration of the parental or carer behaviour that is instrumental in defining the consequences for the child or young person.</p> <p>This can include a range of behaviours such as excessive criticism, withholding affection, exposure to domestic violence, intimidation or threatening behaviour.</p> |
| Employee Assistance Program (EAP) | An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a confidential counselling service offered by employers to their employees to support their well-being in the workplace and in their personal lives.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Employees                         | A person employed for wages or salary under an award or agreement.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Equality                          | Equality is the state or quality of being equal. It involves treating every individual in the same manner, irrespective of their differences.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Equity                            | Equity is the quality of being fair and impartial. It involves treating individuals in accordance with their needs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Ethics                            | Moral principles govern a person or organisation's behavior or activities.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Expenditure Delegation Authority  | A staff member with the appropriate delegated expenditure limit                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Feedback                          | Provision of information about reactions to a product, a person's performance of a task, etc. which is used as a basis for improvement.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Fee For Service                   | A fee charged for the provision of a specific service.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |



|                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fees                     | All fees, fines, and charges payable as specified in the Schedule of Fees.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Financial Irregularities | A departure from standard procedure. Irregularities are not illegal, but may be (depending on circumstances) e.g. conflict of interest, bribery, etc.,                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Financial Transaction    | An agreement, or communication, conducted between a buyer and a seller to exchange goods or services for payment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| First Aid                | Help given to a sick or injured person until full medical treatment is available.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| General Ledger           | The main accounting record of a company or organisation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Grievance                | Formal complaint made where people think they have been subject to unfair treatment and a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Grooming                 | <p>Behaviours that manipulate and control a child, their family and other support networks, or institutions with the intent of gaining access to the child, obtaining the child's compliance, maintaining the child, young persons or vulnerable person's silence, and avoiding discovery of sexual abuse.</p> <p>Grooming can take place in person and online and is often difficult to identify and define. This is because the behaviours involved are not necessarily explicitly sexual, directly abusive or criminal in themselves, and may only be recognised in hindsight.</p> <p>Some grooming behaviours are consistent with behaviours or activities in non-abusive relationships, and can even include desirable social behaviours, with the only difference being motivation. Perpetrators can groom children, other people in children's lives, and institutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grooming may take a number of forms.</li> <li>• Building trust.</li> <li>• Favouritism.</li> <li>• Gaining the trust of the child's or young person's parents or carer/s.</li> <li>• Isolation - from family and/or, friends.</li> <li>• Intimidation and secrecy 'Testing the waters' or boundary violation.</li> <li>• Shaping the persons perceptions.</li> </ul> |
| Harm                     | is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

|                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                           | of other children. It includes physical, emotional, sexual and psychological harm. Harm can arise from a single act or event and can also be cumulative, arising as a result of a series of acts or events over a period of time.                                                                                                             |
| Infectious Diseases       | Are caused by pathogenic microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi; the diseases can be spread, directly or indirectly, from one person to another.                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Mandatory Reporting       | is the legal requirement for certain professional groups to report a reasonable belief of child physical or sexual abuse to child protection authorities                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Misappropriation          | To appropriate wrongfully or unlawfully (as by theft or embezzlement).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Neglect                   | Is when a parent, guardian caregiver cannot regularly give a child, young person or vulnerable person the basic things needed for his or her growth and development, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical and dental care, adequate supervision, and enough parenting and care.                                                           |
| Neighbourhood Houses      | Community development-based organisations funded by DFFH (formerly DHHS) under the NHCP.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Payment / receipt methods | BNC accepts and uses cash, cheques, EFTPOS, Credit Card, Debit Cards, and online banking.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Participation             | Maximising the opportunities for people to participate in the circumstances affecting their lives.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Person at Risk            | Person aged 18 years and over who:<br>a) has care and support needs;<br>b) is being abused or neglected, or are at risk of abuse or neglect; and<br>c) is unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect because of their care and support needs.                                                                                         |
| Personal Information      | Any information or an opinion about you from which your identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Physical Abuse            | Is a non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child, young persons or vulnerable person caused by a parent, caregiver or any other person. It includes but is not limited to injuries which are caused by excessive discipline, severe beatings or shakings, cigarette burns, attempted strangulation and female genital mutilation. |

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                             | Injuries include bruising, lacerations or welts, burns, fractures or dislocation of joints. Hitting child, young persons or vulnerable person around the head or neck, or using a stick, belt or other object to discipline or punishing a child or young person (in a non-trivial way) is a crime.                  |
| Policy                      | A statement mandating decision-making or placing constraints on activity and containing instructions to ensure compliance with appropriate standards governing the subject matter.                                                                                                                                   |
| Policy and Procedure Manual | A comprehensive index of BNC policies located in hard copy in the office and available in soft copy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Position Description        | Position Description (PD) is a document outlining a role in terms of objectives, responsibilities and outcomes, capabilities and behaviours, and knowledge and experience required to successfully perform the role.                                                                                                 |
| Procedural requirements     | Labelled procedures, guidelines, provisions etc, and not titled Policy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Procurement                 | The process of setting up arrangements for the supply of goods or services to BNC. These arrangements may include preferred supplier lists, catalogues of approved items or contracts for supply of agreed goods and/or services.                                                                                    |
| Psychosocial hazard         | Any factor or factors in work design, systems of work, management of work, carrying out of the work, personal or work-related interactions that may arise in the working environment, and cause an employee to experience one or more negative psychological responses that create a risk to their health or safety. |
| Purchase Order              | A commercial document and first official offer issued by a buyer to a seller indicating types, quantities, and agreed prices for products or services. It is used to control the purchasing of products and services from external suppliers.                                                                        |
| Purchasing                  | An operational procurement, referring to day to day tasks associated with acquiring items off preferred supplier lists, catalogues, contract, or other arrangements which have been put in place for BNC.                                                                                                            |
| Quote                       | A quotation giving the estimated cost for a particular job or service.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Reasonable                  | When you have sound judgement; fair and sensible.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

|                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Reasonable Grounds for Belief | <p>A reasonable belief is a belief based on facts that would lead a reasonable person to think that reportable conduct may have occurred.</p> <p>A reasonable belief is more than suspicion. There must be some objective basis for the belief. However, it does not require certainty. For example, a person is likely to have a reasonable belief if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• observed the conduct themselves</li> <li>• heard from a child that the conduct occurred</li> <li>• received information from another source (including another person who witnessed the reportable conduct or misconduct).</li> </ul> <p>The head of the organisation does not need to share the person's reasonable belief regarding the allegation.</p> |
| Refund                        | Refund means re-crediting a payment made to BNC.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Reportable Conduct            | Conduct that must be reported under legislation that obliges designated institutions to report allegations of institutional child sexual abuse to an independent statutory body.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Reportable Conduct Scheme     | A scheme established under legislation by a State or Territory to monitor, investigate and report on reportable conduct.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Requestor                     | A staff member authorised to create purchase orders.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Resources                     | Human, financial, physical, and knowledge factors providing BNC the means to perform its business processes.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Risk of Significant Harm      | A Vulnerable person, is at risk of significant harm if the circumstances that are causing concern for the safety, welfare or wellbeing of the vulnerable person are present to a significant extent. Significant means serious enough to warrant a response by a statutory authority irrespective of a family's consent.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Safeguarding                  | Protecting the welfare and human rights of people that are, in some way, connected with your organisation its work – particularly people that may be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Sexual Abuse                  | <p>Any act which exposes a child, young person or vulnerable person to, or involves a child, young person or vulnerable person in, sexual processes beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards.</p> <p>Sexually abusive behaviours can include the fondling of genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling of breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism, and exposing the child, young person or vulnerable person to or</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

|                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                   | <p>involving the child, young persons or vulnerable person in pornography.</p> <p>It includes grooming, which refers to actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, to lower the child, young persons or vulnerable person's inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child, young persons or vulnerable person.</p>                                                                                                                                                |
| Social media      | Websites and applications enabling users to create and share content or to participate in social networking.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Staff             | <p>Any person who is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employed as full-time, part-time, casual or sessional by BNC</li> <li>• a volunteer, including vocational placement students</li> <li>• an apprentice or trainee</li> <li>• a fixed term contractor who delivers BNC services, programs or projects including trainers, tutors, and project staff</li> </ul> <p>It does not include people who are contracted to provide a specific service to BNC including facilities maintenance, IT services, cleaning, or financial services.</p> |
| Student           | A learner who is undertaking study or training at BNC.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Supplier          | A person or organisation providing something needed such as a product or service to BNC.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Technology        | Methods, systems, and devices which are the result of scientific knowledge being used for practical purposes, e.g. computers, training materials, phones, or social media.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| The Orange Door   | The Orange Door is the access point for families who need assistance with the care and wellbeing of children, including those experiencing family violence, to contact the services they need to be safe and supported.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| The Standards     | The Victorian Child Safe Standards are a compulsory framework supporting organisations providing services to children to implement policies and procedures which prevent, respond to and report allegations of child abuse.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Volunteer         | A person who willingly offers to undertake a task or perform a service without pay. Vocational placement students are treated as volunteers for the purposes of this Policy and Procedures Manual.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Vulnerable person | Vulnerable people are defined as a people aged under 18 or other individuals who may be unable to take care of themselves or are unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

|                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                | <p>While all people must be protected from harm, there are additional legislative and ethical considerations for protecting vulnerable people.</p> <p>Vulnerable people can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• children and seniors</li> <li>• people with impaired intellectual or physical functioning</li> <li>• people from a low socio-economic background</li> <li>• people who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders</li> <li>• people who are not native speakers of the local language</li> <li>• people with low levels of literacy or education</li> <li>• people subject to modern slavery, which involves human exploitation and control, such as forced labour, debt bondage, human trafficking, and child labour.</li> </ul> |
| Whistle-blower | <p>Anyone who makes or attempts to make a report of Reportable Conduct under this Policy, and is, or has previously been, an employee, volunteer, contractor, third party, child, young person or vulnerable person in the care of BNC or is a relative or dependent of such persons.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Youth          | <p>A person aged between 12 and 24 years of age.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

## Document Control Register

| Manual Number | Policy                              | Name                                                                                                                                                                                     | Version           | Date Ratified | Review Date           |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| V 1.0         | All                                 | BNC Policy and Procedure Manual                                                                                                                                                          | 1                 | 20/03/2020    | 16/09/2020            |
| V 1.1         | All                                 | BNC Policy and Procedure Manual – fix minor errors and formatting                                                                                                                        | 2 of all policies | 16/06/2021    | 16/06/2022            |
| V1.2          | 2.3<br>3.2                          | Child Safe Code of Conduct<br>Child Safety and Wellbeing                                                                                                                                 | 1<br>3            | 20/07/2022    | With Policy Manual V2 |
| V 2.0         |                                     | Minor changes (Spelling, new policy names):<br>2.4, 3.1, 3.4, 3.5, 3.13, 3.14, 3.15, 4.2, 4.3, 5.8, 5.9, 5.13, 5.14, 5.15, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6                                  | 2.1               | 15/03/2023    |                       |
|               |                                     | Policies with reallocated policy numbers:<br>Continuous Improvement formerly 2.3 now 2.5<br>Section 5 renumbered                                                                         | 1.0<br>Various    | 15/03/2023    |                       |
|               |                                     | Policies with additional words, sentences or paragraphs.<br>1.1, 2.5, 3.2, 3.3, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 4.1, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 5.7, 5.11, 5.12, 6.7<br>Child Safety<br>New definitions and acronyms. | 2.1<br>3.1        | 15/03/2023    |                       |
|               | 2.1<br>2.2<br>2.3<br>2.6<br>2.7     | <b>New Policies:</b><br>Code of Ethics and Conduct (formerly Code of Ethics)<br>Workplace Behaviour (formerly Code of Conduct)<br>Child Safe Code of Conduct<br>Whistleblower<br>Auspice | 1.0               | 15/03/2023    | June 2024             |
|               | 3.6<br>3.10<br>3.11<br>3.16<br>3.17 | Feedback<br>Motor Vehicle<br>Emergency Management Plan<br>Handling Child Complaints<br>Programs, Projects and Activities                                                                 | 1.0               | 15/03/2023    | June 2024             |

|     |      |                                                                                                                                                          |     |            |           |
|-----|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------------|-----------|
|     | 4.4  | In Camera                                                                                                                                                |     |            |           |
|     | 4.5  | CoM Resignation or Removal                                                                                                                               |     |            |           |
|     | 5.1  | Grievance Resolution (formerly Feedback and Grievance)                                                                                                   |     |            |           |
|     | 5.2  | Disciplinary and Performance Management (new)                                                                                                            |     |            |           |
|     | 5.5  | Performance Review (formerly Performance Management)                                                                                                     |     |            |           |
|     | 5.10 | Worker Screening                                                                                                                                         |     |            |           |
|     | 5.13 | Vocational Placement                                                                                                                                     |     |            |           |
|     |      | Document Register reformatted                                                                                                                            |     |            |           |
| 3.1 |      | Format changes to remove excess lines and spaces<br>Removal of unwanted line breaks<br>Updated Definitions for the Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy | 3.1 | 01/11/2025 | June 2027 |
|     | 2.1  | Code Of Ethics and Conduct includes Child Safe Code of Conduct                                                                                           |     |            |           |
|     | 2.3  | Child Safe Code of Conduct replaced with Safeguarding Vulnerable People                                                                                  |     |            |           |
|     | 3.1  | Appropriate Use of Technology                                                                                                                            |     |            |           |
|     | 3.2  | Child Safety and Wellbeing - new                                                                                                                         |     |            |           |
|     | 3.9  | Incident Response & Reporting                                                                                                                            |     |            |           |
|     | 3.14 | Privacy                                                                                                                                                  |     |            |           |
|     | 3.17 | Programs, Projects & MOUs – new                                                                                                                          |     |            |           |
|     | 5.1  | Grievance Resolution                                                                                                                                     |     |            |           |
|     | 6.8  | Contracts, Agreements and MOUs – new                                                                                                                     |     |            |           |



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## Section 1: Policy and Procedure Development

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### **Relevant standard, legislation, or controls**

- Refer to the Introduction for a full list of foundation principles and standards
- BNC Document Register
- Association Incorporation Reform Act 2012

## 1.1 Policy Development

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|

### Policy Declaration

Maintaining a consistent approach to the development, implementation, and review of policies is a key action for effective governance and organisational management. Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) maintains an up-to-date, comprehensive Policy and Procedure Manual to guide the practice of employees, volunteers, Committee of Management (CoM) members, and tutors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) and external BNC users and other third parties. The purpose of this policy is to describe the process for policy and procedure development and management.

### Policy Description

#### Application:

This policy applies to the development of all BNC policies and procedures. It applies to anyone involved in policy development, approval, and review.

#### Objectives:

All policies are written, presented, approved and implemented in the standard format as defined by the BNC Policy Template.

All policies are maintained by a document control mechanism, found at the beginning of each policy, including:

- Policy Title.
- Document Number, defined by:
  - o Section number e.g. 1
  - o Policy number e.g. 1.1
- Version Number
- Date Ratified
- Date for Review

Document Control for all policies is summarised in the Document Control Register at the beginning of each Policy.

Key procedures related to policies are included below the policy and are denoted by the relative Document Number e.g. 1.1.1

Templates, forms or links are provided in the Document Register section at the end of the Policy and Procedure Manual. These are denoted by the relative Document Number e.g. DRF1 or DRR1.

New policies are reviewed within 12 months of adoption, then every year at least two sections of the manual will be reviewed. Policies are updated as new practice or legislation emerge.

BNC policies are inclusive and accessible, incorporating:

- 12-point Arial fonts.
- Left Aligned.
- Line spacing 1.3 and line spacing 1.15 is used for lists.
- Avoidance of italics, underlining, and uppercase words.
- Avoidance of strong colour contrast between text and background, including watermarks.
- Use of plain English, short sentences, and minimisation of jargon.

Policy amendments can only be authorised by the CoM policy and procedure implementation, changes, or exceptions are authorised by the Chair. Operational procedure implementation, changes or exceptions are authorised by the Executive Officer (EO).

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Policy and Procedure Manual
- All policies
- All procedures

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- All supporting documentation
- BNC Policy Template

### **1.1.1 Policy Development Procedures**

Policies and key procedures are available in the Policy and Procedure Manual, kept in the Reception Office, and online at <http://www.ballaratnc.org.au>.

#### **Policy Development process (Governance):**

- BNC EO and/or CoM prepare draft policy.

- Feedback collected from users ensures continuous improvement of the Policy and Procedure Manual.
- The EO will collect and review all feedback to be included in the next draft policy.
- Draft policy is distributed to the CoM for consideration prior to the committee meeting.
- Draft policy is discussed at the meeting and either approved or sent back for alterations and presented at the next committee meeting.

**Procedure Development process (Operational):**

- The BNC EO will ensure procedures are accurately documented and maintained.
- Procedures reflecting policy implementation are maintained in the BNC Policy and Procedure Manual.
- Where procedural changes are being developed the EO will confer with the Wendouree Neighbourhood Centre Manager to ensure best practice and consistency between organisations.

**Adoption and Distribution process:**

Once a policy is approved by the CoM

- it must be included in the minutes of the CoM meeting
- it is effective from the date of approval and supersedes all previous policies.
- it is updated in the BNC Policy and Procedure Manual, and a hardcopy replaced in the office and soft copy updated on <http://www.ballaratnc.org.au>.
- The EO will advise staff and CoM members when it is available electronically

it is included in all future inductions for staff, committee members, and volunteers

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## Section 2: Culture Policies

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### Relevant standard, legislation, or controls

- Refer to the Introduction for a full list of foundation principles and standards.
- BNC Document Register
- Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) Act 1986
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Racial Hatred Act 1995
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) including Australia Privacy Principles (APP)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) including Information Privacy Principles (IPP)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety (Child Safe Standards Compliance and Enforcement) Amendment Act 2021
- Reportable Conduct Scheme
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) (including reporting to Child Protection)
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) (including Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose offences)
- Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic) (including Part XIII – Organisational liability for child abuse)
- Worker Screening Act 2020

## 2.1 Code of Ethics and Conduct

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|

### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) Committee of Management (CoM) members are dedicated to an ethical framework which governs the decisions, direction, and policy of our organisation. BNC is committed to protecting our organisation and the people involved with our organisation from illegal or damaging actions by individuals or businesses, either knowingly or unknowingly. This policy will guide business conduct to ensure ethical practice, through an understanding of our ethical principles and behavioural standards expectations.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

All people representing our organisation through governance, operations or participation, are bound to demonstrate the values and to act in a professional manner at all times.

This code applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, CoM Members, volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) and BNC users and other third parties involved in any activity on behalf of BNC, who are required to notify BNC when other interests conflict with the best interests of BNC or where conduct could be deemed unethical and/or illegal. BNC will not tolerate any wrongdoing or impropriety at any time.

#### **Objectives:**

Effective ethics and appropriate behaviour is a team effort involving the participation and support of everyone involved at BNC. BNC will promote a trustworthy and honest atmosphere to reinforce the vision of ethics and standard of conduct within the organisation. Our ethical principles are based on:

- a respect for basic human rights.
- a respect for the individual and the right to self-determination.
- a respect for different cultures and religions in society.
- a commitment to empowerment and participatory democracy.
- a commitment to collaborative working relationships and collective action.

- a commitment to safeguard vulnerable people, including children
- an acknowledgement all relationships and activities with vulnerable people, including children, are based on their consent (whenever possible).

The following standards outline our expectations in relation to ethical practice, and how you should conduct yourself, to meet these expectations:

## **We Act with Honor and Integrity**

### **ETHICAL PRACTICE**

Understand our ethical principles and use them as a guide to how we make decisions, use good judgement and, treat each another and our clients.

### **EXPECTED CONDUCT**

- Publicly and privately support the organisation and each other, acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of others and acting with courtesy and respect.
- Act honestly and in good faith at all times in the interests of the organisational objectives, ensuring all stakeholders, particularly those who are recipients of services, are treated fairly according to their rights.
- Perform duties to the best of our abilities, considering skills, experience, qualifications, and position, and act in a safe, responsible, and effective manner.
- Be punctual and reliable in attendance and duty.
- Comply with the prescribed terms and conditions of our employment/engagement.
- Notify the organisation of any inability to attend duty as early as possible so as not to inconvenience others or delay the work of the organisation.
- Endeavour to ensure personal and financial interests do not conflict with your duty to BNC, and where a potential or actual conflict arises, disclose it to the Executive Officer (EO) or CoM Chair.
- Undertake no personal or business activities for personal gain while at the organisation or while conducting business of the organisation.
- Undertake no personal or business activities for personal gain after leaving the organisation which would breach BNC confidentiality, privacy and intellectual property policies.
- Communicate our commitment to professional conduct in key locations in our organisation, including media, online platforms, and facilities.

## **We Foster a Culture of Respect, Dignity and Safety**

### **ETHICAL PRACTICE**

We create a culture of inclusion and respect, where our policies, practices and actions ensure everyone is treated fairly, with dignity and without prejudice, in an open and safe environment.

#### EXPECTED CONDUCT

- Treat everybody in our organisation with respect, reflecting on the way they want to be treated to ensure they know they are welcome.
- Value people for who they are, their interests, abilities and needs, finding a place for every individual to flourish and grow in our organisation.
- Honour diversity within our organisation, showing interest and open-mindedness towards people for their individual backgrounds and beliefs.
- Avoid using language which might isolate or diminish individuals based on their age, culture, socio-economic status, education, physical or mental health, gender, sexual orientation, or other personal factors.
- Be open to, and accepting of, others having different experiences, skills, attributes and views on life and work.
- Recognise the lived experience of others is different from our own and we cannot assume to know the challenges they may face.
- Take reasonable care of your own health and safety and the safety of others, and follow all reasonable instructions, policies, and procedures about safety.
- Make sure you are always fit to safely perform your duties, unimpaired by drugs, alcohol, fatigue, or other substances.

#### **We Protect our Assets and Information**

##### ETHICAL PRACTICE

We protect, secure, and use our assets and information for appropriate business purposes, including physical assets, electronic assets, information systems, intellectual property and confidential business information.

#### EXPECTED CONDUCT

- Respect and safeguard the property, assets and confidential information of the organisation, the public, and your colleagues ensuring BNC property is appropriately secure from damage, theft or misappropriation.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding any information gained through our work, and not divulge personal information or contact details of staff, CoM, or service users. Staff and CoM maybe requested to sign the Conflict of Interest Register Form DRF1.



- Ensure all transactions, agreements, and records flowing from relationships with BNC's stakeholders will be accurately and openly recorded in the organisation's books and records, and no entries will be made which obscure the true nature of a transaction.
- Seek authorisation for use of BNC trade secrets and marketing, operational, personnel, financial and technical information integral to the success of BNC.
- Do not use BNC assets or business relationships for personal use or gain.
- Treat BNC property with care and consideration, in accordance with accepted community standards and in accordance with manufacturers' instructions, safe work practices, and any relevant BNC procedures.

## **We Uphold the Law**

### ETHICAL PRACTICE

Comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies and take reasonable steps to ensure others make decisions which are consistent with these obligations.

### EXPECTED CONDUCT

- Take responsibility for understanding and following laws, regulations and BNC policies and procedures which apply to you. Misunderstanding or being unaware of requirements does not relieve you of an obligation to comply.
- Complete all relevant training and development programs, so you understand what is required of you.

## **We Safeguard Vulnerable People**

### ETHICAL PRACTICE

Providing a safe environment where vulnerable people, including children, are safe and feel safe, where their voices are heard about the decisions which affect their lives, and we act in their best interests.

### EXPECTED CONDUCT

- Uphold the rights of vulnerable people who come into contact with BNC so they feel heard on matters relevant to their safety and so they feel safe and protected
- Have Zero tolerance for abuse and we will take all allegations of reportable conduct and safety concerns very seriously, ensuring such conduct is dealt with in accordance with BNC policies, procedures and the law.
- Committed to preventing abuse by identifying risk early, and by removing and reducing these risks in both physical and online environments.

- Actively work to listen to and empower vulnerable people who come into contact with BNC.
- Recognise we have a legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when there are concerns about a vulnerable person, which will be followed rigorously.
- Provide robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.
- Provide a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and consider their needs in providing this environment.
- A safe environment for and consider the needs of vulnerable people in providing this environment recognising gender diversity, disability and cultural diversity.
- Report any discovery or suspicion of inappropriate, illegal content, contact or coercion, such as child exploitation material, suspected grooming or sextortion or other abuse, on any device or equipment connected in any way with BNC's, regardless of ownership, must be reported immediately to the EO and if appropriate, to Police following the Incident Reporting and Response Policy procedure.

## **We Honour the Rights of our Community and Community Members**

### **ETHICAL PRACTICE**

We conduct ourselves, our work, and our business, in a manner which reflects our commitment to an individual's basic human rights and social justice principles.

### **EXPECTED CONDUCT**

- Acknowledge the principles and values underlying our approach to professional boundaries in relationships with BNC users. It is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers and CoM members therefore to behave, both at work and outside, in ways which uphold their own credibility, safety, and BNC reputations.
- Recognise our actions and behaviours, both in the workplace and beyond, may be perceived as representing BNC's values, regardless of our intent. It is therefore important to ensure our conduct consistently aligns with BNC's standards and does not inadvertently contradict them.
- Work to promote equity, access, participation, and the rights of people within the community.
- Recognise the barriers people face and work to reduce these barriers for individuals and our local communities.

- Foster inclusion and provide advocacy for those sectors of the community facing disadvantage, impeded access to education, and under-representation.
- Be responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing, and empowerment of vulnerable people, including children, in our organisation.
- Encourage all to voice their ideas and opinions and participate in relevant activities - especially in activities and issues which are important to them.
- Establish an understanding of what disadvantage is, why people are disadvantaged, and who is affected in the local community.
- Recognise and respond to specific issues of language, culture, age, gender, sexual identity, disability, financial disadvantage, and social and/or geographic isolation.
- Plan and undertake special measures to ensure the inclusion of disadvantaged groups within their community.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- All policies within the BNC Policy and Procedures Manual

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Conflict of Interest Register Form DRF1
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Incident Report Form DRF7
- Staff Policy Acknowledgment Form DRF24
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Acknowledgment Form DRF28

### **2.1.1 Code of Ethics and Conduct Procedures**

To manifest the BNC Code of Ethics and Conduct in real and meaningful actions, we will:

- Require staff and CoM members to read and sign the Code of Ethics and Conduct Acknowledgement Form DRF28 as part of the Induction Process. A copy of the signed document is provided to the individual, and a copy is maintained in their BNC file.
- Display and maintain information related to our Code of Ethics and Conduct, and other relevant policies, in key locations within our facilities.
- Incorporate use of our Code of Ethics and Conduct in our Induction Process, Performance Management Procedures and other organisational activities.

- CoM members and the EO will role model the expected conduct and business practices outlined in this Code, acting with honesty and integrity at all times.
- CoM members and the EO will respect the strategic and operational boundaries of BNC roles for EO, staff and committee positions.
- CoM members will not be involved in BNC operational activities unless invited by the EO or as delegated by the CoM. CoM members will be treated as volunteers when working in an operational capacity at BNC.
- EO will maintain an open-door policy and welcomes suggestions and concerns from anyone to allow them to feel comfortable discussing any issues which will alert the EO to concerns within the workforce and organisation.
- Encourage everyone to participate in open dialogue, get honest feedback, and treat each other with fairness, honesty, and objectivity.
- Report to the EO (or the CoM if it relates to the EO) if something we see doesn't seem right or is a potential breach of our Code.
- Consider the questions below if we are unsure of the right thing to do, and if we are still in doubt, speak up and seek advice from your leader.

We will consider the following questions when assessing our own behaviour:

- Is the behaviour legal?
- Does the behaviour comply with all appropriate policies?
- Does the behaviour reflect values and culture?
- Could the behaviour adversely affect BNC stakeholders?
- Would you feel personally concerned if the behaviour appeared in a news headline?
- Could the behaviour adversely affect BNC if someone else did it?

### **Consequences of breaching the BNC Code of Ethics and Conduct**

BNC takes our legal responsibilities seriously. Breaching our Code is a serious matter. If you breach our Code, you will face consequences. In serious cases, this could include the termination of your employment or ending your business relationship with BNC.

In some cases, conduct breaching our Code might also breach laws and attract penalties or charges for which you may be personally liable.

**Code of Ethics and Conduct Acknowledgement Form (DRF28).**

I have read and understand the Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre Code of Ethics and Conduct and confirm I have discussed any concerns or questions I have with the Executive Officer or Volunteer Coordinator.

|            |            |
|------------|------------|
| Name:      | EO Name:   |
| Signature: | Signature: |
| Date:      | Date:      |

## 2.2 Workplace Behaviour

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) Committee of Management (CoM) will build a workplace culture where the principles of diversity, fairness and inclusion are integrated into our everyday work. Our behaviour is guided by our organisational values and standards set out in our Code of Ethics and Conduct.

### Policy Description

#### Application:

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, CoM Members, volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) and BNC users and other third parties involved in any BNC activity or situations having a connection to our work or engagement with BNC, including, but not limited to:

- when we are in the workplace, whether during or outside normal working hours;
- whether on or off-site, whether face to face, using information systems (e.g. computers) or other forms of communication (e.g. phones); and/or
- work-related events, including but not limited to conferences and social functions where we are or maybe perceived to be there representing BNC.

#### Objectives:

BNC has a legal and moral responsibility to provide a safe, ethical, and inclusive work environment and to set standards of behaviour supporting a workplace culture free of bullying, discrimination, harassment, vilification, and victimisation

BNC will:

- ensure our structures and practices are free from unlawful discrimination, both direct and indirect.
- provide information about unlawful bullying, discrimination, harassment, vilification, and victimisation.
- ensure our policies, procedures, and practices comply with equal opportunity and occupational health and safety requirements.

- create a working environment which promotes inclusion, dignity, and respect for all. No form of discrimination, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- ensure training, development and progression opportunities are available to all.

### **Individual Responsibility**

As individuals, we are responsible for ensuring we understand and comply with this policy, attend regular training relating to this policy, and take all reasonable steps to ensure our workplace is free from unacceptable behaviour.

We are responsible for our own behaviour and can be held legally liable as individuals for unlawful behaviour; including discriminatory, harassing or bullying behaviour. If we observe another person breaching this policy, we are required to take action or notify an appropriate member of management, as outlined in our Grievance Resolution Policy.

### **Management Responsibility**

Managers are responsible for providing a safe work environment which enables people to carry out their work responsibilities free of unacceptable workplace behaviour. This includes being good role models of respectful workplace behaviour; continual monitoring of the work environment to ensure high standards of respectful workplace behaviour are observed; and ensuring individuals understand their responsibilities.

### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Induction Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Handling Child Complaints
- Appropriate Use of Technology Policy
- CoM Resignation or Removal Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy

### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Incident Report Form DRF 7
- Conflicts of Interest Register DRR1

- Safe Work Australia Guides

## 2.2.1 Workplace Behaviour Procedures

### Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour

Individuals are encouraged, wherever possible, to raise matters directly with the other person/s involved in the inappropriate behaviour if they feel safe and capable to do so. This is often the most effective and timely way to address issues and resolve any potential misunderstandings. Where this is not possible, or where further direction is needed, complaints will be handled in line with the Grievance Resolution Policy.

All complaints of unacceptable behaviour in the workplace will be taken seriously. The grievance or complaint may be investigated and, if proven, appropriate disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator.

All reasonable steps to ensure anyone who makes a complaint will not be victimised or treated unfairly for making the complaint. However, vexatious or malicious complaints (deliberately made up) may result in disciplinary action against the complainant.

### Bullying

BNC has adopted the Safe Work Australia definition of workplace bullying, defined as:

*“Workplace bullying is repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or a group of workers, including volunteers, that creates a risk to health and safety”.*

Examples of bullying behaviour may include, but are not limited to:

- abusive, insulting, or offensive language or comments
- aggressive and intimidating conduct
- belittling or humiliating comments
- being subjected to practical jokes
- unjustified criticism
- deliberately excluding or isolating employees
- withholding information vital for effective work performance
- setting unreasonable timelines or constantly changing deadlines
- setting tasks unreasonably below or beyond a person’s skill level
- denying access to information, supervision, consultation, or resources to the detriment of the worker
- spreading misinformation or malicious rumours
- changing work arrangements such as rosters and leave to deliberately inconvenience a particular employee or employees.



Bullying behaviours can be exhibited verbally, physically and/or through body language, and they can take the form of action or lack of action.

Workplace bullying can be directed at a single employee or group of employees and be carried out by one or more individuals. It can occur:

- sideways (peer to peer) between employees and/or volunteers;
- downwards from managers to employees; or
- upwards from employees to supervisors or managers.

### **What is not bullying?**

Reasonable management action carried out in a reasonable manner is not bullying. For example, reasonable management action may include:

- setting reasonable performance goals, standards, and deadlines;
- rostering and allocating working hours where the requirements are reasonable;
- not selecting an employee for a development opportunity where a reasonable process has been followed;
- informing an employee about unsatisfactory work performance in an honest, fair, and constructive way;
- implementing organisational changes or restructuring; or
- disciplinary action, including suspension or terminating employment.

Isolated or “one-off” incidents of discrimination, harassment or other unwelcome or inappropriate behaviour are not bullying. However, such behaviour may breach other BNC policies or procedures.

Conflicts, differences of opinion and disagreements are not necessarily bullying. Such incidents are a normal part of working life and, while they can leave people feeling upset, they should not be confused with bullying behaviour.

### **Discrimination**

Unlawful discrimination may take the form of direct or indirect discrimination. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person in the same or similar circumstances because of one of the grounds or attributes listed below. Indirect discrimination occurs when there is a requirement, condition or practice imposed which appears neutral, but which has the effect of disadvantaging a person with a particular attribute, in circumstances where this is unreasonable.

Unlawful discrimination can occur on grounds or based on attributes, including:

- marital status;
- sex, which includes pregnancy, potential pregnancy and childbirth, and sexual orientation or lawful sexual activity;
- race;
- religious, ethical or political beliefs;
- disability, illness or injury;
- industrial activity and trade union membership;
- gender history, gender identity, transgender and transsexual status;
- carer status or family responsibilities;
- physical features;
- breastfeeding;
- irrelevant criminal record or irrelevant medical record;
- employment status;
- age; and
- personal association (whether as a relative or otherwise) with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes.

Examples of unlawful discrimination may include (but are not limited to):

- an employer's refusal to employ a woman because she is pregnant;
- an employer's decision not to offer a job to a candidate because the candidate has a physical disability, even though the disability has no impact on the candidate's ability to do the job;
- offensive jokes or comments about another person's racial or ethnic background, sex, sexual preference, age, disability, and the like;
- display of pictures, calendars, pin-ups, posters, computer images (e.g. in emails) etc. which are offensive or derogatory;
- expressing negative stereotypes of particular groups;
- judging a person on characteristics such as religious or political beliefs, cultural practices, sex, or age rather than work performance; and/or
- using stereotypes or assumptions when making decisions about a person's career.

## **Harassment**

Harassment is unlawful under both State and Commonwealth legislation if:

- it is unwelcome, uninvited, or unreciprocated; and
- a reasonable person would anticipate the recipient would be offended, humiliated, intimidated; and
- it is either sexual in nature or targets a person on a discriminatory ground.

The fact no offence was intended or the conduct was engaged in as a joke does not mean the harassment is lawful. The conduct will amount to harassment if a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would have anticipated the possibility the person harassed would be offended, humiliated, insulted, or intimidated. Harassment can be a single or repeated act of offensive behaviour.

A common form of harassment is sexual harassment. A person sexually harasses another person if they:

- make an unwelcome sexual advance;
- make an unwelcome request for sexual favours; or
- engage in other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, and a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would have anticipated the possibility the other person would be offended, humiliated, insulted, or intimidated.

## **Victimisation**

Victimisation occurs where a person is subjected to a detriment in retaliation for some action they have taken, or intend to take, or have helped someone else take, in relation to a complaint of harassment, discrimination, bullying, vilification or victimisation. This includes people who have agreed to be witnesses in relation to a person's complaint.

A detriment in employment may include demotion, dismissal, transfer, suspension, loss of a benefit, being ostracised from work or work-related social functions, or being the subject of gossip or innuendo.

## **Vilification**

Vilification is generally any act which:

- happens publicly as opposed to privately; and
- could incite (encourage, urge, or stir up) others to hate, have serious contempt for, or have severe ridicule of an individual or a group of people, because of race, colour, nationality, descent, ethnic, ethno-religious or national origin, homosexuality (lesbian or gay), HIV or AIDS status or transgender status. This includes vilification because an individual is thought to be a lesbian, gay or transgender, or to have HIV or AIDS.

Certain forms of vilification, such as racial vilification, are unlawful; however, the fact a type of vilification is not unlawful does not mean it does not breach this policy.

## 2.3 Safeguarding Vulnerable People

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|

### Policy Declaration

At BNC we believe all people, regardless of their age, gender, race, religious beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Embedding a culture of empowering people and upholding safety within the Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) is integral to our ability to meet the needs of and serve our community. We are committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children, young adults, vulnerable people and people at risk, (collectively referred to as Vulnerable People).

We have zero tolerance for any form of physical and/or sexual abuse. Everyone working at BNC is responsible for the protection of children, young adults, vulnerable people and people at risk and reporting information about any form of physical and /or sexual abuse.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including staff, Committee of Management (CoM) Members, volunteers, contractors and BNC users. It applies to a broad range of situations where interaction with a vulnerable person may occur including all activities in and organised by BNC which involve, result in or relate to contact with vulnerable individuals.

A vulnerable person is defined as a person aged under 18 or other individuals who may be unable to take care of themselves or are unable to protect themselves. All staff, volunteers, contractors and third parties of BNC share responsibility for protecting everyone from abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Failure to comply with this Policy and related procedures may result in disciplinary action.

#### **Objectives:**

The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) define 'safeguarding as a primary duty of care to protect the welfare and human rights of people that are connected

with your charity or its work – particularly people that may be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation’.

BNC is committed to the Safeguarding Principles of empowerment, prevention, proportionality, protection, partnership and accountability.

We will support a positive and effective culture towards Safeguarding and ensure all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible incidents of neglect, grooming or abuse and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs.

We will provide guidance to staff, volunteers, contractors and third parties as to actions to be taken where they suspect any abuse within or outside of the organisation and provide assurance that all suspected abuse will be reported and thoroughly investigated.

The CoM are responsible for protecting people who interact with BNC, they:

- govern by promoting a culture of safety for vulnerable people.
- attend Level 2 or higher Safeguarding training.
- have Safeguarding as a standard committee agenda item
- ensure Safeguarding governance, policies and procedures, appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place.
- will include Safeguarding as part of the overall risk management approach.

The Executive Officer (EO) as the Safeguarding Officer is responsible for:

- ensuring all staff, volunteers and contractors know relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures, and the organisation’s Code of Ethics and Conduct.
- ensuring BNC staff, volunteers and contractors receive Safeguarding training and are aware of their obligation to report suspected abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable person by following these policies and procedures.
- ensuring BNC has effective and appropriate ways to manage Safeguarding and legal compliance.
- providing Safeguarding updates and incident reports to the CoM.
- working with the CoM to assess safeguarding risks within the organisation and to develop strategies and action plans to minimise the risks.
- undertaking correct screening of people by following current safeguarding laws and legislation and keeping appropriate records.
- dealing with and investigating reports of abuse and ensuring reports to external parties are made where required.

BNC staff, volunteers, contractors and third parties are responsible for:

- attending Safeguarding training and to understand the BNC policy, procedures, Code of Ethics and Conduct and relevant laws in relation to Safeguarding protection.
- being the first point of contact for a safeguarding matter or disclosure.
- providing an environment that supports all vulnerable people's emotional and physical safety.
- assessing the risk of abuse to vulnerable people within their area and ensure controls are in place to prevent, detect and respond to incidents.
- reporting any reasonable belief or incident that a vulnerable person's safety or welfare is at risk to responsible persons in the organisation or authorities (such as the Police and/or the child protection service).
- they fulfil their obligations as mandatory reporters and facilitate the reporting of any suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Policy
- Induction Policy
- Appropriate Use of Technology Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Strategy, Business, and Risk Management Policy
- Worker Screening Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Handling Child Complaints Policy
- Privacy Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- The Child Safe Standards
- Child Safety Training Action Plan DRM7
- Training Register DRR3
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Incident Report Form DRF7
- Risk Management Plan DRM8
- Risk Register DRR7
- Positions Descriptions

- Enrolment Forms

### **2.3.1 Safeguarding Vulnerable People Procedures**

The BNC Code of Ethics and Conduct applies to all people working with BNC including, CoM members, employees, contractors, and volunteers (collectively referred to as Staff). The Code of Ethics and Conduct will be reviewed, agreed to, and signed by all staff across the organisation regardless of their role or job description within BNC.

Our Code of Ethics and Conduct sets expectations for how staff should behave around vulnerable people. This is important to help prevent them from being harmed. It identifies both positive safe behaviours and those we consider unacceptable. Engaging in unacceptable behaviour is a breach of the Code of Ethics and Conduct and may result in managerial or disciplinary action.

BNC is committed to safe employment and recruitment practices which reduce the risk of harm to vulnerable people from people unsuitable to work with or have contact with them. The Worker Screening Policy requires all Staff to go through the organisation's recruitment screening processes before commencing with BNC.

BNC will provide mandatory Safeguarding training to Staff and any relevant persons connected to the organisation as part of their induction either as face-to-face or online training. BNC Safeguarding training includes:

- what is Safeguarding and everyone's role in Safeguarding of vulnerable persons.
- how to recognise a vulnerable person potentially in need of Safeguarding and take action and what the indicators of abuse, including grooming behaviours are.
- how to recognise, identify, mitigate and respond to risks in the online, offline, onsite and off-site environments. This includes the structural and physical environmental risks and how to communicate that information to vulnerable people and their families.
- BNC Safeguarding and Incident Reporting and Response policies and procedures and the process for when and how to report:
  - an incident
  - potential incident
  - if a vulnerable person's safety or welfare is at risk or
  - the requirements and process for mandatory reporting.

#### **How are Safeguarding Incidents received**

Safeguarding incidents can be reported by:

- Disclosure from a vulnerable person

- Verbal or written reports to staff
- Staff observation or suspicion of an incident

## **Managing and Reporting of a Safeguarding Incident**

All Staff and third parties who receive a Safeguarding Incident from or about a vulnerable person or who have grounds to suspect abusive activity must report any suspicion or reasonable belief that an incident

- Has taken place.
- May be taking place. or
- Could take place.

All reporting must follow BNC's Incident Reporting and Response Policy and Procedure. Reports can be made through

- Any CoM member email [committee@ballaratnc.org.au](mailto:committee@ballaratnc.org.au)
- The Executive Officer, Vicki Coltman 0409023373 [manager@ballaratnc.org.au](mailto:manager@ballaratnc.org.au)
- A Staff member
- Call Triple Xero (000) If you believe a vulnerable person is in immediate danger, in a life-threatening situation or safety or welfare.

All suspected, perceived and potential incidents (including Mandatory Reporting) must also be reported to the EO and CoM to be managed through an incident response plan.

A report will contain:

- a) The name and contact details of the reporter.
- b) The name of the vulnerable person or, if a name cannot be obtained after reasonable inquiries, a description of the vulnerable person.
- c) If, or to the extent, known to the reporter:
  - i. The date of birth.
  - ii. Information about where the person lives.
  - iii. The names of the parents (if applicable), guardian or other appropriate persons.
- d) The grounds for the reporter's belief the vulnerable person has been the subject of abuse or is the subject of ongoing abuse.
- e) If, or to the extent, known to the reporter:
  - i. The name of any person alleged to be responsible for the abuse.
  - ii. The person's contact details. and
  - iii. The person's relationship to the vulnerable person.



- f) The contact details to report all incidents or near misses which including name, position, phone number and email.

All incidents and the status of an investigation are to be stored securely as per the Incident Reporting and Response Policy.

## **Mandatory Reporting**

If the EO is informed of a complaint or disclosure that may be reportable conduct under the applicable Reportable Conduct Scheme and which has not yet been reported to the appropriate authorities, the EO must determine if the circumstances constitute a reasonable belief of abuse and reportable conduct:

The EO will determine if an individual has engaged in reportable conduct such as:

- Any sexual offence, or sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including child pornography offences).
- Any assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child.
- Any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child; or
- Criminal offences such as the failure to reduce or remove risk of a child becoming the victim of abuse and concealing child abuse.

If the EO determines there is not a reasonable belief and/or the conduct is not reportable conduct within the meaning of the applicable legislation, they are not required to report the complaint or disclosure, but the decision and the reasons for that decision must be documented in writing and the CoM advised within 1 day.

A decision by the EO not to report a complaint or disclosure to the appropriate authorities does not prevent any other staff member, volunteer, contractor or CoM member from reporting it to the appropriate authorities.

If the EO determines the complaint or disclosure is reportable conduct, the EO must report to the appropriate Mandatory Reporting Contacts within Three (3) days after becoming aware of a reportable allegation. The Mandatory Reporting Contacts are:

- Commission for Children and Young people: 1300 782 978 e: [contact@ccyp.vic.gov.au](mailto:contact@ccyp.vic.gov.au)
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing during business hours (8.45am - 5.00pm), Monday to Friday, West Division intake - rural and regional: 1800 075 599.
- After Hours Child Protection Emergency Service on 13 12 78.
- Senior Rights Victoria 1300 368 821.
- Disability Services Commissioner <https://www.odsc.vic.gov.au/>.

- Department of Health and Human Services <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/>.

The EO will notify the appropriate Mandatory Reporting Contacts of:

- Any allegation of reportable conduct, or conviction of reportable conduct, against an individual when the EO becomes aware.
- If BNC proposes to take disciplinary action against an individual (and the reasons why it intends to take or not take any such action). and
- Any written submissions made to BNC concerning any such allegation or conviction that the individual concerned wished to have considered in determining what (if any) disciplinary or other action should be taken in relation to the individual concerned.

**Failure to disclose:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report this information to the police. Failure to disclose the information may be a criminal offence.

**Failure to protect:** People of authority in BNC will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.

### **Investigating an Incident**

All incidents or suspected incidents will be investigated following the BNC Incident Reporting and Response Policy and all individuals must cooperate fully with the internal or external investigator.

The EO will ensure reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met in any investigation and will notify the Insurer of any reporting of a safeguarding incident, including sexual or serious physical assault.

If it is decided that it will not conflict with any proceeding of the authorities or upon receiving clearance from authorities, the EO will conduct a confidential internal investigation.

An individual who attends an external investigation who is the subject of a complaint, whether related to activities of BNC or not, must:

- Immediately inform the EO.
- Cooperate with the appropriate authorities in their investigation of the complaint.
- Comply with the EO's directions regarding that person's participation in BNC activities and interactions with vulnerable people. and

- Keep the EO informed of the investigation status into the complaint and its resolution.

While an investigation is conducted, BNC reserves the right to:

- Report the matter to appropriate authorities, including the Police or appropriate authorities as required under legislative requirements; and/or
- Stand the individual down (with pay, where applicable).

At the conclusion of any investigation and a breach of the organisation's policies or Code of Ethics and Conduct is identified BNC reserves the right to:

- Take disciplinary action against those it believes are responsible, which may include dismissal.
- Terminate or cease involvement with BNC.
- Take legal action.

### **Supporting Parties Affected by a Complaint**

All employees and volunteers are trained to understand their response to a vulnerable person's disclosure of abuse.

A complaint must be treated seriously, respectfully and sensitively. The EO will support a vulnerable person who makes a complaint or discloses.

BNC will offer appropriate psychological first aid and support to anyone implementing any aspect of this policy while acting on behalf of BNC. BNC will provide support to vulnerable people who are victims of abuse and their families, including accessing professional services by:

- Giving the vulnerable person your full attention.
- Maintaining a calm appearance.
- Letting the vulnerable person take their own time.
- Letting the vulnerable person use their own words – don't ask questions. Just listen.
- Reassuring the vulnerable person it is right to tell.
- Accepting the vulnerable person will disclose only what is comfortable and recognise the bravery/strength of the vulnerable person for talking about something difficult.
- Telling the vulnerable person what you plan to do next.
- Reporting to EO and appropriate authorities the incident without delay.

### **2.3.2 Addendum Identifying Physical Indicators of Abuse**

Everyone plays an important role in protecting others from further harm by recognising the indicators of abuse and responding to them. The presence of one or more indicators does

not mean that abuse has occurred but does require vigilance. Indicators of abuse are not always obvious, and while this may lead to suspicions abuse has occurred, there might not be any evidence to confirm the suspicion.

### **Elder Abuse**

- Injuries such as bruises, cuts, or broken bones
- Malnourishment or weight loss
- Poor hygiene
- Symptoms of anxiety, depression, or confusion
- Unexplained transactions or loss of money
- Withdrawal from family members or friends

### **Financial Abuse**

- Restricted access to or no control over personal funds or bank accounts
- No records or incomplete records kept of expenditure and purchases
- Missing money, valuables or property
- Appearance, clothing / other items are of poor condition
- Forced changes to wills or other legal documents

### **Neglect**

- Hunger and weight loss
- Poor hygiene and or poor hair texture
- Inappropriate or inadequate clothing for climatic conditions
- Inappropriate or inadequate shelter or accommodation
- Unattended physical problems or medical needs
- Health or dietary practices that endanger health or development
- Social isolation
- Pressure marks that indicate being left in one position for too long
- Developmental delay
- Sallow or sickly appearance
- Abnormally high appetite, stealing or hoarding food
- Smelly or dirty appearance

### **Emotional or Psychological Abuse**

- Speech Disorders
- Weight loss or gain
- Avoiding home (particularly if the abuser is in the family home)
- Running away or continually staying at friend's houses
- Fear of the dark, not wanting to go to bed, bedwetting or nightmares
- Lying or stealing
- Lack of trust in adults

- Poor self-image or self-esteem
- Poor academic performance
- Poor peer relationships
- Secretive, demanding or disruptive behaviour

### **Physical Abuse**

- Facial, head and neck bruising or injuries
- Drowsiness, vomiting, fits (associated with head injuries)
- Unexplained or poorly explained injury
- Other bruising and marks may suggest the shape of the object that caused it
- Bite marks or scratches
- Unexplained burns or scalds
- Unexplained fractures, dislocations, sprains

### **Sexual Abuse**

- Direct or indirect disclosure
- Sexual act described by the person
- Trauma to the breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Injuries (e.g. tears or bruising), pain or itching to genitalia, anus or perineal region
- Torn, stained or blood stained underwear or bedclothes
- Unexplained sexually transmitted infections
- Unexplained accumulation of money or gifts

## **2.3.3 Addendum Identifying Behavioural Indicators of Abuse**

### **Elder and Financial Abuse**

- Stealing from others, borrowing money, begging
- Missing out on outings / events that they used to be able afford to go to

### **Emotional or Psychological Abuse**

- Feelings of worthlessness about life and self; extreme low self-esteem, self-abuse or self-destructive behaviour.
- Extreme attention seeking behaviour and other behaviours (e.g. bullying disruptiveness, aggressiveness)
- Excessive compliance
- Depression, withdrawal, crying

### **Grooming**

- Talks a lot about a particular adult or older child, or wants to spend a lot of time with them or meet them alone
- Is in a relationship with a much older person
- Is skipping school or sporting activities
- Is spending less time with friends or changes friendship groups suddenly
- Spends more time alone in their room
- Has unexplained gifts like new toys, clothes, jewellery or electronics and doesn't want to talk about where the gifts came from
- Doesn't want to talk about what they've been doing or lies about it
- Stops telling you about their day or asking for your advice.

### **Neglect**

- Requesting, begging, scavenging or stealing food
- Constant fatigue, listlessness or falling asleep
- Direct or indirect disclosure
- Extreme longing for company
- Anxiety about being alone or abandoned
- Displaying inappropriate or excessive self-comforting behaviours

### **Physical Abuse**

- Explanation inconsistent with the injury; explanation varies
- Avoidance or fearfulness of a particular person or employee
- Sleep disturbances (e.g. nightmares, bed wetting)
- Changes in behaviour (e.g. out of character aggression, withdrawal, excessive compliance)

### **Sexual Abuse**

- Repeat use of words e.g. "bad", "dirty"
- Self-destructive behaviour, self-mutilation
- Sudden changes in behaviour or temperament, e.g. depression, anxiety attacks, withdrawal, agitation, anger, violence, absconding, seeking comfort and security
- Inappropriate advances to others
- Sleep disturbances, refusing to go to bed, going to bed fully clothed
- Eating disorders
- Refusing to shower or constant showering
- Changes in social patterns, refusing to attend usual places (work, respite)

## 2.4 Conflict of Interest

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) is committed to transparency and ethical behaviour at all levels of our organisation. This includes avoiding situations in which we might feel compromised by conflict of interest, This policy requires we:

- act impartially and without prejudice.
- declare any potential or actual conflict of interest.
- do not accept gifts or benefits which may influence a decision.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management (CoM) Members, volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) and BNC users and other third parties involved in any activity on behalf of BNC to help them understand BNC conflict of interest processes.

#### **Objectives:**

Conflict of interest, both real and perceived, arises when people in positions of authority within BNC stand to make a personal, professional, or financial gain from our organisation. Such arrangements have the potential to undermine the integrity of our neighbourhood house, its decision making, and its reputation in the community. However, there are circumstances where conflict of interest cannot be avoided and hence must be appropriately declared and managed.

To ensure our members and our community can rely on the integrity of our decisions we will declare all conflicts of interest, or perceptions of conflicts of interest which could impact the organisation.

‘Conflict of Interest’ is, where a person stands to gain financially, personally or professionally from any business dealings, programs, or services of the organisation, other than where:

- the person falls into the class of people benefited by the organisation and the gain is of a nature common to other beneficiaries, or
- the person is an employee of the organisation, and the gain is of a nature common to other employees, or
- the person is a contractor or supplier to the organisation, and the gain is of a nature common to other contractors or suppliers, or
- the person is a volunteer, including a CoM member, to the organisation, and the gain is of a nature common to other volunteers.

Examples of Conflict of Interest include situations in which:

- close personal friends, business or family members are involved, such as decisions about employment, discipline or dismissal, service allocation or awarding of contracts.
- an individual or their close friends or family members may make a financial gain or gain some other form of advantage.
- an individual is involved with another organisation or offers services which are in a competitive relationship with our organisation and therefore may have access to commercially sensitive information, plans, or financial information.
- an individual is bound by prior agreements or allegiances to other individuals or agencies requiring them to act in the interests of that person or agency or to take a particular position on an issue.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Auspice Policy
- Organisation Structure Policy
- CoM Recruitment and Appointment Policy
- Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Policy
- CoM In Camera Policy
- Induction Policy
- Audit Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Purchasing and Procurement Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy



- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Rules of Association
- Conflicts of Interest Register DRR1
- Conflict of Interest Register Form DRF1
- Incident Report Form DRF7
- Gifts Register DRR2

### **2.4.1 Conflict of Interest Procedures**

We recognise conflict of interest situations are likely to occur and these should not impact on an individual's participation in our organisation.

#### **Committee of Management Conflict of Interest Declaration**

Conflict of interest will be declared and recorded annually, with an ongoing emphasis on updating records where any new information comes to light:

- On appointment, all CoM members will complete and submit a Conflict of Interest Register Form DRF1 and verbally declare any potential conflicts of interest which could foreseeably impact their role within our organisation.
- CoM members are also required to identify and declare any conflicts of interest (or perception of) which arise within committee business at each meeting, whether they have been previously disclosed or not. These will be recorded in the minutes and if required registered on the Conflict of Interest Register DRR1
- The CoM Secretary will maintain a Conflicts of Interest Register DRR1 reported via the Register Form DRF1 and where conflict of interest is declared in the course of CoM business.
- If a person alleges another person has a conflict of interest, whether existing or potential, the CoM will act in the best interest of the organisation and may elect to implement conflict of interest management procedure as appropriate.
- Where there is any doubt whether there is a conflict, the member and committee should err on the side of caution and declare the interest.

Where conflicts of interest are identified the CoM will implement the following steps:

- Decide if the member has a real or perceived conflict of interest.

- Decide what, if any role the member should have in the decision or activities involved, including whether the member will vote, where relevant. The member should not be included in this discussion and may be asked to leave the room during the discussion to avoid influencing the decision.
- Document the declaration and decisions by the committee in the minutes of the meeting.

### **Staff and Volunteer Conflict of Interest Declarations**

A register of conflicts of interest will be kept and all staff and volunteers (if applicable) will be asked to declare:

- potential or actual conflicts of interest exist when a person joins the organisation.
- conflicts of interest arising during their involvement with the organisation.

The register will be maintained by the Executive Officer (EO) and reviewed as required by the CoM. All potential and actual conflicts will be recorded in the register, showing:

- the name of individual.
- their position or role in the organisation.
- the nature of the interest they hold.
- the date of record.
- any incidents arising where the interest comes into conflict with the interests of the organisation, the date of the incident and a summary of how it was managed.

Staff and volunteer conflicts of interest will be managed as follows:

- The conflict will be assessed by the EO, or the CoM in the case of the EO.
- If a conflict of interest exists or there is a perception a conflict exists, the individual may be asked to:
  - o contribute to the discussion but abstain from voting or taking part in a decision on the matter.
  - o observe but not take part in the discussion or decision-making.
  - o leave the meeting during discussion and decision on the matter.

### **Staff involvement in external activities**

BNC encourages and supports staff becoming involved in community activities and volunteer work in their personal lives. However, it is possible they may undertake volunteer or professional roles outside the organisation which give rise to a conflict of interest, or a perception of conflict.

As a result, BNC expects all staff members to declare their involvement in external activities related to their work at BNC when they are employed. The EO will discuss and plan with the staff member how any potential conflicts of interest can be managed. Staff members taking on other (new) work outside BNC need to inform the EO where such new employment may conflict with duties as a BNC employee or where such new employment may occur while the employee is expected to be performing BNC employment duties.

## **Gifts**

Gifts can range from small items including pens, hats, t-shirts, mugs, bags, key chains, to items of greater value, for example gift vouchers, travel, and electronic equipment. The potential for conflict of interest for gifts given by a supplier, BNC user or because of a BNC purchase exists. BNC encourages staff, volunteers and CoM members not to accept these gifts.

Gifts received as a direct result of a BNC purchase remain the property of BNC and do not belong to the person who purchased or received them.

If an individual receives a gift:

- If feasible, the gift is returned.
- If not feasible to return the gift, the Gifts Register DRR2 must be updated and the EO advised of the gift.
- The EO, and the CoM will make a decision as to whether the gift recipient can keep the gift or if it belongs to BNC.
- Plants or flowers may be displayed in the lobby, or at another central location where all employees may enjoy their presence.

Gift policy exemptions occur where:

- Gift such as t-shirts, pens, hats, food, drinks etc are received by staff and CoM members as members of the public at events (conferences, training events, trade shows) which are offered equally to all members of the public attending the event.
- Food, beverages, and moderately priced meals or tickets to local events or work meetings are supplied by and also attended by current customers, partners, and vendors or suppliers in the interest of building positive business relationships.
- Personal loyalty points are accrued as a direct result of a BNC purchase where there is transparency around the decision-making process to use the supplier for the purchase, for example points accrued at a supermarket when purchasing food supplies.
- Gifts given to staff for appreciation of their efforts as farewell gifts or from other BNC staff as thank you gifts.

## 2.5 Continuous Improvement

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

Continuous improvement requires a deliberate and sustained effort and a learning culture. It is a results-driven cycle, with a focus not only on strengthening service delivery but also on individual outcomes. Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) is committed to continuous improvement in all aspects of our organisation, from service delivery to governance. This policy guides Committee of Management (CoM) members and Staff in the design and delivery of our services to the community and ensures BNC maintains high standards, improves systems and processes, adapts to changing needs, and demonstrates organisational improvement.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, CoM Members, volunteers, contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) and BNC users and other third parties involved in any activity on behalf of BNC.

#### **Objectives:**

BNC is committed to innovation, high quality, continuous improvement, best practice, and effectiveness in the provision of support for our community through:

- Ensuring all services, processes and procedures undertaken by staff aim to be the best they can be.
- An annual review of services and programs to maintain quality and effectiveness as measured against BNC Strategic and Business plans.
- The encouragement of staff, community members, and BNC users to provide feedback to improve service delivery through our Feedback Policy and Process.
- Documentation of planning, resource allocation, risk management, and reporting as an integrated approach supporting BNC's purpose and mission.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy

- Feedback Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Handling Child Complaints Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Audit Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Strategic Plan
- Business Plan
- Risk Register DRR7
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Incident Report Form DRF7

## 2.6 Whistleblower

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) Committee of Management (CoM) is committed to transparent, accountable, and ethical operations. This policy complements normal reporting and communication channels and provides an alternative means of reporting alleged or suspected wrongdoing where the usual channels have failed or are not appropriate.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all people in a paid or unpaid capacity who are current or former CoM members, BNC employees, volunteers, contractors, agency/hire staff, suppliers, and financial and tax auditors (internal and external) involved in any activity on behalf of BNC. The policy is separate from mandatory reporting, reportable conduct, external complaints, and internal grievance resolution processes. Please refer to specific policies relating to these matters.

A whistleblower will not be disadvantaged for reporting a concern under this policy, even if it turns out they are mistaken. The whistleblower can still qualify for protection even if the concern turns out to be incorrect. However, where it is shown a person has raised a whistleblower concern which is deliberately false or misleading, the matter will be treated seriously, and appropriate disciplinary action will be considered.

#### **Objectives:**

BNC prides itself on having a culture which supports and encourages people to raise concerns about wrongdoing. Wrongdoing includes any suspected or actual misconduct in breach of general law, policies, procedures and code of ethics, or generally recognised principles of ethics. This may include, but is not limited to:

- fraud, negligence, corruption, breach of trust or breach of duty;
- conduct in breach of state or federal legislation;
- financial irregularities, including fraudulent financial reporting or accounting practices, money laundering or misappropriation of funds;

- illegal, immoral or illegitimate practices;
- maladministration or serious and substantial waste of resources;
- practices endangering the health or safety of those who attend our workplace or events, including the general public; and/or
- practices endangering the environment.

BNC will:

- maintain a workplace free of misconduct and supportive of whistleblowing;
- ensure disclosures are dealt with appropriately and in a timely manner; and
- ensure individuals who disclose wrongdoing can do so safely, securely and with confidence they will be protected and supported.

This is achieved by having in place robust policies, procedures, a quality management system and an 'open door' policy with management. All reports of potential wrongdoing disclosures will be taken seriously.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Audit Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Program Fees and Charges Policy
- Purchasing and Procurement Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Handling Child Complaints Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Volunteer Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Incident Report Form DRF7

## **2.6.1 Whistleblower Procedures**

### **Who to make a disclosure to**

BNC encourages internal disclosures in the first instance, so BNC can identify and address wrongdoing as quickly as possible. It is BNC's preference disclosures are made to the following Eligible Recipients:

- Executive Officer (EO)
- Committee of Management Chair

Nothing in this policy is intended to limit you from disclosing Reportable Conduct or providing information to a government agency, law enforcement body or a regulator in accordance with any relevant law, regulation, or prudential standard.

It is important to understand, not all disclosures will constitute a protected disclosure. Before making a disclosure, you should consider whether you wish to seek independent legal advice to assist you in determining whether it will be a protected disclosure (and therefore provide them with the whistleblower protections under this policy and the law).

### **How do I raise a whistleblower concern?**

Where possible, any disclosures should be made in writing. Where a verbal disclosure is made, the Eligible Recipient will document the disclosure for you to review and sign.

Disclosures should contain the following details:

- names of people involved;
- names of any witnesses;
- date(s), time(s) and location(s) of the wrongdoing;
- details of any proof;
- money or assets involved; and
- how often you think the incident(s) has happened.

Evidence to support any disclosure should be brought forward at this time, if it exists. The absence of evidence will be considered in decisions of whether to open an investigation into the matter. However, absence of evidence is not an absolute deterrent of investigative procedures.

Receipt of written disclosures (other than those received anonymously) will be acknowledged within two business days.

### **Can I make an anonymous disclosure?**



As a whistleblower, you can elect to either make a complaint anonymously or request your identity not be disclosed during the course of the investigation or after it is finalised. As a whistleblower who wishes to remain anonymous, you can also refuse to answer questions you feel could reveal your identity.

Anonymous disclosures may limit the protections and support BNC is able to offer and may also limit BNC's ability to fully investigate the matter. Where anonymity has been requested, the whistleblower is also required to maintain confidentiality regarding the matter and to refrain from discussing the matter with any person.

### **Investigation of disclosure**

Once receiving a complaint, the Eligible Recipient will take one of the following actions:

- where the complaint is deemed reasonable and within the scope of this policy, they will initiate an investigation process. They will determine if they or someone else will undertake the investigation, known as the Investigation Officer. Where it is deemed appropriate, an external expert may be engaged to assist with the investigation, which may include leading the investigation; or
- where the complaint is deemed unreasonable (trivial), indeterminable (insufficient evidence) or related to matters outside the scope of this policy, they will dismiss the disclosure.

Regardless of the determination, the whistleblower will be informed of the decision and appropriate records of the complaint and decision will be maintained.

### **Investigation process**

BNC will aim for the investigation process to be completed within 20 business days of receipt of the complaint.

The investigation process will differ depending on the nature of the suspected wrongdoing being investigated. It may include a formal in-depth investigation; a broad review; and/or an audit of records, data, or other evidence. The purpose of the investigation is to determine if the whistleblower concerns are substantiated, with a view to remedying any wrongdoing uncovered, where practical.

### **Final Report**

A final report shall be prepared by the Investigation Officer which details the following:

- details of the suspected wrongdoing;
- details of the investigation process undertaken;

- a summary of the evidence obtained;
- a fair summary of the defence of any person(s) implicated (if applicable);
- a final conclusion based on the evidence obtained;
- recommendations on what steps should be taken based, including disciplinary actions if appropriate; and
- recommendations on any steps BNC could take to prevent a reoccurrence.

The final report should consider any privacy and confidentiality requirements and is not intended to be freely distributed. The report will be provided to the Executive Officer and Committee for Management for their consideration.

## 2.7 Auspice Policy

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) supports smaller community groups and individuals in many ways, including acting as an auspicing body for groups or individuals (the auspicee) who are not legal entities which prevents them from accessing support and grant funding. This policy will provide a clear process for assessing requests for auspice and negotiating auspice agreements.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to the Committee or Management (CoM), Executive Officer (EO) and third parties requesting BNC to auspice them.. It includes auspice requests and agreements which are:

- short term to complete a project
- permanent ongoing
- temporary while the group becomes established

Some common auspicing arrangements which could be considered by a neighbourhood house include auspicing of:

- one-off events such as art exhibitions, concerts, or markets
- pilot projects or program trials
- incubate start-up groups
- local playgroups and study groups
- youth projects, and
- sporting programs or competitions

#### **Objectives:**

To help groups or individuals access funding, facilities and services, and to meet insurance, financial and legal responsibilities, BNC has a formal process for auspice requests.

The most common reason for a group or person to seek to be auspiced is a need to quickly and easily satisfy grant funding requirements the group or person is not able to meet.

BNC will act as the 'auspicator', entering an auspice arrangement where the auspicee carries out the project 'under the auspices of' the auspicator. BNC will receive the project funding and enter into relevant agreements for the auspicee.

To ensure the CoM will consider all written auspice requests and agreements against set criteria to ensure their alignment with BNC values and mission.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Budget Development and Management Policy
- Marketing and Communications Policy
- Programs, Projects and Activities Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Program Fees and Charges Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Auspice Application Form DRF25
- Auspice Agreement DRA3
- Strategic Plan
- Business Plan
- Annual Budget
- Risk Register DRR7

## **2.7.1 Auspice Procedures**

### **Requesting Auspice**

Applicants should contact BNC to discuss the proposed project or activities with the EO. The EO will provide an Auspice Information pack including the following documents;

- Auspice Application Form DRF25
- Auspice Agreement DRA3

- Auspice Policy
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy for information and guidance

The application form includes questions on why the group wishes to be auspiced by BNC and an overview of the group and its activities including potential risks and proposed budgets.

### **Assessing Auspice Applications**

The EO will liaise with the applicant, communicating status updates and managing the request on behalf of the CoM.

The CoM will not consider auspice requests

- where the project for which funding is required is particularly complex or involves a significant amount of risk or potential liabilities
- from parties seeking to pursue a project for commercial reasons or for-profit activities.

Auspice applications will be included on the CoM agenda for consideration at the next CoM meeting.

The CoM will assess the application based on the following criteria:

- Appropriateness – does the request align with BNC Strategic Plan, Goals and Purpose
- Level of risk involved – what are the financial, legal and insurance risks to BNC of entering into the auspice agreement
- Size of group requesting auspice – BNC will consider small group requests but encourages larger groups to become legal entities in their own right
- Control of decision making - will BNC be part of the control group or a key decision maker as required for insurance cover
- Comparative size of budget / funding – does BNC have the financial and organisational ability to support the request
- Length of auspice – the term of the agreement
- Outcome delivery – the auspicee's ability and capacity to deliver the project
- Conflict of Interest – assess any conflicts and their impact on BNC
- Fee for Service – what is the administration cost to BNC

Should the CoM accept the auspice request, the CoM will pass a resolution to support the auspice request. The EO will negotiate a formal BNC Auspice Agreement DRA3 on behalf

of the CoM. The final Auspice Agreement will be tabled at the next CoM meeting for consideration.

Before the Auspice Agreement DRA3 is approved, the EO will seek advice from the BNC insurer as to the validity of the arrangement and risk impact on BNC if the Agreement is approved. This advice will be provided to the CoM when the final Auspice Agreement is tabled at the CoM meeting for consideration.

### **Auspice Agreements**

The BNC Auspice Agreement DRA3 will include the following information:

- Purpose and structure of the auspiced body
- Activities of the auspiced body to be covered by the auspice agreement
- Roles and responsibilities of both parties
- Financial Procedures
- Use of premises, equipment and consumables
- Risk Management procedures
- Communication and Reporting Procedures
- Fees and payments
- Dispute and Conflict Resolution
- Expiry date

The BNC Auspice Agreement DRA3 must be in writing and signed by all members of the community group or individuals requesting the auspice, not just an individual of the requesting body.

### **Auspice Fees and Payments:**

BNC will charge between of 10% and 20% fee for service to administer the auspice. Auspice fees will be negotiated with each auspiced body reflecting the type of auspice, the type of project, their capacity to pay and percentage of revenue or percentage of grant request.

Auspice payments will be charged at an agreed rate for the use of BNC facilities and equipment.

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## Section 3: Whole of Organisation Policies

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### Relevant standard, legislation, or controls

- Refer to the 'Introduction' for a full list of foundation principles and standards
- BNC Document Register
- Association Incorporation Reform Act 2012
- Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act 2004
- Learn Local Committee Capability Framework
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) including the Australian Privacy Principles (APP)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) including Information Privacy Principles (IPP)Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety (Child Safe Standards Compliance and Enforcement) Amendment Act 2021
- Reportable Conduct Scheme
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) (including reporting to Child Protection)
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) (including Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose offences)
- Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic) (including Part XIII – Organisational liability for child abuse)
- Worker Screening Act 2020
- Emergency Management Act 1986 and 2013
- State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP)

## 3.1 Appropriate Use of Technology

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) acknowledges technology plays an integral part in our lives. BNC supports the safe and appropriate use of technology to enable people to increase efficiency, connect with others, and achieve in their work and lives. We commit where possible to maintain up-to-date access, but reserve the right to access hardware software used for work purposes at any time there are suspicions or allegations of inappropriate use, regardless of who owns the hardware or software.

### Policy Description

#### Application:

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee or Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) and BNC users.

#### Objectives:

Flexibility to engage and adapt to emerging technologies will enable our organisation and our community to increase connectivity and opportunities. However, inherent risks must be recognised and planned for to protect both our organisation and individuals.

BNC expects a minimum standard use of technology for any individual accessing BNC technology. This includes adherence to the Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy and Workplace Behaviour Policy when:

- Using computers, phones, mobile phones, and other hardware.
- Accessing the BNC internet via BNC or personal devices.
- Using personal devices, such as mobile phones or tablets.
- Employing methods, systems, and community and sector knowledge.
- Maintaining the integrity of our Intellectual Property (IP).

#### Related Policies and Procedures:

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy



- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Induction Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Performance Management Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Asset Management Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Purchasing and Procurement Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Purchase a New Asset Form DRF 3
- Staff Access and Equipment Request Form DRF23

### **3.1.1 Appropriate Use of Technology Procedures**

#### **Information Technology (IT)**

BNC maintains computer labs with computers and laptops, multifunction printers, and individual computers and laptops for staff and users. Other equipment includes phones, mobile phones, cameras, projectors, iPads and associated devices.

The Executive Officer (EO) is responsible for all IT, including:

- Hardware purchases and maintenance.
- Software licencing and access to software.
- Maintenance of technology and liaison with IT contractors and technicians.
- Providing advice to BNC regarding IT issues.
- Providing IT induction and support to staff and volunteers.
- Information management.
- Security and virus protection.

The EO is responsible for backing up documents and files and for ensuring staff responsible for data are trained to conduct and monitor back-up procedures.

BNC technology procedures are applied as:

- Standard procedures – relevant to any person using BNC technology.
- Staff specific procedures – relevant to any staff person using BNC technology.

## Standard Use of Technology

Any person using technology at BNC is required to follow these guidelines, which are displayed in all computer use areas:

BNC Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy and Workplace Behaviour Policy define our expected behaviours and attitudes in both the physical and virtual use of technology. This includes:

- Respect the rights of others, regardless of culture, gender, sexual preference, disability, etc. Harassing, insulting, defaming or attacking others through any digital communication amounts to cyber-bullying and is not acceptable.
- Acting honestly and in good faith

Acceptable use of BNC computers, phones, and other hardware:

- Ensure care and protection for computers and other technological equipment.
- Do not deliberately damage or deface computers and other technological equipment.
- All updates will be immediately accepted on computers, phones, and other hardware
- Unused, unwanted or unknown applications and software are deleted
- Devices are rebooted / turned off after use as a habit to clear links and malicious software
- Passwords are reset regularly and not shared with anyone else
- Multifactor Authentication, Passkeys or other security technology is set up as appropriate
- Only using accounts assigned to you.
- Do not share your personal passwords, logins or confidential information or store them where others can access them.
- Do not view, use, or copy passwords, data, or networks without authorisation.
- Do not install software without authorisation from the IT manager or EO.
- Do not destroy or damage data, networks, or other resources.
- Respect and protect the intellectual property of others.

Report any of the above issues or policy breaches to the EO immediately

Accessing the internet via BNC devices:

- Access only appropriate sites. Inappropriate sites include, but are not limited to illegal, pornographic or contain inappropriate or obscene sexual material, gambling,

advocate hate/violence, contain discriminatory material or other inappropriate games or software sites.

- Do not infringe or violate copyright laws (including copying and transmitting documents, software, music, games and/or video files) without license or permission.
- Do not access, download, send or display offensive, abusive, racist, pornographic, sexist, obscene language, or excessively violent material in any electronic communication.
- Do not send emails containing information which is abusive, impolite, offensive, defamatory, inaccurate, or illegal.
- Do not contact children, other than direct relatives or children within your guardianship.
- Must not incur any additional expenses for BNC, including online shopping.
- When using the internet be alert to possible scams, spam, malware, and other viruses which could negatively impact BNC software or hardware.
- Be cyber alert and take appropriate steps to identify those engaging with you online to ensure they are real and not acting in a criminal or fraudulent manner towards you or the organisation
- Comply with relevant laws, regulations and industry standards.

Use of personal devices, such as phones or tablets.

Personal devices are welcome at BNC but should be used mindfully and in the interests of other people. As much as possible individuals should:

- Avoid disturbing others with personal phone calls, instead move away from classes or people engaged in activities.
- Avoid disturbing others with loud music or games, instead use headphones.

Individuals must not use personal devices to:

- Record confidential information belonging to BNC or other people.
- Record or photograph other people without their consent.
- Download or upload inappropriate, illegal, or obscene material whilst at BNC or when using BNC internet connections.

Accidental loss of Data

In the case of accidental loss of data, the EO is to be contacted immediately. The EO will ask the IT contractor to restore lost data from previous backups.

## **Employee specific use of technology**

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Staff may use technology to enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness. Any new technologies at BNC, such as artificial intelligence require discussion and approval by the EO before implementation.

Staff must always comply with privacy laws to safeguard client information and are never permitted to input personal information into Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems or use AI to capture meeting discussions if the meeting refers to client or confidential organisational information.

Personal use of technology in the workplace (whether on BNC or personal devices) is permitted but limited to avoid decrease in productivity. Personal use should:

- Be infrequent and brief.
- Not interfere with individual workplace duties or colleagues.
- Not interfere with operations of BNC.
- Not decrease BNC network performance or electronic storage.

Not expose BNC systems to viruses, software or systems which could compromise the integrity of BNC data and systems. There may be times when staff need to use technology for extended personal use. An example of this may be when accessing online materials related to study. If a staff member needs to use BNC technology for an extended period of time, they should discuss this situation with their manager in advance.

Online Shopping for work purposes is acceptable, as this promotes efficient and effective time and resources. Online shopping for personal purposes is not permitted without the EO's permission.

For information regarding use of social media please refer to the Social Media Policy.

For the benefit of both staff and BNC electronic security, staff are not permitted to access BNC emails or files from personal devices without written approval from the EO.

## 3.2 Child Safety and Wellbeing

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|

### Policy Declaration

As a Victorian government funded organisation, Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) is contractually and legally required to comply with the eleven Victorian Government Child Safe Standards (The Standards). The Standards are compulsory minimum standards for organisations which provide services for children (or are used by children) to help protect children from harm.

BNC is committed to empowering children as vital and active members of our community and our organisation. We involve them when making decisions about matters which affect them and are committed to their safety and our legal and moral obligations to act in their best interest. This policy identifies the importance of children and their safety in our organisation and guides us on how to behave with them.

### Policy Description

#### Application:

Everyone must be aware of BNC's Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy and child safety obligations, including understanding allegations of misconduct involving children can be made against a person even if the conduct occurred outside of their work.

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) and all BNC users. It applies to a broad range of situations where interaction with a person under the age of 18 years (children) may occur including all activities in and organised by BNC which involve, result in or relate to contact with children.

More information on the Child Safe Standards is available at the <https://www.vic.gov.au/about-child-safe-standards>

#### Objectives:

Children have a fundamental right to be safe, happy, and empowered. They are valued participants who bring insight and innovation to BNC activities. We will incorporate practices and systems at BNC to ensure compliance with The Standards. We will

champion a child safe culture using governance practices to apply a top down and bottom-up approach ensuring we can all identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities. We will have an easily accessible and culturally safe process for child complaints, and complaint handling, which are taken seriously. They will be responded to promptly and thoroughly, ensuring privacy and employment law obligations are also met in the process.

The Executive Officer (EO) is the BNC Safeguarding Officer and all BNC staff and volunteers will be given level 1 Child Safety training to ensure they understand their responsibilities and how to respond to a child safety disclosure.

**Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Policy
- Induction Policy
- Appropriate Use of Technology Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Strategy, Business, and Risk Management Policy
- Worker Screening Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Handling Child Complaints Policy
- Privacy Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Child Safety Training Action Plan DRM7
- Training Register DRR3
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Incident Report Form DRF7
- Risk Management Plan DRM8
- Risk Register DRR7
- Positions Descriptions
- Enrolment Forms

### **3.2.1 Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedures**

To ensure we embed a child safe culture, at BNC child safety is an ongoing process of training and information sharing, including the following actions:

#### **Children's Participation**

- our community engagement activities will include opportunities for discussions with children, including child-led conversations on their rights and what makes them feel safe and unsafe
- a suggestion box in the foyer with suggestions assessed and acted on where appropriate. Children are provided with feedback on their suggestions
- consultation with children about any proposed significant changes to the physical environment, policies, procedures, programs or staffing. Children's views are collected by staff, provided to management and considered in the decision-making process
- display the BNC public commitment to child safety in the public reception areas around BNC, including a commitment to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- information provided to children and families about BNC operations, staffing and programs is suitable for different age groups and diversity of the children. Child safety information sessions will be offered where needed
- run annual placed based events, designed by children for children, with our local schools and community organisations including Children's Week activities
- work with young learners to develop learning programs designed to meet their needs and be delivered in a safe environment
- volunteer opportunities will include opportunities for children to participate in a safe and supportive environment
- celebrate Aboriginal culture in the BNC physical environment with art and garden plantings designed by Aboriginal children
- we will comply with the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australians recommendation for all children to be immunised, unless there is a clear medical reason why this should not occur.

#### **Involving Families and Communities**

- parents, families and communities are welcome to provide feedback at any time through our contact email address and are encouraged to raise any concerns they have with us
- publish this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy on our website, placing copies in public areas and providing hard copies on request

- include articles and information on child safety and wellbeing, and reminders about our policies and procedures in our marketing and promotional materials.

### **Creating culturally safe environments for all Aboriginal children and their families**

- include an Acknowledgement of Country at CoM and other BNC meetings
- consult with families and members of the Aboriginal community to identify opportunities to promote Aboriginal culture and practices at BNC
- provide opportunities for children to share their cultural identity and express their culture, including through community activities
- provide training for staff and volunteers on the strengths of Aboriginal culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children
- celebrate NAIDOC Week and acknowledging significant cultural events
- provide opportunities for feedback from Aboriginal children, families and communities on their experience at BNC.

### **Valuing Diversity**

- provide training for all CoM members, staff and volunteers on understanding diversity and how to support inclusion and cultural safety
- welcome and support participation of all children, including children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTIQ children and Aboriginal children and their families
- offer students and families through our enrolment forms the opportunity to provide information about themselves, including any specific needs to participate fully in our programs
- have zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination and take action when discrimination or exclusion is identified
- deliver programming reflecting the diversity of our students, their interests and cultures
- strive to reflect the diversity of our community through representation in our staff and CoM members
- acknowledge and celebrate important cultural dates in our activities
- have a physical and online environment which actively celebrates diversity
- commit to ensuring our facilities and online activities promote inclusion of children of all abilities.

### **Recruiting and Screening Staff and Volunteers**

- recruit staff, CoM and volunteers who are appropriate to engage with children.



- require a Working with Children Check, Criminal Record Check and referee checks for all staff and volunteers who have a role with children or have access to children's personal information
- position descriptions will include a child safety statement, and a zero tolerance towards racism with an expectation to act statement on incidents of racism
- require staff to have appropriate qualifications for their roles and check to make sure these qualifications are valid.

### **Supporting staff and volunteers**

- incorporate child safety considerations into decisions impacting children and their families
- develop a Child Safe Training Action Plan DRM7 which is reviewed annually
- mandated annual child safety training for leaders, staff and volunteers which is recorded in the BNC Training Register DRR3
- training will help everyone understand their obligations on reporting, information sharing and recordkeeping and on how to identify signs of harm and respond accordingly
- cultural diversity and other types of diversity training for leaders, staff and volunteers which is recorded in the BNC Training Register DRR3
- issues or concerns about behaviour with children will be raised immediately and addressed in line with our Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy, complaint handling policy and disciplinary policy.

### **Child Safety Person**

- the EO is the Child Safety Person with responsibility for responding to any child safety related complaints or concerns
- BNC staff will receive child safety training, so can act as a child safety person in the absence of the EO
- photos and names of the Child Safety Persons are displayed on our noticeboard
- if a person does not feel comfortable making a report to a child safety person, they may report their concern to the CoM Chair

### **Disclosure of abuse or harm**

BNC prioritises prevention, identification and mitigation as key risk management strategies. Therefore, BNC is committed to developing a culture of reporting and training staff to understand their obligations when a child makes a disclosure of abuse or harm. If staff feel uncomfortable with following the Child Safe Procedure for any disclosure, they

should discuss this with the EO who will manage the conversation and disclosure with them.

If a child discloses an incident of abuse or harm to you:

- Try and separate them from the other children discreetly and listen to them carefully.
- Let the child use their own words to explain what has occurred.
- Reassure the child you take what they are saying seriously, and it is not their fault and they are doing the right thing.
- Explain to them this information may need to be shared with others, such as with their parent/carer, specific people at BNC, or the police.
- Do not make promises to the child such as promising not to tell anyone about the incident, except to tell them you will do your best to keep them safe.
- Do not leave the child in a distressed state. If they seem at ease in your company, stay with them.
- Provide them with an Incident Report Form DRF7 to complete, or complete it together, if you think the child can do this.
- As soon as possible after the disclosure, record the information using the child's words and report the disclosure to the EO in the first instance and if not available to police or child protection.
- Ensure the disclosure is recorded accurately, and the record is stored securely and confidentially with the EO in line with the Data Retention Policy.

If a parent/carer says their child has been abused in your organisation or raises a concern:

- Explain BNC has processes to ensure all abuse allegations are taken very seriously and you will need to take any concerns to the EO for action.
- Ask about the wellbeing of the child.
- Allow the parent/carer to talk through the incident in their own words.
- Advise the parent/carer you will take notes during the discussion to capture all details.
- Explain to them the information may need to be repeated to authorities or others, such as the BNC's management or the police or child protection.
- Do not make promises at this early stage, except to tell them you will do your best to keep the child safe.
- Provide them with an Incident Report Form DRF7 to complete or complete it together.
- Ask them what action they would like to take and advise them of what the immediate next steps will be.

- Ensure the report is recorded accurately, and the record is stored securely.

## **Child protection**

The BNC Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy outlines the Mandatory Reporting requirements. If you witness a criminal activity immediately contact Victoria Police 000.

If any person is concerned the health and wellbeing of a child is threatened, they will report the situation to a BNC staff member, who must report it to the EO.

The EO will respond to concerns of child abuse in a manner which:

- Protects the rights of the child.
- Protects the safety of staff.
- Protects the role and reputation of BNC in our community.

The EO will utilise BNC Incident Reporting and Response and/or Disciplinary procedures as appropriate to the situation. Inappropriate behaviour towards children may result in a warning, termination of employment, or exclusion from our BNC.

## **Record keeping and information sharing**

- all child safety complaints, concerns, incidents and near misses will be recorded in the incident reporting system
- a separate child focused complaint handling process for children which includes guidance on how to make a complaint, the process for raising a child safety concern, a description of the different types of complaints / concerning behaviours and obligations regarding privacy and confidentiality
- records which may assist with the investigation of a complaint or safety concern will be identified and kept as part of the record of an investigation.
- records will be kept even if an investigation does not substantiate a complaint.
- record and keep the outcome of any investigations, and the resolution of any complaints. This includes findings made, reasons for decisions and actions taken.
- records will be stored securely and kept by BNC for at least 5 years.
- BNC may share relevant information to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, where it is appropriate and in their best interests.
- BNC will keep information about complaints confidential, except where it is necessary to share information to respond properly to a complaint or to prioritise child safety.
- we may also need to share information about incidents or complaints with external authorities to comply with the law or to prioritise safety. More information is available in our complaint handling policy.

## **Risk management**

- conduct regular age appropriate risk assessments which include physical injury, allergic reactions, danger to life, emotional harm and risk of abuse assessments.
- and have a Risk Management plan DRM8 to address the risk of child abuse and harm at BNC
- the risk management plan will be developed in consultation with our staff, volunteers, parent representatives and children, copies will be available from the main office
- the CoM is responsible for approving the Risk Management plan DRM8.
- contractors or other providers of services will always be supervised by a member of staff while working with us to ensure child safety.
- BNC requires children aged 14 and under must be accompanied by a responsible adult (e.g. parent guardian or teacher), unless appropriate risk management strategies have been documented and implemented
- raise awareness of the risks and dangers of the online environment with children sharing information and training, where appropriate, about cyber safety

## **Non-compliance with this policy and the Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy**

BNC will enforce this policy, the Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy and any other child safety and wellbeing policies. If required, BNC will work with the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) or other Regulator to ensure compliance with The Standards.

Potential breaches by anyone will be investigated and may result in restriction of duties, suspension or termination of employment or engagement or other corrective action. More information can be found in our Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy.

## **Review**

BNC will review all child safe practices and policies at least every two years. The EO will conduct a review of how effectively BNC is delivering child safety and wellbeing. The input of people involved with BNC will be sought as part of this review. We also review relevant practices and policies in response to a child safety incident or 'near miss'.

Findings from reviews will be reported to the people involved in our organisation and also inform our approach to continuous improvement of our child safety practices. Reviews are overseen by the CoM and will be informed by consultation with children, families and staff.

## 3.3 Event Management

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|

### Policy Declaration

Events are an essential part of building great communities. Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) will participate in and deliver events which reflect our purpose and values, and which are managed for the safety and wellbeing of participants. This policy guides BNC in the selection and management of events which

- BNC develops and implements.
- BNC is a participant in.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all BNC employees and volunteers (collectively known as Staff for this policy) engaged in event management and support. For the purposes of this policy BNC workshops, information sessions, meetings, and courses are not considered events. A BNC event can be held onsite at a BNC facility or placed based in the community.

#### **Objectives:**

Any organised activity which brings people together for a common purpose or interest (such as a celebration, workshop or art experience) can be considered an event. In providing or participating in events BNC has a responsibility to ensure the event is appropriate and safe.

Great events build community connections, enhance pride of place and enrich people's lives. In supporting, delivering and participating in events in our community BNC plays an active role in facilitating great communities, and contributes to the public perception of our organisation.

The decision to support, coordinate or participate in an event should be based on the following:

- Alignment to BNC's goals, purpose, mission, and values.
- Sufficient time for preparation and planning.
- Availability of appropriate budget and/or in-kind resources.

- Appropriate attention to risk management and safety for participants.

As a rule, the steps for managing a BNC event are:

1. Identify and evaluate the event opportunity.
2. Develop an event plan outlining requirements, parameters, and measures of success.
3. Identify event risk and safety and develop appropriate risk mitigation plans as required.
4. Identify budget and resource requirements, seeking funding if required.
5. Coordinate and deliver the event.
6. Evaluate event, report, and acquit funding as necessary.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Marketing and Communications Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Worker Screening Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Overtime and Time off in Lieu Policy
- Programs, Projects and Activities Policy Feedback Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Epidemic/Pandemic Policy
- Budget Development and Management Policy
- Financial Management Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Strategic Plan
- Business Plan
- Annual Budget
- Event Checklist DRC1
- Event Evaluation Form DRF2

- Risk Management Plan DRM8
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Incident Report Form DRF7

### **3.3.1 Event Management Procedures**

#### **Strategic Alignment**

Alignment to the BNC goals, purpose, mission, and values provides an indication of the sort of role BNC should have in creating, supporting, or participating in an event. Where BNC is considering leading the coordination of an event, the event should strongly reflect one or more of the current goals as well as organisational purpose, mission, and values.

Where BNC is considering supporting or participating in an event coordinated by another group or organisation consideration of BNC purpose, mission, and values should provide an indication of the role BNC might play.

In all cases, it is important external partners and partnerships demonstrate strategic alignment to BNC values. New partners and partnership arrangements need to be authorised by the EO.

#### **Sufficient Planning**

Planning required for an event will depend on a range of factors, according to the nature of the event and the target audience. Sufficient planning time should be allowed to ensure details are in place and the event is communicated in a timely manner to allow guests to plan to be there.

Planning arrangements must be documented on the Event Checklist DRC1. Planning details may include factors such as:

- Naming Rights – is this a one off event or a regular event with the EO approving all event names prior to marketing and promotion of the event.
- Venue hire or booking arrangements.
- Catering and refreshments - ensure participants at all events have access to a supply of drinking water.
- Guest speakers – consider community interest groups, public leaders, celebrities.
- Permits including road closures, food or drink, or use of public space. Check with local government.
- Promotional activities – workshops, children’s activities, information sessions etc.
- Itinerary / running order for the day of the event.

- Planned activities and suppliers.
- General purchasing and/or internal and external sourcing of equipment and supplies.
- Risk assessment and mitigation.
- Post-event clean-up and pack-down.
- Staffing / volunteer checklist.

## **Risk Management And Mitigation**

Attention to risk is essential for any event. Risk assessment should be planned in advance and consider aspects such as:

- Nature of event and guests, e.g. Youth music events, historical unveilings and children's celebrations will all require different risk management approaches.
- Role of partners in event delivery.
- Equipment used, management of water and electricity.
- Site details, environment and extreme weather impacts.
- The health and wellbeing impacts will be assessed to ensure safety compliance for everyone involved.
- Staff and volunteers are appropriately screened, trained and protected.

Once identified, risk mitigation factors might include:

- Implementation of partnerships, working agreements or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with any partner organisations.
- Provision of first aid kits and trained staff, as per First Aid Policy.
- Provision of Safe Food Handling training.
- Provision of security or police presence.
- Signage and information.
- Use of contractors to manage equipment, tag and testing update or provision of training in equipment management.
- Fencing or barriers to manage access to certain areas.
- Provision of shelter, water, sunscreen.
- Cancellation factors and plan.
- Promotion and marketing

## **Off-site Event Safety**

Prior to the start of the event the Event Coordinator will ensure:

- all BNC event staff and volunteers have a successful National Criminal Check and Working with Children (WWC) Check, as per the Worker Screening Policy.



- an evacuation map and plan is included within the risk management documents for the event and all participating staff and volunteers are aware of the procedures outlined within these documents.
- all staff and volunteers are provided with an event induction which outlines their roles, the event delivery expectations, and health and safety requirements.
- the First Aid Policy, Feedback Policy and Grievance Resolution Policy, the Incident Reporting and Response Policy, and supporting documentation is available at the event and staff are briefed on these documents..

The Event Coordinator is responsible for following all legal directions, obtaining licences and permits, and other compliance related requirements for holding an event.

### **Environmental Impacts**

Any decisions made regarding cancellations of an outdoor event due to severe weather conditions are to be made 48 hours in advance where possible, or as soon as the extreme weather forecast or warning is released (whichever occurs first). Extreme conditions include the following:

- Bushfires – Days declared as a CODE RED fire day, or a bushfire occurring in close proximity of the planned event where there is an increased chance of risk.
- Heavy Rains / Floods – Heavy rains or Flood warnings forecast in the vicinity of the planned event.
- Strong Winds – Strong Wind warnings in the area the event is being held where the expected wind / gusts exceed 60kph and potentially increase risk factors.
- Extreme Temperatures – Temperatures above 36 degrees or below 5 degrees Celsius.
- Public Directives (e.g. police request).

Leading up to the day of the event, the event coordinator is to manage all emergency warning and weather apps in case of adverse weather conditions or emergencies preventing the safe operating of the planned event.

On the day of the event, the event coordinator is to monitor the emergency warning and weather apps in case conditions change, becoming unsuitable or unsafe for the event to continue.

Events may be cancelled or rescheduled at the discretion of the event coordinator which will depend on the type and location of event being held, and financial constraints associated with rescheduling the planned event.

### **Budget And Sponsorship**

The event budget should be identified and allocated before coordination commences. The budget should take into account expenses such as:

- Venue hire or permits.
- Performance or activity fees (e.g. musicians, petting zoo, etc).
- Catering.
- Audio-visual equipment purchase or hire.
- Promotion and advertising costs.

If a participant or entry fee is planned, this should be calculated and factored into the budget with moderate expectations to avoid incurring a loss.

Where funding or sponsorship contributes to the budget the event manager will:

- The purpose of the funding and the event align.
- The funding requirements and conditions are met, such as acknowledgement of the funder on promotions and speeches.
- The funding is acquitted, or the sponsor appropriately thanked in a timely manner after the conclusion of the event.

## **Coordination And Delivery Of Event**

Event organisation will vary according to the nature of the event. As a rule, the following roles and responsibilities apply:

### **BNC Executive Officer (EO)**

Oversight and compliance accountability, including:

- Approve budgets for events
- Be aware of and contribute to events as relevant
- Support planning and implementation of event activities
- Sign off on all external funding and performance agreements
- Ensure management of events aligns with BNC's goals, purpose, mission and values
- Financial administration (e.g. payment of invoices) of events.

### **Event Coordinator**

Manage event planning and administration including:

- Event promotion and marketing
- Identification, preparation and submission of permits and relevant paperwork
- Arranging venue and speaker/s (if required) for the event

- Facilitation of event organising committee as relevant
- Managing event budget and expenditure
- Coordinating resources and equipment as needed
- Organising staff training in identified areas (food safety, first aid, etc)
- Planning and conducting an evaluation
- Delegate tasks to other staff or volunteers as required
- Remain on-site at all times while the event is taking place and until all staff, volunteers and partner organisations have departed

### **Other BNC Staff**

Undertake specific tasks as requested by the EO or Event Coordinator to contribute to the planning, implementation and evaluation of events. Tasks could include, but are not limited to:

- Event promotion
- Procuring and preparing event materials
- Consulting with community members
- Undertaking risk management processes
- Gathering and analysing collected data

### **Evaluation**

BNC conducts evaluations of all events as a matter of good practice and continuous improvement to service delivery. This is also frequently a requirement of funding agreements. As such, event evaluation should be considered as part of the planning process.

The specific evaluation process used may vary according to the nature of the event, or the requirements of funding agreements. The Event Evaluation Form DRF2 is to be completed in full to ensure all evaluation requirements are met.

Event feedback should be collated into a short report for distribution to management, funding bodies and other stakeholders as required (report format and distribution may vary according to event type and specific funding agreements).

### **Media, Images and Videos**

The Event Coordinator will ensure all images, including videos, follow the permissions process outlined in the Marketing and Communications Policy. Where a person withholds permission for their images to be used, the Event Coordinator will ensure all images are deleted and not stored in BNC files where they could inadvertently be used in the future.

## 3.4 Facility Management

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|

### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) facilities exist to support our community, and as such our organisation will ensure they are appropriately managed for safe use. This policy defines the arrangements by which BNC occupies manages our facilities.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) and BNC users and other third parties involved in any activity on behalf of BNC.

#### **Objectives:**

As a community-based organisation located in a community hub, BNC is responsible for the leasing arrangements of our buildings and the management of our facilities to ensure they are maintained and available for use in an accessible and equitable manner.

#### **Lease of facility**

All BNC facilities are subject to a lease/s, which are reviewed as per lease agreement or as required. As part of the review process, the Executive Officer (EO) will consider:

- Growth of the organisation.
- Usage of existing spaces.
- Any changes needed to better suit the needs of the organisation.
- Opportunities for expansion.
- Ongoing suitability of the facility to continue to meet the needs of the organisation.
- Cost of lease and obligations.

The EO will negotiate the usage of the facility with the landlord, any changes required and any clauses requiring a financial or resourcing contribution, such as:

- Maintenance.
- Management of gardens and outdoor spaces.

- Utilities and telecommunications.
- Operational costs and their impact on the Budget
- Shared access spaces.
- Relationship to landlord policies or requirements, e.g., responsibilities in an evacuation scenario.

Any new or changes to the lease arrangements are required to be presented to the CoM prior to signing of lease by authorised signatories.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Financial Management Policy
- Delegation of Authority Policy
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Asset Management Policy
- Appropriate Use of Technology Policy
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Auspice Policy
- Budget Development and Management Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Strategic Plan
- Business Plan
- Annual Budget
- Facilities Hire Agreements DRA1
- Leases

### **3.4.1 Facility Management Procedures**

BNC values and benefits from the various social, recreational, cultural and leisure activities which enrich our local community.

To hire a BNC space for a meeting, program or event:

- Potential users will be asked to provide a written request for the use of the BNC's premises/equipment.
- The proposed use of the facilities/equipment must be consistent with the objectives of BNC.
- The applicant must specify the purpose of the hire, the proposed times, facilities/equipment required and the approximate number of participants attending.
- BNC reserves the right to refuse applications which do not comply with BNC's requirements.

The Administration Coordinator will assess the risk of the proposed use, taking into account:

- The age of the participants.
- The nature of the proposed activity.
- The quality of supervision.
- The facilities/equipment to be used.
- The group's ability to provide evidence of satisfactory use of other facilities.
- Whether the activity involves consumption of alcohol.
- The level of skill required to operate any equipment involved.
- Any special circumstances related to the particular users.

The Administration Coordinator shall then institute procedures to ensure the User has:

- Undertaken to provide for the avoiding of all foreseeable risks.
- Obtained all the required permits, licences, etc.
- Undertaken to comply with any Public Directives (compliance requirements)
- Adequate insurance cover in place.

Groups will be assessed and required to complete a Facilities Hire Agreement DRA1 and charged a Usage Fee. The Facilities Hire Agreement DRA1 and Usage Fee includes facilities, equipment, supplies and materials and, where applicable, responsibility for damage to the facility other than general wear and tear.

A security bond may also be levied. BNC reserves the right to set a security bond to match the nature of proposed activity. If the activities are considered to be of a higher risk level to the property or security of the BNC then a higher bond will be charged.

Any damage or accidents occurring during use must be immediately reported to the EO, who shall make an appropriate record of all incidents. The bond is refundable after the Hire Agreement ends, less any charges for cleaning and damage.

Conduct by those attending or participating in and program or activity of the applicants should be consistent with the purpose and values of BNC.

Any breaches of the Hire Agreement may result in the suspension of a group's right to reserve facilities. Suspension of a group's agreement should be issued in writing within a reasonable time for the group to source alternative accommodation.

## 3.5 Asset Management

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|

### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) assets exist to support our community, and as such our organisation will ensure they are appropriately acquired and maintained in a manner for safe use. This policy defines the arrangements by which BNC purchases and manages our assets on behalf of the community.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) and BNC users and other third parties involved in any activity on behalf of BNC.

#### **Objectives:**

As a community-based organisation providing a community hub, BNC is responsible for the acquisition, maintenance and management of equipment and technology, making it available for use in an accessible and equitable manner to achieve its operational goals and serve its users effectively.

#### **Asset Acquisition**

BNC will ensure assets acquired by the organisation are done so in the best interest of the community, in terms of need, alignment with BNC purpose and goals and value for money.

#### **Asset Management**

Assets will be utilised to their fullest potential to maximise usage and economic performance. To achieve this BNC monitors, audits, and reviews the assets held to ensure they can continue to meet the goals and objectives set in the business and strategic plan.

#### **Asset Disposal**



Assets shall be disposed of at the Executive Officer (EO) discretion and as per the Delegation of Authority. Disposed assets must be documented and removed from the Asset Register DRR6.

### **Asset Hire**

BNC provides some assets for hire to the local community and ensures they are fit for purpose and appropriate training is provided on the use of the asset hired.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Financial Management Policy
- Delegation of Authority Policy
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Appropriate Use of Technology Policy
- Facility Management Policy
- Motor Vehicle Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Audit Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Budget Development and Management Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Purchasing and Procurement Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Strategic Plan
- Business Plan
- Annual Budget
- Asset Register DRR6
- Purchase a New Asset Form DRF3
- Change of Asset Status Form DRF4
- Facilities Hire Agreement DRA1
- Equipment Hire Agreement DRA2

## **3.5.1 Asset Management Procedures**

### **Asset Acquisition**

Any asset purchased on behalf of BNC must be handled in accordance with the Financial Management Policy and be recorded in the BNC Asset Register DRR6.

As per the Delegation of Authority Policy, the EO is empowered to authorise the acquisition of assets where:

- Budget resourcing has been allocated
- Grant funding has been provided for the purchase

Prior to an asset purchase from retained earnings, the EO must seek the CoM's approval for the purchase. Relevant quote(s) and the Purchase an Asset Form DRF3 form should be presented to the CoM along with information regarding the new asset acquisition, including:

- What asset is to be purchased and how this aligns to BNC goals.
- Why the asset must be purchased from retained earnings.
- Proposed budget for acquisition, with external supporting evidence of best value.
- Date for completion or purchase of asset.

## **Asset Disposal**

An asset surplus to requirements, unserviceable, obsolete, transferred, retired, or lost can be disposed of and released from the Asset Register DRR6. This will be reported to the Treasurer who will advise the CoM of the asset disposal.

Under delegation the EO can dispose of assets and report their disposal to the Treasurer. If there is no delegation of authority to dispose of an asset, for example it has a significant value, then the EO will recommend to the CoM a course of action for the disposal of the asset and complete the Change of Asset Status Form DRF4 form to dispose of assets.

If the asset is to be sold, then the proceeds of the sale must be recorded in the Asset Register DRR6 along with the release date and release type.

If the asset has no book value or is inoperable, broken or damaged, the EO may donate the asset to another not-for profit organisation or a community member for recycling or reuse.

## **Asset Management**

An Asset Register DRR6 is a legal requirement for BNC which is maintained and reviewed / audited yearly to ensure accuracy. The Asset Register DRR6 includes:

- Details of the asset (type, serial number etc).
- Date asset was purchased.

- Cost of the asset.
- Supplier name and address.
- Where asset is kept.
- Warranty dates and details.
- Date asset was disposed of and amount obtained.

BNC assets are externally audited yearly to ensure no fraud has occurred. The asset position of BNC shall be presented annually to the CoM. This is the responsibility of the Treasurer.

All assets will be insured to the value of their replacement against fire, theft, burglary and accidental damage. The EO will be responsible for keeping the organisation's contents insurance current, and in conjunction with the Treasurer, for reviewing the cover at each renewal to ensure:

- The value of the coverage is sufficient for replacement of all assets at their replacement value.
- All portable items such as laptops are covered for theft, loss or damage when being used away from the BNC facilities.

## **Asset Hire**

To hire a BNC space and/or equipment for a meeting, program or event, the BNC Hire Agreement DRA1 or DRA2:

- Requests all potential users to provide a written request for the use of the BNC's premises/ equipment.
- Requires the proposed use of the facilities/ equipment to be consistent with the objectives of BNC.
- Requests the applicant to specify the purpose of the hire, the proposed times, facilities/ equipment required and the approximate number of participants attending.
- Gives BNC the right to refuse applications which do not comply with BNC's requirements and objectives.

The Administration Coordinator will assess the risk of the proposed use, taking into account:

- The age of the participants.
- The nature of the proposed activity.
- The quality of supervision.
- The facilities/equipment to be used.
- The user's capability to use the facilities/equipment.

- The group's ability to provide evidence of satisfactory use of other facilities/equipment.
- Whether the activity involves consumption of alcohol.
- The level of skill required to operate any equipment involved.
- Any special circumstances related to the particular users.

The Administration Coordinator shall then institute procedures to ensure:

- The user has undertaken to provide for the avoiding of all foreseeable risks
- Adequate insurance cover is in place.

Groups will be assessed and required to complete an Equipment Hire Agreement DRA2 and charged a Usage Fee. The Equipment Hire Agreement DRA2 and Usage Fee includes facilities, equipment, supplies and materials and, where applicable, responsibility for damage to the facility other than general wear and tear.

A security bond may be levied and is refundable after the Hire Agreement ends, less any charges for cleaning and damage. BNC reserves the right to set a security bond matching the nature of proposed activity. If the activities are considered to be of a higher risk level to the property or security of the BNC then a higher bond will be charged.

Any damage or accidents occurring during use must be immediately reported to the EO, who shall make an appropriate record of all incidents.

Conduct by those attending or participating in any program or activity of the applicants should be consistent with the purpose and values of BNC.

Any breaches of the Hire Agreement may result in the suspension of a group's right to reserve facilities. Suspension of a group's agreement should be issued in writing within a reasonable time for the group to source alternative accommodation.

## 3.6 Feedback

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
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### Policy Declaration

In accordance with our Continuous Improvement Policy, information regarding satisfaction or perspectives provided by people involved with our organisation highlights where Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) is performing well and how we can improve.

BNC embraces feedback in all its forms as valuable and beneficial, as it provides insight and understanding to guide our organisation's growth and development and is an opportunity for improvement. Where feedback is provided as a formal complaint, BNC acts fairly to investigate and resolve the issue as soon as practical.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy supports any person making feedback to BNC whether in a paid or unpaid capacity. It defines BNC's acceptance, use, and response to various forms of feedback received by our organisation and is based on the principles of visibility and accessibility, responsiveness, assessment, feedback, improvement focus and service excellence.

#### **Objectives:**

Our approach to feedback management supports:

- people understanding their rights and responsibilities.
- an organisational culture focused on effective, person-centered complaints resolution and utilising feedback for continuous improvement.

To achieve this BNC employs the following strategies:

- The management process will be visible and accessible to individuals with BNC users provided information on how and where to provide feedback.
- Recording and responding to all forms of feedback, verbal and written, positive and negative.
- Utilising positive feedback to boost staff moral and community reputation through sharing good news stories in our meetings, and through our media.
- Recording positive feedback to support future programs and funding applications.

- Allocating resources to respond, address, or utilise feedback where required.
- Utilising information provided in complaints to reduce the potential for future complaints.
- Respecting the privacy of the person providing the feedback.
- Respecting the privacy of the person against whom any allegations have been made.
- Utilising the Grievance Resolution Policy to resolve complaints at the earliest opportunity in a way both valuing and respecting the person's feedback.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Event Management Policy
- Organisation Structure Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Handling Child Complaints Policy
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- CoM Resignation or Removal Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Performance Review Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Vocational Placement Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Staff and Volunteer Exit Policy
- Whistleblower Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Feedback Register DRR4
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Incident Report Form DRF7

### **3.6.1 Feedback Procedures**

#### **Social Media and Online Feedback**

BNC manages several social media online platforms and will respond to all comments and feedback within 1 business day. The vast majority of these are positive and require a simple 'like' or quick response. The Executive Officer (EO) oversees these communication channels and delegates to other staff to help manage these accounts. Any negative feedback or complaints will be highlighted to the EO for response and action as deemed appropriate.

The feedback management process can be simplified into three steps:

1. Receive information or a comment via an online platform.
2. Provide an accepted response (like, smile, comment) to the person who provided the feedback. If the feedback is negative or a complaint, notify the EO who will respond to the person advising them to follow the general feedback process below or by thanking them and investigating the feedback if it is a process or system issue.
3. Communicate results to the person who provided the feedback.

### **General Feedback**

BNC records and responds to feedback, verbal and written, positive and negative to the best of our abilities. The feedback management process can be simplified into five steps:

1. Receive information about the person(s) or situation, documenting as appropriate.
2. Record in Feedback Register DRR4, gathering evidence to ascertain the facts prior to progressing if necessary.
3. Respond to the person who provided the feedback, thanking them for their contribution and outlining the process for resolution (if required).
4. Apply an appropriate response, i.e., direct communication regarding positive feedback, or seek resolution via management for negative feedback.
5. Communicate results to person who provided the feedback.

### **Compliments**

Compliments can be made verbally or in writing and where appropriate be recorded in the Feedback Register DRR4. Compliments will be provided to the relevant employee or members, as well as the Committee of Management (CoM).

Compliments may also be featured on our social media, in our brochures or in other communication forms. As per our Media and Communications Policy, the name of the person providing the feedback will only be included on any communications platform if they provide permission to do so.

Compliments will also be accessed for program development, grant writing and other business activities, as appropriate.

### **Informal Complaints**

Informal complaints can be made verbally to any BNC staff or CoM member. Where an informal complaint is made the person receiving the complaint will advise complainant of the formal process. Informal complaints should be recorded in the Feedback Register DRR4, and reviewed by the EO or CoM Chair, who will decide on whether follow up is appropriate.

### **Formal Complaints**

Formal complaints, also known as grievances, must be made by completing a BNC Feedback Form DRF5 or on the Incident Report Form DRF7. The resolution of grievances will be managed in accordance with the Grievance Resolution Policy.



## 3.7 First Aid

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) provides an effective first aid response to help maintain a safe and healthy environment for any person engaged in our organisation. This policy supports our organisation to meet our duty of care as well as meet work health and safety regulations.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy).

#### **Objectives:**

First Aid is the initial care provided to a sick or injured person. First Aid is usually given by someone 'on the spot' and is an essential service provided to any persons who are injured at BNC or associated off site activities. A person administering first aid is often not a qualified health care professional and is not expected to perform the duties of one. People administering first aid are needed to provide immediate assistance until a qualified health care professional arrives and takes control of the situation or the person recovers or the person is taken for medical assistance.

BNC provides an effective first aid response to help maintain a safe and healthy working and learning environment for staff, contractors, BNC users and community members engaged in BNC activities.

To achieve this, we:

- Allocate appropriate resources, including first aid equipment, to provide effective first aid responses which reduce, whenever possible, the severity of the injury/illness.
- Apply risk management principles to identify any gaps in first aid provisions and to maintain at least 1 First Aid Officer(s).

- Train and roster First Aid Officers to respond promptly to people injured or those requiring first aid.
- Ensure staff, contractors, BNC users and community members engaged in BNC activities are aware of how and where to obtain first aid assistance.
- Completes Incident Report Form DRF7 for any Incidents requiring First Aid or for minor injuries completes an entry in the First Aid Kit injury booklet.
- Reviews incidents and first aid responses, so corrective actions can be applied to continuously improve first aid responses and to reduce the risk of injury.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Vehicle Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Incident Report Form DRF7
- First Aid Kit Checklist DRC2

### **3.7.1 First Aid Procedures**

It is the responsibility of the Executive Officer (EO) to ensure:

- Adequate and appropriate First Aid facilities are provided at BNC, in BNC managed vehicles or at any BNC off site programs or events.
- Signage is clearly displayed advising of First Aid Officer/s.
- Annually staff are offered onsite First Aid training, with a qualified provider during business hours. Staff may opt out of this training by advising the EO or discuss with the EO an alternative day, time or place to attend training.
- First Aid Kits are maintained and kept in a clearly identifiable container, prominently displayed for easy access.
- First Aid Kits are inspected and updated monthly using the First Aid Checklist DRC2.

- First Aid Kits include Incident Report Forms DRF7 or a First Aid Injury Booklet, to be completed when any First Aid is administered, including the following information:
  - o Name and contact number of the injured person.
  - o Date and time of injury.
  - o Nature of injury/illness.
  - o Treatment provided.
  - o Supplies used.
  - o Name of First Aider who attended.

Staff are responsible for ensuring their First Aid Qualification is kept up to date. BNC will cover the costs of maintaining training.

### **Providing First Aid**

At the time a person is required to provide assistance they should:

- Assess the situation quickly – check for danger.
- Identify the nature of the injury or illness as far as possible.
- Arrange for emergency services to attend.
- Manage the casualty appropriately and promptly.
- Stay with the casualty until they can hand over to a health care professional.
- Give further help if necessary or as directed.

First Aid providers should always operate in a manner to ensure their safety, as well as the safety of others. This includes awareness of infection control, including:

- Washing hands with soap or applying alcohol-based disinfectant before and after first aid administration.
- Use of disposable gloves when administering First Aid, and use of other protective devices where appropriate, such as eye protection or masks.
- Prompt reporting and medical response if provider sustains a sharps injury.
- Appropriate disposal of any used first aid materials or equipment in secure containers.

First Aid Officers are NOT to administer or dispense any medicines, including insulin injection devices (Epi Pens), paracetamol or other headache preparations without the patient's consent.

Qualified First Aid providers are indemnified by BNC in respect to any legal actions taken against them, provided their first aid assistance or lack of assistance is not proven to be the result of wilful negligence or given without the patients consent.

## **First Aid Kit Contents**

First Aid Kits are to be stocked with an appropriate amount of equipment and dressing.  
First Aid Kit contents must be documented in a First Aid Kit Checklist DRC2 and monitored as per the Chart of Delegations DRM3.

## 3.8 Health

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

Supporting health and wellness leads to healthier and happier people in our organisation. Safeguarding health is an important part of our organisational identity and Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) will provide and promote active living and healthy eating across our community. This policy supports our culture, day to day practices, increased access to health initiatives and the creation of an environment supporting and encouraging healthy choices every day.

### Policy Description

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) and BNC users and other third parties involved in any activity on behalf of BNC.

#### Objectives:

The most effective health and wellness initiatives share common characteristics: active engagement of management and staff, commitment to tailored, equitable and appropriately resourced actions, and a long-term focus on achieving health across our community.

Increased education and access to health information can improve health outcomes for individuals, particularly when the environment, culture, and practices make healthy options the easy choice.

Well planned initiatives tailored to the needs of the providing a safe and healthy workplace don't need to be expensive or resource intensive and can:

- Improve culture and participation.
- Build loyalty and commitment amongst staff and users.
- Reduce staff absenteeism and increase productivity.
- Reduce injury and accelerate return to work.
- Enhance recruitment and retention to staff positions, committee roles, and our community programs.

- Comply with occupational health and safety legislation and regulations.

When applying this policy, BNC will follow these principles:

- Recognise health includes psychological health and is more than just the absence of illness and injury.
- Supportive and engaging work has benefits for individuals, families and wider society, beyond chronic disease risk reduction.
- Recognise culture and environment contributes significantly to an individual's ability to make healthy lifestyle choices, including emotional wellbeing.
- Leadership will provide our staff with a safe, healthy and supportive environment to work in and our users a place to attend.
- Leadership is well positioned and will act as advocates and role models of workplace health and wellbeing.
- Commit to providing a supportive culture where healthy lifestyle choices are valued and encouraged.
- Recognise the voluntary nature of participation within health and wellbeing related activities.
- Commit to providing employees with access to safe and appropriate health and wellbeing information, activities and services, following recommended good practice, quality service provision, and legislation.

The following objectives have been established to contribute to our health and wellbeing:

- To support opportunities and programs designed to increase active living choices available in our community.
- To provide access to healthy food choices through foods offered in our organisation and an environment supporting the consumption of foods brought from home.
- To promote a smoke-free environment and support people seeking to quit.
- To promote and provide an organisation encouraging responsible alcohol consumption.
- To support staff and users to participate in regular physical activity and reduce sedentary practices through promotion, education, and access to physical activity and movement opportunities.
- To support staff to avoid illness through encouraging preventative immunisations and supporting sick staff to stay at home as per the Leave and Wellbeing Policy
- Encouraging physical care in the workplace through regular breaks, safe lifting practices, social distancing, hand sanitisation, ventilation and ergonomic management.

- To support and promote staff wellbeing through work practices, a positive culture, and leadership.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Safe Workplace Policy
- Leave and Wellbeing Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Event Management Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Policy
- Induction Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Epidemic/Pandemic Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Worksafe - Manual Handling Guides

### **3.8.1 Health Procedures**

- **Healthy Eating** – any person attending BNC is supported to bring food prepared at home for meals or snacks. Where BNC provides food for staff and BNC users the following policies apply:
  - o Fresh is best.
  - o Avoid frying foods.
  - o Provide low sugar options.
  - o Avoid overly processed food.
  - o Consideration of special dietary requirements.
- **Smoking** – is not permitted on any site. BNC will endeavour to support people trying to quit.
- **Immunisations** – BNC staff are encouraged to access free immunisations via the health service, including:
  - o Adult Diphtheria and Tetanus- required as a booster at age 50.
  - o Measles Mumps Rubella – required for those born between 1966 and 1983 who never had a second measles vaccine.
  - o Hepatitis B – recommended for general population, especially for first aiders.

- o Annual Influenza vaccination – recommended in May each year.
- o Coronavirus (SARS) vaccination – as recommended by the Department of Health
- **Communicable illnesses** – Staff who are suffering from an acute infectious illness should not attend work and should stay away from work for the legislated periods of time, as detailed in their relevant Award or Collective Bargaining Agreement.
  - o Staff are entitled to confidentiality regarding any illness.
- **Taking breaks** – Staff are encouraged to take regular breaks:
  - o Block out times where short breaks can be taken – 5 minutes around 10am and 3pm can make a big difference to your day.
  - o If working at a desk make a habit of getting up every 20-30 minutes- go to the printer, get some water, use the toilet or stretch.
  - o When you have the opportunity, go outside. A few minutes of fresh air will freshen you up, and a short walk will get the blood pumping and stimulate your brain activity.
- **Ergonomics** – desk-based staff are encouraged to access an ergonomic assessment. These may be offered by the Executive Officer (EO) if identified as a need, but staff can also request one if they feel there is a need.
- **Manual Handling** – staff should employ proper processes for lifting. Seek assistance if manual handling is required, and plan ahead when activities or deliveries require heavy lifting. BNC will keep copies of the Worksafe Hazardous Manual Handling guide in the office, making it available to all staff at Induction.
- **Hand Washing** – Washing of hands with soap and water is one of the best and simplest precautions. Hand washing should occur:
  - o Before preparing food.
  - o After going to the toilet.
  - o Before (if possible) and after giving first aid.
  - o After contact with any body fluids.
- **Food handling** – food produced at BNC is done so in line with food handling guidelines and under the supervision of suitably qualified staff or tutors.
- **Prevention of Needle-stick Injuries** – It is possible people may encounter needles at our premises. If a needle is discovered on the property it should be brought immediately to the attention of the EO or responsible team leader, who will organise for its disposal. Needles should NEVER be:
  - o Recapped by staff when found
  - o Broken or bent by hand
  - o Removed from disposable syringes after use.



Needles and syringes should be disposed of in an approved sharp safe container. If approved sharp safe containers are not available, a puncture resistant container with wide opening, such as a fruit juice container, would be the next best option.

- **SunSmart** – Sun protection is required when outdoors. Between September to April outdoor activities and events should be scheduled to minimise sun exposure, especially between the hours of 11am and 3pm. Water and shade should be provided, and all staff must wear sun protective clothing, wide brimmed hats and apply sunscreen 20 minutes prior to sun exposure and re-applying every two hours.
- **Extreme Conditions** – Outdoor events or activities should be cancelled when high risk conditions are forecast.
- **Taking Leave** – Working long periods without holiday breaks can have a negative impact on staff performance, morale, health and wellbeing. Staff are provided with several different leave entitlements and opportunities to accrue Time-off-in-Lieu and are encouraged to take holiday breaks at least every six months.

## 3.9 Incident Reporting and Response

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) is equipped to identify, plan for and respond to incidents impacting the wellbeing of individuals or our organisation. The purpose of this policy is to ensure BNC utilises a consistent and coordinated approach to incident management which meets our legal requirements, as well as allowing the organisation to learn from mistakes and near misses.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) and BNC users and other third parties involved in any activity on behalf of BNC.

#### **Objectives:**

BNC implements strategies to avoid or mitigate the impact of incidents through safety awareness, education and training, as well as through regularly reviewed policies and procedures, refer to the related policies and procedures list.

Incidents, no matter how small, must be recognised, responded to and documented for our organisation to strengthen and grow.

Broadly, incidents are events which could result in a breach of organisational policy and/or impact the health and wellbeing of an individual or the organisation to the degree a response is required. Incident categories include:

| Category                                  | Symptoms                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Unacceptable behaviour                    | Abusive, violent or intimidating actions or language used by a community member, staff, user, or CoM member in the organisation.                                                                                                                                      |
| IT Systems Security Event                 | IT incident likely to have an ongoing impact on the organisation such as privacy breach or cyber security event.                                                                                                                                                      |
| Personal Security Event                   | Serious injury/illness, assault, sexual assault, theft, suicide, attempted suicide, homicide, lost/missing student, epidemic, serious student or staff misconduct, or drug or alcohol abuse when impacting on academic performance or conduct.                        |
| Legislative compliance breach:            | Statutory or regulatory, e.g. discrimination and harassment, ethics, integrity, OHS, financial, health, safe food handling, worker screening.                                                                                                                         |
| Physical / infrastructure security event: | Vandalism, building fire, explosion, bomb threat, arson, traffic accident, accidental property damage.                                                                                                                                                                |
| Natural disaster:                         | Flood, cyclone, storm, high winds, bushfire, earthquake, or any natural disaster likely to cause major damage to property, threaten personal safety, or cause inability for the majority of staff to attend to normal operations.                                     |
| Environmental:                            | Chemical, biological, radiological, hazardous material.                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Human errors or mistakes                  | Judgement errors, lapses in attention, or a lack of proper training or incorrect/inappropriate qualifications, failing to follow established procedures, misinterpreting information, overlooking critical safety steps, or making decisions under stress or fatigue. |

Understanding the origins and elements of incidents is essential and therefore the following principles guide BNC incident management response:

- **Openness about failures** – incidents are reported, and the incident acknowledged without fear of inappropriate blame.
- **Emphasis on learning** – BNC focuses on learning from mistakes and near misses. BNC employs a culture of continuous improvement.
- **Appropriate action** – BNC will take action to remedy problems, prioritising and resourcing actions where greatest improvements are possible.
- **Accountability** – individuals understand they may be held accountable for their actions.
- **Just culture** – individuals are treated fairly.
- **Cooperation, collaboration and communication** – teamwork is recognised as the best defence. BNC fosters a culture of trust and mutual respect.
- **Confidentiality and Privacy** – individuals have a right to confidentiality and for their privacy to be protected.

Effective management of incidents and issues requires their prompt communication to the EO. BNC staff are encouraged to report all incidents, no matter how small, including 'near misses' when an incident might have occurred. All staff are responsible for commencing or participating in incident reporting and response as their training and abilities allow.

## **Critical Incidents**

A Critical Incident is a crisis, which has a stressful impact, overwhelming the usually effective coping skills of an individual or group. Critical incidents are usually outside the range of ordinary experiences and may have a strong impact on the individual or group and must be reported to a government agency or department.

If not responded to effectively, critical incidents may lead to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, compromised systems, financial losses, and reputational damage. BNC is committed to swift and effective response to support individuals impacted by these events.

## **DFFH Critical Incidents**

Critical Incidents are required to be reported to DFFH under the NHCP Guideline via the Critical Incident Reporting Form DRF6. In some instances, they may also be required to be reported to a government agency or department under mandatory reporting requirements.

Critical Incidents are defined as:

- **Category 1** – the most serious Incidents – such as death or severe trauma - and occur at the service or during service delivery. Recommended report within 1 working day.

- **Category 2** – Incidents involving events threatening the health, safety and or wellbeing of users or staff. Recommended report within 2 working days.

**Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Induction Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Event Management Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Motor Vehicle Policy
- Emergency Management Policy
- Fraud Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Handling Child Complaints Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Staff and Volunteer Exit Policy
- CoM Resignation or Removal Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- WorkSafe Reporting Form
- Critical Incident Reporting Form DRF6
- Incident Report Form DRF7
- Vehicle Incident Report Form DRF31
- Incident Register DRR5
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Feedback Register DRR4

### **3.9.1 Incident Reporting and Response Procedures**

An incident may be managed during the normal course of BNC business, will require completion of the Incident Report Form DRF7 and is managed by the Executive Officer (EO) and staff using normal processes and procedures. For incidents involving a vehicle, the driver will complete the Vehicle Incident Report Form DRF31. Completed Incident Reports, including the BNC response, will be documented, recorded in the Incident Register DRR5 and reported to the CoM at every meeting.

Where an incident involves staff or CoM Members, the EO, or if the EO is affected the Chair or if the Chair and EO are affected then the Deputy Chair will be responsible to manage the incident and decide whether individuals should be sent home or placed on leave. In some situations, incidents involving staff may require implementation of disciplinary action, as per the Performance Management Policy. Extreme incidents may involve immediately implementing dismissal processes for staff members or removal of CoM members from the CoM.

An Incident Report Form DRF7 must be completed for any incident which demonstrates or highlights gaps and/or areas for improvement in planning, procedures, communication strategies or is a serious breach of policy. The Incident Report Form DRF7 incorporates feedback gathered from those present at the incident and other people impacted by the incident.

#### **Mandatory Reporting**

In addition to contractual reporting obligations, there are several legislative reporting requirements for BNC to provide immediate notification of the incident. These include but are not limited to:

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (OHS Act) to notify workplace safety incidents to WorkSafe, including death, fractures, and hospitalisation. A detailed list of mandatory reporting incidents is located on the WorkSafe website.
- Child Safe Legislation
- Cyber, Privacy or Information Breach
- Employment Legislation
- Financial
- VMIA requires immediate notification of critical incidents including child abuse, Fair Work claims, serious injury, cyber breaches and financial solvency.

#### **Critical Incident Response**

In all cases, an incident should be considered to have the potential to become a critical incident and should be managed as follows

1. Provide an Immediate Response.

Staff and EO should take required action, without putting themselves in danger, to:

- Determine the nature, danger and seriousness of the incident.
- If safe, minimise the immediate effects of an incident.
- Follow safety, first aid, use of technology, child safe and employment procedures.
- Notify the EO, who will immediately notify the CoM Chair of any Critical Incidents,
- The EO will implement the Emergency Management Plan and begin mandatory reporting notifications as required
- Preserve the area, ensuring evidence is not destroyed prior to the investigation.

2. Supporting impacted people.

The EO, or if the EO was involved and affected by the incident, the Chair or Deputy Chair, is responsible for coordinating support strategies following a critical incident.

Strategies include:

- Convene a meeting for those involved as soon as possible.
- Summarise the incident and clarify uncertainties.
- Invite questions and discuss issues of concern.
- Show care and support.
- Draw up a plan of action, taking into account the needs of the workers.
- Make short-term arrangements for work responsibilities.
- Offer information on defusing and debriefing.

3. Defusing the event.

Defusing is designed to bring the experience of the incident to a conclusion and provide immediate personal support and it should be provided by an unaffected member of staff who has the appropriate skills to deliver it. If nobody meets these requirements an external facilitator will be engaged.

The aim is to stabilise the responses of those involved in the incident and allow an opportunity for them to express immediate concerns. This step should take place within 12 hours of the incident. Strategies include:

- Review the event
- Clarify workers' questions and concerns
- Encourage workers to talk about what happened
- Identify current needs
- Offer workers advice, information, and handouts on referrals and support agencies
- Arrange debriefing and follow-up sessions if required

#### 4. Debriefing.

Debriefing is not counselling; it is a structured voluntary discussion aimed at putting an abnormal event into perspective. It offers workers clarity about the critical incident they have experienced and assists them to establish a process for recovery.

The debriefing should be carried out as soon as possible after the event. All those directly involved in a critical incident should be strongly urged to attend. The location should be comfortable, safe and central. The settings should ensure confidentiality.

Trained de-briefers and support staff should conduct debriefing sessions where possible to help staff to explore and understand a range of issues, including:

- The sequence of events.
- The causes and consequences.
- Each person's experience.
- Any memories triggered by the incident.
- Normal psychological reactions to critical incidents.
- Methods to manage emotional responses resulting from a critical incident.
- An awareness of any legal issues.
- Evaluation of the debriefing session.

#### 5. Ongoing monitoring and support.

With appropriate and responsive critical incident processes, the people affected will be able to integrate the information and in time recover without symptoms. The EO and staff need to be alert to each other and watch for signs being exhibited by staff immediately after an event, or over a period of days or weeks.

Some signs to watch out for include when a person:

- Avoids reminders of the incident or is unable to stop talking about it.



- May have increased arousal, restlessness, fatigue, flashbacks, inappropriate emotions, loss of interest in work.
- Values may change, they avoid people, or they become pessimistic or bitter.
- Has a preoccupation with the incident, even saying 'it's part of the job' while denying the effects.

Where critical incident stress is observed the person affected will be supported to access the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

## **Cyber Security**

A data breach occurs when personal or organisational information is lost, accessed or disclosed without authorisation or subject to unauthorised modification or misuse. An eligible data breach is one that is likely to result in serious harm to the affected individual or BNC.

BNC understands risk relating to cybersecurity and the controls to be deployed to address such risks evolve over time and it is not possible to reduce cybersecurity risk to zero. BNC will endeavour to materially reduce cybersecurity risk through adequate cybersecurity documentation and controls, including regular cyber security training and risk assessment reviews.

When developing Cyber Security controls, BNC acknowledges:

- The single biggest threat is via third party websites and legacy systems so mapping these is key as we cannot protect what we don't know we have.
- Not all digital assets are equal, but they are all defendable with proper controls.
- The worst time to develop a crisis management plan is mid-crisis so having a plan in place is essential.
- What is safe today may not be safe tomorrow, constant monitoring and reviewing is required, controls are not a set and forget process.

If a cyber security breach occurs or we suspect a breach has occurred we will:

- take all reasonable steps to complete an assessment within 30 days of becoming aware of reasonable grounds to suspect
- prioritise this matter above other routine decisions
- immediately assign a person to be accountable for the timely completion of the assessment
- ensure the assessment includes analysis of the suspected compromised personal information, not just an investigation of the unauthorised access
- monitor progress of the assessment and investigation, and

- develop a data breach plan to ensure an effective data breach response.

### **Data Breach Response Plan**

The Data Breach Response Plan outlines the steps BNC will take in the event of a suspected or confirmed data breach involving personal information. It ensures compliance with the Notifiable Data Breaches (NDB) scheme under the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

BNC will implement a Response Team for managing a data breach comprising the BNC CoM Chair, EO and IT Support (internal or external). The EO will coordinate the response, communication, assess legal obligations and manage reporting. The IT Support team will assess technical aspects and containment. The CoM Chair will be kept informed of all breaches and work with the EO to respond to a breach.

BNC will ACT fast, remaining calm to CONTAIN the breach, to:

- Immediately isolate or shut down affected systems to prevent further access or disclosure
- Secure physical records if involved
- Change passwords immediately
- Check antivirus software for threats
- If MFA is available and not enabled, enable it immediately
- If locked out of accounts, contact providers ASAP for recovery options.

BNC will ASSESS the breach:

- Determine what systems or accounts were accessed and what personal or sensitive data has been exposed
- Check bank statements, email logs and cloud storage for other suspicious activity

BNC will NOTIFY:

- The people affected with the type of breach and steps to take if personal details have been compromised and contact IDCARE for confidential support and tailored advice.
- Report incident to Australian Securities Directorate [Report Cyber](#) or Australian Cybersecurity Hotline on 1300CYBER1.
- The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) using the NDB form if the breach is likely to cause serious harm,

BNC will take steps to REVIEW defences:

- Updating all systems and software

- Reviewing who has access to sensitive data
- Consider cybersecurity tools like endpoint protection
- Document the incident, actions taken and lessons learned
- Invest in training for organisation to support future incident prevention.

## 3.10 Motor Vehicle

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|

### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) operates a pool of motor vehicles to undertake its work, including providing community-based services.

For the purposes of this policy, vehicles includes vehicles used to transport people (including cars and buses) and vehicles used to transport goods (including minivans or utilities).

BNC will ensure all motor vehicles used for organisational activities are fit for purpose and meet required occupational safety requirements before being driven.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy), and any other authorised parties who drive a motor vehicle owned or leased by BNC. This party is known as the 'driver' for this policy.

Private vehicles may be used from time to time to undertake BNC activities and work. Drivers are expected to follow this policy when using a private vehicle to undertake BNC related activities and work.

#### **Objectives:**

BNC encourages those needing travel for work related activities to make use of the BNC vehicles by proactively considering the timing of activities to match the availability of the vehicles and to make bookings with the BNC office.

The objectives of this policy are to ensure the:

- guidelines for safe and appropriate use of a motor vehicle used for work purposes are in place;
- responsibilities for security, care and maintenance of vehicles are clearly defined;
- responsibilities for fines and traffic infringements are clearly outlined;
- process for personal use of BNC vehicles is clearly defined; and

- staff understand the steps involved, should a breakdown, accident or theft occur.

**Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Travel Policy
- Asset Management Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Purchasing and Procurement Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Vehicle Incident Report
- Vehicle Log Book
- Vehicle Booking Form DRF33
- Incident Report Form DRF7
- Travel Reimbursement Form DRF18
- Expense Authorisation and Reimbursement Form DRF19
- Vehicle Lease
- Insurance Policy (Vehicle)
- Driver Declaration Form DRF29
- Vehicle Incident Report Form DRF31

### **3.10.1 Motor Vehicle Procedures**

**Fleet Management**

The CoM must approve and minute a resolution to purchase a new vehicle, lease or hire a vehicle or undertake any unbudgeted repairs to a vehicle.

The BNC CoM and Executive Officer (EO) will endeavour to select the safest vehicles possible when purchasing, hiring or leasing vehicles.

The EO will maintain

- a preventative maintenance program to ensure the manufacturer's service recommendations are met and a vehicle complies with roadworthiness requirements;
- accident management services and manufacturer's roadside assistance are provided;
- a toll road account; and
- registration and re-registration of the vehicle.

Drivers are responsible for notifying the EO of any maintenance issues identified while they are using the vehicle.

### **Use of Private Vehicles**

Drivers should only use their private vehicles when:

- attending a work-related activity on their way to or from BNC at the start or end of a shift and it is not possible to take the BNC vehicle home;
- BNC vehicles are unavailable, note drivers should plan trips with the BNC office to minimise this happening;
- In an emergency; or
- Other travel options are unavailable, refer to the Travel Policy.

Private vehicles can only be used for BNC work related activities with the permission of the EO or CoM Chair prior to usage. For the reimbursement process following the use of a private vehicle refer to the Travel Policy.

When using a private vehicle for BNC work related activities, drivers are expected to follow the behaviors and guidelines in this policy, including parking safely, their responsibility for infringements, and the process for accidents and theft.

Drivers should ensure their vehicle is legally registered, roadworthy and appropriately insured. Requirements for insurance claims related to a private vehicle include:

- BNC will only reimburse a staff member for use of a private vehicle for business travel where the staff member certifies, at the time of submitting their claim, the vehicle is covered by Comprehensive Insurance and Compulsory Third-Party Insurance policies.
- If a private vehicle is damaged whilst being used for BNC work purposes any 'normal' excess insurance charges prescribed by the insurer will be reimbursed by BNC unless they include an amount prescribed by the insurer as 'punitive' excess charges.

- BNC will only reimburse excess where a claim has been made on the insurer and the insurer has deducted an excess at settlement.
- All claims are to be submitted in writing to the CoM Chair and must be supported by evidence of excess deduction applied by vehicle insurer.
- BNC will not accept any claims for damages other than in respect of insurance excess.

## **Approved Drivers and Registration**

Drivers are permitted to drive their own private vehicles if approved by the EO or CoM Chair but must not drive another person's private vehicle for work purposes.

Drivers using a BNC vehicle must register with the BNC office prior to their first time driving the vehicle. To ensure their registration details are current, drivers must reregister with the BNC Office at the start of every calendar year, or the first time in any calendar year they use a BNC vehicle,

The registration includes:

- completing a Driver Declaration Form DRF29;
- providing a photocopy of your current Australian driver's licence; and
- providing details of an emergency contact, to be kept on file.

It is the driver's responsibility to ensure their licence remains valid, and the driver must notify the BNC office if there are any changes affecting their right to drive.

P-plate drivers are permitted to drive BNC vehicles and must display their P-plates when driving. Learner drivers are not permitted to drive BNC vehicles as they are not covered under our insurance.

A driver with a condition, including returning to work after an illness, which may affect their driving ability, must discuss this with the EO and may be requested to present a fit to drive doctor's certificate.

## **Vehicle Use**

### **BNC Vehicle Bookings and Pre-departure**

To ensure availability, the driver is required to pre-book a vehicle by contacting or visiting the BNC office to complete a Vehicle Booking Form DRF33. Keys can be collected from the office and the logbook must be completed and signed by the driver before departure. Bookings will be prioritised over non-booked requests, except in the case of an emergency. If a booking is no longer required, the driver must notify the BNC office to cancel the booking as soon as possible.

Before starting the vehicle, the driver must complete a visual safety check, including:

- tyres are fully inflated and have adequate tread;
- front and rear windscreens are clean and free of damage;
- side mirrors and interior rear vision mirror are clean and adjusted to the right angle and height for them;
- vehicle is free of damage (photograph and report any new damage to EO before driving);
- indicators, headlights, and taillights are operational;
- there are no unexplained oil/water puddles under vehicle; and
- note if the vehicle has been left clean from a prior use.

### Parking

When using a vehicle, it must be parked in a safe, legal and secure manner at all times.

The BNC vehicle will be parked in an allocated car park when not in use. Please confirm the location of the vehicle from BNC office staff when collecting the vehicle keys as the vehicle maybe occasionally parked in different parking locations

### Taking the BNC Vehicle Home

During the holidays, a driver may be requested by the EO to look after a BNC vehicle and park it at their home. The driver, and only the driver, may use the vehicle during this time for reasonable personal use and distances, the driver will be responsible for all personal petrol expenses.

A driver may book a vehicle to take home, with prior permission by the EO, for an out of hours work-related event or for personal use.

### BNC Vehicle Cleaning, Fuel and Maintenance

The driver must leave the vehicle clean and tidy after each use. Remove all rubbish and personal items. If the vehicle is exceptionally dirty (inside or out) after use, the driver will be responsible for cleaning it at a carwash (see instructions below) before returning it.

All vehicles will be cleaned monthly by a volunteer, at a carwash, to be paid via petty cash. Cleaning consists of washing the exterior of the vehicle and vacuuming the interior. Clean interior windows/windscreen, as required. Please provide receipts for reimbursement.

Fuel to be kept above half a tank. The driver must fill the tank when the gauge reaches half full. Payment can be either via reimbursement with a receipt for petty cash (returning with the receipt and change) or a BNC debit card.



The driver must report any mechanical anomalies to the EO as soon as possible. The EO is responsible for the regular servicing and all mechanical repairs.

### BNC Vehicle Logbooks

The logbook is kept in the BNC office and must be completed by the driver/office staff before and after each journey to record the destination and reason. Drivers are authorised to carry passengers with all passenger names to be recorded in the logbook. Drivers are not permitted to transport clients unless authorised by the EO.

### Infringements

Drivers are required to observe all traffic laws, including regulations and by-laws relating to all aspects of motor vehicle operation in the applicable jurisdiction of operation.

Fines for traffic and parking offences are the responsibility of the driver who is obliged by law to provide relevant details to authorities or the BNC office on request. Failure to pay fines may result in legal action by the issuing authority (i.e. police). Costs resulting from legal action are to be met by the driver.

### Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

A driver must comply with existing road traffic legislation and not drive while under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. Smoking, consumption of alcohol or use of illegal substances inside a BNC vehicle is not permitted.

If the driver is at fault in an accident and they are found to have a blood alcohol over their licence requirements or illicit drugs in their system, the driver will be required to pay the insurance excess and will be banned from future use of BNC vehicles. The driver may also be subject to a disciplinary action as per the Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy.

### BNC Vehicle Monitoring System

BNC vehicles may be fitted with a vehicle monitoring system(s) to monitor vehicle speed, geographical location, route, and/or direction. BNC reserves the right to collect and analyse location and journey details at any time.

### Return of BNC Vehicle

On return, the driver will ensure:

- the vehicle has a minimum of half a tank of fuel;
- all personal items and rubbish has been removed;

- exceptionally dirty (inside or out) vehicles haven't been cleaned (see previous);
- the logbook has been completed correctly and keys returned to the BNC office.

## **Safety and Security**

Vehicles are to be parked in a safe and secure place at all times. Vehicles are to be properly secured when unoccupied, i.e. keys removed, doors locked and security systems activated.

Every BNC vehicle is fitted with:

- a first aid kit (checked every 6 months)
- a fire extinguisher (checked annually)
- health and safety items (mask, gloves, etc)
- fluoro vests and hi-visibility hats, required to be used by anyone loading/unloading the vehicle.

## **Breakdowns, Accidents and Theft**

In instances of vehicle theft or items stolen from inside the vehicle, it is the driver's responsibility to notify police and the EO immediately. Please note personal property, such as laptops, phones or sunglasses stolen from vehicles may not be covered by BNC insurance. It is not recommended to leave such items unattended in a vehicle.

In a collision, the driver must not admit liability. Assuming the driver is uninjured, at the scene of a collision, the driver should:

- exchange vehicle, insurer and personal details with other driver(s) involved;
- provide contact details of the EO; and
- notify police if there is any property damage or injury.

As soon as possible following the accident/incident, the driver should:

- seek medical assistance as needed;
- report the details to the EO or office; and
- complete a Vehicle Incident Report Form DRF31 (including photos where available).

In the case of mechanical issues (i.e.: car not starting or a breakdown) call Roadside Assistance located in the vehicle (covers most issues, see Service and Warranty Manual).

## **Penalties for Breach of this Policy**

Drivers will face disciplinary consequences for breaching this policy. For minor offenses, including receiving more than two speeding fines, BNC may issue reprimands and ultimately revoke the use of the BNC vehicle.

More serious breaches of this penalty could result in a ban from the future use of BNC vehicles, termination of employment, and/or legal action as needed for more serious offenses under the Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy.

## 3.11 Emergency Management Plan

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

As an organisation funded by the state government, including the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) and Department of Education (DET), Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) is required to:

- have an appropriate Emergency Management Plan in place
- review this plan at least annually.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy assists the BNC Committee of Management (CoM) and Executive Officer (EO) to prepare for and respond to emergencies. It outlines the organisations responsibilities and the types of things to consider when preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies.

The policy seeks to achieve a consistent approach, allowing BNC to

- take into consideration the local environment, conditions, resources and the health, safety and wellbeing of clients and staff; and
- plan for the potential impacts on clients, staff, and services from the range of emergencies they may face. This includes identifying specific risks inherent to our service and location.

Taking an 'all hazards' approach enables BNC to be better prepared by planning for the impacts of a range of potential emergencies which may occur, factoring in our clients' needs and any specific risks they face.

#### **Objectives:**

BNC has a legislated duty of care to take reasonable steps to prevent injury to the people who access or work at BNC. This extends to taking reasonable steps to identify, assess and manage risks, and reasonable steps to plan, prepare, respond, and recover from an emergency.

An emergency is an incident or event threatening the health, safety or wellbeing of our clients, staff, or visitors. An emergency may also impact the way we are able to operate by threatening, damaging, or destroying property, or by disrupting essential services.

Emergencies include, but are not limited to:

- floods, storms, bushfires, and grassfires
- building or industrial fires
- explosions and accidents
- extreme heat and heatwaves
- epidemics or pandemics
- security breach or cyber threat
- the contamination of food or water supply, and
- disruption to essential services such as electricity, gas, or telecommunications networks.

An emergency does not need to directly affect BNC for it to have an impact on our clients, staff, or ongoing service delivery. For example,

- smoke from a bushfire or industrial fire may result in poor air quality leading to potential breathing difficulties.
- a flood or storm may cause prolonged road closures. This could mean BNC is unable to evacuate safely, is inaccessible to emergency services, or staff cannot travel to or from work.
- An epidemic or pandemic may not only cause staff or clients to become ill, but it may also impact the number of regular staff available to deliver services. A severe epidemic or pandemic may also cause BNC to close.
- a data breach may result in confidential client data being stolen and BNC may reactive a cyber threat to publicly release this information.

While each emergency is unique, their impact can be similar. The planning undertaken for one type of emergency can be applied across several similar scenarios. For example, BNC may identify and plan for a prolonged power outage as a potential consequence of a severe storm. This planning could be reused or adapted should a different emergency disrupt the power supply.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

- Safe Workplace Policy
- Event Management Policy
- Facility Management Policy
- Health Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Epidemic/ Pandemic Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Induction Policy
- Marketing and Communications Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Emergency Management Plan DRM6
- Business Continuity Plan DRM5
- Risk Management Plan DRM8
- Incident Report Form DRF7

### **3.11.1 Emergency Management Procedures**

#### **Business Continuity and Emergency Management Plans**

BNC maintains a Business Continuity Plan DRM5 or an equivalent document (for example a Pandemic Safe Plan) to ensure ongoing service provision or communication around suspensions, should our service be disrupted.

BNC's Emergency Management Plan DRM6 records our emergency management arrangements. It also directs management, staff, clients, and others as to what to do before, during and after an emergency.

An annual review of both the BNC Emergency Management Plan DRM6 and Business Continuity Plan DRM5 is conducted by the CoM.

The BNC Emergency Management Plan DRM6:

1. Includes a risk assessment to identify the types, likelihood and consequences of an emergency occurring
2. reflects the location, physical environment, client and staff profile, and other relevant factors
3. describes the planned responses for different types of emergencies such as altering or ceasing services, relocation, sheltering and evacuation
4. has clear triggers for activation and deactivation, including processes for maintaining situational awareness and sourcing accurate, up-to-date information

5. be tailored to the needs of our community and clients, including Aboriginal and CALD communities, to ensure a culturally responsive approach
6. includes agreed emergency management roles and responsibilities, including clear lines of authority for decision making and communication arrangements gives consideration for staff and clients who may be impacted by emergencies outside any impact on the organisation, including but not limited to Code Red Days, localised flooding, bush fires, data breaches, cyber threats, epidemic thunderstorm asthma and power outages.

### **Activating the Emergency Management Plan**

BNC will in the first instance call 000 when there is immediate danger to life or property.

BNC will activate the emergency management plan when we become aware of a risk or actual emergency, including a Code Red declaration. During an emergency, the CoM Chair will be briefed regularly by the EO, with updates to the CoM as needed.

BNC will continually monitor risks and warnings through local networks, as well as mainstream media, and maintain regular contact with local emergency service agencies, particularly during high-risk periods. We will act where an emergency may impact on clients or staff.

### **Notifying the Department**

BNC must notify the relevant government agencies and departments by phone if an emergency results in changes to service delivery, and again when normal services have resumed. Notification is required when there is a:

- Critical Incident, refer to the Incident Reporting and Response Policy.
- change to the way services are delivered, including a decision to stop providing services, or is required to relocate to a different address.
- data breach or cyber-attack.
- service returns to normal operations following an emergency or Code Red day relocation within 5 days. service has not or is not expected to return to normal within five days of the Code Red day, the department must be notified by the fifth day, indicating when the service expects to return to normal.

## 3.12 Marketing and Communications

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

Our brand and messaging identify our organisation in the community. Whether through advertising, media relations, brochures, and other printed publications, videos, webpages, direct mail, or other means, the consistent application of strategies to promote and protect the Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) brand is of vital importance to the organisation.

BNC is committed to communicating and enhancing our image in the community through clear and consistent marketing strongly connected to our organisation's purpose, branding, and strategic priorities. The purpose of this policy is to ensure marketing and communications opportunities are efficient and effective. This will improve the visibility of BNC in the community by ensuring all information follows the BNC branding and design guidelines and avoiding miscommunication.

### Policy Description

#### Application:

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) engaged in marketing or communication activities on behalf on BNC, and any public documentation produced by BNC.

#### Objectives:

Successful marketing strategies and communications efforts ensure consistent and coordinated strategies. For BNC to communicate clear messaging it is essential all marketing and communications activities reflect the organisations purpose, vision, and values and are developed and delivered in line with the BNC branding and design styles.

The Executive Officer (EO) will be responsible for the production and distribution of brand and design style guidelines and updates as appropriate. Staff will operate under this direction with regard to editorial style, brand guidelines, and organisational marketing messages.

All BNC external communications activities should be coordinated with and approved by the EO or as delegated. These activities include, but are not limited to:



- Publications including print and electronic publications.
- Merchandise.
- Logos.
- Advertising.
- Media Relations including distribution of press releases.
- Films.
- BNC webpage.
- Signage.
- Event management.
- Sponsorship.
- Social media.
- Market research.
- Email Footers.

When developing marketing materials, the EO will take into consideration:

- Whether to use electronic or hard copy materials.
- The cost, sustainability and environmental impact of the material.
- How to maximise the impact for the target audience.

## **Partners and Sponsors**

BNC has a range of partners and sponsors who require their branding to be used on marketing materials. The EO will ensure BNC:

- Adheres to external branding requirements and style guides for these organisations.
- Gains relevant approval for the use of logos, templates etc.
- Maximises the benefits of promoting these partnerships and sponsors in BNC marketing activities.

## **Copyright**

BNC is required by copyright legislation and ethical considerations to recognise and protect intellectual property – both its own and the rights of others. All staff are required to observe applicable copyright laws and regulations in the production of BNC materials.

## **Media Spokesperson**

The EO is the spokesperson for BNC and is its media representative. This responsibility may be delegated to a Committee of Management (CoM) member or staff in the absence of the EO. No CoM member is to speak (includes writing emails, newspapers articles etc) as a representative of the organisation without prior consent of the CoM Chair.

**Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Events Management Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Budget Development and Management Policy
- Appropriate Use of Technology Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Business Plan
- Strategic Plan
- Annual Budget
- BNC Style Guide DRM1
- Image Consent Form DRF30

### **3.12.1 Marketing and Communications Procedures**

**Use of Style Guide**

The BNC Style Guide DRM1 provides guidelines for the way materials and documents should be presented to communicate and identify our brand in the community and with our stakeholders. The BNC Style Guide DRM1 guides staff to create clear, cohesive, and reflect materials for BNC and ensures brand consistency.

The BNC Style Guide DRM1 is developed and maintained in reference to our funding agreements and the Standards for Communications Accessibility.

**Use of Logo**

The name and logos of BNC may only be used for authorised purposes, including:

- Any internal or external publication or signage.
- BNC website and social media pages.
- Merchandise.

- Films and still images.

The BNC logo, along with its accepted variations, is the primary graphic mark for BNC. It is designed to promote the visual identity of our organisation and connects us with the other neighbourhood houses in our community.

The BNC logo is applied to all print and electronic materials representing the organisation. The BNC logo may not be modified through changing typefaces, proportions, or other design alterations. Use of the logo on publications not belonging to BNC must be authorised in writing by the EO.

## **Social Media**

As per the Social Media Policy, BNC encourages and supports the use of social media for engagement opportunities with our community, and promotion of its events, services, and programs.

The purpose of using these communication channels is to support BNC's purpose and promote programs and events of interest to the community. Additionally, social media can add value by communicating relevant and engaging content to strengthen the organisation's brand.

The EO must be consulted prior to creating any form of social media account involving BNC. BNC encourages staff and student representatives to use social media with the due exercise of discretion, thoughtfulness, and respect for the organisation and the social media community, and in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy, Workplace Behaviour Policy, Privacy Policy, and any other relevant BNC Policies.

Confidential or proprietary information should never be shared publicly on social media channels.

General Guidelines:

- Be inclusive, responsive, respectful, and friendly.
- Look for collaboration or cross-promotion opportunities.
- Encourage communication with the audience – don't just broadcast.

BNC's social media accounts may choose to share related social media content generated by other organisations, clubs, and societies which supports the purpose, activities, and values of our organisation.

## **Film Production**

Films produced for external audiences must be approved by the EO prior to publishing. Films must be produced in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy, the Workplace Behaviour Policy, the Privacy Policy, Brand Guidelines, and any other relevant BNC Policies.

Any request by an outside video production company, including broadcasting companies, to film at BNC should be referred to the EO.

### **Website Management**

The BNC website must maintain site-wide consistency with regard to navigation structure, location of the BNC logo, footer, and contact information.

The BNC website adheres to the highest level of quality, reflecting BNC's image and purpose, and abides by established standards and BNC policies and guidelines.

### **Photo and Recording Permission**

Many of BNC's forms, including registration and enrolment forms, include a standard permission request for BNC to use photos and recordings taken during our activities and events. BNC recognises consent can change and will endeavour at all times to check with participants before any photos and recordings are taken.

Using images and recordings of people from our community builds a sense of connection and inclusion with our community. Therefore, BNC's policy is to use photographs and audio or visual recordings of staff or BNC users for publicity purposes in print or online media.

Any person (or parent or guardian of a person under the age of 18) not willing to have their image used for these purposes is able to opt-out by removing themselves from the vicinity where photos or recording is taking place, or by advising the photographer, filmmaker or BNC staff they do not wish to be included. Failure to do so will be interpreted as consent and the images or recordings maybe published by BNC.

To ensure BNC users are aware of this policy BNC:

- Displays signage in the entrance way and prominent positions in every room regarding the photo and recording policy.
- Notifies BNC users when photographers and/film makers are in the vicinity for publicity purposes.
- Requires photographers or filmmakers to be aware of the opt out policy and offer it where appropriate.

- In relation to children, is especially vigilant the parents and guardians are aware of and comfortable with any images or recordings being taken.
- Use Image Consent Form DRF30 for any major marketing and communications campaigns.

## **Newsletters and Direct Marketing**

Use good judgment when writing content. Where possible, link newsletter stories back to the website. All text should be spell checked and punctuated correctly using the BNC brand and design style guide.

Where data is collected, such as through online surveys, it must be managed in accordance with the BNC Privacy Policy.

## **Advertising**

All advertising (including or recruitment of personnel) placed on behalf of BNC in any publication or electronic medium and paid for from BNC funds must be approved by the EO.

Any sponsors who collaborate with BNC events must sign a contract or agreement particularising what they will provide, and what BNC will offer in return (e.g. a logo on all promotional material for the event or having the BNC user on site during the event).

The project coordinator will be responsible for ensuring all documentation (e.g. contracts, agreements) is completed and submitted to the EO for sign off.

## **Publications**

Any person producing a publication (flyers, newsletters, etc) on behalf of BNC will:

- Design and layout publications adhering to brand and design style guides.
- Ensure marketing messages are consistent with organisational objectives.
- Target messages appropriate for the intended audience.
- Use the BNC logo in a clear and consistent manner.
- Gain written permission from copyright owner for inclusion of any information subject to copyright.

Any person producing a publication for BNC will ensure all details including copy are correct on promotional material. The publication must be reviewed and approved by the EO prior to publication.

BNC publications and promotional posters can be distributed in brochure stands and poster displays around the community. A list of all locations where BNC publications are distributed is maintained by the EO and marketing staff.

## **Emergencies and Communications**

In the event of an emergency the safety and welfare of staff, volunteers and BNC users will always be of the utmost importance. If possible, the EO will attend the site of the emergency as soon as possible to ensure the safety of staff and to assist with media enquiries. Other staff should avoid speaking to the media without permission from the EO or the Chair.

It is not appropriate to comment on the possible cause of the emergency or the extent of the damage or injury. Comments should be limited to an expression of concern about the safety of others, an indication of what is being done to keep others safe, and what is being done to support others e.g. provision of counselling. It is also inappropriate to comment on matters currently under police investigation, likely to be part of a police investigation or subject to legal proceedings.

## 3.13 Organisation Structure

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|

### Policy Declaration

Individuals within our organisation and the relationships between them play a vital role in the delivery of our services and the sustainability of BNC into the future. Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) clearly articulates the relationships between the various roles forming the structure of our organisation, to ensure all parties can understand and identify the part they play.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) to help them understand the BNC organisational structure.

#### **Objectives:**

##### **Committee of Management**

BNC is an incorporated association, ABN 79 868 780 589 with an endorsed set or governance rules (The Rules) and an elected CoM. The Rules determined how the elected committee of management govern the organisation. This skills-based CoM is a representative and collective body which must abide by the following policy requirements:

- Each committee member should become familiar with The Rules (as soon as practical).
- The CoM is collectively responsible for ensuring BNC complies with the Act and individual committee members comply with the Act.
- CoM members and former CoM members must exercise their powers and discharge their duties in accordance with the BNC CoM Charter DRM2.

##### **Composition of Committee**

- Chair

- Deputy Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- General Members
- Public Officer (EO)

### **Strategic Responsibilities**

The CoM is required to collectively set the strategic direction, mission, vision, values, and operational plan to meet the centres' needs. This should be done in consideration of legislative requirements and contractual obligations for the organisation.

### **Compliance Responsibilities:**

The CoM must ensure BNC is compliant with:

- NHCP Guidelines.
- DFFH Service Agreement Information Kit.
- Learn Local Guidelines
- Consumer Affairs Victoria.
- Australian Charities National Commission.
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004.
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Victorian Child Safe Standards
- Relevant safety, employment, taxation and other business legislation

### **Employment Responsibilities:**

The CoM will:

- Manage the recruitment and employment of the Executive Officer (EO).
- Provide employment support to the EO in accordance with the Performance Management Policy.
- Oversee the correct management of BNC staff by EO, in accordance with BNC People Policies (Policy and Procedure Manual ).
- Avoid any direct or indirect management of BNC staff. All feedback and management relating to BNC staff occurs via the EO, unless authorised by the CoM in exceptional circumstances.

### **Executive Officer**

The EO is employed by the CoM and is responsible for key management and operational issues within the direction and the policies endorsed by the CoM, including:



- Implementing organisational strategies and making recommendations to the CoM on significant strategic initiatives.
- Managing staff, including determining terms of appointment, evaluating performance, and developing and maintaining succession plans for staff.
- Developing the annual budget and managing day-to-day operations within the budget framework.
- Maintaining an effective risk management framework.
- Keeping the CoM and regulators informed about any developments with a material impact on the organisation's performance.
- Managing day-to-day operations in accordance with Code of Ethics and Conduct, Workplace Behaviour Policy and BNC Policies.
- Developing staff positions as part of the organisational structure as required to meet and deliver contracts or specific programs within the organisational budget and resources available.
- Oversee volunteer recruitment and management.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Induction Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Performance Management Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Policy
- Vocational Placement Policy
- Programs, Projects and Activities Policy CoM Recruitment and Appointment Policy
- Budget Development and Management Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Rules of Association
- Strategic Plan
- Business Plan

- Annual Budget
- Feedback Form DRF5
- CoM Charter DRM2

### **3.13.1 Organisational Structure Procedures**

A copy of BNC's Organisational Structure Policy will be provided to all staff and CoM members on commencement, in accordance with the Induction Policy.

Any new roles in development will be created and allocated in reference to the BNC Structure as part of the Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Policy and within the organisation budget and framework.

The addition of programs or initiatives which extend the organisational structure beyond the current organisational delegations are subject to approval by the CoM, in accordance with the Programs, Projects and Activities Policy.

CoM members will be listed on the BNC website and in the BNC Annual Report.

## 3.14 Privacy

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|

### Policy Declaration

In recent years, many individuals have experienced the theft of their personal information, hence creating a higher focus on how organisations collect and handle personal information.

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) will protect and uphold the right to privacy of the people we work with and the people we support. In particular, BNC is committed to protecting and upholding the rights of our users to privacy in the way we collect, store, and use information relating to them, their needs, and the services we provide to them. We will manage personal information in an open and transparent way to enhance our accountability for handling practices for personal information to build community trust and confidence in those practices.

### Policy Description

#### Application:

This policy applies to anyone within BNC who receives or uses personal or organisational information to perform their duties and roles. It applies to people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) and BNC users and other third parties involved in any activity on behalf of BNC. It requires a consistent and careful approach in the way personal information is managed, including what is written and said about individuals, and how they decide who can see or hear this information.

#### Objectives:

At BNC we will provide you with the relevant privacy notices and advise when your personal information will be passed onto or is collected by a third party. Should your personal information be compromised we will notify you as soon as we identify any breaches of this policy.

You can read more about privacy, on the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner's (OAIC) website: <https://www.oaic.gov.au/>

In managing personal information, BNC will follow the Australian Privacy Principles (APP) as set out in the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) (amended by the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012), Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) including the Information Privacy Principles (IPP) and the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic).

In dealing with personal information, BNC will:

- ensure people know what sort of personal information is held, for what purposes it is held, and how it is collected, used, disclosed, destroyed and who will have access to it.
- implement 'privacy by design' approaches to ensure data collection processes only collect the personal information needed and relevant to a project or activity
- ensure privacy for an individual when they are being interviewed or discussing matters of a personal or sensitive nature.
- only collect and store personal information necessary for the functioning of the organisation and its activities.
- use fair and lawful ways to collect personal information.
- collect personal information only by consent from an individual.
- ensure personal information collected or disclosed is accurate, complete, and up-to-date, and will provide access to any individual to review information or correct wrong information about themselves.
- take reasonable steps to protect all personal information from misuse and loss and from unauthorised access, modification, or disclosure.
- destroy or permanently de-identify personal information no longer needed and/or after legal requirements for retaining documents have expired.
- implement systems and processes to identify and deal with data breaches when they occur

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Handling Child Complaints Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Performance Review Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy

- First Aid Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Programs, Projects and Activities Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Marketing and Communications Policy
- CoM Resignation or Removal Policy
- Staff and Volunteer Exit Policy
- CoM In Camera Policy
- Worker Screening Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Vocational Placement Policy
- Epidemic/Pandemic Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Incident Report Form DRF7
- Australian Privacy Principles (APP) Guidelines
- Information Privacy Principles (IPP)
- BNC Privacy Impact Assessment

### **3.14.1 Privacy Procedures**

#### **WHY WE COLLECT INFORMATION RELATING TO A PERSON**

Through its activities BNC engages with a broad cross-section of people, collecting and using personal information to perform its legal and operational functions. These functions include employing staff, processing financial transactions, delivering adult education, supporting volunteers, running events and activities, managing community development programs, and providing employment and other support services.

Personal information is usually collected directly from the individual concerned although in some cases BNC may receive such information from third parties who have been given consent to share this with us.

In addition, individuals may agree to receive information about BNC, such as via the website, upon registering to use the visitor wi-fi, or by completing hard copy or digital forms and surveys.

As required by the Australian Privacy Principles, BNC includes privacy collection notices at the time of collecting personal information, which explains how information may be used.

#### **HOW WE COLLECT AND STORE PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Important information to note:

- BNC has protections in place to keep your personal information safe however personal information may be collected, stored and shared with third party providers. Therefore this Privacy Policy does not extend beyond BNC website, systems and processes.
- When linking to and using other third party sites you should familiarise yourself with their website privacy statements as listed below.
- By accessing the BNC website, providing information online or completing BNC registration documentation you are acknowledging your usage is subject to this Policy.
- If you do not want your personal information being stored offshore or by a third party, please do not submit personal information to us.

When engaging in BNC activities or services an individual will provide personal information in the following ways.

### **Forms, surveys, images and other documents**

BNC uses a variety of hard copy documents to capture personal information. These documents are generally completed by the individual, sometimes with the help of staff or a third party. Once completed, they are given to BNC staff who enter the information into our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) databases. Depending on the purpose of the information provided, the original documents will either be stored in locked filing cabinets or digitised and then destroyed as per the Data Retention Policy.

Where hard copies of documents are required, staff will lock relevant documents away or destroy them, keep a 'clean desk' free of personal documents, and place computer screens out of the view of others, particularly visitors to the organisation, to minimise the risk of inadvertent disclosure of personal information.

BNC will collect images and videos from participants for marketing, including online promotion. Consent will be obtained before photos are taken, and signs in public areas will notify you of this. You can decline at any time or ask the EO to remove your image, and your request will be promptly addressed.

### **CRM: Social Planet**

Social Planet is an Australian online CRM where individuals enter their personal information directly into the database or BNC staff use hard copy documents to enter personal information into the database.

The personal information provided to Social Planet, a third party, (excluding any billing or credit card information) is disclosed by Social Planet to BNC, who have access to this CRM database using secure logins and passwords. The purpose of collecting this information is to ensure the individual is enrolled in a course or activity and, if the customer has agreed to receive information about BNC programs, events and activities, to send them information.

For further information on Social Planet's privacy policy, refer to:

<https://socialplanet.com.au/site/privacy>

## **CRM: ETO**

ETO is an American online case management system used by BNC staff to manage Work & Learning Centre (WLC) client registrations and compliance data.

When an individual agrees to become a WLC client they give permission for their personal information to be passed on to the Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL), a third party, who own and operate the WLCs across Victoria with Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) funding.

Only BNC staff working in the WLC team have ETO logins and passwords to access ETO. BSL staff managing the WLC program will also have access to BNC client personal information. BSL de-identifies personal information before passing this onto third parties.

Further information on how your personal information is handled refer to:

- BSL's privacy policy: <https://www.bsl.org.au/privacy-policy/>
- ETO's privacy policy: <https://www.bonterra.tech.com/legal/privacy-policy>

## **CRM: Microsoft Excel, Forms, Emails**

BNC also collects and maintains personal information using Microsoft products including Excel, Forms, Sharepoint and Outlook. This information maybe stored on the BNC file server, portable drives, desktop or laptop computers and/or online. The information collected is used for internal BNC purposes. BNC staff require security logins and passwords to access this information via BNC Microsoft 365 licences. BNC Staff will at all times consider the privacy implications of their actions including using 'BCC' when sending emails, secure storage of portable storage devices and giving other staff access to information they need to complete their roles. Technical support for our computer equipment and our Microsoft systems is provided by Ballarat Tech Help, a third party. By default this may give them access to some personal information when providing this technical support to BNC staff. For more information on Ballarat Tech Help refer to their website: <https://ballarattechhelp.com.au/>

For information on how your online personal information is protected, refer to Privacy at Microsoft <https://privacy.microsoft.com/en-ca>

### **Electronic Direct Mail (EDM) & Newsletter Subscription**

BNC uses both internal and third-party vendors to provide online communication services for some messaging, email campaigns and newsletter services. In subscribing to newsletters, you are providing BNC with personal information, which will not be disclosed for any other purpose without your consent.

Subscriptions supported by third-party vendors only share details to assist with managing delivery, technical issues and the prevention of fraud or security issues. They include but may not be limited to:

- Social Planet (see above)
- Microsoft Forms (see above)
- Mail Chimp Privacy Policy: <https://www.intuit.com/privacy/statement/>
- Social Media (Facebook, You Tube, Instagram, etc)
- Online Graphic and Marketing tools (Canva, Vista Print, Adobe, etc)

You can unsubscribe at any time and your email address will be moved to a 'do not contact' email database. To do this, click on the unsubscribe link within each email or newsletter type you have previously subscribed to.

### **National Police History and Working with Children Checks**

National police history checks and Working With Children (WWC) checks are conducted on staff, contractors, tutors, volunteers, and in some cases clients. This is a requirement of BNC's commitment to child safety.

When accepting a position, whether paid or unpaid at BNC, the individual is giving permission for their sensitive personal information to be used for a national police history check and to provide a WWC check. Access to relevant personal information is strictly limited to the Executive Officer and authorised BNC staff. BNC will retain the results of the checks in the individual's records until they are no longer involved with BNC or in compliance with legislative requirements.

BNC uses Equifax online Fit2Work platform, a third party American based company, to perform its checks. For more information refer to the Equifax privacy policy:

<https://www.equifax.com.au/fit2work/sites/default/files/privacy.pdf>

### **Accounting and Financial Transactions**



BNC collects financial information from individuals and businesses as part of its daily operations. This information may be received in hard copy or electronically and is primarily kept in compliance with Australian Tax Office requirements, along with other government departments.

BNC uses Xero and MYOB online platforms to process and manage its financial systems, for further information on how these companies manage your personal information refer to their privacy policies:

- Xero <https://www.xero.com/au/legal/privacy/>
- MYOB <https://www.myob.com/au/legal/privacy-policy>
- Online Banking systems (including Bendigo Bank, ANZ, NAB, Macquarie, Square)
- Government systems (including the Australian Tax Office)

### **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Systems**

BNC uses new technologies responsibly, recognising the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) can enhance efficiency, accuracy, and decision-making processes by automating routine tasks to analysing vast amounts of data swiftly and accurately to provide insights that might otherwise remain hidden.

AI examples include Machine Learning, which enables computers to learn from data; Computer Vision, allowing them to interpret visual information; and Natural Language Processing, for understanding and generating human language.

When using AI tools, BNC follows these principles:

- No personal, sensitive, or confidential data may be input into AI tools, this includes using client data and images in AI software
- AI will not be used to record or document confidential meeting minutes
- AI-generated content must be reviewed and approved by a human for accuracy and to reduce discrimination, unfairness, safety issues, fraud and exploitation
- AI is used to support productivity, not to make decisions involving personal data
- Microsoft proprietary models are the preferred AI tools for BNC staff when using propriety data to reduce the risk of unintended consequences which may breach BNC Policies.

### **Website**

When using the BNC website you will provide personal information, including your location, IP address and in some cases your name and contact details. Personal details are maintained on secure servers. Sometimes BNC also invites people to submit comments, photos, or stories via forms on the website.

Although users are encouraged not to identify people, the stories may include some personal information. Whenever BNC collects such content, individuals are informed about the purposes for which their content will be used (for example, publication on the website).

The BNC website uses Google Analytics, a web analytics service provided by Google, Inc. (Google). Google Analytics uses cookies, which are text files placed on your computer, to help the website analyse how users use the site. The information generated by the cookie about your use of the website (including your IP address) will be transmitted to and stored by Google on servers in the United States. Google will use this information for the purpose of evaluating your use of the website, compiling reports on website activity for website operators and providing other services relating to website activity and internet usage. Google may also transfer this information to third parties where required to do so by law, or where such third parties process the information on Google's behalf. Google will not associate your IP address with any other data held by Google.

You may refuse the use of cookies by selecting the appropriate settings on your browser; however please note that if you do this you may not be able to use the full functionality of our website. By using our website, you consent to the processing of data about you by Google in the manner and for the purposes set out above.

Our site uses cookies to make your experience of the site easier and more efficient. A cookie is a small data file placed on your hard drive by the web page server. A cookie cannot retrieve any other data from your hard drive, pass on a computer virus, or capture your email address. Note that the cookie will remain on your computer as a record for future visits to our website.

In using cookies BNC does not record any personal information or collect names or details of commercial transactions. In addition, BNC does not use cookies as the basis for direct marketing.

You can configure your browser to notify you when you receive a cookie, providing you with the opportunity to either accept or reject it. You can also refuse all cookies by turning them off in your browser or deleting all cookies from your computer if required.

For further information, please visit the Google Privacy Center

<https://safety.google/security-privacy/>

The BNC website is managed by Virtual Bean, a third party web design company. For further information refer to their website: <https://www.virtualbean.com.au/>

## **WHAT TYPES OF PERSONAL INFORMATION DO WE COLLECT AND WHAT IS IT USED FOR**

Information for bookings for course enrolments, supplier details for purchases, employment, volunteers, client support, venue hire, events, lunches and other activities are regularly taken by BNC. The personal information collected and used by BNC is described below.

### **General contact information**

At a minimum, the personal information usually collected would include name, phone number and email address. The purpose of collecting this information is to process a booking and to ensure an event or visit is properly coordinated.

This information is not used for any other purpose (such as unsolicited marketing) without the consent of the individual concerned. However, the information may be used to generate de-identified broad demographic data.

BNC maintains several databases with contact details of individuals who regularly engage with us who wish to receive regular information about our activities. This information is usually collected directly from the people who are interested in receiving information or from a representative of their organisation.

Personal information, including contact details, in the customer relationship management databases is used to:

- enrol in courses and classes
- register as a Work & Learning Centre client
- register as a volunteer or Committee Member
- become an employee, tutor or contractor
- hire the facility, rooms or equipment
- distribute information about BNC events and activities, including by email
- maintain membership lists of friends, sponsors and donors
- retain details of donations, and (with their consent) to publicly acknowledge those donors
- access and help individuals with online government and other services
- administer a booking for an event or activity
- request and receive feedback about people's experiences,
- financial purposes including payment of accounts, funding applications and contracts, bank accounts signatories, etc and
- generate invitation lists for BNC events.

### **Sensitive and Health personal information**

Sensitive and health information may be collected in relation to some individuals. For example, clients may formally identify as being culturally or linguistically diverse or being a person with a disability. Health information (for example medical reports or certificates) may also be collected by BNC where there is a workers' compensation or other health-related matters affecting an individual. All records are stored in a secure file, with access limited to staff on a need-to-know basis.

Sensitive and Health information are defined in the Privacy Act and are special subsets of personal information which requires greater protection under the Privacy Act. Sensitive and Health information is personal information that includes information or an opinion about an individual's racial or ethnic origin, political opinions or associations, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership or associations, sexual orientation or practices, criminal record, disability, health or genetic information, and some aspects of biometric information.

Generally, sensitive information has a higher level of privacy protection than other personal information.

### **Information on Employees, Tutors, Contractors and Committee of Management members**

BNC is required to collect personal information from employees, tutors, contractors and Committee of Management (CoM) members in order to meet its employment and legislative commitments. This information can be provided in hard copy or electronically form and is stored in locked filing cabinets or secure password protected systems within BNC offices.

By providing this personal information, an individual agrees to have their personal information shared with the relevant government departments who require it as a condition of their employment or appointment.

Internally, only the Executive Officer, senior delegated staff, and the Bookkeeper (a third party contractor) have access to this information. In some cases and with the consent of the individual, the CoM Chair or a potential future employer may also be given access to personal information.

### **Information on Volunteers, including Vocational Placement Students**

Volunteer personal information is stored on Social Planet (Refer above to the CRM: Social Planet information) and only used for rosters, contact information, medical emergencies and as de-identified data for annual reporting to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) via Neighbourhood Houses Victoria, third parties.

Vocational Placement Agreements, containing personal information, are stored on the secure BNC file server or in Microsoft 365 programs, including email and Sharepoint. (Refer above to the CRM: Microsoft Excel, Forms, Emails information)

### **Information on Adult, Community & Further Education (ACFE) Learners**

For ACFE, sensitive personal information is collected to ensure our compliance to state government funding agreements and for medical details in case of emergencies. We collect and store a range of socio-economic and demographic data in Social Planet (Refer above to the CRM: Social Planet information) for the Department of Jobs Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR), third party. This information is de-identified before being provided to DJSIR who use it for national and state based reporting purposes.

ACFE provide a detailed privacy notice each year which is included in enrolment processes and available on the BNC website.

For further information refer to the DJSIR Privacy Policy: <https://djsir.vic.gov.au/privacy> and DJSIR 'How Training Data Is Used' <https://www.vic.gov.au/training-data-collection/m>

### **Information on Work & Learning Centre (WLC) Clients**

For WLC client's sensitive personal information is collected to ensure compliance to state government funding agreements as we are required to collect a range of socio-economic and demographic data for the Department of Jobs Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR), a third party.

The personal information provided by a WLC client to BNC is recorded in ETO (Refer above to the CRM: ETO information). By registering as a client of the WLC, a client is giving permission to share their personal information with Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL) and for their name, phone number and email to be subscribed to the BNC community newsletter. (Refer to the Electronic Direct Mail & Newsletter Subscription section on how to unsubscribe.)

The information provided to BSL is not de-identified giving BSL full access to a clients' personal information in compliance with our funding agreement to deliver employment services for DJSIR.

BNC will de-identify this personal information if using it for BNC reporting and compliance requirements, unless permission from the person is given to share some or all of their information.

### **Information for room bookings and hire agreements**

We collect personal information from those hiring BNC equipment and the facilities / rooms at Ballarat South Community Hub, Delacombe Community Hub, and the ArtBox. This information may be collected via a hard copy agreement, our online booking systems (email and website) or verbally over the phone.

This information is used internally to manage the bookings and is passed onto the following third parties for the processing of invoices and receipt of payments:

- BNC contract bookkeeper
- Phoenix P12 Community College who own the Ballarat South Community Hub. For further information refer to the College privacy policy:

<https://phoenix.vic.edu.au/privacy-info/>

### **Information for administrative and financial records**

In order to perform its daily operational activities, BNC collects personal information from businesses, community organisations, government departments and other individuals who provide services and products to BNC.

This information may include bank and other financial details required to process invoices and receipt payments. This information is used internally, but is also passed onto the following third parties:

- BNC contract bookkeeper
- BNC Auditor, CountPro - <https://countpro.com.au/services/>
- Government departments and other philanthropic organisations for legislative reasons or as funding compliance may require copies of invoices and payments as proof of compliance.

### **Information on Participant Testimonials and Research Projects**

If BNC is using personal information for a testimonial, case study or as part of a research project, the individual will be given:

- a choice about participating
- information about the purpose of the research project, why it is being collected, and how it will be used
- the choice to have their identify or personal information de-identified
- the right to withdraw at any time
- copies of any subsequent publications.

The collection of personal information will be limited to what is required for the conduct of the project. Organisational participants in research projects will generally be identified in

BNC research, unless the nature of a particular project requires anonymity, or an organisation specifically requests it.

### **Information used for assisting with government services or other support**

BNC helps community members access government and other support services, including MyGov and Services Victoria. To do this, individuals may share sensitive personal information with BNC staff who are assisting them with their registrations, applications and enquiries.

This personal information is not stored or used by BNC for any other purpose other than what it is provided for. Any hard copy documents will be returned to the individual or destroyed upon completion of the assistance. Any soft copy documents will be archived in accordance with the Data Retention Policy.

### **Information used for fundraising**

Where BNC engages in fundraising activities, BNC will provide a simple means of opting out of future direct marketing communications, comply with any opt-out requests and, if requested, tell you where you got their personal information from.

## **DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION**

BNC will not disclose personal information to anyone outside BNC unless the individual concerned has given their consent, or disclosure is otherwise permitted by the Australian Privacy Principles. Examples of exceptions include disclosure being necessary to prevent a serious threat to a person's life, health or safety, or for law enforcement purposes.

BNC works exclusively within Australia and does not provide personal information to overseas organisations except as identified in this policy when using cloud based technology for the collection and storage of data.

BNC does not sell their clients lists to third parties nor use this information for fundraising activities unless written consent is provided by the individual concerned.

## **PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION**

We have in place, policies and information protection procedures, including (where appropriate):

- physical secure file storage (including locked cabinets and offices)
- private meeting rooms and spaces
- password protection of electronic databases and systems
- the provision of information to staff on a 'need to know' basis

- staff receive information and are trained in cyber security and are privacy focused.

## **HOW LONG DO WE STORE THE PERSONAL INFORMATION AND HOW DO WE DESTROY IT**

Security of personal information is maintained in a number of ways. Where an electronic database containing personal information has been created, BNC takes steps to ensure the database may only be accessed by people who need access to perform their duties.

System access is granted to staff only on authority of an appropriate delegate, for the purposes of performing their work. Guidance is provided to staff about safeguarding electronic information (including the secure transfer of that information) in BNC's information technology policies and procedures.

Disposal of records containing personal information is performed in accordance with the relevant disposal authority under supervision of the Executive Officer and in accordance with the BNC Data Retention Policy.

## **HOW WE WILL RESPOND TO A DATA BREACH**

BNC gives data protection the highest priority and a data breach would activate the BNC Incident Reporting and Response Policy including the Data Response Plan (DRP). The Executive Officer will take accountability for the breach and immediately implement the DRP, prioritising it over all other BNC activities, and notifying the BNC Committee of Management.

When implementing the DRP to

- Identify the type of Breach to determine what information has been stolen with the most likely data breach occurring in the online environment.
- Contain the Breach by shutting down access to the information.
- Assess the extent of the Breach, reviewing all systems and processes to determine the scope, size, and impact of the breach.
- Provide Clear Communication to those who have had their personal data compromised, including providing information on when, what, how and why will be notified. We will notify Office of the Australian Information Commissioner's (OAIC), other relevant government reporting agencies and provide a media release.
- Monitor and Review with a working committee established to review the data breach and determine what occurred and how this can be prevented in the future. All reasonable steps will be taken to strengthen and improve processes and systems to reduce the likelihood of a future breach.



Note: The DRP actions will commence at the same time and are not taken as sequential actions.

## **THE PRIVACY CONTACT OFFICER**

The Privacy Contact Officer is the Executive Officer (EO). The EO will:

- ensure all staff are familiar with the Privacy Policy and administrative procedures for handling personal information.
- ensure BNC users and other relevant individuals are provided with information about their rights regarding privacy.
- handle any queries or complaint about a privacy issue.

### **How to gain access to your personal information**

If you wish to enquire about the use of your personal information or you believe your personal information is incorrect, in the first instance speak to the BNC staff member who manages your information. They will work with you to make the necessary corrections to your personal information.

Personal information will only be provided to the owner of that information or with their consent to a guardian or someone recognised as a 'responsible person' (power of attorney, lawyer, doctor, interpreter). When dealing with vulnerable people including children, BNC will consider the capacity of children, young adults, or people with compromised capacity when obtaining their consent and their ability to consent. If the information is not corrected; or you wish to have your personal information removed from BNC systems, contact us by providing sufficient information for us to identify your records at:

Executive Officer  
Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre Inc  
PO Box 540W, Ballarat. 3350  
(03) 5329 3273

[reception@ballaratnc.org.au](mailto:reception@ballaratnc.org.au)

## 3.15 Social Media

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
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### Policy Declaration

Social media is a rapidly growing and widely used phenomenon, with the capacity to enhance and enrich our community engagement and impact. However, there are inherent risks which must be identified and avoided, for both our organisation and individual staff when communicating via social media for either professional or personal use.

This policy is designed to assist Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) gain the benefits from utilising social media and to help us to consider appropriate and measured engagement with social media. It is also to ensure compliance with confidentiality, governance, legal, privacy, and regulatory parameters pertaining to BNC use of social media.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy covers people using (collectively known as Staff for this policy) all forms of social media, social networking, and blogging for BNC activities. There are numerous social networking sites, including but not limited to Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, Wikipedia, and blogging sites. As technology changes, there may be other forms of sharing social media and social networking, and this policy will cover any form of sharing information by any medium or by any internet site, website, blog, video clip, social media site, text message, sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, or Wikipedia or any similar way, or by any other medium even if not known or devised when this policy was written. In essence, if you are using any form of electronic technology to transmit information (including words, sounds or images) to other persons, that usage will be treated as “social media” and covered by this Policy.

#### **Objectives:**

Whilst BNC accepts and values the role social media plays in society to provide new opportunities for proactive two-way communication, it is necessary for guidelines to be developed to ensure BNC staff and Committee of Management (CoM) members communicate in a manner which does not pose a risk to the operations, reputation or

culture of our organisation, or a risk to the health, safety, or reputation of other BNC staff or users.

## **Social Media Conduct**

Social media is built around the concept of a 'conversation' and anything posted to a social media site is deemed to be in the public domain. Whether using private or professional social media accounts staff are advised of the following:

- The BNC Code of Ethics and Conduct, Safeguarding Vulnerable People, Workplace Behaviour and Safe Workplace Policies apply on social media platforms - any social media content related to BNC should be positive and welcoming. Bullying, harassing, offensive comments, or disparaging remarks about staff, CoM members, professional peers, other organisations, or centre users will not be tolerated.
- The BNC Privacy Policy applies on social media platforms, personal details should never be disclosed on social media without the permission of the person concerned.
- The BNC Marketing and Communications Policy applies to social media platforms. Photographs, films or other recordings made at BNC are able to be shared on social media, however, caution is advised in relation to the use of images of children. If a person requests their image be removed from social media the request must be fulfilled as soon as possible.
- The internet is not an anonymous tool. Staff must be advised anything written either from employees' home or work computers can be traced back to the individual, and has the potential to reflect on and damage BNC's reputation.
- BNC leaves it to the discretion of individual employees in deciding whether to interact with BNC users, colleagues and other people connected to BNC via social networking sites. However, it is understood if staff do make those connections they do so on a personal basis and not as a representative of BNC, and the above restrictions will apply. BNC does not recommend BNC users to do this due to the difficulties this can create managing personal / work place boundaries for those you interact with.
- No disparaging remarks or opinions are to be made or expressed about BNC or its products, services or its business methods.

## **Social Media Perception**

How information is perceived by other social media users can have a significant impact on the reputation of our organisation. When providing information via social media platforms:

- Consider if information could be misinterpreted. Be clear and concise and avoid discussing multiple topics.

- Avoid debate or online arguments. Briefly clarify information where needed but do not engage in lengthy conversations online.
- Consider if a personal opinion contravening the BNC values, strategies, policies or procedures maybe taken to represent those of the organisation.

### **Use of social media during business hours**

Social Media usage for work purposes is encouraged, as this stimulates productivity, motivates and promotes innovation. However:

- Social Media for personal use by staff is permitted but should be limited to be infrequent and brief use.
- Staff must recognise social media is a public platform and any references to BNC on professional and personal social media platforms must comply with BNC Code of Ethics and Conduct. It is recommended staff:
  - o Do not use break time to access their personal social media if their work role involves a high degree of computer-based work, staff are instead encouraged to take screen breaks to support their health and wellbeing.
  - o Consider professional online etiquette and manage any social media in a manner supportive of BNC.
  - o Discuss inappropriate social media behaviour or concerns with the Executive Officer (EO) to ensure safe and comfortable boundaries are in place.
  - o Be aware negative or defamatory social media activity may lead to disciplinary action.

### **Use of Social Media Outside of Work**

Staff must be aware if they use social media outside of the workplace they are required to act in BNC's best interests and not undermine BNCs interests or reputation. Inappropriate behaviour or communications can impact upon the organisation and relationships within the workplace and with our community:

- In general, employees should not identify themselves as BNC staff members in their personal social media accounts (Facebook, etc).
- BNC can monitor the content of any person's public social media content. "Public social media content" means any social media content that can be accessed by the public generally, and includes tweets, Facebook wall posts and messages sent to groups via LinkedIn.

- BNC Staff and CoM Members shall not publicly post inappropriate content on a social media forum. Inappropriate content includes, but is not limited to, content which:
  - o bullies, harasses or discriminates against any BNC staff member, CoM member or centre user.
  - o damages BNC reputation or interests.
  - o is illegal.

Breach of this Policy or any other BNC Policy on social media platforms may be subject to disciplinary action, including in extreme circumstances, dismissal.

### **Feedback on BNC social media platforms**

Regardless of whether it is positive or negative, feedback on BNC social media platforms should be monitored and responded to in accordance to the Feedback Policy. The EO will determine how comments made on the BNC social media platforms will be responded to, ensuring consistency and respect.

### **Public Dissatisfaction on Social Media**

There will be instances where a member of the public uses social media to make comments about matters relating to BNC outside of the BNC social media platforms. Whether the comments are founded or unfounded they should be reported to the EO. The EO will evaluate the validity of the comments and whether a response is warranted. Where the comments are found invalid it is recommended a 'no oxygen' approach is taken – avoid making a response and therefore adding fuel to the fire.

If the comments are valid and warrant a response the EO should attempt to resolve the issue through private channels, and avoid public discussion on social media.

Under no circumstances should any staff person or CoM Member discuss negative feedback regarding BNC on social media, unless delegated by the EO.

### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Appropriate Use of Technology Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Induction Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy

- Marketing and Communications Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Events Management Policy
- Programs, Projects and Activities Policy Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- End User Licence Agreement
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Code of Conduct Acknowledgement Form DRF28

### **3.15.1 Social Media Procedures**

- All staff and CoM members will be provided a copy of this policy at Induction, as per the Induction Policy.
- BNC social media accounts can only be established with written authorisation from the EO.
- The EO may delegate management of a BNC social media account to an appropriate staff person.
- Where possible, staff who manage a BNC social media site should use an identifiable work email address and or phone number. This may include a general BNC email address.
- Staff managing BNC social media sites need to be aware signing up to use a social media site may require them to agree to an “End User Licence Agreement”, which may give consent to the sites owner to use BNC material uploaded without BNC consent. Some terms may also attempt to assign intellectual property material to the site.

Any staff or CoM member concerned about comments or conduct on social media which relates to BNC in anyway should take a screen shot of the issue and report their concerns to the EO.

## 3.16 Handling Child Complaints

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
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### Policy Declaration

The Victorian Government Child Safe Standards (The Standards) are compulsory minimum standards for organisations which provide services for children (or are used by children) to help protect them from harm.

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) will empower children to be vital and active members of our community and our organisation. We are committed to their safety and our legal and moral obligations to act in their best interest.

This policy is designed to ensure children associated with BNC are informed about how they raise complaints, how their complaints are taken seriously, and how we respond promptly and thoroughly when they raise a complaint.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) and BNC users and other third parties involved in any activity on behalf of BNC.

#### **Objectives:**

Children are valued participants in BNC activities and programs, who bring insight and innovation. Children are vital members of our community and have a fundamental right to be safe, happy, and empowered.

We will ensure:

- BNC has an accessible, child focused complaint handling policy which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff and volunteers, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Ethics and Conduct or Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy and obligations to act and report;

- effective complaint handling processes are understood by children, families, staff and volunteers, and are culturally safe;
- complaints are taken seriously, and responded to promptly and thoroughly;
- BNC has policies and procedures in place to address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement; and
- reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Induction Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Strategy, Business, and Risk Management Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Incident Report Form DRF7
- Child Safety Training Action Plan DRM7
- Training Register DRR3
- Victorian Government Child Safe Standards

### **3.16.1 Handling Child Complaints Procedures**

Sometimes, things happen you might not like. Everyone has the right to speak up about how you feel if something is affecting you. You also have the right to tell someone if you are feeling anxious, worried, afraid or if you do not feel safe. Even if you find the issue



hurtful or embarrassing, we encourage you to talk to us, as we want to make sure you feel safe and happy.

We will take what you have to say seriously, and we want to help. When dealing with a child complaint, BNC staff will at all times listen to you, reassure you, ask for more information, keep you informed and respect you.

### **How do I make a complaint?**

By talking about it, or by writing it down, if that's easier. We will listen to you no matter how big or small you think the issue is.

You can speak to any BNC staff member who you feel safe and comfortable with, including the Executive Officer (EO). We will listen to you and ask you to tell us about what happened, including the names of any people who were involved and/or might have seen what happened. The BNC staff member will take notes on what you talk about and any follow up action/discussion, keeping the notes in a confidential file.

If you write it down, you can place your complaint in the BNC suggestion box in reception or you can hand it to any BNC staff member. You can also email or message your complaint to a BNC staff member.

### **Do I need to make a complaint by myself?**

You can do it by yourself, with a friend, your parent(s) or another adult whom you trust and feel safe with. This person is sometimes called a support person.

### **Can I make an anonymous complaint?**

Yes, you can make an anonymous complaint; however, it may not be possible to properly understand the situation or take appropriate action. BNC staff will try to discretely find other evidence to support the complaint, but if there is no other evidence to support your complaint, then the complaint will be dropped.

### **What will happen next?**

We may also ask you what you would like to happen next. Sometimes, if we think the issue is serious (if we feel someone is not safe), we will have to decide about what needs to happen next, but it is important for you to let us know how we can help you.

If possible, the staff member will help you deal with it. If not, they will explain who it needs to go to and why. We will ask you what support you may need and how you would like us to keep you up to date on what is happening with your complaint.

Depending on the issue raised, the staff member might help you with some strategies to manage it yourself or with someone else's support. If the matter is more serious, BNC may need to gather further information to properly understand the situation. This process may include speaking to others involved. We will tell you before we do this.

If you change your mind and do not wish to continue with your complaint, BNC staff will discuss this with you and may still investigate the issue raised by your complaint depending on the seriousness and nature of the complaint.

### **Who else might be involved?**

At all times BNC staff will respect you and keep your complaint confidential. However, sometimes BNC staff may be legally required to involve other people, including:

- the other people named in the complaint;
- your support people: friends, parents, carers, and guardians; and
- for more serious complaints, teachers, and police.

If a BNC staff member is worried about your wellbeing they may also discuss your complaint with the EO, where your immediate safety will not be compromised, a referral to The Orange Door may be appropriate.

### **Timelines**

We will follow the BNC procedures for handling incidents as per the Incident Reporting and Response Policy and if we first receive your complaint in writing, we will contact you within two working days to confirm we have it and talk about what's next. Depending on how complex your complaint is, we will try to resolve it within 10 working days of receiving your complaint. If it is going to be longer, we will tell you. At all times we will keep you informed of the progress of the investigation.

If you feel the investigation is not progressing fast enough or have concerns for your safety, you can contact the EO or CoM Chair at any time to discuss your complaint.

## 3.17 Programs, Projects and Activities

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) is committed to offering high-quality, accessible and equitable programs and activities to our community. We strive to provide enriching opportunities that promote lifelong learning, personal growth, community building, and social responsibility. All programs, projects and activities will be conducted in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and best practices, and will reflect the principles of diversity, equity, fairness and inclusion.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) engaged in the management of programs, projects and activities organised, sponsored, or co-sponsored by BNC whether held onsite at a BNC facility or placed based in the community, including but not limited to:

- Workshops, seminars, and training sessions
- Educational classes, information sessions and courses
- Recreational and cultural activities
- Outreach and engagement events
- Youth and adult education programs
- Community service and volunteering initiatives
- Collaborative projects with other organisations or institutions.

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the Event Management Policy and the Program Fees and Charges Policy.

#### **Objectives:**

BNC Programs tend to be delivered over multiple years, have recurrent funding, and comprise smaller projects and activities. BNC Projects are generally less than one year with a defined start / end date, specific objectives and deliverable, limited resources and the delivery of a series of tasks and activities to achieve the project milestones and goals.

Activities are things we do, engage in or attend which are generally only done once. They include attending an event, lunch, class or workshop.

Examples of BNC programs, projects and activities are the:

- Learn Local Program comprising smaller projects (courses) and activities (classes).
- Neighbourhood House Program with placed-based projects (food relief) and activities (lunches, morning teas, concerts, workshops).

The purpose of the Programs, Projects and Activities Policy is to provide a comprehensive framework for the development, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement of programs and activities which serve the needs of all participants.

BNC programs, projects and activities will be designed to be inclusive, fair, transparent, and published in advance to allow for any member of our community to attend. Where possible, waitlists and alternative options will be offered when numbers are limited. All learning and activity materials must be accessible, relevant, and up-to-date. Where possible, digital resources will comply with accessibility guidelines and support various learning styles and abilities.

The decision to support, coordinate or participate in an activity or program should be based on the following:

- Alignment to BNC's goals, purpose, mission, and values.
- Needs assessment either previously identified or planned
- Sufficient time for preparation and planning.
- Availability of appropriate budget and/or in-kind resources.
- Appropriate attention to risk management and safety for participants.
- Collaboration and partnerships to enhance reach, impact, and sustainability
- Monitoring and evaluation will be embedded to ensure continuous improvement.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Marketing and Communications Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Worker Screening Policy

- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Overtime and Time off in Lieu Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Epidemic/Pandemic Policy
- Budget Development and Management Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Program Fees and Charges Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy
- Event Management Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Strategic Plan
- Business Plan
- Annual Budget
- Event Checklist DRC1
- Event Evaluation Form DRF2
- Risk Management Plan DRM8
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Incident Report Form DRF7

### **3.17.1 Programs, Projects and Activities Procedures**

BNC staff, volunteers and the community, have an indication of the sort of role BNC should have in creating, supporting, or participating in a program, project or activity. In many cases this will be determined by previous needs assessments which have identified the target audience, objectives, potential benefits, risks, and resource requirements, and the availability and requirements of grant funding

As a general rule, the Executive Officer (EO) will determine which programs, projects or activities are both most appropriate to deliver and strategically aligned with the BNC goals, purpose, mission, and values.

All programs, projects and activities must be financially viable to deliver and where possible provide a revenue stream for the organisation. To ensure there is ongoing funding for programs, projects and activities, the EO is responsible to overseeing potential grant opportunities, applications and submissions.

Planning and delivery of a program, project or activity will vary. As a rule, the following roles and responsibilities apply:

## **BNC EO**

Oversight and compliance accountability, including:

- Approve budgets and allocate resources including staff
- Support planning and implementation of activities
- Sign off on all external funding and performance agreements
- Ensure management of program, project and activities are in line with BNC's goals, purpose, mission and values
- Financial administration (e.g. payment of invoices).
- Promotion and marketing

## **Coordinator**

Manage program, project or activity planning and administration including:

- Identification, preparation and submission of permits and relevant paperwork
- Managing budget and expenditure
- Coordinating facilities, resources and equipment as needed
- Organising staff training in identified areas (food safety, first aid, etc)
- Planning and conducting an evaluation as a matter of good practice and continuous improvement to service delivery
- Delegate tasks to other staff or volunteers as required

## **Other BNC Staff**

Undertake specific tasks as requested by the EO or Coordinator to contribute to the planning, delivery and evaluation of the program, project or activity. Tasks could include, but are not limited to:

- Promotion and participant registration
- Procuring and preparing materials and resources
- Consulting with community members
- Undertaking risk management processes
- Gathering and analysing collected data

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## Section 4: Committee of Management Policies

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### Relevant standard, legislation or controls

- Refer to the Introduction for a full list foundation principles and standards.
- BNC Document Register
- Association Incorporation Reform Act 2012
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) including Australia Privacy Principles (APP)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) including Information Privacy Principles (IPP)
- Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety (Child Safe Standards Compliance and Enforcement) Amendment Act 2021
- Reportable Conduct Scheme
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) (including reporting to Child Protection)
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) (including Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose offences)
- Worker Screening Act 2020
- Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic) (including Part XIII – Organisational liability for child abuse)

### 4.1 CoM Recruitment and Appointment

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
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### Policy Declaration

Strong strategies to support recruitment of skilled and passionate community members to the Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) Committee of Management (CoM) are an important component of meeting the ongoing sustainability needs of the CoM and our organisation. The purpose of this policy is to outline strategies used for recruitment and appointment of new members for the BNC CoM.

### Policy Description

#### Application:

This policy applies to the BNC CoM. The CoM will undertake the following recruitment procedures at least two months prior to the BNC AGM.

## Objectives:

The best recruitment situation creates a skills-based list of potential candidates ready to step into leadership roles in our organisation. BNC will enable people to lead through our membership base, keeping them informed of key CoM activities and including them in house celebrations and successes. It is the responsibility of all members to be advocates for BNC and the great work we do in our community, to keep linking people in, joining the member group and making plans to become part of our CoM.

Each year BNC will lay the groundwork of an effective and responsive recruitment strategy by:

- Thinking about the direction BNC is heading and what major projects or activities are in store over the next few years.
- Documenting the qualities and skills needed to help lead the community organisation towards its aims.
- Identifying the skills/expertise gaps in CoM membership.
- Deciding whether the CoM could better reflect the diversity of its stakeholders.
- Developing a succession plan for CoM candidates.
- Encouraging potential candidates to become involved with our organisation.

Potential recruits will be required to complete an Application for Nomination to CoM Form DRF11 and the CoM Skills Audit Form DRF12. The CoM, or an appointed subcommittee, will examine these documents carefully and consider the following with each applicant:

- Why they are interested in BNC?
- How much time they can contribute to BNC?
- What skills and experience they can offer?
- What support they will need to become a CoM member?
- What do they want out of their CoM service?
- Can they envisage any conflicts of interest which may arise?
- Do they have any previous experience serving on a CoM or in other leadership positions?

Appointments to the CoM are generally made each year at the AGM or during the year to fill casual vacancies, in accordance with the BNC Rules.

Once an appointment has been confirmed, the member will be contacted by the BNC CoM Chair and provided details regarding meeting attendance.



Once CoM Member has been appointed, their success will be supported through implementation of our Induction Policy and the Conflict of Interest Policy.

**Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Organisational Structure Policy
- Delegation of Authority Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Induction Policy
- CoM Resignation or Removal Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Worker Screening Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Volunteer Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Rules of Association
- Strategic Plan
- Committee Skills Assessment Tool
- Application for Nomination to CoM Form DRF11
- CoM Skills Audit Form DRF12

### **4.1.1 CoM Recruitment and Appointment Procedures**

#### **Annual Recruitment Procedure**

In the months prior to the BNC AGM the CoM will undertake the following actions to support the recruitment of successful CoM members:

1. Review CoM needs and skills gaps:
  - a. How many people will be standing down from the CoM and how many vacancies will this create?
  - b. Utilise an agreed Committee Skills Assessment Tool.
  - c. Conduct analysis of existing and potential members against the BNC Strategic Plan:

1. What are the key objectives for BNC over the next one to three years?
  - ii. What skills are needed to assist the staff/volunteers/organisation to achieve these objectives?
  - iii. What skills do current CoM members offer in these areas?
  - iv. What skills will depart with the retiring CoM member/s?
  - v. Where are the skill and demographic gaps?
2. Review CoM practicalities and demographics:
  - a. Is the CoM the right size? There is no recommendation for CoM size, although typically CoM level is higher in smaller groups, although overload and burn out should also be avoided.
  - b. How balanced is the CoM? The CoM needs to comprise a good range of skills and interests to cover the different aspects of the organisation.
  - c. How representative is the CoM? BNC will, when able, recruit CoM members who represent a diverse range of the community, including service users. This may, from time to time, include members of other organisation whose mission statement is compatible with our own.
  - d. Desirable personal traits of CoM members? These include the following:
    - i. An ability to work co-operatively: Diversity of viewpoints is actively encouraged in the CoM, but it is also important to know how to work co-operatively and reach consensus on key issues.
    - ii. A personal commitment to the organisation's mission: It is essential BNC CoM members are committed to the BNC mission and are prepared to work to achieve objectives.
    - iii. A positive outlook: Members of BNC's CoM offer their services on a voluntary basis and while it is important to take the roles and responsibility of the CoM seriously, it should also be enjoyable.
    - iv. Focus on diversity: The members should be from diverse backgrounds, demonstrated understanding of diversity and have appropriate skills and expertise suitable for decision making.
3. Preparation of information for potential candidates. This could include:
  - a. What are neighbourhood houses?
  - b. Our current strategic goals.
  - c. Our current main projects.
  - d. Recent successes.
  - e. How much time is expected of them each month?
  - f. Length of term for CoM members.

- g. The financial position of the organisation.
  - h. Information on director's insurance.
  - i. How many people are on, and could be on, the CoM?
4. Create a list of potential candidates. Using the existing knowledge of our community, make a list of community members who could potentially meet our needs. Discuss the list as a whole CoM and filter it down to a short list. Sources include:
    - a. Friends/colleagues/associates of existing, retiring or past CoM members or volunteers.
    - b. People from organisations whom have donated funds – community bank, Lions Club, Rotary, Arts Group, etc.
    - c. People who use the house.
    - d. Community leaders, including young leaders.
    - e. Indigenous elders.
    - f. Staff or associates of local education providers.
    - g. Members of multicultural organisations.
    - h. Key partners, such as council, health services or counselling.
    - i. Community members already active in committees.
    - j. Business associations – consider tradies, pharmacists or supermarket managers.
    - k. Advertising partners – especially any sponsors.
    - l. Recruitment agencies – volunteer or work placement agencies.
    - m. Professionals with in-demand skills, including accountants, lawyers, marketers, event managers, etc.
    - n. Advertising in local media and online may also provide potential candidates.
  5. Select a representative to make initial contact with the short list, it may be the Chair, a subcommittee or people who already have connections with individuals. Initial contact should be an opening conversation to assess their interest as well as appropriateness as a CoM member.
  6. Depending on the results of initial contact the potential candidate may be invited to nominate via the Application for Nomination to CoM Form DRF11 and completion of the CoM Skills Audit Form DRF12.

If the potential candidate declines, they may be invited to recommend other possible candidates and to participate in our organisation in another way, perhaps on a subcommittee, running a program or by presenting on a topic to the CoM. This increase in their involvement and interest in BNC may lead to possible future CoM members.

## **Casual Appointment Procedure**

Where a vacancy exists on the CoM, it is possible to fill this vacancy outside of the annual recruitment drive. In this situation, the CoM will follow the above recruitment procedure to find a suitable candidate. The candidate will complete the Application for Nomination to CoM Form DRF11 and Skills Audit Form DRF12 and submit to the CoM for the review.

At the CoM meeting following receipt of the application, the CoM will review and consider the application. If successful, the candidate's term of office will start from the date the CoM adopts a motion to appoint the candidate to the CoM.

## 4.2 Delegation of Authority

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
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### Policy Declaration

Delegations represent the different acts of authorised designated or assigned actions to different CoM, employee or volunteer positions and roles. Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) clearly defines delegations of authority by the Committee of Management (CoM) and Executive Officer (EO) for the efficient delivery of organisational planning and activities. The purpose of this policy is to communicate clear guidelines for delegated authorities for the efficient operation of BNC.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to CoM, employees and volunteers of positions nominated by the CoM or EO to exercise the delegated authority. An individual can only exercise delegations within their area of responsibility.

#### **Objectives:**

Documented organisational authority ensures all individuals know what decisions they can make and where they must seek approval for actions they wish to take. This safeguards the organisation from decisions being made by unauthorised individuals and ensures appropriate accountability for decisions is maintained.

In accordance with BNC Rules, delegations of authority are intended to achieve:

- Efficiency and effectiveness of BNC processes.
- Appropriate levels of authority as provided in order to discharge their responsibilities.
- Delegated authority is exercised by the most appropriate and best-informed individuals within the organisation.
- Effective internal controls.

Unless otherwise specified in the delegation of authority, a decision to delegate authority may only be made by the CoM.

Delegations are attached to the position occupied, not to the occupant of the position. The responsibilities of a position appear in their position description. Delegations shall align with BNC Position Descriptions and Awards and Agreements.

There are two key types of delegation:

- **Activity delegations** give a person authority to take or approve actions, other than expenditure of funds, on behalf of BNC.
- **Financial delegations** give authority to approve expenditure up to a specified limit.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Policy Development Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Organisation Structure Policy
- CoM Recruitment and Appointment Policy
- Facility Management Policy
- Asset Management Policy
- Finance Policies Section 6

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Rules of Association
- Strategic Plan
- Business Plan
- Annual Budget
- BNC Position Descriptions
- Chart of Delegations DRM3

### **4.2.1 Delegation of Authority Procedures**

#### **Establishing delegations of authority**

In broad terms, the following delegations of authority apply. The CoM is responsible for approving items such as:

- The Rules of Association
- The Strategic Plan.
- The Annual Budget.

- EO recruitment, appointment and managing performance
- Contracts and agreements involving legal obligations.
- Funding compliance.
- Staff work conditions and remuneration rates as documented in an Enterprise Agreement or similar document.
- Opening or closing of bank accounts.
- Signatories to the accounts.

Delegations to members of the CoM, sub-committee, staff, or nominated representative shall be made by resolution of the CoM and recorded in the minutes. Terms of Reference need to be clearly stipulated for any sub-committees.:

Delegations to staff may be made at the discretion of the EO, within appropriate areas of responsibility.

A delegation cannot be exercised where the officer holding the delegation has a conflict of interest or where the delegation will result, either directly or indirectly, in any tangible benefit to the delegate. In such cases a transfer of the function to another appropriate position must be arranged with the CoM.

### **Retained Authority**

Except in so far as documented in other BNC policies, the CoM retains all financial and other accountabilities. Where such retention is not in accordance with applicable legislation, that legislation will prevail.

In addition:

- A subcommittee may be delegated specific decision-making authority over work they are directing.
- The EO is responsible for approving expenditure within specified limits, staff activity within the agreed organisational plan, staff leave and other entitlements, staff work plans, and client service decisions.
- The signatories to accounts will approve any expenditure above the delegation of the EO.
- The EO will have a financial delegation within budget and will approve directly or by delegation all other items as per the Chart of Delegations DRM3.

### **Ensuring compliance with delegations of authority**

The delegations of authority are documented in the Chart of Delegations DRM3.

The CoM will monitor compliance with delegations through reports from the EO. To support compliance, the information on delegated authority should be easy to access when needed and referenced as part of recording major decisions.

### **Reviewing and adjusting delegations**

Delegations of authority will be reviewed and adjusted as the CoM decides in response to specific changes in external requirements, other organisational policies or the scope of services and activities.



## 4.3 Strategy, Business and Risk Management

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) prepares for a sustainable and community responsive future through the development of our Strategic Plan, the translation of our Strategic Plan into our Business Plan, and the protection of our Strategic Plan through our Risk Management Plan DRM8. This policy provides guidance in developing, implementing, monitoring, reviewing and protection of BNC's strategic direction.

### Policy Description

#### Application:

This policy applies to the Committee of Management (CoM) and Executive Officer (EO). The Strategic Plan applies to our entire organisation.

#### Objectives:

Our Strategic Plan, adopted on a multi-year cycle, enables BNC to adapt as the environment changes, providing a clear focus for our staff and members to work towards our shared goals. The CoM reviews the BNC Strategic Plan annually to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate to our organisational context.

Our strategic planning process is stimulated by the Neighbourhood House Community Development Practice Model:

- **Involving** the community and encouraging participation and inclusion, and valuing diversity and difference at all levels of neighbourhood house operation.
- **Identifying** community needs and aspirations.
- **Determining** appropriate community programs, activities and services in response to those needs, ensuring that diversity and difference are valued.
- **Partnering** with community organisations, businesses, government and philanthropic organisations to secure appropriate funding and support.
- **Delivering** quality programs, activities and services.
- **Evaluating** the effectiveness of all aspects of neighbourhood house operations, including programs, practice, and governance.

Our Business Plan defines the annual work plan for our organisation to achieve our Strategic Plan.

Our Risk Management Plan DRM8 identifies the threats which could prevent the delivery of our Strategic Plan, documenting our management approaches to avoid or reduce the impact of these risks. The BNC Risk Management Plan DRM8 is a live internal document, reviewed by the EO and CoM annually, and is updated on a regular basis.

**Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- All policies within the BNC Policy and Procedures Manual

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Rules of Association
- Strategic Plan
- Business Plan
- Risk Management Plan DRM8

### **4.3.1 Strategy, Business and Risk Management Procedures**

#### **Strategic Plan**

The BNC Strategic Plan is a public document, which includes:

- Our Purpose.
- Our Mission.
- Our Values.
- Description of our organisation and current services.
- Description of our community.
- Several key strategic goals for the multi-year cycle.
- Several measurable objectives for each of the key strategic goals.

The BNC Strategic Plan is developed in reference to:

- Previous Strategic Goals and Achievements.
- Need analysis, resource planning, and service evaluation.
- Input from staff, partners, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Changes in funding, legislative or regulatory obligations.
- Other relevant guiding documents.

The BNC Strategic Plan is developed and adopted by the CoM, in consultation with the EO, staff, and other stakeholders. An external contractor may be employed to assist the CoM to develop the Strategic Plan, or with a specific component of the plan.

## **Business Plan**

The BNC Business Plan is an internal document which supports the implementation of the strategic goals by operationalising the objectives for each goal. The Business Plan:

- Identifies activities to be completed in the coming year to progress the allocated strategic objectives and meet funding agreement obligations and routine operational needs.
- Allocates strategic objectives to teams or roles within the organisation.
- Defines timeframes for delivery.
- Defines resource requirements (available or required) to meet strategic objectives and routine operational needs.
- Includes opportunity for staff input and feedback on development and review of Business Plan.

The BNC Business Plan is developed by the EO in consultation with the staff and is endorsed by the CoM.

The BNC Business Plan is monitored by the EO and is the basis for reporting by the EO to the CoM at CoM Meetings. The EO is empowered to adjust the Business Plan as required.

## **Risk Management Plan**

The BNC Risk Management Plan DRM8 maintains a register of potential internal and external threats which could impact the delivery of the BNC Strategic and Business Plans, including:

- Description of Risk (events, causes, impacts).
- Related Objectives (business, strategic, project).
- Controls (existing mechanisms to prevent, detect and manage the risk).
- Control Effectiveness Rating (effective, satisfactory, unsatisfactory).
- Level of Consequence in case event occurs.
- Level of Likelihood of the event.
- Risk Rating.
- Risk Owner.
- Risk Treatment Options (accept, avoid, share, reduce likelihood, reduce consequence).

- Risk Treatment Plan.

The Risk Management Plan DRM8 is the responsibility of the CoM and is maintained by the EO.

The Risk Management Plan DRM8 should be discussed in conjunction with the Business Plan at CoM Meetings.

## 4.4 CoM In Camera

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|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

Committee of Management (CoM) members, the Executive Officer (EO), and other invited staff and guests, attend Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) CoM meetings. BNC CoM meetings, except for the annual and special general meetings, are deemed confidential and are not open to the public. To allow CoM members to discuss confidential matters, an *in camera* session will be included in all meeting agendas.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy details when, when and how to hold an *in camera* session. *In camera* sessions are scheduled for the end of a meeting but can be held any time during with a motion from the CoM.

Only those persons authorised by the CoM to remain at the in camera session of the meeting will be permitted to remain. Other persons will be excused from the in camera portion of the meeting.

#### **Objectives:**

The effective operation of any organisation relies on its CoM, and the effective operation of the CoM relies on all its members having a full command of the necessary information and expertise. There are times when CoM members believe it is in BNC's best interest to discuss confidential matters between themselves.

An in camera meeting, or portion of a meeting, involves a meeting of only those persons who are CoM members and any person who they, by resolution, authorise to be present. A CoM member may be asked to leave an in camera session where a conflict of interest is identified, either before or during a session.

*In camera* sessions should be built on trust between CoM and key stakeholders. Whilst confidential they should not be secret with the intention to hide something or protect someone.

Matters to be dealt with in an *in camera* session include, but are not limited to:

- assessing, rewarding or disciplining individuals;
- discussions and dealings with other entities or persons where the information being discussed may compromise the relationship of the organisation with them or its relationship with its stakeholders;
- labour relations or human resources issues;
- financial, personnel, contractual and/or other matters for which a decision must be made when premature disclosure would be prejudicial;
- matters related to civil or criminal proceedings; and
- personal health information related to an individual.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Privacy Policy
- CoM Resignation or Removal Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- BNC Rules of Association

### **4.4.1 CoM In Camera Procedures**

#### **Prior to a CoM meeting**

BNC will include an *in camera* standing item in every meeting agenda. The Chair, or Chair's Delegate, shall ensure the CoM is prepared in advance of each regular CoM meeting, including any *in camera* items for discussion.

Items for discussion *in camera* must be presented to the Chair prior to the meeting, unless a matter is raised during a meeting and CoM members request the matter be discussed *in camera* at the end of the meeting. The Chair will determine whether or not a portion of the meeting will be identified as an *in camera* session.

#### **Requirements of an *in camera* session**

A CoM motion is required to move into, and rise from, an *in camera* session.

The CoM may approve by resolution individuals including legal counsel, consultants, presenters and staff may be permitted to attend all or a portion of the *in camera* session.

Whilst *in camera*, the CoM may consider and vote on motions. Voting on items *in camera* shall take place according to the regular provisions governing meetings.

No minutes of an *in camera* session will be taken. Resolutions and actions should be included in the meeting minutes but may not identify individuals or subjects discussed.

## **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the EO, or the Chair if the EO is not present,

- to debrief the EO, if not present, of the *in camera* session when and if appropriate
- to debrief absent CoM members of the *in camera* session
- to keep a record of any resolutions and actions from the *in camera* session or meeting to be included in the meeting minutes.

## **Format for minutes**

If the *in camera* session occurs as noted in the Agenda, the minutes should record:

### **“Motion to move in-camera”**

The meeting was adjourned and the meeting moved *in camera* at <insert time>.

If the *in camera* session occurs during the meeting and not as noted in the Agenda, the minutes should record:

### **“Standing Orders were suspended to bring forward item <insert time> of the agenda.”**

The meeting was adjourned and the meeting moved *in camera* at <insert time>.

To return to the open session of the meeting, the minutes should record:

### **“Motion to return to the open session”**

The meeting returned to Open Session at <insert time>

The minutes should then note either:

- there was no business arising or
- detail the business arising from the In-camera meeting.

## 4.5 CoM Resignation or Removal

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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) appoints skilled and passionate community members to the Committee of Management (CoM). The CoM are committed to providing a supportive and inclusive culture for all its members. CoM members leave for many reasons, including family, employment and changing priorities. This policy sets out the process when a CoM member leaves by reason of resignation or removal.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all CoM members.

#### **Objectives:**

The BNC Rules of Association and the CoM Recruitment and Appointment Policy determine how CoM members will be appointed. When an individual leaves it is important to the organisation to understand the reasons why the person has resigned or to ensure a formal termination process is followed.

There are many reasons why a person leaves the BNC CoM, including resignation or removal. This policy helps to understand these reasons and for the organisation to ensure there are no cultural or behavioural issues behind the resignation to be investigated.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Feedback Policy
- CoM Recruitment and Appointment Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- CoM In Camera Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy



- Privacy Policy
- Staff and Volunteer Exit Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- BNC Rules of Association
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Exit Interview Form DRF32

### **4.5.1 CoM Resignation or Removal Procedures**

It is important to note, whilst some legal obligations and requirements cease upon resignation or removal of a CoM member, there are some responsibilities which continue, for example confidential committee information remains confidential.

When leaving the CoM, a CoM member will return any BNC equipment, and other property, and confidential documentation for shredding.

#### **Resignation**

CoM members are required to follow the process as outlined in the BNC Rules of Association when resigning from the CoM.

A CoM member can resign at any time by notifying, in writing, the CoM Chair. If no date is indicated on the resignation letter, the resignation will take effect immediately. The CoM Chair within 1 week of receiving the notification will formally acknowledge receipt of the written resignation and notify the CoM members of the resignation. The Executive Officer (EO) will include the resignation letter in CoM correspondence for the next CoM meeting.

#### **Removal of a CoM Member**

In extreme circumstances a CoM member maybe removed by a special resolution as per the BNC Rules of Association. Reasons for the removal, include but are not limited to, when a CoM member:

- Fails to comply with the BNC Rules of Association
- breaches BNC policies
- their term on the CoM has ended
- becomes ineligible to be a CoM member.

Within 2 weeks of the passing of the removal resolution, the CoM Chair will notify the CoM member of their termination of service from the CoM.

#### **Exit Interviews**

Exit interviews will be offered to all CoM members who leave the CoM. Whilst encouraged to attend, CoM members are under no obligation to attend an exit interview.

The CoM Chair, or their delegate, will conduct an exit interview, completing the Exit Interview Form DRF32, with the CoM member within 2 weeks of the notification of resignation or removal.

Any information obtained at the meeting with the CoM member will be documented in writing and tabled at the next CoM meeting. In some circumstances this may be presented at an *in camera* session.

The CoM will discuss the feedback and take appropriate action as identified, including but not limited to a farewell gift, a thank you letter/card, or in more serious instances an investigation.

## **Compliance**

After the resignation is tabled at a CoM meeting or the Chair has notified the EO of the removal of a CoM Member, the EO will notify regulatory bodies to remove the CoM member from their registries.

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## Section 5: People Policies

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### Relevant standard, legislation or controls

- Refer to the Introduction for a full list foundation principles and standards.
- BNC Document Register
- Association Incorporation Reform Act 2012
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) and Fair Work Regulations 2009 (Cth)
- Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Secure Jobs, Better Pay) Act 2022
- National Employment Standards
- Neighbourhood Houses and Adult Community Education Centres Collective Agreement 2017
- Labour Market Assistance Industry Award 2010
- Carer Recognition Act 2010
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) including Australia Privacy Principles (APP)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) including Information Privacy Principles (IPP)
- Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)
- Long Service Benefits Portability Act 2019 (Act)
- Australian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza (AHMPPI)
- Biosecurity Act 2015 (Commonwealth)
- Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act 2004
- Occupational Health and Safety (Psychological Health) Regulations
- Accident Compensation Act 1985
- Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Amendment Bill 2025
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety (Child Safe Standards Compliance and Enforcement) Amendment Act 2021
- Reportable Conduct Scheme
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) (including reporting to Child Protection)
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) (including Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose offences)
- Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic) (including Part XIII – Organisational liability for child abuse)
- Worker Screening Act 2020

## 5.1 Grievance Resolution Policy

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

At Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) we all have the right to work in a safe working environment and to be treated with dignity and respect. BNC encourages discussion and communication between staff as a means of developing co-operation and reducing misunderstandings. This policy provides a clear and fair process for people to raise a formal complaint and settle a grievance(s).

The purpose of this procedure is to encourage a person to:

- raise their grievance without fear of victimisation
- promote the timely resolution of grievances
- ensure there is a fair process in resolving grievances

### Policy Description

#### Application:

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) and BNC Users. This policy is not intended to override or form part of the terms of any award, enterprise agreement or contract applying to an employee, but should be considered a reasonable direction.

#### Objectives:

We recognise sometimes issues do arise in the workplace. When issues arise, we encourage where possible, the early resolution at the local level before they escalate to a formal complaint. This provides the best opportunity for a positive resolution, as it focuses on maintaining and/or improving working relationships and lessens the impact of the grievance on the operation of the team.

Where issues or complaints do escalate, we will provide the opportunity for their satisfactory resolution in a positive and constructive way. The grievance resolution process will be guided by the following principles:

- Privacy and confidentiality – only people directly involved in the grievance, or in managing it, can have access to information about the grievance. Individuals involved in the grievance should not discuss the matter with any other person in the workplace, subject to any legal requirements for disclosure.
- Fairness – all parties to the complaint will have the opportunity to present their side of the matter. No assumptions will be made, or action taken, until all relevant information has been collected and considered.
- Support - all parties will have the right to bring a support person to any meetings relating to the formal resolution process. The support person is not an advocate and cannot speak on behalf of the staff. If the staff is under 18yo, they must have a support person present, and it is recommended it is a parent or guardian.
- Freedom of victimisation – all necessary steps are taken to ensure those involved in a grievance are not victimised by anyone for coming forward with the grievance or for helping to manage it. Any victimisation will lead to disciplinary action.
- Timeliness – all grievances are dealt with in a timely manner. We aim to manage each resolution level within a reasonable timeline, advising participants of any delays and ensuring adherence to the above principles.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Handling Child Complaints Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Event Management Policy
- Program Fees and Charges Policy
- Staff and Volunteer Exit Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- CoM Resignation or Removal Policy
- Worker Screening Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions

- Incident Report Form DRF 7
- Feedback Form DRF 5
- Incident Register DRR5
- Feedback Register DRR4

### **5.1.1 Grievance Procedures**

#### **Level 1 – Informal/Self-Resolution**

When an issue arises, staff who feel they are able, are encouraged to attempt to resolve the issue personally at an early and informal stage before the issue escalates.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to assist with information about self-management solutions if needed.

Informal resolution does not require lodgment of a complaint in writing and is not a prerequisite for referring the issue to a formal resolution process. The individuals involved with resolution at this level should attempt to resolve the grievance within 14 days. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, if the matter cannot be resolved within 14 days, the matter should be progressed to Level 2.

When raising their issue with the person(s) concerned, the staff should:

- ensure they can clearly articulate the basis of the concerns;
- focus on the issue i.e. action or decision made, not the person;
- if appropriate, describe the effect the issue is having;
- aim for conciliation, not assigning blame;
- make a clear request regarding the resolution being sought; and
- seek an agreed resolution.

#### **Level 2 – Assisted Self-Resolution**

Where resolution at Level 1 has not been successful or the person doesn't feel safe or confident to self-manage a solution, they should seek assistance from the Executive Officer (EO). CoM members should seek assistance from the CoM Chair. If either the CoM Chair and/or EO are involved in the complaint, then the Deputy Chair will be responsible for managing the process. This person will be known as the Resolution Officer for the purpose of this policy,

Assistance can be provided in three ways:

- providing clarification on policies and/or expectations, available options and/or guidance in how to raise the issue;
- attending any resolution discussions as a silent observer; and/or
- facilitating any resolution discussion as a neutral third party.

In all these scenarios, the Resolution Officer should attempt to allow the individuals to manage the resolution process themselves, with the aim to re-establish a good working relationship, not determining who is at fault. Where an issue is brought to the Resolution Officer's attention appearing to be a serious misconduct or presents a significant risk to health and safety, they are obliged to commence a formal resolution process (level 3). Where the EO or CoM Chair is the subject of the grievance, the staff should seek support from the Deputy Chair.

All communications and steps taken towards resolving a grievance at this level must be documented in the Feedback Register DRR4 and reviewed by the Resolution Officer. The individuals involved in resolution at this level should attempt to resolve the grievance within 14 days. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, if the matter cannot be resolved within 14 days, the matter should be progressed to Level 3.

### **Level 3 - Formal Complaint Resolution**

Where self-resolution has been unsuccessful, the issue is more serious or the person, known as the Complainant, prefers a formal resolution approach, they must raise a formal complaint with the Resolution Officer. The Resolution Officer will then act to refer all formal complaints to the appropriate people to best manage the complaint.

Considerations on who is appropriate to handle the complaint will include: if they are able to be objective and impartial, if it presents a conflict of interest, and if they have the skills or knowledge required. BNC reserves the right to engage an independent external suitable person to manage the resolution process. Whoever is determined to be the appropriate person to manage the resolution process will be known as the Complaint Handler.

Formal complaints (also known as grievances) must be made by the Complainant completing a BNC Feedback Form DRF5 or on the Incident Report Form DRF7. In lodging the grievance, a person should provide the following information:

- the nature of the issue/s, including details of the incident/s (dates, times, locations, etc);
- any evidence or names of potential witnesses, where relevant;
- any attempts to resolve the grievance at self-resolution and the outcomes of those attempts; and
- the outcome or resolution they are seeking.

The Complaint Handler will ensure the Complainant is aware of the Grievance Resolution and Privacy Policies, copies will be provided as required.

### **Assessing the Grievance**

In determining the most appropriate resolution process, the Complaint Handler must assess the nature and severity of concerns raised, based on the following criteria:

- What is the nature and severity of the grievance?
- How often has the alleged behaviour or issue occurred?
- How long has the alleged behaviour or issue been going on?
- How long has it been since the alleged incident(s) took place?
- How many people are potentially involved?
- What are the roles, responsibilities, and relationships of those involved?
- Has the same matter been raised before?
- What action, if any, have already been taken?
- What resolution is the complainant seeking?

### **Resolution Options**

The aim of any resolution process is to ensure a safe and respectful workplace, as well as repairing any damage done to professional working relationships. Resolution options may include one or more of the following:

- Formal investigation
- Mediation
- Team communication and development
- Coaching and/or mentoring
- Training

The Complaint Handler must confirm with the Complainant which resolution process/es they plan to undertake. The Complaint Handler will determine the most appropriate time to advise the person/s who is the subject of the complaint (known as the Respondent) and when to provide them with a copy of the complaint and notification of the resolution process. Depending on the nature of the complaint, this notification may occur immediately, after an initial investigation of the complaint or once the investigation is completed.

In most cases both the Complainant and the Respondent/s will be interviewed separately to ascertain their version of events. In some cases, the Complainant may be interviewed before the Respondent is notified of the grievance, particularly where the Complaint



Handler believes the written complaint does not provide enough detail. Where appropriate, witnesses may also be interviewed, and other evidence considered.

The Complaint Handler will respond to the grievance within 14 days of receipt of the complaint. Where the matter cannot be resolved within 14 days, all parties will be notified of the reasons for the delay and the expected timeframe.

## **Outcomes**

The Complaint Handler will put in writing, details of the resolution process, the findings (if applicable) and the outcomes. This written record may be part of the BNC Feedback Form DRF5 or a report attached to the form. Possible outcomes include (but are not limited to):

- An acknowledgement of a misunderstanding;
- An agreement on how the parties will work together in the future;
- An agreement the inappropriate behaviour will change or stop;
- An apology;
- Training or coaching for a person, group or team;
- Referral to EAP or other appropriate counselling;
- Changed work practices;
- A change in policies;
- A formal warning (with a varying degree of severity);
- Other formal discipline, such as transfer or demotion;
- Termination of employment, volunteer position or use of BNC facilities

## **Appealing the Grievance Outcome**

Any parties directly involved in the formal complaint resolution process may appeal the grievance outcome. The grounds for appeal will be based on new information becoming available which may change the outcome and/or an identified explicit deficiency in the resolution process. Being unhappy with the outcome is not sufficient grounds for appeal.

## **Anonymous Complaints**

Anonymous complaints are discouraged as it prevents the Respondent/s from receiving procedural fairness, including being able to question and fully understand the nature of the complaint. Where an anonymous complaint is received, BNC will attempt to discretely substantiate the allegations with other evidence. Where it cannot be adequately substantiated, BNC will not proceed with resolving the complaint.

## 5.2 Disciplinary and Performance Management

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|

### Policy Declaration

Our staff are our most vital resource. We strive to maintain our positive work culture, which reflects our Code of Ethics and Conduct. To achieve this, we must be clear about our expectations regarding performance and behaviour, and ensure we take steps to meet these expectations. Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) will foster a harmonious work environment supporting a positive and productive workplace culture, providing employees and volunteers with information regarding appropriate performance standards and workplace behaviour.

This policy is designed to ensure when discipline and/or termination issues arise, the principles of procedural fairness are applied.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, CoM Members, volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy).

#### **Objectives:**

Performance relates to an individual's capacity to effectively fulfil the requirements of their role, including failure to reach performance goals, behaviour which does not align with BNC values, inability to improve, or poor work ethic. Behaviour (or conduct) relates to how an individual behaves whilst undertaking the requirements and responsibilities associated with their role, which may include wilful breaches of policy, refusing to follow reasonable instruction, serious misconduct, and unsafe work practices.

BNC aims to give staff every opportunity to perform and behave to the best of their ability, however understands situations will arise where performance and/or behaviour is deemed unsatisfactory, and disciplinary action may be necessary. At all times, BNC will endeavour to provide a fair and just process for all parties involved in a disciplinary action.

Except in cases warranting summary dismissal, BNC will ensure staff are given an adequate opportunity to respond to the allegations or concerns regarding their

performance and/or behaviour, and will be provided with reasonable timeframes and supports to improve.

**Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Worker Screening Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Handling Child Complaints Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Motor Vehicle Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Performance Review Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Overtime and Time off in Lieu (TOIL) Policy
- Leave and Wellbeing Policy
- Staff and Volunteer Exit Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Rules of Association
- Position Descriptions
- Awards and Collective Bargaining Agreements
- National Employment Standards (NES)
- Incident Form DRF7
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Incident Register DRR5
- Feedback Register DRR4
- Exit Interview Form DRF32

### **5.2.1 Disciplinary and Performance Management Procedures**

Disciplinary and performance management procedures are delegated to the Delegate who will be either the:

- Executive Officer (EO) is responsible for all staff disciplinary action and may delegate informal counselling to another staff member.
- CoM Chair is responsible for disciplinary action taken against the EO and other CoM Members.
- CoM will delegate responsibility to another CoM Member if the Chair is unavailable or party to any disciplinary action.

BNCs disciplinary and performance management procedures will have three distinct, but not necessarily sequential, components:

- Informal counselling;
- Formal counselling; and
- Formal warnings (which may include termination).

The decision as to which of the three components initially apply will be based on the seriousness of the person's unsatisfactory behaviour and/or performance and will depend on the facts and circumstances as identified by, or conveyed to, the Delegate. Counselling and/or formal warnings must take place prior to any decision regarding termination, unless a serious breach of BNC policies has occurred.

Where the Delegate has not observed the unsatisfactory behaviour and/or performance firsthand, sufficient facts must be gathered to determine the seriousness of the issue and the appropriate action. As part of the process of establishing the facts, the Delegate may:

- Assess relevant evidence, including documents, video footage, records, etc.;
- Interview person/s who may (or should) have knowledge of the person's unsatisfactory performance and/or behaviour; and
- Document what has occurred.

#### **Informal Counselling**

Where a person's performance or behaviour is considered to be unsatisfactory, the person shall be informed in the first instance of the nature of the unsatisfactory performance or behaviour and of the standard required to be achieved by the Delegate. The purpose of this conversation is to identify the concerns raised and to agree on solutions.

An Incident Report Form DRF7 will be provided to the Delegate who will ensure proper processes are followed. A copy of the Incident Report Form DRF7 will be given to the person if requested.

### **Formal Counselling**

Formal counselling will occur when performance and/or behaviour has not improved despite previous counselling, or where the unsatisfactory performance or behaviour is considered more serious. The Delegate will meet with the person to:

- Seek to understand the cause of the behaviour or performance problem.
- Work with the person to develop an action plan for improving the identified poor performance and/or conduct.
- Gain the person's commitment to the plan whereby the performance and/or behaviour is improved.

Upon completion of the counselling session(s), the Delegate must:

- Document the counselling session in writing with both parties signing a copy of the record to reflect a true and accurate reflection of the outcomes achieved in the session (In instances where the person refuses to sign a copy of the record, the reason for the refusal must be documented).
- Follow up the counselling session with an agreed date to review the person's progress.
- Place a copy of the counselling documentation on the person's file.
- Remove the documentation after period of 12 months, providing the performance issue has been successfully resolved.

In instances where the counselling process does not achieve the desired results or when a person has clearly breached acceptable standards of BNC, disciplinary action is initiated.

### **Formal Warning**

If it becomes clear performance counselling has failed to correct a performance and/or behaviour related issue, or where a person has clearly breached their obligations there is a requirement to undertake formal disciplinary processes.

When disciplinary procedures are employed, the Delegate must:

- Treat every case on its own merits.
- Seek advice and assistance from an independent HR consultant.
- Ensure another person is with them as a witness when meeting with or speaking to the person.

- Notify the CoM of the commencement of formal disciplinary action and the reasons why.

To be certain a fair and impartial process has been followed when disciplining a person, the following guidelines must be adhered to.

- Prior to the meeting, the person will be given the nature and details of the matters to be discussed, time and place of the meeting and advised of the opportunity to bring a support person.
- The person must be given the opportunity to discuss and respond to the issues.
- The person will be given appropriate support to resolve the issues, in accordance with BNC legislative requirements, in a prompt manner
- If a person's performance and/or behaviour does not improve to the required standards or the issue is not successfully resolved, then it is possible the outcome may be termination of employment.

## **Termination**

If attempts to resolve the issue via counselling and/or warnings has failed, or where there has been a serious breach of BNC policy, a show cause meeting will be called.

The purpose of this meeting is to ask the person to show cause as to why their employment should not be terminated. Depending on the circumstances, the person may be stood down on full pay until a meeting is scheduled.

Requests for an employee to attend a show cause meeting shall be made in writing outlining:

- When and where the meeting will take place;
- Who else will be involved in the meeting (i.e. Management representative)
- The specific issue(s) to be discussed;
- Their opportunity to respond; and
- The opportunity for them to bring a support person/observer to the meeting.

At the meeting the Delegate will present their evidence and ask the person to respond. A decision surrounding the person's continued employment/volunteering will either be made at this meeting, or within one working day, should new evidence need to be considered.

Excluding summary dismissal, employees terminated as a result of misconduct or unacceptable performance will be given notice as per their Industrial Award and will receive any outstanding leave and/or TOIL entitlements (if applicable). Employees will only be issued with a Statement of Service upon request.

The Delegate reserves the right to seek independent industrial relations advice or engagement of an independent external consultant, to assist in this process.

Under no circumstances should a person be terminated or instantly dismissed without prior consultation with the CoM. The Delegate will complete an Exit Interview Form DRF32 for all terminated staff.

### **Appeal Review Panel**

An Appeal Review Panel will be convened where there is a dispute relating to a person's unsatisfactory performance and/or behaviour. Anyone can request in writing to the Delegate the formation of an peer Appeal Review Panel consisting of:

- An independent chair appointed by the Delegate
- Two people invited to join the panel from BNC CoM members, employees, volunteers or clients as mutually agreed by both parties.

The Appeal Review Panel can request access to any documents related to unsatisfactory performance and/or behavioural including but not limited to:

- The BNC Policy and Procedure Manual
- Position Descriptions
- Incident Reports
- Other relevant information or evidence

The Delegate will form the Appeal Review Panel within seven working days of receiving the written request. The Chair of the Appeal Review Panel will convene the meeting/s and work with the other members of the panel to make a recommendation to the Delegate within five working days. Upon receipt of this recommendation, the Delegate may continue the disciplinary and performance management process or conclude the process.

### **Withdrawal of Disciplinary and Performance Management Action**

The Delegate may withdraw the disciplinary and performance management action with formal, documented communication which should specify the decision to withdraw the action, the reasons for it, and any expectations for future performance.

The withdrawal should clearly state the issues are resolved, and the employee's employment is no longer at risk due to those specific concerns. It is essential to retain this document for personnel records and to inform the individual of the decision to avoid any future misunderstandings about their employment status

## 5.3 Flexible Working Arrangements

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

Greater flexibility for employees enables them to provide a higher level of support to our organisation when it is most needed. Defined by the National Employment Standards (NES), Flexible Working Arrangements are valuable guidelines to support the best working relationship between Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) and its paid employees.

This policy gives effect to industrial obligations regarding Flexible Working Arrangements according to the appropriate awards supporting BNC employees.

Employees may consider the following options for a flexible working agreement request job share, reduced hours, flexible hours, working from home, special leave, leave without pay or another arrangement to be specified.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy makes provision for several options available to full-time and part-time employees who wish to make flexible working arrangements to assist in accommodating an appropriate balance between work and personal life outside work.

The policy does not apply to 'everyday flexibility, where 'everyday flexibility' is the informal flexible work arrangements employees require to suit a particular individual, client or business need. The Executive Officer (EO) will work proactively with BNC employees to ensure employees are supported in their daily flexible working arrangements.

This policy is intended to assist the organisation to implement the requirements of the National Employment Standard regarding requests for flexible working arrangements for employees with at least 12 months' service who are:

- a parent or guardian of a child who is school age or younger.
- pregnant.
- a carer, including supporting an immediate family or household member who requires care or support because of family or domestic violence.
- have a disability.
- 55 or older.



- are, or a member of their immediate family or household, experiencing family and domestic violence.

**Objectives:**

Under the NES, employees may request from their employer flexible working arrangements due to a change in their circumstances. A flexible working arrangement is designed to ensure employees can achieve a good work/life balance. Casual employees have limited access to Flexible Working Arrangements under the NES.

Prior to making an application for or responding to a request of Flexible Working Hours BNC employees and managers will read the information available on the Australian Fair Work Ombudsman website to ensure management of Flexible Working Arrangements are completed in accordance with the most recent rules. The NES will prevail in the event of any inconsistency.

Employees may elect, with the agreement of the EO, to work additional hours as flexible hours. Time Off In Lieu (TOIL) accrued at the initiative of the employee as flexible hours is not Overtime. If not taken, such TOIL will be paid out on termination at ordinary hours' rates.

All Flexible Working Arrangements will be clearly articulated in a written agreement and kept on file with the employee's other employment documentation.

Flexible Working Arrangements are not required where employees work Overtime with the approval or at the request of the EO. In this instance refer to the Overtime and Time Off in Lieu Policy. Flexible extra hours may only be worked within the ordinary span of hours prescribed by the relevant Award / Collective Bargaining Agreement (for example, 6am to 8pm Mon to Fri). Flexible extra hours may only be worked to a maximum of 10 hours in a day.

Flexible Working Arrangements are available subject to operational requirements. As a consequence there may be some positions in the organisation where flexible working arrangements will not be available to employees.

Employees requesting Flexible Working Arrangements are still required to attend the standard workplace for a minimum of two days per week, pro rata. The reason for this requirement is to maintain workplace culture and ensure collaboration occurs between all employees.

If working from home, an employee is required to dial into the staff meetings as attendance at staff meetings is not optional. employees should take all reasonable steps to ensure attendance and advise the EO in advance if they are unable to attend a staff meeting.

An employee may be required to attend the workplace at short notice on additional days where the EO deems it necessary for reasons including:

- to accommodate business needs,
- to cover staff who are away,
- to attend meetings or training, and/or
- to supervise staff.

**Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Overtime and Time off in Lieu Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Leave and Wellbeing Policy
- Epidemic/Pandemic Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- National Employment Standards
- Awards and Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Leave Application Form DRF9
- Flexible Working Agreement Request Form DRF13
- Flexible Working Agreement Response Form DRF14
- Working From Home Safe Workplace Assessment Form DRF17
- Staff Access and Equipment Request Form DRF23
- Working From Home Checklist DRC4

### **5.3.1 Flexible Working Arrangement Procedures**

This information must align with the information in relevant Award/ Collective Bargaining Agreement. The Award/ Collective Bargaining Agreement will prevail in the instance of any inconsistency.

An employee making a request for flexible arrangements will provide a written proposal, using the Flexible Working Agreement Request Form DRF13 and the Working From Home Checklist DRC4, to the Executive Officer.

When requesting any of the above flexible arrangements, the EO will seriously consider the request, and subject to operational requirements will not unreasonably withhold agreement. The EO will also consider the implications and consequences of refusal of the request on the employee. It is recognised agreeing to such requests may require some reasonable accommodation and changes to usual arrangements to be made by the employer.

We also recognise consideration of a request may lead to some negotiation and modification of the employee's original proposal.

In general, requests for flexible arrangements may only be refused on grounds of operational requirements where it can be demonstrated the proposal will lead to significant adverse consequences for the organisation such as:

- the burden of additional costs.
- detrimental effect on the ability to meet customer demand.
- inability to reorganise work among existing staff.
- detrimental impact on quality.
- detrimental impact on performance.
- insufficiency of work during the periods the staff member proposes to work.
- planned structural changes.

Before responding in writing to a request for Flexible Working Arrangements the Executive Officer will meet the employee to explore any alternative arrangements which may work better, or if it is appropriate to trial the arrangement first.

BNC will respond to a written request using the Flexible Working Agreement Response Form DRF14 within 21 days, in accordance with the Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Secure Jobs, Better Pay) Act 2022.

Where Flexible Working Arrangements are used, it is expected the employee will generally use TOIL rather than paid leave to cover minor absences such as appointments, and to help manage peaks and troughs in workloads.

## 5.4 Overtime and Time off in Lieu (TOIL)

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
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### Policy Declaration

Greater flexibility enables employees to provide a higher level of support to our organisation when it is most needed. The policy seeks to clearly distinguish between Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) arrangements for overtime and flexible working arrangements to:

- Ensure all employees are treated consistently and the Executive Officer (EO) and employees are aware of the procedures for Time Of In Lieu (TOIL).
- Give effect to industrial obligations regarding TOIL for overtime.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy affects BNC full-time and part-time employees. The policy sets the general parameters for managing TOIL and should be read in conjunction with any relevant Award or Collective Bargaining Agreement. The Award or Collective Bargaining Agreement will prevail to the extent of any inconsistency. The specific rostered hours set for each employee will be set out in their contract of employment. Subsequent and mutually agreed variations are confirmed in writing by the EO and rosters updated to reflect any changes

#### **Objectives:**

From time-to-time BNC employees, excluding casual employees, may choose to work outside their rostered hours to accommodate a personal issue, pressing work issue, or attend meetings or training. The CoM recognises TOIL can provide a flexible way to balance both the needs of the service and the personal needs of the individual employee.

TOIL needs to be managed in a way which is industrially fair and beneficial to the employee, and is also operationally and financially sustainable for the Centre. This arrangement is designed to ensure employees are not working excessive hours and to ensure work/life balance.

Employees who work additional hours to their normal hours of employment may be entitled to TOIL under their relevant Award or Agreement, where the additional hours are overtime they must be approved in advance by the EO.

Employees may also work some additional hours as part of a flexible working arrangement, with the agreement of the EO, and accrue TOIL on a flexible basis subject to the Flexible Working Arrangement Policy.

An important objective of this policy is to ensure employees do not carry an excessive amount of TOIL for greater than 6 (six) months. The organisation reserves the right to review and amend this policy if TOIL accruals across the organisation regularly exceed the limits set by this policy.

Records of TOIL hours, indicating whether for overtime or for flexible hours, are kept on the employee's timesheet and recorded in the employee payroll system.

**Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Flexible Working Arrangements Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Epidemic/Pandemic Policy
- Event Management Policy
- Leave and Wellbeing Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- National Employment Standards
- Awards and Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Leave Application Form DRF9
- Flexible Working Agreement Request Form DRF13
- Flexible Working Agreement Response Form DRF14

### **5.4.1 Overtime and Time Off In Lieu Procedures**

Overtime involves working additional hours beyond the regular schedule, often compensated with extra pay or time off. Flexitime on the other hand allows for flexible adjustment of daily working hours within a specified time frame. Employees can find out more about overtime from the Fair Work Ombudsman.

This policy and information must be read in conjunction with the employee's relevant awards/agreements and the Flexible Working Arrangements Policy. The Award will prevail in the instance of any inconsistency.

- TOIL for flexible hours paid out will be at the ordinary time rate and TOIL can only be accrued and taken in accordance with this policy.
- Overtime may only be worked with the prior approval of the EO or relevant manager. It is intended overtime will only rarely be required to be worked.
- An employee who is required to work overtime may be granted TOIL for overtime subject to agreement between the employee and the EO. This should be determined before any overtime is approved.
- Approved TOIL for overtime accrues as detailed in the relevant award or collective bargaining agreement
- Employees who choose to stay late to complete work must seek EO approval prior to accruing TOIL as TOIL can only be accrued and taken with the prior approval of the EO. TOIL should be calculated in 15-minute intervals and can be claimed where the additional time worked exceeds 15 minutes, in the first instance.
- TOIL must be recorded on the employee timesheet and signed by the employee and EO at the time it is accrued or taken.
- TOIL leave must be taken at a time approved by the EO.
- TOIL should be redeemed as soon as possible after it has been accrued, and all TOIL must be taken within 6 (six) months of being accrued.
- Unless otherwise mutually agreed, the maximum amount of TOIL for flexible hours accrued must not exceed the equivalent of two (2) working weeks. Once an employee's accrued TOIL exceeds this limit, the EO may discuss with the employee when the TOIL will be taken. If no agreement is able to be reached about when the employee will use the accrued TOIL in excess of 50% of the TOIL hours, the EO may direct it be taken at a time of the EO's choosing, or in exceptional circumstances may authorise it be paid out.
- Employees will use the Purchase Leave Form DRF10 for all requests to have TOIL paid out.

## 5.5 Performance Review

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

The Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) performance review approach is designed to provide a vital link between the BNC Business Plan, its vision and guiding principles, and individual employees. Our performance review approach supports great workplace culture and employee wellbeing by enabling clear communication, troubleshooting and goal setting to enable our employees and our organisation to achieve success. This policy ensures the employee performance review process is clearly defined and is applied consistently across the organisation.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all BNC employees and any person involved in conducting performance review activities at BNC. Volunteers who do not have an ongoing position (e.g. once-off event volunteers) may request to participate in a performance review in order to obtain feedback and experience regarding their position and performance.

#### **Objectives:**

BNC strives to maintain our positive work culture, which reflects our Code of Ethics and Conduct. We ensure our organisational goals are linked to the individual performance of our objectives of our employees, facilitating the flow of strategy into action.

In line with our Continuous Improvement Policy, BNC is committed to the growth and development of our organisation. We believe our employees are our most important asset, and investing in their professional development and workplace understanding is a direct investment in our community.

Performance review is part of the day-to-day responsibilities of the Chair, the Executive Officer (EO) and our team leaders - encouragement, positive feedback and attention to detail is essential in supporting people to succeed.

BNC is also committed to an annual Performance Review Cycle, where deeper exchange of information, ideas and opportunities is enabled via the EO. For this to occur, the CoM and EO will ensure:

- All employees have access to the Performance Review Policy, included in the Policy and Procedures Manual, at employee induction.
- During the first 3 (three) months of a person's commencement in a role their manager will work with them to develop a Goal Performance Plan (GPP) Form DRF15, outlining the person's goals and objectives and individual development priorities for a 12-month period, in line with their Position Description and the BNC Business Plan. Consideration should also be given to the individual's long-term career objectives. The GPP will be updated during the Financial Year Period.
- An Annual Performance Review with each employee will be completed within an established eight-week performance review period during each financial year using the Performance Review Form DRF16.
- Progress reviews or ongoing Feedback Appraisals may be conducted on an informal basis more frequently throughout the financial year.
- Periodic assessment and discussion of performance will be carried out throughout the review period between the manager and employee on an "as needed" basis.

Satisfactory completion of the annual performance review will determine the relevant level with the pay schedule appropriate to their award. Where employees have achieved satisfactory performance, they are eligible to be back paid the difference in wage to the anniversary of their commencement date.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Professional Development Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Induction Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Positions descriptions
- Business Plan
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Goal Performance Plan (GPP) Form DRF15
- Performance Review Form DRF16



## 5.5.1 Performance Management Procedures

### Performance Review

Performance reviews are intended to be a constructive process to support two-way communication about the achievement of the individual's goals. Performance reviews should be seen as:

- An opportunity to recognise and celebrate the contribution of the employee to the organisation.
- An opportunity to identify and address risks caused by under-resourcing, misaligned expectations, or skill gaps.
- Providing a healthy and supportive work environment
- A way to resolve a behavioural issue breaching BNC's Code of Ethics and Conduct.

BNC performance reviews are:

- A confidential, consistent, clear, and fair process for all employees.
- To be scheduled ahead of time to allow consideration and contribution by the individual employee.
- To focus on results and outcomes, with a strong link between the employee's goals, their position description, and the BNC Business Plan.
- To confirm the goals and targets for the next 6-12 months, including training and development.
- To include a review of the employee's position description and its accuracy, and update if necessary.
- To provide an opportunity for the employee to provide feedback to the EO regarding the support they need to be effective in the workplace

### Process

1. The criteria for review are agreed on using the person's position description and areas of responsibility, as well as any all-of-employee criteria identified by the EO. Usually these are established at the end of the performance review for the next period.
2. Measurements for review should also be identified and defined - simple is best, i.e. Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, Development Encouraged, Improvement Required, Unsatisfactory Performance.

3. Recognition of significant actions, duties or contributions the employee has undertaken outside the previously identified GPP is included in the review discussion.
4. Concerns and difficulties should also be identified, as well as suggestions for training or possible improvements.
5. The employee uses the criteria to review and appraise their own work.
6. The EO completes a review of the employee's performance using the Performance Review Form DRF16.
7. The employee and EO meet to discuss the results of the separate reviews. Discussion should unpack differences in assessment and identify successes as well as challenges. The results of the discussion will form the basis of the Goal Performance Plan Form DRF15 and appraisal criteria for the next 6-12 months.

### **Review Appeal**

Where an employee is not satisfied with the overall assessment recorded in the review, they should initially discuss these concerns with the EO. Where the EO and the employee are unable to resolve the concerns, the employee can request the matter be referred to the CoM Chair for a review of the overall assessment. The CoM Chair will consider all documentation and make a final decision.

### **Managing Unsatisfactory Performance or Behaviour**

Where unsatisfactory performance or behaviour is identified, the manager will:

- incorporate the areas for improvement in the Goal Performance Plan Form DRF15, in instances where some improvement is required; or
- commence the process outlined in the Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy, in instances where performance or behaviour is unsatisfactory and/or the Goal Performance Plan has been completed and goals have not been achievement.

Unsatisfactory performance or behaviour at performance review may result in the following:

- Provision of professional development.
- Performance counselling.
- Agreement to address performance with a specified period.

If the employee enters into an agreement to address performance and meets the requirements of the agreement within the agreed timeframe, they may be eligible to move up a level within their pay schedule.

If the employee does not enter into an agreement or does not meet the conditions of the agreement, then they are not eligible to move up a level within their pay schedule.

## 5.6 Induction

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

Induction and orientation is vital to ensure our people feel a part of our organisation – our culture, values, purpose, projects, and the ways we work to keep each other safe and well in the workplace. Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) acknowledges the efficient operation of our organisation relies on preparing and supporting individuals to achieve in the roles they perform. Whether a committee member, volunteer, or staff member, we ensure people are provided with the training and information necessary to enable them to contribute safely and effectively to the operation of our organisation.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) who need to be provided with accurate information and appropriate guidance to succeed in their roles.

#### **Objectives:**

BNC prepares Staff by providing role appropriate organisation induction and workplace orientation. We will ensure all new Staff are systematically introduced to their roles, co-workers, and the organisation, and are provided with the information required to perform the duties of their new role.

This will be achieved by:

- Welcoming and familiarising new people to BNC, including an introduction to our values, strategic priorities, significant policies and procedures, facilities, health and safety information, and other BNC activities and services available to them.
- Providing information to enable them to perform their responsibilities.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Handling Child Complaints Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Organisational Structure Policy
- Worker Screening Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- CoM Recruitment and Appointment Policy
- Performance Review Policy
- Professional Development Policy
- Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Policy
- Vocational Placement Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Appropriate Use of Technology Policy
- Health Policy
- Emergency Management Policy
- Safe Workplace
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- CoM Papers (Agenda, Minutes, Calendar)
- Rules of Association
- Strategic Plan
- Business Plan
- Budget
- VMIA Insurance Policies
- Financial Reports
- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual
- Staff Policy Manual Acknowledgement Form DRF24
- Conflict of Interest Register Form DRF1
- Staff Access and Equipment Request Form DRF23
- Induction Checklist DRC5
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Acknowledgement Form DRF28
- Incident Report Form DRF7
- Volunteer Agreement Form DRF8

## **5.6.1 Induction Procedures**

The Executive Officer (EO) will be responsible for designing and delivering formal induction and orientation for all BNC roles. This induction is tailored to meet the specific needs of the different roles and needs of BNC.

### **Staff Induction**

The EO will ensure all new staff have:

- Their orientation during the first week of employment, preferably on the first day.
- Completed OHS inductions in the first week of employment.
- The paperwork required as per the Worker Screening Policy in the first week of commencing.
- Read and signed the Code of Ethics and Conduct Acknowledgement Form DRF28 in the first week of employment.
- Completed an organisation induction within 1 month of commencing work at the BNC.
- Read and signed the Staff Policy Manual Acknowledgement Form DRF24 within 6 weeks of commencing in their BNC role.

The EO will ensure existing staff commencing in a new role at BNC will have the appropriate induction to enable them to perform their new role.

### **CoM Induction**

The EO will ensure an orientation occurs at the first committee meeting post AGM each year, and as required where new members are co-opted to the committee. CoM member induction will include the staff induction plus a broader strategic and governance induction in consultation with the CoM Chair.

### **Volunteer Induction**

We recognise commitment builds over time, and our induction processes must be responsive to volunteer interests and engagement in our organisation. Volunteer induction and orientation will be scaled to their anticipated contribution and term of involvement. For instance:

- 1 day to 4 weeks volunteers - role specific orientation and general housekeeping information, provision of Volunteer Agreement Form DRF8 on key rights and responsibilities within the organisation and Code of Ethics and Conduct Acknowledgement Form DRF28 sign off.

- 1 month to 3 month volunteers (including community based orders, vocational placement students or mutual obligation roles) role specific induction, provision of Volunteer Agreement Form DRF8, Code of Ethics and Conduct Acknowledgement Form DRF28, and provision of key workplace policies completing the Staff Policy Acknowledgement Form DRF24.

We understand volunteers can be deterred by too much paperwork and strive to find the right balance between an engaging and enjoyable organisation and one which provides a safe and protective environment for all.

## **Induction and Orientation**

Whilst the orientation process will be different for everyone, it is expected the EO will

- introduce people to their colleagues and other BNC Users.
- allocate a workspace (if applicable).
- give access and passwords to the relevant BNC systems (if applicable).
- give a tour of BNC amenities and facilities– e.g. lunchroom, bathrooms etc.
- discuss expectations (dress codes, use of technology, behaviour, etc).
- explain the Emergency Procedures, First Aid and Incident Reporting and Response processes.
- discuss training and professional development opportunities (if applicable).
- advise of any specific work and break times
- provide an Induction Kit consisting of:
  - o BNC background, purpose, values, organisational structure, strategic plan
  - o BNC Policies and Procedures Manual and acknowledgement form completed
  - o Specific contracts, terms and conditions relevant to the role, including payroll procedures and payroll details, expense reimbursement, etc
  - o Specific role related information
  - o Induction Checklist DRC3

## 5.7 Leave and Wellbeing

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|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) is committed to the wellbeing of our employees. We encourage them to take a balanced approach to work and life and to make use of the leave entitlements available to them through their award or collective bargaining agreement.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all employees. It does not apply to volunteers. This policy outlines BNC's commitment to employees in utilising leave arrangements to maintain a balanced approach to work, family and personal needs, as well as the duties of employees to ensure leave is used appropriately and responsibly.

#### **Objectives:**

Everybody is entitled to a workplace which is supportive, positive, and promotes a healthy lifestyle. BNC employees are appointed under a range of awards and collective bargaining agreements which define their entitlements and are governed by the National Employment Standards. BNC supports employees to access and utilise leave entitlements to enable a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

All BNC employees are provided information regarding the employee conditions, including leave entitlements, outlined in their award or collective agreement as part of their contract at the time of appointment to their role.

Employees are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with their entitlements as defined by their award or collective bargaining agreement and discuss any queries or clarifications with the Executive Officer (EO).

Holidays, whether spent at home or elsewhere, are times to switch off and rejuvenate. Employees should not conduct work related activities during their leave time.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**



- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Overtime and Time off in Lieu Policy
- Flexible Working Arrangements Policy
- Health Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Epidemic/Pandemic Policy
- Professional Development Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- National Employment Standards (NES)
- Awards and Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Leave Application Form DRF9
- Purchased Leave Form DRF10

### **5.7.1 Leave and Wellbeing Procedures**

Employees should be familiar with the Overtime and Time off in Lieu (TOIL) Policy and the Flexible Working Arrangements Policy before applying for leave.

Unless legislation or an award or collective bargaining agreement supersedes the BNC Leave and Wellbeing Policy, the following applies:

- Before applying for leave, employees should discuss the timing of the leave request with the EO, or in the case of the EO, the Chair. Leave may be denied if the operational implications of the leave timing will impact the ability of BNC to deliver work requirements.
- All leave applications must be submitted to and approved by the EO, or in the case of the EO, the Chair, on the Leave Application Form DRF9 in a timely manner, unless exceptional circumstances occur. No leave is finalised until it has been approved and the employee notified in writing.
- Where exceptional circumstances exist, the employee must make every effort to notify the EO of the situation by other methods (email, phone call, text message) and complete the relevant paperwork as soon as possible.
- Only apply for the leave accrued. The amount of accrued leave each person has available can be found on their payslip. Leave will not be granted in arrears.
- Accrued annual leave must not be in excess of six weeks for full time employees, pro-rata for part time employees. If an employee accrues more than six weeks

annual leave, they may be requested by the EO, or in the case of the EO, the Chair, to negotiate a reduction by taking annual leave or paying out to reduce the accrued leave.

- As a general rule, annual leave will not be paid out, unless in exceptional circumstances at the mutual agreement of the EO and the employee, or in the case of the EO, the Chair.
- Staff must allocate annual leave (or the equivalent TOIL) to the shutdown period between Christmas and New Year, with consideration to public holidays and any special leave arrangements defined by their award or collective bargaining agreement.
- Annual Leave and Annual Leave Loading, where it applies, will be paid out to staff upon termination of their role with BNC.
- Some leave applications may be requested to provide evidence to support the application, in accordance with the award or agreement and at the discretion of the EO.
- BNC recognises pandemic and epidemic leave provisions as and when mandated and legislated. for infectious disease leave in the BNC employee agreement.
- Purchased Leave, where it is available, should be negotiated with the EO and documented in an annual agreement via Purchased Leave Form DRF10.
- Public Holidays are provided as defined by the award or collective bargaining agreement and legislative public holiday arrangements. Public holidays falling when the centre is open can be negotiated with the EO prior to the public holiday to take alternative days in lieu.
- Long Service Leave will be paid out according to the entitlement, unless otherwise negotiated by the employee. Other Long Service Leave payment arrangements could be:
  - o Half pay rate, doubling the length of leave entitlement.
  - o Double pay rate, halving the length of leave entitlement.
- Leave Without Pay applications may be made by any employee at BNC. The EO, or in the case of the EO, the Chair, will fairly consider any Leave Without Pay application in the best interest of the employee and the organisation. Consideration of Leave Without Pay Applications will include:
  - o Amount of time requested.
  - o Timing of leave requested.
  - o Nature or purpose of the leave.
  - o BNC's ability to deliver outcomes related to the employee's role for the period of the leave request.
  - o Ability to backfill the employee's role during their absence.

- BNC will support individuals experiencing situations of violence or abuse in their personal life constituting family violence which may affect their attendance or performance at work. BNC condemns all forms of violence including family violence. If you are experiencing family violence, you may require additional support and we are therefore committed to providing support for you, through adjusted hours, implementing the Flexible Working Arrangements Policy, ability to attend appointments and access to support services.

## 5.8 Professional Development

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

Professional development is vital to workplace wellbeing, productivity, reward, and recognition - whether you are an employee, volunteer or CoM member. Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) will provide a supportive and rewarding environment recognising professionalism, capacity, and commitment are linked to the ongoing development of skills and competencies. This policy supports our commitment to career development and provides guidelines to ensure fairness and equity in the application of this principle.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all BNC employee and Committee of Management Members (CoM).

The Executive Officer (EO) may invite volunteers to participate in professional development opportunities which have a positive impact on service delivery to BNC users. These opportunities may include, but are not limited to, training in first aid, cultural competency or child safety.

#### **Objectives:**

As per our Induction Policy, all BNC staff, volunteers and CoM members must receive:

- Orientation to BNC
- Induction in BNC goals, policies, and procedures, strategic plan and other key documents.

Other professional development opportunities are encouraged to extend and enhance individual capabilities and capacity, potentially including:

- On-the-job training.
- Internal and external courses.
- Support for other educational studies.
- Attendance to conferences and seminars.
- Coaching and mentoring programs.

- Networking opportunities.

Employees are encouraged as part of the BNC performance review process, to take an active role in their own ongoing professional and career development and to apply their learning to its most effective use.

To achieve this, the CoM authorises an appropriate expenditure budget amount to facilitate appropriate professional development opportunities for employees.

The EO will administer the annual professional development budget in a fair and equitable manner, in the best interests of the organisation and responsive to needs of individual members. Not all professional development will require a budget, and other resources may need to be reallocated as is feasible. All professional development should be documented in the staff person's Goal Performance Plan Form DRF15 and Performance Review Form DRF16, as per the Performance Review Policy.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Induction Policy
- Performance Review Policy
- Leave and Wellbeing Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Travel Policy
- Volunteer Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Annual Budget
- Business Plan
- Goal Performance Plan Form DRF15
- Performance Review Form DRF16

### **5.8.1 Professional Development Procedures**

#### **Organisational Professional Development**

Professional development initiatives may be identified by the EO and included in the annual professional development calendar, and where required, budget.

Broadly, professional development initiatives might include:

- Training related to workplace health and safety or child safety.
- Sector orientation.
- Skill specific workshops, e.g. community development, volunteer management, etc.

Planning for professional development initiatives must ensure employees will not be unreasonably impacted in their Goal Performance Plan Form DRF15 delivery.

### **Individual Professional Development**

The CoM is responsible for approving professional development opportunities for the EO. The EO is responsible for approving professional development opportunities for all staff.

An application for an employee to complete professional development is required to be submitted for approval in writing to the EO. The application should outline:

- Overview of the professional development program, including content, cost, time requirements, etc.
- How the program relates to the individual's goal performance plan, or other identified benefit to BNC.
- Whether position backfilling will be required and is available.

The EO will consider all applications for feasibility, considering:

- Budget.
- Overall BNC training needs and priorities.
- Impact on the organisation.
- Equity in provision of professional development between employees.
- Whether changes to the individual's conditions of employment (hours of work, leave, use of equipment, etc) are required, and if so, are these achievable.

Where a professional development application is rejected by the EO, an alternative recommendation should be offered to the person on how they may otherwise achieve their goal. If staff have a disagreement with the EO over this, they can request the CoM Chair review their request.

Records of professional development will be maintained in the individual's personnel file.

The above procedure should be followed by the CoM in relation to the EO.

### **CoM Professional Development**

CoM members interested in pursuing professional development related to their governance role should discuss the opportunity with the Chair and EO.

The Chair, EO and CoM member will review the opportunities to complete the professional development requested according to resources available, such as internal mentoring, pro-bono training or workshops by partners, conferences or other training events.

Where possible, all professional development opportunities for CoM will be supported.

## 5.9 Recruitment and Appointment of Staff

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
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| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) will use best practice recruitment strategies to attract the best person for a role in our organisation. As a workplace committed to inclusion and diversity our recruitment policy and procedures are efficient, logical, relevant, and succinct. This policy defines the organisational requirements to achieve fair, transparent and effective recruitment practices, which reflect a commitment to diversity and inclusion in our workplace.

### Policy Description

#### Application:

This policy applies to the recruitment of all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy).

#### Objectives:

BNC is a community organisation, promoting and creating opportunities where people can participate, learn, and connect. It is fundamental for our organisation to demonstrate strong commitment to inclusive recruitment practices to strengthen and grow our organisation.

BNC will ensure it attracts the best available people to guarantee an inclusive and diverse workforce by:

- Maintaining clear and succinct, up-to-date Position Descriptions (PDs), which include:
  - o Identification and prioritisation of the most important tasks and capabilities required to perform the role;
  - o an employee requirement for a Worker Screening clearance;
  - o a clear commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities to uphold child safety. The following statement will be included in all position descriptions:



‘The Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre is a child safe environment. Our Centre actively promotes the safety and wellbeing of all visitors and users, and all staff are committed to protecting children from abuse or harm in our environment, in accordance with our legal obligations including child safe standards. Our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is available in our Policy and Procedures Manual on our website’.

- o a clear commitment to support clients from all backgrounds and walks of life. The following statement will be included in position descriptions:

‘A clear tenet of working in the community sector is to provide positive regard for all without imposing judgment. In this role, you will be supporting a diverse range of clients from all walks of life and be expected to help them regardless of your own personal beliefs. You will need to be prepared to adopt the professional values of our organisation and not impose your own personal values, beliefs and attitudes on our clients. Refusal to work with a client without a valid safety or legal reason would constitute a breach of BNC’s values and Code of Ethics and Conduct.’

- Succession planning identifies timeframes, techniques and people who should be involved in making the appointment.
- Vacant positions are either advertised in a timely and appropriate manner, or where specific skill requirements are identified, individuals may be invited to apply. All vacant position information must accurately reflect the nature of the position and the values of our organisation and applicant screening requirements.
- Any potential bias will be removed from the application process by avoiding requesting information not relevant to the applicant’s competency to undertake the role.
- Ensuring an appropriate staff selection framework is developed for all positions to ensure objective means of selection are applied to all vacancies. Assessment will include the applicant’s suitability to specific and objective key selection criteria which reliably measure and assess their ability to successfully perform the requirements of the position.
- Screening and vetting applicants to ensure applicants are a good fit for our organisation and can be entrusted with the duties of the position, as well as pass Criminal Record Check and Working with Children Check requirements.
- Maintaining confidentiality and the privacy of each applicant at all times.

The CoM is responsible for appointing the Executive Officer (EO). The EO is responsible for all other appointments within the organisation. The EO may seek assistance from CoM members or external independent people with the appointment process.

All recruitment and selection procedures and decisions will reflect BNC's commitment to provide equal opportunity by assessing all potential candidates according to their skills, knowledge, qualifications, and capabilities.

**Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Induction Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Worker Screening Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Organisation Structure Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Event Management Policy
- Health Policy
- Marketing and Communications Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- CoM Recruitment and Appointment Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Position Descriptions
- Employment Contracts
- Fair Work Statement

## **5.9.1 Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Procedures**

**Succession Planning:**

Planning for vacant positions by the EO, or in the case of the EO position, Chair, determines an appropriate selection process. The EO is delegated to:

- ensure, if a selection panel is to be used, the panel will reflect the diversity of the community and include an independent panel member. The panel will be briefed against allowing unconscious bias to influence decision making.
- actively encourage applications from First Nations people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and people with a disability. Giving due consideration and merit to diversity and skills for recruitment purposes.

### **Selection:**

- Selection processes may incorporate a range of techniques for assessment of suitability, such as work simulation, group interviews, or written key selection response.
- An appropriate shortlisting methodology will be applied by the panel, if used, according to the selection process. The shortlisting process will focus on individual aptitude and ability to complete tasks required.
- Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by letter/email no later than three weeks after the successful applicant has returned the signed Contract of Employment.
- Staff and volunteers should not be advised of the outcome of the selection process until the chosen applicant has accepted the position in writing.
- All personal documents of job applicants should be retained until probation period has been completed.

### **Offer of employment:**

The offer of employment should be made first by telephone or in person and, upon acceptance, in writing.

The offer of employment will include:

- A Letter of Offer
- A Contract of Employment including the starting date of employment, place of employment, hours of work, time in lieu, duties, salary award, dress code, confidentiality, probationary period, remuneration, superannuation, and termination conditions.
- Employee Details Form DRF26
- A Position Description
- Fair Work Information Statements
- Policy Acknowledgement Form DRF24
- Requests for copies of screening checks or the information on how to apply
  - Criminal Record Check
    - Valid Working with Children Check Employee

- Tax File Number
- Superannuation Choice
- Other relevant employment documentation or certificates including child safe, first aid, and hospitality certificates.

The Contract of Employment will become valid once:

- Contract has been signed by the approved applicant and returned and co-signed by the EO.
- All requirements of the Worker Screening Policy are met including receipt of a Criminal Record Check and Working With Children Employee Check.

### **Probation**

- Successful applications will be employed with a probation period of three months, or six months for the EO. At the end of the probation period the appointment will be reviewed.
- During the probation period either party can terminate the appointment to immediate effect.

## 5.10 Worker Screening

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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) uses appropriate worker screening to safeguard vulnerable people from harm which complies with the Victorian state government legislative requirements of the Worker Screening Act 2020.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all BNC people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, contractors and other third parties involved in any activity on behalf of BNC whose work with BNC is likely to involve direct contact with vulnerable people. For the purposes of this policy, they will be known as Workers.

#### **Objectives:**

Worker Screening involves assessing whether a person who works, or applies to work, with vulnerable people is suitable to work with vulnerable people. Screening helps to ensure workers engaging with vulnerable people do not pose a risk to the health and safety of the people they work with.

In meeting the requirements of the Worker Screening Act 2020, BNC must be satisfied only those workers who meet the highest standards of probity and suitability are employed or engaged. Verification of suitability will include assessments including but are not limited to reference checks, medical assessments, qualification verification, a Criminal Record Check and a Working with Children Check (WWCC).

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy

- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Induction Policy
- Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Event Management Policy
- CoM Recruitment and Appointment Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Vocational Placement Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Criminal Record Check
- Working With Children Check

### **5.10.1 Worker Screening Procedures**

BNC is committed to safeguarding our clients and uses several methods to ensure our workers are appropriately screened before they commence employment or volunteering and at regular intervals during employment, including:

- applicants will be asked questions in interviews to determine a candidate's understanding of safeguarding and a behavioural question on the same, such as "Tell me your experience with safeguarding" or "When have you been exposed to a situation where you had reasonable grounds to suspect abuse and what did you do?"
- 2 referee checks who will be asked question on the candidates' ability to work with vulnerable people, their experience on safeguarding and if the referee considers the person suitable to work with children or vulnerable adults..
- new workers must produce appropriate Worker Screening(s) with at least 3 months validity prior to commencement of employment or volunteering with BNC.

#### **Types of Screening**

Depending on the requirements of an individual role, workers will require one or more of the following Worker Screenings:

- Working with Children Check (WWCC) appropriate to their role. If an individual does not hold a WWCC they will be required to apply for a card at their own expense within 1 week of commencement.

- Criminal Record Check (also known as National Police Record Check). BNC uses a secure online platform to manage its Criminal Record Checks and will pay the costs involved with background screening of workers.
- Other screenings, such as reference checks, NDIS worker, medical assessments and/or qualification verifications.

## **Application Process**

For new or prospective workers without existing Worker Screening(s), applications will be commenced by the Executive Officer (EO) or maybe delegated to the Compliance Officer. The screening provider will then email the individual, requesting them to login to the system, confirm their identity and complete and submit the application.

As per the Financial Management Policy, BNC will only cover expenses related to Criminal Record Checks. Contractors will cover their own Worker Screening costs.

BNC and individuals will be notified of the outcome.

## **Possible Outcomes**

Based on the results of the Screening(s), one of three possible outcomes will apply:

- Clearance – the worker successfully receives their Worker Screening Clearance. Employment offers are conditional on a worker achieving a successful worker screening clearance.
- Exclusion – the worker does not meet the criteria and is unable to engage in work with BNC.
- Risk Assessment – when the worker is still in the assessment stage. Where a worker receives a negative Criminal Records Check, the EO will discuss the outcome with the worker and undertake a risk assessment of the outcome. In undertaking a risk assessment, the EO will consider:
  - o the relevance, nature, number, and severity of the offence(s) in relation to the work;
  - o the length of time since the offence took place; their age at the time of the offence; and
  - o the worker's general character since the offence was committed.

Depending on the outcome of the risk assessment, the worker may move to clearance, exclusion or be engaged with a risk assessment plan and adequate supervision.

Any decision to allow a worker to continue at BNC after a negative result, must be tabled at the next CoM meeting for discussion and approval.

## **Privacy**

Strict confidentiality and privacy will exist in relation to Worker Screening information. Worker Screening information will be stored securely and will only be accessible to staff who require it to properly discharge their administrative responsibility for safeguarding of BNC clients.

## **Right of Appeal**

Should any existing or prospective BNC worker feel they have been unjustly dealt with in relation to the Worker Screening process, they have the right to appeal via the Grievance Resolution Policy.

## **Breaches**

Breaching this policy is treated as a serious matter which could result in the termination of your employment or ending your business relationship with BNC.

In some cases, conduct breaching this policy might also breach laws and attract penalties or charges for which you may be personally liable.

## **Compliance**

Each person, by consenting to undertake Worker Screening(s), demonstrates their commitment to the provision of a safe working environment. Refusal or failure to apply for/supply Worker Screening(s) will result in a person's application for employment or engagement being withdrawn or the worker being immediately suspended from duty without pay.

BNC recognises Worker Screening(s) does not constitute a comprehensive assessment of the suitability of a person to hold a position with BNC and will ensure all aspects of the recruitment process are undertaken to determine suitability.

BNC reserves the right to alter these requirements due to changes in legislation and/or based on risk-assessment of specific roles and will communicate these changes to affected workers immediately.

All existing workers are responsible for notifying BNC if their status changes and for renewing their Worker Screening(s) prior to their expiry.

. BNC will access the [WWCC Status Checker](#) to check the validity of a WWCC at any time.



## 5.11 Safe Workplace

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|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
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### Policy Declaration

We play a vital role in supporting our community members to grow and succeed. This can only be achieved in an environment where everybody feels safe, inclusive and supported. Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of those who work at BNC. This policy supports BNC's compliance with the OHS Act 2004 and requires everyone associated with the organisation to take reasonable care for maintaining their health and safety and for minimising the risk of harm at work.

### Policy Description

#### Application:

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, contractors and other third parties involved in any activity on behalf of BNC, collectively known as workers for this policy.

#### Objectives:

BNC has a moral and legal responsibility to provide a safe and healthy workplace, including addressing psychosocial hazards arising in the working environment which cause an employee to experience one or more negative psychological responses that create a risk to their health or safety. This policy outlines the actions BNC takes to ensure all workers can work in a physically and emotionally safe and supportive environment, through;

- Office design and environmental management.
- Working alone protections.
- Intolerance of workplace bullying.
- Intolerance of sexual harassment.
- Avoiding work related stress.
- Intolerance of Occupational Violence and Aggression.
- Processes and systems of managing and carrying out work.

All workers will be briefed on this policy in accordance with the Induction Policy, and have a collective responsibility to provide and maintain, so far as is practicable, a safe working environment without risks to health.

**Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Induction Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Worker Screening Policy
- Health Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Professional Development Policy
- Epidemic/Pandemic Policy
- Travel Policy
- Vocational Placement Policy
- Volunteers Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Flexible Working Arrangements Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Organisation Structure Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Appropriate Use of Technology Policy
- Event Management Policy
- Facility Management Policy
- Asset Management Policy
- Motor Vehicle Policy
- Emergency Management Policy
- Handling Child Complaints Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Incident Report Form DRF7

### **5.11.1 Safe Workplace Procedures**

#### **Office Design and Environmental Management**

The Executive Officer (EO) will ensure:

- the physical environment at work is safe, healthy, and regularly maintained.
- the office layout is safe, and all workers are provided with adequate seating, lighting, heating, ventilation, toilet and kitchen areas, and space free from chemical and noise pollution.
- there is a warning system for the office, including verbal codes to alert others in the event of a high-risk event.
- there are well-maintained first aid kits available in prominent locations.
- local fire authorities are consulted as necessary about fire safety measures – including extinguishers and fire blankets, and instructions for their use.
- health/safety training sessions attended in the workplace/externally are documented.

When staff are working off-site on a regular basis, the EO will ensure:

- the off-site facility meets the BNC workplace health and safety expectations and requirements
- they are provided with a workplace induction including the evacuation procedure.

All workers will ensure

- the safe use, handling and storage of any chemicals or cleaning products used by the organisation.
- they follow safe manual handling process
- any unsafe or unhealthy issues are immediately reported to the EO
- they document any workplace accidents/incidents and first aid treatments.

#### **Working Alone Protections**

The CoM discourages working alone at BNC but will ensure appropriate safety arrangements are in place should any worker need to work alone at any time.

Generally, there should be at least two people on duty at the BNC premises at any time.

When there is a specific need for only one worker to be in the BNC facility, the building must be secured in such a way as to prevent access by members of the public or unauthorised persons.

Outdoor and off-site activities, including meeting clients, should not be conducted in isolation. Staff should not visit client's homes. If they must visit a client's home they must take another worker with them.

Where night-time classes occur the worker should ensure:

- They are parked in a well-lit spot.
- They have access to a BNC duress alarm.
- They exit the facility with a class member, coordinating activities and requesting support as required.
- Once safely in their own vehicle they witness the departure of students, offering appropriate and safe assistance if needed.

If a BNC user needs to be transported to another location by BNC staff, BNC staff should endeavour, for their own safety, to find transport options not requiring them to be alone in a vehicle with the BNC user. If needed, BNC will pay for the reasonable cost of the transport for the person. BNC staff should not use their personal vehicles to transport BNC clients and users.

### **Intolerance of Workplace Bullying**

In alignment with our Code of Ethics and Conduct, workplace bullying, and other forms of harassment will not be tolerated at BNC. Workplace bullying is characterised by persistent and repeated negative behaviour directed at an worker creates a risk to health and safety.

Workplace bullying includes the persistent occurrence of:

- Verbal abuse.
- Intimidation and threats.
- Withholding information essential for someone to do their job.
- Excluding or isolating others.
- Interfering with someone's personal property or work equipment.

All staff will have access to information and training about identifying, preventing and responding to workplace bullying. Anyone experiencing bullying should report the incident to the EO immediately. The EO will investigate the allegation as soon as practicable and where appropriate, develop recommendations for the resolution of the complaint. Resolution strategies could involve mediation and/or disciplining of the perpetrator.

### **Intolerance of Sexual Harassment**

BNC considers sexual harassment to be an unacceptable form of behaviour which is not tolerated. We believe all people have the right to an environment free of sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment means someone is making unwelcome comments or advances of a sexual nature, or requesting unwanted sexual activity - and you believe to refuse will lead you to being unfairly treated. It has nothing to do with mutual attraction or private consenting friendships, whether sexual or otherwise. Examples of sexual harassment include:

- persistent unwelcome demands, or even subtle pressures for sexual favours.
- leering, patting, pinching, touching, or unnecessary familiarity.
- jokes, messages or telephone calls of an offensive sexual nature.
- distribution or display of material which is offensive to another.
- sexual assault (also a criminal offence).

Sexual harassment is illegal under the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act (2010) and the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act (1984).

The EO will ensure all workers are treated fairly and equitably, they are not subject to harassment, and anyone who makes a complaint about sexual harassment is not victimised.

All reports of sexual harassment will be taken seriously, treated with empathy, and investigated thoroughly and confidentially.

Disciplinary and/or legal action will be taken against any person found to be guilty of sexually harassing a BNC user, CoM member, staff member, contractor, volunteer or anyone else involved in programs and activities conducted by BNC.

### **Avoiding Work Related Stress**

BNC believes the best way to prevent and deal with stress is to acknowledge the potential sources of stress in the total work environment and take action to stop them becoming actual causes of stress.

Some of the ingredients of a stress-reducing work environment are:

- agreeable working conditions.
- effective support systems.
- adequate professional supervision.
- clearly defined roles, positions, responsibilities, and accountability structures.
- realistic workplans, workloads and timelines.

- taking time off for regular breaks and leave.
- seeking early professional intervention if difficulties arise and are ongoing.

BNC is therefore committed to providing these conditions in accordance with our Performance Review Policy as well as any others which may be required to prevent and/or manage stress.

The EO will make available adequate information about a range of stress causes and preventative behaviours/structures, together with information about appropriate health and support services.

Staff members will be encouraged to attend training on health-related issues, including stress reduction, whenever possible.

### **Professional Boundaries**

Staff must recognise and understand they have a duty of care to BNC users, and the rights and needs of users and communities are always to be respected.

To protect staff and BNC users, BNC expects staff to interact with users safely and professionally in relation to the emotional, psychological, intellectual, social, physical, and online space.

In no way does this detract from the need to establish rapport with a person in order to provide friendly and accessible services and support by the staff.

Therefore, BNC expects staff to observe professional boundaries in their relationships with users and their relatives, friends, visitors and representatives. The behaviour outside those boundaries should be regarded as potentially abusive, unsafe and a potential reason for disciplinary action.

It is often difficult to draw precise lines defining appropriate behaviour, so we encourage staff to be transparent in their dealings with BNC users and others and to discuss any difficulties which may arise with the EO.

Any member of staff who feels a potentially inappropriate relationship is developing must discuss the situation with the EO. The action to be taken may include:

- varying the staff member's duties in order to limit contact with the person.
- discussing the situation frankly with the person in order to re-establish appropriate boundaries.
- having a chaperone present whenever there is any contact.
- changing the staff member's contact details e.g. new phone.

Where the overstepping of professional boundaries has resulted in harm to the BNC user, the staff member will be subject to a disciplinary investigation.

### **Intolerance of Occupational Violence and Aggression**

We all have the right to always feel safe – this means not being insulted, threatened or assaulted at any time.

By adhering to our Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy and Workplace Behaviour Policy BNC aims to:

- restrict the escalation of violence or aggressive behaviour, with the objective of defusing the situation.
- protect the right of workers to always feel safe.
- provide support to people involved in a violent or potentially violent situation.
- encourage more acceptable behaviour.
- provide a consistent response to unacceptable behaviour in the workplace and wider community.

#### **Unacceptable behaviour**

- is all behaviour inside the work site/s, in close proximity, by telephone or other technology – which is threatening or discriminatory in any way, and includes any threats, abuse or violence by BNC users or others (including CoM members or staff) towards anyone else.
- includes physical violence/assault, threats of physical violence/assault, and any behaviour leading other people to feel unsafe (e.g. shouting, racist or sexist insults, attempts at self-harm, harassment, refusal to leave).

Offences of any nature which harm only the offending individual will be treated with the same flexibility and understanding expected in the home or community environment.

Workers are encouraged to attend specific professional development and training in how to handle unacceptable behaviour.

The physical environment will be organised in such a way as to minimise frustrations and eliminate dangers. Services will be delivered with maximum efficiency and matched with BNC users' needs. Dangerous objects and instruments will be kept in locations which prevent impulsive use of such items.

Violent behaviours will be dealt with in ways focusing on the management of the behaviour. Persistent behaviour of an unacceptable nature may result in temporary or permanent withdrawal of our service/s to the offending individual.

In situations of physical violence, the offending person will be asked to leave immediately, or the worker should leave the situation as soon as possible. Other workers must be alerted, either by use of a verbal or other code if an electronic alarm system is impractical. If the offending person refuses to leave, they will be informed the police will be called. If the worker believes the situation is serious, then the police must be called immediately, before the situation escalates.

In situations where there are threats of violence, the person will be asked to stop the threats and to leave and come back when this unacceptable behaviour has stopped. If they refuse to leave, the worker should leave the room or building if possible or tell the person the police may be called. Another worker must be informed as soon as possible.

In cases of other behaviour leading people to feel unsafe, the person should be informed the conversation or service provision will not continue until the behaviour has stopped. The person may be asked to leave. If they refuse to do so, the worker should leave the situation as soon as possible and inform the person the police may be called.

In accordance with our Incident Reporting and Response Policy, all the above incidents must be recorded by the worker on an Incident Report Form DRF7, and the EO and CoM Chair informed as soon as possible.

The CoM Chair and EO will ensure workers and others exposed to any such incidents have access to professional debriefing within 24 hours of its occurrence.

Follow-up discussions and support will also take place both for worker's well-being and to make the necessary preventive changes at BNC. These will include but are not limited to a factual and restorative process for the staff i.e. discussion topics include who was involved, what actually happened and why, options open to the worker/s, what has taken place since and what more can be done, and what can be learnt from a particular incident. Staff will also have the option of counselling and other assistance if they require it.

## **Working from Home**

From time to time and with EO approval staff maybe required to work from home. Before working from home staff must complete a Working from Home Safe Workplace Assessment Form DRF17 prior to the commencement of working from home.

Valid reasons for working from home include

- The reasons are valid and sufficient to consider working from home and :
  - o is not to be a substitute for child-care or dependent care although may support family responsibilities (e.g. coordinate with school hours)



- o it enables better balance of work/family/life (etc.) responsibilities which will enhance performance and commitment and/or reduce stress
  - o it represents a more productive way of working compared with current arrangements
  - o there is government-medical advice to do so
- The nature of the work and employee must be suited to such an arrangement:
  - o the work can be performed independently
  - o there are responsibilities (e.g. people management/supervision) which can feasibly be met by this arrangement
  - o the working from home checklist can be met and if a site visit cant be performed that sufficient evidence of workspace at home can be produced.

## 5.12 Volunteer

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) values the contribution and commitment volunteers make to our organisation and the community we support. We recognise our duty of care to our volunteers and our responsibility to support and protect volunteers within our organisation. This policy ensures volunteers at BNC are informed, protected and supported in our organisation.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all BNC volunteers and employees engaging with volunteers in any capacity.

#### **Objectives:**

Volunteers make a valuable contribution to our organisation, the relationship between BNC and the volunteer will be managed in a way which is mutually respectful, safe and healthy.

Volunteers can come to BNC from a range of avenues, including:

- Personal interest in making a short-term or long-term contribution to the community or sharing their skills and passions.
- Developing work skills and experience to improve employment opportunities, including trainees.
- Students – individuals filling vocational placement requirements for study to achieve learning objectives and work experience.
- Corporate – individuals or groups making short-term or long-term community contribution through volunteering as part of their workplace's corporate responsibility policy or program.
- Mutual Obligation placement – individuals who receive government benefits who are required to complete activities as part of their payment obligations.
- Community Based Orders – a person required to complete activities, including unpaid community-based work, under the supervision of a probation and parole officer.

BNC acknowledges volunteer success is reliant on a range of factors which recognise, protect, and support volunteers whilst also ensuring our organisation is a safe and responsible place for staff and members of the community. Whatever the reason for joining BNC, we treat all volunteers equally, acknowledging their time and contribution and striving to meet their needs and requirements.

Volunteers at BNC must understand they play an important role in our organisation, and their behaviour and attitude is a reflection on our organisation. Volunteers should expect to be supported at BNC, but must also support the BNC purpose, values, policies, and processes in order to have a successful experience in our organisation. Where individuals repeatedly demonstrate they cannot meet these requirements their volunteer role at BNC may be terminated.

### **Volunteer Recruitment**

Appointing the right person to the job is essential. Recruitment of volunteers is directed by the Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Policy, Vocational Placement Policy and Worker Screening Policy, including management of position descriptions, staff selection screening and probation.

Where individuals are students who have vocational placement requirements, the agreements negotiated around role and responsibilities may be used in place of BNC documentation.

Where BNC users complete their course/ program involvement and continue to volunteer in the organisation, they must be transitioned to a volunteer role via the appropriate documentation and induction processes.

### **Volunteer Induction**

Volunteers working for a short period of time (less than seven days), under the close supervision of the Volunteer Coordinator, such as for an event or short-term task, should receive a short induction outlining:

- Site orientation
- BNC Code of Ethics and Conduct
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Information about BNC Policies
- Any other relevant details identified by the Team Leader

Other volunteers should be inducted as per the Induction Policy and are required to attend a Volunteer Induction Training approved or provided by BNC.

## **Volunteer Management**

As a community organisation, all volunteers are required to understand the responsibility they have to represent BNC. Management of volunteers is guided by the Performance Review Policy and Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy. This includes processes for performance review, performance counselling and disciplinary procedures.

Where volunteers require feedback or to sign off for their workplace, educational institution or other agency, the Executive Officer (EO), or delegated staff member, will plan to accommodate these as required.

## **Volunteer Training**

Under national legislation, volunteers are protected by and bound by many of the same protections as staff. Where this is the case, volunteers at BNC may be required to complete annual training, such as Child Safety. Apart from the legal requirement to do so, BNC strongly supports volunteer engagement in our training programs to ensure we remain a safe and respected organisation for all involved - especially our valuable volunteers.

Where possible, BNC will endeavour to request volunteers complete training inside their normal volunteer hours. Non-legislated training may also be offered to volunteers in alignment with their specific roles at BNC.

## **Volunteer Culture**

Volunteers at BNC are required to be committed to our organisational Code of Ethics and Conduct. BNC has a zero tolerance towards bullying, gossiping, physical violence and aggression, requiring all volunteers to share the BNC values and to respect each other. The volunteer's acknowledgement and signing of the code during their induction signals agreement of the Code of Ethics and Conduct.

## **Volunteer Safety**

Under Victorian Health and Safety Laws volunteers are entitled to and must comply with the same legal rights and protections as paid staff. Our Volunteers are included in the policies of the BNC Policy and Procedure Manual and have the same protections as employees. These will be covered in detail in the Volunteer Induction Training or can be discussed further with the EO. All volunteers are required to acknowledge they understand their safety obligations and responsibilities.

## **Volunteers Working Alone**

Employees and volunteers must avoid situations where it is necessary for a volunteer to work in isolation. Any person working in isolation is at risk of issues caused by injury, illness, environment, or other people. This should be avoided through forward planning and discussion, using tactics such as:

- Shared program times, e.g. scheduling times and dates for a community bags sewing group.
- Pairing volunteers for tasks, e.g. always have two people go to set up signage and flags for an event.
- Support by friends or family e.g. take a friend when watering the community garden on the weekend – or don't risk going.
- If working in isolation is the only option, then a Risk Management Plan must be approved by the EO to ensure safety.

**Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Appropriate Use of Technology Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Policy
- Performance Review Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Induction Policy
- Vocational Placement Policy
- Professional Development Policy
- Epidemic/Pandemic Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Event Management Policy
- Motor Vehicle Policy
- Handling Child Complaints
- CoM Recruitment and Appointment Policy
- Worker Screening Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy

- Staff and Volunteer Exit Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Volunteer Position Descriptions
- Volunteer Induction Manual
- Volunteer Program
- National Volunteer Guide
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Incident Report Form DRF7
- Volunteer Agreement Form DRF8
- Volunteer Expression of Interest Form DRF27
- Goal Performance Plan (GPP) Form DRF15
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Acknowledgement DRF28
- Exit Interview Form DRF32

### **5.12.1 Volunteer Procedures**

BNC is a member of the Ballarat Volunteer Network – Coordinators Network and Volunteering Victoria, which ensures we have up-to-date advice and information to support volunteers.

Employees and volunteers are encouraged to review information found on the Volunteering Victoria website and to contribute ideas and improvements to the BNC volunteer program.

#### **Volunteer Teams**

All volunteers at BNC are assigned an employee who is responsible for their wellbeing, safety and management in the workplace. This employee may be the EO, a Program Facilitator, the Volunteer Coordinator, an Administration Officer or a Tutor or Trainer.

BNC ensures the employee has enough time to review the National Volunteer Guide and assess and implement processes and activities to meet key legal obligations for managing volunteers.

#### **Volunteer Appointment**

Individuals may apply to BNC to become a volunteer by:

- completing a Volunteer Expression of Interest Form DRF27
- following the Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Process

- approaching BNC directly or through a third party (such as a university or other agency)
- transitioning from a BNC program.

Volunteers at BNC are required to:

- Complete a Volunteer Agreement Form DRF8 (unless other placement related material fulfils this function).
- Complete the screening requirements in a timely manner including Criminal Record and Working With Children checks
- Acknowledge and adhere to BNC Code of Ethics and Conduct and relevant Policies.
- Complete any other processes defined by BNC or a third party for volunteer placement
- Complete Volunteer Induction training.

Volunteers at BNC receive:

- Copy of their Volunteer Agreement Form DRF8 and all other relevant documentation as per the Induction Policy.
- Opportunity to discuss and plan for their needs and interests for volunteering.
- Position Description, outlining skills and qualifications required for the role (unless other placement related material fulfils this function).
- Welcome Letter.
- Appropriate Induction and Orientation by the Volunteer Coordinator when they commence their role.
- Appropriate Volunteer Induction Manual, providing organisational overview, outlining volunteer's roles and responsibilities, contact details for BNC, out of hours and emergencies and other key information.
- Recognition, through feedback and acknowledgement, such as through media and special events as mutually agreed between BNC and volunteers.
- Opportunity to provide feedback to improve BNC's Volunteer Program.
- Supervision, performance review and other performance management, if required or requested.
- Inclusion in professional development opportunities provided by BNC, including- on-the-job training, as appropriate.

### **Termination of Volunteer Arrangement**

A volunteer arrangement can be ended at any time by either party. However, it is in the best interests of our organisation and our volunteers for individuals who cease

volunteering to provide feedback to the EO in an exit interview, completing the Exit Interview Form DRF32. The Volunteer Coordinator will ensure the volunteer receives a thank you letter and a certificate of appreciation.



## 5.13 Vocational Placement

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|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) builds the capacity of the community sector by supporting future community sector professionals in vocational placements while they are studying. Placement is provided to students completing work experience for secondary school and other short course students as well as professional experience for students undertaking vocational or tertiary studies.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all Vocational Placement Students (students) at BNC and the BNC employees who oversee them.

BNC considers students completing vocational placements to be BNC volunteers, they are not considered to be employees and therefore are not entitled to the minimum wage nor other entitlements provided under the Fair Work Act.

As volunteers, students are entitled to the same legislative protections as other volunteers and are expected to comply with the BNC Code of Ethics and Conduct and the Volunteer Policy.

#### **Objectives:**

Vocational placements provide students with the opportunity to apply the theory and skills they learned while studying in a professional workplace. Under these arrangements students can gain the skills they need to transition successfully from study to work, while giving industry the opportunity to enrich student learning experiences and increase the number of work-ready graduates.

Vocational placement must meet all the following criteria:

1. **There must be a placement.** This can be arranged by the educational or training institution, or a student may initiate the placement with BNC directly, in line with the requirements of their course.

2. **There must be no entitlement to pay for the work the student undertakes.** Work arrangements covered by industrial awards or agreements are not vocational placements.
3. **The placement must be done as a requirement of an education or training course.** The placement must be a required component of the course as a whole, or of an individual subject or module of the course. It doesn't matter whether that subject is compulsory or an elective chosen by the student.
4. **The placement must be one that is approved.** The institution delivering the course which provides for the placement must be authorised under an Australian, state or territory law or an administrative arrangement of the Commonwealth or a state or territory to do so. Courses offered at universities, TAFE colleges and schools (whether public or private) will all satisfy this requirement, as will bodies authorised to offer training courses under state or territory legislation.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Safe Workplace Policy
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Organisation Structure Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Worker Screening Policy
- Induction Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Student Learning Contract
- Volunteer Expression of Interest Form DRF27
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Acknowledgement Form DRF28

### **5.13.1 Vocational Placement Procedures**

Vocational Placements are overseen by the Supervisor who may be the Executive Officer (EO) or a delegated staff member.

The tasks to be performed by students are determined by:

- the requirements of their academic institutions
- the learning outcomes dictated by their courses
- the operational needs of BNC programs
- any contractual restrictions or conditions imposed on student placements by funding bodies

BNC will at all times and to the best of our ability will:

- ensure students are placed in programs where they have the capacity to satisfy the demands of their courses
- attempt to meet the student's needs and expectations but cannot guarantee a student will get everything they asked for from their placement as we operate in a dynamic workplace, with constantly changing projects and activities.

Depending on their course of study the type of activities undertaken by a student may include observation and/or participation in:

- community development programs and projects
- marketing and administrative tasks including report writing
- event planning and delivery
- research and evaluation

## **Application Process**

Initial enquiries, from either individual students or educational institutions, are directed to the EO who obtains basic details of the placement required and provides information about the application process.

Work experience for secondary and other short course students is generally arranged by teachers.

## **Assessment and Approval Process**

The Supervisor acknowledges receipt of the application and discusses the placement opportunity with the EO and other BNC staff.

Consideration is given to the student's educational credentials (e.g. whether they have completed sufficient studies to warrant the placement being sought), the reasons for the placement and any particular benefits of the placement to BNC. Students must provide a copy of the course objectives with their application.

Prior to a final decision, students are interviewed by the Supervisor , and / or the staff member who will be supervising them, to explain the experience offered and assess their suitability.

The Supervisor arranges for relevant pre-placement screening to be carried out, prior to a final decision.

The Supervisor approves the student's application for placement and advises both successful and unsuccessful applicants.

Appropriate documentation is often provided by the educational institution which the student attends. The EO and / or Supervisor signs the successful student's placement agreement.

Where vocational placement is organised for secondary school students and no formal agreements are in place, the students will complete a Volunteer Expression of Interest Form DRF27 to ensure their details are collected and their volunteer hours can be recorded.

Most post-secondary and tertiary educational institutions also require a student learning contract. The learning contract is reviewed at every supervision session and the student is required to demonstrate outcomes against each element of the contract.

### **Induction and Guidance**

The Supervisor will provide induction to the student and be their primary contact during their vocational placement.

The Supervisor , or supervising BNC staff member, will

- provide day-to-day direction and support to the student about the activities they engage in while on placement.
- ensure students are provided with information about BNC policies and procedures relevant to the student placement e.g. ethics, conduct, privacy and confidentiality.
- liaise with other relevant staff as required and appropriate to determine how the day-to-day supervision and support can be provided to the student.
- provide regular and specific feedback to the student and the representative of the educational institution about the student's performance on placement, including suggesting learning strategies and activities to assist learning.
- provide formal written feedback about student performance in accordance with the format and frequency agreed in the Student Agreement.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure they engage in meaningful learning within the BNC environment and during their placement. The EO or Supervisor should be contacted immediately if a student has any concerns about their learning or placement at BNC.

### **Finalisation of Placement**

Prior to the end of a placement the student and supervisor complete the student learning contract and other required documentation. All BNC resources are returned.

Any documentation relating to a student placement is held by the Supervisor for 6 months from the date the placement is finalised and then maybe be destroyed or archived.

### **Early Termination of a Placement**

While committed to making every effort to support a placement to its conclusion BNC reserves the right to terminate a student placement at its discretion. Similarly, we recognise the right of students to withdraw at their own discretion.

Situations which may lead to BNC terminating a placement include:

- professional misconduct
- lack of alignment with student expectations and what a BNC vocational placement can provide to the student
- non-compliance with BNC contractual obligations, policies or the direction of a supervisor including breach of confidentiality or breach of professional boundaries
- sustained inability to demonstrate competency against learning outcomes
- unexplained absenteeism or non-participation in professional guidance
- behaviour that actually or potentially brings BNC into disrepute
- failure to adhere to the BNC screening requirements, or an unsuccessful outcome, as per the Worker Screening Policy.

The Supervisor will inform the student's educational institution whenever there are concerns about the student's performance or behaviour. However, if there is a serious breach involved BNC has the right to immediately terminate the placement without consultation.

## 5.14 Travel

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### Policy Declaration

People connected to Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) may need to travel to attend meetings, events, and other activities in our community. The purpose of this policy is to outline the requirements, obligations, and responsibilities of staff when travelling for work purposes.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) who travel for BNC related activities.

#### **Objectives:**

BNC staff may be required to travel for a range of reasons, including, but not limited to:

- Attending or providing professional development opportunities.
- Attending meetings.
- Participating in events.
- General BNC business.
- Meeting BNC users.

The Executive Officer (EO) is required to authorise any out of the ordinary travel or when staff travel outside of Ballarat.

In the first instance, BNC staff should use BNC vehicles, subject to availability, or public transport, as BNC has a commitment to environmental sustainability.

- BNC requires:
- Travel costs are kept to a minimum (e.g. economy fares and booking flights in advance to benefit from discounted rates, etc.).
- Where travel by public transport is not practicable staff are permitted limited use of a private vehicle, at the discretion of the EO.

- When a private vehicle is used, staff are encouraged to carpool if possible.

Staff are expected to act in a manner consistent with the Worksafe and Occupational Health and Safety Regulations which extends to use of private vehicles for BNC purposes.

It is the responsibility of the staff member driving a motor vehicle for business purposes to ensure the following conditions are adhered to:

- The driver has a current Victorian (or interstate) Driver's License.
- The driver maintains a zero drug and blood alcohol level whilst driving the vehicle with passengers or maintains a legal drug and blood alcohol level whilst driving the vehicle without passengers.
- The vehicle must have a minimum of Third-Party insurance.
- The vehicle must have current Victorian registration and be roadworthy.

BNC will not accept any liability arising out of the use of a vehicle for business purposes. Any fines or infringement notices incurred during use of a vehicle for business purposes will remain the responsibility of the driver.

The conditions and the level of the travel allowance are to be in accordance with the staff allowances and Private Vehicle Reimbursement Rates contained in the relevant award or collective bargaining agreement.

Employees are responsible for expenses associated with the renewal of their Driver's License and private vehicle maintenance.

When using a vehicle on company business, the employee must comply with motor traffic and vehicle laws.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Motor Vehicle Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Professional Development Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Positions Description
- Awards and Collective Bargaining Agreements

- Travel Reimbursement Form DRF18
- Expense Authorisation and Reimbursement Form DRF19

### **5.14.1 Travel Procedures**

Staff travel is negotiated at the time of employment, as per the position description and relevant Award for each role. When staff are travelling and are out of the office for work purposes, they are required to advise office staff when they leave and return. For safety purposes another member of staff should know the details of the meeting including where it is and expected return time.

Travel allowances are claimed on the Travel Reimbursement Form DRF18 and approved by the EO. They are attached to staff timesheets and processed in the fortnightly payroll process.

Public transport or other travel tickets may be purchased by the BNC Debit Card, from petty cash, or purchased by staff and claimed for reimbursements using the Expense Authorisation and Reimbursement Form DRF 19.

As per the Delegation of Authority procedure, all purchases should be approved by the appropriate Team Leader or the EO in advance.



## 5.15 Epidemic/Pandemic

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### Policy Declaration

From time to time infectious diseases develop into epidemics or pandemics, and create increased risks for the community. The purpose of this policy is to outline the strategies and actions Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) intends to take to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases declared epidemics or pandemics, and control the transmission of infectious diseases when a case/s is identified.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, BNC in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, Committee of Management Members (CoM), volunteers, and contractors (collectively known as Staff for this policy) and BNC users and other third parties involved in any activity on behalf of BNC.

#### **Objectives:**

In the event of an epidemic or pandemic, BNC will, as far as possible:

- Act to protect its clients, its staff, its volunteers, and the public from infection or contagion by epidemics and/or pandemics.
- Facilitate, through its policies and procedures, strategies designed to reduce risks to its clients, its staff, its volunteers, and the general public.
- Comply with all directions from authorised public health officers and recognised medical authorities in relation to the epidemic or pandemic.
- Assist its clients, staff, volunteers and others, as relevant, to minimise their exposure to the illness concerned.
- Encourage and assist those who have reason to believe they are at risk of contracting the epidemic or pandemic to obtain a diagnosis.
- Support staff, volunteers, contractors and clients to take reasonable precautions to prevent infection or contagion.
- Provide standard precautions such as personal protective equipment (e.g. masks, soap, and gloves) where needed.

- Maintain its services and operations throughout the period of concern, subject to health directives to close.

### **Leave and Flexibility**

Staff may request or require paid and unpaid leave when they are unwell, at risk of or vulnerable to infection, and are at risk of infecting others.

Workers may make use of leave consistent with BNC leave policies, relevant industrial instruments and the National Employment Standards (including access to unpaid leave).

BNC may, at its discretion, direct those affected or reasonably at risk of being affected by the pandemic or epidemic, to remain away from the workplace or work remotely.

Where possible during an epidemic or pandemic, BNC will aim to provide workers with flexibility to work remotely and to attend medical appointments.

### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy Safe Workplace Policy
- Flexible Working Arrangements Policy
- Overtime and Time off in Lieu Policy
- Leave and Wellbeing Policy
- Event Management Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Health Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Emergency Management Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- National Employment Standards (NES)
- Awards and Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Business Continuity Plan DRM5
- Pandemic Emergency Management Plan DRM4
- Emergency Management Plan DRM6
- Risk Management Plan DRM8
- Critical Incident Reporting Form DRF6
- Leave Application Form DRF9
- Flexible Working Agreement Request Form DRF13

- Flexible Working Agreement Response Form DRF14
- Working From Home Safe Workplace Assessment Form DRF17
- Staff Access and Equipment Request Form DRF23
- Working From Home Checklist DRC4

### **5.15.1 Epidemic/Pandemic Procedures**

In carrying out the procedures listed below, BNC will be guided by the information and directions provided by Australian health authorities and the World Health Organisation, and its occupational health and safety obligations.

#### **Responsibilities**

The Executive Officer (EO) will be the Epidemic Officer, or if the EO is absent, the EO will appoint an Epidemic Officer.

The Epidemic Officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring the organisation's Leave and Safe Workplace policies are consistent with the intention of the Epidemic /Pandemic Policy.
- Assessing the organisation's vulnerabilities, in the light of the epidemic or pandemic, to human resources, suppliers of goods and services and facilities
- Preparing a comprehensive Business Continuity Plan DRM5 and other required health plan.
- In the event of an epidemic or pandemic,
  - o Giving notice to staff, volunteers, clients, and any persons likely to be affected that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect.
  - o Bringing into operation the Emergency Management Plan DRM4 for an epidemic or pandemic and the management procedures specified below.
  - o Instituting any administrative measures necessary to reduce the impact of the vulnerabilities detailed above.
  - o The Epidemic Officer shall familiarise staff/volunteers and others, as relevant, with recommended procedures on epidemic avoidance guidelines (e.g. handwashing, soap, sneezing policy) as appropriate.
  - o Working with all sectors of the organisation to identify mission-critical staff and functions.

Staff/volunteers are responsible for abiding by the epidemic procedures specified below, when informed by authorised staff that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect.

The following procedures apply in the event of the EO giving notice that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect.

## **Events**

The EO will consider on a continuing basis whether any events involving the attendance of staff or members of the public should be changed, rescheduled or cancelled to minimise the risk of infection.

## **Work procedures**

The EO will consider on a continuing basis whether:

- It is necessary or appropriate for nominated staff/volunteers to work from home.
- Travel, (or other activities which may cause staff to come into contact with other people in Australia or overseas) should be modified or terminated.
- Arrangements for staff/volunteers who work with clients or the public should be modified to minimise risks for all parties.

The EO may require any member of staff to not attend the workplace, and/or to work from home, or, if this is not feasible or appropriate, to take leave as per the Leave Policies. The EO may require any member of staff to provide satisfactory evidence they are fit to return to work.

## **Contractors and suppliers**

The EO will consider on a continuing basis whether arrangements with existing contractors and suppliers need to be modified or supplemented to ensure uninterrupted service delivery.

## **General Requirements**

In the event of an infectious disease being declared an epidemic or pandemic BNC requires people covered by this Policy to take the following precautions.

- Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.
- Maintain at least 1.5 metres distance between yourself and anyone else.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, or shaking hands with others.
- Make sure you follow good hygiene and encourage others to do the same. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze, and disposing of used tissues immediately.

- Stay home if you feel unwell. If you are well enough to work but would like to minimise the risk of infecting others, ask your [manager/ supervisor] whether you can temporarily work from home.
- Keep up to date on the latest hotspots (cities or local areas where the pandemic or epidemic is spreading widely). If possible, avoid traveling to places - especially if you are more at risk.
- If you are or are likely to be contagious, notify the EO as soon as possible. It may be possible or necessary for you to self-isolate by staying at home until you recover.
- Seek medical advice promptly and follow the directions of your local health authority.
- Follow any additional instructions from the EO as legally required for each specific epidemic or pandemic.
- When possible work from home.

## 5.16 Staff and Volunteer Exit

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### Policy Declaration

The professional knowledge, experience and working relationships of our people is a key element to Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) success. Managing the preservation and retention of information and relationships as someone leaves our organisation is important to our ability to provide continuity of service to our community. This policy identifies the actions and responsibilities required when a staff member or volunteer is leaving their employment or engagement with BNC.

### Policy Description

#### Application:

This policy applies to all BNC employees, volunteers and Committee of Management (CoM) members (collectively known as Staff for this policy) involved in any activity on behalf of BNC. This policy applies when our staff or volunteers leave BNC through:

- resignation,
- retirement,
- accepting a voluntary separation package,
- completing their employment/engagement agreement,
- abandonment of employment/engagement, or
- dismissal.

#### Objectives:

BNC is committed to:

- facilitating a respectful exit, maintaining an appropriate level of confidentiality;
- ensuring the retention and transfer of vital organisational knowledge;
- ensuring the safe return of BNC property, corporation information, and equipment; and
- utilising feedback from exit interviews, in collaboration with other initiatives, to improve retention and employment/engagement practices.

#### Related Policies and Procedures:

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy

- CoM Resignation and Removal Policy
- Volunteers Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Exit Interview Form DRF32

### **5.16.1 Staff and Volunteer Exit Procedures**

#### **Staff/Volunteer Lead Exit**

Where the exit is initiated by the staff member or volunteer, they must inform the Executive Officer (EO) or Volunteer Coordinator of their intention to leave. The period of notice and how the notice must be given (e.g. in writing), will be outlined in their employment/engagement agreement.

#### **Organisational Lead Exit**

Where the exit is initiated by BNC, e.g. end of an employment/engagement period or dismissal, the EO (or their delegate) will notify the staff member or volunteer in writing of their exit date and any requirements.

#### **Exit Interview**

Exit interviews are offered to all departing staff/volunteers and provide BNC with an opportunity to gain insight on them as an employer/organisation, as well as ideas for improvement. It also gives BNC a chance to express appreciation and gratitude for the individual's work and contribution during their time with the organisation.

Whilst participation is voluntary, managers should make the invitation and encourage participation in the exit interview process. All reasonable efforts will be made to protect the confidentiality of individuals participating in this process.

Exit interviews for staff will be documented on the Exit Interview Form DRF32. Please refer to the CoM Resignation and Removal Policy, and Volunteers Policy for the process requirements for exiting CoM members and volunteers.

## **Return of Property and Information**

All staff and volunteers leaving are responsible for the safe return of all property belonging to BNC (including: equipment, resources and materials), on or before their last day. BNC is entitled to deduct from wages, the cost of replacement of any property not returned or unaccounted for. If this becomes necessary, staff will be advised in writing by the EO, with their final payment advice.

## **Notifications**

The EO is responsible for managing the timely notification to:

- Payroll: to enable reconciliation of hours worked, entitlement balances and calculation of final payments;
- IT: to facilitate changing access, passwords, security and transfer of IT systems and accounts; and/or
- Facilities: to manage the return of property and/or vehicles, as well as any access swipe cards and/or keys.

## **References**

It is BNC's policy not to provide written references without EO approval.

Individual staff, at their own discretion, may agree to be a verbal referee for individuals they have worked with and/or managed.

To receive a statement of service and/or separation certificate, staff must request this as they are not automatically given on exit.



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## Section 6: Finance Policies

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### Relevant standard, legislation or controls

- Refer to the Introduction for a full list foundation principles and standards.
- BNC Document Register
- Association Incorporation Reform Act 2012
- Australian Accounting Standards
- Superannuation Act 2005 (Cth)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) including Australia Privacy Principles (APP)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) including Information Privacy Principles (IPP)
- Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)
- Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012
- Long Service Benefits Portability Act 2019 (Act)
- Worker Screening Act 2020
- Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety (Child Safe Standards Compliance and Enforcement) Amendment Act 2021

## 6.1 Audit

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) will provide an independent, objective assurance approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, finance, control, and governance processes. BNC audit processes ensure BNC will meet its statutory audit and compliance requirements at all times. In addition, the Committee of Management (CoM), Treasurer, or Executive Officer (EO) may undertake internal audits designed to add value and improve BNC's operations.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to any person involved with BNC internal and external audits completed for any compliance purposes.

#### **Objectives:**

Audits ensure we accomplish our objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of BNC processes. Strong fraud prevention processes will help increase the confidence of CoM members and other funding stakeholders have in BNC's systems and processes.

The CoM can authorise an internal audit at any time. When conducting an internal audit consideration should be given to the effectiveness of the organisation's internal controls.

The financial statements of BNC are subject to an annual external audit. External audit is conducted by a registered auditor to comply with the relevant statutory requirements, the requirements set out in the BNC Rules and any other relevant requirements.

Any additional audit opinion specifically required by a funder is to be provided by the same registered auditor unless there are extenuating circumstances such as previously documented and agreed contractual obligations or government regulations.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Financial Management Policy

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Asset Management Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Delegation of Authority Policy
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Purchasing and Procurement Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- CoM Calendar
- BNC documents and financial papers

### **6.1.1 Internal Audit Procedures**

An internal audit may be conducted by the Treasurer or an appointed suitably qualified individual. The internal audit will:

- Examine to what extent BNC has implemented procedures designed to deter and detect financial risk or fraud.
- Undertake a financial risk management review.
- Implement a process for investigating financially related incidents or complaints in a timely manner.
- Monitor the compliance to the Code of Ethics and Conduct, Finance Policies, and Fraud Policy.
- Determine if the BNC culture and work environment promotes ethical behaviour and encourages all staff to communicate any known or suspected wrongdoing to the appropriate person.

A typical review conducted by internal audit involves a detailed review of a process or function to test processes, systems and controls to ensure they are working as desired. This testing can be conducted in a variety of ways, including:

- Observation of procedures in place.
- Review of Documentation.
- Re-performance of an operation.
- Compliance Testing of Transactions.
- Substantive Testing of Transactions.

The results of the internal audit process will be presented to the CoM for review. Any plans for resolution or corrective action of identified risk areas should be completed in a timely manner and compliance should be measured.

### **6.1.2 External Audit Procedures**

The CoM is responsible for appointing and monitoring the performance of the external Auditor annually at the Annual General Meeting, in accordance with the Association Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Act). To maintain independence, the same Auditor may be appointed year to year however no auditor will be appointed for more than five years in a row. An Auditor may not be reappointed until two years after their last appointment.

The external audit period is established in the annual CoM Calendar, in accordance with the reporting timeframes required for compliance purposes. Three months prior to the audit period the CoM (or appointed subcommittee) will review the previous year's audit report, review the terms of engagement of the external Auditors, the scope of the audit and any additional services and monitor external Auditor independence.

If a new Auditor is required, the CoM will determine an appropriate process, in accordance with the Act. The external Auditor is precluded from providing any services likely to threaten the independence or present a conflict of interest with their compliance and assurance role.

The following process is undertaken for an external audit:

- The external audit must be planned and executed in order to present results to the CoM for review at the March CoM meeting and for adoption at the AGM. Once adopted the Audit report must be submitted via the Service Agreement Management System (SAMS) the Funded Agency Channel (FAC), and to Australian Charities and Not-For-Profit Commission (ACNC) and Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) and other regulatory agencies as required.
- The EO is responsible for booking the Auditor annually in November.
- At the request of the Auditor, the Bookkeeper, in consultation with the EO and the Treasurer, will make all documents and information available to the auditor in order to conduct an audit of the financial affairs of BNC.
- The Bookkeeper will negotiate a mutually agreeable time for the Auditor to conduct the audit at a time the Bookkeeper is available to assist in the audit process and follow up on any questions regarding financial management. The Treasurer may participate in the audit as the representative of the CoM.
- The appointment of the Auditor for the following year will take place at the Annual General Meeting, unless the CoM is required to appoint a new Auditor.

- The CoM will appoint another Auditor, in accordance with the Act, if for any reason the Auditor is unable to perform the duties required.
- The CoM will recommend the appointment of an alternative Auditor if the EO, in consultation with the Treasurer, determines the Auditor's performance of their duties is not satisfactory or not appropriately priced; or if the CoM determines the financial probity would be improved by the appointment of an alternative Auditor.

## 6.2 Budget Development and Management

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### Policy Declaration

The Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) budget supports the delivery of the Strategic Plan vision and goals. The Committee of Management (CoM) is responsible for adopting and monitoring the budget of the organisation each year as part of its annual business planning. This policy outlines BNC's approach to planning and managing resources efficiently and effectively.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

BNC will provide effective management and monitoring of BNC's funds and resources. Budget development and management is done in collaboration with BNC employees, the Executive Officer (EO), the Bookkeeper, and the Treasurer on behalf of the CoM.

#### **Objectives:**

A formal budgeting process is the foundation for good business management, growth and development. Organisations focused on their strategy and plan know exactly where to spend their resources and they have a plan to keep them from spending money in areas not aligned with the vision (what we are trying to do) and mission (why we are doing it).

#### **Annual Budget Development**

BNC receives operating funds through a range of grants, funding contracts, donations, sponsors, delivery of fee for services programs, and social enterprise activities. Grants are a primary source of funding for BNC with contracts of different amounts and delivery duration.

The EO will ensure the budget clearly identifies:

- the different funding sources and their related project budgets.
- recurrent funding and expenditure.
- funding received in advance for projects delivered over multiple years.

To ensure BNC maximises its funding opportunities, the EO will implement an ongoing program of funding submissions. As a result, income projections may change during a year

and impact the CoM's adopted budget. Thus, BNC operates under a budget which is flexible in responding to unforeseen events including possible challenges in cash flow.

### **Annual Budget Monitoring**

The EO will be responsible for the monitoring of expenditure, reviewing actual against budgeted expenditure. The EO will include, in the CoM reports, any other matters likely to impact on the financial operations of BNC or an unplanned crisis.

The CoM shall be responsible for:

- Adopting financial reports presented to the CoM.
- Any variance against budgeted ongoing expenses e.g. rent, wages, etc.
- Retaining the right to amend or remove any authority for ongoing payments.
- Grant authority for any purchases not already approved at budget level or under delegation.

### **Long term financial responsibility**

In formulating BNC's long-term financial budgets and plans the CoM will undertake a review of its financial management strategies and principles as well as financial management policies and procedures. The CoM should consider investment strategies such as:

- Minimum and maximum levels of retained earnings.
- Capacity of the facilities to meet BNC's strategic goals.
- Amount of funds required to meet the ongoing operational needs of BNC.

### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Auspice Policy
- Debt Recovery Policy
- Event Management Policy
- Facilities Management policy
- Asset Management Policy
- Organisation Structure Policy
- Purchasing and Procurement Policy
- Delegation of Authority Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Program Fees and Charges Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy

- Debt Recovery Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Annual Budget
- CoM Calendar
- Strategic Plan
- Business Plan
- Position Descriptions
- Funding Agreements and Contracts
- Financial Reports
- Awards and Collective Bargaining Agreements

## **6.2.1 Budget Development And Management Procedures**

The CoM will:

- Have an Annual Calendar defining the timeframes for the draft budget to ensure it is available in December each year.
- Deliver a position description for the Treasurer Role clearly outlining responsibilities and requirements of the position which will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.
- Include Financial Reports as a standing agenda item at all CoM meetings.
- Provide CoM members with information on their appointment, and where requested mentoring or training to ensure they are confident to interpret and monitor BNC finances in a financially sound manner.

### **Annual Budget Development**

When drafting an annual budget, the EO and Treasurer will consider:

- The goals and objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan and Business Plan as the budget provides the financial resources to achieve the BNC vision.
- The legal and financial requirements of funding bodies and other accounting requirements.
- Revenue projections based on historical financial performance, as well as projected contract revenues and grant submissions.
- Fixed and variable operational costs, including expected cost increases and past operational costs.



- National Wage Review increments for salaries or relevant wage increases, revisions to the Agreement, awards, contracts, etc.
- Goal related projects identified in the budget.
- Consideration of the current year financial situation.

The draft budget will be presented to the BNC CoM no later than December of the preceding financial year unless otherwise agreed by the CoM or its representatives. The CoM may accept the tabled Budget or may request variations within the context of the Strategic Plan goals and objectives. If adjustments are required, the new budget will be presented for consideration at the following meeting or via email if requested by the CoM. Once adopted by the CoM, this becomes the official operating budget for BNC for the stated year, and all CoM members and employees must endeavour to work within the financial limits stated or implied by this document.

### **Grant Acquittals and Carry Forward Amounts**

The EO is responsible for all grants and their acquittals; and will keep a record of the status of all current grants, including funding contracts and income received in advance.

The EO will ensure all awarded income is spent in accordance with the grant agreements and contracts, and expenditure is in line with the broad structure of the proposed project cost detailed in the proposal or any revised budget.

Where unspent funds are identified during the preparation of the acquittal and or budget the EO will either

- carry forward unspent funds at the end of each year in accordance with current accounting standards and practices, or
- before the end of the final day of the project liaise with the funding body to determine how these funds are to be spent or returned to the funding body or if they can be kept as retained earnings.

The EO will provide a regular update to the CoM on the status, including risks of non-delivery, of all current grants.

### **Funding Submissions**

When a funding submission is successful and has a significant impact on the BNC budget or staffing implications, the CoM may request the annual budget be amended to reflect this change. Successful funding agreements will be managed as per the Contracts and Agreements Policy.

The EO will provide a report on the budget implications for all active funding submissions and grants at CoM meetings.

### **Annual Budget Monitoring**

The EO will provide the monthly financial reports to the CoM including

- Balance Sheet
- Profit and Loss Statement
- Profit and Loss to Budget Statement
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable.
- Cash Flow

A written financial progress report will be provided to the CoM by the Treasurer, with support from the EO at the CoM meetings. The Treasurer's report to the CoM will include the following:

- Budget to Actual Report.
- Bank Statements as at the end of the previous month.
- Previous month's bank reconciliation.
- Balance Sheet.
- Profit and Loss Statements.
- Cash Flow.
- Accounts payable.
- Accounts receivable.
- Staff leave entitlements.
- Other financial related documents requested by the CoM.

The CoM reports will show monthly and year to date expenditure and any variance expenses. The Treasurer will provide a written analysis explaining any reasons for any materials differences in projected income or expenditure and the possible effect these variances may have on the financial operations of BNC.

Twice a year, mid-year, and at the end of the year, the Treasurer will develop a report for the CoM to consider the progress of BNC's financial status against the strategic plan and budget. This report will cover the review of financial matters, recommendations for change or improvement, as statement of the current financial status of BNC and an opinion as to its financial sustainability.

## 6.3 Financial Management

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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) must comply with specific financial administration, accounting, control, management, audit and reporting requirements as specified in legislation and by various government agencies. BNC manages a range of financial systems and processes to support the effective and efficient management of BNC resources. BNC will ensure financial management is transparent and appropriately recorded and monitored to minimise its exposure to the risk of theft or fraud. This policy is intended to guide and direct BNC financial management practices.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This Policy applies to the Committee of Management (CoM), the Executive Officer (EO), Bookkeeper, other employees (collectively known as Staff for this policy) authorised to handle or manage BNC financial transactions, and individuals requiring reimbursements of expenses incurred on behalf of BNC.

#### **Objectives:**

BNC uses Financial Management for planning, organising, directing, and controlling the financial activities such as the utilisation of funds of the enterprise. BNC will apply general management principles to financial resources of the enterprise.

BNC will develop and document financial management practices and controls necessary to meet statutory regulations and legislation ensuring:

1. No BNC funds may be committed or expended except by EO approval or a staff member with documented authority to approve, in accordance with BNC Delegation of Authority Policy and Conflict of Interest Policy.
2. BNC funds will only be expended on goods and services for approved BNC purposes. Funds from external sources tied to particular purposes, such as grant funds, must be used only for the specified purposes.
3. All items purchased from BNC funds are the property of BNC, unless there is an agreement in writing to the contrary associated with a particular grant or contract.

4. All BNC assets, however acquired, must be prudently managed and properly documented to meet accounting, regulatory, reporting, and compliance requirements and properly accounted for, in approved asset registers, where required by the Asset Management Procedure.
5. All financial transactions must be properly documented and accurately recorded in a timely manner and in accordance with BNC policies, procedures, and business processes. All members of BNC community are to act in an ethical and honest manner in all aspects of procurement and financial expenditure involving BNC funds.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Delegation of Authority Policy
- Facilities Management Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Asset Management Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Travel Policy
- Worker Screening Policy
- Budget Development and Management Policy
- Debt Recovery Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Audit Policy
- Programs and Charges Policy
- Purchasing and Procurement Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Auspice Policy
- Event management policy
- Marketing and Communications Policy
- Organisation Structure Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Program Fees and Charges Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Annual Budget
- Australian Accounting Standards
- BNC documents and financial records

- Investment Strategy
- Expense Authorisation and Reimbursement Form DRF19
- Daily Banking Form DRF20
- Receipt Declaration Form DRF21

### **6.3.1 Financial Management Procedures**

The CoM approves the annual budget, setting the parameters for annual expenditure. All expenditure must be approved by the appropriate delegated person or EO as per the Delegation of Authority Policy.

The EO is responsible for the oversight of bank reconciliation, accounts receivable, and accounts payable, which are managed by the Bookkeeper.

New financial systems must be authorised by the CoM and appropriate procedures developed prior to implementation. The CoM will only consider using a new financial system once a reasonable understanding of its risks and benefits are gained and provided the organisation has the necessary procedures and expertise to manage it.

Financial records will be kept according to the Australian Accounting Standards, and will be maintained in the following manner:

- Transactions will be recorded electronically using accounting software approved by the CoM.
- Electronic entry of transactions will be done by the Bookkeeper, EO and Treasurer.
- Accounts are reconciled monthly by the Bookkeeper.
- The Chart of Accounts will be managed by the Bookkeeper in conjunction with EO and the Treasurer.
- Where necessary, hard copy primary records will be maintained by the Bookkeeper.
- Financial records will be archived as per the Chart of Delegations DRM3..
- All accounts will be dealt with promptly and within specified time frames.

BNC has the following systems and procedures to process financial transactions (sales, purchases, receipts, and payments) made using common payment / receipt methods.

#### **6.3.1.1 Cash and Cheque Procedures**

Authorised office staff process all incoming payments from customers made by cash, EFTPOS, or credit card by receipting and recording income in the Point of Sale System.

The Bookkeeper records all monies received in the General Ledger. Staff receipting money will be trained in receiving and recording cash, cheque, and EFTPOS payments.

## **EFTPOS**

BNC uses an Electronic Funds Transfer at Point Of Sale (EFTPOS) machine as a method of payment for goods and services. This enables BNC to use an electronic device to transfer funds from a customer's bank account to the BNC bank account.

Office Staff will ensure:

- all payments to BNC received by payment card are processed on the EFTPOS machine in accordance with the invoicing and cash receipting procedures.
- procedures are in place for all EFTPOS machines to ensure they are not tampered with.
- machines are stored securely when not in use (e.g. when unattended or overnight).
- if payments are made when the card is present (i.e. usually because the cardholder is present in person), process the payment directly on an EFTPOS machine, and not via any other mechanism.
- if payments are made via telephone without the physical card, key the cardholder data received (expiry date and CCV) directly into the EFTPOS machine and do not write it down. If the data is written down, or captured in any form of voice recording, destroy or delete it without delay when the transaction is processed.
- physical access to the EFTPOS machine must be restricted to staff authorised to use the machine.
- BNC does not accept or transmit payment details via an email, an instant message, a fax on a multifunction device, or a VoIP fax, as these forms of transmission are not secure.
- the EFTPOS machine is settled daily
- all EFTPOS transactions are recorded on the Daily Banking Form DRF20 the settlement slip and other paperwork is attached to this form and emailed to the Bookkeeper
- All EFTPOS refunds must be approved by the EO or a delegated staff member.

## **Cheques**

- All Personal Cheques must be approved by the EO before they are accepted as payment for goods or services.
- Business Cheques are receipted by the office staff or by the Bookkeeper.
- All cheques are processed by the Bookkeeper as a standard procedure.
- All BNC cheques must be signed by two authorised signatories.

When dishonoured cheques become apparent:

- The Bookkeeper will contact the customer to advise the cheque has been dishonoured and request the bill be settled by electronic funds transfer or credit card.
- If no contact can be made or replacement funds are not received, the EO will be notified and will review the next step as per the Debt Recovery Policy.

## **Cash and Petty Cash**

BNC keeps all cash received for payment of goods and services in a Cash Drawer, including Petty Cash reimbursements for small cash purchases.

Staff requiring cash from the Cash Drawer for any reason must complete the Expense Authorisation and Reimbursement Form DRF19, have it authorised by the EO and then request a delegated office staff member to provide them with the cash.

Under no circumstances are unauthorised staff to take money from the Cash Drawer. Only delegated office staff, the Bookkeeper and EO are permitted to access the cash in the Cash Drawer. Any staff member taking money from the Cash Drawer without the correct authorisation may be subject to disciplinary actions, including, in the extreme circumstance, dismissal.

The Cash Drawer:

- Is kept in a secure location in the main BNC office.
- Has a cash float as per the Chart of Delegations DRM3, which maybe increased with CoM approval.
- Is replenished by the Bookkeeper as needed.
- Can be used for purchases, which must be authorised by the EO or their delegate via the Expense Authorisation and Reimbursement Form DRF19.
- Can be used for staff reimbursements, which are authorised by the EO or their delegate via the Expense Authorisation and Reimbursement Form DRF19.
- Is reconciled daily by a delegated staff member. Any discrepancies in the cash balance are reported to the EO immediately.
- Is reconciled daily and banked weekly, except where the money held exceeds the float plus \$200, in which case banking should be completed on the day.
- Float is banked on the last working day of the calendar year before the Christmas close. The float will be replenished on the first working day of the new calendar year via a BNC Cheque from the EO or Bookkeeper.
- Cash should not under any circumstances be used for:
  - o Salaries or wages.

- o Loans to staff members.
- o Personal expenses.
- o Recurrent expenses.

### **6.3.1.2 Bank Account Procedures**

BNC maintains bank accounts with reputable and ethical financial institutions. The choice of financial institution is made by the CoM. Wherever possible the organisation's banking is to be conducted online.

#### **Opening Bank Accounts**

- A new BNC bank account must have the authorisation of the CoM and be recorded in the minutes of the CoM meeting.
- The EO will organise with the Bank to open the account.
- For each new bank account opened, the financial system must be updated, and the bank account registered by the Bookkeeper.

#### **Bank Account Authorisation**

- For monies withdrawn from any bank account, whether by cheque, EFT or other online payment method, two persons must authorise each payment as per the Delegation of Authority Policy.
- The authorised persons for bank account payments are nominated committee members, the Treasurer, the Bookkeeper, and the EO.
- Each payment made must be supported by an invoice, receipt, or other appropriate documentation and the authorisation must be attached to this documentation prior to payment.

#### **Variations to Bank Account Terms and Conditions**

- Any variations to banking arrangements can be made or varied by the EO.
- The Bookkeeper is responsible for updating the financial system and/or bank account register with the new information.

#### **Closing Bank Accounts**

- Closing a BNC bank account must have the authorisation of the CoM and be recorded in the minutes of the CoM meeting.
- The EO will organise with the Bank to close the account.
- The Bookkeeper will then finalise all transactions, meet the bank's requirements with respect to account closure, and update the financial system and bank account register.



## **Bank Account Transactions**

Office staff will:

- Daily count all monies received
- Deposit all money received in the Transaction Account as per BNC Rules.

The Bookkeeper will:

- Investigate unallocated direct deposits or withdrawals of more than one month to determine the source. Where the source cannot be identified, the deposit or withdrawal will be allocated to a suspense account to keep these funds separate and identifiable.
- Notify the EO of any unauthorised withdrawals as soon as discovered.
- Ensure all expenditure is made in accordance with the current BNC Delegation of Authority Policy.

The EO will:

- Invest excess BNC funds in accordance with the CoM developed BNC Investment Strategy designed to maximise interest revenue. This may include term deposits and shares.
- Ensure funds are transferred between the Transaction Account and the Investment Accounts to meet financial requirements as they arise while also maximising interest revenue.
- Receive delegation to transfer these funds and ensure details are recorded in the finance papers at the CoM Meeting.

## **Online Banking**

- The EO, Treasurer and the Bookkeeper are the only personnel permitted to complete Online Banking.
- Invoices for payment must be approved by the EO, or authorised staff member, in writing prior to any payment transaction.
- The Bookkeeper can only complete payment transactions once the EO, or authorised staff member, has approved the invoice.
- Bank transfers are monitored by the Bookkeeper. The Bookkeeper will reconcile and receipt all bank transfers.

### **6.3.1.3 Accounts Receivable and Payable Procedures**

#### **Accounts Receivable**

Some forms of BNC income arise from the sale of goods or services by BNC to a third party (e.g. surplus assets, student enrolments, social enterprise sales, etc.).

The Bookkeeper will manage all accounts receivable and:

- send out invoices on a monthly basis.
- process payments received and bank deposits.
- maintain documentation.

The EO will ensure all accounts receivable documentation, including funding contracts and grant agreements, is provided to the Bookkeeper.

When engaging with a customer, supporting documentation must be provided to the Bookkeeper in order to create an invoice to bill a customer. Each customer must have their own customer account in the system through which their invoices will be processed.

Goods and services must not be provided to previous BNC customers where there is doubt regarding their payment capacity.

A BNC Invoice must be created for all transactions involving the sale of BNC goods or services including when a payment is received in advance, paid directly to a BNC staff member on behalf of BNC or in accordance with a contractual undertaking or other mutual agreement. Point of sale transactions managed through another process are exempt from this.

BNC's payment terms are 7days, the EO can consider a request from a customer for alternative payment terms.

To ensure correct invoicing, the staff member engaging with the customer, must have:

- Written confirmation of what has been agreed between parties e.g. terms of agreement / service contract including total amount and GST treatment.
- Customers' correct address (displayed on a letter, email or written communication).
- Department / school / area if applicable.
- Confirmation of Australian Business Number (ABN).
- Email address of recipient of bill or contact details of Accounts Payable Department.

A credit note is created for the purpose of making an adjustment to an existing invoice e.g. when an error has been made which differs from the agreement in place or customer expectation, or when further detail like a purchase order number is required to be placed on the invoice.

The EO must approve all credit notes. The staff member requesting a credit note must ensure the EO and Bookkeeper have all the relevant paperwork to support the credit note

and the new invoice is attached. Credit notes must not be created when a debt is no longer recoverable and needs to be written off.

The EO and Bookkeeper are responsible for debt recovery for BNC as per the Debt Recovery Policy.

### **Accounts payable**

The Bookkeeper will manage all accounts payable and:

- ensure all purchases have the necessary approval before processing.
- process payments to creditors either by cheque or electronic funds transfer (EFT).
- issue a remittance advice to a creditor when an EFT payment is made.

As per the Financial Management Policy, payment authorisation requires two signatures from authorised BNC personnel to be completed, unless a financial delegation has been made for use of a BNC debit card, as per the Delegation of Authority Policy. The EO must be one of the authorising signatures for the payment.

For any payment completed on behalf of BNC a receipt or invoice must be provided to the Bookkeeper for reconciliation and/or reimbursement within one month of completing the transaction. If a receipt or tax invoice is missing the person responsible for the transaction should:

- Request a replacement from the vendor.
- OR, if the above is not possible, complete a Receipt Declaration Form DRF21.

Repeated instances of receipts being lost or not received will be viewed as failure to comply with this policy, which may lead to loss of financial delegation or permission, and potentially no BNC reimbursement.

#### **6.3.1.4 Debit Card Procedures**

BNC uses Debit Cards for purchasing goods and services. The CoM is responsible to approve the number of debit cards and the maximum debit card limit.

- Debit Cards are held in the name of the authorised staff member.
- A new card holder will return a signed copy of this policy to the EO (or Chair, as appropriate), as acknowledgment they have read and agree to abide by the policy.
- From time to time, BNC staff may be delegated to use a BNC Debit Card not in their name. When this occurs, the staff member must complete an Expense Authorisation and Reimbursement Form DRF19 located in the main BNC office.
- No personal expenditure is permitted on a BNC Debit Card.
- The card holder must not obtain cash advances.

- The card holder must ensure the security of their Debit Card at all times. A card holder will, at all times, be held accountable for any and all transactions incurred on their Debit Card unless they have notified the Bank lost/stolen Card area and the EO if the card is lost or stolen.
- The card holder must seek authorisation from the EO, or in the case of the EO the Chair, to complete expenditure beyond the amount delegated by the CoM.

### **6.3.1.5 Reimbursement Procedures**

The BNC Debit Card is the preferred method of payment by staff for BNC purchases. Where staff require reimbursement for expenses incurred on behalf of BNC they must submit to the EO an Expense Authorisation and Reimbursement Form DRF19.

- Staff are reimbursed when spending personal money to purchase authorised goods or services for reasonable and lawful BNC purposes.
- Reimbursement for use of private motor vehicles by staff on BNC business must be claimed as a Motor Vehicle Allowance, refer to the Travel Policy.
- Amounts under \$100 will be reimbursed in cash, larger amounts will be reimbursed by the Bookkeeper via Direct Debit to the staff member's bank account when payroll is processed each fortnight.
- Staff should gain authorisation from the EO, or their delegate, prior to completing a transaction which requires reimbursement.
- BNC recognises authorisation is not always possible, however failure to seek authorisation may result in the claim being declined.
- Where staff are expected to claim significant reimbursements, for instance, on meal allowances whilst away for training purposes, a cash advance may be authorised.
- BNC will not reimburse payment for:
  - o Expenses claimed by an employee as a tax deduction, such as subscription to a professional journal or laundering uniforms.
  - o Expenses normally recoverable from a third party.
  - o Expenses not incurred for business purposes.
  - o Traffic fines and penalties.

Reimbursement for expenses incurred on behalf of BNC by people who are not staff may only be reimbursed by way of an invoice to BNC.

## 6.4 Fraud

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### Policy Declaration

The Committee or Management (CoM) has ultimate responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud and is responsible for ensuring appropriate and effective internal and external control systems are in place. This policy ensures Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) internal and external controls are in place to prevent fraud.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to any irregularity, or suspected irregularity, involving any person including CoM members, volunteers, employees, BNC users, consultants, vendors, contractors, outside agencies doing business with employees of such agencies, and/or any other parties with a business relationship with BNC. We all share in the responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud in the organisation.

#### **Objectives:**

The BNC fraud policy is established to facilitate the development of controls to aid in the detection and prevention of fraud against BNC. It is the intent of BNC to promote consistent organisational behaviour by providing guidelines and assigning responsibility for the development of controls and conduct of investigations. Any investigative activity required will be conducted without regard to the suspected wrongdoer's length of service, position/title, or relationship to BNC.

Fraud is defined as the intentional, false representation or concealment of a material fact for the purpose of inducing another to act upon their injury.

The CoM is responsible for the detection and prevention of fraud, misappropriations, and other irregularities. The CoM, Executive Officer (EO), and Bookkeeper will be familiar with the types of improprieties which might occur within their area of responsibility and be alert for any indication of irregularity.

Actions consisting of fraud, including the terms defalcation, misappropriation, and other fiscal irregularities refer to, but are not limited to:

- Any dishonest or fraudulent act,
- Misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies, or other assets,
- Impropriety in the handling or reporting of money or financial transactions,
- Falsifying timesheets or travel claims by not working actual hours submitted, not working rostered hours or claiming travel not undertaken.
- Profiteering as a result of insider knowledge of BNC activities.
- Disclosing confidential and proprietary information to outside parties.
- Disclosing to someone else securities, activities, engaged in or contemplated by BNC.
- Accepting or seeking anything of material value from contractors, vendors, or persons providing services/materials to BNC.
- Destruction, removal, or inappropriate use of records, furniture, fixtures, and equipment.
- Any similar or related irregularity.

Irregularities concerning an employee's moral, ethical, or behavioural conduct should be resolved by the EO. Fraud by any staff member shall constitute grounds for dismissal, and if deemed appropriate may lead to criminal or civil proceedings.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Financial Management Policy
- Audit Policy
- Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Policy
- COM Recruitment and Appointment Policy
- Disciplinary and Performance Management Policy
- Facility Management Policy
- Asset Management Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Worker Screening Policy
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Induction Policy
- Feedback Policy
- Purchasing and Procurement Policy
- CoM Resignation and Removal Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Incident Report Form DRF7
- Feedback Form DRF5
- Risk Register DRR7

**6.4.1 Fraud Procedures**

The CoM shall adopt finance strategies and risk management strategies (detailed in the BNC Risk Register DRR7) designed to encourage fraud prevention including:

- Monthly reconciliation of all bank accounts and other accounts.
- Presentation of financial reports to CoM at every meeting, including the provision of bank statements.
- Surprise internal audits.
- Conducting an annual external audit.
- Appropriate procedure for accountable sign off for electronic or cheque payments.
- Implementing and monitoring processes for secure cash handling and reconciliation.
- Maintaining control over access to BNC resources, such as technology, equipment, and stationery.
- Ensuring keys are managed and stored in an appropriate manner.
- Ensuring the building is never left unlocked without staff members on site.
- Protection and regular updating of access codes to the building and any code protected secure areas (including online spaces).

The EO will ensure there are mechanisms in place within their area of control to:

- Assess the risk of Fraud, including an assessment criterion on the Risk Register DRR7, for business management and project management risk areas.
- Educate staff about fraud prevention and detection, with Fraud Prevention training offered as needed.
- Facilitate the reporting of suspected fraudulent activities.

Recruitment strategies for CoM and Staff shall incorporate fraud prevention via:

- Ensuring applicants undergo Criminal Records Checks
- Contacting previous employers and referees.
- Inclusion of fraud prevention and detection issues in relevant development and induction activities.

## **Confidentiality**

Any irregularity detected or suspected must be reported immediately to the EO, or if the EO is suspected of being involved in the fraud, the CoM Chair, who coordinates all investigations both internal and external. The complainant may remain anonymous. The EO will treat all information received confidentially. Any person who suspects dishonest or fraudulent activity should not attempt to personally conduct investigations or interviews/interrogations related to any suspected fraudulent act.

Investigation results will not be disclosed or discussed with anyone other than those who have a legitimate need to know. This is important in order to avoid damaging the reputation of persons suspected but subsequently found innocent of wrongful conduct and to protect BNC from potential civil liability.

## **Fraud Investigation**

The EO, with the CoM Chair, has the primary responsibility for the investigation of all suspected fraudulent acts as defined in the policy. If the investigation substantiates the occurrence of fraudulent activities, the EO will issue reports to the CoM. Decisions to prosecute or refer the examination results to the appropriate law enforcement and/or regulatory agencies for independent investigation will be made in conjunction with the CoM, as will final decisions on disposition of the case.

The Investigator, whether the EO, CoM Chair or an external investigator will have:

- Free and unrestricted access to all BNC records and premises, whether owned or rented.
- The authority to examine, copy, and/or remove all or any portion of the contents of files, desks, cabinets, and other storage facilities on the premises without prior knowledge or consent of any individual who might use or have custody of any such items or facilities when it is within the scope of their investigation.

Great care must be taken in the investigation of suspected improprieties or irregularities to avoid mistaken accusations or alerting suspected individuals an investigation is under way.

All inquiries concerning the activity under investigation from the suspected individual, their attorney or representative, or any other inquirer should be directed to the CoM Chair. No information concerning the status of an investigation will be given out. The proper response to any inquiries is: "I am not at liberty to discuss this matter." Under no circumstances should any reference be made to "the allegation," "the crime," "the fraud," "the forgery," "the misappropriation," or any other specific reference.

The reporting individual should be informed of the following:



- Do not contact the suspected individual in an effort to determine facts or demand restitution.
- Do not discuss the case, facts, suspicions, or allegations with anyone unless specifically asked to do so by the CoM Chair.

Where an investigation of fraud has been established the matter will be referred to police. Any action taken by police will be pursued independently of any employment-related investigation by BNC.

If an investigation results in a recommendation to terminate an individual, the recommendation will be reviewed for approval by the CoM Chair, if necessary, by outside counsel, before any such action is taken. The decision to terminate a staff member is made by the BNC EO and CoM Chair.

## 6.5 Program Fees and Charges

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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) establishes fees and charges in accordance with current legislation, funding agreements, and regulations. BNC provides a range of service activities and operates a social enterprise. Whilst many BNC activities are free, BNC endeavours to recover costs from the sale of goods and services to BNC users where possible. This policy outlines the basis on which BNC collects fees from students, provides services to partners, and operates its community and social enterprise activities.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to BNC employees whose responsibility it is to know BNC program fees and charges and the processes for administering these fees, including refunds of fees.

#### **Objectives:**

The Executive Officer (EO) is responsible for setting program fees and charges, reviewing them as part of the annual budget development process. Throughout the year, the EO will monitor the fees and make adjustments to ensure compliance with this policy. The EO will notify the CoM of any changes to program fees made after the budget is adopted. The CoM authorises program fees and charges when it adopts the annual budget.

Fees and Charges are categorised as:

- Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) and Training fees.
- Provision of community goods and services eg photocopying; laminating.
- Project activities eg social enterprise catering, meals, produce sales.
- Fee for Service activities eg project staff on secondment, third party accredited training, community education, BNC third party project delivery partnerships.

#### **Adult, Community and Further Education and Training**

BNC delivers ACFE training to students complete an enrolment form before undertaking a course. Unless otherwise nominated on the enrolment form and agreed to by the third party, the student is liable for payment of the nominated course fee before the course commences. Enrolment places are not confirmed until payment is received.

In circumstances where a third party is paying the fee, the third party must previously have nominated they agree to incur the expense, preferably via a purchase order, signing the enrolment form, or other written authority. It is the responsibility of the student to gain the financial support of the third party. In the absence of a signed authority from the employer, the student will be invoiced.

BNC can set ACFE course fees and charge for materials, equipment and administration costs noting there is an ACFE maximum fee limit regulated by the funding body which is located in the Preaccredited Guidelines on the Learn Local website.

BNC acknowledges, in certain circumstances, a participant may seek full or partial refund of fees paid. We will ensure refund applications are handled in a timely manner and in accordance with the Financial Management Policy.

If BNC cancels a course after a student has paid, we will offer the student:

- Deferral to a later course.
- A full refund of the course fee.

**Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Delegation of Authority Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Budget Development and Management Policy
- Grievance Resolution Policy
- Debt Recovery Policy
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Auspice Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy

**Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Annual Budget
- Enrolment Form
- Schedule of Fees

### **6.5.1 Program Fees and Charges Procedures**

The EO uses informed discretion in setting the price of goods or services, bearing in mind the overarching responsibility to ensure BNC's resources are appropriately applied. To ensure BNC improves customer relations and maintains a reputation as a business which deals fairly with customers, competitors and suppliers alike BNC complies with the Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012.

When setting a fee or charge, consideration is given to:

- if the goods or services attract GST.
- direct costs of the goods and services (materials and staff time).
- indirect costs (BNC overheads such as utility costs and rent).
- sound commercial principles, including market forces.
- factors supporting a price less than the cost of producing the goods or services, including:
  - o whether the person accessing the goods or services does not have the capacity to pay.
  - o whether the transaction is non-routine and immaterial in amount.
  - o whether the ongoing administrative costs of charging and revenue collection exceed the expected revenue benefits.
- being clear and fair, meaning there is a healthy balance between BNC and the consumer.
- providing itemised receipts for all cash payments.

We also ensure refunds and exchanges are offered if BNC goods:

- are faulty.
- do not match the product description.
- are unfit for their intended purpose.

#### **6.5.1.2 ACFE and Training Fee Procedure**

##### **Schedule of Course Fees**

- BNC fees are payable by a student as set out in a Schedule of Fees which is reviewed annually and published online and in relevant publications. The Schedule of Fees will be published prior to the opening of enrolments.
- The administration of fees payable as specified in the Schedule of Fees is the responsibility of the EO who will determine:
  - o the method of advice of fees payable.
  - o the date for payment of fees.

- o the circumstances for waiving or deferring a fee by way of a payment plan, if appropriate.
  - o a student's eligibility for a refund or waiver of the whole or portion of the fees paid.
  - o administrative and miscellaneous charges.
- BNC may set out charges for goods and services for:
  - o equipment or items which become the physical property of the student and are not consumed during the program of study (i.e. 'tools of the trade').
  - o food, transport, and accommodation costs associated with the provision of field trips which form part of the course or program.
- BNC may set student services and amenities fees.
- Students may incur costs associated with their own personal professional studies, including, for example, an accredited training course fee.
- Office staff will determine from the enrolment form how the student will pay for their course.
- The EO has discretion to waive the fee and/or the payment terms where the student would otherwise be prevented from participating.
- Office staff and the Bookkeeper will take cash payments and raise invoices for student enrolment in accordance with the requirements of the Financial Management Policy

## Refunds

The EO or delegated staff member may refund relevant fees to a student in accordance with this policy.

- A student excluded, suspended, or expelled under a BNC policy or procedure is not entitled to a refund (except where any Commonwealth or State legislation or code of practice provides otherwise).
- Fee refunds are not automatic and must be applied for in writing unless BNC cancels the class.
- Approved fee refunds are only processed after the fees have been cleared through the bank account.
- Where the student ceases training of their own volition prior to the midway point of the program (defined as midway through unit completion, or midway through time period of course, whichever is the earlier), the maximum fee refund will be 50% of the total fee payment.
- Where the student ceases training of their own volition after the midway point of the program as defined above, no refund is payable.

- Actual attendance in class by the student will not be considered when assessing a refund request.
- Refunds will not be issued after course commencement except in exceptional circumstances or where funding guidelines stipulate this requirement.
- In exceptional circumstances a participant may apply in writing for special consideration of a refund for the following:
  - o bereavement
  - o hospitalisation and/or unexpectedly having to assume carer's responsibilities.
- BNC will not issue refunds for:
  - o a change in working hours.
  - o inconvenient travel.
  - o moving interstate.
  - o job change.
  - o change of career direction or change of mind.

## **Grievances**

A student may seek a review of a decision to refuse a refund of student fees in whole or part under the BNC Grievance Resolution Policy.

## 6.6 Debt Recovery

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|

### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) will treat debtors and third parties with fairness, respect, and courtesy. We will not harass or coerce them, treat them unconscionably, or mislead them about the nature of their debt, their legal obligations, or any possible outcomes if the debt is not paid. BNC will not pursue a person for a debt unless we have reasonable grounds for believing the person is liable for the debt. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the efficient and effective recovery of outstanding debts while maintaining a quality customer service.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to all BNC debtors for outstanding charges and other accounts receivable owed to BNC, the Committee of Management (CoM), Executive Officer (EO), Bookkeeper and the employees responsible for managing BNC debtors. BNC may, at its sole discretion, on a case by case basis, alter the way the process outlined in this Policy is conducted to ensure it suits the particular circumstances of the outstanding debt.

#### **Objectives:**

BNC clients experience high levels of socioeconomic disadvantage so BNC will endeavour to give clients access to our goods and services at fair and reasonable prices. We will commence a debt recovery escalation process with a friendly conversation and reminder with our debtors, and if required only then follow through to a letter of demand and bad debt collection for an outstanding payment.

The key objective of the Debt Recovery Policy is to:

- ensure a fair, consistent and accountable approach to BNC's debt management and collection practices.
- recognise the importance debt recovery has on the capacity of BNC to deliver services.
- maximise the collection of outstanding debts.

- establish timelines of communications and debt collection itself to deliver consistency of service.
- maximise the cost effectiveness of collection processes.

The EO is responsible for overseeing Debtor Management. Early intervention is a primary goal with outstanding debts reviewed on a regular basis by the Bookkeeper, EO, and Treasurer. Decisions will be made as to the most appropriate debt recovery action after this review. This can include:

- Issue of regular reminders.
- Personal contact with the debtor.
- Referral of matter to debt recovery agents.

Account statements and/or copies of outstanding invoices are to be sent to all debtors on a monthly basis.

A clear collection procedure is to be used for the timely and efficient administration of debtors. An invoice will be issued as soon as practicable in accordance with contract conditions or other arrangements.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Delegation of Authority Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Program Fees and Charges Policy
- Budget Development and Management Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

#### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Schedule of Fess

### **6.6.1 Debt Recovery Procedures**

The following procedures will be followed to recover outstanding amounts:

- Debts due and payable. Normal payment terms will be 7 days from the invoice date
- Debts 7 days and over. If a debt is unpaid at month end and still outstanding after 30 days, another copy of the invoice will be sent..



- Debts 60 Days or over. If the reminder invoice is unsuccessful and the debt is still outstanding after 60 days, the EO will follow up the invoice to determine why the payment has not been received. The EO will resend the invoice to either the original contact or a new one if identified in the EO review.
- Debts 90 Days or over. If the invoice remains unpaid after 90 days, the EO will issue a debt collection warning letter with the invoice.

### **Debt Collection Agency**

If the final letter does not produce settlement, the debt will be referred to the Debt Collection Agency as appointed by the EO for recovery action. Prior to this action, it should be determined whether it is uneconomic to finalise recovery action due to the relatively small value of the debt. If so, the EO will recommend to the Treasurer the debt should be written off.

### **Dispute Settlement**

Where payment of an outstanding debt is being disputed by a debtor, the EO will consult with the Treasurer and may then attempt to mediate a solution or alternatively proceed to recommend write-off of the debt. The EO may accept a reasonable request for the payment of an outstanding amount by instalments, provided a reasonable progress payment is made promptly within a specified date.

Any instalment repayment program is to be documented in writing and agreed by both the debtor and the EO. An explicit term of any such arrangement is the failure by the debtor to pay any instalment on or before the due date will render the full amount of the debt then outstanding, immediately due and payable.

### **Writing Off Debts**

Before a debt may be regarded as irrecoverable, one of the following conditions must be satisfied:

- The debtor cannot be located.
- It is uneconomic to finalise recovery action due to the relatively small value of the debt.
- The medical, financial, or domestic circumstances of a particular debtor at the time does not warrant the taking of recovery action or further recovery action.
- Legal proceedings through the courts have proved, or on legal advice or advice from Debt Collection Agency, would prove unsuccessful.

When, in the opinion of the EO, a debt is considered irrecoverable, the matter is to be referred to the Treasurer. The Treasurer will make a recommendation to the CoM at the

next CoM Meeting to write off the debt at the end of financial year. This motion will be recorded in the minutes of the CoM Meeting and the Auditor advised.

When a debt has been written off, the EO will notify the Bookkeeper to make all necessary entries in the accounting system. Details of written off debts are to be held on file.

On no account will a debtor be informed an outstanding debt has been written off. If the circumstances of a debtor change, then further action to recover the debt should be taken if it is considered financially viable to do so.

## 6.7 Purchasing and Procurement

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
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### Policy Declaration

Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) requires the procurement of goods and services to support activities and deliver services to the BNC community. The purpose of this policy is to ensure all procurement decisions and consequential processes must be made in accordance with BNC's Policies and Procedures regardless of the funding for the procurement.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to any person with authority to spend or approve expenditure of BNC funds through purchasing or procurement activities. It is important all individuals (collectively known as Staff for this policy), who commit to expenditure, are aware of the obligations under this Policy.

#### **Objectives:**

Effective internal control procedures must be implemented and maintained by BNC to ensure all purchasing and procurement activities of BNC are authorised in accordance with the delegated authorities and business requirements within a documented process.

The Executive Officer (EO) is responsible for BNC purchasing and procurement as per the Delegation of Authority Policy.

A purchase can only be approved and committed following approval of funds expenditure from the appropriate delegate.

Goods and services must only be purchased to support a BNC activity, and not for the benefit of individual staff members or external entities.

When purchasing items BNC will ensure goods and services:

- are obtained expeditiously and economically, considering compatibility with existing equipment and facilities and the ongoing asset maintenance and storage requirements.
- represent good value for BNC and are in keeping with BNC purpose.

- comply with any regulatory or other obligations.
- are able to be funded.
- are obtained by a process treating suppliers equitably and fairly and provides a clear audit trail.
- are purchased from preferred suppliers and local businesses where possible.

Procurement of goods and services should be through a Purchase Order or on a BNC Debit Card, where applicable.

Examples of goods and/or services items include:

- the supply of a specified quantity of tangible materials (e.g. milk, stationery, consumables) at a set time or at periodic intervals.
- the supply of a less tangible commodity or service, such as advertising placement.
- the maintenance of property and equipment.
- the leasing of equipment.
- assets as defined in the Asset Management Policy.

The only exceptions are:

- Goods which are more efficiently acquired through petty cash (maximum value of \$100 excluding GST) as per petty cash procedures.
- Goods or services initially purchased at a staff member's own expense, and for which reimbursement is sought as per reimbursement procedures.
- Direct invoice procedures have been put in place as part of lease, MOU, or contract arrangements (energy insurance, advertising and other services).
- Legal, Professional and Human Resource services.
- Internal 'trading', i.e. where goods and services are acquired from within BNC and payments are transferred between one area of BNC as per journal procedures.

This policy applies to payments which are not strictly, for goods and services provided by third parties as BNC requires an invoice in order to generate a payment to them for system, regulatory and audit reasons. These items include:

- a cost contribution by BNC to a partner organisation in respect of a shared endeavour
- a donation by BNC to a third party.

Payments to contractors and consultants can only be made if they are a bona fide contractor and no Superannuation or Payroll Tax obligations would arise as a result of the payment, unless the contractor is an ACFE tutor or other regulatory requirements exist to do so.

## **Preferred Suppliers**

BNC believes forced labour has no place in our operations or supply chains. BNC takes all reasonable steps to ensure modern slavery is not occurring in our supply chains by maintaining a list of preferred approved suppliers.

The EO will maintain a list of preferred suppliers, who:

- Provide best value for money based on price, reliability, transaction costs, risk and ongoing support.
- Where possible are local businesses, or businesses who have local content, in order to support the Ballarat 'Buy Local' campaign.

Nothing in this policy prevents the EO or other delegated staff from negotiating with a supplier to obtain a more favourable price or service for a purchase.

### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Delegation of Authority Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Asset Management Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Audit Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
- Budget Development and Management Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Appropriate Use of Technology Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Motor Vehicle Policy
- Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Policy

### **Related Documents:**

- BNC Policy and Procedure Manual Definitions
- Annual Budget
- Preferred Supplier List

## **6.7.1 Purchasing and Procurement Procedures**

When purchasing an item for BNC, an individual will:

1. Determine how much money is available to purchase the item.

Project staff will use their project budget to determine their purchase funding. Staff without an expenditure delegation authority must have EO approval for their purchase prior to making the purchase. Under no circumstances are staff to split a purchase into two or more purchases to avoid a Delegation of Authority expenditure threshold.

2. Identify the preferred supplier.

When there is no preferred supplier, or there is a good reason not to use the preferred supplier, staff must seek an exemption from the EO.

3. Negotiate with the supplier to evaluate the purchase with the following principles:

- Value for money: This goes to fitness for purpose, price and quality, and includes whole-of-life costs such as installation, operation, maintenance, and disposal.
- Supplier reputation and reliability: This is important for managing risk, and may be important for matters such as quality, delivery, and fixing faulty products. Suppliers must be able to supply the goods/services within the required timelines.
- Warranties: What type of warranties are offered? Does the warranty extend for a reasonable period beyond the delivery time?
- Support and maintenance: What type of ongoing support and/or maintenance is offered, at what cost, and over what period?
- Compliance: Where possible, suppliers must be committed to ethical trading principles, including respecting human rights and be taking meaningful action to address the global human rights issue of modern slavery.

4. Obtain a single documented price for the goods or service required.

Suppliers must provide valid tax invoices which comply with the Australian Tax Office (ATO) requirements. These must have a description of the items and may be a quote, copy of a catalogue, internet price, or past receipt or invoice.

5. Determine how the purchase will be made.

Confirm the above steps have been completed before making the purchase either by Debit Card, Credit Card, Petty Cash or Invoice.

6. Where a Purchase Order is required, create a Purchase Order for the supplier when purchasing with an Invoice. Some suppliers will require a Purchase Order before they can transact with BNC, If Staff are required to create a purchase order for the

purchase of goods and services, apart from goods and services exempt in this policy. Staff will:

- Complete the Purchase Order.
- Provide the EO with a copy of the Purchase Order and all relevant documents
- The EO will approve the purchase, when a staff member does not have an Expenditure Delegation

7. Receive and check goods and service ordered.

Once goods and services are received the staff member will confirm the quantity, quality, condition, and compliance with order specification. If the order has not been completed as expected, the staff member will notify the supplier and work with them to complete the order. The staff member will advise the EO order is not complete.

8. Partially received goods and services.

The staff member will follow up the supplier regarding undelivered or partially delivered goods and services. If goods are returned, the staff member will ensure there is a receipt or other evidence the items have been returned. If the goods and services have been paid for a credit or credit note must be received. The staff member must inform the EO of any changes to the original order.

9. Paying supplier invoices.

Once the staff member has confirmed the goods and services are received as ordered they refer the invoice to the EO who will authorise the Bookkeeper to pay. The Bookkeeper must receive a copy of any credit or credit note received.

## 6.8 Contracts, Agreements and MOUs

|                |            |               |                   |             |                  |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Version number | <b>3.1</b> | Date Ratified | <b>01/11/2025</b> | Review Date | <b>June 2027</b> |
|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|

### Policy Declaration

Contracts, agreements, and memoranda of understanding (MOUs) known as ‘business documents’ are vital instruments in the daily conduct of business, partnerships, and collaborations for Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC). Business documents serve to outline the mutual understanding, rights, obligations, and expectations of all parties involved. A clearly articulated policy on the creation, negotiation, execution, and management of these documents is essential to ensure legal compliance, transparency, and the successful achievement of BNC objectives.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure all contracts, agreements, and MOUs are created, reviewed, and executed in accordance with applicable laws and BNC best practices.
- Mitigate legal, financial, and reputational risks through structured processes.
- Promote transparency, accountability, and consistency in dealing with third parties.
- Provide a clear framework for the storage, renewal, amendment, and termination of contractual documents.

### Policy Description

#### **Application:**

This policy applies to any person with authority to initiate, negotiate, draft, review, approve, execute and store business documents on behalf of BNC.

#### **Objectives:**

A comprehensive policy for contracts, agreements, and MOUs fosters legal compliance, risk mitigation, and organisational efficiency. By following the principles and procedures outlined in this document, all parties can engage in clear, productive, and mutually beneficial relationships.

A business document can be a:

- **Contract:** A legally binding agreement between two or more parties that creates enforceable rights and obligations. Contracts may be written, oral, or implied by conduct, though written contracts are preferred for clarity and enforceability.



- **Agreement:** A mutual understanding between two or more parties regarding their relative rights and obligations. All contracts are agreements, but not all agreements are contracts; only those agreements that are legally enforceable qualify as contracts.
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** A formal, but non-binding, document that outlines the broad terms of a mutual understanding or partnership between two or more parties. MOUs are commonly used to establish the intent to cooperate or collaborate before a formal contract is executed. MOUs are often used as a precursor to formal contracts, allowing parties to outline shared intentions, goals, and areas of cooperation. While generally non-binding, MOUs may contain certain binding clauses (e.g., confidentiality, intellectual property, or dispute resolution).

BNC's guiding principles for managing business documents are:

- **Legality:** All contractual documents must comply with relevant local, national, and international laws and regulations.
- **Clarity:** Terms and conditions must be clearly worded to avoid ambiguity and misinterpretation.
- **Authority:** Only designated individuals may authorise, sign, or amend contractual documents on behalf of the organisation.
- **Due Diligence:** Parties must conduct appropriate due diligence on potential partners before entering into any contractual relationship.
- **Risk Management:** All agreements should be reviewed for legal compliance, financial liabilities and costs, reputational and stakeholder risks and operational processes and resources risks by competent personnel or legal counsel. Risk mitigation measures may involve insurance, indemnity clauses, limitation of liability, and other protective provisions.
- **Record Keeping:** Contracts, agreements, and MOUs must be securely stored and easily retrievable for future reference or audit purposes.
- **Training:** BNC will provide regular training and resources to all relevant personnel on contract management, legal compliance, and best practices for agreements and MOUs. This ensures that employees remain informed and capable of managing contractual relationships effectively.

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Delegation of Authority Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Asset Management Policy

- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Audit Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Budget Development and Management Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Programs, Projects and Activities Policy

### **6.8.1 Contracts, Agreements and MOUs Procedures**

Business documents have the following roles and responsibilities:

- The Initiator is responsible for identifying the need, drafting initial terms, and coordinating with the Executive Officer (EO) who will seek legal advice to ensure compliance with relevant laws and policies where needed.
- The Approvers are authorised individuals, as per the Delegation of Authority Policy, who review and sign off on business documents.
- The EO is the 'Contract Manager' who oversees the ongoing administration, performance tracking, and compliance of contractual documents and ensure secure storage, retrieval, and retention of documents.

The following procedures will be undertaken when working with business documents on behalf of BNC.

#### **INITIATION**

- The need for a contract, agreement, or MOU is identified by a staff member or CoM member and discussed with the EO.
- The EO will identify potential parties and commence initial discussions to establish basic terms and intent.

#### **DRAFTING**

- All contractual documents should be drafted using BNC approved templates where available. BNC CoM members or other qualified individuals / organisations can be asked to assist in drafting new documents.
- Drafts must include the names of the parties, purpose, scope, responsibilities, deliverables, timelines, compensation (if any), dispute resolution mechanisms, confidentiality clauses, and termination conditions. MOUs should clearly specify which provisions, if any, are intended to be legally binding.

- Legal advice should be consulted for non-standard agreements or where there is any uncertainty.

## REVIEW AND APPROVAL

- All business documents must undergo review by the CoM.
- The review should assess compliance with legal requirements, organisational policies, and risk mitigation measures.
- Approval hierarchies are established in the Delegation of Authority Policy based on the value, type, and risk level of the agreement.

## EXECUTION

- Only authorised signatories may execute business documents.
- Where required, signatures must be witnessed and/or notarised.
- Copies of the fully executed documents should be exchanged among all parties and stored according to policy.

## STORAGE AND RECORD KEEPING

- Executed documents must be stored in a secure, centralised location (digital contract management system or physical archives).
- Access to contractual documents is restricted to authorised personnel only.
- Retention periods for contracts should align with legal requirements and organisational needs, typically ranging from 5 to 10 years post-termination.

## MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

- The EO is responsible for monitoring obligations, deliverables, milestones, and renewal/termination dates.
- Compliance with contractual terms should be regularly reviewed, and any deviations or breaches must be reported to the CoM and addressed promptly.

## DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- Effective dispute resolution mechanisms should be included within all business documents. Options may include negotiation between parties, mediation by a neutral third party, arbitration as an alternative to litigation and jurisdiction and venue for legal proceedings.
- Early resolution of disputes is encouraged to minimise disruption and preserve business relationships.

## AMENDMENTS AND TERMINATION

- Any changes to contractual documents must be made in writing, reviewed and approved by all relevant parties, and signed by authorised representatives.
- Termination procedures should be clearly defined in the original agreement, outlining notice periods, grounds for termination, and any post-termination obligations.
- Upon termination, a closing process should be conducted to ensure all rights and obligations are settled.

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# Document Register

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Document numbers mentioned in this Manual begin with 'DR (Type) (Number)'

## **F - Forms (Templates)**

- DRF1 - Conflict of Interest Register
- DRF2 - Event Evaluation
- DRF3 - Purchase a New Asset
- DRF4 - Change of Asset Status
- DRF5 - Feedback
- DRF6 - Critical Incident Reporting
- DRF7 - Incident Report
- DRF8 - Volunteer Agreement
- DRF9 - Leave Application
- DRF10 - Purchased Leave
- DRF11 - Application for Nomination to CoM
- DRF12 - CoM Skills Audit
- DRF13 - Flexible Working Agreement Request
- DRF14 - Flexible Working Agreement Response
- DRF15 - Goal Performance Plan (GPP)
- DRF16 - Performance Review
- DRF17 - Working from Home Safe Workplace Assessment
- DRF18 - Travel Reimbursement
- DRF19 - Expense Authorisation and Reimbursement
- DRF20 - Daily Banking
- DRF21 - Receipt Declaration
- DRF22 - Continuous Management Feedback
- DRF23 - Staff Access and Equipment Request
- DRF24 - Policy Acknowledgement

- DRF25 - Auspice
- DRF26 - Employee Details
- DRF27 - Volunteer Expression of Interest
- DRF28 - Code of Ethics and Conduct Acknowledgement
- DRF29 - Driver Declaration
- DRF30 - Image Consent
- DRF31 - Vehicle Incident Report
- DRF32 – Exit Interview
- DRF33 – Vehicle Booking
- DRF34 – Client **Excursion Form**

## **A - Agreements**

- DRA1 - Facilities Hire Agreement
- DRA2 - Equipment Hire Agreement
- DRA3 - Auspice Agreement
- DRA4 – Laptop Loan

## **C - Checklists**

- DRC1 - Event
- DRC2 - First Aid Kit
- DRC3 - Induction
- DRC4 - Working from Home
- DRC5 - Interior Building and Kitchen Inspection
- DRC6 - External Grounds

## **R - Registers**

- DRR1 - Conflicts of Interest
- DRR2 - Gifts
- DRR3 - BNC Training
- DRR4 - Feedback
- DRR5 - Incident
- DRR6 - Asset
- DRR7 – Risk

## **M - Miscellaneous**

- DRM1 - BNC Style Guide
- DRM2 - BNC CoM Charter
- DRM3 - Chart of Delegations
- DRM4 - Pandemic Emergency Management Plan
- DRM5 - Business Continuity Plan
- DRM6 - Emergency Management Plan
- DRM7 - Child Safe Training Action Plan
- DRM8 – Risk Management Plan