

Factsheet

Behaviour Code for Australian Parliamentarians

Every Parliamentarian is required to understand and comply with this Code and the Behaviour Standards. The Code and Standards are enforceable, and a breach could lead to sanctions being imposed.

Respect

- Parliamentarians, as employers and leaders in the community have a leading role to play in fostering a healthy, safe, respectful and inclusive environment where all people feel safe and valued.
- Parliamentarians must treat all those with whom they come into contact in the course of their parliamentary duties and activities with dignity, courtesy, fairness and respect.

Diversity

- Parliamentarians, as employers and leaders in the community, have a role in fostering and respecting diversity in their workplace and to ensure everyone feels safe and welcome to contribute.
- Parliamentarians recognise the importance and value of diverse viewpoints, and that robust debate is conducted with respect for differing views, which are essential for a functioning democracy.

Prohibited behaviour

- Bullying and harassment, sexual harassment or assault, discrimination in all its forms including on the grounds of race, age, sex, sexuality, gender identity, disability, or religion is unacceptable. Such behaviour will not be tolerated, condoned or ignored.

Upholding the Code

- Parliamentarians must incorporate this code in their everyday workplace practice. This is done by:
 - Undertaking any training or professional development as recommended or deemed necessary as an employer and leader within the community.
 - Complying with all workplace policies.
 - Acting on allegations of misconduct made about their staff and to implement recommendations of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Commission (IPSC) in relation to staff misconduct. Failure to do so may be a breach of this Code and sanctions may apply.



What is the Behaviour Code?

In October 2024 the Australian Parliament passed a resolution to endorse a Behaviour Code for Australian Parliamentarians. The Code sets out expectations for how parliamentarians behave towards each other and others they engage with in the course of their work, while recognising the importance of a free exchange of ideas and parliamentary privilege, which is an integral part of our democracy.

All Australian Parliamentarians have a shared responsibility as employers and leaders in the community to ensure that Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces meet the highest standards of integrity, dignity, safety and mutual respect.

The Behaviour Code should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Standards and the *Members of Parliament Staff Act 1984*.

When does the Code apply to me?

Both the Code and the Standards apply to Parliamentarians in the course of their role, including at social events, when travelling for work, and outside of normal business hours. This includes conduct engaged in by any means, including in person, or by electronic communication.

Alcohol is no excuse for breach of this Code or the Standards.

How do I report a breach of the Code?

If you experience or witness unacceptable behaviour you are encouraged, and will be supported, to speak up. Complaints in relation to this Code can be submitted to the IPSC at www.ipsc.gov.au or phone 1800 01 4772.

Complaints made under this Code will be taken seriously and dealt with confidentially and independently. Breaches may be met with sanctions.

You can access independent and confidential support and advice by contacting the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service (PWSS) at www.pwss.gov.au or phone 1800 747 977 (option 1).

What if I, or my staff, are the subject of a complaint to the IPSC?

Parliamentarians have obligations to the IPSC, to:

- Cooperate with investigations and comply with any imposed sanctions.
- Maintain the confidentiality of the complaint process, unless authorised by the IPSC (or otherwise required by law) to share or release information

 Phone 1800 747 977

 Text the PWSS 0487 112 755

www.pwss.gov.au

