



Staff and Volunteer Code of Ethics

(updated 2021)

INTRODUCTION: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH

Staff members and volunteers are committed to make a social contribution through offering their time, skills and energy to Oogachaga through working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, queer and gender-diverse (LGBTQ+) and heterosexual communities served by Oogachaga.

They are strongly encouraged to enhance their skills, remain abreast of new developments in knowledge and practice in their area of volunteering, and grow professionally through continuous educational activities, learning and development.

CODE OF ETHICS

They have a responsibility to the clients whom they serve and to Oogachaga within which the service is provided, to maintain high standards of professional conduct and competence in their work.

1. Confidentiality

- 1.1 Use of information, materials, video and audio recording, photography, client and volunteer data derived during the working relationship with Oogachaga is solely for purposes of service provision within Oogachaga. It is the responsibility of individual staff member or volunteer to ensure full protection of the identity of all clients and volunteers.
- 1.2 Staff members and volunteers must obtain the organisation's, clients' and volunteers' consent before photographing, video-taping, audio-recording or permitting third party observation for any client work.
- 1.3 Client and volunteer records, correspondence, and other documents must be stored or disposed of in ways that maintain confidentiality.
- 1.4 Staff members and volunteers shall not discuss or reveal any information about the clients, volunteers and service operational details through any media channels (including and not limited to newspapers, magazines, newsletters, publications, online forums, online social sites such personal blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and others) without prior approval from the organisation.

2. Client & Volunteer Welfare

- 2.1 Staff members and volunteers should respect the integrity and protect the welfare of the person or group with whom work is undertaken.
- 2.2 They must make reasonable efforts to plan for facilitating care to the client in the event that services are interrupted by factors such as the staff member or volunteer's illness, unavailability, or relocation.

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3. Professional relationship

- 3.1 Staff members and volunteers do not knowingly engage in behaviour that is harassing (sexual in nature or otherwise) or demeaning to persons with whom they interact in their work, based on factors such as the person's age, gender, race, ethnicity, cultural background, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, or socio-economic status.
- 3.2 They should not solicit goods, services, or other non-monetary remuneration from clients, in return for services rendered in order to avoid potential exploitation or distortion of the professional relationship.
- 3.3 They should avoid establishing dual relationships with clients that could impair professional judgement or potentially lead to exploitation of the clients.
- 3.4 Those who are involved in direct client work (such as face-to-face counselling, hotline services, email, WhatsApp or internet counselling or any other outreach programme deemed applicable to this condition) do not engage in sexual intimacies with current clients or former clients that can potentially lead to distortion of the professional relationship.
- 3.5 Those who are social service professionals must abide by their professional body's code of ethics in conjunction with Oogachaga Code of Ethics.

4. Responsibility towards Organization

- 4.1 Staff members and volunteers respect the rights and reputation of Oogachaga with which there is an association. Materials prepared by staff members and volunteers as a part of regular work under specific direction of the organization are the property of the organization.
- 4.2 Such materials released for use or publication must be in accordance with policies of authorisation, assignment of credit, and related matters which have been established by the organization.

5. Responsibility towards oneself

- 5.1 Staff members and volunteers must maintain high level of self care toward themselves while providing services to the organization or the clients.
- 5.2 They are encouraged to seek support from others, including fellow volunteers or staff when necessary.
- 5.3 They are also encouraged to seek counselling through Oogachaga and recognised partners, when necessary.