

# Code of Conduct

## Acknowledgement

*Catholic Education Northern Territory is indebted to Brisbane Catholic Education for permission to use their material as a basis for our work. We gratefully acknowledge their generosity and support.*

## Director's Message

Catholic Education Northern Territory's Code of Conduct links very closely with *Our Vision, Our Mission* and *Our Values*.

Catholic Education has a long and proud tradition of educating Northern Territory communities since the first school was established in 1908. We have a shared responsibility for all staff to be inducted into our history, traditions and ethos.

Catholic Education places an emphasis on the school as an educational community of persons and a genuine community of faith. Catholic schools will make every effort to promote genuine trust and collaboration between staff, parents and the learning community.

Our Code of Conduct has been developed to support all staff who work in Catholic Education Northern Territory. All staff are required to have a common understanding on how our workers will act. It sets the standard of behaviour expected of everyone. By behaving professionally, conscientiously and ethically, we demonstrate our values and ensure that our schools and workplaces are safe, respectful, supportive and cooperative.

Children, young people and adults in our schools and communities need to be safe and protected from harm. The Code of Conduct sets out our expectation of all workers in maintaining high standards of conduct and professional boundaries in their interaction with colleagues, children, young people and the wider community.

This Code comes into force with immediate effect. It is essential that all staff take the time to familiarise themselves with the Code of Conduct.

Paul Greaves

Director Catholic Education N

Document No. & Name:	CEO.OD.1104.2.1 Code of Conduct	Version Number:	1.3	Page 2 of 22
----------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------	-----	--------------

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# Contents

<b>Acknowledgement</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Director's Message</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Contents</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>A. Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
1. Commitment	4
2. Purpose	4
3. Definitions	4
<b>B. CENT Values</b>	<b>5</b>
4. CENT Vision, Mission and Values	5
5. When does this Code apply?	5
6. What happens if there is a breach of the Code?	6
7. Questions	6
<b>C. Employer Duties and Responsibilities</b>	<b>6</b>
8. Compliance with Employment Laws and Regulations	6
<b>D. Workers Duties and Responsibilities</b>	<b>7</b>
9. Compliance with Laws, Standards and CENT Policies, Processes, Procedures and Regulations.	7
10. Professional Responsibilities	7
11. Cultural awareness	8
12. Duty of Care, Work Health & Safety, and Risk Management	8
13. Use of Social Media, Electronic Communications and Phones	9
14. Smoking, Alcohol and other Drugs	10
15. Privacy and Confidentiality	12
16. Managing Conflicts of Interest - Conflict of Interest Declaration	12
17. Use of CENT Resources	13
<b>E. Professional Behaviour of Workers</b>	<b>13</b>
18. Professional Behaviour with Students	13
19. Inappropriate Relationships with Students and Sexual Misconduct	16
20. Student Protection and Safeguarding	17
21. Professional Behaviour with Parents/Carers	18
22. Professional behaviour between workers	19
23. Workplace Bullying, Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Unlawful Discrimination	19
24. Natural Justice, Procedural Fairness and Equity	20
<b>F. General</b>	<b>20</b>
25. Copyright and Intellectual Property	20
26. Secondary Employment	21
27. Records, Notices and Approvals	21
28. Employee Assistance Program	21
29. No Cause of Action	21
<b>References</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Relevant Legislation and Documents</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Version Control</b>	<b>22</b>

## 1.

Document No. & Name:	CEO.OD.1104.2.1 Code of Conduct	Version Number:	1.3	Page 3 of 22
----------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------	-----	--------------

UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED

## A. Introduction

### 1. Commitment

- 1.1. Catholic Education Northern Territory (CENT) is responsible for the administration of systemic Catholic schools and the Catholic Education Office situated in the Catholic Diocese of Darwin. CENT is committed to providing high quality education in accordance with the ethos and values of the Catholic Church.
- 1.2. CENT unequivocally commits to fostering the dignity, rights, self-esteem and integrity of every person.
- 1.3. CENT requires all workers to maintain a high standard of personal and professional conduct and to comply with all CENT's policies and procedures, including this Code of Conduct.

### 2. Purpose

- 2.1. This Code sets out a framework that supports individual behaviour in the workplace in line with *Our Vision, Our Mission* and *Our Values*.
- 2.2. This Code sets out the responsibilities and standards of behaviour required of all workers of CENT, whether they work at CENT schools, CENT Early Learning Centres, Outside School Hours Care services or in the Catholic Education Office.
- 2.3. The Code does not provide an exhaustive list of every aspect of work, but rather provides a broad framework to assist workers, including Principals/Managers, to make appropriate and ethical decisions about their conduct so as to maintain the good reputation of CENT and a harmonious environment.
- 2.4. The Code is part of CENT's commitment to the National Principles for Child-Safe Organizations and the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards and is a supporting document for CENT Safeguarding Risk Management Strategy.

### 3. Definitions

**CENT** means Catholic Education Northern Territory.

**Child Protection Legislation** includes the following:

- Care and Protection of Children Act
- Care and Protection of Children (Screening) Regulations
- Domestic and Family Violence Act
- Education Act
- Teacher Registration (Northern Territory) Act
- Children's Commissioner Act
- Education and Care Services (National Uniform Legislation) Act
- Education and Care Services Regulations

These may be amended and replaced from time to time.

**Code** means this *Catholic Education Northern Territory Code of Conduct*.

**Confidential Information** means all information concerning the affairs of CENT that has been made available to workers during the course of their employment with CENT, but does not include information in the public domain (other than as a result of a breach of any duty of confidentiality).

**Conflict of Interest** is a situation or set of circumstances that has the potential to influence the impartiality of a person because of the possibility of a real or perceived link between the worker's private interests and their professional duties and responsibilities. The private interest can include, but is not limited to, financial gain, desire for professional advancement, potential to treat another person unfairly or more advantageously, or the desire to favourably assist family and friends over others.

Document No. & Name:	CEO.OD.1104.2.1 Code of Conduct	Version Number:	1.3	Page 4 of 22
----------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------	-----	--------------

UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED

**External Agencies** include Catholic Education in other Dioceses, Catholic Diocese of Darwin, church authorities, Religious Institute schools, Government bodies and agencies, Teacher Registration Board of the Northern Territory, universities and the Union.

**Intellectual Property** means all statutory and other proprietary rights in respect of copyright and neighbouring rights, in relation to inventions, patents, registered and unregistered trademarks, registered and unregistered designs, utility models, know-how, trade secrets and rights to require information to be kept confidential and all of the other rights arising from intellectual activity and rights to apply for the above.

**Personal Information** is information or an opinion and whether recorded in a material form or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion.

**Principal** means a worker appointed to be the religious and educational leader of a CENT school within the Diocese of Darwin; otherwise a person who has the delegated authority to act in the position of Principal.

**Social Media** includes any form of online publication or presence that allows interactive communication, including social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, Snapchat), internal intranet social portals, video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, TikTok, etc.), instant messaging (e.g. SMS, WhatsApp), geo-spacial tagging (e.g. Yelp), location based dating apps, blogs, micro-blogging, podcasts, gaming platforms, wikis and online collaborations and forums, discussion boards and groups.

**Student** refers to any child or young person in Early Learning Centres, preschools, primary, Out of School Hours Care services and secondary education (birth to 18 years or older). This covers children and young people across all settings and communities, including those not in CENT schools. It also includes students visiting from interstate and overseas.

**Worker** is any person who renders a service to CENT as a paid or unpaid employee, volunteer, religious, contractor, or labour hire.

**Union** means the Independent Education Union – Queensland and Northern Territory Branch., Nurses Union

## B. CENT Values

### 4. CENT Vision, Mission and Values

#### 4.1. CENT and its workers are guided by CENT Vision, Mission and Values.

*Our Vision:*

Inspired by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we commit to educational excellence, equity and fullness of life for all.

*Our Mission:*

Through servant leadership, we witness Gospel values in a faith community; integrating life and learning in a culture of care, collaboration and excellence.

*Our Values:*

Wisdom leads to Justice, which is expressed in Courage, Compassion and Love.

#### 4.2. In the performance of their duties, workers must act in accordance with the Catholic ethos and the core values of the Catholic Church.

### 5. When does this Code apply?

#### 5.1. This Code applies to all CENT workers who work in CENT schools, CENT Early Learning Centres, Outside School Hours Care services or the Catholic Education Office.

Document No. & Name:	CEO.OD.1104.2.1 Code of Conduct	Version Number:	1.3	Page 5 of 22
----------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------	-----	--------------

UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED

- 5.2. This Code applies to all CENT workers at any location where the workers are performing work and representing CENT, including outside normal work hours. The Code applies while supervising students on school camps, excursions, sporting and extracurricular activities, training courses, social functions. The code also applies when interacting with students, workers, the school community or public, in person and via media, social media and electronic communications.
- 5.3. Compliance with this Code by all workers is compulsory. Workers must complete all training in relation to this Code which is required by CENT.

## 6. What happens if there is a breach of the Code?

- 6.1. Workers are accountable for their actions. Failure to comply with this Code will constitute a breach of this Code. CENT will take appropriate action according to this Code. It also may include action under any one of the following: the CENT Student Protection Processes, CENT Complaints and Grievance Policy, CENT Employee Performance Management and Disciplinary Matters Procedure.
- 6.2. In taking any action under these processes and procedures, CENT will afford the worker the fundamental principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.
- 6.3. Workers should report potential breaches of this Code by other workers to their Principal/Manager. Where a worker is uncomfortable or believes it is inappropriate to report a matter to the Principal/Manager, the worker should report the matter to the School Improvement Partner, HR Manager or the Deputy Director School Services.
- 6.4. A report will be made to the Statutory Authorities including Territory Families, Housing & Communities or the Police, TRB as applicable.

## 7. Questions

- 7.1. Questions, concerns or clarification in relation to any issue in this Code may be addressed by workers by consulting their Principal/Manager, School Improvement Partner, HR Manager or contacting the CENT Integrity Office.

## C. Employer Duties and Responsibilities

### 8. Compliance with Employment Laws and Regulations

- 8.1. Adhering to local, state, and national laws and regulations relevant to this code of conduct and ensuring that workplace policies are compliant with legislative and regulatory requirements and upholding professional and ethical standards in all workplace matters.
- 8.2. Employers are responsible for ensuring workplace safety is managed in accordance with Work Health & Safety (WHS) laws and CENT processes and procedures to establish and maintain a positive work culture that supports worker wellbeing including and not limited to implementing safeguarding measures for students and workers.
- 8.3. Promoting a workplace free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying and implementing policies to ensure equal opportunities for all workers respecting the dignity of the human person.
- 8.4. Providing ongoing professional development opportunities to ensure workers receive the necessary training on policies, procedures, and workplace expectations.
- 8.5. Ensuring all workers understand the Code of Conduct and other workplace policies by ensuring policies and procedures are accessible and expectations, rights, and responsibilities are effectively communicated to all workers.

Document No. & Name:	CEO.OD.1104.2.1 Code of Conduct	Version Number:	1.3	Page 6 of 22
----------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------	-----	--------------

**UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED**

- 8.6. Implementing fair and transparent grievance resolution procedures, addressing complaints in a timely and impartial manner ensuring that natural justice and procedural fairness in disciplinary and dispute resolution processes are upheld.

## D. Workers Duties and Responsibilities

### 9. Compliance with Laws, Standards and CENT Policies, Processes, Procedures and Regulations.

- 9.1. Workers are responsible for knowing, understanding and complying with this Code and all relevant CENT policies and procedures as they are revised, reviewed or amended from time to time. Workers must complete all training and attend all briefings as required or requested by CENT in relation to CENT's policies, processes, procedure, guidelines and regulations. Relevant policies and procedures are available on CENet and/or are provided to workers through CENT's induction and training programs.
- 9.2. All applicable laws, regulations, industrial awards and agreements must be complied with by workers. If there is any conflict between this Code and legislation, the legislation will take precedence.
- 9.3. If there is any change in the criminal history of a worker which would impact on the worker's ability to perform his/her role, the worker must immediately give all required notifications to his/her Principal/Manager. Registered teachers must also notify the Teacher Registration Board of the Northern Territory, including when charged or convicted of an offence. School officers, other support staff and holders of Ochre Cards must notify SAFENT of a change in their police information.
- 9.4. Workers must comply with the professional standards of relevant professional bodies, for example, the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, Early Childhood Australia: Code of Ethics and the Australian Psychological Society Code of Ethics. Teachers must abide with the *Protective Practices Guidelines: For Teachers in their interactions with children and young people*; and *Managing Professional Boundaries: Guidelines for Teachers* published by the Teacher Registration Board of the Northern Territory. Workers must complete all appropriate professional development and obtain and maintain all relevant registration and accreditation.

*Examples of the CENT policies and procedures with which workers must comply include:*

- *Work Health and Safety Policies and Procedures;*
- *Student Protection Processes;*
- *CENT Complaints and Grievance Policy Statement,*
- *CENT Employee Performance Management and Disciplinary Matters Procedure*
- *CENT Anti-Discrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity, Bullying and Harassment Policy*
- *ICT Acceptable Use Policy;*
- *Privacy Policy*
- *Conflict of Interest Policy*

### 10. Professional Responsibilities

- 10.1. CENT requires workers to act professionally and to be courteous and respectful.
- 10.2. CENT requires workers to carry out their duties in a professional, competent and conscientious manner. Workers are responsible for maintaining and developing their professional work practices and seeking appropriate opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills.
- 10.3. Workers must always, when representing CENT, conduct and present themselves appropriately to enhance their professional reputation and the reputation of Catholic education.
- 10.4. Workers must not engage in any conduct that is contrary to the Catholic ethos and values of CENT.



- 10.5. Workers must be honest, trustworthy and accountable. Workers must not engage in illegal, disreputable or scandalous activities that may negatively impact on their personal reputation or the reputation of a CENT school or Service, CENT or the Catholic Church.
- 10.6. Workers must comply with the lawful and reasonable directions/instructions of CENT and their Principal/Manager.
- 10.7. In representing their qualifications and competencies, workers must be truthful. When responding to CENT's request for information or when making any application to CENT, workers must promptly provide CENT with all relevant information and materials.
- 10.8. If workers have a supervisory role, they must exercise responsible management, leadership and supervision.

*CENT expects workers to act professionally and to be courteous and respectful to:*

- *students;*
- *other workers;*
- *parents / carers;*
- *the school community;*
- *parish personnel;*
- *external agencies;*
- *members of a religious order appointed to a role in a CENT school or service or the Catholic Education Office(CEO); and*
- *consultants and contractors who perform work at a CENT school or service or CEO.*

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10.9. In addition, Principals and Managers are expected to:

- comply with all of CENT's policies and procedures;
- promote a collegial and collaborative workplace;
- provide ongoing support and feedback to workers;
- ensure workers who they supervise have a clear understanding of their duties and how they are expected to perform their duties;
- exercise appropriate leadership in managing performance and development processes; and
- take appropriate action if a worker breaches this Code.

## 11. Cultural awareness

11.1. Workers based in Aboriginal communities will be inducted into, and should be especially aware and respectful of, dress codes, local laws, local customs regarding 'going on country' and community expectations in relation to alcohol, illicit drugs and intimate relationships.

## 12. Duty of Care, Work Health & Safety, and Risk Management

- 12.1. Workers have a duty to take reasonable care for their own safety and wellbeing and that of students and staff. Workers must take all action reasonably practicable to ensure that the physical and emotional wellbeing of students is safeguarded at all times.
- 12.2. Workers must follow safe work practices, comply with reasonable instructions and comply with CENT's policies and procedures for health and safety. Any hazards or unsafe work practices in the work environment must be reported by workers to their Principal/Manager and WHS Manager.
- 12.3. Workers may only assist students to take approved medication in accordance with CENT's policies for the administration of medication to students.
- 12.4. CENT's Safeguarding Risk Management Strategy (CSRMS) outlines the policies and procedures that are in place for the safeguarding of students. Workers are required to comply with the CSRMS and reasonable directions of the employer to create a safe and supportive environment.



*The worker's duty of care includes:*

- *providing adequate supervision of students and complying with arrangements for student supervision in the school;*
- *taking all reasonable steps to ensure the school grounds, premises and equipment are safe for students to use;*
- *reporting any bullying, harassment or discriminatory behaviour of students in accordance with CENT and school's policies;*
- *assessing the risks of any activity and taking preventative measures to remove or minimise reasonably foreseeable risks;*
- *in performing playground duty, actively supervising designated areas in a vigilant, mobile and punctual manner;*
- *providing appropriate medical assistance to students or seeking assistance from a medically trained person to care for a student who is injured or ill at school;*
- *addressing the personal care needs of a student in accordance with the school's requirements and procedures and the student's management plan, e.g. support plan; and*
- *complying with the school's requirements in relation to after-school activities.*

### 13. Use of Social Media, Electronic Communications and Phones

#### General Responsibilities

- 13.1. Workers are personally responsible for the content that they publish on Social Media, electronic communications and phones. As a result, workers must exercise professional discretion and sound judgement in their use of Social Media, electronic communications and phones, even for personal communication.
- 13.2. Comments and posts on Social Media, electronic communication and phones can leave a permanent record. Workers should recognise the potential for negative consequences for themselves, CENT, colleagues, students, parents/carers and the school community through their personal use of Social Media, electronic communications and phones.
- 13.3. Workers must be familiar with and comply with CENT policies in relation to the use of Social Media and electronic communications.
- 13.4. Only the Principal/Manager, or a delegate appointed by the Principal/Manager, may make statements to the media on behalf of CENT or a school. Workers must avoid making comments to the media if they are identified, or may be identified, as workers of their school or CENT.

#### Professional Boundaries with Students

- 13.5. Workers must respect appropriate professional boundaries with students in their use of Social Media, electronic communications and phones (and see further details on professional boundaries in section 23).
- 13.6. Any Social Media, email or phone communication by workers with students must form part of an approved school-based process for communication. It should never be used for social or personal communication. Any official or school Social Media site or presence must have the prior approval of the Principal/Manager. Only users approved by the Principal may post information or comments.
- 13.7. Workers must not interact with, respond to "Friend requests", "like" a post or image or "follow" students on Social Media. Workers must take all reasonable steps to adjust their privacy settings to prevent or "block" students interacting with them on Social Media.
- 13.8. Workers must notify their Principal/Manager if a student attempts to interact with them on Social Media, personal email, personal mobile phone or home telephone. Workers must notify their Principal/Manager if they mistakenly communicate or interact with a student on Social Media, personal email, personal mobile or home telephone.
- 13.9. Workers must use professional discretion before communicating or accepting a "Friend" request on Social Media with a past student or parents/carers of current students.

- 13.10. Workers must always use the worker's and students' CENT or school provided email address for email communication with students, and communication must only be for an appropriate educational reason. Workers must not communicate with students using either the worker's personal email address or the student's personal email address.
- 13.11. Workers must not provide their personal mobile or home telephone number to students. Communications by workers with students using the student's personal mobile or home telephone may only occur in very limited circumstances, where there is a justifiable context and with the prior approval of the worker's Principal/Manager.
- 13.12. Records of approvals must be kept by the Principal/Manager and parents/carers must be advised by the Principal/Manager of the approval, as appropriate.

*When using Social Media, electronic communications and phones, including outside normal working hours, workers are required to:*

- *remember their responsibilities under the law, this Code and CENT policies and procedures;*
- *obtain the express permission of their Principal/Manager before posting any school/office information, material, photographs or video;*
- *respect the privacy and confidentiality of others and not disclose or use the private, personal or confidential information of students (including students' academic work, records or results), colleagues or parents/carers;*
- *not use their personal camera, personal mobile phone or personal video recorder to photograph or record images of students unless they have obtained the prior approval of the parents/carers and there is a justifiable and appropriate context. Any digital material captured **must** be transferred to a CENT digital place of storage as soon as reasonably possible and permanently deleted from the personal device;*
- *never post or comment on any material, images or comments in relation to students, including photographs and video;*
- *not disclose or use CENT's Confidential and Personal Information;*
- *not infringe intellectual property rights and not disclose or use CENT's Intellectual Property (including CENT's or a school's logo);*
- *take care to be polite and respectful and never use obscene or offensive language;*
- *not imply that they are authorised to speak as a representative of CENT or the Catholic Church or give the impression that their views are those of CENT or the Catholic Church; and*
- *not post, "like" or respond to material or images that are offensive, obscene, pornographic, defamatory, derogatory, fraudulent, threatening, intimidating, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist or which incite violence against others.*

## 14. Smoking, Alcohol and other Drugs

- 14.1. CENT is committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff, students and others who visit our schools and offices and is committed to the prevention and reduction of harm associated with workers being impaired by drugs and/or alcohol at work.
- 14.2. CENT views alcohol, drug and substance use as a social and health problem and encourages workers to seek assistance from CatholicCare or other service which provides confidential counselling. Workers will not be penalised for self-disclosure and will be supported to attend an approved rehabilitation program.
- 14.3. Workers are responsible for ensuring that their capacity to perform their duties is not affected by the use of alcohol, drugs or any substance. Workers must not put themselves or any other person's health and safety at risk due to their use of alcohol, drugs or other substances. Workers are required to refrain from the use of or effects of alcohol, drug and substance when at work.
- 14.4. If workers have concerns about alcohol, drug and substance use, they must report these concerns to their Principal/Manager who will contact the CEO HR Manager. For student concerns, the Integrity Office must be contacted.

### Smoking

- 14.5. Workers must comply with all laws in relation to the use and supply of tobacco and smoking products, (including without limitation, e-cigarettes or other vaping devices), including the Tobacco Control Act (NT) 2002 and Tobacco Control Regulations (NT).

Document No. & Name:	CEO.OD.1104.2.1 Code of Conduct	Version Number:	1.3	Page 10 of 22
----------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------	-----	---------------

UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED

- 14.6. Workers are legally banned from smoking on a school facility and on land within a ten metre boundary of the school facility. A school facility includes any land on which the school provides educational instruction or activities (for example, sporting facilities located away from the school). These laws apply at all times, including during and after school hours, on weekends and during school holidays. Workers are also prohibited from smoking at or near an underage sporting event, at an outdoor swimming area, at or near children's playground equipment or any other place identified by legislation.
- 14.7. CENT workers at the Catholic Education Office may only smoke in areas outside the office designated for smoking.
- 14.8. Workers must never purchase or provide students with smoking products or encourage or condone the use of smoking products by students.

#### Alcohol

- 14.9. Workers must never purchase or provide students with alcohol or encourage or condone the use of alcohol by students, including any student over the age of 18.
- 14.10. Workers must be aware of their legal and additional community expectations when traveling to and working in Aboriginal communities. Follow the local community regulations in regards to the consumption of alcohol.
- 14.11. Workers must never be under the influence of alcohol when workers are performing their work duties or in any other circumstances where they are responsible for the care or supervision of students, including at school, school functions, dances, sporting fixtures, fundraising events, camps, excursions or study tours.
- 14.12. The Principal must approve of the provision of alcohol at school, work events or social functions. Workers must ensure that they are not under the influence of alcohol at school or work events or school or work social functions. A worker would be considered to be "under the influence of alcohol" where the worker's ability to exercise appropriate behaviour, judgement or discretion is impaired by his/her consumption of alcohol.
- 14.13. Alcohol that is present on school grounds for approved purposes must be contained in a secure location which is not accessible by students.
- 14.14. Sanctioned events where the serving of alcohol is permitted must follow the responsible service of alcohol (RSA) the laws, specifically:
  - Everyone is expected to act responsibly
  - Non-alcoholic, low alcoholic drinks and food will be provided
  - Alternative transport arrangements are to be made e.g. taxi, bus
  - Serving alcohol for a limited time
  - The 'don't drink and drive' message is to be reiterated

#### Drugs

- 14.15. Workers must comply with the law and must not take, be under the influence of or be in the possession of illegal drugs.
- 14.16. Workers must never be under the influence of prescription drugs that might cause an impairment while they are at work or in any circumstances where they are responsible for the care and supervision of students. If a worker is using medication that may affect his/her performance at work, the worker must notify the Principal/Manager. Workers must not misuse prescription drugs and should only take prescription medication prescribed to them by a qualified medical practitioner.
- 14.17. Workers must never purchase illegal drugs or provide students or other workers with illegal drugs or prescription drugs not prescribed for the student or other worker. Workers must not encourage or condone the use of illegal drugs, or misuse of prescription medication by students or other workers.

## 15. Privacy and Confidentiality

- 15.1. Personal and Confidential Information (including students' personal details), which workers obtain through their employment with CENT, must always be handled confidentially and in accordance with the CENT Privacy Policy. Such information must not be disclosed, unless permitted to be disclosed under those documents or unless permitted by law. This obligation continues after a worker ceases to be employed by CENT.
- 15.2. Workers must only use Confidential Information for work related purposes. Workers should exercise caution and use sound judgement when discussing Information for legitimate work related reasons. Confidential Information should be treated with respect and never be a topic of gossip or spoken about freely with others.
- 15.3. Any Confidential Information obtained by workers through their employment must not be used for financial gain or other advantage.
- 15.4. Workers are required to handle data in accordance with CENT's processes and procedures, as implemented and amended from time to time. Action or knowledge of disclosure of data (accidental or deliberate) that may result in harm to CENT or individuals must be investigated according to CENT Data Breach procedures.
- 15.5. If workers have any questions or concerns about whether information is a privacy or data breach or confidential information and whether it can be disclosed, they should contact their Principal or Manager.

## 16. Managing Conflicts of Interest - Conflict of Interest Declaration

- 16.1. Workers must be impartial and objective and ensure that their private interests or personal views do not conflict or interfere (or be seen to conflict or interfere) with their obligations to CENT and the proper performance of their duties.
- 16.2. Workers must ensure that they do not use their position as an worker of CENT or CENT's resources, equipment, information, Confidential Information or Intellectual Property to promote or benefit their private interests, including but not limited to, financial gain, desire for professional advancement, potential to unfairly treat someone, or the desire to assist family or friends.
- 16.3. If a worker has an actual, perceived or potential Conflict of Interest, the worker must declare it to his/her Principal/Manager. The Principal/Manager should keep a written record of the declaration.
- 16.4. Principals/Managers must appropriately assess and manage actual, perceived or potential Conflicts of Interest for workers and provide guidance to workers to resolve any issues.
- 16.5. In some cases, workers may be able to engage in other employment while they are employed by CENT. However, workers must ensure that they continue to meet all their obligations under this Code, including Professional Behaviour with Students (section 15), Privacy and Confidentiality (section 20) and Use of CENT Resources (section 22). In many cases, workers engaged in other employment may have an actual or perceived Conflict of Interest which they must declare to their Principal/Manager.
- 16.6. Workers may interact with a school in their capacity as a parent/carer. It is expected that such interactions will be in the capacity of a parent/carer only, however, such interactions must also be professional and consistent with obligations under this Code. Care must be taken not to interfere with teaching and learning. Any concerns regarding the child/ren of a worker need to be raised using the appropriate formal channels which have been put in place at the school and system level.
- 16.7. As a sign of gratitude, workers may be offered small gifts, for example, suppliers, parents/carers or students may give a small gift of thanks. However, in some circumstances receiving a gift may create a Conflict of Interest, a sense of obligation, undermine a worker's (or another worker's) impartiality or affect the reputation of CENT. Workers must ensure that the acceptance of a gift does not influence, or be seen to

influence, their decision making. If a worker is unsure about accepting a gift, the worker should seek the advice of their Principal/Manager.

- 16.8. Workers must never ask for money, gifts or benefits. If a worker is offered money or a bribe, the worker must immediately refuse the money or bribe, explain that it is not appropriate and inform his/her Principal/Manager.

## 17. Use of CENT Resources

- 17.1. Workers must use all CENT resources, information and equipment responsibly and with due care, for legitimate, work related purposes and in accordance with the law and CENT's policies, processes, procedures and regulations. Waste and extravagance must be avoided. The purchase and disposal of CENT resources and equipment must be done in accordance with CENT's policies and procedures.
- 17.2. All CENT property and resources must be returned to CENT before the worker ceases employment with CENT.
- 17.3. Workers must use CENT's ICT resources in accordance with CENT's Policies and Procedures, including CENT's ICT Acceptable Use Policy. CENT may carry out monitoring and surveillance on CENT's ICT resources to monitor usage of these resources. This monitoring and surveillance includes investigating alleged breaches of the law, compliance with this Code, compliance with CENT policies and procedures or misconduct.

## E. Professional Behaviour of Workers

### 18. Professional Behaviour with Students

- 18.1. CENT is committed to providing a positive learning environment that minimises the risk of harm and which supports students' wellbeing. Workers are expected to conduct themselves in a way that reflects this commitment and complies with the professional boundaries contained in this section.
- 18.2. Workers must take action to keep students safe. Workers must report behaviour of other workers towards a student that may contravene this Code. Failure to report breaches of this Code by workers or ignoring behaviours may place a student at risk of harm and may result in disciplinary action against the worker who fails to report
- 18.3. Workers must act appropriately and professionally at all times in their interactions with students, including outside school hours, to ensure that they maintain professional boundaries and are a positive role model for students.
- 18.4. CENT expects workers to establish and maintain professional, positive relationships with students and show respect, courtesy and consideration to students.
- 18.5. Workers must use and develop effective, consistent and appropriate management strategies for their interactions with students. The strategies must be in accordance with CENT's Pastoral Care, Wellbeing and Behaviour Policy Statement, CENT Classroom and Behaviour Management Procedures, CENT Bullying Prevention and Intervention Procedures and other school documents. Where an individual plan has been developed for a student, workers are required to act in accordance with that plan.
- 18.6. If a worker, after first complying with section 21, *Managing Conflicts of Interest – Conflict of Interest Declaration*, provides any services to a student outside school hours (for example, coaching, tutoring, counselling, training), the worker's obligations in this Code will continue to apply to the worker's conduct with students in providing these services.
- 18.7. Workers working with students in CENT schools hold a special position of trust, care and authority with students. Workers must set clear professional boundaries in their interactions with students and ensure that they maintain appropriate physical, emotional and behavioural boundaries with students.

Document No. & Name:	CEO.OD.1104.2.1 Code of Conduct	Version Number:	1.3	Page 13 of 22
----------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------	-----	---------------

UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED



- 18.8. Where a worker has a close personal relationship with the parents/carers of a student or his/her family, the worker must report that Conflict of Interest (section 14) to the Principal, who will manage this conflict. Workers working in small communities will need to be mindful of acceptable professional boundaries in their social engagement with families and children.

*The following self-assessment may assist workers in assessing and managing their Professional Boundaries:*

- *Am I dealing with a particular student in a different manner than with others?*
- *Would I do or say this if a colleague or parent/carer was present?*
- *Is my dress/availability/language different with a particular student?*
- *Are the consequences of my actions likely to have negative outcomes?*
- *Are my personal feelings translating into inappropriate actions?*
- *Further information is available in [Managing Professional Boundaries: Guidelines for Teachers](#) (Teacher Registration Board of the Northern Territory).*

### Physical Boundaries with Students

- 18.9. Corporal punishment is prohibited in CENT schools. Corporal punishment involves the application of physical force to punish or correct a student.
- 18.10. Workers may only make physical contact with a student if the physical contact is appropriate and reasonable for the behaviour, teaching, support, management or care of the student. The contact must also be appropriate given the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the student. Physical contact with a student must be consistent with any individual plan in place for the student. Where physical contact with a student is a necessary part of the learning or teaching experience, workers must exercise caution to ensure that the contact is appropriate and acceptable for the duty to be performed.
- 18.11. Physical interventions by a worker with a student (including restraint or removal of a student) are only appropriate as a measure of last resort to ensure safety and protection. Acceptable instances of physical intervention are restricted to occasions when the student or other persons are being harmed or at risk of imminent harm (harm to property is not a relevant consideration for workers). The physical intervention and force used must be reasonable in the circumstances.
- 18.12. Workers must respect physical boundaries with students.

*Examples of situations in which physical contact with a student may be appropriate include:*

- *assessing a student who is injured or ill where some touching may be required (workers should advise the student of what they intend to do and, where possible, seek the student's consent);*
- *teaching sport, music and other activities where touching a student may be required to demonstrate a particular action or skill;*
- *guiding a student in a non-threatening manner; and*
- *comforting a distressed student in an appropriate manner, for example, by a pat on the arm or shoulder.*

*The following are examples of physical boundary violations with students:*

- *using force to manage or direct a student's behaviour (pushing, pulling, grabbing, poking, shoving, throwing);*
- *using force to correct or punish a student (hitting with an object, punching, kicking, pinching, shaking);*
- *refusing a student's biological necessities (disregarding or refusing a student's reasonable request to access food, drink or use a toilet);*
- *inappropriately touching or massaging a student (patting a student on his/her bottom, stroking a student's hair); and*
- *applying painful or noxious conditions to a student (exposing a student to protracted physical management techniques such as standing still for an unreasonable length of time, making a student pick up rubbish or reach into a rubbish bin without protective gear e.g. gloves).*

### Emotional Boundaries with Students

Document No. & Name:	CEO.OD.1104.2.1 Code of Conduct	Version Number:	1.3	Page 14 of 22
----------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------	-----	---------------

UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED

- 18.13. Workers must respect the emotional needs and well-being of students and ensure that they do not violate appropriate emotional boundaries with students.

*The following are examples of emotional boundary violations with students:*

- *shaming, embarrassing or humiliating students (teasing, sarcasm, belittling, derogatory remarks);*
- *using unprofessional criticism (comments that target the student rather than the behaviour);*
- *making overly familiar or personal commentary (comments about a student's personal appearance ); and*
- *intimidating behaviours (shouting at or in the presence of students, use of threats and fear).*
- *commenting on, or gossiping about a student's personal matters, for example, about a court case involving a student or a family dynamic*

#### Behavioural Boundaries with Students

- 18.14. Workers must respect behavioural boundaries with students. Workers must not develop a relationship with a student that is, or could be seen to be, a personal rather than a professional relationship. Workers must ensure that they treat all students consistently without inappropriate familiarity or spending 'special time' with a student.
- 18.15. Where a personal relationship exists between a worker and a student (such as a family relationship), the worker must declare that relationship to the Principal/Manager at the earliest opportunity. The Principal/Manager should keep a written record of the declaration.
- 18.16. CENT's procedures in relation to transporting students must be complied with by workers. Workers must not drive a student in their vehicle unless they have first obtained the specific written permission of the parents/carers and the Principal. In the case of a Principal they will require the express consent of their School Improvement Partner (SciP). One adult cannot be alone with a child or young person in a vehicle unless it is an emergency and they are being taken to receive care.
- 18.17. Workers must not spend time alone or remain in a confined, isolated or secluded space with a student, which in the context of the program/activity/occasion, a reasonable person would consider inappropriate.
- 18.18. Workers must not use a personal device (e.g. personal camera, personal mobile phone, iPad, or personal video or voice recorder, etc.) to take, record, or store any student information (e.g., phone number, email address, etc.) recordings, or images, unless they have obtained the prior express approval of the student's parents/carers and their Principal or SciP and there is a reasonably justifiable and appropriate educational context. Any digital material captured should be transferred to a CENT digital place of storage as soon as reasonably practicable and permanently deleted from the personal device.
- 18.19. Workers must ensure that they do not violate appropriate behavioural boundaries with students.

*The following are examples of behaviour boundary violations with students:*

- *inappropriate use of Social Media in relation to a student e.g. accepting a "friend" request, "liking" a post or image, "following" or contacting students on or through Social Media;*
- *personal emails, texts, phone calls or other forms of personal communication with a student;*
- *gift-giving or showing special favours;*
- *disclosing inappropriate personal information to a student;*
- *sharing personal belongings/materials and/or photographs/videos/other media with students without an appropriate professional reason;*
- *sharing secrets with a student;*
- *inappropriate questioning of a student about personal and private matters;*
- *overly familiar social interactions with students including in staff offices or classrooms, on excursions, camps or at sporting activities;*
- *providing a personal email address, residential address, mobile or home telephone number to students;*
- *engaging in social activities with students (where there is no declared personal relationship) outside school;*



- *driving students without appropriate authority;*
- *visiting students at home without appropriate authority;*
- *permitting students to use facilities and/or spaces designated for use by workers (for example, worker toilet and/or change facilities);*
- *spending significant time alone with a student other than to perform a worker's professional duties.*
- *Disrespectful or discriminatory treatment of, or manner towards, young people based on their perceived or actual gender, religious, ethnic or cultural stance.*

*Using unprofessional language:*

- *swearing at, or in the presence of a student; or*
- *making inappropriate comments to or in the presence of a student, e.g.*
  - *inappropriate comments about a child/young person's appearance, including excessive flattering comments*
  - *talking with a student about highly personal and/or sexually inappropriate matters that do not benefit the student*
  - *offering advice on personal matters to a student*
  - *asking a student questions about personal/sexual matters*
  - *refusing to stop discussions of personal/sexual nature when asked by the student*
  - *use of inappropriate pet names*
  - *vilification or humiliation*

*Failing to follow CENT's Pastoral Care, Wellbeing and Behaviour Policy Statement, CENT Classroom and Behaviour Management Procedures and relevant school documents:*

- *using unreasonable, unfair and/or unjust disciplinary measures;*
- *imposing manifestly unreasonable expectations or excessive demands on a student; or*
- *using locations or social isolation outside of the school's guidelines as punishment.*

*Using a personal device or private email address to make contact with a student (unless there is an appropriate authority).*

*Voice recording, photographing, or videoing a student using a school device for a purpose other than an appropriate and professional educational reason. Recording, photographing or videoing a student on a personal device should not occur except as specified in 16.17.*

*Supplying substances to a student (e.g. unauthorised medication, tobacco, alcohol, illicit drugs).*

*Exposing students to material that contains adult content, material that is contrary to the values and/or beliefs of the Catholic Church, or themes that are offensive or inappropriate for the age and/or maturity of the student.*

## 19. Inappropriate Relationships with Students and Sexual Misconduct

- 19.1. Workers must not engage in inappropriate relationships or sexual misconduct with a student.
- 19.2. Workers must not have a romantic or sexual relationship with a student. It is irrelevant whether the relationship is lawful, consensual or condoned by parents/carers. A worker must immediately discourage and reject any romantic or sexual advances by a student and immediately report the matter to his/her Principal/Manager.
- 19.3. Only a professional relationship between workers and students is acceptable. Sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student must be reported to the Northern Territory Police in accordance with CENT Mandatory Reporting Policy and CENT Student Protection Processes. As a result of the relationship of trust between a worker and student, any reasonable beliefs and/or allegations of a sexual relationship between a worker and a student will be considered by CENT to be sexual abuse of a student. Allegations or reasonable beliefs of grooming behaviour between a worker and a student will be considered by CENT to be likely sexual abuse. It is inappropriate for a worker to have a

romantic relationship with a student and CENT may also consider it to amount to likely sexual abuse of a student.

- 19.4. The obligation of a worker not to engage in a sexual relationship or inappropriate relationship with a student, does not cease when the student turns 18 years of age or leaves school or the worker ceases employment with CENT. The obligation continues to apply to a worker for a significant time after the worker/student relationship ceases. Workers should be very wary about entering into a romantic or sexual relationship with a former student, especially in the first few years after cessation of the worker/student relationship. Workers are to be guided by the information in *Managing Professional Boundaries: Guidelines for Teachers* published by the Teacher Registration Board of the Northern Territory, under Q&A: *Professional Boundaries*.
- 19.5. If a worker has a lawful sexual or romantic relationship with a student which existed before the worker commenced employment with CENT or any work in a school, the worker must immediately declare that relationship to his/her Principal/Manager. If an existing worker has a lawful relationship with a person who is not a student at a CENT school and then that person becomes a student at a CENT school, the worker must immediately declare that change in circumstance to his/her Principal/Manager. Written records of the declaration are to be maintained by the Principal/Manager.

*A worker must not engage in the following conduct with students:*

- *jokes of an inappropriate or sexual nature;*
- *inappropriate touching;*
- *undressing in front of students;*
- *inappropriately communicating to students the sexual behaviour of others;*
- *possession, distribution or display of pornography;*
- *inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature including sharing information about sexual relationships and sexual preferences;*
- *sexual exhibitionism;*
- *communications that are sexually explicit or offensive;*
- *personal communications about the worker's romantic or sexual feelings for the student or others;*
- *holding conversations of a personal nature with a student where disclosures of private or personal information about themselves are made;*
- *flirting with a student; or*
- *using obscene language or gestures of a sexual nature*

## 20. Student Protection and Safeguarding

- 20.1. CENT is committed to the safety, wellbeing and the protection of students from harm and abuse. Safeguarding students must be at the heart of everything we do. CENT does not tolerate any form of abuse or harm within CENT or in the community. Workers must act immediately to prevent abuse and harm and respond appropriately to students who have been abused or harmed or are at risk of being abused or harmed.
- 20.2. CENT has set clear standards and boundaries which are contained in this Code for how each and every CENT worker should act with students. CENT is committed to upholding respectful behaviour towards students and all CENT workers are required by CENT to report behaviour towards students that may be contrary to this Code. This obligation to report cannot be delegated or transferred to another person. Workers must take action to keep students safe. Failure to report possible breaches of this Code or ignoring behaviours may place a student at risk of harm and may result in disciplinary action against the worker who fails to act.
- 20.3. Workers are required to familiarise themselves, and comply with all CENT policies and procedures.
- 20.4. The CENT Student Protection Processes sets out the process for:
- responding to and reporting allegations or beliefs of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of students and harm, or risk of harm, from other causes to students; and

- responding to allegations of inappropriate behaviour of a worker towards a student (including breach of a physical, emotional or behavioural boundary with a student by a worker).

20.5. The CENT Student Protection Processes (as amended and/or replaced from time to time), must be followed, including making all reports required under that process. Student protection concerns must be reported as required by law and/or CENT as the employer. Failure to uphold obligations to report may result in:

- appropriate action being taken by CENT, which may include disciplinary action; and/or
- the worker breaching relevant legislation, which may include a penalty being issued or prosecution commenced by the relevant authority against the worker.

20.6. Workers must complete all Safeguarding training.

Any workers requiring assistance or who have a concern about Student Protection or Safeguarding requirements should contact their Principal/Manager or the CENT Integrity Office.

## 21. Professional Behaviour with Parents/Carers

21.1. Workers must always engage with students' parents/carers in a professional and courteous manner.

21.2. Workers must endeavour to establish a relationship with students' parents/carers that is based on mutual trust and open communication.

21.3. CENT expects workers to respect parents'/carers' rights of enquiry, consultation and information in relation to their child. The characteristics and uniqueness of each student's family background and the values and perspectives of each student's family must be respected by workers.

21.4. Where there is any disagreement or conflict with parents/carers, workers must use their best endeavours to resolve the issues and workers must ensure that their behaviour is not derogatory, belittling, intimidating, rude or abusive.

21.5. Workers must not provide their personal email address, residential address, mobile or home telephone number to a student's parent/carer without appropriate professional reason. All written communications with parent/carer about students, the school and/or CENT are to be sent from the worker's CENT (including ntschools) email account and are to be professional, related to the student's learning and development or other school matter, and written in a way that promotes the reputation of CENT, the school and the worker.

*In their behaviour with parents/carers, workers must:*

- *be approachable, prompt and responsive;*
- *treat parent/carers with consideration, respect and dignity;*
- *respect cultural diversity;*
- *be aware of and respect different family structures;*
- *be tolerant of different opinions and perspectives; and*
- *exercise sound judgement and patience.*

*Workers can demonstrate their professional behaviour with parents/carers by:*

- *working collaboratively with parents/carers;*
- *ensuring they are responsive to requests by parents/carers in relation to their child's education;*
- *engaging parents/carers through developing effective partnerships;*
- *using professional honesty and discretion with parents/carers in discussing the educational development of their child;*
- *explaining to parents/carers the relevant rules, policies and procedures of the school which affect their child;*

- *being cautious when interacting with parents/carers on social media platforms and at private functions to avoid an actual, potential or perceived Conflict of Interest;*
- *not disclosing Confidential Information from families unless it is for a legitimate purpose;*
- *considering parents'/carers' perspectives regarding the education of their child; and*
- *negotiating constructively with parents/carers to achieve the best educational outcomes for their child.*

## 22. Professional behaviour between workers

- 22.1. All workers are expected to contribute to a workplace that is respectful, tolerant and co-operative. High standards of conduct by CENT workers can have a positive influence on the culture and atmosphere of the work environment. Workers are expected to conduct themselves in ways which are conducive to positive workplace relationships.
- 22.2. Workers must ensure that their behaviour towards other workers is not derogatory, rude, aggressive, abusive, belittling, threatening or intimidating.
- 22.3. Where there is any disagreement or conflict between workers, workers should try to use their best efforts to resolve the issues through the appropriate processes for managing grievances. Information can be found in CENT's Complaints and Grievance Policy Statement, CENT's Complaints Management for Schools Guidelines and CENT's Employee Performance and Disciplinary Matters Procedure and workers can talk to their Principal/Manager.

Conduct that is not consistent with CENT's expectations for professional relationships, includes:

- gossip;
- inappropriate personal remarks to another worker or other persons about another worker;
- forming alliances/cliques which exclude another worker;
- offensive, hostile or discriminatory conduct and behaviour which may cause offence or isolation of another worker;
- intentionally withholding information; and
- any behaviours that may amount to bullying, harassment or discrimination towards another worker.

*Workers must in their conduct with other workers:*

- *work collaboratively and consultatively;*
- *be approachable, prompt, responsive and courteous;*
- *treat others with consideration, respect and dignity;*
- *foster unity, trust, harmony and cooperation;*
- *encourage openness and tolerance among workers;*
- *respect cultural diversity;*
- *be tolerant of different opinions and perspectives;*
- *recognise the potential, talents and skills of others, irrespective of race, gender, age or religion; and*
- *exercise sound judgement and patience.*

## 23. Workplace Bullying, Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Unlawful Discrimination

- 23.1. All workers must promote dignity, courtesy and respect at work and avoid behaviour which is or might reasonably be perceived to amount to workplace bullying, sexual harassment, abuse or unlawful discrimination. Workers who believe that anyone in the workplace is being bullied, sexually harassed or discriminated against, should report the behaviour to their Principal/Manager, the School Improvement Partner or the HR Manager.
- 23.2. Workers must comply with the CENT Anti-Discrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity, Bullying and Harassment Policy. Workers may seek assistance or further information by contacting their Principal/Manager or the HR Manager.

- 23.3. Physical assault, threats of physical assault, sexual assault, indecent exposure and stalking are all criminal offences which should be reported by workers to the Northern Territory Police and their Principal/Manager.
- 23.4. CENT will take appropriate action if a worker is found to have bullied, unlawfully discriminated against, or sexually harassed another person as described in CENT Anti-Discrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity, Bullying and Harassment Policy.

## 24. Natural Justice, Procedural Fairness and Equity

- 24.1. Workers who are required to conduct any type of investigation of complaints against other workers or stakeholders, or issues affecting workers or stakeholders are expected to act consistently, promptly, and fairly.
- 24.2. There is an obligation to maintain the principle of natural justice that ensures fairness, impartiality, and the right to be heard in decision-making processes in dealing with issues relating to any investigation.
- 24.3. Procedural fairness ensures that a clear, fair, and unbiased process is followed when addressing workplace concerns such as worker investigations, grievances, and performance issues.

## F. General

## 25. Copyright and Intellectual Property

- 25.1. Workers are required to comply with copyright legislation, regulations and any license arrangements. Any use of copyright material requires the permission of the copyright-holder consistent with copyright legislation and/or any license arrangement. Workers who do not comply with copyright legislation and/or any license arrangements risk disciplinary action.
- 25.2. Workers may use CENT's Intellectual Property in the course of their employment with CENT.
- 25.3. All material created by workers in the course of their employment with CENT is wholly owned by CENT. Workers are encouraged to freely share the material they create in the course of their employment with CENT with other CENT workers.
- 25.4. Workers must ensure that the intellectual property rights of others are not infringed and any third party copyright or other intellectual property rights in the materials are appropriately acknowledged.
- 25.5. Workers cannot use CENT's Intellectual Property for any private purposes either during or after the worker's employment with CENT (for example, conducting a private business) without obtaining the written permission of the Director CENT.

*Examples of material which workers may create in the course of their employment:*

- *work programs;*
- *teaching materials;*
- *units of work;*
- *assessment items;*
- *precedent documents and forms;*
- *music;*
- *artwork;*
- *websites or online digital resources;*
- *multimedia presentations;*
- *camp and excursion programs; and*
- *risk assessment resources.*



## 26. Secondary Employment

- 26.1. Workers employed on a full-time basis must seek and obtain approval in writing from their Principal or supervisor prior to engaging in any alternative employment or business activity, including employment in a family run business.
- 26.2. All workers must also seek approval to undertake secondary employment if the employment may result in potential conflicts of interest that could adversely impact the worker's ability to perform their duties at CENT, including work, health and safety concerns, or CENT's financial position, services, stakeholders or standing in the community.
- 26.3. Where a worker is already involved in secondary employment when they commence employment with CENT they must provide details of the secondary employment to the Principal and or Supervisor and obtain approval in writing to continue in that secondary employment.

## 27. Records, Notices and Approvals

- 27.1. Workers are required to make and maintain all CENT records in accordance with CENT's policies and procedures and as otherwise required by any relevant legislation or regulation.
- 27.2. Records of all consents and approvals and declarations given to a Principal/Manager in relation to a CENT worker (for example, a Conflict of Interest Declaration or approval to transport students) must be kept on file by the Principal/Manager and the worker.
- 27.3. Where a Principal/Manager is required to notify or seek consent, the Principal/Manager is required to notify or seek the consent of the Director.
- 27.4. Workers must keep all CENT records in accordance with CENT's policies and procedures and not destroy any records without appropriate authority.

## 28. Employee Assistance Program

- 28.1. CENT provides an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through the CatholicCare Access counselling program. This free and confidential counselling program is available to all staff and their immediate families who require support or would like to discuss any work or personal issues.

## 29. No Cause of Action

- 29.1. This Code of Conduct does not contractually or in any other way create or contribute to a legal cause of action against CENT.

## 2. References

- [CEO.SS.3100.1.1 Work Health & Safety Policy](#)
- [CEO.SS.3102.1.1 Safety Management Plan](#)
- [CEO.SS.3110.1.1 - Fitness for Work Policy](#)
- [CEO.SS.3110.2.1 - Fitness For Work Procedure](#)

## 3.

## 4. Relevant Legislation and Documents

Document No. & Name:	CEO.OD.1104.2.1 Code of Conduct	Version Number:	1.3	Page 21 of 22
----------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------	-----	---------------

UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED

- Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 (NT)
- Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulations 2011 (NT)
- Education Act 2015 (NT)
- Education Regulations 2015 (NT)
- [Non-Government School Registration Standards](#)

## 5. Version Control

Version Number	Amendment Date	Approved Date	Description of Amendment	Review due
1.0		Jun 2020		Jun 2021
1.1	Aug 2020	Aug 2020	Added Director's message	Jun 2021
1.2	Nov 2022	Dec 2022		Feb 2024
1.3	24/01/2025		Formatting and WHS, HR and PCW Policy inclusions	Jan 2026