

Statement of Business Ethics

Introduction from the Chief Executive

At Eastern Health, we expect all our business arrangements, whether with our employees, consultants, contractors or suppliers, to be conducted in an ethical manner.

Our *Statement of Business Ethics* outlines what you can expect from us and what we will expect from you in any business dealings. It is intended for anyone in the private, public or non-profit sectors who is involved or is proposing to be involved in a business arrangement with Eastern Health. Anyone dealing with us in a business arrangement is expected to comply with the ethical framework in which we work.

We believe that compliance with this statement benefits everyone and upholds public trust and confidence. Understanding and complying with this statement may also assist businesses to compete on a level playing field to obtain work with other public sector organisations operating under similar requirements.

David Plunkett
Chief Executive
Eastern Health

Our values

Eastern Health operates in accordance with seven values which are briefly described below:

Excellence

We strive to attain the highest standards of service delivery and clinical practice and we demonstrate responsiveness by providing high quality services to the community in an equitable, prompt and professional manner.

Accountability

We are open and accountable for our decisions and actions and act within the levels of our authority and in accordance with relevant policies and legislation.

We act with impartiality, i.e. we make decisions and provide advice on merit without bias, caprice, favoritism or self-interest and we act fairly by objectively considering all relevant facts and applying fair criteria.

Compassion

We are honest, fair and caring and we treat others as we would expect to be treated.

Team Work

We work professionally, efficiently and effectively in our roles and co-operate and work well with others in the pursuit of team goals.

Integrity

We are open, honest and transparent in our dealings and practices. We adhere to professional, ethical and legislative requirements. We use resources efficiently and effectively and in a transparent

manner. We refrain from and report improper conduct and unethical behaviour. We avoid any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.

Respect

We are professional and respectful to others in our dealings with them.

Collaboration

We work collaboratively with our colleagues and other services.

What you can expect from us

We will:

- live our values;
- communicate clearly and respond promptly to questions, resolving any issues quickly;
- resolve any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest in the public interest;
- make objective decisions based on merit, considering reasonable criteria and only relevant and material facts;
- protect privacy and confidentiality when necessary;
- pay according to agreed terms;
- talk directly to you about any problems we have with our relationship and not discuss issues publicly or with the media.

All our procurement activities will comply with the *Victorian Industry Participation Policy* and will be based on the following principles:

- value for money;
- open and fair competition;
- accountability;
- risk management;
- probity; and
- transparency.

As public sector employees, Eastern Health staff are not permitted to accept (either for ourselves or for our families):

- bribes;
- money or tips;
- any gift of influence no matter what the value; or
- any gift/benefit from a supplier, or likely supplier, either during a tendering period or three months either side of a tendering period.

We define a 'gift of influence' as a gift/benefit that is intended to ingratiate the gift giver with the recipient for favorable treatment. This includes any gift/benefit that, if accepted by our staff, could create, may create or could be perceived as creating, an obligation back to the gift giver or partiality towards the gift giver's business or product.

Our staff may accept token business gifts of little value, as long as they are one-off and not 'gifts of influence'.

Other than for token gifts/benefits, our staff are required to record and notify their manager of the details of all gifts/benefits offered to them including the name of the gift giver and the reason for the gift.

We are required to avoid all potential, actual or perceived conflicts of interests where possible. If this cannot be achieved, we are required to resolve the conflict of interest in the public interest. We must also record all potential, actual or perceived conflicts of interest on a centrally held *Conflict of Interests register* which is monitored regularly.

Non-compliance

If we engage in unethical or illegal (including corrupt) behaviour, this could result in criminal investigation, criminal prosecution, loss of reputation, or disciplinary action that may result in dismissal of staff who are involved.

What we expect from you

In your dealings with us, we expect you to:

- be professional, accessible, open and fair;
- act at all times with honesty, integrity and transparency;
- communicate clearly and respond promptly to questions, resolving any issues quickly;
- comply with the law, this statement and our policies and procedures as they extend to you;
- declare to us any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest if and when they occur and work with us to resolve them in the public interest;
- provide us with a quality product or service on time that gives us value for money;
- refrain from pressuring us in our decision making;
- refrain from offering any bribes, gifts or benefits that are intended to influence us or may be perceived as influencing us;
- refrain from involvement in any collusive practices;
- talk directly to us about any problems you have with our relationship and not discuss issues publicly or with the media;
- protect privacy and confidentiality where expected or necessary; and
- tell us about any unethical business practices that you identify.

If you are involved in tendering for business with Eastern Health, you will be required to sign an acknowledgement that you have read and accept our *Statement of Business Ethics*.

If you engage in unethical or illegal (including corrupt) behaviour, it could lead to criminal investigation, criminal prosecution, termination of order/contract, disqualification of tender, loss of future work, loss of approval and loss of reputation.

Further information

If you have any questions about this statement please contact the Executive Director, Human Resources & Communications.

If you are concerned about a possible breach of this statement, or about any conduct that could involve fraud, corruption, maladministration or serious and substantial waste of public funds, please contact the Executive Director, Human Resources & Communications or the Victorian Ombudsman.