



CODE OF ETHICS

Each member of the Association shall conduct their business with integrity and in an ethical manner to earn and maintain the confidence of clients, colleagues, employers, employees and the public, and to maintain the reputation of the business events industry.

Article 1

Members shall pursue and maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct, and:

- (a) Comply with the laws of Australia or of the country in which work is being performed and operate within the spirit of those laws.
- (b) Ensure that all contracts and/or terms of business are clear, concise and are honoured in full unless terminated or modified by mutual agreement.
- (c) Maintain skills through commitment to continued professional development and encourage colleagues to do the same.
- (d) Uphold at all times the standing of the Association, our Industry and its Code of Ethics and actively encourage colleagues to do the same.
- (e) Act honestly and fairly in all business dealings.
- (f) Uphold high standards of corporate governance, and adopt terms of trade that would enhance the reputation of the industry as a sound, financially well-managed industry.
- (g) Adopt risk management strategies, including the maintenance of appropriate insurance coverage so that all parties are not unreasonably exposed to risk.
- (h) Shall not represent by use of the MEA logo or otherwise that their product or service is endorsed by MEA unless such endorsement agreement exists.
- (i) Cooperate with any inquiry conducted by MEA to resolve any dispute involving consumers or another member.

Article 2

In their relationships with clients or customers, members shall:

- (a) Where a principal/agent relationship exists, act as faithful agents in both professional and business matters.
- (b) Advise them of any conflict of interest situation as it may occur or as it is perceived.
- (c) Give professional opinion as objectively as possible when asked to do so and accept responsibility for advice given, actions taken and omissions.
- (d) Declare any commissions, remuneration or additional benefit received from a third party that directly arises out of work performed for the client.
- (e) Promptly respond to any client complaint about the service provided.

Article 3

In their relationships with employees and others, members shall:

- (a) Protect the safety, health and welfare of employees and the public.
- (b) Not disclose any confidential information without the specific consent of the provider of that information unless compelled by law.
- (c) Not harm or attempt to harm, maliciously or recklessly, directly or indirectly, the professional reputation of others.
- (d) Respect the privacy of others by distributing personal details only in circumstances that would be reasonably expected by the person, and by communicating with the person only when it is relevant to the circumstance that gave rise to the giving of the personal detail, or otherwise when permission is granted.
- (e) Respect the intellectual property of others in the industry, particularly when ideas, creativity, and advice has been provided in good faith, but no agreement is in place to use such intellectual property.
- (f) Make every effort to resolve complaints and grievances in good faith through reasonable direct communication and negotiation.

Breach of Ethics:

Any MEA member, client or third party (called the complainant) can bring to the attention of MEA a potential breach of the Code of Ethics. The following process applies for dealing with the allegation:

1. In the first instance, the complainant shall raise the allegation of a breach of the code of ethics in writing to the MEA Chief Executive Officer. The complainant needs to:
 - i. Outline the circumstances of the breach(s), providing as much information and evidence as possible to substantiate the complaint.
 - ii. State whether they wish their identity to remain confidential. In opting for confidentiality, it should be understood by the complainant that in some circumstances, such confidentiality might form a barrier to proper investigation.
2. The MEA CEO shall respond to the complainant explaining the process and seeking any further information, including whether other complainants may be involved.
3. The MEA CEO shall write in confidence to the member being the subject of the complaint, notifying them of the complaint and seeking an explanation for the alleged breach.
4. On recommendation of the CEO that the matter requires further investigation, the Board of Directors shall appoint a minimum of three and a maximum of five members of the National Council to act as the Disciplinary Tribunal to deal with any breach of ethics cases, and shall from that group appoint a Chair. The appointees to the Disciplinary Tribunal shall have no conflict of interest as a result of a business or other relationship with either the complainant or the member, nor shall they be in direct competition with either party.
5. Should the CEO recommend against further action, the complainant may write to the President to seek that the Board of Directors take the complaint further. If the Board of Directors decides to not take the complaint further, such decision is final.
6. The Disciplinary Tribunal shall deal with the issue on a confidential basis. In their investigations, if appropriate to the circumstances, they can:
 - i. Seek further evidence from complainant, the member or other relevant parties.
 - ii. Decide that no further action is necessary.
 - iii. Call a meeting between the complainant and the member to seek to resolve the matter.
 - iv. Call a formal meeting with the member where the member has the opportunity to put their case.
 - v. Take advice on customary industry practice,
 - vi. make recommendations to the Board of Directors on appropriate changes to the Industry's Code of Ethics, or if certain information and education strategies to the general membership are appropriate.
 - vii. Rule that there has been a breach (s) or the Code of Ethics and instigate an appropriate disciplinary response.
7. Options for the Disciplinary Tribunal if a breach is found are:
 - i. That the member be notified in writing that there has been a breach, and either giving a warning that should such a breach occur again, further action would be taken and/or stipulating that the member has been formally censured.
 - ii. That all MEA members be notified of the breach.
 - iii. Cancellation of membership.
8. Should the member disagree with the finding of the Disciplinary Tribunal, they may appeal to the full National Council for further consideration, and in so doing, state the grounds upon which the decision of the Tribunal shall be reconsidered.
9. The National Council shall act in accordance with Clause 19 of the MEA Constitution. Any decision of the National Council shall be final.

(By-Law of MEA adopted 20/04/04 by Board of Directors.)