

CODE OF CONDUCT

Every member of Meetings & Events Australia 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 any country in which work is being performed.
- (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) At all times uphold the standing of the Association, our Industry and MEA's Code of Conduct 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 maintain the reputation of the industry as a sound, financially well-managed industry.
- (g) Adopt risk management strategies for all events that identifies all risks and include risk mitigation processes, including the maintenance of appropriate insurance coverage.
- (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.
- (j) Is compliant with the laws of Australia governing the conduct of business and holds appropriate business licences and updates records as required.

Article 2

In their relationships with clients or customers, members shall:

- (a) Where a principal/agent relationship exists, act as faithful agents in all matters.
- (b) Disclose any conflict of interest as it may occur or as it is perceived.
- (c) Provide professional opinions as objectively 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) Manage all data received in accordance with the Australian Privacy Act 1988.
<https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/the-privacy-act>
- (c) Not disclose any confidential information without the specific consent of the provider of that information unless compelled by law.
- (d) Not harm or attempt to harm, maliciously or recklessly, directly or indirectly, the professional reputation of others.
- (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 Conduct

Any MEA member, client or third party (the complainant) can bring to the attention of MEA a potential breach of the Code of Conduct. 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 conduct in writing to the MEA Chief Executive Officer by completing the complaint form on the Meetings & Events Australia website. The complainant must:
 - 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 affect the scope of the investigation.
2. The MEA Chief Executive Officer shall respond to the complainant explaining the process and may seek further information.
3. The MEA Chief Executive Officer shall write in confidence to the member subject to the complaint, notifying them of the complaint and seeking a response to the alleged breach.
4. A Disciplinary Tribunal shall deal with the issue on a confidential basis. In their investigations, if appropriate to the circumstances, they may:
 - i. Seek further evidence from any relevant party.
 - ii. Decide that no further action is necessary.
 - iii. Call a meeting with the member where the member has the opportunity to put their case without the presence of the complainant.
 - iv. Call a meeting between the complainant and the member to seek to resolve the matter by mediation
 - vi. Rule that there has been a breach (s) or the Code of Conduct and recommend an appropriate disciplinary response to the CEO/Board.
5. Should the MEA Chief Executive Officer recommend against further action, the complainant may write to the Chair to seek that the MEA Board of Directors take the complaint further. If the MEA Board of Directors decides not to take the complaint further, such decision is final.
6. On recommendation of the MEA Chief Executive Officer that the matter requires further investigation, the MEA Board of Directors shall appoint a minimum of three and a maximum of five members of the Board to act as the Disciplinary Tribunal to deal with the alleged breach, and shall from that group appoint a Chair. The appointees to the Disciplinary Tribunal must have no conflict of interest as a result of a business or other relationship with either the complainant or the member.
7. If a breach is found then the member shall 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.
8. Should the member disagree with the finding of the Disciplinary Tribunal, they may appeal to the full MEA Board of Directors for further consideration, and in so doing, state the grounds upon which the decision of the Disciplinary Tribunal shall be reconsidered.
9. The CEO shall recommend such action as is deemed appropriate and the MEA Board shall decide whether or not to accept that recommendation.
10. Penalties for a breach of the Code of Conduct may include:
 - i. A written warning and formal reprimand
 - ii. A temporary suspension of membership
 - iii. Permanent expulsion from Meetings & Events Australia