

Code of Conduct for Fusion Party of Australia candidates, elected members, members, staff, and other party representatives

This Code of Conduct can be amended by a vote of the Executive Committee and, ultimately, by a vote of the membership.

Our Code of Conduct frames the work we do within and for the Fusion Party (the Party) to be measured against the highest possible standards. The Party in particular expects the leadership of the party to uphold the ethical standards set out in this code. The bar is set high for practical and aspirational reasons, and reflects the level of honour and integrity expected of those who guide and lead our country. Commitment to these standards reaffirms the gravity with which we take the role of a political party and how we contribute to the direction and leadership of this nation.

The Party acknowledges that all people are entitled to fair treatment. We are committed to being a safe and inclusive space for all employees, members, and volunteers, and to apply these standards to our interactions with people outside our organisation.

1. Scope

1.1 This code applies to all representatives (being titled roles or candidates), volunteers, employees or members of the Party.

1.2 Third party individuals and organisations that work with us should endeavour to meet an equivalent standard of conduct as defined in this code. Failure to do so can result in a termination of their relationship with the Party at the discretion of the executive.

1.3 State, territory and local branches of the Party may have their own code of conduct. Where those codes conflict with this code of conduct on a procedural level, the geographical branch policy shall take precedence.

1.4 Associate branches of the federal entity may have additional code of conduct requirements over and above, but may not contravene, this code.

2. Procedure for Complaints

2.1 The Party takes all complaints seriously, and recognises the right of any Australian resident to submit genuine complaints to the organisation over any action, or omission, by an individual within the party that they feel is a violation of our code of conduct.

2.2 The Party may also accept any submission of a concern regarding a publication, activity, or action of the Party, but this will not be administered under the resolution guidelines applied from the Code of Conduct.

2.3 The Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) is defined by the Party constitution.

2.4 Any complaint or concern should be submitted in writing to any Party representative (or group thereof), who shall acknowledge the complaint in writing and refer it to the DRC in a timely manner. The DRC is responsible for determining if a complaint is to be deemed genuine or vexatious.

2.5 The Party strongly believes in whistle-blowing protections. The Party and its members shall maintain a strict “no retaliation” policy regarding any complaint, or concern raised.

2.5.1 “No retaliation” does not apply to actions deemed necessary or appropriate in the course of dismissing repeated vexatious complaints made, in the interests of continuing the effective operation of the Party, or the individual’s responsibilities.

2.5.2 If anyone who has submitted a complaint or concern to the DRC believes they are the target of a retaliation in any form (including but not limited to bullying, harassment, exclusion, or vexatious complaints) they are encouraged to contact the DRC. Those found to have committed any of the above behaviours will be considered to be in breach of this code.

2.6 In the event of a potential breach of this code of conduct (including submission of a complaint to the DRC):

2.6.1 The DRC will investigate the substance of the complaint,

2.6.2 and may take disciplinary action against those found in breach of this code. Such action may include written notice of a breach, call for the executive to review the membership status of persons in breach, instate a probationary period for those in breach, or for particularly heinous grievances they may recommend the executive expel the breaching party(s) from the Party.

2.7 Where a complaint has been made to the DRC and the outcome is not satisfactory to the complainant, a complaint may be escalated for the consideration of the Party executive.

2.8 If the finding of the DRC is not unanimous, it is to be referred to the Executive for review.

2.9 All recommendations made to the Executive by the DRC should be recorded in Executive Committee minutes. Recommendations of expulsion shall be made public.

3. Standards of Conduct

3.1 The Party expects all persons covered by this code to abide by the following standards and principles:

3.1.1 Everyone should be treated with fairness and dignity.

3.1.2 Everyone should follow all applicable workplace policies, and behave in a safe manner for themselves and those around them at all times.

3.1.3 Party members should aim to correctly represent the interests, aims and policies of the Party and its Branches.

3.1.4 All actions taken within, or on behalf of the Party should be free from personal conflicts of interest. Any potential conflict of interest must be disclosed to the party as soon as the individual becomes aware of it.

3.1.5 Dealings with fellow Party members, including those members elected to public office should be done in a positive and constructive manner.

3.1.6 Dealings with other persons or parties on behalf of the organisation should be done in good faith.

3.2 Elected representatives to public office are expected to adhere to these additional standards:

3.2.1 Elected representatives to public office are expected to work constructively with other elected representatives and members of the Party and its Branches to achieve the purposes of the Party.

3.2.2 Elected representatives to public office must declare all take-away gifts or sponsored experiences to be listed on a public register maintained by the Party and not accept gifts that are not commensurate with the situation. The DRC may review the appropriateness of any gift accepted without specific complaint raised against the recipient.

3.2.3 Elected representatives will maintain a public register of their own votes.

3.2.4 Elected representatives shall liaise with the Party on policy or voting direction when no clear policy has been established by the Party in order to ensure consistency with Party direction or contribute to the development of new policy.

3.2.5 If elected representatives vote in parliaments or councils against Party policy, they shall explain to the Executive Committee their reasons for voting that way.

4. Misconduct

4.1 Misconduct includes a range of different activities and omissions that may warrant action on the part of the Party. Misconduct events can range in severity. The following list of behaviours are considered by the Party to be misconduct, however this list is not exhaustive.

4.1.1 Sexual assault.

4.1.2 Physical assault.

4.1.2 Verbal intimidation or use of abusive, or threatening language towards another person.

4.1.3 Any type of harassment, bullying or victimisation.

4.1.4 Discrimination, or harassment towards a person or group of persons on the basis of age, disability, race, ethnicity, sex, intersex status, gender identity, sexual orientation or religion.

4.1.5 Disregard of health or safety policies and procedures.

4.1.6 Negligence or recklessness in one's duties or activities on behalf of the Party, or while involved in a party event.

4.1.7 Committing an act or omission that damages or is likely to damage the reputation of the Party.

4.1.8 Misuse of confidential information, including unnecessary storage of member or voter information outside of approved databases.

4.1.9 Falsification of documents, or making an incorrect declaration to the Party or on the Party's behalf (including candidate nomination forms).

4.1.10 Unauthorised possession or misuse of Party property (including physical or digital assets including intellectual property).

4.1.11 Actual or attempted bribery or coercion using Party or personal property, resources or influence.

4.1.12 Deliberate misrepresentation of the interests, aims and policies of the Party or its Branches.

4.1.13 Behaviour in a manner considered contrary to the policies of the Party.

4.1.14 Engaging in Branch stacking or similar activities; for the purpose of ensuring certain individuals are preselected to electable positions.

Note: This is not the same as being an enthusiastic recruiter for the party. Actions that may constitute branch stacking include but are not limited to; paying for or raising money for other people's membership, falsely signing a membership application on behalf of another person or encouraging or requesting a third party to do the same.

4.2 Additionally, the following behaviours by candidates and elected representatives may be considered as misconduct:

4.2.1 Use of their position to benefit personally beyond any normal remuneration, such as embezzlement of party or public funds or property.

4.2.2 Use of their position for the private benefit of any friend, family member, associate or any other person.

4.2.3 Casting their vote in Parliaments or Councils in direct conflict with the established principles of the Party.

4.2.4 Intentionally restricting Party representative access to their offices and records related to elected representative business including minutes, meeting records, travel and background briefings, beyond what is required to be kept confidential by law or policy.

4.2.5 Failing to respond to requests and directions of the Executive Committee in a reasonable timeframe on Party and Electorate business.