



Policy

Statement of Business Ethics

At Bridge Housing we empower residents and foster inclusive communities through quality services and programs. Our priority is sustaining tenancies, and we know that with early intervention most problems can be solved. We are proactive and in regular contact with our residents to ensure they are set up to succeed. We set high ethical standards for ourselves, and we expect the same from our private sector partners and suppliers.

When you adhere to this Statement of Business Ethics, it tells us that you, as a partner or supplier, respect our responsibility to deliver an ethical service to our tenants and are committed to helping us achieve this.

We look forward to doing business with you.

Laurie Leigh

Chief Executive Officer

Who does our Statement of Business Ethics apply to?

This statement applies to Bridge Housing and all related entities. We require all employees, agents and anyone acting on behalf of Bridge Housing to abide by this Statement of Business Ethics. We also require our commercial partners to maintain similar ethical standards. We expect that our commercial partners will make their employees, agents, subcontractors, or anyone working on Bridge Housing business aware of this statement and their obligation to respect its principles.

A commercial partner is any individual or organisation which enters into a contractual relationship to provide goods or services to Bridge Housing.

What are our core business principles?

We conduct all our business activities with honesty, fairness and consistency. We aim to work within an open and competitive marketplace that achieves the best value for public money. We are committed to transparency in all our business endeavours.

In the context of this statement, fairness means that we will be objective, reasonable and accountable for our decisions. We acknowledge that there may be differences between the way the not for profit and private sectors do business, and the expectations each has of the other. We will do our best to reconcile those differences in a way that respects the rights and obligations of both parties. We expect our commercial partners to take the same approach in their dealings with us.

We will balance all relevant factors in making commercial decisions. These include but are not limited to; initial and whole-of-life costs, quality, reliability and timeliness of delivery, as well as community and social policy imperatives.

What can you expect from our staff?

We believe that personal integrity is an essential part of Bridge Housing as a leading provider of affordable housing to low- and moderate-income families in NSW. Our staff pledge to operate under and uphold the highest of ethical standards.

At Bridge Housing, directors and staff are bound by our Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy. Our staff are required to carry out their duties using common sense and good judgment.

Acting in accordance with the Code, they are expected to:

- Act in a courteous, respectful, and unbiased manner.
- Communicate in a clear, direct, and accountable fashion.
- Use resources effectively, efficiently, and economically.
- Avoid conflicts of interest.
- Keep accurate records of all business dealings on behalf of Bridge Housing.

- Maintain the confidentiality of Bridge Housing and our commercial partners' proprietary and sensitive information.
- Not accept gifts or other benefits offered during their duties.

If our staff do not adhere to our Statement of Business Ethics, they will be held accountable and may be subject to disciplinary proceedings, including possible loss of employment, as well as criminal and other legal sanctions.

What are our corporate values?

Our corporate values guide our actions and determine who and what we aspire to be. They are expressed through our interaction with our colleagues, applicants and residents, suppliers, and all other Bridge Housing stakeholders including the wider community.

We use our Corporate Values to make decisions that will align with our long-term goal to “Change people’s lives through more homes and quality services”. Our Values guide our behaviours.

Our values are:	What does Bridge Housing mean by this?
Integrity	We act ethically and honestly.
Inclusion	We cultivate diversity and belonging.
Innovation	We look for new ways to make a positive impact.

What are our key commercial practices?

We are committed to purchasing goods and services underpinned by the following principles:

- Honesty and fairness
- Accountability and transparency
- No conflict of interest
- Rule of law
- No anti-competitive practices
- No improper advantage
- Intention to proceed (prior to seeking or submitting tenders)
- Co-operation

All communications made or received by Bridge Housing will be treated as confidential, unless otherwise indicated. Bridge Housing keeps records of all commercial transactions to ensure that there is an effective audit trail and a basis upon which to monitor and review the performance of contracts.

Our commercial partners can also expect:

- To be treated with impartiality and fairness
- To receive equal access to information
- To have the same opportunities to submit bids or tenders.
- To be subject to probity and audit checks if required
- Have their intellectual property rights respected and to receive fair compensation for any access, license or use of those rights.
- To receive fair consideration when providing goods or services to Bridge Housing

What do we expect from our business partners?

We expect our business partners to mirror the ethical standards and practices that we follow. We expect our partners to:

- Comply with Bridge Housing's procurement policies and procedures in all their dealings with Bridge Housing.
- Provide accurate and reliable advice and information.
- Declare any conflicts of interest arising in their commercial activities with Bridge Housing.
- Not engage in any form of collusive practice, including offering Bridge Housing staff inducements or incentives.
- Not disclose confidential information.
- Refrain from discussing Bridge Housing business practices or information in the media or other public forums.
- Provide fair value for money in supplying Bridge Housing with goods and services.
- Co-operate in preventing unethical practices.
- Assist Bridge Housing in continuously improving its business practice and relationships.

What do we expect of our staff?

In dealing with our business partners, our staff are expected to:

- Promote the integrity of Bridge Housing.
- Always act in the interest of Bridge Housing.
- Disclose and manage any conflicts of interest.
- Not accept or solicit money, gifts, hospitality, benefits, or travel.
- Treat clients and partners with fairness.

- Not engage in any discriminatory or harassing behaviour.
- Not disclose any confidential information obtained in the conduct of their work.
- Ensure that information is kept securely to prevent unauthorised access.
- Obtain approval for any secondary employment outside their duties.
- Respect the confidentiality of any information obtained in their employment with Bridge Housing when or if they move on to other employment.
- Report corrupt conduct.

Why is compliance important?

By complying with our Statement of Business Ethics, our business partners will be able to advance their reputation, business objectives and interests in the broader market and community.

Considering that all our business partners must adhere to these ethical standards, there is no disadvantage in complying. However, there are serious disadvantages to non-compliance. Demonstrated corrupt or unethical conduct could lead to the termination of contracts, loss of work in the future, damage to business reputation, public exposure, and even criminal prosecution.

Gifts and benefits

Our Gift Policy requires all employees to decline gifts, benefits, travel, or hospitality offered during the course of their duties. Our commercial partners should not offer any gifts or benefits to Bridge Housing staff. If a gift is accepted, officials must record the gift in Bridge Housing's Gift Register.

Disclosing and registering conflicts of interest

A conflict of interest may be actual, potential, or perceived. Each type of conflict should be disclosed.

Declarations should be made by the employees about their own activities but also those of 'affiliated persons', that is:

- a) any immediate family member;
- b) any corporation or organisation in which the employee has membership, ownership, employment, or an interest in; or
- c) any trust or other estate in which an employee has substantial beneficial interest.

Business partners and their staff must disclose actual, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest.

Conflicts of interest will be managed according to the applicable policy.

Reporting corrupt conduct

Bridge Housing's Fraud Control Policy defines corrupt conduct to be the conduct of any person that adversely affects the honest or impartial exercise of their functions by any of our staff or authority. It includes the offering or acceptance of bribes and the misuse of Bridge Housing resources. Bridge Housing' requires staff and business partners to report any suspected corrupt conduct.

Please refer to Bridge Housing's Whistleblower policy for information on the protection provided for Bridge Housing staff who report corrupt conduct.

Contact

If you wish to provide any information about suspected corrupt conduct, fraud, or other misconduct, please contact Bridge Housing's Fraud Control Officer (Chief Financial Officer) directly on 8324 0820 Ext 220. Alternatively, if you wish to remain anonymous, Bridge Housing has established a Whistleblower program which is administered by an independent third-party organisation, *Your-Call*.

We have established this program as we are committed to encouraging, supporting, and protecting the reporting of incidents of fraud, corrupt conduct and questionable behaviour.

By engaging *Your-Call*, an independent organisation, contractors or supplies can securely, anonymously and confidentially report information about dishonesty, fraud, unsafe environments, unethical and other inappropriate behaviour.

You can make a secure report online at www.your-call.com.au or alternatively a link to their website is on Bridge Housing's website.

This service is monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. When logging a report please ensure you use the unique company identifier code BRID2009. All reports will be investigated, and you are able to monitor progress and receive feedback through *Your Calls* portal.

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