

# *Mountains Outreach Community Service Inc*

Organisational Policy No. 1

Philosophy, Mission and Goals

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## *Philosophy, Mission and Goals*

### **PHILOSOPHY**

Mountains Outreach Community Service Inc (MOCS) has a commitment to:

- Social justice and equity,
- Personal empowerment and choice,
- Reconciliation and anti-bias strategies,
- Working in partnership collaboratively and facilitating others to do the same (eg. by community networking and conflict resolution),
- Facilitating participation and active involvement in innovative, imaginative and creative ways.

MOCS **VISION** is to build a healthy interactive community

- ❖ Where vulnerable and disadvantaged community members are well supported and their resilience and quality of life is improved.
- ❖ Where individuals, families and communities participate in opportunities to build a sense of place, community connection and trust through shared experience, knowledge and strong respectful relationships.

MOCS **MISSION** is to

- ❖ Support families and build community in the Blue Mountains

MOCS **VALUES**:

- ❖ We respect the knowledge, culture and custodianship of the Aboriginal communities of the Blue Mountains.
- ❖ We value diversity, and advocate for social justice, equity and social inclusion.
- ❖ We value strengths based community development practice, personal and community empowerment and choice.

MOCS **GOALS** are to:

1. Reduce the impact of social and economic disadvantage and reduce social isolation by building social inclusion.

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2. Enhance the resilience and connectedness of BM children, their families and communities.
3. Be an agile and robust community organisation.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

MOCS **aims** to improve the quality of life for Blue Mountains residents by developing and initiating projects and activities to meet the needs of people disadvantaged through disability, isolation, socio-economic status and to relieve poverty, misfortune and suffering.

### **MOCS objectives:**

1. To work with the community to identify their needs and to assist in the development and implementation of culturally appropriate services and programs and links to meet and address those needs.
2. To increase the knowledge of and promote the use of community services and resources by the more disadvantaged within our community to assist them to realise their potential.
3. Raise community awareness of the issues impacting on the disadvantaged and vulnerable within our community.
4. To provide the opportunity for community connectedness and access to programs that build resilience within and across our community.
5. To provide opportunities for increasing the understanding of reconciliation and respect for Aboriginal culture and issues affecting or important to the Aboriginal community.
6. Deliver community development activities that address the social and economic factors that impact on the lives of the disadvantaged and vulnerable within the BM community.
7. Provide outreach children's services in the Blue Mountains Local Government Area to enable access for Aboriginal and disadvantaged families.
8. Provide families with information and referrals to assist them to access services that meet their individual needs.
9. Promote the participation of families including children in the development of activities and service planning and evaluation.



# *Mountains Outreach Community Service Inc*

Organisational Policy No. 2

Code of Ethics and Conduct

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## *Code of Ethics and Conduct*

### **STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

MOCS provides an open, welcoming and safe environment for everyone participating in our programs. We are committed to four social justice principles: equity, access, participation and rights.

We are committed to ensuring that all staff, volunteers and Management Committee members act ethically, responsibly and in the best interests of the organisation. Staff, Management Committee members, volunteers and students recognise and support the stated philosophy and policies of MOCS and contribute to these by working towards the best possible standards of service to the community.

MOCS is committed to ensuring that individual interests which conflict with the interests of the organisation are identified and managed so that they do not affect the services, activities or decisions of the organisation. Declaration and management of conflict of interest are specifically required for the Management Committee and all staff. Refer to Conflict of Interest Policy.

We provide high quality programs for children and families that are safe and welcoming for them.

We seek feedback and input from children, parents and colleagues so these standards are maintained.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT:**

Everyone participating in Mountains Outreach Community Service's programs (including staff, volunteers, Management Committee members, students, children, parents and visitors) must keep to the following codes of behaviour:

**Treat everyone with respect** ie act fairly and equitably; respect others, their values and their rights; respect privacy and confidentiality and create an environment that is free of discrimination, harassment or victimization

**Act honestly at all times**; be transparent when making decisions or giving advice and ensure all actions can withstand scrutiny.

**Listen to children's and young people's views**, respect what they say and involve them in decision-making, especially about matters that will directly affect them.

**Be a positive role model to children and young people** in all your conduct with them.

**Set clear boundaries about appropriate behaviour** between yourself and the children and families attending MOCS' programs. Boundaries help everyone to carry out their roles well.

**Follow MOCS organisational policy and guidelines** for the safety of children as outlined in MOCS Child Protection Policy\* at all times to ensure the safety of children.

**Record and act on serious complaints of abuse.**

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Code of Ethics and Conduct

**Have another adult present or in sight** when conducting one-to-one activities with children, wherever possible.

**Respect the confidentiality of information** of a sensitive nature obtained in the course of service provision or any meetings and store confidential information safely.

**Inform service users about the limits of confidentiality.**

Staff will be provided with a MOCS t-shirt and name badge and encouraged to wear these at MOCS services and activities.

**DO NOT discriminate** on the basis of race, gender, religion, age, disability or sexuality.

**DO NOT use discriminating, bullying or rude remarks or behaviour.**

**DO NOT develop any ‘special’ relationships** with children and young people that could be seen as favouritism such as the offering of gifts or special treatment.

**DO NOT do things of a personal nature** that children are able to do for themselves, such as going to the toilet or changing clothes.

## **STANDARDS OF WORK**

### **Professional conduct:**

All individuals will perform their duties in a diligent manner as best they can and be at the highest level of professional conduct. They will be accountable for their work and their interactions with others by working within the law and the goals and objectives of MOCS and following its policies and procedures and not act in any way that brings them or the organisation into disrepute.

**Personal behaviours:** work co-operatively as a member of the team; support colleagues; discuss ethical concerns with colleagues and the manager; project a positive image of the organisation; not be absent from duties without an appropriate reason; dress appropriately and maintain confidentiality.

**Use of resources:** resources include physical, financial and technological resources as well as intellectual property. MOCS personnel must respect and safeguard all work resources and use them efficiently and only for appropriate purposes.

**Harassment and bullying** are unacceptable and contrary to ethical behaviour.

Discrimination on the basis of race, gender, religion, age, disability or sexuality is unacceptable and a breach of anti-discrimination and human rights law.

Harassment can take many forms. It can be obvious or subtle, direct or indirect. It includes:

- sexual or suggestive remarks or gestures
- displaying or circulating sexually suggestive, offensive or degrading/insulting material on walls, computer screen savers, E-mail,
- making fun of someone, imitating someone’s accent, spreading rumours, unwelcome practical jokes
- obscene or unsolicited telephone calls, letters, faxes or E-mail messages
- invasion of personal space, unnecessary physical contact
- continually ignoring or dismissing someone’s contribution.
- pushing, shoving or jostling or assault
- threats, insults, name calling, inappropriate language
- creating a hostile feeling or environment without any direct attacks being made on a person

### **COMMITMENT TO THIS CODE:**

Reviewed May 2015

Reviewed Feb 2018



# *Mountains Outreach Community Service Inc*

Organisational Policy No. 3

Access, Equity and Inclusion

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## *Access, Equity and Inclusion*

### **POLICY**

Mountains Outreach Community Service Inc (MOCS) is committed to providing access and equity of opportunities, resources and power which are not equally available to all people of the Blue Mountains LGA community. In particular, MOCS will target groups and individuals who experience disadvantage and discrimination.

MOCS' philosophy is based on the belief that all people have equal right to the benefits and opportunities of our society. Priority is given to particular disadvantaged groups within the local community, according to the changing characteristics of the community in order to share these benefits and opportunities. This includes:

- People discriminated against on the basis of race, ethnicity, colour, religion, or beliefs,
- People discriminated against on the basis of gender or sexuality
- People disadvantaged because of socio-economic status
- People with physical, intellectual or psychiatric disabilities and their families
- People excluded because of attitudes toward their age
- People discriminated against on the basis of preconceived ideas that may diminish the value of the person/persons
- People isolated because of services, transport, distance or geographical isolation.

### **PROCEDURES**

1. MOCS is committed to social justice and will ensure that equity of access to services and resources is actively pursued within its areas of responsibility and promoted amongst the networks of service providers, according to community articulated needs. Specific strategies include the following:
  - 1.1 MOCS services, events and resources will be promoted as widely as possible using a wide variety of media, service networks, and distribution of flyers/information to culturally specific and special needs community groups.
  - 1.2 Promotion of services will include the translation of brochures and the use of translators, where appropriate and possible.
  - 1.3 Information will be provided in a manner that is culturally sensitive, easily understood and in plain English so that it is accessible for people with a wide range of literacy levels.
  - 1.4 Where fees are charged for services, events or resources, MOCS will aim to ensure they are affordable.
  - 1.5 MOCS will seek to ensure the accessibility of locations and premises, including both the offices of MOCS and venues at which events are to be held (eg. training workshops, activity days, etc). Where possible,

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- venues should provide disabled access and be on public transport routes.
- 1.6 MOCS will ensure suitable operational hours and arrange events at times most suitable to particular community groups and public transport timetables.
  2. MOCS will promote activities that are culturally and socially sensitive and appropriate to our target group in the Blue Mountains LGA, in a way that reflects the social, demographic and cultural diversity of the area.
  3. MOCS is committed to assisting individuals in its service user group whose needs are not being met by service providers, to help vocalise these needs, and support and resource them.
  4. MOCS will promote the principles of participation and non-discrimination in the planning and delivery of MOCS services, resources and activities to all current and prospective community groups and agencies.
    - 4.1 MOCS will engage in ongoing consultation with a broad range of diverse groups to ensure ongoing relevance and accessibility of MOCS services, resources and events.
    - 4.2 MOCS will consult with diverse and special needs groups in the community in the development of MOCS' work plans and strategic plans.
    - 4.3 MOCS will actively encourage participation on MOCS' Management Committee and other decision making bodies which reflect the diversity of the community.
  5. MOCS will ensure that its Employment Policies and Procedures\* reflect Equal Employment Opportunity principles and will be consistent with anti-discrimination laws.
  6. MOCS will ensure that staff and management are given effective and relevant training and support that will enhance their understanding of access and equity issues and enable them to consistently implement accessible and equitable services.
  7. A specific criteria for involvement in the Management Committee will be a commitment to social justice and all Committee members, staff and volunteers are required to endorse MOCS' Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy\*.
  8. MOCS will develop and maintain their resources file to enable staff to implement this policy.



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Access, Equity and Inclusion

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## **\*Other relevant policies & documents**

- Philosophy, Mission and Goals Statement      Organisational Policy No.1
- Code of Ethics and Conduct                      Organisational Policy No. 2
- Equal Employment Opportunity                  Employment Policy No. 1

Adopted by Committee of Management on:- \_\_\_\_\_ 2008 \_\_\_\_\_

Review Date:- \_\_\_\_\_ May 2015 \_\_\_\_\_

# *Mountains Outreach Community Service Inc*

Organisational Policy No. 4

Duty of Care

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## *Duty of Care*

### **DEFINITIONS**

Duty of Care is a legal boundary that applies to the conduct of a paid or unpaid worker towards any one else they deal with in their professional role.

#### **1. Standard of Care**

The standard to which a given activity must be performed to meet the Duty of Care is ‘the standard that a reasonable person would meet in the same circumstances’.

A reasonable standard is not perfection. The standard of care is determined by a whole range of factors. These include:

- The standards that are generally seen as applicable to a given situation,
- Other laws and regulations that might apply to the circumstances,
- The practicalities of the situation,
- Responsibilities to other people who might be involved,
- Current community values about what is acceptable practice.

Other factors that are taken into account include:

- The level of training received and responsibilities undertaken,
- Awareness by paid and unpaid workers of their skills, experience and their limits,
- The delegation of tasks and responsibilities to unpaid workers that are within their level of skill, training and experience.

#### **2. Breach of Duty of Care**

A breach of Duty of Care is a failure to meet the relevant standard of care, through:

- Any worker doing something that they should not have done, or
- Failing to do something that they should have done.

This does not mean that every mistake necessarily constitutes a breach of Duty of Care. This will depend on whether or not the mistake was reasonable in the circumstances. The person to whom the Duty of Care was owed has to be able to show that the breach of that duty resulted in some sort of harm or loss. In a negligence action, it must be demonstrated that:

- Harm or injury was caused, either directly or indirectly, by the breach of Duty of Care – to be able to show, that, were it not for the other person’s carelessness, the damage would not have occurred,
- The harm or injury was reasonably foreseeable in the circumstances.

# *Mountains Outreach Community Service Inc*

Organisational Policy No. 4

Duty of Care

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## **POLICY**

Mountains Outreach Community Service Inc (MOCS) will ensure that all Management and Service Committee members, staff, volunteers and students have a good understanding of and commitment to their responsibilities in relation to Duty of Care.

In MOCS there are three main levels of Duty of Care:

1. **Management** – The Management Committee has a Duty of Care to its employees, volunteers, students and service users as the service provider. It needs to provide policies and procedures and make decisions that are aimed at protecting all parties,
2. **Paid Staff** – Paid staff have a Duty of Care to volunteers and students, to ensure that they are not placed in a position which could put them at risk. This includes the physical environment where they work and also the level of training and skill development provided to ensure that the volunteer and/or student is adequately skilled to perform the duties required,
3. **Management, Staff, Volunteers and Students** – have a Duty of Care to the service users they assist, to ensure that their actions (or lack of) or decisions do not put service users at risk.

## **PROCEDURES**

1. Management and Service Committee members, staff, volunteers and students are required to read and understand this policy document on Duty of Care, as part of their orientation to the organisation.
2. Staff recruitment practices must fulfil Child Protection legislative requirements. In particular, MOCS must ensure that all workers recruited to the organisation sign a “Prohibited Employment Declaration” form and all who work directly with children also sign consent to undergo a screening process. (Refer Clause 1 in Child Protection Policy)\*.
3. The Management Committee must ensure that the organisation’s Occupational Health and Safety Policies and Procedures\* are developed, implemented and reviewed regularly to fulfil its Duty of Care obligations.
4. Training will be provided to all MOCS staff, volunteers and students to ensure they have the skills to fulfil duties required of them. The training needs of staff will be addressed as part of the Staff Appraisal\* process and as required.
5. If a Management or Service Committee member, staff member, volunteer or student think they or another person within the organisation may have

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Duty of Care

breached their Duty of Care obligations, the person concerned is required to immediately report the alleged breach to the MOCS Manager. The following will then be implemented:

- Actions are to be immediately taken by MOCS staff who are present to minimise harm to the person or people involved, and follow up action is to be pursued, as required.
- The alleged breach is to be investigated by the MOCS Manager,
- The alleged breach, if confirmed is to be reported to the Management Committee,
- Strategies will need to be put into place to ensure the breach does not occur again (eg. training, property maintenance, reference to Disciplinary Action Policy\*, seek legal advice).

## **\*Other relevant policies & documents**

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Staff Appraisal                | Employment Policy No. 11 |
| • Disciplinary Action            | Employment Policy No. 13 |
| • Child Protection               | Operations Policy No. 4  |
| • Occupational Health and Safety | Operations Policy No. 6  |

Adopted by Committee of Management on:- \_\_\_\_\_

Review Date:- \_\_\_\_\_