





# Code of conduct

# Document Control

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Any breach of confidentiality represents a failure or breach of the COCOWA constitution and code of conduct. This document belongs to the Congolese Community of Western Australia with the Executive Committee as its sole custodian.

Distributing this document without the permission of the executive committee will result in serious consequences.

Our Code of Conduct shall be read in conjunction with the COCOWA constitution, Policies, and procedures.

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## Code of conduct overview

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The Congolese Community of WA Code of conduct sets guidance and proper practices on how we work with each other in the community and elsewhere when engaging the community to accomplish our mission and vision. It outlines the norms, rules and responsibilities for standard behaviour and accountabilities for our decision making in all our dealings.

Congolese Community of WA Code of conduct applies to all leaders, elders in our community, external organisations, Consultants, agencies, or stakeholders dealing with Congolese community of WA directly or indirectly.

## Our Mission, Vision, and Goals

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Our Mission and Vision clarify why the Congolese community of Western Australia exists and what we are working together as a community to achieve.

### **Our Mission**

To build a sustainable, and strong community that will provide meaningful opportunities, support, and solutions by connecting lives within the community.

### **Our Vision**

THRIVE in UNITY and HARMONY

### **Our Goals**

#### Empowerment

- Conveying confidence in our community members' ability to be successful.
- Build the capacity of emerging leaders for a better future.
- Competency Uplift of our leaders and emerging leaders for a better future for our community (Capacity building).

#### Wellbeing and Development

- Promote Mental and Physical well-being.
- Strengthen harmony, peace, and unity among the Congolese in Western Australia and other communities in sustainable environment (Social, cultural & Technologies focus)

#### Finance our Vision

Pursue projects and endeavours that will drive financial growth and prosperity for our community.

#### Enhance Awareness

- Promote Community engagement
- Deliver events and activities that exhibit Congolese culture and excellence
- Partnerships and Networking with other communities and organisations
- Increase bridging, Knowledge and experience sharing with other groups or organisations
- Preserve and perpetuate our legacy.

## Our Core Values

Our Values give us a framework and guidance for our behaviours, and decision-making and are blueprints about what we expect of ourselves and each other. We will all act in accordance with our values.

Values	Expectations
One Community / Inclusion	<p>"Congolese community of WA first"</p> <p>As one community, we work together in the best interests of all our members and the community by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- building a strong network based on tolerance, understanding, and cooperation.</li> <li>- building a strong network based on tolerance, respect, and cooperation</li> </ul> <p>We are one and diverse. We stand together and strong.</p> <p>Mentoring to help our youth as they go through challenging life changes and teamwork.</p>
Integrity	<p>We are committed to being honest, ethical, and accountable in everything we do.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- being trustworthy, consistent, and reliable.</li> <li>- practicing and encouraging open and honest communications</li> <li>- conducting our actions fairly, with honesty and transparency</li> </ul>
Responsibility and discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Following through on our commitment toward the community (membership fee payment, punctuality)</li> <li>- Adherence to OCOWA, constitution, code of conduct, policies, and regulations</li> <li>- Personal Responsibility: upholding the values and mission of the community at all time</li> <li>- Communal Responsibility: encouraging others to do the right thing by setting an example</li> </ul>

Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Thriving to commit to our vision: our devotion to our vision through positive actions and optimism will lead us to success</li> <li>- A commitment to problem-solving in an amiable and respectful way</li> <li>- Working together to solve problems that affect us as community: "If you want to go far go together".</li> </ul>
Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New ideas and innovative approaches to doing things.</li> <li>- Smart planning and delivery for the future</li> <li>- Treating everyone with courtesy and respect by taking time to listen</li> <li>- Being good steward of our resources, supplies</li> </ul>

## Our Responsibilities under COCOWA code of conduct

COCOWA members conduct, and behaviour must be in accordance with the Code, regardless of our role. If you breach the COCOWA Code of conduct or relevant policies and procedures, you may place yourself and COCOWA at risk.

COCOWA will hold anyone who breaches the Code and other policies accountable for their actions and if you become aware of behaviour that breaches COCOWA Code of conduct, policies, and constitution, you should report it as soon as possible to the executive committee (EXECOM).

Failure to comply with our Code may result in disciplinary action, up to and preventing access to community resources.

## Our Code of conduct

### 1. Selflessness

Leaders of Congolese Community of WA have a general duty to act in the best interest of Congolese Community of WA. [They should not do so to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, their friends, or the organization they come from or represent.](#)

### 2. Integrity

Leaders of Congolese Community of WA

- Should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organizations that might seek to influence them in their performance of their role.
- As well as avoiding actual impropriety, should avoid any appearance of improper behaviour, and
- Should avoid accepting gifts and hospitality that might reasonably be thought to influence their judgment.

### 3. Objectivity

In carrying out their role, including making appointments (including Board appointments) awarding contracts, recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, or transacting other business; Congolese Community of WA leaders should ensure that decisions are made solely on merit.

### 4. Accountability

Leaders of Congolese Community of WA

- Have a duty to comply with the law on all occasions in accordance with the trust placed in them and in such a way as to preserve public confidence in Congolese Community of WA; and
- Are accountable for their decisions and actions to the individuals and families they support, funding bodies and the public. They must submit themselves to what scrutiny is appropriate to their role.

### 5. Openness

Leaders of Congolese Community of WA

- Should ensure that confidential material, including personal data of is handled in accordance with the privacy law of Australia.
- Should be as open and transparent as possible about the decisions and actions that they take; and
- They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider interest clearly demands it.

### 6. Honesty

Leaders of Congolese Community of WA

- Have a duty to declare any interest relating to their board role and to take steps to resolve any conflicts that may arise. Where private interests of a board member conflict with their duties as a board member he/she should resolve this conflict in favour of their board member role.
- Must make relevant declarations of interest in the different circumstances and roles they play both within and outside of Congolese Community of WA



## 7. Leadership

We have high expectations of performance and conduct of all our people, especially our leaders. We expect our leaders to:

- role model behaviours consistent with our Code
- make ethical and transparent decisions consistent with our Code.
- encourage members to communicate openly and address concerns.
- hold all members to account, regardless of position or seniority.
- create a respectful, courteous, and professional environment that embodies our values and Code.
- act in a timely manner to address any breaches of the Code.

## 8. Confidentiality and Information protection

We keep confidential information confidential and private information private. This means we keep COCOWA's confidential information secure and confidential, including private information we hold. We're committed to protecting the privacy of individuals' personal information, including sensitive information, in accordance with the [Privacy Act 1988](#).

The Congolese Community of WA owns and retain all rights for the name "**Congolese Community of WA**" and will not tolerate its usage without authorisation from the executive committee of the Congolese Community of WA

## 9. Disclose any Potential Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest is a situation where a committee members or leader's interests outside the community conflicts with their role in COCOWA. Conflicts of interest can be actual, potential, or perceived and we each have a duty to avoid and disclose these to the executive committee as soon as we become aware.

Receiving gifts, benefits or hospitality from external parties has the potential to place the community in a position where we feel conflicted. We may be offered hospitality as part of our work, but it is not always appropriate to accept. We must avoid situations that present an actual or perceived financial or moral obligation to another organisation or individual.



This means we will:

- Act honestly and in the best interests of The Congolese Community of WA.
- Refuse any gift, benefit or hospitality that is likely to place COCOWA under an actual or perceived commercial, moral, or ethical obligation to other organisations or individuals.
- Openly declare private interests and affiliations that may conflict with or be perceived to conflict with the Community or our duties or position.
- Ensure decisions are accurately recorded so that they are transparent and able to be reviewed.
- Follow legislated and/or policy requirements for managing real, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest.
- Ensure that the acceptance (or refusal) of gifts, benefits or hospitality is in accordance with COCOWA's policy and is recorded in the corporate gift and hospitality register.
- Staff or committee member assumes responsibilities for another group or organisation with same or similar objects (e.g. [Cannot be COCOWA president and assume same responsibilities as a president for another group or organisation](#))

## 10. Members declaration:

- I have read and understand the provisions of the Leaders member's contract.
- I have received and read the constitution, policies etc and understand my duties and responsibilities.
- I undertake to familiarise myself with the organisations policies, objectives, plans and financial position.
- I agree to declare all conflicts of interest as and when they arise. If at any time these conflicts hamper my ability to perform my duties as a member of the board, I shall resign from the board; and
- I shall keep all the proceedings at board meetings confidential and shall not discuss any of the issues discussed with the press/media without clearance from the executive committee.

## 11. Breaches of the Code

All members of the Congolese community of Western Australia may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of all duties for all executive committee members and membership suspension for general community members if they:

- Deliberately breach of the COCOWA constitution
- Deliberately breach of the COCOWA code of conduct
- Deliberately breach our COCOWA policies, guidelines, and procedures

When a grievance or misconduct allegation founded on irrefutable evidence comes to the attention of the community leadership, which breaches our Constitution, code of conduct, guidelines, and procedures:

- The leadership team and other stakeholders shall coordinate the investigation process with all parties.
- The leadership shall provide the necessary support to the complainant, respondent, or others.
- The process for addressing grievances or allegations of misconduct which breach COCOWA constitution, code of conduct, policies, guidelines, and procedures, will vary depending on the nature of the allegations and the circumstances of the case. Not all matters shall be treated the same.

### **Report Misconduct or Breaches of the Code of conduct**

It is your duty to report any misconduct or breaches of the code to the executive committee or the board of elders. You must detain credible proof before undertaking such process. Below outlined items are examples of breaches and misconduct but not limited to

- Intentionally disregard of COCOWA constitution, Code of Conduct, and policies and procedures
- Conflict of interest
- Bullying
- Harassment
- Unresolved interpersonal conflict
- Discrimination
- Grievance
- Fraud
- Theft
- Abuse of power

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



Thrive in Unity and Harmony