

## Aboriginal Advisory Group Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct sets the minimum requirements for behaviour for members of the Aboriginal Advisory Group for The Orange Door. It is vital that the Aboriginal Advisory Group, a partnership between Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal services, and The Orange Door, works in a way that is safe, respectful and productive.

Cultural Safety is a key guiding principle of *Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way – Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families (Dhelk Dja)*. As defined in *Dhelk Dja*, cultural safety is “an environment that is safe for people: where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience, of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening”. There are two elements to cultural safety. The first requires “environments of cultural resilience within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities”, while the second requires “cultural competency by those who engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities”<sup>1</sup>. Cultural Safety is about creating and maintaining an environment where all people are treated in a culturally respectful manner.

This Code of Conduct is based on the *Dhelk Dja* Code of Conduct and has been developed in line with the Guiding Principles of *Dhelk Dja* to ensure that all interactions are safe, inclusive and respectful for all people.

### 1. Membership

**This Code of Conduct applies to all members and proxies of the Aboriginal Advisory Group, including representatives from:**

- Local Aboriginal services who sit on the HLG
- Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group (IFVRAG)
- Regional/Local Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee (RAJAC/LAJAC)
- Aboriginal practitioners in The Orange Door
- Hub Manager (where appropriate)

**The Code applies to:**

- face-to-face interactions
- phone calls
- electronic communication, including email
- any other forms of communication that may occur

#### 1.2 Other related Sub-working Groups

Any Aboriginal Advisory Group sub-working groups that are established will automatically be captured under this Code of Conduct. Where the term ‘Aboriginal Advisory Group for The Orange Door’ is used below, it refers to all Aboriginal Advisory Group meetings and encompasses all other work and governance groups related to the work of the Aboriginal Advisory Groups.

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<sup>1</sup> The Commission for Children and Young People, (n.d.), *Tip Sheet: Child Safer Organisations – Cultural safety for Aboriginal children*, accessed from <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/assets/resources/tipsheet-cultural-safety-aboriginal-children.pdf>, viewed July 2018

## 2. Principles and Values

Members of the Aboriginal Advisory Group must agree to uphold and represent the *Dhelk Dja* Guiding Principles at all times.

These are:

- Self-determination (Community-led; self-management, Leadership)
- Collaboration and Partnerships
- Strengths-based
- Cultural and trauma informed resilience and healing approaches
- Safety (Cultural; Physical and community)
- Accountability, transparent and honesty of all parties

In accepting to adhere to these principles and values, all participants must:

- behave with sensitivity to Aboriginal people, cultures and communities and keeps those needs at front of mind
- show respect for diversity, show empathy, and treat others with fairness, courtesy, equity and respect
- act in the best interests of the people and organisation they represent
- show commitment to the Vision and Guiding Principles of *Dhelk Dja*
- act in the public interest, and not seek to gain any advantage for themselves, their family or friends, or the organisation they represent
- allow everyone to take part without interruption or intimidation
- be open and honest about their actions and decisions, and give reasons for them
- be clear and honest about whether they are giving their personal view or the views of their organisation
- not attempt to dominate the meetings for their own purpose or the purpose of a group or organisation they are representing
- declare any private interests or interests of their organisation relevant to their involvement with the the Aboriginal Advisory Group and seek to resolve any conflict in the public interest

Participants must not:

- act or speak in a way that may be perceived as bullying, culturally unsafe, abusive, discriminatory or derogatory
- disclose confidential information
- prevent anyone getting information they are entitled to
- speak, or claim to speak, or give the impression that they speak, on behalf of or claim to be representing The Orange Door or Aboriginal Advisory Group or giving the views of The Orange Door or Aboriginal Advisory Group unless they have been authorised to do so by the Aboriginal Advisory Group Members.

## 3. Confidentiality

Aboriginal Advisory Group meetings may occasionally receive information which is not in the public domain. It is the responsibility of the person providing such information to ensure that all other group members are advised that certain information is confidential. Moreover, it is the responsibility of each individual to ensure that this information remains confidential unless prior authorisation has been given by the Chairperson(s) for this to be discussed elsewhere.

Individuals must never use confidential information for their personal advantage or the advantage or disadvantage of anyone known to them or to disadvantage or discredit The Orange Door.

## 4. Breaches of the Code of Conduct during Meetings

Any member who does not comply with the Code of Conduct will be asked to leave the meeting by the Co-Chair(s) of that meeting.

Any person excluded from an individual meeting because of their behaviour will only be allowed to return to future meetings if they agree to abide by this Code of Conduct.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct are to be dealt with under the Dispute Resolution and Complaints Policy and Procedure document, to ensure that all parties to a breach feel safe and supported to continue to participate.

If there are continuous breaches of the Code of Conduct then membership will be suspended.

It is the responsibility of individual members, associate members and observers and the organisations, departments and agencies that they represent to understand this Code of Conduct

## 5. Member Statement

As a member of the Aboriginal Advisory Group for The Orange Door, I agree to at all times uphold and demonstrate my commitment to this Code of Conduct.

I understand that failure to observe the above may result in being asked to leave the meeting by the Co-Chair(s) or membership being suspended.

Member

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Name:

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Title:

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Signed:

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Date:     /     /

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