



# Spectrum Quest Code of Conduct

## Purpose

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to establish a clear standard of behaviour and conduct which is expected of Spectrum Quest.

## Scope

The scope of this Policy applies to all who serve through Spectrum Quest, and all who partake in Spectrum Quest, including but not limited to Game Masters, Volunteers, contractors, participants, parents of participants, and any others involved or associated with any program run by Spectrum Quest.

A simplified version of the code of conduct will be prepared and made available for parents and participants with accessibility needs. Parents and participants who are capable of understanding this non-simplified code of conduct are expected to read and adhere to this full document instead of the simplified version.

## Definitions

- **Participant:** Someone who is signed up for, or partakes in programs and/or activities Spectrum Quest provides. And includes all children and young people (age 0 to 25) a given person comes into contact with while serving for Spectrum Quest.
- **“Those who serve participants”:** This refers to anyone who interacts with, or provides, or is expected to provide service to a participant. This includes but is not limited to Game Masters, Volunteers, contractors, and any others involved or associated with any program run by Spectrum Quest. The expectations outlined in this document for these people are not limited towards their treatment of participants, but all people they interact with while serving under Spectrum Quest.

## Guiding principles

1. Spectrum Quest acknowledges that children and young people with disability are more vulnerable to abuse than children and young people without disability. Spectrum Quest believes that all children should be treated with respect and that any form of child abuse and exploitation is unacceptable. Spectrum Quest has a zero tolerance of child abuse.
2. Consideration and action regarding safety should always be prioritized.
3. Participants should have the dignity of risk as appropriate for, but not limited to, their age and stage of development.
4. Those who serve participants with Spectrum Quest recognize their duty of care to take all reasonable steps to ensure that children are safe from harm, and oversee risk taking is done appropriately.
5. Adherence to this Code of Conduct is a mandatory requirement for all outlined in the scope.
6. Spectrum Quest will ensure that all people outlined in the scope are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in regards to it.
7. Spectrum Quest believes that all participants, and those Spectrum Quest comes into contact with should be equally protected, treated, and assisted regardless of their gender, nationality, sexuality, religious or political beliefs, family background, economic status, physical or mental health or criminal background.

## Policy

Spectrum Quest will not tolerate any harassment, discrimination, abuse or harm of children and young people.

All those outlined in the scope are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of all participants involved with Spectrum Quest.

This Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour towards participants, and aims to protect participants by reducing opportunities for abuse or harm to occur.

All those outlined in the scope are expected to follow this Code. Failure to do so will be considered misconduct, which may lead to dismissal and/or reporting to the police.

All those who serve participants through Spectrum Quest will hold an active and valid Working With Children Check, and will obtain a police check upon request by Spectrum Quest leadership.

### All those outlined in the scope must

- Always follow Spectrum Quest policies and procedures.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect participants from physical, emotional or sexual abuse, harm or neglect.
- Treat participants with respect by listening to them, valuing their ideas and opinions and acting in a culturally sensitive way.
- Welcome and include all participants, regardless of their background or lived experience.

- Provide environments that are physically, emotionally and culturally safe, accessible and inclusive for all participants.
- Maintain professional boundaries and model appropriate adult behaviour in all real world and online contact with participants.
- Respect the privacy of participants, their families/carers, and only disclose information if you have informed consent or where there is a duty of care concern.
- Discuss any concerns about the safety of participants in your care with Spectrum Quest.
- Report any breaches of this Code of Conduct to Spectrum Quest.
- Contact NDIA if you believe: Spectrum Quest is not serving in a way that is appropriate for a business serving NDIS participants, and you believe Spectrum Quest is aware of this, and Spectrum Quest has not taken reasonable steps to address it in a reasonable time frame.
- Contact Consumer Affairs if you believe: Spectrum Quest is not providing services as a business in a reasonable manner, that Spectrum Quest is aware of this, and Spectrum Quest has not taken reasonable steps to address it in a reasonable time frame.
- Contact the police if a participant is at immediate risk of abuse (telephone 000)

## **In addition, all those who serve participants through Spectrum Quest must:**

- Adhere to the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#) and the [Victorian Child Safe Standards](#).

## **All those outlined in the scope must not:**

- Shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade any participant.
- Discriminate against any participant on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, disability, vulnerability or sexuality.
- Engage in any activity with a participant that is likely to cause them physical, emotional or cultural harm.
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves.
- Be alone with a child or young person unnecessarily and/or for more than a very short time.
- Develop a 'special' relationship with a specific child or young person for your own needs.
- Engage in a romantic or sexual relationship with a young person you work with, or first made contact with through your work or volunteering, no matter the age of the young person.
- Show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention.
- Arrange unauthorised contact, including online or via the phone, with children or young people.
- Photograph or video a child or young person without their/their parents'/carers' consent.
- Use inappropriate language in the presence of participants, appropriate to their age, development, cultural background, and other relevant factors.

- Disregard any action or report that breaches this Code of Conduct, or policies and procedures.

## Breaches of the Code of Conduct

If any Spectrum Quest staff member or volunteer believes, or is aware of a breach of the Code of Conduct, they must:

- Act to prioritise the best interests of participants.
- Take actions promptly to ensure that participants are safe.

All those outlined in the scope are expected to follow this Code of Conduct. Failure to do so will be considered misconduct, which may lead to dismissal and/or reporting to the police. Breaches will be handled by employed members of Spectrum Quest with the following possible outcomes:

### No further action

Should an investigation into a matter result in a conclusion that the alleged event did not occur, was not as serious as had been alleged, or involved a misunderstanding, there may be no further action as a result.

### Informal warning

Should an investigation into a matter result in a conclusion that the matter was not serious, or that the person did not intend to breach policy, an informal warning may be given, and the occurrence recorded. The warning may consist of providing the person with a copy of the relevant Code, procedure or policy to review.

### Formal warning

In the event of a breach of policy, a formal warning may be issued with:

- Details of the behaviours expected of all persons outlined in the scope of this document;
- Details of the behaviours observed or indicated;
- Details as to the changes in behaviour expected in order to address these concerns.

In the event that the changes in behaviour do not occur in a reasonable timeframe, the matter may progress to dismissal. In managing problems with performance, those who serve participants through Spectrum Quest will usually be given more than one formal warning before proceeding to termination. The number of warnings will be proportionate to the severity of the performance issues, and will be communicated to the person in question.

## **Dismissal or termination of contract, or participation in Spectrum Quest activities.**

Dismissal/termination is the final, and least desirable disciplinary action. It may occur where other methods have failed to resolve the matter, or where the matter is considered serious misconduct.

### **Ban**

In some circumstances, the person may be banned from attending Spectrum Quest. This ban may also apply to people who are not participants in Spectrum Quest's program. As a guiding principle, a ban will be most commonly used when the person is a danger, or takes action that distresses participants, parents, and/or staff of Spectrum Quest in a severe manner.

If a person is banned from Spectrum Quest, the following applies.

- They may not attend any Spectrum Quest activities.
- They may not be in attendance to a venue where Spectrum Quest is about to, is running, or just has finished running a program.
  - This is measured from 15 minutes before participants are invited, suggested, encouraged, or expected to arrive.
    - E.g. A program starts at 4pm. Participants are encouraged to arrive between 3:45 and 3:55pm. Therefore, the banned person must not be in the venue after 3:30pm.
  - This period ends 15 minutes after the expected departure time of participants, or when a participant or parent interacting with Spectrum Quest staff finishes what they are discussing, as it relates to Spectrum Quest. Whichever is later.
    - E.g. Spectrum Quest program(s) at a venue finish at 6pm. Participants are asked to leave by 6:15. Therefore, the banned person must not be in the venue before 6:30pm.
    - E.g. If a parent or participant wishes to discuss a matter related to Spectrum Quest after a program session has finished, then the ban will continue to apply until this conversation ends.
  - If the banned person attends during this period, Spectrum Quest may
    - Ask the person to leave the venue.
    - If at any point before this they have been asked to leave the venue as above, then Spectrum Quest may choose to call the police instead.

### **Venue cooperation and disclosure**

Spectrum Quest will work with venues to enforce this ban. And where the stipulations above cannot be fully applied, then appropriate solutions will be discussed and arranged with venues. As part of this enforcement, Spectrum Quest may share the name and description of the person.

## **Further disclosure.**

If a person is dismissed, terminated from a program, or banned, and Spectrum Quest makes a reasonable judgement that the person shows indications of greater danger to the general public, or has been a danger to people, whether those people were related to Spectrum Quest directly, or general members of the public, whether or not the actions led to police involvement, and whether or not it was a breach of the Spectrum Quest code of conduct; then Spectrum Quest may elect to pass on the name description, if they Spectrum Quest has that information, to relevant (and only relevant) venue(s). Spectrum Quest does not need to notify if they have done this, but must disclose this to the banned person if the person has asked Spectrum Quest, up to a maximum of once a month, and no more than six times a year. The banned person may not request Spectrum Quest to initiate sharing if and when they disclose this information. Spectrum Quest will also invite venues they work with to reach out to Spectrum Quest if they need to call the police on that banned person outside of when Spectrum Quest operates, and the police need that person's contact details. Spectrum Quest will happily provide that information to the police.