

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VANISH MEMBERS



1. Policy Statement

VANISH requires all its members to -

- respect each other's stories and life journeys;
- agree to refrain from any disrespectful, unreasonable or unethical conduct that brings VANISH into disrepute, including engaging in, for example:
 - harassment, intimidation, aggression and/or excluding behaviour towards other members, service users, staff, other members of the adoption, intercountry adoption or donor conceived communities or the public; or
 - speaking or acting on behalf of VANISH when under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- to agree to abide by this Code of Conduct, as follows:

I agree, in the name of VANISH and in connection with any VANISH activities I undertake in any forum (including social media) and in all circumstances, that I will endeavour to:

- *conduct myself with dignity;*
- *be respectful of colleagues, members and other members of the public;*
- *help maintain a safe environment;*
- *be respectful of different views, feelings and opinions;*
- *respond to views different to my own or deliberate provocations in a firm but respectful manner; and*
- *maintain the confidentiality of other members and the public in an ethical and appropriate manner.*

Signed by Members:

Dated:

2. Rationale and Principles

VANISH understands that issues associated with separation from a child or parent – including adoption, intercountry adoption, donor conception and other reasons beyond the control of one or more parties, are emotional and that there are many different perspectives. At times each of us will disagree markedly with the views of others. This policy is not intended to prevent robust discussion and debate, let alone impinge on freedom of thought or speech. However, we can only move forward personally and as an organisation if we are prepared to listen to, and consider, different views and to conduct debates and discussions in a safe, respectful manner.

3. Procedures

VANISH urges all members to immediately report any incident that breaches this Code of Conduct by a member of VANISH or a person purported to be a member of VANISH to the manager, chairperson or a member of the VANISH Committee of Management.

VANISH has a protocol for dealing with such complaints, including contacting the member alleged to have breached the Code, investigating the complaint and acting on the findings.

Complaints can be made to:

- the Manager of VANISH by emailing manager@vanish.org.au; or
- the Chairperson of VANISH exec@vanish.org.au

On request, other members of the Committee of Management Executive may be approached.

All complaints will be treated in confidence pending the investigation process. Complainants will be advised in person of the outcome. If necessary, an arbitration process will be considered.

4. Supporting Documents

Service Users Charter

Protection of Legal and Human Rights and Freedom from Abuse and Neglect Policy

Confidentiality Policy

Feedback and Complaints Policy.

Policy No 2	Date	Approved By	Date
Developed v1	February 2014	COM	February 2014
Reviewed v2	September 2015	COM	13/9/2015
Reviewed v3	March 2021	COM	24/3/2021
Next Review	March 2024		