

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

## 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff members, board members and volunteers of Foresight Australia. Its purpose is to define 'conflicts of interest' that may arise in the carrying out of work for Foresight Australia, and the procedure to follow should such a conflict arise.

## 2. DEFINITION

A conflict of interest occurs when a person's personal interests conflict with their responsibility to act in the best interests of the charity. Personal interests include direct interests, as well as those of family, friends, or other organisations a person may be involved with or have an interest in (for example, as a shareholder). It also includes a conflict between a board member's duty to Foresight and another duty that the board member has (for example, to another charity). A conflict of interest may be actual, potential or perceived and may be financial or non-financial.

These situations present the risk that a person will make a decision based on, or affected by, these influences, rather than in the best interests of the charity. Therefore these situations must be managed accordingly.

## 2. BODY OF POLICY

This policy aims to ensure the decisions made by Foresight Australia's staff, board members and volunteers are made ethically and in the best interests of the organisation and the people it serves.

It is Foresight Australia's policy that board members, staff and volunteers must:

- i. Avoid positions of conflict or potential conflict:
- ii. All Foresight members, staff and volunteers must avoid placing themselves in a situation that could be or may lead to or be perceived as a conflict of interest.
- iii. Disclose any material personal interest:
- iv. All Foresight members, staff and volunteers must fully and frankly disclose to the Board material personal interests that relate to the affairs of the organisation or external business interests if those interests may lead to an actual or potential conflict of interest.

In defining whether a board member, staff member or volunteer has or may have a conflict of interest, the following should be considered:

- (i) a conflict of interest may involve a conflict of duties or responsibilities which can arise from avoiding a personal loss as well as gaining a personal advantage;
- (ii) a material personal interest is an interest that has the potential to impact, positively or negatively, financially or otherwise, on the person and/or organisation; and
- (iii) conflicts of interest may arise through the involvement of a third party, including a family member or relative, business partner or friend.

3. Where a material personal interest and/or conflict of interest is disclosed, the disclosing person must remove him/herself from any work, meeting or activity in which the conflict of interest may have a material impact.
4. Foresight Australia staff or board members and volunteers are not precluded from receiving gifts or benefits unless:
  - (i) the gift or benefit does appear or may appear to compromise or influence the recipient in the eyes of others; or
  - (ii) a gift has been offered and the recipient feels or suspects that the gift is offered as an inducement for a particular outcome.
5. Foresight Australia staff members, board members and volunteers should not actively tender for gifts or benefits for personal use or enjoyment. Any gifts or benefits offered or actually received should be received and used in the best interests of Foresight Australia.
6. Foresight Australia recognises that the reporting of potential or actual conflicts of interests and duty may involve disclosing personal information. Foresight Australia's Board, staff and volunteers are obligated to treat any personal information sensitively and respect the person's privacy, within the limits of the law.
7. A breach of this policy or a failure to disclose an interest or duty, subject to the circumstances surrounding the breach and the nature of the interest and conflict, may result in termination of membership, employment or engagement as a volunteer, whichever the case may be. In extreme cases, legal action may ensue.

**Contacts**

For questions about this policy, contact the board or the General Manager by email at [foresight@foresight.org.au](mailto:foresight@foresight.org.au) or by phone at 02/8021 3632.



14<sup>th</sup> September 2022

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