|  |
| --- |
| VPSC Code of Conduct  for committees of management:  A Quick Guide Summary  Crown land reserves |
| All committees of management members are required to abide by the Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities |

**Why a Code of Conduct**

A Code of Conduct assists people within an organisation to understand the standards of behaviour and conduct they will be expected to uphold when interacting with each other and others outside the organisation.

**Background to the VPSC and committees as public entities**

Committees of management are considered part of the broadly defined “public sector.”

Committees incorporated through the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* are among over 3,500 public entity boards/committees in Victoria. Other Victorian Government public entities include school councils, cemetery trusts, public hospitals, water corporations and other advisory committees.

The Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC) provides advice and support on issues relevant to public sector administration, governance and service delivery.

VPSC resources, including the Code of Conduct, refer to “Boards” and “Directors”. These descriptions apply to committees of management.

It is expected that all committee of management members familiarise themselves with the VPSC Code of Conduct, including the details of expected behaviours.

**Accessing the Code of Conduct**

The [Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities page of the VPSC website](https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/ethics-behaviours-culture/codes-of-conduct/code-of-conduct-for-directors-of-victorian-public-entities/) includes:

* The full Code of Conduct available for viewing
* Capacity to download a PDF copy of the Code

A “Quick Guide” summary of the VPSC Code of Conduct follows below.

**VPSC Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities**

**A Quick Guide summary for committees of management**

**Introduction**

All committees of management members are required to abide by the Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities published by the Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC).

The Code of Conduct sets the standard of behaviour expected from members of committees of management.

This “Quick Guide” summary will help you understand:

* What is included in the Code of Conduct
* How committees of management must follow the Code
* How to follow the Code as an individual committee member
* What happens if you don’t follow the Code

Note: VPSC resources, including the Code of Conduct, refer to “Boards” and “Directors”. These descriptions apply to committees of management.

**What is the Code of Conduct?**

The Code of Conduct sets the standard of behaviour expected from:

* Committees of management
* Individual members of committees of management

**Roles and values**

It includes roles and values found in the *Public Administration Act 2004* (the Act). The Act is a law for all public entities to follow (committees of management incorporated through the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* are public entities).

Roles and values included in the Code are:

* Committee member’s obligations – things you need to do
* The committee’s obligations
* Public sector values − ways a committee member should think and act

The Public Sector Values are:

* Responsiveness – offering good and quick advice to the committee
* Integrity – being open and honest
* Impartiality – making the best decisions for the committee you can
* Accountability – being responsible for what you do
* Respect – treating everyone well
* Leadership – letting everyone know about these values
* Human rights – doing the right thing by others

**Behaviour expected from committee members**

The Code outlines the behaviour expected from committee members. As a committee member, you must:

* Demonstrate the public sector values listed above
* Follow the laws and rules of the committee of management
* Understand the business of the committee
* Understand the role of the committee
* Regularly attend committee meetings
* Act in the best interests of the committee and the Crown land reserve(s) the committee manages
* Promote the best interests of the committee and reserve(s)
* Use information appropriately and for its intended purpose
* Tell the committee if you plan to run as a candidate in a government election
* Act fairly
* Act in a financially responsible manner, exercising care in relation to public funds and assets and actively monitoring the committee’s financial accounts
* Follow the rules about conflicts of interest and duty

**How does the committee follow the Code of Conduct?**

Everyone on the committee needs to make sure the committee follows the Code. The Code expects the committee to:

* Manage the operations of the committee and the Crown land reserve(s) the committee are responsible for
* Look after the committee’s money carefully
* Manage the committee’s reputation – what people think about the committee
* Act in the best interests of the committee to achieve public benefit from the Crown land reserve(s) in line with the reserve purpose
* Manage any possible risks
* Manage any conflicts of interest and duty
* Manage the committee’s relationship with stakeholders

**Consequences of behaviour in breach of the Code of Conduct**

Committee members must know and understand the Code. If you don’t follow the Code, you might be asked to leave the committee.

Also, a committee member who improperly uses their position to gain an advantage for themselves or someone else, or to cause detriment to the committee, may be subject to police investigation and/or legal action.

**Further information**

See the committees of management pages of the website of the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Change (DEECA) at:

<https://www.deeca.vic.gov.au/boards-and-governance/committees-of-management>