Purpose

Estia exists to support people with disabilities to live with dignity, exercise choice, strengthen belonging and experience a full everyday life. This policy explains the conduct people can expect from everyone working for or representing Estia. It supports safe, ethical and dependable services and clear accountability.

Every person supported by Estia will be known, respected and included. We combine faith-inspired compassion with professional standards, respecting each person's beliefs, culture and choices.
Participation in religious activities is a personal choice.

Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to Estia's directors, committee members, employees, contractors, volunteers, students and people on placement. It covers support delivery, workplaces, community activities, online communication and other conduct connected with an Estia role. It explains Estia's responsibilities; it does not place conditions on a participant's right to receive support or make a complaint.

Policy objectives

1. Respect each person's rights and choices

We listen to each person and respect their right to express themselves, make decisions and direct their own life. We provide information in ways they can understand, support informed consent and access to a chosen advocate, and balance dignity of risk with lawful safeguarding responsibilities. We respect culture, identity, relationships and beliefs, and do not tolerate discrimination, bullying or harassment.

2. Protect privacy and confidentiality

We access and use personal information only for authorised purposes. We keep records secure and share information only with consent or another lawful basis. Photographs, recordings, stories and social media content must follow consent and privacy requirements. Private information must not be discussed in public or accessed out of curiosity.

3. Provide safe and competent support

We work within our skills, training and responsibilities, follow each person's current support plans and seek help when needed. We follow medication, mealtime, health, infection prevention and workplace safety procedures. Workers must be fit for duty and must not provide support while impaired by alcohol, drugs or fatigue.

Policy objectives continued

4. Act honestly and use resources responsibly

We communicate truthfully, keep accurate records and claim only for support actually delivered and legitimately chargeable. We use Estia's funds, vehicles, equipment and systems for authorised purposes. Fraud, theft, misleading claims and falsifying records are unacceptable. Only authorised people may make public statements on Estia's behalf.

5. Maintain professional boundaries and manage conflicts

We must not use a position of trust for personal, financial or other gain. Workers must not borrow from participants, seek gifts or accept benefits that could influence their work. Actual, potential and perceived conflicts must be disclosed promptly and managed, including withdrawal from affected decisions where required. Personal relationships, private arrangements and online contact must comply with Estia's professional boundaries requirements.

6. Prevent and respond to abuse and sexual misconduct

Violence, exploitation, neglect, abuse, grooming and sexual misconduct are unacceptable. We take reasonable steps to prevent harm, recognise warning signs and act promptly on allegations or concerns. Workers must not engage in sexual relationships with participants they support. Restrictive practices must meet applicable legal, authorisation, behaviour support and reporting requirements and must never be used as punishment or for convenience.

7. Raise concerns and act promptly

Workers must promptly report incidents, near misses, unsafe practice and suspected misconduct through Estia's incident and escalation procedures. Immediate safety and medical needs come first. Managers must respond, document actions and ensure required notifications to the NDIS Commission, police or other authorities occur within applicable timeframes. A complaint process must not delay safeguarding action or mandatory reporting.

8. Be fair and transparent about prices

We explain fees and service arrangements clearly and do not pressure people to purchase supports. We comply with applicable NDIS pricing requirements. We must not charge or advertise a higher price to an NDIS participant for the same or substantially the same goods supplied to someone who is not a participant without reasonable justification.

Speaking up is supported

Participants, families, advocates, workers and members of the public can raise concerns about conduct. We will listen respectfully and will not tolerate threats, retaliation, victimisation or reduced support because someone raises a concern in good faith. A person can choose a supporter or independent advocate and can contact an external body directly without first complaining to Estia.

How to raise a concern

Contact Estia: Speak with a worker, manager or the Chief Executive Officer. Telephone **02 9879 8000** or email **admin@estia.org.au**. Concerns about the CEO can be directed to the Chair of the Board through Estia's office. You may ask for assistance to communicate your concern or access an advocate or interpreter.

Contact the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission: Telephone **1800 035 544** or visit www.ndiscommission.gov.au/complaints/report. You can report a concern directly and can choose to remain anonymous. The Commission can arrange interpreting assistance; people who are deaf or have hearing or speech impairment can use the National Relay Service.

In an emergency or immediate danger, call 000.

Responding to concerns and breaches

Estia will assess safety risks promptly, protect people from harm and consider concerns fairly. Information will be handled sensitively and shared only as needed to respond or meet legal obligations. We cannot promise absolute confidentiality. People affected will be given appropriate information and an opportunity to respond, while protecting participants and the integrity of any investigation.

Depending on the findings, action may include supervision, training, changes to duties, disciplinary action, termination of employment or engagement, and referral to police or regulators. Action involving directors or committee members will follow applicable governance requirements. Estia will use findings to improve services and prevent recurrence.

Responsibilities and implementation

The **Board** approves this policy and oversees conduct and culture. The **CEO** implements it, maintains reporting pathways and monitors compliance. **Managers** provide guidance, address concerns and check that workers understand their responsibilities. **Everyone covered** must read, understand, acknowledge and follow the Code on commencement, annually and when updated, as required by Estia's internal Code.

This policy is intended for publication on Estia's website after approval. Estia will support people to understand the Code using their preferred communication method and provide accessible information on request. The policy will be reviewed annually and earlier following significant incidents, legislative changes or identified improvements.

Related policies and standards

Read with Estia's internal Code of Conduct, complaints and feedback, incident management, safeguarding, privacy, conflicts of interest, gifts and benefits, whistleblowing and records management policies. Relevant standards include the NDIS Code of Conduct, NDIS Practice Standards and ACNC Governance Standards.

NDIS reference: www.ndiscommission.gov.au/rules-and-standards/ndis-code-conduct