

The logo for AfCAS, consisting of the text "AfCAS" in white, bold, sans-serif font, centered within a solid blue rectangular background.

**Association for Culturally Appropriate Services (AfCAS)
Working with Vulnerable Members Policy 2018**

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Association for Culturally Appropriate Services (AfCAS) Working with Vulnerable Members Policy 2018

About AfCAS

AfCAS is a not-for-profit association established to facilitate and support culturally appropriate service delivery among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) aged care service organisations and communities.

AfCAS is establishing a collaborative approach to sharing the strengths of the CALD Aged Care service providers and communities, to support each other to provide quality care to their targeted CALD clients. The collaboration aims to develop a hub and spoke model where AfCAS will be the hub from which member organisations can choose to receive, at cost price, the services such as finance, human resources, marketing and quality culturally appropriate care programs.

We support multiculturalism, community harmony, social justice and the rejection of all forms of discrimination and racism.

AfCAS' membership is open to any individuals or organisation representatives who have an interest in improving the service provision to CALD clients and communities.

AfCAS has an elected management committee implementing policies and work programs on behalf of its membership and stakeholders.

AfCAS Objectives

The objects of the Association are:

- To actively foster and support organisations to provide culturally appropriate services for the CALD population regardless of geographic location or diversity of needs.
- To foster a collaborative approach to member organisations to provide culturally appropriate services
- Facilitate access to specialised services for member organisations to support CALD clients, e.g. translating and interpretation, financial/reporting services
- To promote and support members to establish and deliver culturally appropriate services
- Build capacity of the CALD service sector to be resilient and sustainable
- To advocate for improved quality, accountability and accessibility for delivery of services to the CALD community
- To work in partnership with other key agencies to avoid duplication of CALD services and promote efficient use of available resources.

AfCAS recognises that some of our members or potential members will be vulnerable in the context of how we interact with them, due of their personal circumstances. We understand that we have a duty and obligation to ensure that all elements of our interactions are consistent with our objectives and that we make reasonable adjustments and put in place appropriate additional support mechanisms to identify and meet the needs of our members and supporters.

Our Aged Population Vulnerabilities



Australia's population (2016) is 24.13 million



An estimated 436,366 people are living with dementia in Australia (2016)



In 2017 1 in 7 Australians were aged 65 years and over



In 2016, 1 in 3 older people were born overseas; the majority of these were born in a non-English speaking country



53% of Australians aged 65 and over had disabilities



In 2016 25% of people aged 65 years and over live alone



In 2014, stress affected more than half (52%) of people aged 65 and over in the last 12 months



Approximately 10 - 15 % of older people experience depression. Older people living in residential aged-care are believed to be much higher, around 35%. [ABS, 2014]

Association for Culturally Appropriate Services (AfCAS)

Working with Vulnerable Members and Communities Policy

2018

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Working with Vulnerable Persons Policy (the Policy) is a part of the Association of Culturally Appropriate Services (the Association) policies and processes to ensuring that safe environments will be created to promote and enhance the safety and welfare of vulnerable people who receive services, come in contact with, or participate in programs developed by or on behalf of the Association at any level.
- 1.2 This policy aims to:
 - Provide guidance for our members on how we define and identify vulnerable members, communities and consumers
 - Outline the processes we have in place to help support vulnerable people.
 - Outline roles and responsibilities in relation to vulnerability and how we will oversee compliance in this area.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to any person representing the Association including:
 - 2.1.1 Appointed members of the Association Management Committee (including any sub-committees thereof);
 - 2.1.2 Any person employed by the Association (on a full-time, part-time, contract or casual basis); and
 - 2.1.4 The members, guests, associates and volunteers of the Association.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 Vulnerable Persons refers to those who may be at risk of abuse or exploitation due to their dependency on others or experiences of disadvantage, and could include people with a physical, intellectual or psychological disability, the frail aged, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, refugees, and those living in poverty.
- 3.2 Elder Abuse refers to all aspects of abuse of elderly people, that is, neglect, physical, verbal, sexual, financial and social.
- 3.3 Identifying a vulnerable person - while it is not possible to supply an exhaustive list of persons who may be vulnerable within the context of charities and community service work, the following could be considered a guide:
 - 3.3.1 any infirmity, including early dementia or disease;
 - 3.3.2 mental illness;
 - 3.3.3 intellectual disability;
 - 3.3.4 illiteracy or limited education which may impair a person's capacity to understand inability or limited ability to speak or understand the English language;
 - 3.3.5 chronic alcoholism;
 - 3.3.6 drug dependence;
 - 3.3.7 physical disabilities including deafness or loss of sight;
 - 3.3.8 cultural, ethnic or religious factors including those relating to gender attitudes
 - 3.3.9 Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders;
 - 3.3.10 persons with impaired capacity.

Association for Culturally Appropriate Services (AfCAS)

Working with Vulnerable Members and Communities Policy

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4. Relevant guidance and legislation

4.1 The following Acts, Regulations and Guidelines provide the legislative framework for the Policy:

Commonwealth legislation

4.2 Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011 (Cth)

4.3 Aged Care Act 1997 (Cth)

4.4 Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

4.5 Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

Western Australian State legislation

4.6 Public Health Act 2016

4.7 Equal Opportunity Act 1984

AfCAS

4.8 All policies, procedures and ethical guidelines as appropriate.

5. Policy Statement

- 5.1 The Association recognises its legislative obligations and is committed to the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable people with whom we come in contact.
- 5.2 The opinions of vulnerable people are encouraged and respected. We listen and act upon any concerns that are raised with us.
- 5.3 We ensure that vulnerable people know how to access a complaints procedure available to them.
- 5.4 We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.
- 5.5 Support is provided for the rights of vulnerable persons when and as required.
- 5.6 Support is provided for Apexians and encouragement is given for their active participation in building and maintaining a safe environment for vulnerable people in our communities.

6. Application of Policy

6.1 The Association will undertake the following to manage its obligations under the Policy:

6.1.1 Take all reasonable steps to ensure the most suitable and appropriate people are engaged (for the National Board) or recommended to be engaged (for clubs and other non-directly controlled entities) to work with, and/or provide services to vulnerable people.

6.1.2 Applicants for any employed position which is substantially and directly involved with vulnerable people will be screened for their suitability to provide services; screening may involve interviews, referee reports, checking qualifications and previous employment history in working with children and obtaining criminal history reports. Identifying such a position will involve consideration of the nature of the service provided (proximity or intimacy), the frequency (incidental contact, regular and/or on-going contact), and the vulnerability of the person.

6.1.3 Staff employed and to whom clause 6.1.2 applies will undergo a criminal history screening not less than once every three years.

6.1.4 A Children and Vulnerable Person's Safety Contact Officer is nominated by the National Board as a first point of contact. The Officer will provide advice and support to children, vulnerable people and Apexians regarding safety and wellbeing.

6.1.5 Maintain a listing of any current position/s as per clause 6.1.2 and the nominated Children and Vulnerable Person's Safety Contact Officer which will be made publicly available by verified individual request through the Apex Australia Website.

6.1.6 Take steps to increase awareness within the organisation about providing an environment where

Association for Culturally Appropriate Services (AfCAS) Working with Vulnerable Members and Communities Policy 2018

vulnerable people are safe and protected from abuse.

6.1.9 Provide training to National Board Members and Regional Communicators about Association and regulatory requirements and their contact with children and vulnerable persons.

6.1.10 Maintain supportive and responsive procedures for fulfilling mandatory reporting obligations, where relevant, and dealing with complaints and issues effectively as they arise.

6.1.11 Take appropriate security measures for the collection and maintenance of appropriate records related to children and vulnerable persons when and as required.

6.1.12 Collaborate and consult with other relevant agencies in matters concerning the protection of vulnerable people.

6.1.13 Develop, monitor, evaluate and review risk management strategies and procedures when and as required to minimise potential harm to vulnerable people.

7. Reporting Requirements

7.1 All Apexians have the obligation (in addition to, and not to derogate from any relevant state legislation) to notify the relevant State Government authority if they suspect, on reasonable grounds, that a vulnerable person has been or is being abused or neglected as well as notifying the Association's Children and Vulnerable Person's Safety Contact Officer. 7.2 An Apexian must immediately notify the Association's Children and Vulnerable Person's Safety Contact Officer if that person believes they would fail a criminal history screening for the purposes of determining whether that person is suitable to work with children or vulnerable persons.

Vulnerable Persons Safety Policy

7.3 The practice will ensure Apexians are appropriately supported, records are kept confidential and secure, and any organisation responsibilities (in addition to any mandatory reporting obligation/s) are pursued where relevant. 7.4 The Association will sensitively support any Apexian who, though not a mandated notifier, suspects incidents of abuse or neglect of a child or vulnerable person.

8. Review

8.1 The Policy will be reviewed periodically as required by the Association's Corporate Governance Framework.

9. Access to the Policy

9.1 The Policy is available for public inspection on the Association's website: www.apex.org.au

10. Further Information

10.1 For further information about the Policy please contact:

Association of Apex Clubs of Australia Legal and Compliance Director Ph: 073245 3730 Email: counsel@apex.org.au