

UNDERSTANDING ETHICS, CONDUCT AND PRACTICE IN LIVED EXPERIENCE WORK



A key part of the Lived-Living Experience Workforce Project is the co-design of a Code of Ethics for the lived-living experience workforce in Queensland.

There are many types of guidance tools that we come across and use in our practice, so we've created this quick guide to help differentiate between them.



CODE OF ETHICS (THE WHY) YOUR COMPASS

Your compass guides you toward what is right, even when things feel unclear. It is not about rules. It is about your values and how you show up as a Lived-Living Experience worker.

Your compass helps you:

- Respect people's choices and autonomy
- Be real, honest and intentional in how you share your lived experience
- Do no harm, even when trying to help
- Stay grounded in dignity, hope and mutuality

Ask yourself:

"Am I walking alongside this person in a way that feels respectful and safe?"

The co-design discussions will be focussing mainly on the "compass" - i.e. the broader ideas and values that make peer work what it is, and help us navigate some of the ethical complexities of the work.



BETTER CARE TOGETHER

LIVED-LIVING EXPERIENCE
WORKFORCE PROJECT



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Conversation might also touch upon these two broad types of guidance tool, although it won't be the focus of the discussion:



CODE OF CONDUCT (THE WHAT) YOUR RULEBOOK

Your rulebook sets clear expectations about what is okay and not okay in your role. It protects both you and the people you support.

Your rulebook helps you:

- Maintain confidentiality and privacy
- Work within safe and appropriate boundaries
- Avoid conflicts of interest or dual relationships
- Use respectful and appropriate communication
- Follow organisational and professional expectations

Ask yourself:

"Is this behaviour appropriate for my role?"



PRACTICE FRAMEWORK (THE HOW) YOUR TOOLKIT

Your toolkit is how you actually do the work. It includes the skills, approaches and ways of being that bring lived experience practice to life.

Your toolkit helps you:

- Share your story safely and purposefully
- Build mutual, human to human relationships
- Sit with distress instead of trying to fix
- Support choice, voice and self determination
- Navigate systems without losing your lived experience lens

Ask yourself:

How can I support this person in a way that aligns with lived experience values?

HOW THEY WORK TOGETHER

Your compass ethics guide your direction
Your rulebook conduct keeps things safe
Your toolkit practice helps you take action



You need all three.

Without a compass, you can lose your values.

Without a rulebook, people can get hurt.

Without a toolkit, you do not know what to actually do.

IN PRACTICE EXAMPLE

Situation: Someone asks you what they should do.

Compass/Ethics: People have the right to make their own choices

Rulebook/Conduct: Do not direct or control decisions

Toolkit/Practice: Ask what feels right for you and explore options together

FINAL THOUGHT

*Lived experience work is not about having all the answers.
It is about showing up in a way that is real, safe and human.
Your compass, rulebook and toolkit help you do that every day.*