

PRISTINE AWARENESS: FOUNDATION FOR BUDDHIST PRACTICE

Code of Conduct General Principles

As a Buddhist organisation operating in Australia, we follow the ethical teachings of Buddha Shakyamuni, the historical Buddha. Therefore we expect all leaders, members and attendees at all of our events and activities to act in accordance with the Buddhist Precepts as set out below.

The Five Essential Buddhist Precepts:

In my daily life I commit to:

1. Abstain from causing harm or killing.
2. Abstain from taking anything which is not freely offered by the rightful owner.
3. Abstain from non-consensual, deceptive, irresponsible or harmful sexual activity.
4. Abstain from communicating dishonestly, manipulatively or so as to bring benefit to myself or disadvantage to others.
5. Abstain from becoming intoxicated by substances or activities.

The Buddha also required his followers to comply with local laws. Accordingly the expectations of Pristine Awareness, as a fully inclusive organisation based on contemporary Australian standards and best practice law, are set out in detail on the following pages.

CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

The principal aim of Pristine Awareness: Foundation for Buddhist Practice (PA) is the creation of a harmonious community dedicated to Buddha Dharma, specifically Buddhist practice. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for PRISTINE AWARENESS (PA) teachers, Sangha, volunteers and program or event participants to ensure harmonious, ethical and appropriate conduct in all PA programs and at all PA events and activities.

1. CODE OF CONDUCT

1.1. *All organisers, facilitators, participants or attendees at PA events or activities must abide by the core ethical principles of Buddhism.* In this organisational context these core principles are:

- That PA teachers, Sangha, volunteers and program participants abstain from committing deliberate acts of physical or psychological harm against others
- That PA teachers, Sangha, volunteers and program participants abstain from taking what is not freely given (stealing, fraud, forgery, cheating etc.)
- That PA teachers, Sangha, volunteers and program participants abstain from sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, inappropriate contact of a sexual nature, sexual abuse)
- That PA teachers, Sangha, volunteers and program participants abstain from false, deceptive or divisive speech (malicious speech, gossip, harsh criticism of others)
- That PA teachers, Sangha, volunteers and program participants abstain from attending or participating in PA events or activities while under the influence of intoxicants (alcohol and other drugs)

1.2. *All organisers, facilitators, participants or attendees at PA events or activities must treat all members of the Buddhist community with respect and kindness and be mindful of the Dharma purpose of PA programs, events and activities.* Specifically this means to:

- Not discriminate against others on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, educational level, income, biological sex, age, sexual orientation, gender presentation or for any other reason
- Not engage in speech or actions of a sexist, racist, xenophobic, homophobic or transphobic nature.
- Show respect and kindness to all Dharma peers (those with whom one is practicing)
- Show respect and kindness to all ordained Sangha (monastics and ordained tantrikas)
- Show an appropriate level of respect and kindness to all Dharma teachers
- Not defame, slander or unjustly criticise¹ fellow participants in PA programs, events or activities
- Not defame, slander or unjustly criticise fellow Buddhist practitioners
- Not defame, slander or unjustly criticise members of the ordained Sangha (monks, nuns, ngakmas and ngakpas)
- Not defame, slander or unjustly criticise Dharma teachers (especially the teachers of one's Dharma peers)
- Abide by health or safety requests of PA directors, teachers and volunteers – specifically to practice social distancing at all times and wear masks if requested to do so. Also to not

¹ Unjust criticism is criticism that is unwarranted and/or not based on reliable evidence such as: a legal ruling in a recognised court of law, an independent investigation by qualified investigators and a subsequent detailed finding or report, or reliable and verified eyewitness accounts of acts that would be deemed unlawful under Australian law.

attend live events if any viral or infectious symptoms are present or if there has been contact with someone with an infectious illness of any kind in the seven days prior to a live PA event.

- Not engage in inappropriate discussions or actions that might *reasonably* cause distress or discomfort to others (such as insensitive discussions of violence, cruelty, abuse or medical procedures)
- Remain present and focussed on Dharma while at PA events or activities and mindful that others are there to practice or receive teaching, not to engage in discussions about personal issues, politics, current affairs, social trends or events, or any other worldly matters

2. BREACHES OF CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

2.1. *Unacceptable conduct will be addressed promptly and appropriately.* Specifically, any person found to have breached the code of conduct by PA's directors or representatives will be notified that they have been deemed to have breached the code of conduct. The person in breach of the code of conduct will be given a written warning that any further breaches will result in their exclusion from all PA programs, events and activities.

2.2. In cases of *serious misconduct* the notification and written warning will be omitted. Where PA's directors or representatives have deemed that serious misconduct has been committed the consequence will be exclusion without notice from all PA programs, events and activities.

2.3. Some examples of serious misconduct are:

- Theft, misappropriation, misuse or unauthorized use of PA's or participants' property
- Fraud, deceit, deception and dishonesty
- A pattern of continued or deliberate breaches of PA's code of conduct
- Violent, offensive or other intimidating conduct or language
- Unlawful harassment
- Attending PA events incapacitated through use of alcohol or drugs
- Conduct that constitutes a criminal offence, whether committed at a PA event, program or activity or elsewhere
- Action likely to cause injury or impair physical safety
- Defamation, slander or harsh and/or unwarranted criticism, whether of PA directors, teachers, Sangha, volunteers, participants or of any other person/s
- Failure to respect confidentiality of information
- Failure to comply with a reasonable instruction or request from PA directors, teachers, Sangha or volunteers, such as a health and safety request

3. GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS

A person may complain about a perceived wrong done to them by a PA teacher, employee, volunteer or participant.

3.1. Where the complaint involves criminal activity or a breach of Australian law PA directors or representatives will promptly report that to the relevant authorities.

3.2. Where the complaint does not involve a breach of law or a crime a PA representative (the directors or their representatives) will ensure the complaint is promptly and appropriately dealt with.

3.3. All complaints will be resolved through the rubric of the *PA Code of Conduct Policy*.

3.4. Where possible and practicable all proceedings should be confidential.

3.5. Where appropriate PA directors or representatives will initiate mediation with the complainant to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of all parties (the complainant, the PA directors or representatives and any other involved parties).

3.6. Where appropriate, complainants and any other involved parties will be provided with a contact list of professional counselling services and encouraged to seek professional support.

3.7. Where a PA director or representative is the focus of a serious misconduct complaint an independent mediation process will be initiated. The aim of the mediation will be to reach an agreement that is satisfactory to all parties. The form or style of any mediation process must be agreed to by all parties. Any mediation process must not be prohibitive to any of the involved parties in terms of financial cost, location or travel requirement, time commitment, or cost to health and wellbeing.