

## White Ribbon Ambassador and Advocate Code of Conduct

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

White Ribbon Australia (White Ribbon) fosters the following values in its day to day work:

- **Courage:** in facing challenges and finding creative and innovative solutions
- **Integrity:** being ethical, honest and accountable to all
- **Respect:** being compassionate, honouring and acknowledging difference and upholding dignity
- **Collaboration:** working collaboratively to drive positive social change
- **Leadership:** being leaders in driving lasting, positive, normative change

This Code of Conduct identifies the attitudes and behaviours expected of White Ribbon Ambassadors and Advocates in both their professional and personal capacity and consistent with White Ribbon's values.

### 2.0 SCOPE

This Code applies to:

- All current White Ribbon Ambassadors and Advocates

White Ribbon Advocates and Ambassadors are expected to uphold White Ribbon's values in their professional and personal capacity at all times so as to not bring White Ribbon and the cause of preventing men's violence against women into disrepute. This scope is not limited to one's professional role or work hours and applies at all times.

### 3.0 POLICY STATEMENT

White Ribbon is a community-owned and supported social change movement dedicated to preventing men's violence against women through the engagement of men to drive attitudinal and behavioural change to create an Australian society in which all women live in safety, free from violence and abuse.

In order to achieve this, White Ribbon seeks to:

- foster a culture of integrity, respect, collaboration and responsibility amongst all Ambassadors and Advocates in order to enhance the work and reputation of the movement as a reliable voice and valued partner in the field of violence prevention.
- empower all Ambassadors and Advocates to model non-violent, equitable and respectful gender relations in their professional and personal lives.

- provide training and assistance to Ambassadors and Advocates to enable recognition of and skilled capacity to actively speak out about attitudes and behaviours that lead to disrespect, violence and abuse. This also includes inappropriate behaviours that result from sexist attitudes that can be unintended or disguised as humour but which is always insidious, offensive and exclusionary.

This Code of Conduct:

- Is a set of general principles and detailed prescriptions. It does not address all possible issues that may arise.
- Provides general guidelines aimed at maintaining high ethical standards and conduct mitigating reputational risk and ensuring accountability within and beyond White Ribbon.

## **4.0 EXPECTATION OF AMBASSADORS AND ADVOCATES**

### **4.1 Responding to Disclosures**

Ambassadors and Advocates are likely to encounter an increase in disclosures from members of the community due to their representative role. It is important that these disclosures are responded to with empathy and that the individual is directed to appropriate services from which they can receive professional support.

Practical guidance can be found in the [‘Responding to Disclosures’ factsheet](#)

White Ribbon advises that all Advocates and Ambassadors follow the ‘Accidental Counsellor’ guidelines provided by Lifeline Australia in responding to disclosures. These guidelines recognise the importance of recognising the disclosure, responding appropriately and promptly referring the individual to professional support services.

White Ribbon’s primary referral to professional support services for victims of physical, emotional, economic or sexual violence is 1800 RESPECT (737 732). 1800 RESPECT is Australia’s national sexual assault and domestic family violence counselling service which is available 24 hours a day and is free.

A list of other national and local support services for victims of sexual, abuse and family violence can be found on the [Support Services](#) page of our website.

### **4.2 Keynote Speaking**

Ambassadors and Advocates may be called upon to represent White Ribbon in a formal capacity by speaking at a community event about White Ribbon and the prevention of men’s violence against women.

Speaking engagements for Ambassadors and Advocates are optional and are not imposed upon those who may feel uncomfortable about participating in this manner.

A sample White Ribbon keynote presentation is available on both the Ambassador and Advocate Portals including demonstrations and exemplary scripts. Please use these to inform your knowledge of the issue and support the development of your own material and presentation.

White Ribbon speaking engagements are considered voluntary and community event hosts requesting a speaker are not required to pay a speaking fee. Any monies received as a result of

speaking opportunities on behalf of White Ribbon must be directed to White Ribbon in the form of a donation.

### **4.3 Disclosing in Keynote Speaking**

Ambassadors and Advocates may at times share their own personal experiences of being a survivor of or witness to violence relevant to the White Ribbon social change movement.

White Ribbon requests that in the interest of the privacy of other individuals involved in these experiences that there is no inclusion of identifying factors such as surnames, names of children, schools, workplaces etc.

We also ask that discretion is used with each audience to gauge the level of detail appropriate to the audience and ask that this is particularly exercised with younger audiences.

White Ribbon encourages those who do engage in sharing their own personal experience to alert their support networks and contact 1800 RESPECT should any past experiences be re-triggered.

### **4.4 Keynote Speaking to younger audiences**

Ambassadors and Advocates who wish to participate in speaking engagements to younger audiences such as White Ribbon Schools must have or obtain a current [Working with Children's Check](#) in addition to the standard requirement of a [Police Check](#).

White Ribbon requests that content delivered during keynote speaking engagements to younger audiences is age appropriate and is provided to the key contact at the school or institution prior to delivery to ensure the content is considered appropriate for your audience. We advise that discretion is used in the sharing of personal experiences to younger audiences of sexual, family and domestic violence, and other situations of abuse or disrespect, and that graphic information or images are avoided.

### **4.5 Engaging with the media**

Ambassadors and Advocates are requested to notify White Ribbon when they are scheduled to participate in a media engagement. A White Ribbon Media Toolkit is provided on both the Ambassador and Advocate website Portal to help you prepare for media opportunities and ensure you are on message for your audience.

Media engagement opportunities for Ambassadors and Advocates will also arise through White Ribbon and be facilitated through their PR Agency. Ambassadors and Advocates may decline media opportunities or request staff support during their media engagement.

Ambassadors and Advocates are requested to notify White Ribbon when they are approached or scheduled to participate in a media engagement by contacting [media@whiteribbon.org.au](mailto:media@whiteribbon.org.au).

### **4.6 Knowing your audience**

The roles of White Ribbon Ambassadors and Advocates provide many opportunities to speak on the issue of men's violence against women and how we can all help to prevent it. Our Ambassadors and Advocates are formal representatives of White Ribbon in the community and, as such, share their

unique stories and experiences while communicating a message aligned with White Ribbon's key messaging and values.

Ambassadors and Advocates must be respectful and attentive to their audience and communicate about the nature of and positive outcomes being achieved to end men's violence against women.

In any given audience to which an Ambassador or Advocate might speak, it is likely there will be people who have directly experienced violence, whether physical or non-physical, or people who have witnessed violence. To avoid re-traumatising such participants, Ambassadors and Advocates should refrain from speaking at length about the graphic nature of violence, whether as a generalisation or referring to a specific instance.

When speaking at conferences or events, Ambassadors and Advocates must be conscious of their audience and make an effort, where possible, to ascertain key stakeholders. These might include prevention of violence organisations, Women led organisations, emergency and frontline services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, multicultural organisations and those from the broader sector. Where appropriate, Ambassadors and Advocates may acknowledge these organisations if present.

#### **4.7 Challenging conversations**

As our representatives in the community, Ambassadors and Advocates often need to field difficult questions including those relating to gender inequality and its connection to men's violence against women. During these conversations, whether challenging or inspiring, Ambassadors and Advocates will act in accordance with this Code of Conduct, always treating others with the utmost respect and valuing their feedback and insights. Our Ambassadors and Advocates are solution-focused, active listeners and recognise that people who have passionate opinions usually have personal experiences that formed these opinions.

If it becomes clear that the person an Ambassador or Advocate is speaking with is not interested in an open, respectful discussion, the Ambassador or Advocate should acknowledge this and suggest the person get in touch with White Ribbon Australia to answer their queries.

As our Ambassadors and Advocates encourage people to be self-reflective of their behaviour and attitudes and accept feedback and critique constructively, they also must accept feedback and critique with respect and honesty. In order to educate others about the links between gender inequality and men's violence against women, our Ambassadors and Advocates are on a journey of constant learning and are reflective of their own attitudes and behaviours, both conscious and unintentional.

If you are unsure of an answer in a particular topic, or are unclear of White Ribbon Australia's position on a topic, we advise that you acknowledge the information is not at hand, and seek advice from the Ambassador & Advocate Team before responding.

#### **4.8 Social media etiquette**

The prevention of men's violence against women and its prevention is a cause our Ambassadors and Advocates are personally committed to support and action. As such, the Ambassador and Advocate roles are positions intrinsic to Ambassadors' and Advocates' professional and personal lives.

Our Ambassadors and Advocates actively promote and support White Ribbon activity through their professional and social networks including workplaces. In all spheres their Conduct must adhere to the values encompassed in the Ambassador and Advocate roles.

#### **4.9 Contact Information and Consent**

The role of the Ambassador and Advocate is a public representative role. White Ribbon encourages those who wish to remain anonymous for issues of safety to consider the efficacy of their involvement at this level due to the public nature of the role.

White Ribbon will request an Advocate's and Ambassador's consent to the following during the application phase:

- Online Profile on White Ribbon website
- Sharing of contact information with other Ambassadors and Advocates within their State or Territory to facilitate peer to peer activity
- Sharing of contact information with their respective State or Territory White Ribbon Committee
- Use of imagery in White Ribbon marketing, social media and print material.

The contact information of each Ambassador or Advocate will not be shared with third parties unless consent is provided by the individual Ambassador or Advocate concerned.

Once consent is obtained, it can be formally updated or withdrawn through the Ambassador and Advocate Online Consent Form.

#### **5.0 PROCEDURE FOR NON-COMPLIANCE OR BREACH OF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT**

White Ribbon Australia endorses community representatives of the movement as Ambassadors or Advocates in a public facing role. As a primary prevention service a critical aspect to upholding and progressing our values is the integrity and reputation of our members.

As a community-led grassroots organisation working towards positive social change, disreputable actions of individual members has the potential to diminish the efficacy of the organisation, and undermine the work of others in the same role publicly

White Ribbon Australia does not accept individuals with a known history of violence against women into the Ambassador program. In any case where evidence of violence against women is given an individual would be lapsed from the program.

Where there is a reasonable belief that a member has engaged in activity, behaviour or speech that may damage the reputation of White Ribbon Australia an investigation will be conducted by the organisation.

If an Ambassador or Advocate suspects that a breach of this Code of Conduct has occurred or will occur, they must notify that breach to White Ribbon Australia. The report will be handled in accordance with the process outlined in White Ribbon's Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure. No one will be disadvantaged or prejudiced by White Ribbon if they report a suspected breach in good faith. All reports will be acted upon appropriately and in confidence.

The general public are able to voice their concerns regarding particular Ambassadors or Advocates whom they believe contravene White Ribbon's values and Code of Conduct by way of formal complaint. These complaints are investigated according to [White Ribbon's Formal Complaint](#)

[Handling Policy](#). Ambassadors and Advocates to whom the complaint is directed are given opportunity to respond to the allegations prior to a decision being reached. Formal Complaints may result in the termination of one's appointment as an Ambassador or Advocate.

Anyone can submit a formal complaint through our online [Complaints Form](#) on our website.

Where White Ribbon is notified of a formal complaint against an Ambassador or Advocate, it is routine for the formal status to be suspended for the duration of any investigation.

## 5.1 Legal Matters and Court Proceedings

### (a) Legal matters regarding violence against women including sexual assault, assault, or domestic and family violence

Ambassadors or Advocates against whom a civil or criminal charge has been made in relation to violence will be required to suspend their Ambassador or Advocate status pending the outcome of the court proceedings. Upon conclusion of the court proceedings the person may be eligible upon review to again take up the role of Ambassador or Advocate.

### (b) Ambassadors or Advocates initiating court proceedings

Ambassadors or Advocates who are likely to initiate court proceedings relating to violence are likewise required to suspend their Ambassador or Advocate status during these court proceedings. This measure is to ensure we uphold our duty of care for people who volunteer for White Ribbon Australia, that these legal proceedings are not compromised and are not in contempt of court and that a person's Ambassador or Advocate status does not affect the outcome of court proceedings.

Ambassadors or Advocates who are likely to be engaged in any legal matters or court proceedings where the Ambassador or Advocate is or will become a party and family violence or child sexual abuse allegations are likely to be an issue is required to inform the White Ribbon Australia National office. The most relevant legal matters include family court proceedings, child protection proceedings, and family violence order proceedings (in Australia different States and Territories call also refer to these as domestic violence orders, apprehended violence orders, family violence intervention orders, family violence retraining orders and domestic violence restraining orders).

Any measures taken by White Ribbon regarding legal matters or court proceedings are to ensure our duty of care to our Ambassadors, Advocates, Supporters and those in the community connected to the White Ribbon social change movement. It is also in accordance with our values and operational procedures and protocols.

## 6.0 TERMINATION OF STATUS

Either party (White Ribbon Australia or an Ambassador or Advocate) can elect to terminate an Ambassador or Advocate status at any time.

## 7.0 VARIATION

White Ribbon reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this policy. Ambassadors and

Advocates will be informed by email of revisions to this Policy as they arise and the date from which these changes will take effect.

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