

ENGAGEMENT CODE OF CONDUCT

INTRODUCTION

City of Clarence engages with the community through a variety of online and face-to-face forums.

Regardless of the subject matter or engagement method, all communication and engagement activities must always be safe for both community members and employees/contractors and allow people to explore ideas and participate in conversations in a productive and respectful way.

Community engagement is a key component of our commitment to delivering transparent governance. Our engagements enable us to respond to the needs of the community and empower both community members and decision makers through clear accountability and informed participation.

We may engage with community in a variety of ways including online, face-to-face, community information sessions, over the phone, or in larger-scale public forums.

This code of conduct should be read in conjunction with our Community Engagement Policy 2020, which can be [found on our website](#).

OBJECTIVES

We have compiled the following guidelines for engagement for community members, employees and representatives. The guidelines aim to ensure that all participants are treated with respect and have a positive experience regardless of their views or their role in an engagement.

ENGAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Failure to adhere to these guidelines may adversely affect the outcome of an engagement or, in some cases, result in feedback being discounted or excluded.

1. Engagement Guidelines for Community Members

- 1.1. It is highly recommended to read any supporting documentation or information prior to engaging so that your comments and ideas are informed and relevant.
- 1.2. Debate is welcome but should be constructive and respectful of differing views and opinions.

- 1.3. Please respect the time of both council employees and other community members by staying on topic and within scope.
- 1.4. The protection of free speech, diverse opinions and values do not include:
- offensive language / swear words or content that a reasonable person would consider abusive, harassing, stalking, threatening or offensive toward another person or persons
 - potentially libellous accusations or content that is defamatory, knowingly false or misrepresents another person
 - threatening or offensive comments
 - violations of confidentiality
 - violations of privacy, publicity, moral or any other right of any third parties or infringements upon any copyright, trademark, trade secret or patent of any third party.
- 1.5. Respect moderators and/or City of Clarence representatives. Even if moderators and representatives are behind a computer screen, please remember that they are real people who are doing their job.

2. Engagement Guidelines for Employees

2.1. Officers are encouraged to engage with the public at the point in a project that ensures community input can be meaningfully used.

2.2. Communicate effectively:

- use multi-layered processes and multiple ways for community members to be heard
- keep the community informed and follow up where possible either by updating web or consult pages, pushing out communications on a decision, or calling back interested parties
- consider the form of your communication i.e., what hours, times, places suit your target audience.

2.3. Remember that you are representing City of Clarence and, as such, your personal views on the engagement must not be aired.

2.4. Be kind and respectful regardless of participant's views and how they may affect your project.

GUIDELINE BREACHES

Violation of 1.4 of these guidelines may result in a warning or instant disengagement. If a second violation occurs, we reserve the right to block the individual from interacting on social media or may remove the person from participating in a face-to-face engagement. Any public comments in violation of the guidelines will be deleted and feedback disregarded.

Serious violations, such as threatening language towards employees or members of the community will result in an immediate online block and may be referred to the police.

Breaches of the guidelines in an online format will be dealt with in the following manner.

1. Removal of comment – any comment that, in the view of the moderator, is directed at a person or persons rather than the engagement topic, or is abusive, defamatory, rude, or inappropriate in nature will be deleted. These comments made in a face-to-face context will result in the conclusion of the engagement.
2. Permanent blocking – a participant who continues to violate the moderation rules may have their access to the website permanently blocked.
3. Automatic blocking – a participant who posts or links to inappropriate, offensive or illegal material will be immediately blocked from posting on City of Clarence social media.
4. Violations of moderation rules on Your Say Clarence may result in the comment/feedback being deleted and disregarded.

Breaches of the guidelines in a face-to-face format will be dealt with in the following manner.

1. Notice of breach – any comments or behaviour that, in the view of the moderator/facilitator/representative, breaches these guidelines will be flagged with the individual as inappropriate and they will be reminded of the guidelines for engagement.
2. Temporary suspension – a participant who repeatedly breaches these guidelines may be suspended from engaging with us for a period of time. The period will reflect both the severity and/or ongoing nature of the breach.
3. Permanent blocking – a participant who continues to violate the moderation rules following reinstatement after a period of suspension may be blocked from engaging with City of Clarence.

In the event of the above, our employees will ask the individual to leave the face-to-face setting and disengage. If they do not and inappropriate behaviour continues, the police will be called.

Our employees will judge engagements on a case-by-case basis and use common sense when assessing the above guidelines.

Our intent is always that we are finding ways to engage and continue engagement wherever possible, rather than finding ways not to do so.

ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

Review period	Aligned to the Community Engagement Policy 2020, within 12 months of each Tasmanian local government election.		
Group Head	Georgi Wicks Head of Strategic Development, Communications and Engagement	ECM Reference	5955832

Table of amendments

No.	Date	Brief Details
	June 2026	Template update and minor revisions.