

Code of Ethics and Practices for Members of the Association Council

Being a member of the Association Council involves particular kinds of responsibilities and relationships based on trust and respect. It is an exercise in Gospel stewardship with particular responsibilities for the governance of Marist ministries.

The role of the Council is to provide leadership and oversight for the Association in the pursuit of its twin purposes: the fostering of the Christian discipleship of its members; and its conducting of its ministries in the name of the Church. All decisions and deliberations of Council are subsidiary to bringing about the reign of Gospel values within the Association and across its works. The Association Council itself should be an exemplar of Christian community and, in the Marist way, be characterised by simple, transparent, unpretentious, warm and down-to-earth ways of relating and working.

ETHICS

1. Members give the necessary time, thought and study to the work of the Association Council so that their contributions can be informed and effective.
2. Members keep all Council discussions in absolute confidence and only speak about them outside Council meetings when the Council has explicitly resolved that it may be appropriate to do so. In this way, members can contribute to Council meetings with honesty and trust.
3. Members participate courteously in meetings in a spirit of cordiality, respect, frankness, and sincerity. All opinions and comments should be expressed and heard in a respectful, rational and calm manner through the Chair. Constructively critical comments should always be made in a way that does not malign any individual or group. Side conversations, and comments on irrelevant topics are to be avoided.
4. Members do not represent any constituency of the Association. While they bring a perspective, which is informed by their own backgrounds and involvements, they are to engage as individuals conscious of governance expectations in relation to conflicts of interest.
5. While members have some responsibility to be aware of currents of opinion in the wider Association, they do not canvass views from members of the Association, its employees, or those whom its ministries serve. Their normal advice to any such person is to refer him or her to the Association Leader, the Deputy Leader, the Executive Officer, Association-level directors, or their school/ministry leader, as appropriate.
6. Members are expected to be supportive in public of any decision of the Council, even when they may have had a variant view prior to a decision being taken.
7. An individual member is not at liberty to make comments on behalf of the Council. This is the responsibility of the Chair.

PRACTICES

1. After consultation with the Chair, agenda items and papers need to be submitted to the Executive Officer at least 7 working days before the scheduled meeting, as it is critical papers go out no later than 5 working days before the meeting. Chairs of Association Ministry Boards, Councils and Committees will be made aware of these timelines. The purposes of Council and its meetings are for governance and policy only, not for management matters.
2. Council members are expected to be well prepared for meetings with all papers read, and actions completed in accordance with agreed timelines.
3. Attendance and punctuality by Council members is appreciated. Inability to attend a meeting should be communicated to the Chair through the Executive Officer.
4. It is the responsibility of all Council members to ensure they are practiced and confident in the use of the video conference software prior to meeting. Testing for remote access can be organised by contacting Kim McDonald, the Mascot Centre Coordinator, or by contacting the Centre Coordinator from where you will be situated if connecting from one of the Centres.
5. A Council member declares any conflict of interest that may be associated with a matter before the Council, according to the Council's disclosure policy, and excuses him or herself from deliberation that involves a family member, a personal business interest, or a conflict of ministry interest (eg ministry related employment). *Collective and individual* awareness of conflict of interest is required and appropriate action expected.
6. The role of the Chair of Council is to conduct the tone, pace and discussions of the meeting. It is the role of every Councillor to constructively assist the Chair in achieving these aims. Attention to and consideration of topics is essential. No phone calls or unrelated computer work should be undertaken. If urgent communication is required, Members are to ask to be excused from the meeting.
7. Members are to concentrate on items published on the Agenda. It is not appropriate for Council members to introduce topics not recorded on the published agenda. In extraordinary circumstances, the Chair may include a late item at their discretion, following preliminary notice to the Chair by a Member.
8. It is expected each Council members contributes to Committee processes.
9. At the discretion of the Chair, an 'in camera' session may be called during which only Council members are involved. This will usually occur before or after the formal agenda items are dealt with and not involve the EO or minutes secretary.