Pieces Together Ltd. - Code of Conduct and Ethical Framework

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PREAMBLE

This document establishes the foundational Code of Conduct and Ethical Framework for Pieces Together Ltd. (ACN 689 550 392), hereafter "the Charity."

This Code is a non-negotiable condition of entry, membership, and engagement. It applies to all "Charity Representatives," which includes all Directors (Officers), Staff (employees), Volunteers, and Members (Full and Associate).

This document is subordinate to the Charity's Constitution and must be read in conjunction with all other governing policies, including but not limited to:

- Pieces Together Ltd. Constitution
- Governance Standards Policy
- Standard Rules of Association (SRA)
- Work Health and Safety (WHS) Manual
- Policy and Code of Conduct for the Safeguarding of Vulnerable People

The purpose of this framework is to ensure the Charity and its operations are, and are perceived to be, beyond reproach. It is designed to create a safe, respectful, inclusive, and ethically rigorous environment in absolute alignment with the Charity's charitable purpose.

PART 1: FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES (THE MEMBER'S PLEDGE)

All Charity Representatives are bound by the following foundational principles, which are based on the core values of a community shed:

1. **Respect and Dignity:** To treat every person with respect, dignity, and fairness, acknowledging their right to hold different opinions. To act in good faith and in the best interests of the Charity and its members.

2. **Integrity and Honesty:** To be open, honest, and trustworthy in all dealings with fellow members, staff, volunteers, and the public.

3. **Safety and Wellbeing:** To commit to a "Zero Harm" objective and to be a valuable contributor to a safe, supportive, and friendly environment that supports the health and wellbeing of all members.

4. **Inclusivity and Fairness:** To value fairness and generosity of spirit and to uphold the Charity's constitutional commitment to inclusivity for all people, irrespective of cultural identity, medical condition, disability, age, gender, political affiliation, nationality, sexual orientation, or religion.

5. **Accountability:** To accept personal responsibility for one's actions and to uphold the standards and reputation of the Charity.

PART 2: THE CODE OF ETHICS (CRITICAL THINKING AND CONDUCT)

Beyond simple rules, the Charity mandates a framework of ethical reasoning. All Charity Representatives are expected to engage in critical thinking and epistemic humility.

2.1. The Duty of Critical Thinking

Critical thinking, in the context of this Charity, is the ethical duty to question one's own biases, assumptions, and interpretations before acting or speaking. It is the conscious effort to move from assumption to understanding.

2.2. The Principle of Epistemic Humility

Epistemic humility is the understanding that one's own knowledge, beliefs, and experiences are limited and fallible. This principle is the Charity's primary defence against dogma and the creation of an unwelcoming environment.

2.3. Prohibition on the Hermeneutics of Assumption

Charity Representatives are prohibited from engaging in the "hermeneutics of assumption." This is defined as the act of interpreting another's actions, words, identity, or motivations through one's own unexamined biases, beliefs, or cultural norms. This practice is the root of discrimination, disrespect, and exclusion.

2.4. Mandatory Application

All Charity Representatives must actively practice this ethical framework. Before judging, intervening, or speaking on a matter involving another person, the Representative must first reflect: "Is my understanding of this situation based on fact, or on my own assumption?" This principle underpins the Charity's commitment to genuine inclusivity.

PART 3: THE CODE OF CONDUCT (SPECIFIC BEHAVIOURS)

This Code of Conduct provides non-negotiable rules. All Charity Representatives **must** adhere to these standards.

3.1. Responsibility to the Charity and its Purpose

- **Primacy of Purpose:** All actions taken as a Charity Representative must be in the best interests of the Charity and for the promotion of its charitable purposes.
- **Reputation:** Conduct, both inside and outside the Parlour, must not bring the Charity into disrepute.
- **Authority:** No Representative may commit the Charity to any project, expenditure, or legal agreement without the explicit, documented approval of the Board or its delegate (e.g., the Parlour Manager).
- **Conflicts of Interest:** All Representatives must comply with Clause 52 of the Constitution and SRA 4.3, and immediately disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest to the Parlour Manager or the Board.
- **Charity Resources:** Charity equipment, funds, or assets (including LEGO®) must not be used for personal use, personal gain, or any purpose other than the Charity's charitable activities, without explicit permission.
- **Media and Public Statements:** No Representative may speak to the media or make official statements on behalf of the Charity unless explicitly authorised by the Board.

3.2. Responsibility to Each Other (Respect and Collaboration)

- **Respectful Communication:** All individuals must be treated with courtesy, fairness, and respect.
- **Aggression and Anti-Social Behaviour:** Zero tolerance is extended to any form of physical or verbal aggression, anti-social behaviour, intimidation, or shouting.
- **Bullying and Harassment:** Bullying, harassment, discrimination, or offensive language is strictly prohibited and constitutes a major breach of this Code.
- **Privacy and Confidentiality:** The personal information and privacy of other members, staff, and volunteers must be respected at all times. Confidential Charity information must not be disclosed.
- **Neutrality:** The Parlour is a neutral space. Representatives must not promote personal political or religious views in a manner that creates division, pressure, or an unwelcoming environment.

3.3. Responsibility for Safety (WHS and Safeguarding)

- **Primacy of Safety:** All Representatives must comply with the "Zero Harm" objective and adhere strictly to the WHS Manual and the Policy and Code of Conduct for the Safeguarding of Vulnerable People.
- **Reasonable Care:** All Representatives must take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others.
- **Compliance and Directions:** All Representatives must comply with all WHS procedures, SOPs, and any lawful and reasonable direction from the Parlour Manager or the Board.
- **Reporting:** All hazards, incidents, injuries (including First Aid), and near misses must be reported immediately to the Parlour Manager. All safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately as per the Safeguarding Policy.
- **Sign-In:** All Members and Volunteers **must** log in on arrival and log off on departure. This is a non-negotiable requirement for insurance and emergency evacuation purposes.
- **Induction:** No Member or Volunteer may use the Parlour facilities until they have completed the mandatory WHS and general induction.
- **Alcohol and Drugs:** No person may enter or remain on the premises while under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol. The consumption of alcohol is strictly forbidden, *except* during specific, Board-authorised events where all building and workshop activities are formally suspended.
- **Smoking:** The Parlour is a smoke-free and vape-free environment. Smoking is prohibited in all indoor and outdoor areas of the premises.

PART 4: BREACH OF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT

4.1. Authority
This Code of Conduct constitutes a set of lawful and reasonable directions from the Charity to its Representatives. Failure to comply is a serious matter.

4.2. **Dispute Resolution (Grievances)**

- Interpersonal conflicts should, in the first instance, be addressed calmly, respectfully, and constructively between the individuals involved, in line with the principles in Part 2.
- If a dispute cannot be resolved informally, any party may initiate the formal dispute resolution procedure as governed by **Clause 19 of the Constitution**.

4.3. **Disciplinary Action**

- A breach of this Code of Conduct may be deemed:
  - A breach of a Member's responsibilities (Clause 15 of the Constitution) [46];
  - Behaviour causing harm or risk of harm to the Charity (Clause 20.1a)[47]; or
  - An act against the best interests of the Charity (Clause 20.1c)[48].
- Such breaches will be managed under the formal disciplinary procedure detailed in **Clause 20 of the Constitution**.
- Depending on the severity, a breach may result in a formal warning, suspension of membership/engagement, or immediate termination.

4.4. **Serious and Gross Misconduct**

- Breaches involving theft, fraud, assault, physical violence, or any form of abuse or exploitation of a vulnerable person constitute gross misconduct.
- Such conduct will be reported to external authorities (e.g., WA Police) and will result in the immediate termination of membership, employment, or volunteer engagement, and permanent exclusion from the premises.
- Reports made in good faith are protected; however, intentionally false or malicious reports will themselves be treated as a serious breach of this Code. If there was intentional deception to gain a financial or personal advantage or to cause a loss to another person or organization, such conduct will be reported to external authorities (e.g., WA Police) as ‘fraud’ and will result in the immediate termination of membership, employment, or volunteer engagement, and permanent exclusion from the premises.

PART 5: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have been provided with a copy of the Pieces Together Ltd. Code of Conduct and Ethical Framework.

I have read, understood, and agree to be bound by its principles and rules. I understand that my compliance with this Code is a non-negotiable condition of my membership, employment, or volunteer engagement with Pieces Together Ltd.

I commit to upholding these principles of respect, integrity, safety, and critical thinking.

Full Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____