

# Objectives and Program Policies

**CAMP COOINDA** was established in 1960 as an independent non-profit organisation to conduct adventurous camping activities for young people. It is an incorporated Association and an Income Tax Exempt Charity. It is managed by a Committee with extensive involvement in the Camp Cooinda program.



## OBJECTIVES

The objectives of Camp Cooinda Inc. are to provide camps for young people that provide

- enjoyment
- challenging outdoor activities
- experiences of cooperative relationships
- opportunities to develop initiative and high self-esteem
- reflection on personal values.

## PROGRAM AND SAFETY

Camp Cooinda's program is based on a waterfront site on Lake Victoria in the Gippsland Lakes (300 kilometres from Melbourne and 20 kilometres from Bairnsdale) and on its own 6 hectare island ten kilometres by water from the main site.

Responsible adventurous outdoor activities require careful attention to the distinction between an acceptable level of risk that constitutes challenge and adventure and the level of risk that constitutes unacceptable danger.

## PROGRAM POLICIES

To ensure responsible, safe, and enjoyable adventure programs on and from its lake sites, Camp Cooinda Inc. has adopted a series of program policies which guide all approved programs it operates and which indicate clearly to leaders the expectations of the organisation about leadership responsibilities.

Acceptance of the following program responsibilities is required of every leader involved in a camp program:

## SAFETY AND WELFARE OF CAMPER AND LEADERS

1. The highest priority in all activities is the safety and welfare of campers and leaders.
2. Leaders are required to practice the 'two-person rule' to ensure a leader is not alone with an individual camper in a setting where they cannot be seen by other people. The 'two-person rule' also applies beyond the camp program including online such as telephone, text and instant messaging, email and social networking sites. The only exception is where a family relationship or friendship existed prior to their leadership role with Camp Cooinda, or the camper would benefit from ongoing support from a leader (this would require the agreement of the Executive Group).
3. Any incident of sexual molestation in a camp program or any instance where a child is at immediate risk of abuse must be reported to Victoria Police. Leaders are also required to comply with their lawful obligation to report to police any reasonable belief that a child has been the subject of a sexual offence by an adult, whether at camp or otherwise (s.327 Crimes Act 1958)
4. Leaders are expected to not in any way discriminate, harass or bully a fellow volunteer leader. Harassment, bullying and discrimination take many forms, including, unwelcome remarks, gestures or physical contact, offensive or derogatory jokes or comments (explicit or by innuendo), verbal or physical abuse or threats, any unwanted sexual contact or advances. Cooinda as an organisation will cooperate with Victoria Police to resolve any matters instigated from any harassment that takes place between Leaders on program.

## WATER SAFETY

5. Campers must be able to swim at least 100 metres.
6. All swimming is supervised.

7. A PFD (personal flotation device) must be worn when swimming at night, and when swimming at the Nicholson River.
8. There is no swimming on ocean beaches unless they are patrolled and supervised by a recognised life-saving body.

#### **USE OF WATER CRAFT**

9. A PFD (personal flotation device) is worn at all times in small craft as required by Government Regulations.
10. Canoeing and kayaking shall cease as soon as practicable when any one of the following occurs on the water on which canoeing or kayaking is taking place:
  - there are white caps
  - waves reach 0.5 metres in heightunless specifically authorised by a Program Director.
11. When there is 30 seconds or less between lightning and thunder, as soon as practicable all boats shall be beached or moored in a safe location so that all campers and leaders can shelter on land and follow the detailed instructions given to leaders.

#### **CANOE AND KAYAK EXPEDITION SAFETY**

12. Craft in an expedition group stay together, usually within a 50m diameter.
13. A camp leader is always in the last canoe or kayak so that all craft and persons are in sight.
14. Expedition routes are approved by a Program Director and keep within 100m of shore except for lake crossings at times and places approved by a Program Director.
15. In the event of illness, accident or equipment damage, the first responsibility of a leader and of the organisation is the safety of every camper.

#### **ROAD SAFETY**

16. During a camp program a leader requires the approval of the Camp Director or a Program Director to drive campers.
17. P-plate drivers do not drive campers (unless a parent authorises this directly with the driver thus by-passing the responsibility of the Camp).

#### **VALUES**

18. Camp Cooida seeks to operate as a community where there is respect for others and cooperation between campers and leaders.
19. Camp Cooida is committed to practices which protect the environment and which increase awareness by campers and leaders of environmental issues associated with camp programs.
20. While Camp Cooida Inc. does not teach or study the doctrines of any particular religion, it reflects a Christian perspective in the values commended to campers.

#### **DRUGS & ALCOHOL**

21. During a camp, leaders and campers may not consume alcohol or possess or use illegal drugs.
22. Smoking is discouraged on health grounds. Camp leaders do not supply cigarettes to campers.

#### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VOLUNTEER LEADERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT CAMP COOIDA**

##### **All volunteer leaders at Camp Cooida are required to abide by this Code.**

During the camp program, the Camp Director fulfils the role of the Child Protection Officer. Outside program, this role is fulfilled by the Executive Officer. The Child Protection Officer provides information and support to all volunteer leaders, children, young people and their carers regarding child protection matters.

**The Camp Director and Program Directors are:**

1. responsible for the overall welfare and wellbeing of volunteer leaders
2. accountable for managing and maintaining a duty of care towards volunteer leaders and children in Camp Cooina programs
3. responsible for relevant administration of programs and activities in their area including the maintenance of records in accordance with Camp Cooina's document management protocols.

**All people involved in the care of children on behalf of Camp Cooina will:**

1. work towards the achievement of the aims and purposes of the organisation
2. maintain a duty of care towards others involved in Camp Cooina's programs and activities
3. establish and maintain a child-safe environment for children and young people
4. be fair, considerate and honest with others
5. treat children and young people with respect and value their ideas and opinions
6. act as positive role models in their conduct with children and young people
7. be professional in their actions
8. operate within the policies and procedures of Camp Cooina and comply with organisational guidelines on contact with children
9. value diversity and foster an inclusive camp environment for all campers and leaders
10. respect the privacy of children, their families and teachers/carers, and only disclose information to people who have a "need to know"
11. contact the police if a child is at immediate risk of abuse (telephone 000).

**No person shall:**

1. shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade children or young people
2. unlawfully discriminate against any child
3. engage in any activity with a child or young person that is likely to physically or emotionally harm them
4. initiate inappropriate physical contact with a child or young person or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves
5. be alone with an individual camper in a setting where they cannot be seen by other people
6. develop a 'special' relationship with a specific child or young person for their own needs
7. show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention
8. arrange contact, including online contact, with children or young people outside of the organisation's programs and activities
9. photograph or video a child or young person without the consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians
10. work with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
11. engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children
12. use inappropriate language in the presence of children
13. do anything in contravention of the organisation's policies, procedures or this Code of Conduct.
14. in any way discriminate, harass or bully a fellow volunteer leader.

**What happens if you breach this Code of Conduct?**

If you breach this Code of Conduct, you will face disciplinary action, including possible termination of your engagement with Camp Cooina.

*Approved by the Committee of Camp Cooina Inc., 28 September 1982.*

*Last revised and approved by the Committee of Camp Cooina Inc., 18 August 2021.*