

Deaf Children Australia Membership Policy

Contents

1.	What We Seek in Our Members	2
2.	Who Can Become a Member?	2
2.1	Voting Member:	2
2.2	Non-Voting Member:	2
2.3	Junior Member:	2
2.4	Life Member:	2
2.5	Associate Member:.....	2
3.	Expectations of Membership	3
4.	DCA's Commitment to Its Members	3
5.	Code of Conduct for Members	3
6.	Conflict of Interest	4
6.1	Disclosure	4
6.2	Transparency	4
6.3	Board Review.....	4
7.	Application Process.....	4
7.1	Application Form Details:	4
7.2	Data Privacy.....	4
7.3	Board Considerations for Membership	5
7.4	Membership Application Outcome Response Time.....	5
8.	Membership Renewal and Review	5
8.1	Renewal Process:.....	5
8.2	Annual Review:	5
8.3	Terminations of Membership.....	5
9.	Related Documents.....	6
10.	References	6

1. What We Seek in Our Members

As a Board and organisation, we value members who:

- Understand DCA's work and its impact.
- Are informed and engaged, enabling them to make thoughtful decisions during votes.

2. Who Can Become a Member?

Deaf Children Australia (DCA) offers several categories of membership to suit different levels of involvement and support. The following categories are available:

2.1 Voting Member:

- **Eligibility:** Open to any individual over 18 years of age who aligns with DCA's mission and values.
- **Rights:** Voting Members are entitled to vote at General Meetings, participate in Board elections, and stand for election as a Director.
- **Responsibilities:** Payment of annual membership fees and adherence to DCA's Code of Conduct.

2.2 Non-Voting Member:

- **Eligibility:** Open to individuals who wish to support DCA but do not wish to have voting rights.
- **Rights:** Non-Voting Members may attend General Meetings but are not entitled to vote or stand for election.
- **Responsibilities:** Adherence to DCA's Code of Conduct. Non-voting members are not required to pay annual membership fees.

2.3 Junior Member:

- **Eligibility:** Open to individuals under 18 years of age who wish to support DCA's mission.
- **Rights:** Junior Members may attend General Meetings but are not entitled to vote or stand for election.
- **Responsibilities:** Adherence to DCA's Code of Conduct. Junior Members are not required to pay annual membership fees.

2.4 Life Member:

- **Eligibility:** Awarded by the Board to individuals who have made significant and lasting contributions to DCA.
- **Rights:** Life Members may attend General Meetings and participate in DCA events, but do not have voting rights.
- **Responsibilities:** No membership fees are required for Life Members.

2.5 Associate Member:

- **Eligibility:** Open to organisations or individuals who wish to engage with DCA without voting rights.
- **Rights:** Associate Members may attend events and participate in DCA activities but are not entitled to vote at General Meetings.

- **Responsibilities:** Payment of membership fees if applicable and adherence to DCA's Code of Conduct.

3. Expectations of Membership

Members of DCA are encouraged to:

- **Pay Membership Fees:** Contribute to DCA through membership dues.
- **Support DCA's Mission, Vision, and Values:** Actively advocate for DCA's goal to champion the growth and social inclusion of deaf and hard-of-hearing children and young people.
- **Engage with DCA Initiatives:** Participate in programs, events, and activities that further our mission.
- **Expand Our Networks:** Help broaden DCA's reach by connecting with the wider community.
- **Contribute to Our Impact:** Play an active role in fostering a more inclusive Australian community.

4. DCA's Commitment to Its Members

In return, DCA will:

- Exclusive Invitation to various DCA events
- Invitation to an onsite members-only Networking Event at our Heritage Bluestone Building in Melbourne.
- Invitation to an Online Members Event
- 15% discount code in our DCA Online Shop - Once only use - valid until June 30, 2025
- Signing The Way Newsletter x 2 per year
- Flying Kites Newsletter – sharing updates on DCA's impact, stories, and upcoming activities.
- Soft/Hard copy of DCA's Impact Reports
- **Recognise Contributions:** Acknowledge and celebrate members' contributions through member spotlights in newsletters and impact reports.

5. Code of Conduct for Members

DCA sets clear expectations of professional behaviour and must ensure all members align with DCA's code of conduct and understand our values:

Respect: DCA respects and promotes the rights of deaf and hard of hearing children and young people, and supports them, their family members and all those around them to make informed choices and enable them to fully participate in the community at all stages of their lives.

Accountable: We are primarily accountable to deaf and hard of hearing children, young people and their families for our decisions and actions, and also accountable to our stakeholders. DCA strives to act with integrity and transparency at all times.

Partnerships: DCA is committed to addressing the disadvantage experienced by deaf and hard of hearing children and young people. DCA's goal is to create partnerships that assist in achieving our vision and providing the best possible support for children, young people and their families.

Service: DCA is a collaborative, diverse and inclusive organisation. We strive to base our work on evidence, empowering deaf and hard of hearing children and young people. DCA seeks contemporary approaches to providing unbiased support, whilst at the same time advancing knowledge and skills in the field.

6. Conflict of Interest

All members of Deaf Children Australia, particularly those serving on the Board, are required to act in the best interests of the organisation and must avoid conflicts of interest. The following guidelines apply:

6.1 Disclosure

Members must disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest as soon as they arise. This includes any affiliations, personal or financial, with external organisations that may influence or appear to influence their decision-making.

6.2 Transparency

All conflicts of interest and related disclosures will be documented by the Board and made available for review as part of DCA's commitment to transparency and accountability.

6.3 Board Review

The Board may, at its discretion, request further information or take appropriate action in cases where a conflict of interest could impact the organisation.

7. Application Process

To join DCA, prospective members should align with our mission to champion the growth and social inclusion of deaf and hard-of-hearing children and young people.

7.1 Application Form Details:

In addition to name and personal contact details, the following information requests will be included in the Membership Application Form (online and hard copy):

- **Personal Connection:** Explain your key interest in being involved with DCA.
- **Experience and Interest:** Indicate if you have lived experience or an interest in the deaf community.
- **Connection to DCA:** Describe any personal or professional links to DCA.
- **Referral Source:** Share how you heard about DCA.

7.2 Data Privacy

DCA will collect and store personal information of its members in accordance with the Commonwealth Privacy Act (1988) and the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs). Information collected will only be used for membership management, communication, and the provision of member services. Members' data will be kept secure, and DCA will not disclose personal information without consent unless required by law.

7.3 Board Considerations for Membership

When reviewing applications, the Board will consider:

- **Residence:** Is the applicant an Australian citizen and currently reside in Australia?
- **Suitability:** Is the applicant aligned with DCA's mission and values?
- **Potential Conflicts of Interest:** Is the applicant involved with other organisations that may pose a conflict of interest with DCA?

7.4 Membership Application Outcome Response Time

- Upon submission of a membership application, the Board will review the application at the next meeting of the Directors.
- Applicants will be notified of the outcome within 7 days following the Board's decision.
- A person becomes a Member only once their name is entered into the *Register of Members*.

8. Membership Renewal and Review

DCA membership will have:

8.1 Renewal Process:

- The Annual Membership Subscription fee becomes due and payable on 1 July each year.
- Receipt of the annual subscription fee renders the Member financial and eligible to vote.
Where the annual subscription fee is not received:
 - a) After one month, the Directors will issue a written reminder notice to the Member; and
 - b) After two months, the Member's rights and privileges associated with Membership will be suspended.

8.2 Annual Review:

The annual membership will be reviewed annually to keep the member database up-to-date and ensure continued alignment with DCA's mission.

If a member has not paid the annual subscription fee for more than 12 months, they will be removed from the Members Register.

8.3 Terminations of Membership

Membership with Deaf Children Australia may cease under the following conditions:

- **Resignation:** A member may resign at any time by providing written notice to DCA. Upon receipt of this notice, membership will be terminated, and the member will no longer have any rights or privileges associated with membership.
- **Non-Payment of Fees:** If a member fails to pay their annual subscription fee for more than 12 months, their membership will be automatically terminated, and their name will be removed from the members' register.
- **Expulsion:** A member may be expelled from DCA if they are found to be in violation of the Code of Conduct or engage in activities contrary to the mission and values of DCA. The expulsion process will be as follows:
 1. The member will be notified in writing of the grounds for expulsion at least 7 days before a Board meeting.

2. The member will have the opportunity to respond in writing or in person before the final decision is made.
 3. The Board's decision, requiring a three-quarters majority vote, will be communicated to the member within 7 days of the meeting.
- **Death or Incapacity:** A membership will be terminated upon the death of the member or in the event the member is deemed legally incapacitated.

9. Related Documents

- Constitution for Deaf Children Australia
- POL-CP-17 Code of Conduct Policy
- POL-CP-04 Privacy Policy

10. References

- Commonwealth Privacy Act (1988)
- Australian Privacy Principles (APPs)