



The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc.

Governance Policy

Version: 02.1

Responsible Person: State President

Approved by the Board on 22.01.2019

Scheduled Review Date: November 2021

Purpose

Governance in the community sector is concerned with the systems and processes that ensure the overall direction, effectiveness, supervision and accountability of an organisation.

Board members take ultimate responsibility for the governance of the Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc. However, governance is not a role for Board and State Council members alone. Governance is also concerned with the way the Board works with the Executive Director and staff, members, volunteers, service users, and other stakeholders to ensure the Association is effectively and properly run and meets the purposes for which it was set up.

The Governance Policy is intended to clarify the content of the organisation's constitution by making explicit the underlying principles of governance approved by the organisation.

This policy does not cover legal or ethical issues concerning the role of the Board or its members, which are addressed separately elsewhere.

Policy

The Board and the State Council of The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc. (CWA) are elected, representative, and collective bodies.

- They are **elected**, in that the determination of Board and State Council members is the prerogative of members through the election process.
- They are **representative**, in that no member can be mandated by their constituency to adopt a particular position if they do not believe it to be in the best interests of the organisation. Whatever the constituency of any member, all members are committed to acting selflessly and making decisions and voting solely in the best interests of the Association.
- They are **collective**, in that while each member should put the point of view of their constituency, and each member has the right to argue for their own point of view and to

vote for that position, once a collective decision has been taken Board and State Council members are required to support that decision.

Governance Principles

All members and employees of the Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc. should abide by the following basic principles of governance:

1. **Transparency:** being clear and unambiguous about the Association's structure, operations and performance, both externally and internally, and maintaining a genuine dialogue with, and providing insight to, legitimate stakeholders.
2. **Accountability:** ensuring that there is clarity of decision making within the Association, with processes in place to ensure that the right people have the right authority for the Association to make effective and efficient decisions, with appropriate consequences for failures to follow those processes.
3. **Stewardship:** developing and maintaining an enterprise-wide recognition that the Association is managed for the benefit of its members, and of women, children and families.
4. **Integrity:** developing and maintaining a culture committed to ethical behaviour and compliance with the law.