



# CODE OF PRACTICE

for the New Zealand Assistive Technology  
Products and Services Industry

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## 1. Objective

Assistive Technology Suppliers New Zealand's (ATSNZ) objective is to implement a self-regulating Code of Practice that ensures consistent provision of assistive technology products and services to consumers who have a disability or have reduced ability, and that safeguards the interests of all stakeholders. Consumers are private individuals buying goods or services other than for business purposes.

In addition to requirements for contracts with such consumers, this Code also covers business-to-business contracts where appropriate. They have been included herein because of the nature of the business carried out. Most of the companies that sign up to the Code will sell to a mixture of consumers including private consumers, businesses and public agencies (such as the Ministry of Health (MoH), Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) ), as well as funding administrators who are contracted by these organisations (such as Enable and accessible); however, the principles involved, particularly in regard to assessment of the users of products and to the need for good after sales support, are similar.

This Code does not override and/or substitute conditions contained within individual government contracts entered into by ATSNZ members. In the event of any inconsistency between this Code and any applicable government contracts or legislation, the contract and/or legislation will prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

The Code will be reviewed regularly with input from external organisations to ensure its effectiveness.

## 2. General Scope and Purpose of the Code

- 2.1 This Code of Practice ('Code') governs the behaviour of companies that have registered to abide by the criteria contained in this Code ('ATSNZ Members'). It operates throughout New Zealand.
- 2.2 In examining a company's behaviour against this Code, only the clauses relevant to that company and its products, the goods that it sells, and its services will be taken into account.
- 2.3 The Code is intended to reflect a philosophy of care and support for consumers. ATSNZ Members are required under this Code to make themselves aware of pertinent legislation, to ensure they do not offer, stipulate, infer or imply anything in their terms and conditions of contract which provides the consumer with less protection than that provided by law, and to ensure that the terms in their consumer contracts comply with all relevant consumer protection laws.
- 2.4 An undertaking to abide by this Code is currently restricted to, and mandatory for, members of Assistive Technology Suppliers New Zealand Association ('ATSNZ'). In considering applications for membership, ATSNZ takes into account the past history of any directors/partners and will not allow entry by any company where a director, partner or major stakeholder has been involved, within the previous 12 months, in the winding up of a company in such a manner that ATSNZ considers that consumers have been disadvantaged. Such companies will, therefore, be precluded from becoming ATSNZ Members at the sole and absolute discretion of ATSNZ.

### 3. Definitions/Terminology

#### Assistive Technology (AT) Industry

3.1 For the purposes of this Code, a company in the 'AT industry' is defined as a business involved in one or more of the following:

- Supply of assistive technologies
- Supply of externally applied medical devices, and/or services relating to the fitting of those devices
- Supply of equipment and related services necessary for medical and health professionals to carry out their various specialist functions
- Training in the use of assistive technologies
- Training relating to health and safety, such as the safe and appropriate use of equipment, and manual handling.

3.2 For the purpose of clarification, the AT industry (in relation to this Code) does not include:

- Pharmaceuticals
- Alternative/complimentary medicines or therapies
- Dentistry
- GP practice
- Ophthalmology
- Implants
- Critical care.

#### Assistive Technology

3.3 An 'assistive technology' is a product or service that enhances independent living as defined in AS/NZS ISO 9999:2016 (Assistive products for persons with disability - classification and terminology).

#### ATSNZ Member

3.4 An 'ATSNZ Member' is any business or other organisation who has successfully applied for and been granted ATSNZ membership and who has agreed to comply with this Code.

## Company

3.5 For the purposes of this Code, 'company' includes:

- Limited companies
- Partnerships
- Sole traders
- Franchises
- Wholly-owned subsidiaries
- Other registered businesses
- Trading arms of registered charities (i.e. organisations or firms with a commercial, profit-making interest)
- Any other body declared by ATSNZ to be a company for the purpose of this Code.

## Consumer

3.6 'Consumers' can include private individuals, businesses, registered charities or authorities/agencies.

## Code Administrator

3.7 ATSNZ is the Administrator of this Code.

## 4. Principles Underpinning This Code

- 4.1 All ATSNZ Members registered pursuant to this Code should adhere to the following principles:
- a) Compliance with all relevant legislation relating to advertising and marketing, the sale of goods, relevant New Zealand regulations, consumer rights, disability rights, data protection, privacy laws, work health and safety laws and the general protections available to all consumers under the Consumer Guarantees Act and the Fair Trading Act.
  - b) They will make themselves aware of, and comply with, pertinent legislation (as described in Appendix B) to ensure they do not offer, stipulate, infer or imply anything in their terms and conditions of the contract that provides the consumer with less protection than that provided by law.
  - c) When selling products, they will ensure that these are of satisfactory quality and fit for the purpose specified. Their selling techniques will be ethical and they will deliver high standards of service.
  - d) Any representations made by the company and its employees will be honest and truthful, and will not give rise to false expectations. Information, claims and comparisons should be accurate, balanced, fair, objective and unambiguous. They should not mislead either directly, by implication or by omission.
  - e) They will act at all times in such a manner as to justify public trust and confidence, to uphold the good standing and reputation of the AT industry, to serve the best interests of society, and above all, to safeguard the interests of individual consumers. They will respect the confidentiality of information obtained and not disclose such information without the consent of the consumer concerned or a person entitled to act on that consumer's behalf, except where such disclosure is required by law. They will be honest and truthful in all their dealings with consumers.
  - f) All communications, verbal and written, will be made in plain language.
  - g) At all times, consumers will be respected and those that are vulnerable will not be coerced in any way. ATSNZ Members should be familiar with the information in publications from the Consumer Guarantees Act dealing with disadvantaged or vulnerable consumers.
  - h) Consumers are to be made aware of the existence of this Code and its availability on the ATSNZ website.
  - i) A copy of this Code will be given to anyone who requests it and, where complaints cannot be resolved directly with the company, complainants will be made aware of their right to make a complaint to ATSNZ in accordance with section 16 of this Code.

## 5. Advertising and Marketing

- 5.1 In marketing and promotional activities, in addition to having due regard for current legislation, care should be taken to ensure any gifts related to purchase of a product or service are directly relevant to that purchase and of a nature that cannot be construed as inappropriate or disproportionate.
- 5.2 Advertisements should comply with any relevant code or standard of advertising.
- 5.3 Advertisements should not give misleading indications about price, value or quality, nor about the organisation placing the advertisement, nor about any benefit that may be derived from the product or service offered. The consequence of responding to the advertisement should be clear.
- 5.4 ATSNZ Members must comply with the New Zealand Advertising Therapeutic Products Code of Practice, where a duty of care is required or a product is specifically scripted.

## 6. Conduct of Staff of ATSNZ Members

- 6.1 ATSNZ Members' staff should always clearly identify themselves and, when away from the company's premises, their reason for calling.
- 6.2 ATSNZ Members' staff should never purport to have medical training where this is not the case, nor represent that their product is endorsed or accredited by a specific body, authority or group unless such endorsement or accreditation can be evidenced in writing.
- 6.3 ATSNZ Members' staff are expected to:
- a) Act at all times in such a manner as to promote public trust and confidence, to uphold and enhance the good standing and reputation of the AT industry, to serve the best interests of society and, above all, to safeguard the interests of individual consumers.
  - b) Be accountable for their own working practices and, in the exercise of such accountability, to:
    - i. act, at all times in compliance with applicable legislation and in a manner befitting a professional worker in the AT industry
    - ii. act, at all times, in such a way as to promote and safeguard the well-being and interests of consumers, including complying with any applicable health and safety obligations for the jurisdictions in which they work.
  - c) Take every reasonable opportunity to maintain and enhance knowledge and competence within their field of work.
  - d) Work in a collaborative manner with consumers and healthcare professionals and recognise and respect the contribution of all within the AT team.
  - e) Take account of the goals, aspirations, values, customs and spiritual beliefs of consumers.
  - f) Ensure that the consumer is fully informed (in this context, this means that the terms and conditions of contract options available and any other pre-contractual and point of sale requirements set out in this Code have been explained), before seeking their consent to a purchase.
  - g) Ensure that there is no abuse of the privileged relationship that exists with consumers or of the privileged access allowed to their property, residence or workplace.
  - h) Respect the confidentiality of information obtained during the course of their work and not disclose such information without the consent of the consumer concerned or a person entitled to act on that consumer's behalf, except where such disclosure is required by law and where such disclosure is addressed in their employer's privacy policy.
  - i) Assist colleagues, wherever possible, to develop competence in relation to the needs of their work.

## **7. Training of Staff and Ongoing Development**

- 7.1 ATSNZ Members should make their staff aware of their obligations pursuant to applicable legislation and industry standards (including but not limited to obligations in relation to work health and safety, disability discrimination, privacy and consumer rights). Staff should give due regard to infection control issues where relevant.
- 7.2 ATSNZ Members should inform their staff of any regulations to which they should give due regard in the course of their work, including but not limited to building regulations, safety regulations, health and safety Codes of Practice, lifting operations and lifting equipment regulations.
- 7.3 Staff should not work unsupervised until they are considered competent to do so. Registered professionals, such as occupational therapists, rehabilitation engineers, physiotherapists, nurses, orthotists and prosthetists are required to receive ongoing training to keep their knowledge up to date and such registration is an indicator of competence. Ongoing training should be facilitated by ATSNZ Members.
- 7.4 ATSNZ Members should maintain a record of training for each member of staff.
- 7.5 Where clinical advice and training is to be given by staff members, they should be appropriately qualified.
- 7.6 All staff should be given a copy of this Code and be made aware that the company and its staff are required to adhere to the provisions herein.

## **8. Representation at Point of Sale**

- 8.1 Staff should have the appropriate product knowledge to advise and assist consumers.
- 8.2 Consumers should be informed that a copy of this Code is available on the ATSNZ website or will be provided free of charge, on request. In addition, ATSNZ Members will prominently display the ATSNZ Code of Practice summary document and the ATSNZ member logo on their website and other relevant promotional material.

## 9. Pre-contractual and Point of Sale Information

- 9.1 ATSNZ Members should not use inappropriate selling tactics, which include but are not limited to the following:
- high-pressure selling techniques
  - unreasonably long stay (for sales in the home)
  - inflated initial price followed by the offer of a discount (often followed by a telephone call to the 'manager')
  - discount on the condition that the consumer agrees to the sale that day
  - withholding price information until the end of the sales discussion/visit
  - alleged limited availability of a product
  - any form of misrepresentation of the product, price or contract.
- 9.2 Potential consumers should be made aware, where appropriate, of AT goods and services offered by government departments such as MoH, major charities and other agencies.
- 9.3 Terms and conditions of contracts should be available in writing, provided to the consumer, and should be legible, comprehensive and written in plain language. They should include details of the supplier's name and geographical address and details of any other supplier's name and geographical address on whose behalf the supplier is acting. Due regard should be given to relevant consumer protection laws and regulations. Consumers with poor eyesight, or who become easily confused, should be encouraged to have a relative, friend or other advisor/carer with them.
- 9.4 Any known limitations of the product/service should be made clear to the consumer, and any clear disparity between the goods and/or services for sale and usual consumer expectations should be explained in clear terms.
- 9.5 Any clear disparity between a consumer's stated requirements and the nature of the goods/and or services to be purchased should be pointed out and explained in clear terms.
- 9.6 Where a product will need to be modified in a way that is not achievable with accessories and where additional fabrication outside routine manufacture is required, the consumer should be made aware of this, as the product will be customised and any changes to terms and conditions as a result of the customisation should be notified to them.
- 9.7 When requested by the consumer, all verbal representations or promises made by the company employee should be put in writing, either on the contract or on a separate form.
- 9.8 Pricing information showing the total price should include goods and services tax, be clear, unambiguous and where requested, provided in writing.

- 9.9 Details of any finance agreement should be explained in such a way that the consumer understands how much they will be paying over the full term of the Agreement and what the terms of the contract are.
- 9.10 Pre-contract information should be sent/presented on its own, allowing time for the consumer to pause and reflect on affordability and to compare credit options, before being presented with the agreement to be signed. Consumers should be encouraged to seek independent legal and financial advice in regard to any finance agreements.
- 9.11 Details of delivery, installation, training, after-sales support, service and warranty should be made available prior to sale.
- 9.12 Where applicable, delivery and completion dates should be discussed with the consumer in advance of ordering/making the purchase and a choice of delivery dates and times should be offered. For mail order and internet orders, normal delivery times should be indicated. Should it become clear these cannot be met, the consumer should be informed as soon as practicable, with an honest explanation of the reason for the delay and a new delivery time arranged.
- 9.13 When required, demonstration of the safe use of equipment for its use under the conditions that the consumer best describes as 'normal' for his/her purposes should be offered prior to the conclusion of a sale.
- 9.14 The consumer should be encouraged to seek appropriate tuition/training from an independent healthcare professional.
- 9.15 In particular, demonstration in the safe use of mobility devices (excluding clinically scripted mobility aids – see clause 9.16) should be given at the time of purchase and/or on delivery. The demonstration should follow a discussion of needs, aspirations, abilities and disabilities to enable selection of the most suitable mobility device and specification for the consumer and their circumstances. A mobility device should only be sold if the member can realistically expect the consumer to develop satisfactory control.
- 9.16 Clinically scripted mobility devices should be delivered and demonstrated in conjunction with an appropriately qualified healthcare professional from the prescribing body.

## 10. Linked Goods and Services

- 10.1 If the product will need servicing regularly, an explanation should be given as to what is entailed, and the likely costs thereof should be outlined. It should be made clear whether maintenance is offered/available or will have to be obtained elsewhere.
- 10.2 Where appropriate, arrangements for insuring the product should be discussed.
- 10.3 Any optional guarantees/warranties should be explained, including who is offering them and what the benefits are, or leaflets that provide such information should be provided.
- 10.4 Clear and accurate information on the availability and price of all linked services should be provided in writing.

## 11. Instructions for Use/Manuals

- 11.1 Any instructions for use or manuals should be written in clear language.
- 11.2 Such instructions/manuals should be made available with all new products, and should, where feasible, be made available with second-hand products. Consumers' attention should be drawn to user manuals and consumers should be informed of the need to read them thoroughly.
- 11.3 Depending on the nature of the product, the instructions/manuals should cover all or some of the following (this is not an exhaustive list):
  - product name, description and intended purpose
  - name of manufacturer and/or supplier
  - illustration of the product
  - reference to any variants or accessories
  - general and/or detailed specifications and dimensions
  - general and/or detailed description of construction
  - explanation of how to use the product safely
  - any known limitations
  - description of maintenance requirements including the recommended frequency of servicing
  - cleaning/decontamination instructions
  - any specific warnings.
- 11.4. Product labels should comply with any relevant statutory regulations (e.g. requirements of Medsafe or Worksafe).

## 12. Cooling-off Period, Cancellation Rights and Protection of Deposits

- 12.1 If an ATSNZ Member offers a cooling-off period other than that required by law, the details should be explained to the consumer and be clearly defined in the written terms and conditions of the contract.
- 12.2 Where cancellation rights apply or are offered, the consumer should be informed under what circumstances they may cancel and these instructions should be plainly visible in the paperwork given to the consumer.
- 12.3 Any deposit paid should normally be refunded in full within 30 days of the date of cancellation. If a deposit will not be refundable or will be only part-refundable, the non-refundability should be made clear when the consumer places the order and the reasons for it should be clearly described. If the consumer cancels the contract lawfully, full repayment should occur (unless, for example, the goods have been damaged after delivery), and in any circumstance monies withheld should not amount to more than the actual loss incurred by the ATSNZ Member.
- 12.4 Where an order cannot be fulfilled and the consumer does not wish to accept substitute goods or services, the refund should be made speedily and in full. Vouchers/credit note to the equivalent value should not be offered unless the consumer agrees this is acceptable.

### 13. After Sales Service Provisions

- 13.1 ATSNZ Members are expected to provide a high standard of after-sales service and to ensure a prompt and adequate service and repair policy.
- 13.2 'Prompt', for the purpose of clause 13.1, will normally be taken to mean response and (where appropriate) visit to the consumer within 3 working days of the request, unless otherwise agreed. No consumer should be without equipment on which they rely for mobility and/or daily living for more than 7 days. Exceptions may occur, for example, where a consumer has customised needs that cannot be met from normal stock held, or where a hospital/clinic appointments system should be followed; however, every effort should be made to keep the period the consumer is without the product to a minimum.
- 13.3 Guarantees and warranties should be in writing, and be clear and unambiguous. Distributors and retailers should pass on the individual parts and labour guarantee offered by the manufacturer, and abide by the terms contained in the guarantee during its currency.
- 13.4 There should be no high-pressure selling of additional warranties, nor any misrepresentation of their costs, coverage and any benefits they provide.
- 13.5 A minimum 3-month guarantee should be offered in respect of all repair work carried out.
- 13.6 It should be explained to the consumer that no claim will be met under guarantee if the product has been abused in any way or damaged by neglect, improper use or failure to maintain in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations, or has been damaged in an accident. Abnormal wear and tear will also be considered when assessing a guarantee claim.
- 13.7 Maintenance agreements should be clear and unambiguous and the covered duration should be stated.
- 13.8 If a company has a buy-back policy this should be clear and unambiguous and be outlined to the consumer in writing in advance of the sale taking place. Any reason for not buying back the product (e.g., because it is single-use, or customised) should be stated and the reason made clear.
- 13.9 Consumers should be given a clear explanation of the basis for charging for repair work not covered by warranty/guarantee and, where practicable, a written estimate in advance, of the anticipated costs of such work.
- 13.10 When work has been carried out, a schedule of the work (labour, parts, etc.) should accompany the invoice, detailing a breakdown of costs.
- 13.11 Adequate stocks of critical parts and components should be maintained to facilitate prompt service.

- 13.12 Consumers should be given details of business opening hours, contact telephone numbers and arrangements, if any, for emergencies out of hours.
- 13.13 Care should be exercised in protecting consumers' property while in the company's possession and companies should not seek any disclaimers to avoid liability for loss or damage. Companies are advised to ensure they are adequately insured to cover such liability, as well as cover against any claims for death, personal injury and damage to property arising out of the demonstration of goods or their use after sale.
- 13.14 If a company is prepared to remove unwanted products, the terms under which they will do so should be made clear when this is requested, particularly in regard to disposal.

## 14. Specific Criteria for Methods of Selling and Supply

### Sales Conducted in a Consumer's Home

- 14.1 Company employees and/or assessors should not visit without a mutually agreed appointment first being made. The purpose and intent of any visit should be made clear to the consumer.
- 14.2 The consumer should be provided with literature describing the products and services available, together with actual price examples or, where exact prices are not possible (e.g. with a customised product), with indicative price ranges.
- 14.3 Consumers should always be encouraged to have a relative, friend or other advisor/carer with them when the company employee/assessor visits.
- 14.4 Company employees should not use high-pressure selling techniques, such as offering inducements to force a quick decision, or knowingly take advantage of vulnerable consumers (examples of what might be high-pressure selling tactics are listed in clause 9.1).
- 14.5 Company employees should comply with a consumer's request that they leave and no assessment or sale should normally last longer than 3 hours, other than in exceptional circumstances (e.g. when an independent health services professional is present and is responsible for leading the assessment).
- 14.6 Where a cooling-off period applies, it may be advisable that no work commences to fulfil the contract until after that period has passed.

### Internet Sales

- 14.7 ATSNZ Members' websites should include appropriate warnings and recommendations encouraging consumers to obtain advice from an independent healthcare professional prior to purchasing products.
- 14.8 ATSNZ Members conducting internet sales should provide a consumer service contact to provide general product and trading information.
- 14.9 Information should be provided to the consumer before they take the decision to buy, as required by any relevant consumer protection legislation.

## **Direct Mail Orders**

- 14.10 Information as to any facility or goods to be purchased on sale or return, and the conditions upon which goods may be returned, should be brought to the attention of consumers in writing.
- 14.11 Information should be provided to the consumer before they make the decision to buy, as required by any relevant consumer protection legislation.

## **Rental Products**

- 14.12 Where a product is rented, the terms and conditions of the rental should be clear and unambiguous, including responsibility for any damage to the product, insurance requirements and, where appropriate, the responsibilities for decontamination/cleaning of the product and packaging for return.

## **15. Clause Relating to Commercial Business Relationships**

### **Sub-contractors and Other Third Parties**

- 15.1 Companies should ensure any sub-contractor, third party, or person carrying out work or representation on the company's behalf is aware of and complies with this Code and applicable Health and Safety and privacy laws.

### **Service and Product Support**

- 15.2 Retailers/distributors who sell into an area of the country where they cannot service/support the product themselves in a prompt and adequate manner should have in place a third-party agreement with a reputable organisation in that area which meets comparable standards or there should be a return-to-manufacturer provision for the product concerned (i.e. there should be consistent support for the product/consumer, whether the consumer is local or geographically distant from the seller).

### **Manufacturers and Sponsors (Organisations responsible for placing a product on the market in New Zealand )**

- 15.3 Companies are reminded that they should accept responsibility for the quality, performance and safety of the products they place on the market in New Zealand and consider whether compliance with relevant safety and testing standards is appropriate. Statements and representations on performance and safety contained in their published literature should comply with any industry or product standards they claim to meet.
- 15.4 Such companies, where registered to abide by this Code, should be able to evidence to the Code Administrator, on request, that any of their products requiring listed with Medsafe are listed.
- 15.5 Companies that manufacture and/or import medical devices should ensure spare parts are available for at least 5 years from the date of final manufacture. For all other products, companies should be mindful of their obligation to stock spare parts for a reasonable period of time from date of final manufacture.
- 15.6 Companies should provide technical training, spare parts lists, and preventative maintenance schedules to anyone requesting them, providing they are satisfied that the enquirer meets any objective criteria they have set for such provision.

### **Adverse Incident Reporting**

- 15.7 Where a company becomes aware of an incident involving a product that resulted in or could have resulted in, serious injury or death of a consumer, the company should report that incident to the appropriate authority (e.g. Medsafe). The company may also determine that it seek external legal advice as to any further obligations that should be complied with under Health and Safety laws as such obligations depend on the individual circumstances of each risk/injury.

## **Product Recalls and Safety Warnings**

- 15.8 All ATSNZ members should follow the steps recommended in the New Zealand Medicines and Medical Devices Recall Code, which came into effect 1 December 2015.
- 15.9 ATSNZ Members that are manufacturers/sponsors should maintain records sufficient to identify to whom they have sold a product, to ensure it can be traced and recovered in the event of a recall for safety purposes, or given appropriate attention if a safety warning is issued necessitating preventive action.
- 15.10 ATSNZ Members that are not manufacturers/sponsors should maintain records sufficient to support the manufacturer/sponsor in the event of a recall for safety purposes.
- 15.11 ATSNZ Members selling to organisations, either Crown or private identities should advise them of the need to track products, to ensure that tracing and recovering a product can occur.

## **Selling to Government & Non-government Agencies**

- 15.12 Companies should give due respect to any codes, regulations or procedures operated by a government agency.
- 15.13 Companies should be aware of complaints procedures in these organisations, so they can advise consumers accordingly should there be a problem.
- 15.14 No gift, benefit in kind or pecuniary advantage may be offered or given to any government agency, government agency staff member, members of the health professions or to administrative staff as an inducement to prescribe, supply, administer, recommend or buy any product.

## 16. Complaints Handling

### ATSNZ Members

- 16.1 All ATSNZ Members should have in place a speedy, responsive and consumer friendly procedure for the resolution of complaints (i.e. any expression of dissatisfaction regarding the products and/or services supplied). ATSNZ Members are normally expected to resolve complaints within one calendar month.
- 16.2 Consumers wishing to make a complaint should be informed to whom within the company they should address their complaint, what information they are required to provide, and the timeframe that will apply to dealing with the complaint. These should include targets for initial acknowledgement of notification of a complaint (with advice regarding the procedure to be followed in addressing it).
- 16.3 Initial acknowledgement of a complaint should be made:
- by telephone within 2 working days of receipt of the complaint, then
  - by email or letter within 5 working days of receipt of the complaint.
- 16.4 Consumers should also be informed that should this process fail, they have the right to contact the Code Administrator (ATSNZ) who will follow the procedure outlined in clause 16.8.
- 16.5 Where a complaint is in regard to a matter that is considered criminal in nature, the consumer should be advised to contact the police and that ATSNZ can play no part in its resolution.
- 16.6 ATSNZ Members should offer maximum cooperation with consumer advisers or any other intermediary consulted by the consumer, such as the Disputes Tribunal or the Commerce Commission etc.
- 16.7 Staff should be advised to be professional, courteous, prompt and fair when dealing with a complainant.

### Code Administrator (ATSNZ)

- 16.8 When ATSNZ receives notification in writing of a complaint against an ATSNZ Member, it will consider whether the company has:
- complied with this Code; or
  - otherwise acted in a manner which has resulted in the consumer suffering loss, inconvenience or dissatisfaction with the services provided.
- 16.9 ATSNZ will first ensure the consumer has attempted to resolve the matter directly with the company concerned.

16.10 If such an attempt has been made, then ATSNZ will:

- request to see all the consumer's documentation
- ask the company to report within 14 calendar days (or such other agreed period), giving as much evidence as possible
- consider any evidence of breaches of this Code
- attempt to settle the dispute by agreement between the two parties, including by means of conciliation facilitated by ATSNZ if the consumer agrees to this process
- There is no charge to the consumer in respect of this process.

16.11 If a dispute remains unresolved 14 days after the finalisation of ATSNZ's dispute resolution process outlined above (or such other time as is agreed between the parties), then the consumer may elect that the dispute is referred to mediation by an independent mediator under the then current rules for mediation used by Disputes Tribunal.

16.12 The cost of the mediation should be paid by the consumer and the ATSNZ member equally, unless otherwise agreed or determined by the mediator during the mediation process.

16.13 ATSNZ cannot deal with a complaint if the complaint:

- is against a company that is not an ATSNZ Member
- is being, or has been dealt with by a court or similar body
- relates to a point in time prior to the company becoming an ATSNZ Member

16.11 ATSNZ will comply with its own privacy policy in circumstances of dealing with complaints where it obtains any personal information either directly or indirectly.

## 17. Sanctions and Disciplinary Actions

- 17.1 Where an identified breach of the Code is minor, the Code Administrator will issue a warning and suggest actions, where appropriate, to prevent repetition. All serious, or repeated, breaches of the Code will result in the Code Administrator making a recommendation to the ATSNZ Committee in regards to termination or suspension of membership to ATSNZ or expulsion from ATSNZ.
- 17.2 The nature of the breach will be identified to the ATSNZ Member in writing, and they will be given the opportunity of a right of reply. Such right should be exercised within 30 days of the notification.
- 17.3 The Committee's decision may include one or more of the following:
- no further action be taken
  - the ATSNZ Member be required to undertake a specified course of remedial action (such as re-training of a particular staff member)
  - the ATSNZ Member be issued with a formal warning
  - expulsion of the ATSNZ Member from the register of companies signed up to the Code (and therefore from ATSNZ).
- 17.4 Where expulsion occurs, a minimum period of 12 months should pass before any application to re-join the register of companies signed up to the Code (and to re-join ATSNZ) will be considered. If any complaints against the company have been made to ATSNZ during that time, such application may be rejected for a further period of time.
- 17.5 The process of establishing that a serious breach has occurred through to final decision of the ATSNZ Committee and instigation of any action will take no more than 90 days

## **18. Privacy**

- 18.1 Members should comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993 with respect to the collection, use and disclosure of personal information.
- 18.2 'Personal information' is any information or an opinion about a person, whose identity can be reasonably ascertained from that information or opinion. Given the nature of the businesses of many ATSNZ Members, it is likely that such information will also include 'sensitive information' or 'health information' as those terms are defined in the Privacy Act 1993.
- 18.3 ATSNZ Members are encouraged to ensure they have in place appropriate privacy policies and compliance plans to address their privacy obligations and should seek external legal advice where they believe such assistance is necessary.

## **19. Health and Safety**

- 19.1 ATSNZ Members should ensure they are compliant with the Health & Safety at Work 2016 Act with respect to all aspects of their business and keep on top of any developments in their industry as it relates to safety.

## Appendix A - Useful Contacts

To check the status/credentials of a health professional:

- Occupational Therapy New Zealand – [www.otnz.co.nz](http://www.otnz.co.nz)
- New Zealand Physiotherapy Board – [www.physioboard.org.nz](http://www.physioboard.org.nz)

For product advice and information:

- The Federation of Disability Information Centre – [www.nzfdic.org.nz](http://www.nzfdic.org.nz)

To source a product:

- ATSNZ Members Register – [www.atSNZ.org.nz](http://www.atSNZ.org.nz)

For assistance relating to consumer rights:

- Health & Disability Commissioner - [www.hdc.org.nz](http://www.hdc.org.nz)
- Consumer New Zealand – [www.consumerprotection.govt.nz](http://www.consumerprotection.govt.nz)
- Commerce Commission – [www.comcom.govt.nz](http://www.comcom.govt.nz)

To make an adverse incident report:

- Medsafe – [www.medsafe.govt.nz](http://www.medsafe.govt.nz)

For assistance in relation to privacy:

- Office of the Privacy Commissioner – [www.privacy.govt.nz](http://www.privacy.govt.nz)

For assistance in relation to work health and safety:

- Worksafe - [www.worksafe.co.nz](http://www.worksafe.co.nz)

For assistance in relation to advertising:

- Advertising Standards Authority New Zealand – [www.asa.co.nz](http://www.asa.co.nz)

## Appendix B - Pertinent Legislation

The following is not an exhaustive list of all the legislation that might apply to a given circumstance but is a list of the legislation considered likely to be most pertinent to clauses within this Code:

- Fair Trading Act 1986
- Privacy Act 1993
- Health and Disability Commission Act 1994
- Health and Disability Commissioner (Code of Health & Disability Services Consumers Rights) Regulations 1996
- Accident Compensation Act 2001
- Commerce Act 1986
- Health & Safety at Work Act 2015
- Consumer Guarantees Act 1993
- Contract and Commercial Law Act 2017
- Credit Contracts and Consumer Finance Act 2015.



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