



An Australian Government Initiative



NORTHERN RIVERS

RDA-NR Fraud Prevention and Detection Policy

Purpose:

Regional Development Australia – Northern Rivers (RDA-NR) is committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity and transparency. This policy outlines the framework for detecting and preventing fraud within RDA-NR and applies to all employees, Board members, consultants, contractors, vendors, and business partners.

1. Defining Fraud

Fraud involves dishonestly securing a benefit or causing a loss through deception. This definition extends beyond financial misconduct and includes both tangible and intangible gains. Fraudulent activities not only affect financial assets but can also undermine the integrity and operational efficiency of RDA-NR.

Examples of Tangible Fraud:

- Misappropriation of RDA-NR funds or assets
- Manipulation or falsification of financial records
- Alteration or forgery of checks and financial data
- Accepting gifts or material benefits from vendors or contractors (except minor tokens under \$100)

Examples of Intangible Fraud:

- Unauthorised use of RDA-NR assets for personal or external work
 - Forging or altering official RDA-NR documents or files
 - Exploiting insider information for personal gain
 - Tampering with, or improperly handling, RDA-NR records
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2. Fraud Control Principles

- a. Leadership and governance are central to effective fraud management. RDA-NR adopts a **zero-tolerance** approach to fraud.
 - b. A comprehensive risk management strategy underpins fraud detection, prevention, and investigation within RDA-NR's operations.
 - c. Ongoing training in ethics, privacy, and fraud awareness is mandatory to cultivate a culture of transparency.
 - d. RDA-NR will prosecute or apply relevant disciplinary actions against individuals found guilty of fraud.
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3. Reporting Fraud

- a. Any suspicion of fraudulent activity must be reported to the RDA-NR Director without delay. If the Director is implicated, the report should be directed to the RDA-NR Chair.
- b. Reports should include:
 - Details of the suspected activity
 - Names of involved individuals or entities
 - Supporting information related to the suspected fraud
 - Any additional relevant context
- c. Confidentiality and discretion are critical during investigations. Care must be taken to avoid premature accusations or tipping off suspected individuals.

Reporting Guidelines:

- Do not confront the suspected individual directly.
 - Do not discuss the situation outside of authorised channels.
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4. Confidentiality

All fraud reports are treated with the utmost confidentiality to protect both the investigation's integrity and the reputations of innocent parties. Only those with a legitimate need to know will be informed of investigation details.

5. Investigative Powers

Authorised investigators have unrestricted access to all RDA-NR premises, records, and data necessary to conduct a thorough investigation. This includes the right to inspect, copy, or remove relevant documents or assets.

6. Investigation Outcomes

If fraud is substantiated, a detailed report will be submitted to the Director, the Board, and relevant government authorities. Decisions regarding prosecution or referral to law enforcement will be made in consultation with legal counsel.

7. Disciplinary Action

- If fraud involves an employee, the Director will decide on termination in consultation with the Board.
 - If a Board member is involved, the decision will be escalated to the Commonwealth and State Ministers.
 - The decision to terminate the Director, if implicated, rests with the Board.
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8. Supporting Documents

This policy is supported by the following resources:

- a. RDA-NR Delegations Register
 - b. RDA-NR Financial Processing and Management Procedures
 - c. RDA-NR Internal Disputes Policy
 - d. RDA-NR Codes of Conduct (Members and Employees)
 - e. RDA-NR Risk Management Plan
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9. Additional Resources:

For further guidance, refer to **Fraud Control in Australian Government Entities**, Australian National Audit Office (ANAO), available at: [ANAO Fraud Control Guide](#).

Review Date: September 2025

Responsibility: RDA Northern Rivers Board

Previous Versions: None - Version 1.0
