



GOOD KARMA EFFECT

Good Karma Networks

Community Guidelines and Membership Criteria

Good Karma Networks (GKNs) are **online environments for local communities** to connect and contribute positively to each other's lives. All official GKNs are initiated by and administered by **local volunteers**, or **GKN Guardians** (administrators), who are supported by the Australian registered charity, Good Karma Effect.

The main purpose of GKNs is for **neighbours to ask for help from each other**. In response, other members may offer their assistance, knowledge, experience or resources, empowering **positive online and real-life experiences**.

Our community guidelines are designed to facilitate a **safe and inclusive** space for members, to **maximise the benefits** of the GKN to the local community, and reduce the potential for negative outcomes. All members are expected to **read these Guidelines before commenting or posting**, and follow them whenever engaging in the group, and also when communicating with other members and the volunteer Guardians. Each GKN community (including its Guardians) is **collectively responsible** for maintaining the **positive culture** of their GKN.

If members are concerned about any content in their GKN, we encourage them to alert the Guardian team, either by sending a direct message or by using the 'Report to Admin' function in the groups. Due to the algorithms of Facebook, Guardian teams may not see all of the content in the group and so rely on their members to help them keep the community **safe, helpful and relevant**.

From time to time, changes will be made to our Guidelines, some temporary and some permanent, e.g. as a result of COVID-19 restrictions we may suspend rehoming items through the GKN. Please check the current Announcement posts in your GKN for any changes.

If you have any questions about these guidelines, please contact your GKN Guardians directly. Should you wish to discuss the guidelines or activity in the group further, make suggestions, or appeal Guardian decisions, you can email us at info@goodkarmaeffect.com, or send us a message via the Good Karma Effect Facebook page.

For more information about the Good Karma Effect organisation, or the positive impact our GKNs are having in their communities, please visit our [website](#).

Membership Criteria



Your Good Karma Network depends on where you live

GKNs keep their content and members as local to the area as possible, so that our members know that they are asking for help from other locals who are emotionally invested in the community. Some of our networks will only allow people who live in their suburb to join, and depending on the population of the area, number of current members, and activity level, Guardian teams may also admit people who live in adjoining suburbs.

- **Join the GKN in the suburb where you live** or if there isn't one, in a directly adjoining suburb to where you live. This keeps content relevant for you and builds connections between neighbours.
- **Be honest about where you live** - As GKNs rely on the honesty of members in order to remain a safe place to ask for help, if any information is received that you have dishonestly answered any questions about your residential location, you may be removed immediately.
- **If you move out of the area**, of your GKN you are encouraged to leave that GKN and join one closer to where you are living. Guardians may remove any members who are found to no longer be living in their suburb.
- **Special cases** - Guardians reserve the right to permit access to GKNs under other conditions, which can be discussed with them by private message.

Acceptable engagement



Posts asking for help

These include seeking:

1a) **advice, recommendations or information.** Information sought should serve a positive purpose and not be potentially harmful to any individual, group or organisation. Note that negative reviews of businesses/organisations are not permitted in comments, so if you wish to give or receive **negative reviews**, these are only permitted by **private message**.

1b) **to borrow things**

1c) **items you need**, that others might be giving away or selling (**except** alcohol, tobacco products and medications - prescription or over-the-counter)

1d) **help to reuse/rehome your things or animals; or to share your excess food.** Please give without discrimination or any expectation of anything in return. We do not trade on GKNs. We do not permit giving away of business promotional codes/coupons, alcohol, tobacco products and medications - prescription or over-the-counter. **NB** Special rules apply to rehoming animals to comply with local laws (*See point 5e*). We always aim to facilitate the best outcome for any animal finding a new home through our GKNs and expect our members to do the same.

1e) **the owner of something you have found.** Please be careful about how much identifying info you share. (*See point 6n.*)

1f) **practical assistance** eg. help moving, fixing, building things; help with problems around home, etc

1g) **community support for a project or initiative you are starting to make a positive difference** eg. You are holding a local* fundraising event, starting a project to raise awareness of an issue, providing a local collection point for clothing donations etc. **You must be taking the action yourself**, not sharing information about action initiated by someone else/an organisation. Fundraising initiatives must be for a community cause, not for the benefit of an individual/team/club/family. (*See point 6m*) Please refrain from selling anything directly in the network, even for a community cause.

1h) **work/work experience ONLY** if you are under 18 years old, OR trying to get by when unable to find regular or permanent work, so are open to all possibilities. The GKNs are a place to ask for help from your neighbours when you are in a difficult spot so your request for help when you are in this situation is welcome. This does not include advertising your skills and experience.

1i) **potential employees** for your business/workplace in the network suburb or adjoining suburbs. But please leave out the business name and don't promote the business in the post. (*See point 6h*)

1j) **participants for your own research project** If you are *personally* doing research and need local participants, then you may ask on the GKN. However, it is not acceptable to solicit engagement/participation with others' initiatives, or to share a project that you are not personally involved with.

1k) **tenants, for properties in the network suburb only.** e.g. apartments, houses and rooms for rent, breaking a lease, or individuals needing a new housemate. All these cases involve two parties in need and offer opportunities to others in the community. Note: Real estate agents may *not* use the GKN to advertise for tenants.

NB: *Local refers to 'In the network suburb' not surrounding ones.

Acceptable engagement

Section 2



Posts sharing positive experiences

These can include:

- 2a) **Sharing your own experiences of people doing good in the world** i.e. not reposting other people's stories
- 2b) **Sharing a positive local* experience** you've personally had, that could brighten the day/contribute positively to the lives of all of the other members of the group. But no prices or business promotional offers.
- 2c) **Authentic recommendations of local businesses** that you've had a great experience with, and in which you do not have a vested interest. Please do not include prices, special offers etc.

Section 3



Posts related to the local community

- 3a) **Sharing local information that might make life easier** for other members of the local community e.g. power outages, traffic delays, flooding, news about local public amenities. We do not allow crime warnings, parking inspector warnings (or similar), unsolicited advice or unsolicited business-related info. *(And please no 'share and run' posts - see point 6b)*
- 3b) **Sharing local initiatives, events and information that would benefit the local community** e.g. a new playground, community group, events, craft/farmers markets, school fetes, community fairs, etc. This includes community events and activities in your suburb that are community-driven and posted by individuals, not businesses, e.g. Kensington Sunflower Competition. *(Please no 'share and run' posts - see point 6b)*
- 3c) **Garage sales** - telling people about your garage sale is an exception to the 'no advertising' rule. They are local* events where neighbours help each other recycle items (good for the environment) and save money while also fostering community spirit. But please don't list item prices or negotiate with buyers. *(See point 6g)*
- 3d) **Posts about lost/found pets ONLY within the network suburb or adjoining suburbs**, i.e. suburbs that share a border with your GKN suburb. If sharing info from another group/website about a lost/found pet, please provide context, not just a 'share', e.g. *"Please keep a look out for this dog, last seen in Champ St, Coburg"*.

NB: *Local refers to 'In the network suburb' not surrounding ones.

Section 4



Acceptable comments

Please ensure your comments in the GKN are:

- 4a) **relevant** to the post
- 4b) **helpful/compassionate** - If you don't have anything helpful or compassionate to say, please don't say anything at all.
- 4c) **solution-oriented** - please don't complain about a problem. Work with people to find a solution, or be quiet.
- 4d) **not criticising, or potentially harmful to, any individual, group or organisation**. If you wish to share a **negative experience** of an organisation or business to assist the poster with their decision, please do so by private message only.
- 4e) **not single-minded/rigid or "correcting" others** - Comments that imply that other members 'should' do something in particular, or are 'wrong', are not acceptable. Your contribution may be valuable, but may not be the only relevant info, or the best solution for that person at this time. Remember, if you are suggesting something *other* than what has been requested, or encouraging the person to consider a *different* perspective, please do so with **compassion and respect**.



Other things to remember

5a) Please **don't offer (or ask for) a trade or swap**. GKNs are about helping others without expectation of anything in return. Of course, you are very welcome to give *surprise* tokens of appreciation to those who help you!

5b) When posting content from another group or website, please **always include your own words** explaining your personal involvement and the relevance to the local community. 'Share and run' posts are not acceptable.

5c) **Content on a GKN is not to be shared anywhere else** without the express permission of the author/s. If you wish to repost information and images in other groups, e.g. to help someone locate a lost pet, you **must ask the person first**. We take the safety of our members seriously; breaking this rule can lead to immediate removal from the group. (See point 7b)

5d) Posts relating to **crime - ONLY allowed if the post is asking for help** from the community, e.g. 'Please keep an eye out for my stolen bike.' However, posts must include a request that any information is to be provided directly to the poster by private message and **comments must also be turned off**. This is to reduce the possibility of negative contributions to the newsfeed. Compassionate/supportive messages sent directly to the poster are encouraged.

5e) **Rehoming cats and dogs** - If you would like to find a new home for any cat or dog through a GKN in Victoria, by law you must include a **valid microchip number and a Pet Exchange Register source number** in your post. It will otherwise be deleted. Your vet can check if your animal has a microchip and you can register for a source number here - <https://per.animalwelfare.vic.gov.au>

5f) Please **avoid posting repetitively** about the same thing; be fair to other participants.

5g) All posts and comments should align with the **positive, community-building philosophy** of the GKN. If you are **unsure** whether your post is suitable for the GKN, you should **first read this entire document**. If you are still unsure, you can send a **private message** to a member of your GKN's Guardian team. *Please don't just post it with the words, 'Admin remove if inappropriate'.*

5h) **If your post or comment is removed by an admin**, you will receive a Facebook notification. **Click on the notification and scroll down** to read the reasons why it has been removed. Please also check your private messages, as a Guardian might have contacted you with more information.

5i) Your GKN **Guardians are unpaid volunteers, from your local community**. They have other responsibilities and are not available 24/7. Please treat them with patience and respect.

Unacceptable engagement



Please report the following to your GKN's Guardian team

- 6a) **Posts volunteering or offering anything, including help or assistance** – Offers are welcome only IN RESPONSE to requests for help in the group, ie.by commenting on a post. None of us knows what the other members of the community need until they ask for it, and when they do, all members of the community are encouraged to provide their offers of assistance, suggestions, and *constructive* sharing of experience in the comments, in order to help the poster.
- 6b) **'Share and run' posts** - Posts sharing content from other groups/websites without including your own words explaining your personal involvement and the relevance to the local community
- 6c) **Public Service Announcements (PSAs)** - Not permitted UNLESS the information may help other members of the community **avoid difficulties or obstructions in the local area** eg. water and power outages, flooding, trees down, traffic incidents (without specific details that may identify or upset others) etc, OR relates to **local public amenities**.
- 6d) **Political or religious content**
- 6e) **Judgement or negativity** - Includes discrimination of any kind, swearing, bad language, public shaming, derogatory comments or any negative judgement of another member's request, solution, decision, lifestyle, choice or ability to communicate in writing.
- 6f) **Asking for or giving away prescription medication**
- 6g) **Selling anything** - Sellers may not look for buyers, however buyers MAY look for sellers (asking for help to find something). Price negotiations are to be conducted by private message, not comments.
- 6h) **Business promotion/advertising** – e.g. Posts promoting someone else's business, or your own business. This includes anything related to the business or which could be considered to be promotion, e.g. offering free things that relate to the line of business, references to the business name, links to business websites or social media pages. **NB** If you have a local business and are able to offer an appropriate solution to someone's request for help in the group then you *are* welcome to comment on their post. All possible solutions may be helpful for the poster.
- 6i) **Complaining** - GKNs are about creating positive outcomes and taking personal responsibility. Where there is a problem, please **ONLY post or comment to constructively contribute to a solution**. Venting negative feelings is not helpful, does not make people feel good nor lead to solutions, so is not permitted.

Unacceptable engagement



Please report the following to your GKN's Guardian team

6j) Looking for **housesitting jobs**, even if unpaid. Our members are welcome to ask for help to find somewhere local to stay for visiting relatives or friends, or if they are in need of moving out of their house temporarily for repairs or renovations. Housesitters are not permitted to join GKNs to look for housesitting opportunities.

6k) Anything **not directly relevant to the local* community** – Posts that are not community focused or driven; and initiatives that are being promoted/activated by someone other than a local* community member. Examples include general/large organisations that operate in larger/non-specific areas (unless someone in the community is supporting them with local* community action)

6l) **Non-local info/events/news** – i.e. sharing posts/groups/news articles/memes that you think are important/funny/interesting simply because you think they are. This group is not about sharing things that are important to you, it is about helping people when they need it. This includes sharing posts from other pages without providing context that clarifies your personal involvement. **NB.** Sharing of local events or information that is relevant to your local community specifically is permitted, if it includes a note from you explaining its relevance/your involvement/why you are sharing. (See point 6b)

6m) **Soliciting signatures, votes or money for anything which is not relevant to the local community** or a project initiated by someone in it. Examples:

- A **competition** in which voting for a local childcare centre could result in a grant being given to them - **acceptable**.
- Gaining support/votes/signatures for **an initiative that you have started** - **acceptable**.
- A petition to change something **in your community** - **acceptable**.
- A **petition** about action that is being taken **outside of your community** and **not initiated by you** - **not acceptable**.
- A crowdfunding campaign or **fundraising for a non-local initiative** (e.g. seeking personal sponsorship for participation in a non-local event or for a non-local cause) - **not acceptable**.
- **GoFundMe or similar fundraising** pages for personal (not community) interests (eg. raising funds for a dog, individual or family member that needs surgery) - **not acceptable**

6n) **Sharing of others' personal information** – Sharing of any individual's personal information (including photo, address, phone number, etc.) or information that may be used to identify them, without their express permission, is not acceptable, **EXCEPT** if you are attempting to return property to them - in this case, please prioritise safety for the owner of the property and be sensible with what information you share. We encourage members to delete posts containing identifying information about other people, once the owner has been located.

6o) **Journalists looking for information for stories.**

NB: *Local refers to 'In the network suburb' not surrounding ones.

Unacceptable conduct and removal from GKNs



Any member who repeatedly posts or comments in breach of the GKN guidelines risks being removed from the group

Removal of a member from the GKNs (for this reason) only happens after the Guardian team has tried to contact the member by private message, attempting to establish that they are aware of the purpose and guidelines of the group and understands them.

Guardians may choose to temporarily 'mute' a member while they establish a common understanding with them about the purpose and acceptable engagement in the group, to maintain the safety of other members.

We always seek first to understand the intentions of a post or comment. Discussion about the reasons for removal of content or muting is always possible by contacting the Guardian team directly.



The following conduct may lead to *immediate* removal from the GKN

A member may be removed and blocked from the group **IMMEDIATELY, without warning**, if they engage in any of the following:

- 7a) **Trolling** - Posting inflammatory, extraneous or off-topic messages or comments with the primary intent of provoking readers into an emotional response or of otherwise disrupting on-topic discussion.
- 7b) **Sharing others' private information outside of the network** – without their express permission. This includes any other person's posts, private messages or information.
- 7c) **Being uncontactable by Guardians** - e.g. if the Guardians are unable to communicate with you privately due to blocked messaging, your Facebook privacy settings or other reasons
- 7d) **Disrespectful or negative responses to Guardians** - including swearing or bad language.
- 7e) **Blatant disrespect for other members, any GKN or the Good Karma Effect, including derogatory or negative commentary about another member** - either in our GKNs or in any other forum.
- 7f) **Indecent posts, comments or private messages**
- 7g) **Dishonest conduct** – any dishonest conduct including intentionally misleading or giving false information to the group, members or the Guardian team.

To **APPEAL** your removal from a GKN, you may email us at info@goodkarmaeffect.com, or send us a message via the Good Karma Effect Facebook page.

Responsible engagement is everyone's responsibility

Members are free to decide on the best course of action for themselves and their situation after considering the information they receive when asking for help on GKNs. As such, members take **FULL RESPONSIBILITY** for the decisions that they make, prioritising the safety of themselves and other members. This includes taking consideration of personal information, belongings, physical safety and wellbeing, and also the choice of language for engagement/posting/commenting. While they do their best to keep their groups safe and friendly, GKN Guardians take no responsibility for the outcomes of any interactions that occur in their GKN.

We all have a choice about the way we engage: please choose to be responsible.

Thank you for looking after each other and looking after your GKN.