

Why Boundaries Matter

- Create safe, ethical therapeutic relationships
- Prevent burnout and maintain objectivity
- Protect both worker and client wellbeing
- Enable sustainable, effective support

Key Areas to Set Boundaries

- Working hours and availability
- Communication methods and response times
- Personal information sharing
- Social media and public encounters
- Gift giving and personal favours
- Relationship boundaries

When to Set or Reinforce Boundaries

- During initial meeting
- When expectations change
- If boundaries are tested
- During transitions in care
- When starting new services
- If roles become unclear

Handling Boundary Crossings

- Address immediately
- Stay calm and professional
- Restate boundary clearly
- Document incident
- Consult supervisor if needed
- Develop action plan if repeated

Effective Boundary Statements

After Hours Contact:

“I’m available weekdays 9-5. For urgent support outside these hours, please call our crisis line at [number].”

Personal Contact Request:

“To best support you, I need to maintain our working relationship. Let’s focus on how I can help you during our scheduled sessions.”

Public Encounters:

“If we see each other in public, a simple wave is appropriate. For confidentiality reasons, I cannot discuss your care outside of our sessions.”

Navigating Gray Areas

Check these resources

- Workplace policies
- Supervisor guidance
- Peer consultation
- Your comfort level

Ask yourself:

- Would this apply equally to all clients?

- How would this look to an outside observer?

- Does this align with my role?

- Could this create unrealistic expectations?

Remember: Healthy boundaries enable better care by creating clear expectations and maintaining appropriate therapeutic relationships.