

OFFICIAL



**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**
for Leicester,
Leicestershire & Rutland
Your Communities - Your Commissioner

Code of Conduct
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

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Important

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1. Introduction

It is vital that all those working for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) conduct themselves in an exemplary manner, in all aspects of their work, and show no bias whatever their personal or political views might be. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) is publicly accountable and frequently works in partnership with other organisations, both in the public and private sector.

The Code of Conduct (this Code) covers the obligations of those who work in the OPCC and who are contracted to or represent the OPCC, including:

- Deputy and/or Assistant PCC(s) if in post
- OPCC Staff
- Independent Committee Members
- Independent Custody Visitors
- Contractors

A separate Code of Conduct is in place for the PCC.

This Code sets out some of the areas where issues can arise. It is designed to protect staff, volunteers and contractors, but where it is breached, further disciplinary action may be taken, as outlined in internal procedures. This Code does not apply when staff are acting in a purely private capacity, although good standards of behaviour are expected from all in their private affairs.

2. General Obligations

The Policing Protocol Order 2023 (issued in 2011 and amended, under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011) requires that all parties to whom the Protocol applies will abide by the seven principles set out in Standards in Public Life.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) employs staff based on the same terms and conditions as Police Staff. As such the OPCC expect staff to conduct themselves in line with the Nolan Principles and the Police Staff Council Standards of Professional Behaviour.

3. The Nolan Principles

The Nolan Committee published the Seven Principles of Public Life, known as the 'Nolan Principles'. These have been adopted widely and form the basis of codes of conduct for holders of public offices and include:-

- **Selflessness**
Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
- **Integrity**
Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- **Objectivity**
Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability**
Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

- **Openness**
Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- **Honesty**
Holders of public office should be truthful.
- **Leadership**
Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

The Nolan Principles apply to all holders of public office and so applies to the Police and Crime Commissioner and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (as and when employed by the OPCC) when acting or representing to act within that role. The Code does not apply when they are acting in a purely private capacity, although good standards of behaviour are expected from the PCC and DPCC in their private affairs.

4. **The Police Staff Council Standards of Professional Behaviour**

These standards were agreed by the Police Staff Council in 2008 and set out the high standards of behaviour that the police force and the public expect of police staff, they include:

- **Honesty and Integrity Police**
Staff are honest, act with integrity and do not compromise or abuse their position.
- **Authority, Respect and Courtesy**
Police staff act with self-control and tolerance, treating members of the public and colleagues with respect and courtesy. Police staff do not abuse their powers or authority and respect the rights of all individuals.
- **Equality and Diversity**
Police staff act with fairness and impartiality. They do not discriminate unlawfully or unfairly.
- **Use of Restraint**
Police staff only use restraint as part of their roles and responsibilities to the extent that it is necessary, proportionate and reasonable in all the circumstances.
- **Instructions**
Police staff only give and carry out reasonable instructions. Police staff follow all reasonable instructions and abide by force policies.
- **Work and Responsibilities**
Police staff are diligent in the exercise of their work and responsibilities Confidentiality
Police staff treat information with respect and access or disclose it only in the proper course of their work.
- **Fitness for Work**
Police staff when at work are fit to carry out their duties.
- **Discreditable Conduct**
Police staff behave in a manner which does not discredit the police service or undermine public confidence in the police service. Police staff report any conviction or caution against them for a criminal offence.
- **Challenging and Reporting**
Improper Conduct Police staff whilst at work report, challenge or take action against the conduct of colleagues which have fallen below the standards of professional behaviour expected.

As they are employed on the same terms and conditions as Police Staff, employees of the OPCC are bound by both the Nolan Principles and the Police Staff Council Standards of Professional Behaviour.

5. Use of Resources

The PCC is responsible for the efficient use of the public resources held across the Force and the OPCC. The PCC will hold those responsible to account to ensure that resources are used responsibly and always give value for money. There are legal requirements in place concerning the use of resources. The PCC will not use the resources of the office for personal benefit or for the benefit of any other person in relation to any business interest. The resources will not be used improperly for political purposes, including party political purposes. Members of staff of the OPCC will only claim expenses and allowances in accordance with the Home Office published scheme.

IT is provided for business use and staff must adhere to force policies relating to the use of IT and Social Media. Private work of any sort must not be undertaken in OPCC premises or by using OPCC equipment or materials.

Staff and representatives should not have personal items delivered to any work premises.

6. Social Media

Postings on social media sites can be accessible to a very wide audience and can remain available for a long period of time. Staff and representatives should therefore take great care not to post anything that may be considered offensive, disrespectful or discriminatory towards the PCC, or others known to them professionally including people in partner organisations. It will not be an acceptable excuse to claim that such postings are private, even if it can be shown that they have been made from a personal device and in your own time.

7. Data Protection

Staff and representatives must respect the confidentiality of the information to which they have access at work. This includes respecting the interests of colleagues and of the general public. Infringement of this could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

Any information to which there is access at work must not be used for personal gain or passed on to others who might use it in this way. Staff and representatives should not tell anyone outside the OPCC what takes place at meetings held in private attended as part of their job role or the contents of any confidential document that they have access to as part of their work. Confidential information about other people or members of the public must not be given to anyone who does not need to know it, unless it is required under safeguarding requirements to help the individual or prevent serious harm to themselves or others. Where there is no safeguarding concern, an individual's permission must be sought before giving information about them to others outside of the organisation, including to Leicestershire Police. The OPCC Information Management policies must be adhered to and the Data Protection Act must be complied with.

8. Conflicts of Interest

Personal relationships with colleagues, members of the public and other organisations must not lead to any suspicion that it could affect staff and representatives' work. Staff and representatives should not be involved in the recruitment, promotion, pay, benefits, training or discipline of anyone who is a relation, partner or with whom they otherwise have a close personal relationship outside of work. If the situation is unavoidable, such an interest should be declared to the Chief Executive, to ensure they are seen to be fair. All staff employed by the OPCC are politically restricted in that they may not participate in any formal political activity. This restriction does not apply to the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC), whose role is not politically restricted. All staff and representatives must be aware of the Gifts and Hospitality and the Corporate Sponsorship Policies. They

should ask for advice at the earliest opportunity if a situation occurs which may cause a conflict.

9. Commitments outside of work

For all staff employed by the OPCC, in accordance with the terms of employment, permission must be sought from the Chief Executive to engage in any other business or take up any additional appointment. Such permission will not be unreasonably withheld. In any case, staff must not be involved in any outside activity or work that could cause a conflict of interest with their responsibilities to the OPCC, or which makes use of knowledge or information which the staff member has access to because of their position. Similarly, where a member of staff wishes to partake in any voluntary activity or role in a voluntary organisation, care should be taken to clarify the expectations of the role and whether there is any conflict of interest.

If there is any uncertainty, any such activity should not be engaged in before first seeking the express permission of the Chief Executive. Staff and representatives are required to register any interests. A register is held in the OPCC. Liability can arise from formal membership of external organisations and permission should be sought if there is reason to believe that any liability may arise. Other than those areas outlined above, staff members and representatives' off-duty hours are not the OPCC's concern unless a person's activities bring the reputation of the office into disrepute. Staff and representatives must never put themselves in a position where duty and private interests conflict, or where public confidence would be weakened.

10. Grants, Commissioning and Procurement

Contracts and orders must be awarded on merit and in line with the Financial Regulations. Staff and representatives must not try to influence the awarding of contracts or orders to any contractor or supplier. Equally, current or past employees or their partners, close relatives or associates must not be favoured when undertaking business with the companies for which they work. Staff and representatives must be fair when dealing with all customers, suppliers, other contractors and sub-contractors. If the OPCC provides support to the community or an organisation there should be no conflict of interest involved. For instance, staff and representatives must never try to influence a sponsorship decision in favour of a specific venture that they, their partner or any other relative or close friend are involved in, no matter how worthy the cause. Many of the OPCC's objectives are delivered by developing partnership arrangements with one or more organisations. These organisations may be other public sector organisations, private sector companies, voluntary organisations or community groups. It is important that if staff or representatives participate in such a group, they are clear as to the authority invested in them by the OPCC and the other partner organisations. Staff and representatives should always check with their line manager as to the extent of their participation and as usual show no bias and ensure that all decisions are based on achieving best value for the OPCC. Any relationship with a contractor or supplier, with whom the person is also involved at work, must be declared to the Chief Executive and the member of staff be recused from any further decision making and/or award.

11. Vetting

All staff and representatives, except the PCC and DPCC, will be vetted by Leicestershire Police. The level of vetting required will be decided when a position is advertised, and staff will be vetted on appointment and subsequently, in line with vetting guidance.

If a circumstance arises which could impact upon the current vetting confirmation, this must be notified to the Chief Executive immediately or in the case of the postholder, must be reported to the PCC. Further vetting may be required. If staff or representatives are

involved in any civil or legal proceedings these should be reported to the Chief Executive or in the case of the postholder, the PCC as soon as the situation occurs.

12. Complaints or Issues of Concern

Anyone who is dissatisfied with the behaviour of a member of staff or representative should review the Complaints Policy. Staff of the OPCC are subject to their terms and conditions of employment which details conduct and disciplinary procedures. Representatives and contractors employed by the OPCC will be subject to such conditions as are set out in individual contracts. Those terms and conditions shall determine the process that will be followed in the event that allegations of misconduct arise. If a member of the public, employee or partner organisation wishes to raise a concern about the conduct of a member of the OPCC's staff or representatives, this should be reported to the Chief Executive marked as private and confidential using the contact details on our website. Should the concern involve the Chief Executive, the matter should be reported to the PCC directly.