# How to maintain integrity when working remotely

**Victorian Public Sector Commission**

## About this guide

Remote working is now a part of our working lives.

Regardless of your work location, your obligations as a public sector employee remain the same.

This guide gives you tips on how to work remotely in-line with the:

- Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees
- Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees of Special Bodies

Our advice in this guide is on 3 of the 7 values:

- responsiveness
- integrity
- impartiality

For more advice, read our longer guide maintaining integrity when working remotely (180KB, DOCX).

## Tips for Victorian public sector employees

### Responsiveness when working remotely

To demonstrate the value of responsiveness when working remotely:

- use your phone, video calls or instant messaging when you're working
- tell your team, manager, stakeholders or community contacts if you won't be available

- direct work calls to your remote work location as per your organisation's policy

- set up an out-of-office message on your phone or email when you take time off or if you work flexibly

- share any ideas that help with responsiveness with your team, only if it complies with your organisation's policies

- speak with your manager if you have any issues that mean you won't be available, so you can work out how to balance being available with your wellbeing

## Managing staff and being responsive

If you're a manager:

- check in with your staff regularly to share information relevant to their work

- let your staff know how you expect them to perform in their role

- support your staff's work-life balance when serving the community, such as not asking them to respond regularly to queries outside agreed working hours

# Integrity when working remotely

To demonstrate the value of integrity when working remotely:

- perform your role to the standards expected of you by your manager

- use your powers responsibly and check you're authorised before you use a statutory power

- never mix work and personal finances inappropriately

- only use public funds for authorised uses

- never reveal the details of your work credit card or bank account to anyone

- get permission from and give your manager details of any IT equipment or other things you borrow from work to use

- use official information for official purposes only

- have sensitive discussions away from others so they can't hear

- lock your computer when you walk away from it

- keep your password secret

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- store your documents securely

- don't store official information on private devices

- be aware of the risk of cyber-attacks and fraud

- comply with your organisation's IT security and firewall policies

- keep your work anti-virus and anti-malware software installed and up to date

- use only licensed software for work

- comply with your work's policy about using your work device for personal reasons

- don't let members of your household use your work device

- follow your work's protocols for using electronic signatures to sign for things

- don't misuse drugs and alcohol while working

- talk to your manager if you take medicine that may affect your work, to plan to keep yourself safe

## Secondary employment

You must:

- comply with your organisation's policies

- if you do work outside your job, check it doesn't create a conflict of interest

- if you're not sure, talk to your manager

## Respectful workplaces

You must:

- be polite and treat people fairly

- never bully or harass colleagues or stakeholders

## Sharing information

You must only share official information or documents when:

- you must do so by law

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- because of work duties

- you must give evidence in court

- you've been given proper authority

## Public comments

When it relates to your work duties, you can only make public comments when authorised.

If you want to make public comments as a private citizen, you must:

- make sure your comments don't relate to any government activity you're involved in or connected with as a public sector employee

- state your comments aren't official comment and that you're speaking on behalf of yourself

- state your comments don't reflect the work of the Victorian Government

- make sure what you say won't stop you from performing your public sector duties in an unbiased way

- make sure you limit any authorised public comments to facts and avoid your opinion

- follow your organisation's social media and internal communications policies

- use social media in line with the Public Administration (Public Sector Communications) Regulations 2018

- remember that even if you do these things, you could still face disciplinary action if a public comment you make as a private citizen brings the government into disrepute

## Unethical behaviour

Always report unethical behaviour and avoid actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.

For example, if you work in a team that administers government grants and someone in your household applies for a grant, you must declare this to your manager.

By declaring this, you can plan with your manager how to manage the potential conflict

# Impartiality when working remotely

To demonstrate the value of impartiality:

- make sure your decisions and advice aren't based on prejudice or favouritism

- implement policies fairly

- base your decisions and advice on sound judgement, not on what's best for you personally

- turn down all offers of gifts or other benefits that other people could see as influencing your decisions or advice

- comply with your organisation's policy on gifts, benefits and hospitality