



**Victorian  
Public Sector  
Commission**



# How to maintain integrity when working remotely

**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.**

## About this guide

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
- 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
- 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