



**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