



STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Policy / Procedure Title	Staff Code of Conduct
Responsible officer	Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer

Security Classification	Public
Disclosable under the Freedom of Information Act 2000	Yes

Implementation date	2012
Next review date:	Bi annual

Revision record	
Date:	Nature of revision
October 2019	Amended following review
June 2022	S7 amended to reflect political status of the 2 APCC posts

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Introduction

The purpose of this Code is to set out the standards of behaviour expected of staff of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for West Mercia and the types of conduct considered acceptable by the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia.

2. Application

This code applies to staff working under the direction and control of the PCC. It does not apply to staff working under the direction and control of the Chief Constable.

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

This code forms part of the agreed terms and conditions of PCC staff and breaches of the code could lead to disciplinary action being taken. This code is supplementary to the West Mercia Police staff Discipline Procedures which are also applicable to PCC staff and any to other HR related policies, e.g. Flexi-Time (Working Hours) Scheme (Police Staff).

In the first instance the PCC's Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer will be the appropriate authority for dealing with any allegations of misconduct. West Mercia Police Professional Standards Department will conduct any subsequent investigation if requested by the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer. In cases where the Chief Executive is the subject of allegations, the Police and Crime Commissioner will be the appropriate authority.

Any necessary disciplinary action will be carried out in accordance with Police Staff Disciplinary procedures.

3. Guiding principles

All members of staff are expected to comply with the seven standards of Public life, known as the Nolan principles. These are set out below.

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in their performance of the official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Equality and respect

In addition, staff must at all times treat others with dignity and respect, not discriminate unlawfully against any person and conduct their working relationships in a polite and professional manner. Discrimination on the grounds of gender, marital status, pregnancy and maternity status, age, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender status will not be tolerated.

4. Code of Ethics

The College of Policing Code of Ethics sets out policing principles and the standards of behaviour expected of police forces in England and Wales. The PCC's staff are also expected to abide by the Code of Ethics.

5. Use of resources

Staff have a responsibility to play their part in ensuring that PCC resources are used prudently and lawfully. In particular, staff must:

- i) use any public funds entrusted to them or handled by them in a responsible and lawful manner;
- ii) not make any personal use of property, vehicles or other facilities of the PCC unless authorised to do so, and
- iii) claim expenses and allowances only in accordance with the West Mercia Police Travel and Subsistence Policy

6. Confidentiality / Use of information

During the course of their employment staff will come across confidential information. The privacy and confidentiality of such information must be maintained at all times unless express authorisation is given to divulge it, or there is a legal requirement to do so. This includes respecting the interests of colleagues and of the general public. Infringement of this could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

Staff should not disclose the proceedings of any meeting from which the press and public have been excluded unless they are required to do so by law, or have been authorised to do so. Care should be taken to ensure that any information that is disclosed is accurate.

PCC contracts or purchasing arrangements must not be used for personal benefit or to benefit any person or organisation other than the PCC unless approval is obtained.

Business information should not be divulged to any third party or used other than for the purpose of discharging the functions of the PCC.

If staff have any concerns about any request to supply information, they should immediately refer the matter to the Chief Executive.

7. Conflicts of interest

These provisions apply where the interests of a member of PCC staff or those of any member of his or her family or other person with whom the member of staff has a close personal association, conflict or potential conflict with the interests of the Commissioner. If a conflict of interest arises during the course of business, staff should declare the interest immediately. The Chief Executive will then need to consider whether it is appropriate for the individual to take any further part in the matter.

All staff employed in the PCC's office 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) and the Assistant Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC).

Staff must not be involved in any outside activity or work that could cause a conflict of interest with his/her responsibilities to the PCC, or which makes use of knowledge or information which the staff member has access to because of their position.

Staff having any concerns about actual or potential conflicts of interest should discuss them with the Chief Executive in the first instance. The responsibility to declare an interest lies with the member of staff. Failure to disclose an interest could result in disciplinary action.

8. Conduct away from work

The personal lives of members of staff are their own concern, however staff should not conduct themselves in a manner which, because of the nature of their employment, would undermine the Commissioner's confidence or trust in them or would affect their integrity in a way which is prejudicial to their carrying out of their duties.

9. Whistleblowing

Staff are expected to report any suspected cases of fraud, irregularity or conduct issues to the Chief Executive. A separate Whistleblowing policy has been developed for this purpose.

10. Complaints

Any complaint received that a member of staff has breached this code of conduct should be made to the Chief Executive or, if the subject of the complaint is the Chief Executive, then to the Commissioner.