



Ministry  
of Justice

# Working in the Ministry of Justice – Volunteers, Agency, Sessional and Others

## Guidance on Standards of Behaviour

### Introduction

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) is a major government department, at the heart of the justice system. It works to protect and advance the principles of justice. Our vision is to deliver a world-class justice system that works for everyone in society. We are grateful for the support of the many volunteers and other individuals\* that generously provide their time to support our work. Their contributions, dedication and enthusiasm are invaluable.

Without exception, our volunteers and other individuals engaged in our work should act responsibly and with integrity. This guidance has been prepared to advise these individuals, and those supervising them, on the behaviour expected and what happens if there is a problem.

We want our volunteers (and others) to know what they may or may not do in order to stay safe and to avoid compromising themselves, other volunteers, our staff, those in our care or the Ministry and its other agencies.

This advice is additional to, and does not seek to replace, any existing local guidance.

### Scope\*

This guidance covers all volunteers, agency staff, sessional staff and other individuals engaged in the work of the MoJ that are not directly employed by the MoJ (and whose behaviour is not therefore covered by the Civil Service Code). Where reference is made to the MoJ, this includes HM Prison and Probation Service, HM Courts and Tribunals Service and the MoJ's other agencies.

### Standards of behaviour Principles

We expect volunteers and other individuals engaged in our work to hold the same core values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality that apply to civil servants and which are set out in the [Civil Service Code](#).

Individuals must:

- always treat people (including staff, managers and those in our care) with decency and respect;
- take care of all official property and report any loss or damage immediately – this is particularly important when dealing with personal/sensitive data;

- promote equality and diversity in all that they do;
- seek permission from those responsible for their management before releasing information to the media (including social media) which relates directly to information or experience gained in their role;
- inform those responsible for their management if there is any change in their circumstances that is relevant to their role. This would include any circumstance that may potentially create a conflict of interest and/or any personal relationships that could compromise their role; and
- seek advice from those responsible for their management if/when unsure about what they may and may not do e.g. before revealing information to which they have access as part of their experience.

Individuals must **not**:

- release or share information related directly to their role or experience with the MoJ without prior permission;
- discriminate against any person or group or harass, victimise or bully others through actions, language or behaviour;
- undertake any favours for offenders – even of the smallest kind – without first gaining specific permission. This would include contacting any person on their behalf; or
- speak on behalf of the MoJ as if employed by it and its agencies.

## What happens if there is a problem?

In the unlikely event that there is a problem with an individual's behaviour or actions, they may be asked to stop or change their behaviour or, depending on the nature of the concern, they could be asked to stand down from their work/volunteering activity.

The relevant manager will decide if an individual may continue in their role and may consider withdrawing access to the relevant establishment/MoJ building. Depending on the nature of the behaviour, this could be extended to other MoJ sites e.g. if an individual presents a safety and/or security risk.

MoJ HR policies apply only to those who are directly employed by the department or its agencies and they do not, therefore, cover individuals covered by the scope of this guidance. Although there is no formal process in place, we aim to treat individuals fairly when taking appropriate action. As a minimum, the relevant manager should discuss the behaviour/incident with the individual concerned and give them a right of reply. If the individual is unhappy with how the issue has been dealt with, they may request a review of their case by their responsible manager's manager.

## Further Information:

Further information will be available from the relevant establishment/department. Individuals covered by the scope of this guidance will have a responsible person to liaise with regarding their placement and any questions or concerns about the standards expected of them.