



Code of Ethics

— policing with **PRIDE** —

Professionalism Respect Integrity Dedication Empathy

Principles and Standards of Professional Behaviour
for the Policing Profession of England and Wales



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Contents

Foreword from Neil Rhodes	1
Force Values and Vision	2
National Decision Model	3
Policing Principles	5
Standards of Professional Behaviour	6
1. Honesty and Integrity	8
2. Authority, Respect and Courtesy	9
3. Equality and Diversity	11
4. Use of Force	12
5. Orders and Instructions	12
6. Duties and Responsibilities	13
7. Confidentiality	16
8. Fitness for Work	17
9. Conduct	18
10. Challenging and Reporting Conduct	21



Foreword from Neil Rhodes

Chief Constable, Lincolnshire Police

The introduction of a Code of Ethics for the police service in England and Wales represents an important stage in the work to ensure that policing is formally recognised as a skilled profession.

The code has been developed within the service by the College of Policing and sets out the principles and standards of behaviour that are applicable to everyone within policing; police officers, PCSOs, special constables, police staff and volunteers.



The code provides a framework to help make the judgements consistently and ethically and sits at the heart of the National Decision Making Model. It encourages professional discussion and ensures that those who challenge unethical or unprofessional behaviour will be supported.

In Lincolnshire, PRIDE is well established and remains our set of organisational values. However, the Code of Ethics is our personal commitment wherever we work in policing and will sit alongside PRIDE in providing us with an ethical framework to how we make decisions.

By adopting this set of principles Lincolnshire Police has demonstrated its contribution and commitment to the continuing work to develop and maintain the highest possible standards within the police service.

Neil Rhodes
Chief Constable



Force Values and Vision

We will deliver our services with **PRIDE**

Professionalism

Respect

Integrity

Dedication

Empathy

What do these words mean to us?

Professionalism:

consistently demonstrating the highest standards of occupational practice and behaviour.

Respect:

showing consideration and courtesy to our community and our colleagues and respect for our Force.

Integrity:

showing honesty, openness and fairness in the way we behave.

Dedication:

being caring and committed to delivering excellent services.

Empathy:

being able to see things from another's point of view and show understanding.

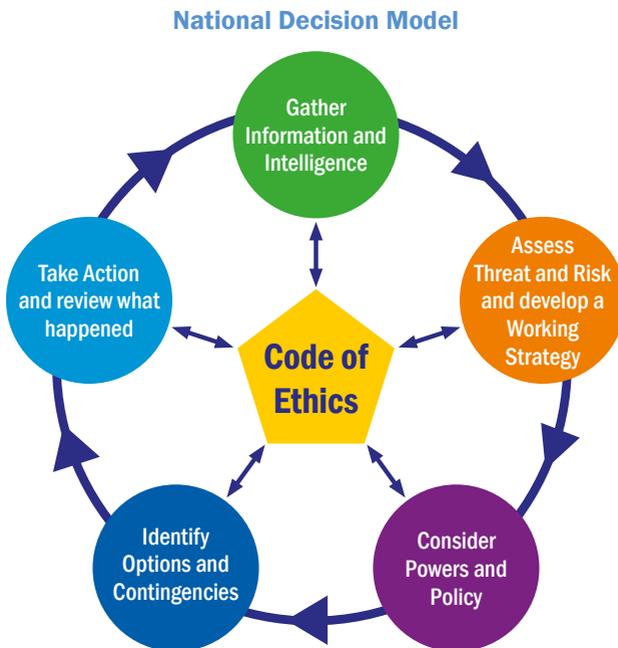
National Decision Model

The National Decision Model is the primary decision-making model for police in England and Wales. Individuals, supervisors and others use it to assess potential decisions or decisions that have already been made.

Making Ethical Decisions

The Code of Ethics promotes the use of the National Decision Model (NDM) to help embed ethical reasoning in accordance with policing principles and expected standards of behaviour. The model allows people to be more questioning of the situations confronting them, more challenging of themselves and better able to make ethical and effective decisions.

The model places the Code of Ethics at the centre of all decision making. This reminds those in the policing profession that they should consider the principles and expected standards of behaviour set out in the Code at every stage of making decisions.



The NDM is inherently flexible. It can be applied to spontaneous incidents or planned operations, by an individual or teams of people, and to operational and non-operational situations. It can also be expanded as appropriate for specialist and other areas of policing. The NDM also works well for reviewing and debriefing decisions and actions.

In every case the elements of the NDM stay the same, but users decide for themselves which questions and considerations they apply at each stage.

Understanding, practising and using the NDM helps people develop the knowledge and skills necessary to make ethical, proportionate and defensible decisions in all policing situations.

In a fast-moving incident, the main priority of decision makers is to keep in mind the principles and standards set out in the Code of Ethics.

You are not expected to know the Code of Ethics word for word. What is expected is that you apply the intent of the Code to your decisions and ask yourself questions such as:

- Is my decision in line with the principles and expected behaviours outlined in the Code of Ethics?
- Will this action or decision reflect well on my professionalism and policing generally?
- Would I be comfortable explaining this action or decision to my supervisor?
- Would I be prepared to defend this action or decision in public?

Policing Principles

Doing the Right Thing in the Right Way

Every person working for the police service must work honestly and ethically. The public expect the police to do the right thing in the right way. Basing decisions and actions on a set of policing principles will help to achieve this.

The principles set out in this Code of Ethics originate from the 'Principles of Public Life' published by the Committee on Standards in Public Life in 1995, as these continue to reflect public expectations. The Code includes the principles of 'fairness' and 'respect' as research has shown these to be crucial to maintaining and enhancing public confidence in policing.

These policing principles reflect the personal beliefs and aspirations that in turn serve to guide behaviour and shape the policing culture. The combination of principles and standards of behaviour encourages consistency between what people believe in and aspire to, and what they do.

Policing Principles

Accountability

You are answerable for your decisions, actions and omissions.

Fairness

You treat people fairly.

Honesty

You are truthful and trustworthy.

Integrity

You always do the right thing.

Leadership

You lead by good example.

Objectivity

You make choices on evidence and your best professional judgement.

Openness

You are open and transparent in your actions and decisions.

Respect

You treat everyone with respect.

Selflessness

You act in the public interest.

Standards of Professional Behaviour

Introduction

These standards reflect the expectations that the professional body and the public have of the behaviour of those working in policing. They originate from the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2012 (for police officers) and the Police Staff Council Joint Circular 54 (for police staff).

The Code has adapted the wording in the Regulations and Circular 54 so that it applies to everyone. However, in misconduct proceedings against police officers, the formal wording of the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2012 will be used.

Standards of Professional Behaviour

1. Honesty and Integrity

I will be honest and act with integrity at all times, and will not compromise or abuse my position.

2. Authority, Respect and Courtesy

I will act with self-control and tolerance, treating members of the public and colleagues with respect and courtesy.

I will use my powers and authority lawfully and proportionately, and will respect the rights of all individuals.

3. Equality and Diversity

I will act with fairness and impartiality.

I will not discriminate unlawfully or unfairly.

4. Use of Force

I will only use force as part of my role and responsibilities, and only to the extent that it is necessary, proportionate and reasonable in all the circumstances.

5. Orders and Instructions

I will, as a police officer, give and carry out lawful orders only, and will abide by Police Regulations.

I will give reasonable instructions only, and will follow all reasonable instructions.

6. Duties and Responsibilities

I will be diligent in the exercise of my duties and responsibilities.

7. Confidentiality

I will treat information with respect, and access or disclose it only in the proper course of my duties.

8. Fitness for Work

I will ensure, when on duty or at work, that I am fit to carry out my responsibilities.

9. Conduct

I will behave in a manner, whether on or off duty, which does not bring discredit on the police service or undermine public confidence in policing.

10. Challenging and Reporting Improper Behaviour

I will report, challenge or take action against the conduct of colleagues which has fallen below the standards of professional behaviour.

1. Honesty and Integrity

I will be honest and act with integrity at all times, and will not compromise or abuse my position.

- 1.1** According to this standard you must:
- act with honesty and integrity at all times.
 - use your position, police identification or warrant card for policing purposes only, and not to gain a personal advantage that could give the impression you are abusing your position.
- 1.2** In abiding by this standard you gain and maintain the trust of the public, your leaders, your colleagues and your team. You are dependable and a role model.
- 1.3** The more senior in rank, grade or role you are, the greater the potential for harm as a consequence of any misuse of your position or any failure to meet the standards required by the Code of Ethics.

Covert Policing

- 1.4** The police service operates on the basis of openness and transparency. This is essential to maintaining and enhancing a positive relationship between the policing profession and the community.
- 1.5** To achieve legitimate policing aims, it is sometimes necessary to use covert tactics. This is recognised in law.
- 1.6** Covert tactics must be appropriately authorised and any deployments must be shown to be proportionate, lawful, accountable, necessary and ethical.
- 1.7** Officers who authorise or perform covert policing roles must keep in mind at all times the principles and standards set out in the Code of Ethics.

Examples of meeting this standard are when you:

- are sincere and truthful.
- show courage in doing what you believe to be right.
- ensure your decisions are not influenced by improper considerations of personal gain.
- do not knowingly make false, misleading or inaccurate oral or written statements in any professional context.
- neither solicit nor accept the offer of any gift, gratuity or hospitality that could compromise your impartiality.
- do not use your position to inappropriately coerce any person or to settle personal grievances.

2. Authority, Respect and Courtesy

I will act with self-control and tolerance, treating members of the public and colleagues with respect and courtesy.

I will use my powers and authority lawfully and proportionately, and will respect the rights of all individuals.

2.1 According to this standard you must:

- carry out your role and responsibilities in an efficient, diligent and professional manner.
- avoid any behaviour that might impair your effectiveness or damage either your own reputation or that of policing.
- ensure your behaviour and language could not reasonably be perceived to be abusive, oppressive, harassing, bullying, victimising or offensive by the public or your policing colleagues.

2.2 The reasons for your actions may not always be understood by others, including the public. You must, therefore, be prepared to explain them as fully as possible.

Relationships

2.3 According to this standard you must:

- ensure that any relationship at work does not create an actual or apparent conflict of interest.
- not engage in sexual conduct or other inappropriate behaviour when on duty.
- not establish or pursue an improper sexual or emotional relationship with a person with whom you come into contact in the course of your work who may be vulnerable to an abuse of trust or power.

Examples of meeting this standard are when you:

- remain composed and respectful, even in the face of provocation.
- retain proportionate self-restraint in volatile situations.
- recognise the particular needs of victims and witnesses for policing support.
- step forward and take control when required by the circumstances.
- keep an open mind and do not prejudge situations or individuals.
- use your authority only in ways that are proportionate, lawful, accountable, necessary and ethical.

3. Equality and Diversity

I will be honest and act with fairness and impartiality.

I will not discriminate unlawfully or unfairly.

3.1 According to this standard you must:

- uphold the law regarding human rights and equality.
- treat all people fairly and with respect.
- treat people impartially.

Examples of meeting this standard are when you:

- show compassion and empathy, as appropriate, to people you come into contact with.
- treat people according to their needs.
- recognise that some individuals who come into contact with the police are vulnerable and may require additional support and assistance.
- take a proactive approach to opposing discrimination so as to adequately support victims, encourage reporting and prevent future incidents.
- act and make decisions on merit, without prejudice and using the best available information.
- consider the needs of the protected characteristic groupings – age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- actively seek or use opportunities to promote equality and diversity.

4. Use of Force

I will only use force as part of my role and responsibilities, and only to the extent that it is necessary, proportionate and reasonable in all the circumstances.

- 4.1 This standard is primarily intended for police officers who, on occasion, may need to use force in carrying out their duties.
- 4.2 Police staff, volunteers and contractors in particular operational roles (for example, custody-related) may also be required to use force in the course of their duties.
- 4.3 According to this standard you must use only the minimum amount of force necessary to achieve the required result.
- 4.4 You will have to account for any use of force, in other words justify it based upon your honestly held belief at the time that you used the force.

5. Orders and Instructions

I will, as a police officer, give and carry out lawful orders only, and will abide by Police Regulations. I will give reasonable instructions only, and will follow all reasonable instructions.

- 5.1 According to this standard police officers must obey any lawful order that is given and must abide by Police Regulations.
- 5.2 According to this standard everyone in policing must give or carry out reasonable instructions only.
- 5.3 There may be instances when failure to follow an order or instruction does not amount to misconduct. For example, where a police officer reasonably believes that an order is unlawful or has good and sufficient reason not to comply.
- 5.4 Any decision to not obey orders or follow instructions, or that transgresses policing policies and other guidance, must be able to withstand scrutiny.

Use of Discretion

5.5 Police discretion is necessary, but must be used wisely.

When making decisions about using your discretion you must:

- use your training, skills and knowledge about policing.
- consider what you are trying to achieve and the potential effects of your decisions.
- take any relevant policing codes, guidance, policies and procedures into consideration.
- ensure you are acting consistently with the principles and standards in this Code.

For police officers, examples of meeting this standard are when you:

- give orders which you reasonably believe to be lawful.
- follow lawful orders, recognising that any decision not to follow an order needs to be objectively and fully justified.
- support your colleagues, to the best of your ability, in the execution of their lawful duty.
- accept the restrictions on your private life as described in Regulation 6 and Schedule 1 of the Police Regulations 2003 and determinations made under those Regulations.

6. Duties and Responsibilities

I will be diligent in the exercise of my duties and responsibilities.

6.1 According to this standard you must:

- carry out your duties and obligations to the best of your ability.
- take full responsibility for, and be prepared to explain and justify, your actions and decisions.
- use all information, training, equipment and management support you are provided with to keep yourself up to date on your role and responsibilities.

Business Interests

- 6.2** People working in policing in England and Wales can have business interests as long as those interests are authorised and there is no conflict with an individual's police work and responsibilities.

Associations

- 6.3** Membership of groups or societies, or associations with groups or individuals, must not create an actual or apparent conflict of interest with police work and responsibilities.
- 6.4** The test is whether a reasonably informed member of the public might reasonably believe that your membership or association could adversely affect your ability to discharge your policing duties effectively and impartially.

Political Activity – Police Officers Only

- 6.5** Police officers must not take any active part in politics. This is intended to prevent you from placing yourself in a position where your impartiality may be questioned.

Examples of meeting this standard are when you:

- are aware of the influence that unconscious biases (such as stereotypes or 'group think') can have on your actions and decisions.
- support your colleagues, to the best of your ability, in their work.
- demonstrate an efficient and effective use of policing resources.
- ensure that accurate records of your actions are kept – both as good practice and as required by legislation, policies and procedures.
- consider the expectations, changing needs and concerns of different communities, and do what is necessary and proportionate to address them.



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7. Confidentiality

I will treat information with respect, and access or disclose it only in the proper course of my duties.

7.1 According to this standard you must:

- be familiar with and abide by the data protection principles described in the Data Protection Act 1998.
- access police-held information for a legitimate or authorised policing purpose only.
- not disclose information, on or off duty, to unauthorised recipients.
- understand that by accessing personal data without authorisation you could be committing a criminal offence, regardless of whether you then disclose that personal data.

7.2 You must be mindful of risks such as:

- increasing your vulnerability to harassment, corruption and blackmail by revealing personal information about yourself or information held for a policing purpose.
- prejudicing investigations by revealing operational material or tactics.

Social Media

7.3 This standard also relates to the use of any platform of web-based or mobile communications, social networking sites, and all other types of social media.

7.4 While there are benefits of social media to policing, there are also potential risks.

7.5 According to this standard you must:

- use social media responsibly and safely.
- ensure that nothing you publish online can reasonably be perceived by the public or your policing colleagues to be discriminatory, abusive, oppressive, harassing, bullying, victimising, offensive or otherwise incompatible with policing principles.

- not publish online or elsewhere, or offer for publication, any material that might undermine your own reputation or that of the policing profession or might run the risk of damaging public confidence in the police service.

Examples of meeting this standard are when you:

- ensure that information you enter onto police systems and into police records is accurate.
- share information with other agencies and the public when required for legitimate purposes.
- maintain the confidentiality of commercial and other sensitive information.

8. Fitness for Work

I will ensure, when on duty or at work, that I am fit to carry out my responsibilities.

8.1 According to this standard you must:

- be fit to carry out your role in policing and fulfil your responsibilities.
- not consume alcohol when on duty.
- not use illegal drugs.
- not misuse legal drugs or other legal substances.

8.2 If you believe you are unfit to undertake your role or you are somehow impaired for duty, you must immediately declare this to your line manager, Human Resources department or other relevant person.

8.3 If you are absent from work through sickness or injury:

- you may be required to consult appropriate health professionals and must follow any advice given unless there are reasonable grounds not to do so.
- you must not engage in activities that are likely to impair your return to work.

- 8.4** If you let your police force or organisation know that you have a drink or drugs misuse problem, you will be given appropriate support as long as you demonstrate an intention to address the problem and take steps to overcome it.
- You may, however, still be subject to criminal or misconduct proceedings.
- 8.5** Chief officers should ensure that there are appropriate systems to support a police officer or staff member who discloses a drink or drugs problem, in compliance with 8.4.
- 8.6** Making a self-declaration of substance misuse after you have been notified of the requirement to take a test for possible illegal substances may not prevent criminal or misconduct proceedings following a positive test result.

9. Conduct

I will behave in a manner, whether on or off duty, which does not bring discredit on the police service or undermine public confidence in policing.

- 9.1** As a police officer, member of police staff or other person working for the police service, you must keep in mind at all times that the public expect you to maintain the highest standards of behaviour. You must, therefore, always think about how a member of the public may regard your behaviour, whether on or off duty.
- 9.2** You should ask yourself whether a particular decision, action or omission might result in members of the public losing trust and confidence in the policing profession.
- 9.3** It is recognised that the test of whether behaviour has brought discredit on policing is not solely about media coverage and public perception but has regard to all the circumstances.

Examples of meeting this standard are when you:

- avoid any activities (work-related or otherwise) that may bring the police service into disrepute and damage the relationship of trust and confidence between the police and the public.
- comply with the National Crime Recording Standard.
- avoid any activities that may compromise your or any colleague's position in policing or compromise a police operation.
- start work on time and are punctual while at work.
- maintain a high standard of appearance when at work, whether in uniform or plain clothes – unless your role requires otherwise.

For Police Officers and Special Constables

I will report any action taken against me for a criminal offence, any conditions imposed on me by a court and the receipt of any penalty notice.

9.4 According to this standard you must report as soon as reasonably practical any occasion in the UK or elsewhere where you have been subject to one or more of the following:

- arrest.
- a summons for an offence.
- a penalty notice for disorder.
- an endorsable fixed penalty notice for a road traffic offence.
- a charge or caution for an offence by any law enforcement agency.

9.5 You must report to your supervisor or your professional standards department as soon as reasonably practical all convictions, sentences and conditions imposed by any court, whether criminal or civil (excluding matrimonial proceedings, but including non-molestation orders or occupation orders). 'Conditions imposed by any court' would include, for example, orders to deal with antisocial behaviour, a restraining order or a bind-over.

When you are in doubt as to whether to make such a report, it is best to report.

- 9.6** You must report as soon as reasonably practical any legal proceedings taken against you for debt recovery, or any other adverse financial judgments.
- 9.7** You must report any serious criminal conviction against a member of your immediate family or a close friend so that appropriate safeguards can be put in place. When you are in doubt as to whether to make such a report, it is best to report.
- 9.8** A police officer being subject to any of these measures could bring discredit on the police service, and this may result in action being taken for misconduct, depending on the circumstances of the particular matter.

For Police Staff and Others working in policing who are not Police Officers

I will report any caution or conviction against me for a criminal offence.

- 9.9** According to this standard you must report as soon as reasonably practical all convictions, sentences and conditions imposed by any court, whether criminal or civil.
- 9.10** For legitimate policing purposes, such as vetting or the nature of your particular role, you may be required to disclose other legal matters affecting you.

10. Challenging and Reporting Conduct

I will report, challenge or take action against the conduct of colleagues which has fallen below the standards of professional behaviour.

- 10.1** According to this standard you must never ignore unethical or unprofessional behaviour by a policing colleague, irrespective of the person's rank, grade or role.
- 10.2** You have a positive obligation to question the conduct of colleagues that you believe falls below the expected standards and, if necessary, challenge, report or take action against such conduct.
- 10.3** If you feel you cannot question or challenge a colleague directly, you should report your concerns through a line manager, a force reporting mechanism or other appropriate channel.
- 10.4** The policing profession will protect whistleblowers according to the law.
- 10.5** Nothing in this standard prevents the proper disclosure of information to a relevant authority in accordance with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
- 10.6** You will be supported if you report any valid concern about the behaviour of someone working in policing which you believe has fallen below the standards expected. You will not be supported, and may be subject to disciplinary procedures, if your report is found to be malicious or otherwise made in bad faith.
- 10.7** The police service will not tolerate discrimination or victimisation or any disadvantageous treatment against anyone who makes a valid report of unprofessional behaviour or wrongdoing.
- 10.8** Given the overriding duty to report wrongdoing, genuine concerns in this respect can never be deemed to bring the policing profession into disrepute.

Supervisors

10.9 According to this standard you must:

- ensure that your staff carry out their professional duties correctly.
- challenge and address any behaviour that falls below the standards in this Code, and report it where appropriate.
- assess, take positive action, or otherwise escalate appropriately any report of unprofessional behaviour or wrongdoing made by someone for whom you are responsible.



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