



# V I C T O R I A P O L I C E

## CODE OF CONDUCT

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS

Victoria Police pays its respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live and work. We pay our respects to Elders and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who continue to care for their country, culture and people.

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## CHIEF COMMISSIONER'S FOREWARD

Our mission as an organisation is founded on our relationship with the community, who willingly give permission for us to serve and protect. At its core, this permission involves community trust and confidence in Victoria Police.

This Code of Conduct is a commitment to our mission, our employees, the community and to the Victoria Police Values: **Respect, Integrity, Leadership, Professionalism, Support, Flexibility** and **Safety**. The Code sets out our obligations and minimum standards in relation to each of the seven Values and must be adhered to by each Victoria Police employee. A document such as this is not intended to detail every possible situation likely to arise; therefore, it cannot be used as a set of absolute rules. Rather, use it to guide your judgement, choices and actions.

We should all be proud of our roles within Victoria Police, knowing that the community depend on us so much. It is vital that we use this Code and our Values as cornerstones of our behaviour.

Shane Patton APM

Chief Commissioner

## CODE OF ETHICS

I uphold the right in my role within the Victoria Police by acting impartially, with integrity and by providing service excellence to everyone.

## OUR MISSION

At Victoria Police, our role is to serve the Victorian community and uphold the law to promote a safe, secure and orderly society. Through the combined efforts of our workforce, Victoria Police achieves this by:

- Preserving the peace
- Protecting life and property
- Preventing the commission of offences
- Detecting and apprehending offenders
- Helping those in need of assistance

The Victorian community invests significant responsibility and trust in Victoria Police to fulfil its mission and in doing so, rightfully expects all employees of Victoria Police to act with the highest levels of integrity and impartiality.

## OUR VALUES

### Respect

Everyone is treated fairly and with dignity, and feels valued and included.

### Integrity

Acting with honour, being fair and respectful of both the law and human rights.

### Leadership

Being focused, confident but still humble and committed to living our Values.

### Professionalism

Being accountable, transparent and committed to maintaining the highest standards of conduct.

### Support

Having empathy and being genuinely committed to responding to the needs and wellbeing of others.

### Flexibility

Providing a service that is agile and evolves with the community's needs.

### Safety

Safety is at the heart of our purpose, it is fundamental to, and underpins, everything we do.

## APPLYING OUR VALUES

Victoria Police employees work within varied and complex situations. Whatever the circumstances, all employees need to be able to make lawful, informed, professional and ethical decisions. Using a framework such as the S.E.L.F test that has regard to Victoria Police Values, will help guide decisions that reflect organisational standards and community expectations.

### Scrutiny

Will your decision withstand scrutiny by the community, the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission and other relevant parties?

### Ethical

Is your decision ethical and in compliance with Victoria Police policies, practices or procedures? Does your decision comply with our Code of Ethics, Professional and Ethical standards and our Code of Conduct?

### Lawful

Is your decision lawful having regard to the law, regulations and Victoria Police instructions? Does your decision properly consider human rights?

### Fair

Is your decision fair on the community, your colleagues, your family, yourself and others? Does it support the community's expectation of the individual's right to equality?

## OUR CODE OF CONDUCT

The Chief Commissioner of Police is authorised under Section 60 of the Victoria Police Act 2013 to issue this Code of Conduct. This Code prescribes behaviour expected of Victoria Police employees and provides clarity on their responsibilities and obligations in serving the community.

The Code of Conduct is founded on the Victoria Police Values and the underpinning behaviour expectations that represent how our Values are lived.

This Code of Conduct must be read in conjunction with organisational policies and guidelines to help further inform our judgement, decisions and actions.

## RESPECT

### What does this look like in Victoria Police?

- Treating each other and every community member with respect and understanding.
- Celebrating and valuing equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Valuing the cultural heritage of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and the heritage of people of all backgrounds and origins.

### Preventing discrimination and harassment

Victoria Police employees adhere to the provisions of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 and create an environment that is free of discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation. Demonstrating respect and promoting diversity and inclusion are of the highest importance to Victoria Police.

### Respecting privacy and confidentiality

Victoria Police employees understand the importance of privacy and confidentiality. Employees only access police systems and information for lawful purposes and must ensure information remains confidential by always acting in accordance with the relevant legislation and policies that guide information handling.

### Respecting our connection with community

Victoria Police employees embrace the strong relationships with community that we serve. We are committed to continuously increasing our understanding of the variety of communities that make up Victoria. By listening to, and valuing the needs of community, Victoria Police is better placed to deliver a safe, secure and orderly society.

## INTEGRITY

### What does this look like in Victoria Police?

- Being honest, objective and impartial.
- Respecting and championing human rights and being committed to lawful and fair processes.
- Placing the community good before our own interests.

### Understanding Human Rights

Victoria Police employees are committed to the principles of the Charter of Human Rights and understand how the principles apply to their role. Every decision, action and policy must adhere to obligations under the Charter, and consider:

- What is the reason for **Acting**? Under what law or authorisation are you acting?
- What is the **Impact**? Which human right is relevant, and will your actions protect or limit that right?
- Is it **Reasonable**? Is your action to limit a human right reasonable and justifiable?
- Is it **Necessary**? Is the limitation necessary and proportionate to the goal sought to be achieved?
- Is there a **Less Restrictive** option? Can you achieve your goal in a different and less restrictive way?

### Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest arises when an employee's personal interests and relationships influence, or appear to influence, the impartiality of an action or decision. Conflicts of interest can be actual, perceived or real and can damage the confidence and trust the community has in Victoria Police and its employees.

### Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality

As Victoria Police employees, our response to offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality is critical to earning and sustaining the trust of those we serve. Victoria Police employees strictly adhere to organisational policy and never accept gifts, benefits and hospitality without a legitimate business reason.

## LEADERSHIP

### What does this look like in Victoria Police?

- Being trustworthy, approachable and treating everyone with compassion.
- Making decisions that reflect our Values and build community trust and confidence.
- Being inclusive, progressive and prepared to acknowledge and learn from mistakes.

### Leading by example

Victoria Police employees always model behaviours based on the Victoria Police Values and act in an ethical manner.

Employees are expected to:

- Always demonstrate and promote the Victoria Police Values and Code of Conduct;
- Take responsibility for professional and personal development of self and others;
- Strive to continuously improve knowledge and performance;
- Take responsibility for, and be prepared to account for, decisions and actions;
- Create a safe working environment which encourages initiative and improvement.

### Obligations to report

As Victoria Police employees, we are legally responsible to report any suspected criminal act or misconduct.

Employees who report misconduct will be supported by legislation and the organisation.

## PROFESSIONALISM

### What does this look like in Victoria Police?

- Behaving in a manner that reflects positively on ourselves and our organisation.
- Being open, honest and consistent.
- Providing services that are engaging, accessible and equitable

### Duty obligation

Victoria Police employees are committed to fulfilling the obligations of their role when called upon, or when circumstances demand.

### Behaviour

Whether on or off-duty, all employees act professionally, exercise good judgement and are accountable for their conduct and behaviour.

### Open to scrutiny

Victoria Police employees understand their actions and decisions are always open to scrutiny. In fulfilling our role, employees maintain secure, accurate and reliable records as required by relevant legislation and policies.

### Resources

Victoria Police has an obligation to properly manage and use publicly owned resources appropriately and in a way that ensures our working environment is safe.

We take care of the equipment and resources provided to us, and make sure we use them safely and for the designated purpose.

## SUPPORT

### What does this look like in Victoria Police?

- Being committed to understanding and considering the experiences and needs of others.
- Reaching out to those in need, encouraging them and being prepared to offer help.
- Being committed to connecting people in need with high quality care and services

### Victims support

Victoria Police employees are often the first point of contact for a victim of crime and play an essential role in providing support to victims throughout the entire process.

Victoria Police employees understand and are committed to fulfilling their role under the Victims' Charter Act 2006.

### Supporting each other

All Victoria Police employees support each other by listening without judgement, offering services and advice, and helping to best meet the needs of colleagues throughout their working and personal lives.

As an organisation, Victoria Police does not accept discrimination or predatory behaviour of any kind and expects all employees to report when it occurs and support those adversely affected.

### Supporting others

All Victoria Police employees are committed to helping those in need. To do this, we listen to the community, and understand and respect different opinions to ensure our service reflects this commitment.

## FLEXIBILITY

### What does this look like in Victoria Police?

- Being open minded, creative and adaptable.
- Being innovative and committed to continually improving.
- Being connected to and working with the community.

### Flexible work arrangements

As an equal opportunity employer, Victoria Police is committed to employment practices and standards that are fair, equitable and inclusive.

Victoria Police employment standards are consistent with the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, further anti-discrimination legislation and policies, the Public Administration Act 2004 and the Victoria Police Act 2013.

Victoria Police is committed to its managers and employees working together in a cooperative and consultative manner to achieve flexibility for the best possible work outcomes.

### Community service focus

The Victorian community includes people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, with disabilities, experiencing mental health issues, of diverse age, gender and sexual identities.

Victoria Police and its employees will continue to build relationships to ensure that every community member is welcome to contribute to policies and programs. We are committed to understanding and respecting everyone within the community which we serve.

### Continuous improvement

Victoria Police employees are innovative and committed to continuously improving our service and adopting a best practice approach to the performance of their work.

## SAFETY

### What does this look like in Victoria Police?

- Being committed to a safe, secure and orderly society.
- Being committed to a safe, inclusive and respectful workplace.
- Safety is always front of mind and underpins every decision we make.

### Safety is everyone's responsibility

All Victoria Police employees have a responsibility to promote and maintain a safe, inclusive and respectful working environment.

We focus on keeping ourselves, each other and the public safe, by appropriately managing risk and actively mitigating any safety issues as soon as we are aware of them.

### Managing health and safety

All employees, especially the organisation's leaders, must ensure safety is always front of mind. At a minimum, our leaders:

- Understand and address health, safety and wellbeing within their work environment;
- Ensure proper induction and training of employees in healthy and safe work practices;
- Challenge inappropriate language and behaviour;
- Encourage the reporting of incidents and escalate issues as appropriate;
- Implement safe work practices that comply with the law, Victoria Police Values, this Code of Conduct, policies and guidelines.

### Drugs and alcohol

All Victoria Police employees have an obligation to themselves, their colleagues and the community to perform their roles and responsibilities unaffected by drugs and alcohol. Victoria Police employees fully understand and strictly adhere to the organisation's drug and alcohol policies.

If you would like to talk through the Code of Conduct, please contact:

- Your manager or supervisor
- Your Ethics and Professional Standards Officer