



## Code of Conduct

INTERIM works with many diverse individuals and children and young people, including those who may be vulnerable. This code of conduct is designed to provide safeguards on behalf of INTERIM. It provides direction and guidance so that everyone is able to participate fully in the work we do.

This code translates our values into standards that staff and volunteers (including Trustees) are expected to uphold. Volunteers and staff will read, understand and show their acceptance of this code of conduct by signing a copy.

### The Seven Principles of Public Life:

Note: These are the principles that started the current interest in Codes of Conduct. Critics consider them vague, but they are included in INTERIM'S Code to show our awareness of these widely adopted principles.

1. **Selflessness:** Holders of public office must act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
2. **Integrity:** Holders of public office must not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
3. **Objectivity:** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office must make choices on merit.
4. **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.

5. Openness: Holders of public office must be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They must give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
6. 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.
7. Leadership: Holders of public office must promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

### Equality and Diversity:

INTERIM exists because we think everyone has something to offer. We are committed to the promotion and implementation of our Equality and Diversity policy and expect all members of staff and volunteers not to discriminate either in employment practices or in the provision of facilities and services by reason of race, ethnicity, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, disability, appearance, age, marital status or financial means.

Any complaint of discrimination, harassment or breach of the equality and diversity policy will be taken seriously. Staff and volunteers should be aware that racial and sexual discrimination or harassment and other serious breaches of the equality and diversity policy constitutes an act of gross misconduct in the case of staff or the basis for exclusion for volunteers.

### Relationships:

INTERIM is a context in which positive and meaningful relationships underpin and extend the opportunities we offer to staff and volunteers. These relationships are expected to be mutually beneficial, transparent and supportive. For this reason staff and volunteers must not enter into sexual relationships or exclusive friendships with each other.

All staff and volunteers must disclose to Trustees in writing any relationship or close friendships they have currently or in the past with staff, volunteers, contractors, consultants, or suppliers, either directly or indirectly, via close relatives or organisations of which they are members. The information will be held in the Register of Declared Interests.

The INTERIM application form for employment also requires all applicants to declare any relationship they may have to a member of staff or volunteer. Failure to declare such a relationship may, once known, result in dismissal or the withdrawal of any offer made.

#### Gifts:

There are occasions when staff or volunteers may be offered gifts by either internal or external individuals or agencies. The offering and accepting of gifts should be acknowledged openly. If gifts are not given openly they may come with 'strings attached' and should be politely declined.

When gifts are received, Trustees are to be informed and will make a record in the Register of Declared Interests detailing what happened to them and how they were acknowledged.

#### Hospitality:

The acceptance of entertainment or hospitality may affect your relationship with the person or organisation offering it and how it might be viewed by others.

Guidelines of what is acceptable are as follows:

- Where the other party is a charity or other organisation which does not have any kind of vested interest in INTERIM
- As a one-off event where a firm has already been awarded a contract with INTERIM
- Visiting a consultant, contractor, other agency or party or a visit arranged by such where it is genuinely instructive rather than constituting a social function or entertainment
- Where the scale and location of the hospitality is neither ostentatious nor extravagant, falls within working hours and can be justified on work grounds
- Where hospitality is neither regular or frequent

Staff and volunteers must inform Trustees of any hospitality or entertainment offered which will be recorded in the Hospitality Book.

## Other Employment, Membership of Committees, Public Services:

Staff and/or volunteers (including Trustees) must exercise discretion in their external activities where these may conflict with those of INTERIM. In particular, if a member of staff wishes to undertake other employment, paid or unpaid, serve as a committee member of an external body or perform public service duties, they must seek the approval in writing of Trustees.

## General Confidentiality and 'Commercial in Confidence':

In the course of your involvement with INTERIM you may have access to information that is confidential. This information may be personal, operational, commercial or financial and include details about the work of INTERIM, its staff, volunteers, consultants, contractors, professional advisers and suppliers.

Staff and volunteers should be aware that any personal information disclosed is confidential to INTERIM and not to individuals. For further information please refer to INTERIM's Confidentiality Policy.

Information must not be passed on to anyone who is not entitled to receive it and it will be seen as a breach of trust if such information is disclosed to any unauthorised person or for information to be used for personal advantage or gain.

If you are in any doubt about who is authorised to receive information you should discuss the issue with Trustees.

## Equipment and Materials:

Staff and volunteers may not use equipment provided by INTERIM or INTERIM's premises for purposes other than authorised activity without prior permission of Trustees. Internet use is strictly monitored and no photographs or videos of children and young people must be taken without the appropriate permissions.

Staff and volunteers should be aware there is no guaranteed right of privacy when using INTERIM's premises or equipment. Please refer to INTERIM's Confidentiality Policy for guidance on using INTERIM's computers.

## Being with People:

Staff and volunteers must always be courteous and helpful to ensure that INTERIM provides an efficient and pleasant working environment at all times.

## Publications and Dealing with the Press:

Staff and volunteers must not publish any material (including on social networking sites and blogs) that comment on the activities and policies of INTERIM without the prior approval of Trustees.

If you wish to publish an article unconnected to INTERIM then the article must not link you to INTERIM without the prior approval of Trustees.

Designated people may write stories or advertise local events in the press with the support and agreement of Trustees.

Staff and volunteers must not make comments to the press unless specifically authorised to do so. Where requests for comments are received they should be passed on to Trustees. Staff and volunteers must avoid being led by representatives of the media into making unguarded comments.

## Consumption of Alcohol, Drugs and Similar Substances:

All staff and volunteers have a duty to ensure when they are carrying out work on behalf of INTERIM they are fit and capable to work and their ability to do so is not impaired by alcohol, drugs (including prescribed) or other similar substances.

INTERIM places a total restriction on the use of controlled drugs by staff and volunteers (unless being taken on medical advice).

INTERIM does not allow the consumption of alcohol on or in the vicinity of its premises.

Alcohol may be available at external INTERIM events:

- Staff and volunteers are reminded they attend events to support and represent INTERIM
- The consumption of alcohol must not impact on the capability of staff and volunteers to represent INTERIM in a skilled and comprehensible way

If any staff/volunteer is deemed to be unfit to carry out INTERIM's work as a result of earlier drinking this may be considered as an act of misconduct. On the same basis volunteers may be excluded.

#### Harassment:

Harassment constitutes actions that are unwelcome and offensive to the recipient. Such behaviour is not tolerated by INTERIM. It may involve inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments or physical contact that is objectionable or causes offence. The key feature is that the behaviour is unwanted by the recipient and it is the impact of the conduct and not the intention that determines whether harassment has taken place. Harassment may take many forms, can be directed at individuals or groups of individuals and can create a threatening and intimidating environment.

Examples of harassment include:

- Unnecessary touching or physical contact
- Derogatory comments about an individual
- Insensitive jokes and pranks
- Speculating about an individual's private life and sexual activities
- Displaying pin-ups or other offensive literature
- Threatened or actual violence
- Repeated telephone calls, texts, emails, letters, visiting or watching
- Threats of dismissal or loss of promotion

#### Issues of Concern:

The following are examples of issues of concern and may also constitute acts of serious malpractice:

- Fraud, stealing, misappropriation of funds or assets and maladministration

- Assault, abuse or neglect of anyone
- Abuse of position for personal gain
- Bullying, discrimination and victimisation

Issues of concern are likely to undermine the integrity and security of INTERIM. They may also include situations where an individual's ethical and civic responsibilities are in danger of being compromised.

#### Financial Management:

Staff and volunteers must not borrow money from or lend money in INTERIM's name.

#### Breaches of the Code of Conduct:

If you feel that staff or a volunteer's behaviour is in not in line with INTERIM's Code of Conduct, the first step is to discuss your concerns as soon as possible with the Chief Executive or one of our Trustees.

Depending on the nature of the concern the following actions may be taken:

A conversation will take place as soon as possible in which the person is reminded of the code of conduct and given the opportunity to change their behaviour and apologise if appropriate. This constitutes a first warning.

In some cases it may be necessary to ask the person to leave INTERIM immediately and return at another agreed time to discuss the incident. In the case of illegal activity INTERIM has a responsibility to report incidents to the Police and to The Charity Commission.

If the behaviour is repeated a further meeting will take place and an agreement made as to how further breaches can be prevented. The outcomes of this meeting will be recorded and it will constitute a second warning.

If the behaviour still continues, a written notice will be issued informing the individual of INTERIM's decision regarding their onward involvement with INTERIM. This decision will be made by Trustees and there will be an opportunity to appeal the decision.

## Policies and Procedures:

INTERIM has a comprehensive set of policy and procedures. All staff and volunteers (including Trustees) are expected to adhere to these published policies. INTERIM's confidentiality, disciplinary and complaints procedures are particularly relevant in relation to this code of conduct. All staff and volunteers are expected to adhere to these published policies.