



Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**  
Social Care **Wales**

# Code of Professional Practice for Social Care Workers



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## Other formats

This document is also available in Welsh  
It's also available in large text, braille or other formats, if required.

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# Code of Professional Practice for Social Care Workers

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The Code of Professional Practice for Social Care Workers is a list of statements that describe the standards of professional conduct and practice required of people employed in the social care profession in Wales. The Code plays an important part in raising awareness of the standards of conduct and practice expected of the profession.

This Code replaces the Code published in 2018. It's clearer and shorter, with more focus on anti-discrimination. But there are no changes to practice.

It applies from **1 July 2026**.

# The Code and the Register of social care workers

We keep a Register of social care workers (the Register).

Everyone on the Register has agreed to work to the standards set out in the Code. We'll take account of the Code when we consider issues of fitness to practise and whether a worker should remain on the Register, or be removed.

## Practice guidance

We publish practice guidance alongside the Code. This is a practical tool to help social care workers use the Code in their work, helping to contribute to good outcomes for people who use care and support.

The practice guidance can also be used to show where the standards in the Code haven't been met. Registered workers should make sure they're familiar with the practice guidance relevant to their role.

## The Code and the wider social care workforce

Registered social care workers must follow the Code, but it's also relevant to other social care workers who don't register with us. This is because it sets clear standards of the conduct and practice expected of the social care profession in Wales.

### What the Code means for:

#### **Social care workers**

You're responsible for making sure you work to the standards in the Code. Your conduct and practice must not fall below the standards, and you must not harm the well-being of individuals.

You're encouraged to use the Code to think about your own conduct and practice and to look for areas where you can improve.

#### **Individuals using care and support and the public**

The Code will help you understand how a social care worker should behave towards you and how employers should help them to do their jobs well.

#### **Employers**

You're expected to promote the use of the Code and take account of it when making decisions about the conduct and practice of your staff.

# The Code

**There are seven sections of the Code.**

- 1.** I must respect the views and wishes, and support the rights and interests of individuals, their carers, and my colleagues.
- 2.** I must do what I can to gain and maintain the trust and confidence of individuals and carers.
- 3.** I must promote the well-being, voice and control of individuals and carers, while supporting them to stay safe.
- 4.** I must respect individuals' rights to take risks, while working with them to help manage and understand the risks of behaviours that could cause harm to themselves or others.
- 5.** I must act with integrity and in a way that maintains public trust and confidence in the social care profession – at work and outside work, online and in person.
- 6.** I must be accountable and responsible for the quality of my work, and for maintaining and improving my knowledge and skills.
- 7.** If I'm responsible for managing or leading staff, I must also embed the Code in their work.



# Section 1:

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I must respect the views and wishes, and support the rights and interests of individuals, their carers, and my colleagues.

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## **I must:**

- 1.1 work with and support individuals in a person-centred way, and respect their dignity, privacy, religion, beliefs and culture
- 1.2 respect, support and promote equality, diversity and inclusion, and not discriminate against individuals, carers, colleagues or other people
- 1.3 challenge and/or report any discrimination and stand up for the rights of individuals, their carers, families and my colleagues
- 1.4 support individuals and carers to communicate their views and choices.

# Section 2:

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I must do what I can to gain and maintain the trust and confidence of individuals and carers.

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## **I must:**

- 2.1 be honest and trustworthy
- 2.2 communicate in an appropriate, open, clear and meaningful way
- 2.3 respect confidential information and only access and use it to carry out my role
- 2.4 not abuse the trust of individuals and carers, or the access I have to their personal information, property, home or workplace
- 2.5 clearly explain policies about confidentiality, accepting gifts and professional boundaries to individuals, families and carers, and always follow them
- 2.6 be reliable and dependable, doing what's been agreed. If I can't, I must explain why to individuals and carers
- 2.7 recognise and be open about where my personal interests affect my work and take steps to make sure they don't influence my professional judgement or practice.

# Section 3:

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I must promote the well-being, voice and control of individuals and carers, while supporting them to stay safe.

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## **I must:**

- 3.1 work with and support individuals in ways that promote their well-being and safety
- 3.2 support individuals and carers to raise concerns or make complaints, and take their complaints seriously, while following relevant policies and procedures
- 3.3 work with and support individuals in a way that maximises their decision making and control over their lives
- 3.4 work with colleagues and other professionals to promote individuals' and carers' well-being, voice and control, using agreed systems, policies and procedures to share information where appropriate
- 3.5 challenge or report concerns, such as unsafe, dangerous, abusive, exploitative or discriminatory behaviour or practice.

# Section 4:

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I must respect individuals' rights to take risks, while working with them to help manage and understand the risks of behaviours that could cause harm to themselves or others.

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## **I must:**

- 4.1 work with individuals and carers to balance risks with their rights and personal choices
- 4.2 follow relevant safeguarding policies and procedures when working with individuals and carers
- 4.3 follow risk assessment policies and procedures to assess if individuals' and carers' behaviour risks harming themselves or others
- 4.4 take necessary steps to reduce the risks of individuals' and carers' behaviour causing harm to themselves or others
- 4.5 raise and, if necessary, escalate any concerns I have about individuals' safety, or the level of care people are receiving in my workplace or any other setting
- 4.6 share information if I think someone may be at risk of harm, while following the data protection requirements.

# Section 5:

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I must act with integrity and in a way that maintains public trust and confidence in the social care profession – at work and outside work, online and in person.

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## **I must:**

- 5.1 not abuse, neglect, harm, take advantage of or exploit individuals, carers or colleagues
- 5.2 always maintain professional boundaries with colleagues, individuals, their families, and their carers
- 5.3 not form inappropriate personal relationships with colleagues, individuals, their families or carers
- 5.4 let my employer know about issues that may create conflicts of interest and take steps to make sure they don't influence my practice
- 5.5 not break any laws, and I understand if I do, my fitness to practise may be questioned
- 5.6 let my employer and Social Care Wales know if I'm arrested or charged with an offence
- 5.7 avoid putting myself or other people at unnecessary risk
- 5.8 not behave in a way – in work or outside work, online or in person – that would raise concerns about my suitability to work in social care.

# Section 6:

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I must be accountable and responsible for the quality of my work, and for maintaining and improving my knowledge and skills.

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## **I must:**

- 6.1 read, understand and follow relevant policies, procedures and standards of practice and conduct
- 6.2 always work in a safe and effective way, and follow the law
- 6.3 keep clear and accurate records, using agreed systems and processes
- 6.4 tell my employer or another suitably qualified and experienced colleague about any difficulties that affect my ability to do my job competently and safely
- 6.5 ask for help from my employer or a suitably qualified and experienced colleague if I'm unable to or unsure how to carry out any aspect of my work
- 6.6 be open and honest with people if things go wrong, giving a full and prompt explanation
- 6.7 look for and complete relevant learning and development to maintain and improve my knowledge and skills to make sure I'm fit to practise
- 6.8 actively and effectively engage in supervision to reflect on my practice and opportunities to improve my knowledge and skills
- 6.9 recognise and respect the roles and expertise of colleagues and other professionals, and work in partnership with them
- 6.10 understand that I'm responsible for work I delegate to others
- 6.11 co-operate with investigations into my or others' practice, carried out by my employer, Social Care Wales or by any other appropriate bodies.

# Section 7:

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If I'm responsible for managing or leading staff, I must also embed the Code in their work.

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This section applies to any managers or leaders of social care workers. If you're not a manager or leader, you should still read this to understand what to expect from your managers and leaders.

## I must:

- 7.1 support an open, safe and inclusive culture where staff can raise concerns and access, discuss, reflect on and share best practice
- 7.2 make sure staff know about the Code and understand how it applies to their conduct and practice
- 7.3 make sure induction, training, learning and development opportunities support staff to maintain and develop their knowledge, skills and understanding
- 7.4 provide effective supervision and appraisal to guide, support and motivate staff, so they can carry out the responsibilities and accountabilities of their role
- 7.5 make sure I know what's happening with the provision of social care, such as by reviewing complaints and feedback or monitoring staff performance
- 7.6 respond to any concerns or complaints promptly and effectively, following any relevant policies and procedures.

## More information

For more information about the Code, including practice guidance and other resources, visit our website:

[www.socialcare.wales/codes](http://www.socialcare.wales/codes)



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