

**WE BUILD
TRUST**



**BETTER
TOGETHER**



WE CARE



**WE SERVE TO MAKE
A DIFFERENCE**



**OPEN
MINDS**

Healthy culture, healthy people

The revisions to our Code of Conduct (the Code) align with the new [Commissioner's Instruction 40: Ethical Foundations](#) and provide simplified instructions for expected workplace behaviour.

The revisions are based on research into behavioural risks identified by DWER staff. Current evidence highlights pressures from conflicts of interest and disrespectful or uncompassionate behaviour. The department's [Thrive at Work: Wellbeing Strategy 2023–26](#) outlines a holistic approach to mitigate these risks, promote wellbeing, prevent mental injury, and support recovery.

The Code references the relevant legislative and policy obligations to which we must adhere and affirms our utmost commitment to an ethical public service. It sets out the standards that we must meet, the behaviours we are expected to practise and the agreed values of the department. It tells us how we report any suspected breaches of the Code, which we are required to do.

Victimisation of those reporting unethical conduct will not be tolerated by the department and must not be tolerated by any of us.

All staff, contractors and volunteers are accountable for upholding this Code, and must know its contents. In addition, we will renew our commitment to, and understanding of, the Code, through regular training in ethical and accountable decision-making.



A message from the Executive Team

We are entrusted with protecting Western Australia's water and environment – work that shapes communities, supports prosperity, and safeguards our future. That trust depends on all of us acting with integrity, accountability, and respect.

Our **Code of Conduct** is our commitment to safe, ethical, and fair behaviour. It ensures we do the right thing – by each other, by the public, and by the communities we serve. This includes listening to and valuing the knowledge of local Aboriginal people as we deliver on our responsibilities. Every action we take matters.

Let's lead with integrity and set the standard for excellence.

The Executive Team, Kany
October 2025



Acknowledgement and awareness



Acknowledgement of Country

DWER acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we live and work throughout Western Australia and we pay our respects to Elders past and present. DWER recognises the practice of intergenerational care for Country and its relevance to our work and working with the community. DWER continues to move forward with a shared commitment to protect and conserve Country for our future generations.



Awareness

Staff, contractors and volunteers are expected to always practise the behaviours that meet the standards of our Code.

We must conduct ourselves in a way that meets community expectations and maintains public confidence in the department. We must ensure our conduct outside of work maintains the integrity of the department and does not impact our ability to perform our duties.

This Code has been prepared and should be read in conjunction with the [Commissioner's Instruction 40: Ethical Foundations](#).



Our values

We promote ethical practice and the appropriate standards of conduct and behaviour. We are committed to a workplace that treats everyone with respect and dignity.

We have a values-based culture of which we can be proud. We must do more to entrench those values and demonstrate the behaviours we all expect.



We serve to make a difference

- We are professionals who deliver sustainable outcomes for current and future generations
- We align our work with the department's priorities and government's direction
- We continue to improve our engagement with Aboriginal people for everyone's prosperity
- We recognise the practice of intergenerational care for Country by Traditional Custodians
- We plan with the future in mind, regularly reviewing our efforts to focus on the right priorities at the right time



We build trust

- We engage early, listen to understand, and respond consistently
- We ensure our work is transparent, evidence based, and accountable
- We are respectful, honest and kind, and demonstrate empathy
- We operate with the highest levels of integrity
- We hold ourselves and each other to account



We care

- We work as a team, valuing the expertise of each other
- We take time to build capability and contribute to the development of our people
- We contribute to an inclusive, safe and healthy workplace
- We are upstanders and support one another to respectfully challenge inappropriate behaviour



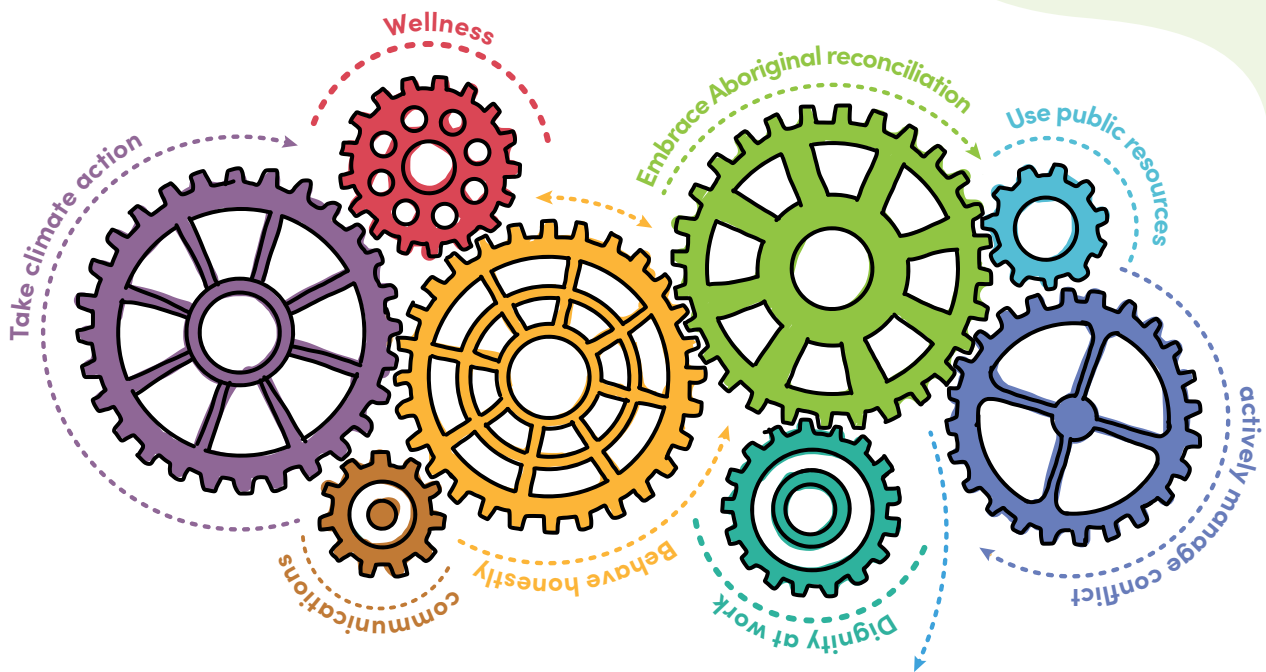
Open minds

- We embrace new ideas and innovation
- We are mindful of both the big picture and local place-based information in our work
- We are flexible and seek better ways to do our work, and we learn from our mistakes
- We are adaptable and resilient in the face of change



Better together

- We work inclusively and collaboratively and have a 'one Government' mindset
- We value our differences and use them to expand our thinking
- We actively share knowledge and information
- We engage in a practical and courteous way with those affected by our work
- We lead at all levels and empower our people to make decisions



Our standards

The Code provides a set of standards to guide us in our conduct.

These standards are designed to give guidance when making both professional and personal decisions, ensuring we exercise fairness, impartiality and timeliness. Decisions made in the context of our private lives may also impact our professional standing.

It is our responsibility to ensure our behaviour aligns to these standards as failure to do so may have significant consequences under the relevant legislation (the [Public Sector Management Act 1994](#) and [Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003](#)). We need to understand and adhere to the standards and read them in conjunction with the relevant legislation, policies and procedures, our values and our refreshed behaviours. We report any suspected breaches of this Code along with any suspected fraud or corruption.

Work safely and practise wellness: We prioritise our own and others' safety and wellbeing by adopting safe work practices and calling out inappropriate personal behaviour.

Behave honestly and act in the public interest: Our personal behaviour is reflective of conducting ourselves with impartiality, honesty and integrity. We do not engage in fraud or corruption and we call out and report when we witness such behaviour.

Declare and actively manage conflict between our personal and private interests: We ensure that our personal or private interests and affiliations do not conflict with our public duties. As employees, we do not accept gifts or benefits.

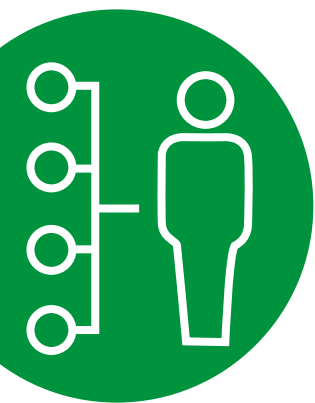
Use public resources and run procurements responsibly: We scrupulously use public resources and always conduct ethical procurement activities.

Actively promote dignity at work: We stop bullying, discrimination and harassment and act when we witness such behaviour. We embrace diversity and equity in all recruitment decisions. We treat everyone as an individual and are inclusive.

Carefully manage communications and information: We ensure the information we provide to the public and the government is authorised and accurate. We protect official and confidential information by reliably recording, managing and maintaining these records.

Embrace Aboriginal reconciliation: We understand our responsibilities to reconciliation. We seek to listen, learn, and build strong partnerships with First Nations peoples and the Traditional Owners of the land, sea and air, upon which we work.

Take climate action: We are committed to identifying, managing, and monitoring climate risks in all our long-term investment, planning, asset management and policy decisions.



Your responsibilities

Employees are reminded our Code is underpinned by the legislation and policies in the Public Sector Accountability, Integrity and Ethics Framework (see page 7).

Failure to adhere to the framework and this Code can have significant consequences, including discipline.

Reporting suspected breaches of the Code

The department takes seriously any reported breaches of our code.

Generally, breaches of our code are reported to our supervisor or next-level manager.

Safety issues can be reported to a Health and Safety representative, the Safe and Well team, or follow the appropriate guidance available on the intranet.

In accordance with our Integrity Framework and our Fraud and Corruption Control Framework, "it is mandatory to report known or suspected fraud or corruption".

Reporting should, in the first instance, be through an employee's supervisor, or their next-level senior employee if more appropriate. However, employees may feel more comfortable reporting their suspicions to:

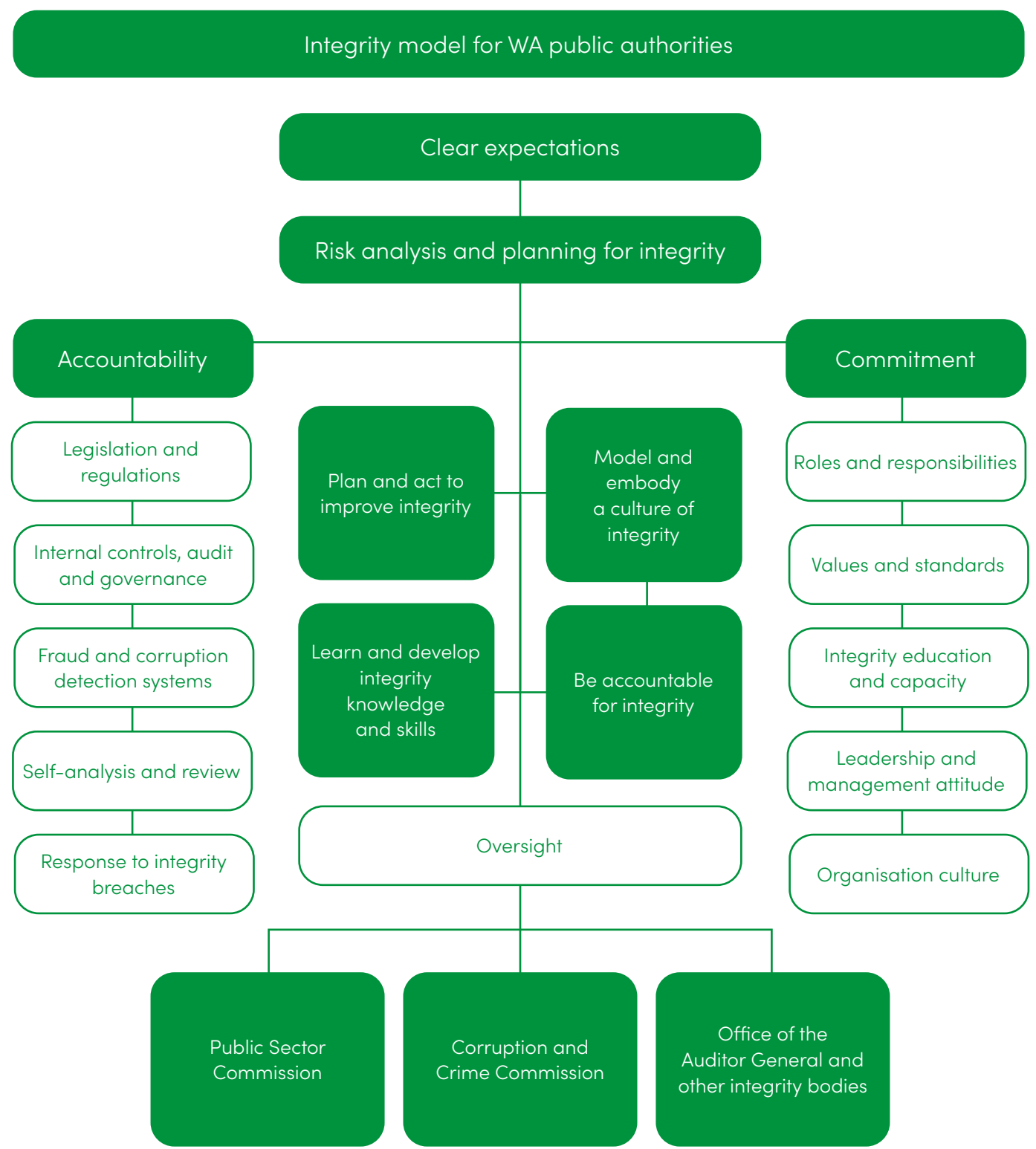
- public interest disclosure officers (contact details are published on the department intranet)
- another manager or team leader where it is neither suitable nor appropriate to report to an immediate supervisor
- the department's anonymous reporting platform – Safe2Say
- the Director General or Deputy Directors General
- the Corruption and Crime Commission for matters of serious misconduct
- the Public Sector Commission for matters of minor misconduct
- the WA Police Service.

Victimisation of those reporting unethical conduct will not be tolerated.

Further information about this Code, supporting policies and consequences are available on the intranet or from the Chief Human Resources Officer at CHRO@dwer.wa.gov.au.



Public Sector Accountability, Integrity and Ethics Framework



Source: Public Sector Commission’s Integrity Strategy for WA Public Authorities 2020–2023