

# Code of Conduct for Agency Staff



## **Welcome to Chelmsford City Council**

This document should be read by all temporary agency workers who are embarking on a temporary assignment with Chelmsford City Council (see below definition for further clarification of a temporary agency worker). Once you have read the document, you should sign the accompanying form and hand it to your supervisor or manager at Chelmsford City Council on your first day.

Definition of a temporary agency worker: “a temporary agency worker is employed by a temporary work agency and is then, via a commercial contact, hired out to perform work assignments at the user firm (i.e. Chelmsford City Council).”

## **I. INTRODUCTION TO CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL**

### **About Chelmsford Town**

Chelmsford is a County Town of Essex, with a population of around 156,000. Located in the heart of Essex, Chelmsford is an ideal location for business, being only 35 minutes from the capital by rail, and within 75 minutes of 6 international airports. Chelmsford is one of the major employment centres in Essex and, although historically industrial, has a very attractive environment. Extensive city centre parks bring the countryside into the heart of the city. Besides having a thriving business community, Chelmsford also offers a choice of 2 major retail malls, a variety of specialist shops, and many famous high street brands.

### **About Chelmsford City Council**

Chelmsford City Council is a large organisation supporting people within the city. It spends approximately £270m each year and employs over one thousand people. The Council speaks up for the town's interests in a number of areas including health, community safety, regeneration and environmental matters, and ensures that a diverse range of services are provided such as refuse collection to every household in the borough and dealing with planning applications.

Our website [www.chelmsford.gov.uk](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk) will help you to find more about Chelmsford, and about the services provided by the Council.

## **Council Structure**

In addition to the Chief Executive group, the five major services of Chelmsford City Council are:

- Community Services
- Corporate Services
- Financial Services
- Public Places
- Sustainable Communities

## **2. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR TEMPORARY AGENCY WORKERS**

### **Dress Code**

For office based roles - appropriate office wear, i.e. smart/casual, no jeans. Speak to your agency if you are not sure of the appropriate dress code.

For operational roles - you will be required to wear protective clothing, please speak to your agency consultant who will inform you of the requirements for the role you will be undertaking.

### **Smoking/Alcohol Policy**

Chelmsford City Council operates a 'no smoking' policy within its premises. Employees are not allowed to smoke in working time.

Alcohol consumption is strictly forbidden during working hours.

### **Police Checks**

If you are offered an assignment involving opportunity for access to children or vulnerable people, it will be exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Chelmsford City Council requires you to declare any convictions or cautions you may have, even if they would otherwise be declared as "spent" under this Act. The information you give will be treated in confidence and will only be taken in to account in relation to the work you are required to undertake. The Council is also entitled, under the arrangements introduced for the protection of children and vulnerable people, to check with the Disclosure and Barring Service for the existence of any criminal record held in your name. The information received will be treated with the strictest confidence.

The disclosure of a criminal record will not exclude you from working with the specified groups of people unless the authorised officer considers that the conviction renders you unsuitable for work with such groups.

## **House Keeping**

All staff must maintain a tidy workplace and ensure that desks and surfaces are left clear at the end of each working day.

## **Confidentiality**

The Council has in place an Information Security Policy, and it is important that you remember that all information you acquire whilst working at the Council, either directly or indirectly, is confidential. You must not disclose any information to any person not directly concerned with the Council.

## **First Aid and Accident Reporting/Health and Safety**

You will be shown where your nearest First Aid box is situated, and how to contact a first aider if required. You will also be told by your manager about the Council's fire regulations and any health and safety issues.

Any accidents which occur on-site should be reported immediately, however minor they seem. In the first instance speak to your Line Manager and then inform your agency.

## **Bullying, Harassment and Reporting Racial Incidents**

Chelmsford City Council does not tolerate acts of bullying, harassment or racial behaviour. If you feel that you are the victim of bullying or harassment or wish to report a racial incident whether you are the victim or a witness then please contact either your manager or Human Resources (01245) 606440. Alternatively, if you wish to report a racial incident and you have access to the Intranet you can download a form by clicking on the link entitled "Racial Incident Reporting".

## **Whistle Blowing**

A whistleblower is someone who reports wrongdoing or malpractice to their employer so that problems can be identified and resolved quickly. You are encouraged to report any malpractice. Confidentiality will be respected and protection from victimisation or reprisals provided. Whistleblowers are protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act. The Council's Whistleblowing Officer, Legal & Democratic Services Manager, can be contacted on 01245 606560 or in writing using a sealed envelope marked 'Private and Confidential' and addressed to The Whistleblowing Officer, c/o Human Resources, Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford, CMI IJE or via email to [whistleblowing@chelmsford.gov.uk](mailto:whistleblowing@chelmsford.gov.uk)

## **Personal Telephone Calls Policy**

Personal telephone calls should be kept to an absolute minimum. When they are necessary use your mobile phone if you have one.

## **Hours of Work**

These will be briefed prior to the start of your assignment. Please note that you will be required to have a minimum of 30 minutes break after working 6 hours. It is your responsibility and in your interest to be punctual – this indicates professionalism and a commitment to the job. This often leads to bookings being extended and the client requesting that staff return for further assignments, thus maintaining regular work.

## **Overtime**

If asked to work overtime you must gain authority from your Line Manager and notify your agency consultant as your timesheet may need to be re-issued to ensure you are paid correctly. All additional hours will be paid at plain time except where you are required to work for a sixth day in addition to a normal five day working week, when an enhanced rate of time and a half will apply.

## **Behaviour and Conduct**

It is vital that you are courteous and polite at all times. All employees and temporary agency workers are expected to act responsibly and in the best interests of the agency and the Council.

## **Use of Equipment/Resources**

You must not use equipment on-site for anything other than activities directly relating to your employment unless you have been given permission from your Line Manager in writing.

## **Identity Badges**

On some Council property you may be required to wear an identity badge which you will normally be issued with on the first day of each assignment. Please make sure that you are wearing your badge visibly at all times when you are on Council business. The identity badge must be returned to the Council when your assignment ends.

### **3. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES AND TEMPORARY AGENCY WORKERS**

#### **Summary of Main Provisions**

Set out below is a summary of those provisions in the Code that are likely to be of particular relevance to you in your day to day work. For further details you should refer to the Code itself, which is available on the Council intranet site or from Human Resources; or discuss the matter with your manager, Human Resources or your agency.

#### **Dealings with the Public**

Be courteous and fair at all times and aim to give the highest standard of service. Dress smartly in a manner appropriate to your role.

#### **Confidential Information**

Do not divulge confidential information to unauthorised persons. If you are unsure whether the information is confidential or a particular person is authorised to receive it, **check** first with your manager.

#### **Political Neutrality**

Do not let your own political opinions interfere with, or influence, your work. Always keep in mind that the Council is a democratically elected body and you are there to help it to carry out its lawful policies.

#### **Acceptance of Gifts & Hospitality**

Treat offers of gifts (including thank you gifts) with caution unless it is clear that the gift concerned is of nominal value only e.g. calendar. If in any doubt politely refuse, or consult your manager. Never accept valuable gifts from members of the public, contractors or potential contractors.

General hospitality should only be accepted where it is provided as part of an occasion that relates strictly to Council business, **and** is not unduly lavish. Treat with caution invitations from contractors, potential contractors, or other outside individuals to attend social or sporting events. Always check with your manager first as some offers of hospitality have to be recorded under the Council's Contract Rules.

#### **Planning Applications by Employees of the Council**

Planning applications or development plan proposals submitted to Chelmsford City Council by current employees and their close friends and relatives must be declared to Planning Building Control Services.

- Serving officers who act as agents for people pursuing a planning matter within the authority should play no part in the decision making process for that proposal. Similarly, should they submit their own proposal to the Council they serve, they should take no part in its processing.
- Proposals will be reported to the main Committee as main items and not dealt with by officers under delegated powers.

### **Personal Interests**

Never use your position with the Council to secure special favours or preferential treatment for yourself, your partner, or family/friends.

Disclose to your manager any financial or non-financial interest which an ordinary person, were s/he to know about it, **might** think could affect your impartiality.

### **Recruitment**

If you are involved in recruitment of staff you should ensure that any appointment is made on merit alone. If you are related to an applicant, or have a close relationship with him/her outside work then you should not take part in the selection process.

The Council operates a Recruitment Safeguarding Policy ensuring safe recruitment for the welfare of all employees, public and wider community associated with the Council.

### **Outside Contractors**

Special provisions in the Code apply to you if your job involves making purchasing decisions, ordering goods/services, evaluating tenders, or supervising contractors. You should check with you manager if in any doubt.

### **Outside Commitments**

Do not engage in outside employment or activities which conflict (or could conflict) with the Council's own interest.

### **Use of Council Resources**

Never use Council property, equipment or materials (e.g. stationery) for your own private purposes or gain. Always keep in mind that the Council's property, equipment etc, has been acquired through monies raised by local and central taxation and that you are a custodian of those assets.

### **Colleagues**

Treat your colleagues (whatever position they may hold in the organisation) as you would have them treat you: with courtesy and respect.

## **Perception**

Where a public authority, such as the Council, is concerned it is not enough simply to avoid actual impropriety or improper conduct. You should at all times endeavour to avoid any occasion for **suspicion** and any **appearance** of improper conduct or impropriety.

## **4. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

Chelmsford City Council recognises and welcomes all legislation that seeks to promote equality of opportunity for all and prevent discrimination on any grounds.

Consequently, it is the Council's Policy that there should be no discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, sex, marital status, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or age.

It is the duty of all employees and temporary staff to accept their personal responsibility for the practical application of the Policy but the Council acknowledges that specific responsibilities fall upon management, supervisors and individuals professionally involved in recruitment and personnel management.

To ensure that this Policy is consistently applied, co-ordinating responsibilities have been assigned to the Chief Executive who will monitor the operation of the Policy for both employees and job applicants and undertake periodic audits.

To safeguard individual rights under the Policy any temporary staff member who believes that the Council has applied inequitable treatment to him or her within the scope of the Policy should raise the matter with their Agency Consultant or with Chelmsford City Council Human Resources as appropriate.

To make the Policy work requires much more than this formal statement. The Policy will assist the creation of the right climate for success but it is for each employee and temporary staff member to make his or her own contribution. The Policy will, therefore, be brought to the attention of every employee, temporary staff member and job applicant and will be kept under regular review.



## **5. DECLARATION**

**This page should be signed and returned to the line manager for the assignment on the first day.**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (print name) confirm that I have read and understood the following information, policies and procedures of Chelmsford City Council contained within the 'Code of Conduct for Agency Staff' and agree to conduct myself within the parameters of these guidelines.

- 1. Introduction to Chelmsford City Council**
- 2. General information for temporary agency workers**
- 3. Chelmsford City Council Code of Conduct for Employees and temporary agency workers**
- 4. Chelmsford City Council Equal Opportunities policy**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Version Number	Creation Date	Changes Made	Changes Made By:	Authorised/Checked?	Date of Changes
1.6	January 2011	Updated Disability Confident logo, whistleblowing details	HR	Y	13/12/2016
1.5	January 2011	Updated directorates	A Whitehead	Y	19/09/2014
1.4	January 2011	Requirement of 30 mins break after 6 hours	Audit	Y	15/09/2014