

Code of Conduct for Agency Workers



AGENCY WORKER CODE OF CONDUCT	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
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1 Welcome to Chelmsford City Council

First and foremost, welcome to Chelmsford City Council, we're really pleased to have you here as an agency worker, working on behalf of the City Council.

We have put this document together to help you understand more about our organisation and what we are here to do and how we expect you to work with us.

As we are a Council, and a public sector organisation there are some specific considerations and standards of behaviour that we ask from everyone who represent us including those who work for us through an agency. These are set out in this document. If you have any questions, please discuss these with your manager or your agency.

At the end of this document, you will be asked to sign a declaration to say that you have read and understood everything.

Important note

These standards of behaviour as set out within this Code and required of you while working for the Council are not intended to signify an employment relationship or otherwise change your legal status as an agency worker.

2 About the City Council

With a population over 181,000 and a customer base across an even wider region, our reach is extensive, and we take great pride in the high-quality services we deliver to all our residents and visitors.

By taking a role at Chelmsford you can make a real difference to local people and help us make Chelmsford district an even better place to live, work and visit.

Our website www.chelmsford.gov.uk will help you to find more about Chelmsford, and about the services provided by the Council.

3 Our Values

The Council has five values – Accountability, Creativity, Learning and Encouraging, Collaborative and Trust – these values drive everything we do as an organisation and enable us to deliver our services. We expect agency workers to familiarise themselves with these values and not act in any way that might undermine them or which might discourage or deter a Council employee from adhering to them.

The Values are set out below, and if you have any questions about these, do please raise them with your manager who will be able to help.



Accountability

We take responsibility and ownership for our own actions, behaviours and performance.

Creativity

We are flexible in our approach, and we focus on solutions.

Learning and encouraging

We recognise our success, and we provide support to further our skills and experience.

Collaborative

We build relationships and we achieve more together.

Trust

We trust in each other.

4 Working at the Council

4.1 Hours of Work

These will have been shared with you by your agency. You will need to have a minimum of 30 minutes break after working 6 hours.

If you are asked to work additional hours by your manager, please notify your agency as your timesheet may need to be re-issued to ensure you are paid correctly*. All additional hours will be paid at single rate unless you are required to work for a sixth day in addition to your normal five-day working week, when an enhanced rate of time and a half will apply.

If you are required to work 37 hours over a 4 day working week, the enhanced rate of time and a half will apply for additional hours worked on the 5th working day once a qualifying time of 37 hours has been reached.

* Operational Services will notify HAYS of the hours worked by agency workers each week to ensure correct payments are made.

4.2 Way of Working

Your manager will discuss with you how your team works. Some of our roles require on site presence every day, but if you are in a role that is more flexible in location, your manager will explain when on site / office attendance is required and how they expect you to communicate your whereabouts. They will also explain any other team communication/attendance protocols that might be in place.

4.3 Identity Badge and Dress Code

If you are issued with an identify badge, please ensure that this is displayed at all times, when you are working. This is to ensure the security of the Council's buildings and all people therein, irrespective of whether they are Council employees/workers, councillors, agency staff, independent contractors, or legitimate visitors.

Your agency will be able to give you any specific dress requirements for your role, as an overview:

- For office-based roles - office wear or smart/casual.
- For operational roles –you may, because of health and safety regulations and/or risk assessments applicable to your area of work, be required to wear protective clothing. These requirements will, of course, apply to all individuals engaged in such work, irrespective of whether they are Council employees/workers, agency staff or independent contractors, and exist for the individual's own personal protection and safety. Furthermore, for operational roles involving interface with members of the public and the exercise of statutory enforcement powers or duties (e.g. on-street parking enforcement for the South Essex Parking Partnership) you may be required to wear a uniform (in common with Council employees engaged in the same role) for the purpose of enabling members of the public to identify your official role. The requirement to wear protective clothing and/or a uniform in the above-mentioned contexts is to not to be taken as an indicator of employment status.

You are not permitted to wear any badges, jeweller, insignia which might give offence, or which could be taken to indicate support of a particular political party or pressure group. Likewise, any tattoos should not be displayed which give offence or indicate support of a particular political or pressure group.

4.4 Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

We operate a Smoke-free policy, and you are not allowed to smoke in working time.

The council has a set of rules concerning alcohol and drugs which you will need to comply with whilst working at the Council. This means that you must not:

- Work or report to work whilst impaired due to the use of drugs (legal or illegal) or alcohol.
- Be in possession of alcohol on Council premises. Unopened containers of alcohol that have been purchased off Council premises for consumption outside of work will be permissible.
- Attempt to sell, distribute or supply alcohol whilst on Council premises, or whilst representing the Council, unless at a Council arranged event where the sale, distribution and/or supply of alcohol has been authorised by a Senior Manager.
- Consume illegal drugs or misuse any drug whilst working or representing the Council.
- Be in possession of, or attempt to sell, distribute or supply any drug which contravenes the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971; the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016; and the Medicines Act 1968, whilst on Council premises or whilst at work. Any contravention of this, without exception, will be reported to the police.

You may consume alcohol at Council arranged functions if authorised by a Senior Manager. Such functions will, when possible be arranged for times when you do not have to return to work having consumed alcohol. However, if alcohol is consumed, you must not drive a vehicle or operate any machinery. If you do not drive a vehicle or operate any machinery you can only return to work if you are not impaired by alcohol.

Your behaviour must always be appropriate, lawful and not offend, harass or irritate others present, nor does it in any way, bring the Council into disrepute or undermine its values.

Any contravention of these rules is a very serious matter and is likely to result in immediate termination of your agency engagement.

4.5 Mandatory Training

There will be some training that you will be expected to complete depending on your role. Your manager will make you aware of this.

4.6 Disclosure of criminal convictions

If you are convicted or cautioned for any offence whilst you are working for us (this includes outside of your working hours) you must immediately notify your manager and your agency.

This includes motoring offences which result in a court action and a driving restriction but not parking offences/fines where no penalty points are incurred.

4.7 Health and Safety

Your manager will ensure that you are shown where your nearest First aid box is if applicable, and how to contact a first aider. Your manager will also explain fire regulations and health and safety issues.

Any accidents or near misses should be reported immediately, however minor they seem. In the first instance speak to your manager and then inform your agency.

4.8 Reporting of sickness or other absence

As an agency worker you have been engaged to cover a crucial role or “gap” which, for whatever reason(s), the Council is unable at the time to recruit an existing or new employee to cover. Although you are not an employee as such, for operational reasons it is crucial that your line manager is made aware at the earliest possible opportunity, through your Agency, if you are unable to attend work on a particular day, whether by reason of illness or due to some other cause.”

4.9 Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation

Chelmsford City Council operates a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment or victimisation in the workplace, enabling a working environment where everyone, irrespective of their employment status, is treated with dignity and respect.

If you feel that you are the victim of bullying, harassment or victimisation, please let both your manager and agency know. Any issues will be dealt with by your agency’s policies and processes.

4.10 Whistle Blowing

You are encouraged to raise any concern you might have when you are working at the Council about unethical or unprofessional behaviour within the Council or by its contractors and suppliers. Confidentiality will be respected and protection from victimisation or reprisals provided.

Depending on the nature of the issue you may choose to raise this first instance with your manager. Alternatively, you may contact the Council's Whistleblowing officer who can be contacted by:

(a) Filling in our online whistleblowing report form on the internet, which can be found at <http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

(b) Sending an Email to: whistleblowing@chelmsford.gov.uk

(c) By telephoning on 01245 606560;

(d) By sending your concerns in writing in a sealed envelope marked 'private and confidential' addressed to The Legal & Democratic Services Manager Civic Centre Duke Street Chelmsford Essex CM1 1JE

5 Standards of Behaviour at the Council

At all times as an overriding principle, the Council expects you to act honestly and with integrity and take care of any equipment or resources you have been allocated and always ensure value for money to the local community.

5.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Council aims to create a work environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. The Council will not discriminate because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Everyone who works at the Council are responsible for the promotion and advancement of equality, diversity and inclusion. Behaviour, actions or words that

transgress the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy will not be tolerated and appropriate action will be taken.

5.2 Sustainability

The Council is committed to protecting the environment and expects everyone who works on its behalf to be mindful of how their actions impact the environment. In particular, we ask that everyone aims to reduce waste and lower carbon emissions whenever possible.

5.3 Use of Council Property and Equipment

Do not use Council property, equipment (including computers, software, and other resources) for your personal benefit or private use. There are some limited circumstances where you may use email and the internet for personal use. Please refer to the Council's Acceptable Use policy for guidance, available on the Intranet or from your manager.

5.4 Information Security

If you have handle or have access to data in the course of your work at the Council, you must ensure that you comply with the Council's Acceptable Use Policy, which is available on the Intranet or from your manager.

5.5 Health, Safety and Security

Please always prioritise the health, safety and security of other staff members and protect Council property and buildings. You should take care to avoid any actions or inactions that could negatively impact or compromise health, safety, and security.

5.6 Safeguarding

The Council provides a wide range of services and facilities takes its Safeguarding responsibilities very seriously, responding appropriately and promptly to all concerns, incidents and allegations.

You will be given access to the Council's Safeguarding policy and training as appropriate for your role. This will ensure that you

- Understand the different forms abuse and your role and responsibilities
- Know how to record and report safeguarding concerns, incidents or allegations

5.7 Working with the Public

If you interact with the public whether in person, by phone, or through written or electronic communication you are expected to do so efficiently and courteously at all times, regardless of the situation. The Council, as a public sector organisation serving the community is entitled to expect this standard of conduct from all individuals who interact with members of the public, irrespective of whether they are an employees/workers, agency staff, or independent contractors. Members of the public who come into contact with the Council do not distinguish between these various employment modes. You should familiarise yourself with the Council's formal complaints procedure and when relevant, you should make an aggrieved individuals aware of the availability of this procedure.

5.8 Confidentiality

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.

You must not use confidential or sensitive information obtained during your time with the Council for personal gain or benefit.

5.9 Political Neutrality

You must not allow your own personal or political opinions to interfere with or influence your work. If you come into contact with Elected Members, please bear in mind that the Council staff serves all Elected Members not just those of the controlling group.

5.10 Gift and Hospitality

You should not accept any fees, gifts or other benefits for you or anyone else, from any member of the public, pressure group or other outside party unless it is clear the gift concerned is of nominal value e.g. a calendar.

General hospitality should only be accepted or provided where 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 let your manager know if you have been offered any gift or hospitality, as some offers have to be recorded under the Council's Contract Rules whether they are accepted or not.

5.11 Personal Interests

You should never use your work or create the impression that you may be using your work with the Council to seek special favours or preferential treatment for yourself, or friends or relatives

You should disclose, in writing, to your manager any personal interest (whether financial or non-financial in nature) which may affect, or be considered by others to affect, your impartiality in any matter relevant to your duties.

Note: Non-financial interests could, for example, include involvement with an organisation receiving grant aid from the Council, or involvement with an organisation or pressure group which is seeking to influence or change the Council's policies.

You are required to disclose in writing to the Council any financial interest, whether direct or indirect, which you have in any contract which, to their knowledge, has been, or is proposed to be entered into by the Council. Failure to disclose such an interest is a serious criminal offence.

If you are unclear whether disclosure is required, you should discuss the matter with your manager.

5.12 If you are involved in decision making on or supervision of contracts or purchases

If your role at the Council means that you are involved in decision making on or supervising contracts or making purchasing decisions, then there are some additional requirements of you:

- You must be familiar with the Council's Contract Rules and Financial Regulations relating to contracts and orders
- You must ensure that orders and contracts are awarded strictly in accordance with the Council's Contract Rules and that no special favour is shown, or preferential treatment given, to businesses run by partners, relatives, friends or former employees.
- You must be familiar with the requirements of the Bribery Act and the Anti-Bribery and Corruption policy
- You must disclose if you have, or have had, a private business relationship with a person or company who you know has or is seeking to have a contractual relationship with the Council (whether for the supply of goods, services or construction works). A private business relationship is where a person or company has been engaged to carry out work at your home or your family or close friend(s) home; or has supplied any goods or services to you, your family or close friend(s).

Exceptions to the above are public utility companies, any bank or similar financial institution, any retail store or outlet where services or goods are commonly provided or made available to other customers

5.13 Other work or Outside Interests

Whilst you are working at the Council you must not engage in outside employment or activities which conflict (or could conflict) with the Council's own interest.

5.14 Close Personal relationships

Close personal relationship are defined but not limited to:

- Being married, dating, in a partnership or co-habiting arrangement or other similar arrangement
- Immediate family members e.g. grandparents, parents, children or siblings
- Other extended family relationships e.g. aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews
- Close or family friendships i.e. frequent intentional contact outside of a work setting and or working hours, that goes beyond professional interactions

- Business associates (outside of the Council)

If you are involved in recruitment or staffing matters when you are working at the Council, you must ensure that all appointments are made based on merit. You must not be involved in making an appointment disciplinary, grievance, promotion or payment decision if you have a close personal relationship with any of the candidates or staff members affected.

5.15 Social media, communications and working with the media

If you are using social media on behalf of the Council, please represent the Council ethically and with honesty and integrity.

Be mindful of your personal social media use and do not post anything that could adversely affect the image of the Council or have the potential to do so. Equally you must not divulge any personal or sensitive information gained through your work at the Council through social media.

Unless it is part of your agency worker role at the Council you must not speak, write, give interviews or take phone calls for information from the media.

6 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 understood and agree to adhere to this 'Code of Conduct for Agency Workers' and to undertake any mandatory training required in my role.

Signed _____

Date _____