

Code of Conduct for the Public Sector: How the minimum standards from the current Code are reflected in the updated Code

Principle/ Value	#	Proposed Minimum Standard	Carried forward	Changes	Newly introduced	Comments
Trustworthy	1	We are honest and professional.	✓	Merges two standards	-	Existing standards 'We must be honest' and 'we must be professional and responsive'
	2	We act lawfully and use public power fairly and reasonably.	✓	Merges two standards	-	Existing standards 'We must act lawfully and objectively' and 'We must treat everyone fairly and with respect'
	3	We avoid activities, work or non-work, that compromise trust in our ability to do our job or that may bring our organisation or the Public Sector into disrepute.	✓	Minor	-	Clarifies that this includes consideration of whether the activity compromises trust in our ability to do our job. Existing standard 'We must avoid any activities, work or non-work, that may harm the reputation of our organisation or the State Services.'
Respectful	4	We value and uphold the dignity of others.	-	-	✓	Clarifies how 'we must treat everyone fairly and with respect' (existing standard). Is existing practice.
	5	We contribute to a positive and safe workplace culture.	-	-	✓	
	6	We act with care and respect, and do not engage in behaviour that is inappropriate or could harm others.	✓	Incorporates one standard	✓	
Impartial	7	We act objectively and do not allow our personal beliefs, interests, activities, or relationships to impact our work.	✓	Merges three standards	-	Existing standards 'We must carry out the functions of our organisation, unaffected by our personal beliefs' and 'We act lawfully and objectively' and 'We ensure our actions are not affected by our personal interests or relationships.'
	8	We disclose our relevant interests and appropriately manage all conflicts of interest.	-	-	✓	Reflects model standards: Model standards: Conflicts of interest - Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission . Is existing practice.
	9	We never misuse our position to benefit or disadvantage others or ourselves.	✓	Minor	-	Extends beyond personal benefit, so that it includes advantage and potential disadvantage to others. Existing standard 'We must never misuse our position for personal gain.'
	10	We decline gifts or benefits that place us under any actual or perceived obligation or influence.	✓	Minor	-	Clarifies actual or perceived obligation or influence. Existing standard 'We must decline gifts or benefits that place us under any obligation or perceived influence.'
Accountable	11	We are open to scrutiny and can account for what we do.	-	-	✓	Is existing practice. Reflects performance requirements at individual and agency levels.
	12	We treat our organisation's information and resources with care and use them only for proper purposes.	✓	Merges two standards	-	Existing standards 'We must use our organisation's resources carefully and only for intended purposes' and 'we must treat information with care and use it only for proper purposes.'
	13	We aim to improve the performance and efficiency of our organisation.	✓	Minor	-	Replaces the word 'work' with 'aim.' Existing standard 'We must work to improve the performance and efficiency of our organisation.'
Responsive	14	We take the time to listen to and understand people's circumstances and needs.	-	-	✓	Is existing practice.
	15	We seek to collaborate and engage meaningfully with New Zealanders to design policies and deliver services that meet their needs and aspirations.	-	-	✓	Clarifies the meaning in the existing standard 'we must be professional and responsive.'
Politically neutral	16	We are politically neutral, which enables us to effectively serve current and future governments.	✓	Minor	-	Existing standard 'We maintain the political neutrality required to enable us to work with current and future governments'
	17	We respect the authority of the Government of the day.	✓	None	-	-
Free and frank advice	18	We support our organisation to provide Ministers with timely, robust, and unbiased advice.	✓	Minor	-	Specifies who advice is provided to by adding the words 'Ministers with timely.' Existing standard 'We must support our organisation to provide robust and unbiased advice.'
Merit-based appointments	19	We are fair and robust in our recruitment and selection processes and must give preference to the person who is best suited to the position.	-	-	✓	Reflects section 72 of the Public Service Act 2020 (Appointments on merit). Is existing practice.
Open government	20	We aim to make government information, decisions, and services more transparent and available.	✓	Incorporates elements of one standard	✓	Existing standard 'We must work to make government services accessible and effective.'
Stewardship	21	We manage and care for the Public Sector, so that it may continue to meet the needs of New Zealanders now and into the future.	✓	Incorporates elements of two standards	✓	Existing standards 'We must work to make government services accessible and effective' and 'We must strive to make a difference to the well-being of New Zealand and all its people.'

Resources

- [Standards of Integrity and Conduct - Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission](#) (Existing Code/standards and guidance).
- [Public Service Act 2020 No 40 \(as at 01 August 2025\), Public Act 16 Public service values – New Zealand Legislation](#) (Statutory provision on the public service values, under which proposed minimum standards are grouped).
- [Public Service Act 2020 No 40 \(as at 01 August 2025\), Public Act 12 Public service principles – New Zealand Legislation](#) (Statutory provision on the public service principles, under which proposed minimum standards are grouped).