

## What standards are expected of police officers under the Code? **Continued** ●●●●

They should not:

- do anything that may be reasonably seen as abuse, bullying, harassment or victimisation;
- discriminate against anyone because of their sex, race, colour, language, religion, political opinion, disability, age, sexuality and so on; or
- act corruptly or dishonestly.

## Victims of crime ●●●●

If you are the victim of crime that the police are dealing with, you have the right to expect that the police will:

- treat you with sensitivity and respect;
- consider any special needs or concerns you may have; and
- keep you up to date about progress with their investigations.

## Your support ●●●●

The Code contains an important set of rules that are designed to protect everyone. We can all benefit from it - police officers know what is expected of them and the public can be reassured by the commitment of the organisation to enforcing it. But to be effective, police officers need the public's support and willing co-operation. They have the right, when they carry out their duties in line with the Code of Ethics, to expect that you will give them your full support.

If you believe that a police officer has broken the Code of Ethics, you can make a complaint to the Police Ombudsman at:

New Cathedral Buildings  
St Anne's Square  
11 Church Street  
Belfast BT1 1PG.

Telephone: 0845 601 2931 or 028 9082 8600.

Fax: 028 9082 8659

E-mail at [info@policeombudsman.org](mailto:info@policeombudsman.org)

INFORMATION ON THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE  
POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT  
THE WORK OF THE BOARD AT

[www.nipolicingboard.org.uk](http://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk)

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# An Introduction

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# Human Rights Standards in Everyday Policing

## An introduction ●●●●

From 13 February 2003 all police officers in the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) must carry out their duties in line with a new and unique Code of Ethics. This Code is based on the European Convention on Human Rights and other relevant human rights standards such as the United Nations Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials. It stresses the priority that the Police Service must give to human rights.

This leaflet gives basic information about the standards set out in the Code, particularly those relating to contact between police officers and members of the public.

If you would like a copy of the full Code of Ethics, please phone us on 028 90 408500 or download the Code (in PDF format) from our website: [www.nipolicingboard.org.uk](http://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk). This leaflet and the Code of Ethics are available from us free on request in accessible formats such as Braille, large print, and on audio cassette, and in minority languages to meet the needs of people not fluent in English.

## What standards are expected of police officers under the Code? ●●●●

The Code of Ethics sets out the standards of behaviour that all police officers must follow when they are in contact with:

- members of the public;
- their colleagues in the Police Service; and
- other professionals in the criminal justice system.

These standards cover:

- police officers' professional duty;
- police investigations;
- privacy and confidentiality;
- the use of force;
- people who are in custody;
- equality;
- integrity;
- property;
- fitness for duty; and
- the duties of police supervisors.

## What standards are expected of police officers under the Code? ●●●●

If police officers do not carry out their duties in line with the standards in the Code of Ethics, this may lead to a criminal or disciplinary investigation.

As a member of the public you have the right to expect that police officers will protect and support your human rights by enforcing the law and providing a professional policing service.

When they are carrying out their duties, police officers should:

- be fair and unbiased;
- use appropriate language and behaviour;
- give equal respect to people and their traditions, beliefs and lifestyles, as long as these are legal; and
- treat anyone in custody with dignity.