

Proposed changes to the Codes of Practice for Employers

When we spoke to registrants, employers and stakeholders last year as part of the Codes review engagement, you told us there was a lot you liked about the Codes and also that we need to make some changes.

We used that feedback to revise the Codes that we are now consulting on.

You can read the planned changes below.

Current code	Revision	Reason
<p>1 As a social service employer, you must make sure people are suitable to be social service workers and that they understand their roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>You will</p>	<p>1 Make sure people you recruit are suitable to be social service workers and that they understand their roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>I will</p>	<p>We have retained the term 'social service workers' as it covers the sector.</p> <p>Change of 'you will' to 'I will' gives a sense of ownership for employers and moves away from the regulator telling employers what to do.</p> <p>Use of term worker has been debated and will be included in consultation to establish preferred terminology.</p>
1.1 Use thorough recruitment processes to make sure that only suitable people with appropriate attitudes and values, and the potential to gain the necessary knowledge and skills, enter the workforce.	1.1 Use thorough and safe recruitment processes to make sure that people with appropriate attitudes and values, and the potential to gain the necessary knowledge and skills, enter the workforce.	
1.2 Check criminal records and registers and follow relevant guidance when assessing whether a person is capable of carrying out the duties of the job they have been selected for. You must do this before you appoint them.	1.2 Follow relevant safe recruitment guidance to check criminal records, registers and gaps in employment when assessing whether a person can carry out the duties of the job.	Referenced safer recruitment guidance, as a general term, rather than refer to the specific document as this may be updated.

1.3 Ask for and provide accurate and appropriate references to share information relating to a person's suitability to work in social services.	1.3 Request and provide accurate and appropriate information and references relating to a person's suitability to work in a specified role.	Safer recruitment has been referenced above.
1.4 Give workers clear information about their roles and responsibilities, relevant legislation, and the policies and procedures they must follow in their work.	1.4 Provide clear information and support to workers to undertake their roles and responsibilities in line with relevant legislation, policies, procedures, and guidance they are expected to follow.	Slight change to the wording
	1.5 Promote the health, safety and wellbeing of workers and ensure they can access sources of information and support.	New code to reflect wellbeing of workers, recognising the importance of a proactive approach to supporting staff.
	1.6 Provide clear information to workers about pathways of line management and communication.	New Code to reflect need for workers to have clear understanding of line management, within context of newer models of management (eg self-directed teams).
2 As a social service employer, you must have the culture and systems in place to support social service workers to meet their Code of Practice. You will	Establish and maintain an environment and culture which values rights, and relationship-based approaches to promote the wellbeing of social service workers and support them meet their Code of Practice. I will	Change of wording to overall Code to reflect developments in sector.

	2.1_Lead a workplace which values and upholds people who use services rights to dignity, kindness, compassion, respect and high-quality care.	New Code to reflect the leadership role, rather than 'manage' and to reflect the language used in Health and Social Care Standards.
	2.2Work with staff to ensure people who use services and carers are supported to develop and thrive and be fully involved and confident in the decisions relating to their care.	New Code to reflect a rights-based approach, including decision making.
2.2 Effectively manage and supervise social service workers to promote best practice and good conduct and support staff to continuously improve their performance and make sure they are fit to practise.	<p>2.3 Effectively lead, manage and supervise workers to promote kind and compassionate practice.</p> <p>2.3.1 Enable workers to continuously improve their performance, professional development.</p> <p>2.3.2 Promote an open workplace culture where workers regularly discuss ethical practice and professional boundaries.</p> <p>2.3.3 Provide leadership and a positive role model on upholding the Codes of Practice for Workers.</p>	Slight word change to reflect the developments in sector and read more supportively.

2.3 Have systems in place to listen to and consider feedback from people who use services, carers and other relevant people, to shape and improve services and the performance of social service workers.	2.3 Listen to and seek regular feedback from people who use services, carers and others. 2.3.1 Use feedback to shape and improve services.	New wording to simplify language and avoid repetition of areas covered in other codes. This will be included in the consultation to ensure that stakeholders, especially employers have an opportunity to comment on this.
2.4 Have systems in place for social service workers to report inadequate resources or difficulties which might have a negative effect on the delivery of care. Work with social service workers and relevant authorities to tackle such problems.	2.4 Have systems in place for workers to report resourcing or operational difficulties that might have a negative effect on the provision of care to people. Work with social service workers and relevant authorities to address such problems.	Slight change of wording.
2.5 Have systems in place to support workers to whistleblow when they feel that working practices are inappropriate or unsafe for any reason.	2.5 Support workers to whistleblow when they feel that working practices are discriminatory, inappropriate or unsafe for any reason and take appropriate action to respond to concerns.	Altered wording to remove 'systems' as expected employers will have whistleblowing policies in place.
2.6 Support social service workers to meet the standards in their Code of Practice and not require them to do anything that might	2.6 Support workers to meet their Code of Practice. I will not require workers to breach their Codes of Practice.	Slight change of wording, as feedback referred to the importance on employers not to ask workers to breach codes.

prevent that from happening.		
2.7 If you employ workers from other professions, support them to meet their own professional codes.	2.7 Support workers from other professions to meet their own professional codes.	
2.8 Report workers whose fitness to practise may be impaired to the relevant authority.		No change
	2.9 Ensure workers and other people and organisations you work with know what information you hold about them and have measures in place to protect such information in line with legislation and work requirements.	New Code This Code relates to employers complying with GDPR, rather than digital care developments.
3 As a social service employer, you must provide learning and development opportunities to enable social service workers to strengthen and develop their skills and knowledge. You will	Provide learning and development opportunities to enable social service workers to strengthen and develop their skills, knowledge and practice. I will	'You will' has been changed to 'I will...'
3.1 Provide good quality induction, learning and development opportunities to help social service workers do their jobs effectively	3.1 Provide good quality accessible induction and learning and development opportunities to help workers carry out their role effectively.	Code has been separated out to ensure the importance of learning and development (L&D) is not lost.

and prepare for new and changing roles and responsibilities.	Support and prepare workers for new and changing roles, responsibilities, and developments in practice.	
3.2 Contribute to providing social care and social work education and learning, including effective workplace assessments and practice learning.	<p>3.2 Contribute to social care and social work education and learning, including effective workplace placements and practice learning opportunities.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>3.2 Provide practice learning opportunities for social work, social care and children and young people programmes to support the workforce to achieve qualification requirements for registration.</p>	There are two options included here, given the changes and developments regarding newly qualified social workers (NQSW).
3.3 Support staff who need to be registered with us to meet the conditions for registration and the requirement for continuing professional development.	<p>3.3 Support workers who need to be registered with the SSSC to meet and maintain their conditions for registration and the requirement for continuous professional learning.</p> <p>3.3.1 Ensure that all NQSWs are provided with the required level of professional learning and development during the supported year to fully meet their CPL requirements.</p>	Additional sub code added for NQSW employers.
3.4 Respond appropriately to social service workers who need support because they do not feel	3.4 Respond appropriately to workers who need support because they do not feel able, or well enough prepared, to carry out their work.	Slight change to wording.

able to, or well enough prepared to, carry out their work.		
3.5 Provide effective, regular supervision to social service workers to support them to develop and improve through reflective practice.	3.5 Promote effective supervisory relationships and regular supervision to workers that enables them to develop and improve through reflective practice.	
4 As a social service employer, you must have written policies and procedures in place to protect people who use services and carers, and to support social service workers. You will	4. Have written policies and procedures in place which support risk enablement and protect people who use services and carers, and to support workers. You will	
	4.1 Have written policies and procedures that support risk enablement. 4.1.1 Have written policies and procedures in place to protect and support individuals, workers and others.	New code.

4.1 Put into action and monitor written policies and procedures, particularly about reporting allegations of harm or abuse to the relevant authority.	4.2 Put into practice and monitor policies and procedures relating to allegations of exploitation, harm, neglect, or abuse. Act upon such situations including reporting to the relevant authority within agreed timescales.	The use of 'agreed timescales' has caused debate within focus groups. Please give your views.
	4.3 Ensure workers know and understand signs of exploitation, harm, neglect or abuse and the action they must take.	New code.
4.1 Make it clear to social service workers that bullying, harassment or any form of discrimination is not acceptable and take action to deal with such behaviour.	4.4 Be clear that bullying, harassment or any form of discrimination is not acceptable and take action to deal with such behaviour.	Slight change of wording.
4.2 Have procedures in place for social service workers to report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> when a colleague's fitness to practise may be impaired 	4.5.1 Have procedures in place for a worker to report when a colleague's fitness to practise may be impaired.	These have been separated out.
	4.5.2 Have procedures in place for a worker to report when care has caused, or may have	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> exploitation or any dangerous, discriminatory or abusive behaviour or practice when care has caused, or may have caused, physical, emotional, financial or material harm or loss. 	caused, exploitation or physical, emotional, financial, material harm or loss.	
	4.5.3 Have procedures in place for a worker to report exploitation, dangerous, discriminatory, or abusive behaviour or practice.	
4.3 Deal with reports and allegations from social service workers promptly, effectively, and openly.	4.6 Deal with reports and allegations from workers promptly, effectively and openly.	No change.
	4.7 Create a culture that supports risk enablement.	Strengthening risk enablement
4.4 Make it clear to social service workers, people who use services and carers that violence, threats or abuse are not acceptable. Have clear policies and procedures for reducing the risk of violence and managing violent incidents.	4.8 Promote a workplace culture that values everyone's safety and where violence, threats, or abuse are not tolerated. Have clear and accessible policies and procedures for reducing and managing such incidents.	This has been altered to reflect more asset, rather than deficit, based language.
4.5 Support social service workers who experience trauma or violence in their work.	4.9 Know and understand the impact of trauma or abusive behaviour on workers, including vicarious trauma. Support workers who experience such trauma.	Change of wording to support development of trauma informed practice by including 'know and understand'.

5.1 Inform social service workers about this Code of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers and your responsibility to keep to it.	5.1 Follow the Code of Practice for Social Service Employers and tell workers about my responsibility to keep to it.	
5.2 Inform social service workers about the Code of Practice for Social Service Workers and their responsibility to keep to it.	5.2 Inform workers about the Code of Practice for Social Service Workers and their responsibility to keep to it, work with them to understand this as part of their registration and ongoing professional development.	
	5.3 Promote the importance and connection between the Health and Social Care Standards and other relevant standards and frameworks to the provision of high-quality care and how they are integral to each other.	New code. Kept references to standards general, rather than naming specific documents, as these may change.
5.3 Make people who use services and carers aware of the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers and inform them how to raise issues relating to the Codes, including how to contact us and cooperate with any proceedings resulting from this.	5.4 Inform people who use services and carers of the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers and provide details of how to raise issues relating to the Codes; including how to contact the relevant authority.	Slight change of wording and inclusion of need to act on any proceedings.
	5.4.1 Cooperate with any proceedings arising from issues raised by people who use services and carers.	New code.

5.4 Take account of the Code of Practice for Social Service Workers when making any decision that relates to a worker's fitness to practise.		No change.
5.5 Follow guidance on making a referral to the SSSC about a worker whose fitness to practise may be impaired. If appropriate, tell the worker that you have made a referral.		No change.
5.6 Cooperate with SSSC investigations and those of other authorities, including providing documents, attending hearings and responding to the findings and decisions.		No change.
5.7 Enable and support social service workers to cooperate with SSSC investigations and those of other authorities (for example, to provide witness statements, documents or other information and, where appropriate, attend hearings).		No change.
	5.8 Take appropriate action on the findings of the SSSC about a worker's fitness to	New code.

	practice, including supporting a worker to meet any conditions on their registration.	
	5.9 Take appropriate action on the findings of other standards setting bodies to improve the service provided to people who use services and carers.	New code.