



WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT LIVING CLG

Code of Standards, Conduct and Professional Behaviour

Policy Reference	WLILP5
Category	Operational Policies — HR & Governance
Version	3.0 (legislative precision added, cross-references corrected)
Status	APPROVED — by the Board of Directors on 9 October 2026
Supersedes	WLILP5 - Code of Standards and Behaviour - DRAFT v2.0; Code of Standards, Conduct & Professional Behaviour 2026 (approved by the Manager)
Policy Owner	Board of Directors, West Limerick Independent Living CLG
Applies To	Employees, Personal Assistants, Home Support Workers, Coordinators, Managers, Board Members, agency staff, students, volunteers, contractors, and consultants acting on behalf of WLIL
Related Policies	WLILP7A - Data Protection Policy; WLILP7D - Data Retention, Rectification and Erasure Policy; WLILP8 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse Policy; WLILP19 - Lone Working Policy; WLILP22 - Protected Disclosures and Good Faith Reporting Policy; WLILP39 - Digital Communications and Social Media Policy; WLILP54 - Dignity at Work Policy; WLILP55 - Disciplinary Policy
Review Cycle	Annually, or as required following legislative change or serious incidents



1. Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Standards, Conduct & Professional Behaviour is to establish the standards of behaviour, professionalism, integrity, and accountability expected of all persons working on behalf of West Limerick Independent Living CLG (WLIL).

This Code supports:

- safe and ethical service delivery,
- person-centred practice,
- safeguarding,
- professionalism,
- public trust,
- and compliance with legal and regulatory obligations.

The policy provides a practical framework to guide employees and representatives of WLIL in carrying out their duties within community, home support, and Personal Assistant (PA) service environments.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees
- Personal Assistants (PAs)
- Home Support Workers
- Coordinators
- Managers
- Board Members
- Agency staff
- Students and volunteers
- Contractors or consultants acting on behalf of WLIL

The standards outlined apply:

- during working hours,
- while representing WLIL,
- during service delivery,
- during community activities,
- during online or digital communications relating to work,
- and where conduct may reasonably impact the reputation or operation of WLIL.

Confidentiality obligations continue after employment or engagement ends.

3. Legislative & Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by:



- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015
- Protected Disclosures Act 2014 & 2022
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Freedom of Information Act 2014, if WLIL has been declared a prescribed body under Section 7 of that Act — FOI does not automatically apply to every HSE-funded body, only to public bodies and those specifically prescribed by ministerial order; WLIL should confirm its prescribed status rather than assume this Act applies
- Children First Act 2015 (where applicable)
- HSE Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse Policy
- Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015, as amended by the 2022 Act (both fully commenced 26 April 2023)
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD)
- HSE Code of Governance principles
- WLILP8 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse Policy
- WLILP19 - Lone Working Policy
- WLILP39 - Digital Communications and Social Media Policy
- WLILP54 - Dignity at Work Policy
- WLILP55 - Disciplinary Policy

4. Core Values & Principles

WLIL is committed to:

- dignity,
- respect,
- independence,
- inclusion,
- equality,
- professionalism,
- integrity,
- accountability,
- safeguarding,
- and person-centred support.

Employees and representatives of WLIL are expected to uphold these values in all aspects of their work and interactions.

All service users must be treated:

- fairly,
- respectfully,



- professionally,
- and in a manner that promotes autonomy, choice, rights, and independent living.

5. General Standards of Conduct

All employees and representatives of WLIL must:

- act honestly, responsibly, and professionally,
- comply with all applicable laws and organisational policies,
- carry out duties competently and safely,
- maintain appropriate professional standards,
- behave respectfully toward service users, colleagues, families, and members of the public,
- avoid behaviour which could damage public confidence in WLIL,
- and support a safe, respectful, and inclusive workplace culture.

Employees must not engage in:

- abusive,
- discriminatory,
- intimidating,
- dishonest,
- exploitative,
- or inappropriate behaviour.

6. Professional Behaviour & Service Delivery

Employees are expected to:

- provide services safely and respectfully,
- maintain professional communication,
- follow care plans and risk assessments,
- respect service user choices and independence,
- maintain appropriate boundaries,
- and work within the scope of their role and training.

Employees must:

- follow lawful and reasonable management instructions,



- cooperate with safeguarding and safety procedures,
- report concerns appropriately,
- and contribute positively to team working and service delivery.

7. Professional Boundaries

Employees must maintain clear professional boundaries with service users at all times.

Employees must not:

- exploit service users emotionally, financially, socially, sexually, or psychologically,
- form inappropriate dependent relationships,
- engage in intimate or sexual relationships with service users,
- misuse their position of trust,
- or behave in a manner that could compromise professional judgement or safeguarding standards.

The inherent power imbalance within care and support relationships means that professional boundaries must always be maintained regardless of consent or perceived willingness.

Employees must avoid:

- over-familiarity,
- inappropriate social involvement,
- excessive personal disclosure,
- or conduct that may blur professional boundaries.

Any developing personal relationship, conflict of interest, or boundary concern must be disclosed immediately to management.

Where pre-existing relationships exist, including family or personal relationships, these must also be declared so that risks can be assessed appropriately.

Breaches of professional boundaries may:

- constitute safeguarding concerns,
- result in disciplinary action,
- and where appropriate, be referred to external agencies.

8. Safeguarding Responsibilities

All employees have a responsibility to:

- safeguard service users,
- promote wellbeing and dignity,



- recognise signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm,
- and report safeguarding concerns immediately.

Employees must comply with:

- WLIL Safeguarding Policies,
- HSE safeguarding procedures,
- and reporting obligations.

Failure to report safeguarding concerns may itself constitute misconduct.

9. Respect, Equality & Dignity

WLIL promotes:

- equality,
- diversity,
- inclusion,
- and dignity in all aspects of service delivery and employment.

Employees must:

- treat others respectfully,
- avoid discriminatory behaviour,
- respect cultural differences, beliefs, identities, and personal choices,
- and contribute to an inclusive environment.

Bullying, harassment, intimidation, victimisation, or discriminatory behaviour will not be tolerated.

10. Confidentiality & Data Protection

Employees may access confidential personal, medical, financial, or organisational information during the course of their work.

All information must be handled:

- lawfully,
- securely,
- confidentially,
- and only for legitimate work purposes.

Employees must:

- comply with GDPR and Data Protection legislation,
- use approved systems only,



- protect records and devices,
- and avoid discussing confidential matters in inappropriate settings.

Confidential information must not be disclosed improperly during or after employment.

Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information may result in:

- disciplinary action,
- safeguarding concerns,
- legal consequences,
- or referral to external authorities.

11. Digital Communications & Social Media

Employees must use digital communication systems responsibly and professionally.

Employees must not:

- post confidential information online,
- share images or information relating to service users,
- discuss service users on social media,
- engage in online conduct that damages WLIL's reputation,
- or communicate with service users inappropriately through personal social media platforms.

Employees must comply with:

- WLIL Digital Communications Policies,
- confidentiality obligations,
- and safeguarding standards when using phones, messaging systems, email, or social media.

Photography, recording, or sharing of information relating to service users is strictly prohibited unless authorised in accordance with organisational procedures.

12. Conflict of Interest

Employees must avoid situations where personal, financial, social, or business interests conflict — or could reasonably appear to conflict — with their responsibilities to WLIL or service users.

Employees must not:

- use their position for personal gain,
- improperly influence decisions,
- seek personal benefit from service users,



- or engage in outside activities that compromise their professional role.

Any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest must be disclosed to management promptly.

13. Gifts, Hospitality & Financial Conduct

Employees must not:

- request gifts,
- borrow money from service users,
- accept significant gifts or benefits,
- or exploit relationships for personal advantage.

Modest tokens of appreciation may only be accepted where:

- they are of nominal value,
- do not influence professional judgement,
- and are declared in accordance with organisational procedures.

Employees must not:

- handle service user finances unless specifically authorised,
- misuse organisational resources,
- or engage in fraudulent or dishonest conduct.

14. Criminal Charges or Convictions

Employees are required to inform management where:

- criminal charges,
- convictions,
- or court orders

may reasonably impact:

- their role,
- safeguarding responsibilities,
- public trust,
- driving duties,
- or the safety of service users.

Each matter will be considered fairly, proportionately, and confidentially, taking account of:

- the nature of the issue,



- relevance to the role,
- safeguarding implications,
- and legal obligations.

15. Health, Safety & Lone Working

Employees must:

- comply with safety procedures,
- follow risk assessments,
- use equipment safely,
- and take reasonable care for their own safety and the safety of others.

Employees working alone or in the community must comply with:

- WLIL Lone Working Policy,
- emergency procedures,
- and reporting requirements.

Staff must not remain in situations where they feel unsafe and should follow emergency escalation procedures where necessary.

16. Attendance, Conduct & Fitness for Work

Employees are expected to:

- attend work reliably,
- behave professionally,
- maintain standards of conduct,
- and remain fit to carry out duties safely.

Employees must not attend work:

- under the influence of alcohol,
- under the influence of illegal substances,
- or otherwise impaired in a manner that places service users or others at risk.

17. Speaking Up & Reporting Concerns

Employees are encouraged and expected to raise concerns regarding:

- safeguarding,



- safety,
- misconduct,
- unethical behaviour,
- fraud,
- abuse,
- or policy breaches.

Concerns should be raised:

- through line management,
- safeguarding procedures,
- protected disclosures procedures under WLILP22,
- or other designated reporting pathways.

Employees who raise concerns in good faith will be supported in accordance with organisational procedures and relevant legislation.

18. Breaches of This Policy

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- supervision,
- corrective action,
- disciplinary procedures,
- safeguarding investigations,
- suspension,
- termination of employment or engagement,
- or referral to external authorities where appropriate.

Serious misconduct may include:

- abuse,
- exploitation,
- confidentiality breaches,
- fraud,
- safeguarding failures,
- violence,
- serious boundary violations,



- or behaviour placing service users or staff at risk.

19. Responsibilities

Employees

Employees are responsible for:

- complying with this policy,
- maintaining professional standards,
- reporting concerns,
- and acting safely and ethically.

Coordinators & Managers

Managers are responsible for:

- leading by example,
- supporting staff,
- addressing concerns appropriately,
- ensuring policy awareness,
- and responding to breaches fairly and promptly.

Senior Management & Board

Senior Management and the Board are responsible for:

- governance oversight,
- maintaining effective policies,
- supporting compliance,
- and promoting a positive organisational culture.

20. Training & Awareness

Employees will receive:

- induction,
- policy awareness,
- safeguarding training,



- professional boundaries guidance,
- confidentiality training,
- and other relevant instruction appropriate to their role.

Policies may be supported through:

- supervision,
- team meetings,
- refresher training,
- and ongoing governance processes.

21. Monitoring & Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- annually,
- following legislative changes,
- following serious incidents,
- or where improvements are identified.

Feedback from:

- employees,
- service users,
- management,
- safeguarding reviews,
- and governance processes
may inform future revisions.

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Approved by the Board of West Limerick Independent Living CLG on 9 October 2026.

Signed on behalf of the Board, on its instruction, by the General Manager:

Margaret O'Brien O'Connor, General Manager



Date signed: 09-10-2026

Records generated under this policy (for example, declarations of conflicts of interest or boundary concerns raised under Section 7) are retained in accordance with WLILP7D - Data Retention, Rectification and Erasure Policy, which is the single authoritative source for WLIL's retention periods.