

No. 084/26

23rd March 2026

Dear Colleague

Royal Mail: Business Standards 2026 - Revised Version

Branches are advised that Royal Mail is today publishing its revised Business Standards for 2026 which are attached.

Clearly, the Business Standards and especially the use of them for Conduct purposes by Royal Mail have been controversial. Indeed, our Branches & Representatives will be fully aware that during the 2022 dispute, the Royal Mail Business Standards were weaponised against our members and reps. This position culminated in the Lord Falconer Review, which exposed the actions of Royal Mail and its use of the Business Standards as a catch-all for charges of gross misconduct.

In the last year, we have been engaging with Royal Mail with the aim of ensuring the Business Standards are less focused on Conduct measures and considerably less threat-centred. To this end, we have been successful in convincing Royal Mail to remove numerous references to "Conduct" from the Business Standards, which we believed were unnecessary.

It should be noted that the Royal Mail Business Standards are not agreed by the union. That said, there has been genuine consultation with us, and we have had the opportunity to make suggestions to improve it and therefore influence the final version. Hence, there is considerably less reliance on the word "conduct". However, this doesn't mean it has been removed in its entirety; it is just back to the normal levels seen in earlier versions.

It follows that the company's Business Standards have been improved and are therefore now more acceptable to us in comparison to the previous version. However, they still remain Royal Mail's Business Standards and are not agreed with the union.

One particularly positive aspect of the new Business Standards appears on Page 8 under the sub-heading "Trade union activities and industrial action". The wording overleaf is far superior to the language in the previous version:

"We support your right to join one of our recognised trade unions, the CWU and Unite/CMA, with whom we have worked for over a century"

The Postal Executive, when considering these developments, felt that it was important that our Branches & Representatives were fully aware that the union has been engaging with management on these critical aspects of the new Business Standards, as no doubt local managers will at times reference them. It is therefore important that our activists are knowledgeable about these matters and can reference the document when needed.

Any queries in relation to this LTB should be directed to Samantha Nicholas at snicholas@cwu.org

Yours sincerely

Andy Furey
Assistant Secretary



Our Business Standards

An employee's guide



We deliver
M♡RE

What are Our Business Standards?

Our Business Standards describe the behaviours we expect from employees at Royal Mail Group. They ensure we comply with the law and treat those around us in the right way.

Our Business Standards help us to achieve the best possible standard of service - for our customers, for the communities we serve and for Royal Mail Group.

Whether you work for Royal Mail directly or in any other capacity, you are expected to uphold the standards in this booklet and comply with the policies that apply to your role.

We deliver
M♥RE

Our expectations

We're all responsible for making Royal Mail Group the best it can be.

This means being honest and respectful, ensuring our customers receive great service and taking responsibility for the environment around us.



Your personal commitment

We expect everyone to follow Our Business Standards.

We trust you to do the right thing and seek support if you're unsure. If you see behaviour that is not in line with Our Business Standards, report this to your manager or use the Raising Concerns tile in the People App (accessible via Robin).

Our values

Our company values define who we are and how we do things. They light the way, shaping the decisions we make and how we do business.



Be Positive

We give it a go
We trust each other
We say thank you



Be Brilliant

We deliver great service
We do the little things well
We find a better way



Be Part of it

We listen to each other
We support each other
We appreciate diversity



Our expectations

At Royal Mail Group, we commit to looking after our people. In return, we expect our people to be the best they can be.



Royal Mail Group commits to:

- providing a safe, secure and healthy work environment
- treating everyone fairly and with respect
- protecting everyone from bullying and inappropriate behaviour
- supporting everyone to raise concerns
- operating within the law.

We expect everyone within the business to commit to:

- following Our Business Standards, policies and procedures
- acting with honesty and integrity
- respecting each other and our differences
- understanding what is expected of them and seeking guidance where appropriate
- doing the right thing and being accountable for their actions
- operating within the law.

! It's important that you understand Our Business Standards. If your behaviour falls short of these standards, you could be subject to action under the Conduct Procedure (up to and including dismissal).

Doing the right thing

For our customers, for each other and for Royal Mail

Making the right decision

You probably follow most of Our Business Standards without even thinking about it. We trust your good judgement to make the right decisions.

But you could find yourself in a situation where you're just not sure of the right thing to do.

If that happens, you should ask yourself:

- Is it legal?
- Does it feel right?
- Is it in line with Our Business Standards, policies and procedures?
- Will it reflect negatively on me or on Royal Mail Group?
- Would I be happy to defend my actions in public?



What to do if something doesn't feel right

If something doesn't feel right, we want you to feel comfortable and confident in raising your concerns.

If you're concerned about something you've seen or heard and you feel that it is not in line with Our Business Standards, values, policies or procedures, you should speak to your manager or raise your concern using the 'Raising Concerns' tile via the People App which you can access in Robin.

The 'Raising Concerns' tile will guide you in raising security, bullying, harassment and other work-related concerns. It will also help you raise anonymous concerns through Speak Up, our confidential and independent reporting helpline.

If you don't have access to the People App, [click here](#) for guidance on how to contact the relevant team directly.



Raising Concerns

If in doubt, Speak Up

Speak Up is our confidential and independent reporting helpline. It allows you to raise concerns, in confidence and anonymously if you wish, about wrongdoing, misconduct or dishonest, illegal or unethical behaviour.

You can use Speak Up to raise concerns that you might feel uncomfortable raising with your manager or that are not appropriate for our other helplines/processes (e.g. Security helpdesk, Raising Concerns Procedure).

Concerns that can be reported to Speak Up include suspected crimes such as fraud, bribery, misreporting, illegal activity, human rights abuses such as modern slavery, or regulations and practices that put people's health and safety at risk, or damage/risk damage to the environment. You can also raise concerns about harassment, including sexual harassment.

The Speak Up policy describes how to raise concerns about wrongdoing in the right way and without fear of retaliation. Every report is taken seriously and treated confidentially and fairly.



Speak Up: In confidence, with confidence

By speaking up, you can improve how things are done at Royal Mail Group, making it a better place to work for you and your colleagues.

We want to hear from you.



For more information, see the Speak Up Policy.



To raise Speak Up concerns, go to the Raising Concerns tile in the People App via Robin.

If you don't have access to Robin, please [click here](#) for Speak Up contact details.

Contents

Doing the right thing for our customers

Behaviour and appearance.....	08
Security, privacy and trust.....	09
Preventing and reporting crime.....	11
Data protection & cyber security.....	12
Responsible business.....	15
Modern slavery	18

Doing the right thing for each other

Health and safety.....	20
Working with colleagues.....	21
Managers' duty of care	23
Diversity, equity and inclusion.....	24
Social media, photography and filming.....	26

Doing the right thing for Royal Mail Group

Conflicts of interest.....	29
Bribery and money laundering.....	30
Gifts, hospitality, sponsorship and donations	31
Use of company funds and property.....	33
Commercial behaviour and regulation.....	34
Dealing fairly with suppliers and customers.....	36
Tax evasion (including VAT fraud).....	37

Doing the right thing for our customers

Everything we do at Royal Mail Group is driven by our customers. We provide a unique Universal Service that reaches the heart of every community, and it's our responsibility to deliver this service to the standard expected. By focusing on quality and reliability, we help individuals and organisations stay connected and make a real difference every day.

We each have an important part to play in delivering our customer promise. From keeping the mail safe and providing timely and reliable services nationwide, to playing our part in protecting the environment and our communities; together we can go the extra mile for our customers. Your role in this is vital.

Behaviour and appearance	08
Security, privacy and trust.....	09
Preventing and reporting crime.....	11
Data protection and cyber security.....	12
Responsible business.....	15
Modern slavery.....	18



Behaviour and appearance

It's more than just a shirt and badge

Our expectations

We are all ambassadors of Royal Mail Group. As such, we expect high standards of behaviour at work.

We should all demonstrate the following:

- a smart and clean appearance
- punctuality and good attendance
- honesty
- integrity and confidentiality when handling customers and colleague data
- efficiency and reliability.

Behaviour

Our business reputation is built on how we behave. We will not tolerate behaviour at work that negatively impacts our service to customers, our colleagues, our reputation or that breaks the law. This includes:

- lateness or poor attendance
- abusive language
- violent or disorderly behaviour
- possessing, selling and/or using alcohol or illegal or psychoactive substances (legal highs)
- gambling.

Trade union activities and industrial action

We support your right to join one of our recognised trade unions, the CWU and Unite/CMA, with whom we have worked for over a century.

Trade union recognition brings many benefits to the company, including well established procedures to manage disagreements. We encourage our managers and union representatives to work together within those procedures to ensure we deliver for our customers.

We are all committed to avoiding industrial action. Where it does take place it must be conducted lawfully. You need to be aware that participating in unballoted industrial action falls short of the standards we expect in our business.

Appearance

Having a smart, clean appearance is important as we all represent Royal Mail Group. You must always ensure you wear the correct and appropriate uniform for your role and based on the conditions in which you are working (e.g. weather).

While at work, please do not wear or display any of the following if they might cause offense to others, pose a health and safety risk or are otherwise incompatible with Our Business Standards:

- non-permanent marks (e.g. temporary tattoos)
- badges, ribbons, jewellery
- memorabilia or symbols
- tattoos or ornaments (including items used in body piercing).



If you are unsure or have any questions about our standards on behaviour or appearance, speak with your manager or see the Uniform Factsheet on Robin by clicking here.

PREVIOUS PAGE



NEXT PAGE



Security, privacy and trust

Security is our priority and everyone's responsibility

Millions of items are entrusted to us by our customers every day. We must always act with honesty and integrity to ensure that this trust remains strong. This means that each of us should:

- display an authorised Royal Mail Group photo ID at all times when on business premises and be prepared to politely challenge anyone not wearing identification
- protect any confidential information we handle from being compromised or disclosed without authority, and protect personal information in line with the UK data protection laws
- handle, with honesty, all items, mail, data, cash and valuables that are entrusted to us
- keep customer property and assets safe from theft, abuse or damage
- not take or use company funds and property, including Royal Mail Group prepaid envelopes, for our personal use
- report anyone who misuses company property or goods that are entrusted to us
- report suspicious items of mail and addresses which might have connections with fraud, illegal drug supply or other criminal offences
- never be involved in the supply, distribution or facilitation of illegal drugs
- be honest in any financial transactions and claims, and follow business-control procedures wherever appropriate
- accurately report business performance measures
- use company premises and facilities only for authorised business.



As a regulated postal operator, Royal Mail Group has a legal obligation to protect the mail and keep it and customer information secure.



Security, privacy and trust (continued)

Protecting the mail

We must minimise the risk of loss, theft, damage or interference with the mail by ensuring that each of us:

- understands and follows the security standards and procedures we use to keep the mail secure
- reports and records any incidents of loss, theft, damage, interference or suspicious activity we have witnessed or been made aware of.

Operational Security Standards

These are the standards for us to follow as a business. We must:

- not leave customers' parcels and letters unattended or unsecured at any time
- have an appropriate level of security awareness and training
- prevent unauthorised access to any of our sites
- give Special Delivery, tracked and high-risk parcels and letters appropriate protection
- use managerial checks effectively to protect all customers' parcels and letters
- provide the appropriate level of security at all times to all vehicles and equipment used to carry customers' parcels and letters
- never disclose the personal data of one customer to another.

Extracting personal mail

If you work in the operational pipeline, you may come into contact with personal mail addressed to you. There may be circumstances where you want to extract your personal mail.

If this is the case, you must follow this process:

- 1 You must make a request to a manager to extract your personal mail.
- 2 The manager must check that the item is addressed solely to you at your home address.
- 3 If the manager agrees that the item can be extracted, they must sign and date the item(s) to show the extraction has been authorised.
- 4 All relevant tracking systems must be updated as appropriate.

These rules apply to all employees except those employed by Parcelforce Worldwide, where the extraction of personal mail is prohibited.



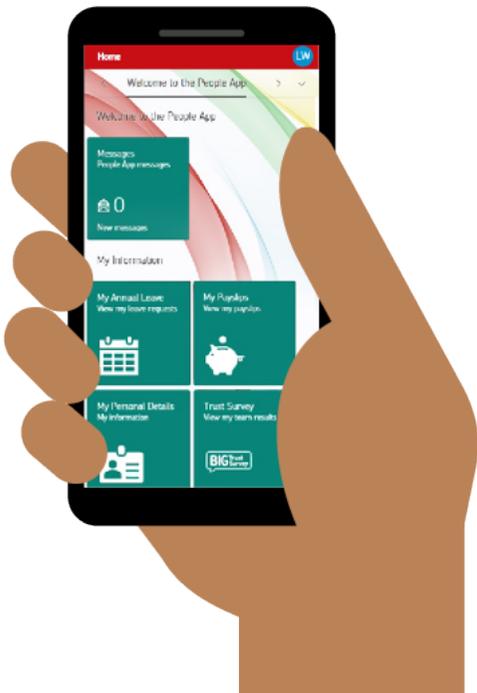
If you need further advice or guidance on Operational Security Standards, please [click here](#).



Preventing and reporting

See it, report it

As a business, it's our collective responsibility to uphold security and prevent criminal actions that could potentially harm our customers, colleagues, or company assets. This means challenging and reporting criminal behaviour and wrongdoing. We will always support you in reporting criminal acts.



What should you do if you witness a crime?

You must report it immediately, if you:

- see a crime or wrongdoing in preparation or planning
- see a crime being committed
- are asked or coerced into becoming involved or turning a blind eye

You can report crime via the Raising Concerns tile in the Royal Mail People App or the Security Helpdesk if you don't have access to the app. You can also raise security concerns anonymously via Speak Up.

Security incidents that must be reported include:

- theft, burglary, robbery
- fraud (either internally or by external parties), counterfeit stamps or scams
- dog attacks where serious injury has occurred
- violent crime or sexual offenses (including sexual harassment)
- malicious communications
- criminal damage, arson or graffiti
- illegal drugs offences

Reporting the facts via:

- the Raising Concerns tile via the People App in Robin



- the Security helpdesk
W: royalmail.com/all-eyes-on-security



- Speak Up
(if you want to report anonymously)
T: 0800 090 3154



Data protection and cyber security

Protect information online

As a Royal Mail Group employee, you are trusted to handle confidential and strictly confidential information on a daily basis. This includes information held electronically on our network and systems, as well as devices such as PDAs, mobile phones and computers.

Using these devices generates data which helps us run our business. This data may include information about our customers or Royal Mail Group employees. To find out more about the data we hold and why, see our People Privacy Notice.



YOUR actions matter in protecting data and preventing cyber crime.

We all need to play our part

- 1 **Be aware:** Understand how to protect the data and devices you handle as part of your role and how to report anything lost, stolen or at risk.
- 2 **Be vigilant:** Keep an eye out for phishing emails and ensure you report these via the tools provided in your email account. You should also report any suspected or actual security incidents and data breaches immediately to the IT helpdesk. This could include losing equipment, mistakenly sharing data with the wrong recipient, suspecting your password or PIN has been compromised, unusual device behaviour, or suspicious emails, instant messages, texts or phone calls.
- 3 **Act fast:** Report any information security issues to the IT Helpdesk on 0345 608 2555 immediately. The sooner you report a problem, the sooner we can act to protect you, your colleagues, our customers and our business.



Data protection and cyber security (continued)

Know the rules

You are responsible for the information and equipment in your possession and must be sure to protect all data and devices in line with our Acceptable Use Policy at all times.

You must:

- protect confidential and strictly confidential information in line with our policies and standards
- protect Royal Mail Group's data and devices and report any issues to the IT helpdesk on 0345 608 2555
- use strong, unique, secret passwords to access Royal Mail Group systems and technology
- only use Royal Mail Group approved tools and systems and only download approved software from Royal Mail Group technology
- protect personal data, keep it confidential and consult the Data Protection Office (DPO) team if you have any questions or are involved in a project that uses personal data.

You must not:

- leave IT equipment unattended, unlocked or insecure at any time
- share your log-in details and passwords or use someone else's
- use personal data for a new purpose without approval from the DPO team
- share colleague or customer personal data or any Royal Mail Group information with others not authorised to receive it
- download or modify our software unless you have authorisation to do so
- access, store, send or post online anything unlawful, indecent, pornographic, abusive or threatening to others
- use Royal Mail Group systems to do anything that is unlawful or that breaks any of Our Business Standards.

Securing our Operational Technology

Operational Technology systems keep Royal Mail running - from sorting machines and conveyor belts to scanners, automated vehicles, and yard management systems.

Watch this video to understand more about how a cyber attack on these systems could stop mail and parcels moving through our network, disrupt services for customers, and put our people's safety at risk.



Think Secure for more help and advice

Think Secure is our internal cyber security and data protection awareness programme. It provides support and guidance on key topics including:

- handling information (physical and digital) safely and securely
- protecting personal data
- using social media responsibly
- creating strong passwords
- cyber crime awareness
- reporting information security risks and incidents.

Find out more about Think Secure [here](#) on our dedicated Robin space.



Artificial intelligence at Royal Mail: smart, safe, responsible

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to computer systems that can perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence - such as understanding language, recognising patterns, making decisions, or learning from experience. These systems use data and algorithms to support our work but always require human oversight.

AI helps us work smarter - but only if we use it responsibly.

At Royal Mail we're proudly adopting this technology in a responsible and secure way; recognising the power it has to radically enhance our business and make it more efficient.

Microsoft Copilot Chat is the only AI tool approved for work-related tasks to keep our data safe and the one protected by our corporate licence, so make sure you use it instead of public platforms.

When using AI, we expect all colleagues to:

- Follow our rules – Always comply with policies and law
- Keep work on work devices – No personal accounts or devices
- Stay in control – AI supports decisions; it doesn't replace them
- Be transparent – Explainable and auditable decisions
- Protect our data – Keep systems secure



For further information, [click here](#) to read our AI policy.



Responsible business

Caring for our communities and our planet

Royal Mail is committed to being a sustainable business and bringing about changes that benefit our customers, colleagues and the communities we serve.

This means being an active, valued and trusted part of every community, through national employment opportunities, community investments and the services we provide.

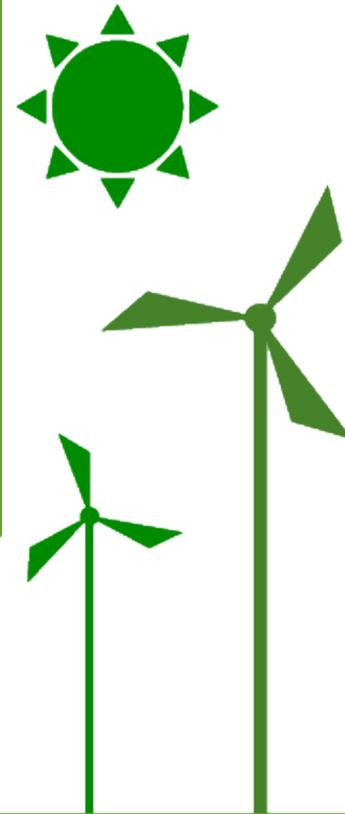
Our goal is to become a Net-Zero business by 2040, which is an ambition we share with many of our largest customers and competitors.

We will achieve this through:

- 1 Zero emission deliveries:**
Optimising on-foot delivery methods whilst electrifying our delivery vehicles.
- 2 Zero emission operations:**
Redesigning an efficient, parcels-focused network that uses low-carbon transport and drives energy efficiency in our buildings.
- 3 Making circular happen:**
Transforming our operations by reducing waste and designing more sustainable customer products.



You can find more information on how we are progressing against our environment strategy [here](#).



Sustainable impact

We're making great progress against our environmental goals, but we still need everybody's help to make a difference. Here are small actions you can take at work that can have a big impact on how we operate.

Responsible energy consumption:

- turn off lights when not in use
- don't interfere with remotely controlled heating systems (but it might be appropriate to turn down/off locally controlled systems)
 - report issues with heating controls to the National Service Centre
- turn off electronic devices and equipment after use
- use the most energy-efficient mode settings on your electronic devices and equipment, for example, use the hibernation feature on computers and laptops
- make sure bay doors and curtains are shut when not in use
- turn off vehicle engines when not in use
- don't over-accelerate or break harshly
- drive efficiently, using the correct gears
- keep tyres at the correct pressure
- use public transport as much as possible and reduce the use of private cars and flights for business travel
- share car journeys with colleagues where possible for business trips and to work
- cut down on business travel: use conference calls and virtual meetings where possible.



Recycle and reuse:

- only purchase/use what is needed and reuse items where possible
- separate waste using the correct waste bins
- don't drop rubber bands while on delivery - collect and reuse them
- collect and reuse York card labels
- where appropriate return used cardboard to larger Mail Centres (MCs) or Regional Distribution Centres (RDCs) where balers are used to increase cardboard recycling
- print only when necessary, always on both sides of a page
- use hand driers instead of paper towels
- use a mug or reusable bottle instead of a disposable cup (Uniform Team can supply water bottles)
- avoid using disposable cutlery, plates and bowls.

Conserving water:

- turn off taps after use
- report any leaks to your manager as soon as possible (even if it's just a dripping tap), so that it can be reported to the National Service Centre.



Sustainable impact (continued)

Supporting our communities

We encourage you to play an active role in your communities through fundraising and volunteering.

Whether you raise funds for our national charity partner, donate through payroll giving or give your time to volunteer for a good cause.

[Visit Robin](#) for all the latest information on our community programmes or email the team at community@royalmail.com.



British Heart Foundation

Our national charity partner is British Heart Foundation. Together we're working to protect heart health and save lives in our communities. You can get involved in our partnership by organising a fundraiser, taking on a challenge, learning CPR or finding out more about supporting your heart health. [Click here to find out more.](#)



Matched Giving and Payroll Giving

Every member of staff employed by Royal Mail can apply once a year for up to £200 in matched giving for money raised for any registered UK charity or registered good cause. You can also donate to causes you care about through your pay. It's a simple and tax-effective way to give.

[Get started on Robin.](#)



Rowland Hill Fund

The Rowland Hill Fund is a charity for postal people, offering support to colleagues, pensioners and their families at times of great need.

[Click here to find out more.](#)



Postal Family Fund

The Postal Family Fund has been supporting postal families for over 150 years with financial support packages in times of hardship. From university and apprenticeship bursaries to family support grants, the charity ensures the children of postal workers have opportunities to thrive. [Find out more.](#)



Modern slavery

As a business, Royal Mail Group is committed to ensuring that modern slavery and human trafficking are not taking place in our organisation or our supply chains.

As individuals, we work closely with local communities and are in a unique position to look out for possible warning signs of modern slavery.



Contact Speak Up via the Raising Concerns tile in Robin or [click here](#) for contact details.

Contact Speak Up if, in the course of your work, you notice someone displaying any of the following modern slavery warning signs:

- being fearful or unwilling to engage with you
- having no official means of identification or having suspicious looking documents
- wearing the same clothes every day or wearing unsuitable clothes for the weather
- having old or untreated injuries or appearing in poor health or malnourished
- appearing withdrawn or frightened
- seeming afraid of you helping them or contacting the authorities.



For more information, see our [Modern Slavery Act statement](#)



Doing the right thing for each other

Our people are what make us special at Royal Mail Group.

From keeping each other safe, to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace culture where everyone feels that they are valued and belong - we all have a responsibility to create a positive working environment for everyone.

Health and safety	20
Working with colleagues	21
Managers' duty of care	23
Diversity, equity and inclusion	24
Social media, photography and filming	26



Health and safety

Everyone goes home safe, every day

To protect yourself and others at work, you must:

- Be familiar with, and understand the health and safety responsibilities relevant to your role
- Keep your workplace in a safe and tidy condition and set a good example to colleagues
- Work in accordance with the training, instruction and information you've been given
- Intervene in a polite manner where necessary to maintain a safe workplace and respect those who step in to help you
- Stay alert to changes in your work environment, report hazards and participate in risk assessment processes where required
- Follow the safe systems of work, standards and procedures designed to protect you and others from harm
- Only carry out tasks if you've been trained or authorised to do so – ask if you are unsure
- Always wear PPE provided for your role and report any defects immediately
- Report incidents, near misses and injuries to your manager straight away so that they can be investigated where required to prevent a reoccurrence
- Declare any health condition, symptoms, or medication that may impact your ability to perform your role safely or effectively or may pose risks to you or others.



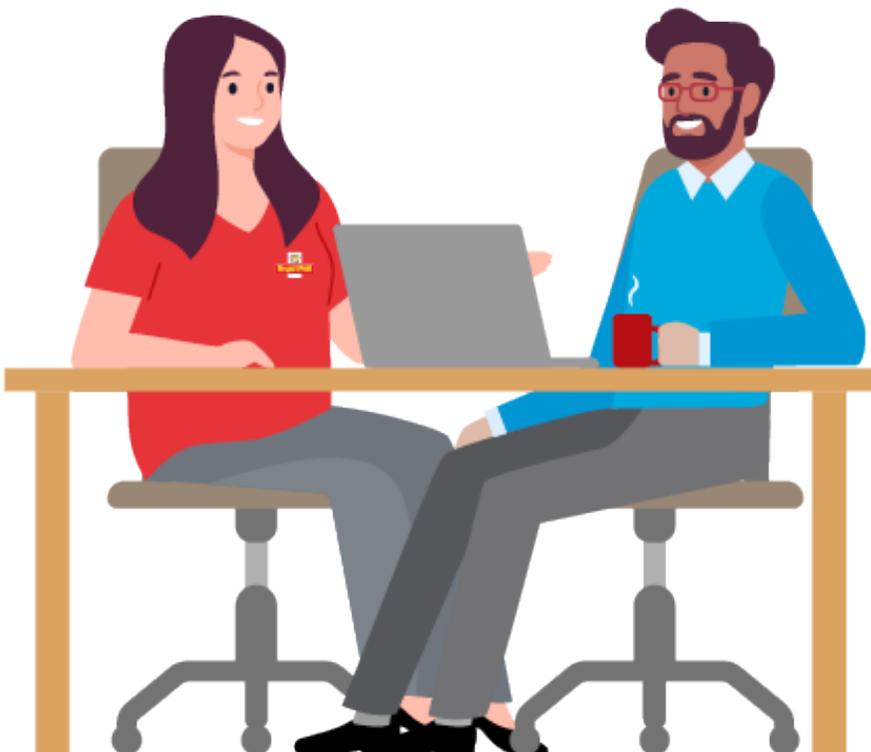
Example: A manager notices a driver get into a vehicle and drive off without completing their daily vehicle check. The manager counsels the employee and reminds them of the importance of daily vehicle checks if driving on company business to keep themselves and other road users safe.



Working with colleagues

Treating each other with respect

We expect our people to behave in line with Our Business Standards and company values at all times. This means treating those around us - colleagues, customers, members of the public - with politeness and respect.



You must:

- challenge any instances of bullying, intimidation, harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination or abusive behaviour and show that it is not acceptable in our business
- be mindful when posting on social media - online content is seen by more people over a longer period of time
- always keep personal data confidential.

You must not:

- take part in, encourage or condone bullying, intimidation, harassment, discrimination or abuse of any kind
- behave in any way that suggests prejudice or favouritism
- exploit colleagues for loans, private work or favours of any kind
- retaliate against any colleague who reports wrongdoing.



Working with colleagues (continued)

Examples of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour

(This list is not exhaustive)

Acceptable behaviour:

- working collaboratively with colleagues
- communicating in a respectful manner
- understanding other people's perspectives to resolve disagreements
- giving and receiving constructive feedback
- being asked to carry out a task in the workplace related to your role
- taking appropriate action to address behaviour or performance that is not in line with our standards or using the relevant procedure (e.g. attendance, performance, conduct).



Unacceptable behaviour:

- displaying aggressive or abusive behaviour such as shouting or personal insults
- spreading malicious rumours or gossip
- offensive comments or body language
- displaying pictures with sexual or racial undertones, or nuances that may be derogatory or discriminatory in any way
- making jokes and banter of a derogatory nature
- unwanted touching, sexual advances or gestures of a sexual nature
- sharing personal details of team members
- using social media (either Royal Mail Group or personal) to display any of the above behaviours.



Managers' duty of care

Leading by example

If you are a manager, you set an example to those around you. Lead as you expect others to follow.



Managers must:

- show initiative and commitment – leading by example to encourage others to do the same
- manage and support employees appropriately, treating others in line with Our Business Standards and values
- develop a team culture that encourages integrity, inclusion and speaking up
- evaluate and manage performance in a fair & equitable manner
- maintain good records and protect employee personal data
- consider commercial implications and other risks as part of your decision making
- put the interests of Royal Mail Group as a whole above those of any specific part of the business
- use company funds as though they were your own, avoiding costs that don't add value to our core business activities or benefit our customers
- behave responsibly and lawfully, avoiding exposing yourself or the company to legal liability
- take all reasonable measures to record and protect essential information and maintain business continuity.

Managers must not:

- turn a blind eye when something isn't right
- fail to act when a concern is raised
- ignore breaches of Our Business Standards, policies or procedures
- bully, harass, intimidate or discriminate against others
- share personal data
- condone any of the above through their actions.

Example: A manager often offers overtime to one of their team members ahead of everyone else. This is showing favouritism to that person and not treating all employees fairly and equally. By doing this, the manager isn't living up to the standards of behaviour we expect or demonstrating the company values at work.

Diversity, equity and inclusion

One Royal Mail, a place where everyone belongs

Everyone is expected to take personal responsibility for putting these principles into practice and setting an example in the workplace

Royal Mail Group is committed to creating a work environment that is inclusive, free from discrimination, victimisation, bullying and harassment, where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect and feel like they belong.

Our workforce is diverse, and inclusion is about treating each other with respect and consideration, and valuing the differences and contributions of all. It is about creating a safe and positive environment where each of us feels comfortable bringing our 'whole self' to work.



This means:

- always being respectful and polite with each other
- working together to create an inclusive working environment for all
- not discriminating for any reason or based on any characteristic such as race, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, disability, marital or civil partner status, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, age, religion or belief (including political opinion in Northern Ireland), sex or gender reassignment
- encouraging a workplace that promotes equity for everyone, based on performance, skills and development needs in a fair and open way
- making reasonable adjustments to ensure colleagues with disabilities or physical or mental health conditions are not substantially disadvantaged when doing their jobs
- not discriminating against those with family commitments outside work; everyone has the right to a family life.

Diversity, equity and inclusion (continued)

We will investigate all formal complaints and take the appropriate action if any employee is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment.

Victimisation is unlawful and you will not be subject to less favourable treatment if you raise a concern about behaviour that amounts to harassment.

It is your responsibility to:

- follow the principles of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion statement
- not discriminate against, intimidate or behave inappropriately towards others or encourage anyone else to do so, including microaggression and similar indirect action.

You must not:

- retaliate against someone who reports a concern in good faith
- deliberately make false or fictitious complaints against someone.

Conflicting religious or political beliefs

We have a responsibility to deliver professionally and impartially to every one of our customers. This means respecting the views and beliefs of others as well as ensuring that our own beliefs and opinions don't cause offence.

As part of your role, you might come across people who hold different religious or political views to your own, or you might be asked to handle items that conflict with your personal beliefs (e.g. food products or alcohol). Our role is not to support or oppose these messages or beliefs; it is to deliver them impartially to the intended recipients.

It is important to recognise that refusing to deliver mail based on personal beliefs undermines the fundamental principle of our service. Furthermore, we have a legal obligation to deliver electoral material which is externally vetted before entering our network.

We aim to strike a balance between the needs of our people and the commercial needs of our business. You must speak with your manager if, in exceptional circumstances, you believe that you are not able to fulfil your role due to your personal beliefs.

! If you have a concern about how you or others are being treated at work, we want you to bring it to our attention so we can support you in the right way.

See the [Raising Concerns](#) section [here](#) to find out more.



Social media, photography and filming

Posting and sharing with care

It is particularly important to think before you post anything online, whether on internal platforms or your personal social media accounts.

Unlike saying it in person, online content can be widely seen and for a long period of time. Once something is posted online publicly, it can be hard to remove it from the Internet.



Internal communication tools

We encourage colleagues to use our internal communication tools to share news, keep up to date with business information, exchange ideas and celebrate success. When doing so, all colleagues are expected to adhere to the following standards.

You must:

- be respectful and mindful that writing or posting on social media can be even more hurtful or offensive than saying it in person
- follow the terms of use for any internal communications platform
- understand our expectations regarding social media use - refer to our **Social Media Factsheet** for further information

You must not:

- be abusive, engage in bullying or discriminating behaviour or undermine others when posting online
- share colleague or customer information
- post comments on behalf of colleagues
- post photos or videos of colleagues without their permission.

Posts and comments are reviewed on a regular basis. If you find a post or comment on our internal platforms offensive or inappropriate, you can use the 'report content' functionality.

! For more information, read our **Acceptable Use Policy** on Robin by [clicking here](#).



Social media, photography and filming (continued)

External social media

You must never share Royal Mail Group business, colleague or customer information on public-facing social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook or TikTok etc. This includes photos and videos.

If information becomes available that shouldn't be in the public domain, our reputation and customer trust can be quickly damaged. Be particularly careful about posting images that include Royal Mail Group uniforms or show someone apparently representing the brand.

You must not:

- post, publish or upload any non-approved Royal Mail Group content to external sites
- upload or post anything online on behalf of Royal Mail Group, unless it's part of your job.

Your manager may ask you to remove posts that do not meet these standards.

Photography and filming

If you film, photograph or otherwise record our business operations anywhere, including at any Royal Mail Group site (whether or not you post this content online), this could place the security and privacy of information (including customer and colleague information) as well as our business at risk.

If you are considering filming, recording or taking photographs at work, always ask yourself:

- Is it necessary?
- Is it appropriate?
- Could it affect the reputation of the business?
- Could it be considered a security or data breach?
- Do you have the permission of anyone who will be filmed/recorded/photographed?

You must:

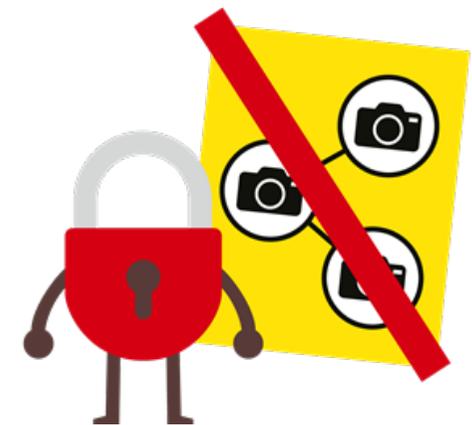
- obtain permission from all the relevant parties (e.g. colleagues, your manager) before you film, record or take photographs on our premises or in our vehicles.

You must not:

- film or distribute materials, either internally or externally, which could harm our commercial reputation or cause offence to colleagues
- distribute or upload images, photographs or film clips on any external sites or social media that have been taken inside a Royal Mail Group site or in our vehicles.



Remember: Even if work topics are discussed or shared on private social media platforms (e.g. WhatsApp groups), we still expect all employees to act in accordance with Our Business Standards.



Doing the right thing for Royal Mail Group

Royal Mail Group is in a unique position with over 500 years of history and a remit to serve the nation.

This position comes with responsibility to meet the obligations imposed by our regulator, to operate ethically and to stay within the law. Not everything in this section will apply to every employee, but it's important to understand the rules that govern our business behaviour.

Conflicts of interest	29
Bribery and money laundering.....	30
Gifts, hospitality, sponsorship and donations	31
Use of company funds and property	33
Commercial behaviour and regulation	34
Dealing fairly with suppliers and customers	36
Tax evasion (including VAT fraud).....	37



Conflicts of interest

Maintaining transparency and integrity

A conflict of interest may arise where your personal interests don't match those of Royal Mail Group. This may affect your judgement and your ability to act in the best interests of the business.

Conflicts of interest are common in business and don't mean you have done anything wrong. However, failing to declare a conflict could cause your judgement and business decisions to come into question. This can result in significant reputational damage and a loss of trust in the business.

Example: An employee's son is about to transfer to the office where the employee works as a manager. Even though the employee would not be their son's manager, they know they should tell their own line manager that their son is coming to work at the same office, and submit a declaration to Royal Mail Compliance & Ethics.

To ensure you are acting ethically and transparently, you must:

- ✓ declare any personal relationships with another employee or person connected to Royal Mail
- ✓ declare any interests or investments (such as shareholdings) in suppliers, customers, or competitors of Royal Mail Group
- ✓ declare any outside employment held by you or someone with whom you have a personal relationship
- ✓ report to your manager any fee you receive from an outside source for carrying out a service that forms part of your role or takes place in business time (e.g. giving an interview or lecture).

You must not:

- ✗ allow your responsibilities, relationships and interests outside of work to influence your business decisions
- ✗ use your official position to gain any personal advantage
- ✗ work for, receive payment from or advertise any organisation which is in competition with Royal Mail Group or is involved in activities that could damage our reputation, including any personal sponsorship

- ✗ allow your actions as an employee or agent to be improperly influenced by any relationship (e.g. by blood, marriage, partnership or being a member of any social, religious or political association) or by any personal or financial consideration
- ✗ work in a role where you could be supervised by or required to supervise someone to whom you are related (by blood, marriage or partnership) or have a personal relationship with
- ✗ be involved in managing relationships with outside vendors, suppliers or other third parties if you have an employment relationship with them, a significant financial interest in them or a close associate who is involved with them (e.g. they are a director of the third party).

You must declare all potential or actual conflicts of interest in writing to your manager and Royal Mail Compliance & Ethics.

To do this:

- Complete the Declaration of Interests form on the Compliance hub - [click here](#) - a copy will be sent to your line manager.
- If you can't access the hub, please contact **RM Compliance**.

For more information, see the [Ethical Business Conduct policy](#) or visit our dedicated space on Robin.

Bribery and money laundering

Doing business by the book

Bribery and corruption are illegal and expose our business and employees to the risk of prosecution, fines, exclusion from tendering for business and other penalties. We have a 'zero tolerance' policy on bribery.



For more information, see our [Ethical Business Conduct policy](#)

What is bribery?

Bribery is promising, offering, giving, asking for or accepting any advantage to encourage or reward behaviour that is improper (in other words, it is illegal, dishonest or involves breaking a duty). This can be direct or through a third party. Even if the recipient turns down a bribe or it doesn't have the intended effect, a bribe has still been offered and this is illegal.

The advantage involved may be financial or nonfinancial and could be anything that has value for the person being offered the bribe or someone connected to them (such as a relative or friend). An advantage may be money, loans, donations (including charitable donations), an award of business, job offers, preferential treatment, a holiday or gifts and hospitality.

You must neither promise, offer or give a bribe, nor must you ask for or accept one.

Example: An employee has been offered money to make sure a customer's mail is delivered first in the morning. They know that accepting this offer means breaking our policy on bribery and potentially breaking the law. The employee does the right thing – they refuse the offer and report it to their manager.

What is money laundering?

Money laundering is the process whereby money generated by criminal activity, like drug trafficking, appears to have come from a legitimate source (usually because someone has falsified accounts).

Money laundering is illegal and so are the activities it tries to hide.

! You must never engage in or help anyone else to engage in money laundering or terrorist financing.

If you know or suspect that bribery, money laundering or terrorist financing is taking place, you should speak with your manager as soon as possible and contact [RM Compliance](#) or the confidential [Speak Up helpline](#).

Gifts, hospitality, sponsorship and donations

Take care – and declare

Offering or accepting gifts, hospitality, sponsorship or donations (GHSD) to encourage or reward improper behaviour may be considered a bribe.

To ensure you stay on the right side of the law, you must:

- register (in advance where possible):
 - all GHSD with a value above £50
 - anything, regardless of value, offered to or received from a public official
- inform Royal Mail Compliance & Ethics immediately if you (or your partner or relative) are offered any GHSD (including tips) and the person giving it suggests that they expect something in return.

Click here to access the GHSD register.

If you cannot access the register, please ask your manager for support.

Example: An employee is in a tendering process to set up a new supplier for employee uniforms. During the tender process, the supplier offers the Royal Mail Group employee tickets to a concert. The employee refuses the tickets and reports the offer using the GHSD register to confirm that he has declined the tickets, protecting both himself and our business.

You must not:

- ask for GHSD from any individual or organisation we deal with
- offer or accept GHSD to influence a decision or to conceal a bribe
- offer or accept any gift of cash, or cash equivalents such as shares, gift cards or vouchers (this does not include Christmas tips from customers to front-line employees)
- offer or accept any GHSD (other than simple refreshments provided at a meeting) if you're involved in tendering or negotiations of a contract or bid for work, during the period of the tender, bid or negotiation.



For more information, see our [Ethical Business Conduct policy and guidance on Gifts, Hospitality, Sponsorship and Donations.](#)



Gifts, hospitality, sponsorship and donations (continued)

Christmas and religious festival gifts Political donations and impartiality

We know all our people do an important job which is appreciated by our customers – especially at Christmas. We believe that you deserve the recognition you get from the public. For this reason, we treat the giving of Christmas tips and gifts for other religious festivals as a private matter between customers and individual employees.

Just remember, you should not accept a tip if there is any suggestion that it is meant to encourage you to:

- do something inappropriate
- reveal official information or information about another customer
- break any company rule
- provide preferential treatment.

Accepting or asking for a tip in these circumstances would be considered breaking the law.



As a company, we must not make political donations of any kind. The interests of our company and our customers must not be compromised by any interest or activity in a political party.

As an individual, you are entitled to vote and take part in the political process, including representing a political party if you wish, but this must be in your own time and using your own resources. Political activity (this includes supporting political parties, pressure groups and other causes) is not allowed at work.

This means you must not:

- offer company support or contributions (e.g. free use of company premises) for any political party or organisation linked with a political party
- sponsor or book events through any political party or organisation linked with a political party
- use company funds or resources to try to advance our business' interests by making payments to governments or officials
- display badges, slogans or notices advertising political parties or causes while on duty, in uniform or on our premises
- distribute or deliver unauthorised material while you are at work or in uniform or allow anyone else to use business services free of charge for this purpose.

You must:

- ensure that electoral material – which by law we have to deliver – is treated correctly, in the same respect as other mail.

For more information see our [Ethical Business Conduct policy](#) and our [Gifts, Hospitality, Sponsorship and Donations guidance](#).

Use of company funds and property

Keeping payments and expenses above board

We expect employees to protect Royal Mail Group property and assets.

This means that you should not use these for your personal benefit or the benefit of anyone other than the company.

We expect you to follow our policies and procedures and use our resources economically, avoiding waste and extravagance.

Example: An employee claims expenses for their travel when they drive to other offices. They often add a few extra miles to their form so they can claim more money. This is fraud and will be investigated under the Conduct Procedure. The employee could be prosecuted.

You must not:

- claim money from the company for hours you did not work
- claim money for a journey you did not make
- claim an expense you did not legitimately have to pay
- use inside information about a company transaction for personal profit.

Note: You may be prosecuted if theft or fraud are involved.



Commercial behaviour and regulation

Ensuring we act ethically, professionally and lawfully

The only right way to compete with other businesses is by making sure that our business methods are always ethical, professional and legal.



The regulatory framework

We operate under a regulatory regime, overseen by Ofcom (our regulator) which sets out our responsibilities as the Universal Service Provider (USP). One of our responsibilities is to provide access to our network (the USP Access Condition).

Under one of these conditions, USPA5, we must not discriminate against wholesale customers and their mail, and we must not share information gained as a result of providing wholesale services (wholesale information) with other parts of the business.

Everyone in Royal Mail Group needs to play a part to make sure we meet our regulatory requirements.

Competition law

We **must** comply with competition law rules at all times.

Both Ofcom and the Competition and Markets Authority have competition law powers and will take action against companies who act in a way that damages competition. For example, it's illegal for competitors to agree prices collectively with each other.

The golden rule is that we should decide our commercial policy independently from competitors and other businesses operating in the market.

Discussing our business arrangements with competitors (and even suppliers) runs the risk of breaking competition law.

We should all:

- be aware of and follow our Regulatory and Competition Law policies
- always act fairly when dealing with our wholesale customers
- only access wholesale information if you have been authorised in advance by Royal Mail Compliance and Ethics
- mark all wholesale information as 'strictly confidential' and 'USPA5 sensitive', and ensure it is stored appropriately
- know where to go for help – you can contact **Royal Mail Compliance and Ethics**.



For more information, visit our dedicated space on Robin

For more information, see our [Competition Law and USPA5 policies and guidance](#)



Commercial behaviour and regulation (continued)

Did you know?

Under competition law, if we are found to have significant market power, we will have extra responsibilities not to abuse that power by exploiting customers or unfairly excluding competitors from the market.

Failure to follow either the regulatory framework or competition law could have serious consequences for the business (such as fines and damage to our reputation) and for individuals (such as action taken under the Conduct Procedure or criminal charges for some offences).

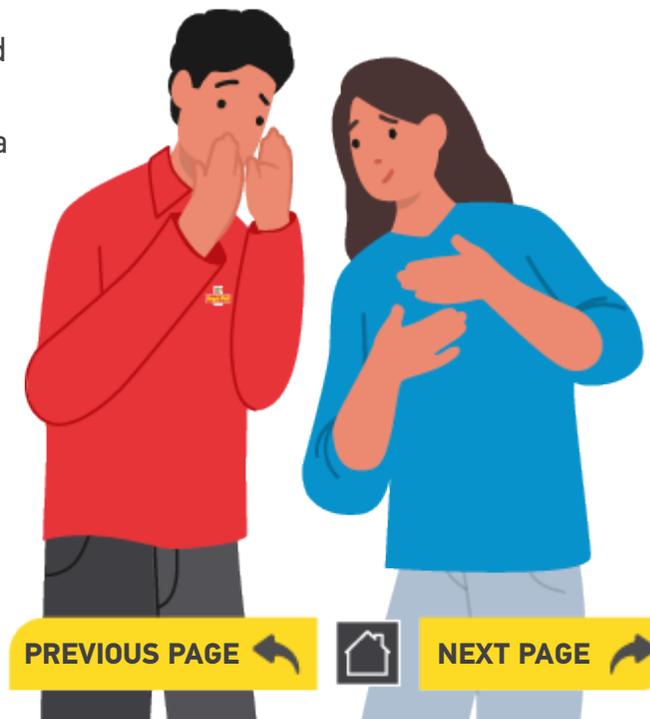
Example: An employee has been told some information about changes to Royal Mail Group's strategy. This information is very positive and exciting for Royal Mail Group and the employee wants to share it with an ex-colleague – someone they still see regularly and who now works for a competitor business. The employee must not share their information with the ex-colleague, even in an informal setting. It could be used by the competitor business to alter their own strategy and so could breach competition law.

You must:

- act fairly and in a non-discriminatory way in all dealings with our customers and suppliers
- only access wholesale information if you have been authorised to do so by Royal Mail Group Compliance and Ethics
- when attending a trade association, forum or event attended by competitors, ensure your attendance is approved in advance by registering the event on the industry events register [here](#)
- remember that you represent Royal Mail Group at any event you attend on behalf of the business.

You must not:

- discriminate against wholesale customers
- discuss confidential or commercially sensitive information outside of Royal Mail Group or when in public, nor should you accept this kind of information from competitors
- reveal confidential information on social media (this could be pricing, strategy or anything else that the public do not already have access to)
- enter into discussions or make any form of arrangements with competitors without first getting legal advice.



Dealing fairly with suppliers and customers

Cultivating relationships based on equity and trust

We aim to build trust and create positive relationships with our suppliers and customers through fair and consistent business dealing.

We achieve this by doing what we've said we'll do, meeting agreed timescales and delivering our services in full.

We expect employees involved in selecting suppliers and negotiating contracts to get the best value for the business and to set an example of competence and honesty.

When doing business for the company you must:

- have the proper authority before you negotiate or sign contracts
- keep to the relevant legal requirements, policies and standards, acting professionally during all customer interactions as the face of Royal Mail Group
- set prices and conditions in line with competition law, and our regulatory requirements and approval processes
- get timely advice from Royal Mail Legal if any non-standard form of contract is proposed and take no decision involving legal risk without their advice
- pay suppliers for goods and services within the agreed timescales and specifications, always ensuring a purchase order is raised unless there is an agreed exemption.

You must not:

- negotiate with suppliers or commit to third-party spending without Procurement approval – this ensures we get the best value and only deal with reputable vendors
- become involved in any business practice that might be reasonably judged improper, including 'cutting corners' by neglecting consultations or procedures – we need to conduct due diligence on supplier/third-party human rights records, tax compliance, sanctions compliance and general probity issues, including bribery risk.



Tax evasion (including VAT fraud)

Always pay what's due

Tax evasion is fraudulently evading or cheating a tax authority out of tax (including VAT) that is owed. It is a criminal offence.

If you deliberately and dishonestly help someone (e.g. a customer) evade tax anywhere in the world, Royal Mail Group could also be held criminally liable and subject to unlimited fines.

This can cause significant reputational and financial damage to our business.

Even turning a blind eye when you know tax evasion is happening could still count as helping someone commit tax evasion. As a business, we must have reasonable procedures in place to prevent tax evasion.

For more information, see our [Ethical Business Conduct policy](#)

To guard against becoming involved in tax evasion, you must:

- follow Royal Mail Group policies and procedures at all times
- be sceptical if a deal appears 'too good to be true', considering factors such as pricing, communication, experience and history
- report any knowledge or suspicion to Group Compliance and Ethics or through the Speak Up helpline.

You must not:

- help a customer, supplier or anyone else to evade tax
- turn a blind eye to what you might think might be tax evasion.

Example: A colleague in the sales team is trying to win business from a new customer who imports goods from the EU. The colleague advises the importer to under-declare the value of goods being imported to help reduce the customs and excise duties due, in return for securing their business. Royal Mail Group could be liable for the actions of this colleague, as they have deliberately helped the importer avoid tax.

VAT fraud

VAT fraud is a type of tax evasion. It can occur anywhere along a supply chain; not just by the person or business Royal Mail Group is immediately doing business with. It could involve our suppliers or our customers.

Royal Mail Group is legally required to have procedures in place to detect fraud in our supply chains. These procedures include, for example, checking that a VAT number and bank account details provided by a supplier are genuine and requiring our contractors to have appropriate checks in place with their own suppliers.

If you are found to be involved in VAT fraud:

- you could be prosecuted and so could Royal Mail Group
- in certain circumstances, a Royal Mail Group director or manager could also be penalised if they should have known about the fraud
- Royal Mail Group may take action under the Conduct Procedure.

Getting help

Your first point of support should normally be your manager.

You can access our People Policy, procedures and factsheets on Robin by [clicking here](#)

If managers require advice and support, they can call the **HR Contact Centre** on 0345 60 60 603 or the **Employee Relations Advisory Services (ERAS) team**.

Raising concerns

You can raise concerns by speaking with your manager or by using the **Raising Concerns** tile in the People App, accessible via Robin.

Additionally, below are contact details for the Speak Up and Security teams:

Speak Up

W: <https://www.safecall.co.uk/royalmailspeakup>



Security helpdesk

W: royalmail.com/all-eyes-on-security



Your Wellbeing

T: 0345 266 5060 (option 2)

W: Wellbeing Hub via Robin

Think Secure

E: ThinkSecure@royalmail.com

IT helpdesk

Contact the helpdesk immediately, if you detect suspicious activity on a device or suspect a data breach has occurred.

T: 0345 608 2555

Royal Mail Compliance & Ethics

E: RMCompliance@royalmail.com

ESG Team

E: esgteam@royalmail.com

Rowland Hill Fund

The charity for postal people, offering financial support to colleagues, pensioners and their families at their times of great need.

T: 0345 600 4586

E: Rhfhelpline@royalmail.com