



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESEARCH

Researching with the Western Australia Police Force

Duty | Teamwork | Integrity | Care

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESEARCH

PURPOSE

Research projects provide a valuable function for the Western Australia Police Force (the agency). They serve various purposes, including:

- Contributing to the body of knowledge on policing; *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2023*
- Critically evaluating policies, strategies and practices;
- Informing and shaping new policing policies, strategies and practices; and
- Finding solutions to existing and emerging issues which impact on policing

Research has the potential to greatly benefit policing practice, but also involves a number of risks that must be appropriately managed. The purpose of this document and the overarching WA Police Force Research Governance Framework, is for the protection of the participants, the researcher and the agency. This document should be read in conjunction with the WA Police Force – *Research Information and Guidelines*.

INTRODUCTION

The [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2023](#) (“the National Statement”), sets the standard for research within Australia and is used to underpin this document. The statement Outlines:

- Section 1: Values and principles of ethical conduct;
- Section 2: Themes in research ethics: risk and benefit, consent;
- Section 3: Ethical considerations in the design, development, review and conduct of research;
- Section 4: Ethical considerations specific to participants; and
- Section 5: Research governance and ethics review.

The conduct of research with the WA Police Force, must comply with the guidelines provided by *the National Statement* and researchers, undertaking research with the agency should familiarise themselves with this document. The agency, researchers and universities all share the responsibility of ensuring the safety of those involved in the research and that the research conforms to *the National Statement*.

Cultural Sensitivity

Research conducted in the WA Police Force must acknowledge the cultural and social protocols of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and individuals from other culturally and socially diverse communities. Research must consider State and Commonwealth Acts, as well as National Standards such as, the Guidelines for [Ethical Conduct in Research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Communities](#).

Vetting

A current Working with Children Check must be held by all researchers, who intend to have any direct contact with children or young people. A current National Police clearance (issued within the last 12 months), may be required for researchers or staff associated with a project, as determined by the WA Police Force.

Research Design

The design and methodology of the research must be scientifically sound, consider the WA Police Force policies, strategies and supporting legislation and be conducted in a manner, that ensures all reasonably practicable steps have been taken to protect the safety and health of researchers, WA Police Force personnel and participants.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESEARCH

Ethics and Informed Consent

The WA Police Force is to be supplied with ethics approval obtained via an accredited Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). Informed consent should be sought in all cases, where it is practicable and be documented by the researcher. Obtaining consent from a participant, shows that their involvement is voluntary and they possess sufficient knowledge and understanding of the research objectives and risks or implications of participation.

Research must adhere to guidelines for consent in accordance with Chapter 2 of *the National Statement*, except in special circumstances, where the conditions for consent have been waived (see Chapter 2.3 of *the National Statement*).

WA Police Force employees partaking in an approved research project are not exempt from consent.

DATA

All information and data provided for or collected by this research is kept secure at all times, including ensuring that:

- Data is stored in a secure location only accessible to researchers directly involved in the project;
- The data is only used for the purposes of this research project and in the fashion specified in the proposal. Any different or subsequent use of the data must receive approval by the WA Police Force.
- All identifiable data released by the WA Police Force must not be retained by the researcher following the completion of the relevant approved analysis or investigation;
- All non-identifiable data released by the WA Police Force is to be stored or disposed of, according to the organisation's own record keeping policies; and
- Research materials are not to be left in an unattended vehicle or location, where unauthorised access could be made.

Data Ownership

Researchers must ensure they have obtained the relevant permissions (written approval or consent), to use third party IP as intended in the research project and provide copies of such permissions with the application for research.

Unless otherwise specified, the default position on ownership is that any IP created is jointly owned by the researcher or entity and the WA Police Force. This means that IP rights are shared, unless otherwise agreed in writing.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest as defined under Chapter 5.6 of *the National Statement* exists where:

'A person's individual interests or responsibilities have the potential to influence the carrying out of their institutional role or professional obligations in research or where an institution's interests or responsibilities have the potential to influence the carrying out of its research obligations.'

Any (or potential) conflict of interests should be disclosed to the HREC and Research Governance, as part of the application process.

WA Police Force employees should be mindful of a potential conflict of interest when undertaking research. This is particularly pertinent, when employees propose research in the business area, where they are employed and therefore, an Officer in Charge is to be advised. Any concerns regarding a potential conflict of interest should be directed to the WA Police Force [Research Governance](#) office.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESEARCH

Monitoring Research Projects

The WA Police Force shall monitor all research projects for compliance with agency rules, regulations and guidelines, as well as against proposed timelines. Researchers must provide regular updates for the duration of the project.

Researchers must submit any proposed changes to methodology, timeframes or the requirement for additional participants or data, to the WA Police Force for approval. Any adverse events identified by the researcher or research team members during the course of the project, are to be reported to Research Governance.

Termination or Suspension

The WA Police Force retains the right to withdraw approval, suspend, vary conditions or terminate a research project, or where continuation may prove detrimental to stakeholders or to the WA Police Force.

PUBLICATION

Research outputs must meet the following conditions:

- a. Be factually current;
- b. Not identify any individuals;
- c. Not reveal confidential the agency information;
- d. Not pose a security risk, including risk to the operations of the agency or the safety of the community;
- e. Acknowledges the participation and/or assistance of the agency and relevant service providers in the conduct of the research;
- f. States that any material published or made publicly available by a researcher, cannot be considered as either endorsed by the agency or an expression of the policies or view of the agency; and
- g. States that any errors of omission or commission are the responsibility of the researchers.

Researchers **must obtain** written approval from the agency, before any findings of the research projects are distributed. A copy of the research findings must be sent to Research Governance, **at least 20 working days** prior to proposed distribution outlining the intended location and timeframe of the publication/presentation.

Researchers must inform the agency of any possible contentious issues at any stage, so that they may be resolved to the mutual satisfaction of the researchers and the agency.

Intellectual Property and Copyright

It is important for researchers to recognise the various intellectual property rights, that may arise from research with the agency. The term "Intellectual Property" (IP) covers the various legal rights which protect the result of original and creative effort. The different types of IP rights include: copyright, trademarks, designs, patents, circuit layout rights and confidential information/trade secrets. For further guidance see <https://www.ipaustralia.gov.au/understanding-ip>.

Researchers and entities should adhere to the various legislative requirements, when using the work of others as well, as ensuring the protection of their own.

Researchers are responsible for adhering to the rules and regulation governing IP, including copyright ownership and protection as specified in the [Copyright Act 1968 \(Cth\)](#), particularly that of third parties.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESEARCH

COMPLAINTS

Research Governance is responsible for managing complaints regarding the conduct of research within the agency. Any issues should be directed to this area in the first instance.

SIGNING CODE OF CONDUCT

Once you have read and understood the conditions contained in this document, please sign below and return to:

Email address: Research.Governance@police.wa.gov.au

Postal Address:

Research Governance
WA Police Force
Locked Bag 45
Perth Business Centre WA 6839

Code of Conduct Declaration

Having read and understood the WA Police Force Code of Conduct for Research, I declare that I will preserve the confidentiality of information released into my care and will adhere to this Code of Conduct and any special conditions, as outlined in the Letter of Approval from the WA Police Force for:

Project Title:			
Principal Researcher		Witness	
Signature:		Signature:	
Name:		Name:	
Role:		Role:	
Date:		Date:	

I agree and acknowledge:

- All research findings must be provided to the agency at least 20 working days prior to proposed publication/presentation.
- All published/presented research must meet all of the conditions outlined in the Code of Conduct.
- All research is published/presented following the receipt of written approval from WA Police Force.

(All researchers who are involved in the project (i.e., all personnel who will see name identified data, the agency's databases or access the agency's premises, staff or clients) must sign this declaration. Please attach extra copies of this page as necessary. Researchers should keep a signed copy of the Code of Conduct for their own records. Researchers should initial each page of the agreement.)