



# Member and Volunteer Code of Conduct

July 2025

Version	Purpose/ Change Summary	Approved by Board	Effective Date	Next Revision
1.0	Original Policy	October 2023	October 2023	2027
2.0	Updated for change in charity name and preamble regarding respect between staff and service users	July 2025	July 2025	2028

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## **Introduction**

The vision of Parkinson's Ireland (PI) is to improve and enhance the quality of life for people living with Parkinson's Disease (PD) and their families, and that all people living with Parkinson's and their families will be presented with opportunities to link into a wider range of relevant services and supports.

Those who share these objectives are welcome to join PI as members and volunteers.

Our members and volunteers give their time, ideas, knowledge and expertise, energy and enthusiasm willingly so that our shared objectives can become a reality people with PD and their families. We are grateful for their contribution and support.

Charities are rightly subject to an increasing amount of oversight and public scrutiny. It is paramount that PI retains public confidence and trust so that we can achieve the aims set out in the strategic plan.

This Code of Conduct has been prepared with the aid of the sample code of conduct for volunteers provided by the Charities Regulator and sets out the ethical principles and specific behaviours that are required of all members and volunteers. It establishes the framework for conduct expected of all members of PI and its volunteers in order to protect the charity. The Code is part of the governing documents of the Party.

## **Respect**

Parkinson's Ireland strives to treat everyone it encounters with courtesy, dignity, and respect. This applies to people with Parkinson's, their care partners, health professionals, volunteers, staff and anyone who uses our services.

In return, we ask that those using our services show the same respect to staff members, board members, volunteers, and fellow service users—both online and in person.

Any form of verbal, physical, or emotional abuse toward staff or others will not be tolerated and may result in appropriate action being taken.

### **1. Ethical Principles Summary**

- i. **Integrity:** To be responsible and honest in order to earn and maintain public trust.
- ii. **Professional behaviour:** To comply with all relevant laws and regulations particularly in relation to fundraising and use of funds, and to avoid any behaviour that damages PI.
- iii. **Independence:** To not allow bias, conflict of interest or undue influence of others to compromise judgement or a position.
- iv. **Confidentiality:** To respect the confidentiality of information acquired as a result of being a member and, not to disclose any such information to third parties nor use the information for a personal advantage.
- v. **Respect:** To honour, respect and uphold the fundamental rights, dignity and worth of others.

### **2. Specific Obligations on members and volunteers**

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- i. Not to engage or be party to any illegal activity;
  - ii. To act in a way that is consistent with the principles, objectives, constitution and codes of PI, and not to act in a manner which brings, or may bring, or may tend to bring PI into disrepute (including through the use of email, social media and other internet sites, engaging with media etc.);
  - iii. To conduct themselves in a professional manner and carry out their duties to the best of their ability;
  - iv. To avoid situations and not to engage in activities or behaviours, which are contrary to the ethical principles set out in section 1 above.
  - v. To act in a way that is in line with the purpose and values of the charity and that enhances the work of the charity;
  - vi. To always communicate respectfully and honestly;
  - vii. To keep confidential matters confidential;
  - viii. To disclose the fact that they have been charged with, or convicted of a criminal offence by prosecuting authorities (or given the benefit of the Probation of Offenders Act 1907 as amended) to the Board/CEO. For the avoidance of doubt, members and volunteers are not required to disclose the fact or details of 'spent convictions' under the Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016 (as amended);
  - ix. Not to seek or accept any gifts, rewards, benefits or hospitality in the course of their role;
  - x. Not to seek to exploit any relationship to further their own or others personal or professional interests. Potential conflicts of interest and/or conflicts of loyalty should be avoided and any conflict of interest/loyalty that arises should be disclosed. Members and volunteers must absent themselves from the decision-making process involving that perceived or actual conflict, and must not interfere, or attempt to interfere, with that decision-making process. In relation to avoiding a conflict of interest, conflict of loyalty and/or undue influence, members and volunteers should always comply with the PI policy on the promotion of medical products;
  - xi. To act in accordance with the instructions of the Charity Trustees (board members) and the CEO and to respect their authority, and the statutory and regulatory responsibilities associated with their roles;
  - xii. To ensure that the utmost care and attention is given when dealing with charitable funds. It is incumbent on all of us to hold each other to account in this regard and to ensure that funds are only used for charitable purposes in a responsible manner. Members and volunteers should at all times comply with the PI financial procedures and instructions from the board, CEO and its agents e.g. bookkeepers. Branches must also adhere to the approval limits and seek the appropriate approval for any spend in excess of these limits;
  - xiii. The name, intellectual property and branding of PI is protected under law. Members and volunteers should be aware of the strict provisions of the Charities Act 2009 in relation to the use of the charity's name and branding. Branches should only use the following naming convention: 'Parkinson's Ireland (Branch name)'. In addition to complying with the Charities Act 2009, which only allows registered charities to fundraise, this provision ensures uniformity of branding and increased awareness and footprint of PI nationwide. Official PI branding should always be used when fundraising and it should be clear to the public that they are donating to PI;
  - xiv. The official PI website is [www.parkinsons.ie](http://www.parkinsons.ie). Branches, members and volunteers are not permitted to have separate websites in relation to PI activities. This is to comply with the Charities Act and to ensure uniformity and quality of messaging;
  - xv. To not purport to represent PI or engage in contracts without formal authority from the board/CEO to do so. This is also a requirement under law;
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- xvi. To seek permission from the board/CEO prior to speaking to the national media. This is due to the strategic importance associated with such activities and to ensure that members and volunteers receive sufficient coaching and guidance in advance;
- xvii. Not to engage in any activity that may cause physical or mental harm or distress to another person (such as verbal abuse, physical abuse, assault, bullying, or discrimination or harassment on the grounds of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community);
- xviii. Not to provide a false or misleading statement, declaration, document, record or claim in respect of PI, its volunteers, employees or charity trustees;
- xix. Not to engage in any activity that may damage property;
- xx. Not to take unauthorised possession of property that does not belong to them;
- xxi. Not to improperly disclose, during or after their involvement with PI ends, confidential information gained in the course of their role with PI.
- xxii. To seek assistance or advice, should an uncertainty exist regarding whether an activity or behaviour complies with the provisions set out in this document;
- xxiii. To act to prevent, stop or limit the activities of a fellow member who is not adhering to the ethical principles and obligations set out in this document.

### **3. Scope and Acceptance**

- i. This code applies to both members and volunteers.
- ii. Members and volunteers agree to comply with this code.
- iii. Members and volunteers agree to be held accountable by this code.

As per the guidance provided by the Charities Regulator in line with section 14(1) of the Charities Act 2009; where a member or volunteer is found to be in breach of the standards outlined in this Code of Conduct or any of PI's other policies and procedures, this may result in their position being terminated. Notwithstanding the foregoing, members and volunteers should note that PI may terminate their position without cause.

Members and volunteers acknowledge that no employment relationship is created in the context of their role with PI.

The board of charity trustees will review the Member and Volunteer Code of Conduct at 3-year intervals or as appropriate. The CEO is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively. All other staff and volunteers, including charity trustees, are expected to facilitate this process.