



**Karolinska
Institutet**

Instructions in respect of the Code of Conduct

Ref. no.: 1-640/2014

Acts, ordinances, internal regulations and guidelines

As public sector employees and representatives of Karolinska Institutet (KI), we are expected to live up to high standards in respect of objectivity and impartiality in our work. There are a number of laws, regulations, agreements, as well as internal guidelines and provisions that employees at KI are obligated to follow and apply in their work. Particular demands are made of those who have management and/or supervisory responsibilities, or who delegate these responsibilities to others. These instructions provide useful information based on a selection of items taken from the "Code of Conduct - for a good working atmosphere at KI".

There are currently four main documents at KI concerning the psychosocial working environment that are particularly important to the code of conduct, and all employees are to be aware of these. "Discrimination, harassment and victimisation", "Employeehip at Karolinska Institutet", "Guidelines for leadership" and "Guidelines for work environment and health". The documents can be found at ki.se, on the intranet under "About your employment", ("Employee" tab) and within "Agreements, rules and guidelines".

As far as the working environment is concerned, employees are to be aware of the applicable sections of the Work Environment Act (1977:1160), the Work Environment Ordinance (1977:1166), the Discrimination Act (2008:567) and the general regulations provided by the Swedish Work Environment Authority with regards to Victimisation (AFS 1993:17), Violence and Menaces in the Working Environment (AFS 1993:2) and Psychiatric and social aspects of the working environment (AFS 1980:14). A large number of provisions are particularly directed towards employer representatives, managers, supervisors and others whose work is of a leadership nature. Under "Working environment and health" on the intranet you can find information and references to working environment laws and regulations along with various rules and guidelines.

The fundamental rules for all those conducting public administrative functions can be found in Chapter 1, Section 9 of the Instrument of Government (RF). This states that, within public administration, all are equal in the eye of the law, and that all employees shall act with objectivity and impartiality.

Information regarding conflicts of interest can be found within "Agreements, rules and guidelines" under the Employee tab. The document "Karolinska Institutet's rules in respect of conflicts of interest" can be found there. Further information can be found in "Rules and guidelines concerning the rights of teachers and other employees in respect of secondary employment", The Public Employment Act (1994:260), and Sections 11-12 of the 1986 Administrative Procedure Act (FL). The document "Om mutor och jäv – en vägledning för offentligt anställda" (in Swedish) can be downloaded from or read at the Government's web site, www.regeringen.se. The document provides an overview and guidance in respect of the rules applying to public sector employees.

Discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying

KI is to be an inclusive university with a good work and study environment that is free of discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying. Its work is to be characterised by a mutual respect between employees, students and anyone else with whom the university comes into contact. KI wants to promote an environment where faults can be openly pointed out.

KI's guidelines "Preventing and taking action in cases of discrimination, harassment and victimisation of employees" provide information regarding who employees can talk to about incidents that could be perceived as discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying. The guidelines also provide information about the applicable laws and rules. Here, definitions of terms such as discrimination, harassment, victimisation, bullying and reprisals can also be found.

Swedish law requires that employers actively conduct work to promote equal rights and opportunities. The Discrimination Act requires employees (managers and supervisors) to actively undertake preventative measures. It is important that both management and employees always have an inclusive approach, and that they ensure that everyone, every day, can participate in work and breaks from work on the same terms. At KI, all employees have a responsibility to contribute to a good working environment.

If an employer becomes aware that an employee, in the course of their work, has been subjected to harassment or sexual harassment by someone working for or training with them, the employer is bound by the Discrimination Act and by work environment legislation and regulations to investigate the circumstances surrounding the alleged harassment and, where appropriate, to take any actions that might reasonably be demanded to prevent future cases of harassment from occurring. This obligation also applies to those interning with the employer or workers who are hired in or on loan from other units.

Information regarding protection against reprisals, and victimisation and "administrative sanctions" can be found in the Discrimination Act and "Victimisation (AFS 1993:17)" respectively.

Close relationships and conflicts of interest

It is extremely important that KI's employees adopt a professional approach in their work and their treatment of others. Within public administration we work on behalf of private citizens and with their interests in mind. Legal security, objectivity and impartiality are values that are fundamental for all public functions. For the general public to have confidence in the public administration, those working within the public sector must not be influenced by irrelevant aspirations or considerations in the course of conducting their work. A public employee must never abuse their position.

Where there is a pre-existing relationship between two parties, the employee must withdraw from contexts and situations where a conflict of interests could arise. This might involve the making of a decision, the appointment of staff, examination or grading, or procurement. Other situations might involve the setting of salaries, supervision or publications, etc. All relationships that might have an effect on a decision or an action(s) are included. A relationship might be, for example, that between friends, husband/wife/partner/children, parents, siblings, son/daughter-in-law, grandchildren, mother/father/in-laws. It is also important that business relationships are transparent, both in respect of conflicts of interest and secondary employment. Relationships can be both positive or negative, and both ongoing or previous. The main concern is that there should be no question of a lack of objectivity or impartiality.

Anyone who is aware that a conflict of interest has arisen is obligated to reveal this and to withdraw, for example, from a procedure or decision-making process. Conflicts of interest can and should be pointed out by others who are aware of the situation.

It is the situation itself - the suspicion that objectivity and impartiality may have been disregarded at the expense of irrelevant personal considerations - that is in focus. It does not matter whether the persons who have some kind of relationship with each other have actually handled an issue or decision objectively and impartially. A conflict of interest occurs when confidence is undermined as a result of the two parties, who are involved in a relationship, are involved in making a decision, or similar.

A suspected conflict of interest obstructs openness in the work environment and can, in the long run, lead to collaboration problems. There is an obvious risk that work environment problems can arise where individual employees have various relationships with each other.

There are strict rules regarding conflicts of interest, and breaking these rules can have serious consequences, both for KI and the individual employee concerned. You can find references to where you can find further information under the heading Acts, ordinances, internal regulations and guidelines.

Salary criteria

Information regarding KI's salary criteria can be found under the Employee tab and within "Agreements, laws, guidelines and rules within Human Resources", "Salary as a management tool". Under the assessment criteria "performance, results and personal qualities", the ability of the employee to create a good atmosphere in the work place is assessed, along with whether they treat colleagues and managers in a positive and respectful manner.

Consequences

Actions and behaviour that contravene laws, regulations, agreements, internal guidelines or rules can lead to the employee having their duties changed, to disciplinary actions or, in extreme cases, to termination of employment. KI always adheres to the applicable rules found in employment legislation, judicial practice and collective bargaining agreements.

Links

<https://internwebben.ki.se/sv/avtal-lagar-riktlinjer-och-regler-inom-personalomradet>

<https://internwebben.ki.se/sv/riktlinjer-och-regler-inom-arbetsmiljoomradet>

<https://internwebben.ki.se/sv/lagar-och-foreskrifter-inom-arbetsmiljoomradet>

<http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/13882/a/64977> (Bribes and conflicts of interest)

http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Lagar/Svenskforfattningssamling/Kungorelse-1974152-om-beslu_sfs-1974-152/ (The Instrument of Government)

http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Lagar/Svenskforfattningssamling/Diskrimineringslag-2008567_sfs-2008-567/ (The Discrimination Act)

http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Lagar/Svenskforfattningssamling/_sfs-1986-223/ (The 1986 Administrative Procedure Act)

http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Lagar/Svenskforfattningssamling/Lag-1994260-om-offentlig-an_sfs-1994-260/ (The Public Employment Act)