



Frequently Asked Questions – part 2

1. Can I access work information for a personal reason if the information is about myself?

It is inappropriate to access work information for any reason other than to perform your work duties, even if the information is about you. While you are not breaching confidentiality or invading another person's privacy, you are still using work information for an inappropriate purpose.

2. Is it appropriate to access someone else's information for a personal reason if I am not doing so with bad intentions?

The intentions or motive for looking up or accessing information is irrelevant and not considered when laying disciplinary action or charges. When determining whether access was appropriate, the only question a supervisor or external auditor will consider is whether you were looking up or accessing the information to perform your work duties.

3. Can I look up someone on the database out of curiosity if that information is publicly available?

It is okay to look up public knowledge in your own time and on your own device, but it is inappropriate to use the database to look up that information. A government database is government property; just as you would not use a work car to run personal errands, it is inappropriate to look up information about someone using the government database.

4. Do I have a right to access information about myself? It is technically my property!

While the information may relate to you, it is legally their property if it has been collected or created by a public sector organisation. Just in the same way that a regular citizen could not walk into an organisation and demand information held about them, you do not have a right to access or use your organisation's information about you.

5. Is it misconduct if I'm not going to receive money or perks?

Personal gain refers to any type of benefit you can receive, even if it is not a direct benefit like money. Personal gain can include simply making friends, developing networks or having someone 'owe you'.

6. Is it appropriate to breach confidentiality if it will benefit my organisation?

While your intention may be to benefit your department and do your job 'as best as you can'. Any release of confidential information to people not aware of the information will be considered a breach. Intentions are once again irrelevant. It only matters if your actions were authorised.

7. Is it bullying if that is how everyone acts? Some workplaces just require a tougher skin!

A bullying culture does not legitimise your bullying actions. Everyone has a right to feel safe and respected in their workplace. No matter how small they may seem in the larger culture of the workplace, any actions that make another person feel belittled, humiliated or disrespected is bullying.

8. Can I alter my timesheet information if I enter the correct number of hours worked, just not necessarily at the exact times or dates I worked?

Timesheets need to be entirely accurate. You are required to fill in the actual hours worked at the correct dates and times. Just because you are not getting personal benefit from the alteration, you are still creating an inaccurate record without authorisation.

9. A loss of data may be poor work and reflected in a performance report, but is it misconduct if it wasn't intentional?

Data loss can have just the same impact as intentionally and maliciously releasing information, making it just as serious. While your actions were not intentional, being careless enough to lose data is still a serious breach of your duties to protect information. Your supervisors may still bring disciplinary actions.

10. Do confidential and sensitive documents require extra care?

All information is important departmental property, and as such, must be treated with care. Certain types of information, such as confidential and sensitive information, may have more rigorous procedures associated with them, such as de-identification and password protection. All information is still of value and must therefore be treated carefully and in line with department procedure.



The Commission can help

We are available to provide support and assistance with identifying, reporting, investigating, managing and preventing misconduct: prevention@integrity.tas.gov.au or 1300 720 289.

For more Misconduct Prevention resources go to www.integrity.tas.gov.au/resources