



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are public resources?

Public resources are those items or services that are paid for, owned, or controlled by public sector agencies and organisations. Resources can be tangible, such as equipment or supplies, or intangible, such as your time. These include:

- ▽ computers, internet, email
- ▽ your time at work
- ▽ photocopiers
- ▽ corporate credit cards, taxi cards or vouchers
- ▽ intellectual property and resources, such as logos and images
- ▽ stationery and other office supplies
- ▽ telecommunication devices, such as mobile phones and tablets
- ▽ vehicles and fuel cards
- ▽ files, records and archives
- ▽ tools, machinery and equipment
- ▽ landscaping supplies, including plants and mulch
- ▽ cash including payments received and funds such as petty cash, and
- ▽ office furniture and fittings.

2. Is misuse of public resources considered misconduct?

Yes, one of the most common forms of misconduct by public officers is the misuse of public resources, which includes:

- ▽ making unapproved use of public resources for private purposes
- ▽ using public resources for outside employment
- ▽ falsifying timesheets, travel or accommodation records
- ▽ using work vehicles and fuel cards for non-work purposes without authority
- ▽ purchasing goods or services for private use on an agency's credit card and
- ▽ taking surplus materials from an agency work site.

Significant misuse, including misuse over a long period, will be considered serious misconduct and may lead to dismissal or police investigation.

Some agencies will allow limited personal use of specific public resources, for example, limited personal local telephone calls. Make sure you understand your permissions and stay within those limits.

3. Can I use my work computer to search for houses to rent in preparation for my transfer of position?

Unless you have permission to do so, using your work computer for personal shopping, research or other purposes is considered misconduct. Check the Code of Conduct or ask your supervisor for guidance.

4. If other people are claiming hours they haven't worked, can I do the same?

Inaccurate time reporting is misconduct, regardless of whether others are claiming hours they have not worked.

Everyone working in the public sector has a responsibility to act in the public interest. The appropriate use of public resources – including how you report your time – is part of that responsibility.

Inaccurate time reporting can lead to disciplinary action and, in some cases, to dismissal, findings of misconduct or prosecution for criminal offences

5. I have a work-related job to do near my house at the end of the workday. Can I take home the work car and return it the next day?

Unless you have permission to use your work car for personal travel, you may not take it home under any circumstance. Check with your supervisor or manager about your agency's policy regarding your use of work vehicles.

6. If my organisation is sponsoring a sports fundraiser for a local charity, can I use our logo on the flyer?

An organisation's logo is part of its intellectual property. As a protected asset, it may only be used according to strict guidelines and with permission.

7. The project I'm working on is taking longer than we planned. Is it OK that I do the extra hours without being paid?

No, you need to claim the actual hours you work to ensure that future project planning is accurate. Speak with your manager about why it is taking longer and whether you need more support.

8. I have to go to the local stationery store to buy supplies for the office, and I also need something small for home. Can I include it in the work purchase and pay my share into petty cash?

No, you must only use work-issued credit cards for work purchases. Even if you reimburse your work, it could still be considered fraud to use credit cards for personal use.

9. A local school needs a marquee for an event this weekend, and there's one sitting in a storage shed at the depot. Can I lend it to the school as long as they return it early Monday morning?

Unless you have permission from your supervisor or the asset manager, you are not permitted to lend any assets or equipment to outside persons or entities, no matter how deserving they may be.

10. I've been collecting the mail on my way to work every day for ages. Can I use the work credit card to put fuel in my car as compensation?

If your manager asked you to collect the mail for work, speak with them about possible compensation. Without permission, you may not use the credit card to put fuel in your or anyone else's private vehicle.

11. There is a mulch pile at the depot that is not being used and is just sitting there composting. Can I take some home?

Misappropriation of surplus or items that appear to be unwanted, forgotten or leftover, is theft. Even if they are not being used, they are still an asset belonging to your agency. The disposal of surplus (even to employees) should be systematic, transparent, and guided by a clear policy and procedures.

12. My last day at work is approaching soon. I haven't been asked to hand in my phone, so can I keep it?

You may keep your phone if it was issued to you as part of an employment package, and your agreement states explicitly that this asset will be transferred to you at the end of your employment. If not, you must return it, along with any other work-issue items, such as a laptop, credit card, fuel card and access fob.



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