

# PRONI

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR REGISTERED PRONI VISITORS

Please read this leaflet carefully. When you register as a Visitor, you agree to abide by the Statutory Rule *Public Use of the Records (Management and Fees) Rules (Northern Ireland) 2016* and associated Code of Conduct. Copies of the Statutory Rule and Code of Conduct are available upon request and on the PRONI website: [www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni).

Behaviour and/or actions contravening the Statutory Rule or Code of Conduct may result in withdrawal of your Visitor Pass and may lead to criminal or civil proceedings.

### **1. Visitors will be responsible for the security of documents produced to them.**

- a. I will not remove any original documents from the reading room.
- b. I will bring my Visitor Pass each time I visit the Office (a fee is payable to replace lost or stolen passes).
- c. I will display my Visitor Pass in the search room and reading room at all times.
- d. I will produce my Visitor Pass for inspection by PRONI staff before original records are produced to me.
- e. I will be responsible for records which have been issued to me:
  - i. I will only consult documents at the table allocated to me
  - ii. I will not pass to or swap documents with other visitors
  - iii. I will not leave documents unattended in the reading room
  - iv. I will return documents to the issue desk if I am leaving the reading room for any reason.
- f. I note that Security staff invigilates in the reading room at all times.
- g. I note that Closed Circuit Television is in operation in all public areas (except the rest rooms).

### **2. Visitors will be responsible for the safe handling of documents produced to them.**

- a. I will not damage or deface any original documents.
- b. I will undertake any handling and preservation instruction as required by the

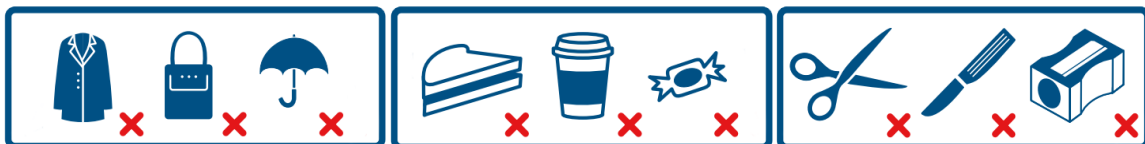
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Deputy Keeper prior to documents being produced to me.

- c. I will adhere to PRONI Document Handling Policy; all document handling requirements displayed in the reading room (see Appendix for a summary); and any specific handling instructions issued by a designated officer.
- d. If accidental damage occurs to a document whilst in my custody, I will report it immediately to a member of PRONI staff.
- e. I will not use flash photography in the search room or reading room.

### 3. Visitors will bring only items specified in the Code of Conduct into the search room and reading room.

- a. I will bring only permitted items into the search room or reading room, which may include:
  - i. one clear plastic bag or document wallet
  - ii. pencils
  - iii. paper or a notepad
  - iv. a laptop or tablet
  - v. a digital camera
  - vi. a mobile phone
  - vii. medication required for emergency use; and
  - viii. equipment used by a disabled person to access records as would constitute a 'reasonable adjustment' under the Equality Act 2010.
- b. I will not bring other items into the search room and reading room, including bags, outdoor clothing and other personal belongings. These can be secured in the ground floor lockers.



### 4. Visitors will extend respect and courtesy to others in the Office.

- a. I will not intentionally or recklessly obstruct any member of staff in the execution of his/her duty, or harass a member of staff at any time.
- b. I will not intentionally or recklessly disturb, obstruct, harass, embarrass, interrupt or abuse any other person using PRONI.
- c. I will not use language or conduct likely to be offensive to persons in the Office.

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- d. I will not promote goods/services or carry out commercial transactions within PRONI without the consent of the Deputy Keeper or a designated officer.
- e. I will avoid making unnecessary noise in the search room or reading room.
- f. I will ensure the sound is turned off on my mobile phone and any other devices before entering the search room or reading room.
- g. I will keep sound levels low when using headphones.
- h. I will not use video or audio recording equipment (including dictation) without first obtaining written consent from the Deputy Keeper or a designated officer.



## 5. Visitors will abide by all health, safety and safeguarding requirements of the Office.

- a. I will immediately leave the PRONI building via the nearest exit in the event of an emergency situation or practice drill.
- b. I will follow PRONI evacuation procedures as directed by staff.
- c. Research facilities are located on the first floor and lifts will not operate during an emergency alarm. Before proceeding to the first floor on any visit:
  - ii. I will inform a member of staff at reception if I would be unable to exit via the stairwell
  - iii. I will inform a member of staff at reception if I would require assistance to exit via the stairwell
- d. I note that PRONI adheres to the Department for Communities' *Children and Adult Safeguarding Guidance* and has Designated Safeguarding Officers.

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## Appendix - Document Handling

- a. Make sure your hands are clean and dry. Wetting fingers (to turn pages) must be avoided.
- b. For heavy or outsize documents staff is available to help with moving the items to and from the issue desk –ask if assistance is needed.
- c. Place documents securely onto the table - do not let documents overhang the edges of the table.
- d. Heavy volumes should not be placed on top of other documents.
- e. Book support cushions are available to support bound volumes.
- f. Do not force a volume to lie flat or leave it open face downwards. Book support cushions and leather weights are available.
- g. For a rolled document, leather weights can be placed at both ends of the document for support.
- h. Do not fold, crease or bend any document – care should be taken when turning pages or unfolding documents.
- i. If pages are stuck together talk to a member of staff. Do not try to free or prise apart pages that are stuck together.
- j. Pencils only must be used around documents. Pens or typing correction fluid must not be used.
- k. Take care not to mark a book or document; do not lean on a book or document; do not place the paper on which you are writing onto a book or document.
- l. If paper clips, pins or staples are attached to documents do not try to remove them.
- m. If documents are held in clear protective sleeves do not remove them.
- n. Take care when removing or replacing documents in envelopes.
- o. Do not re-arrange loose papers.
- p. Re-assemble document bundles with care. Do not tie document tape too tightly around bundles.
- q. Hold photographic negatives carefully, do not flex/bend photographic negatives and prints and do not touch them, except at the edges.
- r. Take care when loading and removing microfilms.