



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova-Republic of Kosovo
Qeveria - Vlada - Government
Ministria e Drejtësisë-Ministarstvo Pravde-Ministry of Justice
Shërbimi Korrektues i Kosovës/Korrektivna Služba Kosova/Kosovo Correctional Service
Drejtoria e Përgjithshme/General Directorate

KOSOVO CORRECTIONAL SERVICE

CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



Prishtinë, March 2025

Article 1

Introduction

Considering the role, mission, and legal activities of the Kosovo Correctional Service, the adoption of a code of ethics and professional conduct for correctional officers is essential and crucial. This aims to ensure ethical and professional behavior with high integrity, enhancing the values and performance of the Kosovo Correctional Service as an executive security agency and increasing public trust in the implementation of its legal mandate in accordance with international standards

Article 2

Status of the Kosovo Correctional Service

1. The Kosovo Correctional Service is an executive security agency operating under the Ministry of Justice.
2. The Kosovo Correctional Service has an identifying insignia, uniform, flag, and emblem, which are approved by the Minister upon the proposal of the General Director of the KCS.

Article 3

Purpose

The purpose of this code is to establish professional conduct standards at all levels of organization, based on the values and principles that correctional officers must uphold while performing their duties both within and outside the institution, as well as in ethical behavior outside official duties. This aims to achieve high standards of honesty, responsibility, integrity, accountability, and the prevention of unethical behavior.

Article 4

Scope

This code of ethics applies to all correctional officers in all correctional institutions. The code of ethics must be upheld both during official duties and outside of them, regardless of whether the behavior considered an ethical violation constitutes a legal offense or not. Ignoring the code of ethics may serve as a basis for disciplinary accountability of the correctional officer.

Article 5

Fundamental Principles

1. The personnel of the Kosovo Correctional Service are obligated to uphold the following fundamental principles:

1.1. **Legality** – The personnel of the Kosovo Correctional Service shall perform all duties in accordance with the Constitution, applicable international instruments, and the legislation in force.

1.2. Suitability and Proportionality – The personnel of the Kosovo Correctional Service shall apply the principles of suitability and proportionality as a limitation in the exercise of duties and authorizations. Authorizations shall be exercised only when necessary and only to the extent required to achieve the legal objectives of the KCS, with the least harmful consequences and for the shortest possible duration.

1.3. Obligation to Respond to Requests and Complaints – The personnel of the Kosovo Correctional Service must respond to requests and complaints submitted by prisoners, individuals, or other bodies.

1.4. Effectiveness and Efficiency – The personnel of the Kosovo Correctional Service must ensure the implementation of laws, regulations, and administrative and security procedures to fulfill the objectives of the Kosovo Correctional Service.

1.5. Accountability – The personnel of the Kosovo Correctional Service are obliged to report, explain, and take responsibility for the consequences of their decisions, actions, and inactions.

1.6. Impartiality and Professional Independence – The personnel of the Kosovo Correctional Service are not allowed to show bias, meaning they must not have a predisposition toward a specific outcome when assessing a situation, as this could result in unjustified harm to the general interest or the rights of other interested parties.

1.7. Avoidance of Conflict of Interest – The personnel of the Kosovo Correctional Service must ensure that their private interests do not conflict with their public position. They must avoid performing private or public duties that contradict their position and could create a conflict of interest. The personnel of the Kosovo Correctional Service shall act in accordance with the provisions of this law and the applicable legislation on the prevention of conflicts of interest.

1.8. Principle of Equal Opportunities – The personnel of the Kosovo Correctional Service shall have equal opportunities to participate in the activities of the Kosovo Correctional Service.

1.9. Principle of Respect for Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms – The personnel of the Kosovo Correctional Service are obliged to respect fundamental human rights and freedoms.

1.10. Principle of Non-Discrimination – Any form of direct or indirect discrimination based on race, color, gender, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, association with a community, property, economic or social status, or sexual orientation is not permitted. However, age criteria and gender quotas for employment, due to the specific nature of the work of correctional officers, shall not be considered discrimination.

1.11. Accountability – Public officials of the Kosovo Correctional Service are obligated to be accountable for the exercise of their authority alongside the performance of their duties and responsibilities, in accordance with the applicable legislation.

1.12. Principle of Courtesy – A correctional officer must be guided by the principle of professional conduct in their interactions with staff, inmates, and other individuals.

Article 6

Integrity

1. **Integrity** is a quality of a correctional officer based on high moral and professional character, which must be visible and recognized at all times in harmony with their actions. Acting with integrity means that an officer works and takes responsibility for their actions and inactions.
2. **Violation of integrity** may involve an act or omission, whether during the performance of official duties or outside of duty, that contradicts the law, correctional system policies and strategies, administrative guidelines, or constitutes a criminal offense.

Article 7

Confidentiality

A correctional officer is subject to the duty of confidentiality. This duty means that they must not disclose confidential information, either directly or indirectly, that could jeopardize an ongoing investigation or criminal proceeding, harm the integrity, dignity, security, and privacy rights of any person, or violate the rights of minors and individuals deprived of liberty who are held in correctional institutions.

Article 8

Ethical Conduct

1. Every officer must set an example with their good behavior for others by working with professionalism, conscience, and reliability.
2. A correctional officer must be courteous and maintain professional communication with colleagues, inmates, and other personnel of public or private institutions.
3. A correctional officer must conduct themselves appropriately at all times and in all situations. Their appearance should be dignified both at work and during their free time. Unprofessional and inappropriate behavior in private life may harm the image of the Kosovo Correctional Service.
4. A correctional officer must not disclose to unauthorized persons any information obtained due to their official duties.
5. A correctional officer must not support or tolerate violence or hatred toward inmates in any way and must refrain from using derogatory or demeaning language based on the committed offense.
6. Even in complex situations, a correctional officer must take ethical actions and make decisions while assessing the consequences of their choices.

7. A correctional officer must demonstrate high personal ethics and integrity in preventing and combating negative phenomena and corruption that undermine the values of the Kosovo Correctional Service.

8. A correctional officer must act with a high level of professional ethics in the use of authority and powers, ensuring that they do not exceed their authorization but operate strictly within their competencies.

9. A correctional officer must refrain from actions, publications, and the dissemination of statements with political content.

Article 9

Sexual Harassment

1. Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited in any form, whether verbal or physical. Therefore, correctional officers must refrain from any action that may contain elements of sexual harassment, both during and outside their official duties.

2. In any case where correctional officers are implicated in actions that promote sexual harassment, they may face disciplinary and criminal proceedings.

Professional Ethics Standards

Article 10

Performance of Duties with Responsibility

1. Staff will perform their duties in a professional, honest, responsible manner, with integrity and accountability, in accordance with the applicable legal provisions, respecting the values and principles of the Kosovo Correctional Service.

2. Statements that criticize other employees or the service may only be made if they can be verified otherwise and if they are constructive. Disagreement with any work policy does not mean that staff can disregard their duties. They have the opportunity to express their doubts about work policies, procedures, or guidelines, but they are expected to do so in an appropriate and professional manner.

3. Employees should not be critical of the institution's work in front of prisoners and the public, specifically. Acting in such a manner encourages disrespect towards the Kosovo Correctional Service and its personnel.

4. The officer must strictly comply with orders given by superiors but also has the right to refuse to execute orders that are clearly illegal. In such cases, the officer must notify the direct supervisor of the superior about the non-compliance without fear of retaliation or punishment.

Article 11

Courtesy

The courtesy of correctional officers will positively reflect on the Kosovo Correctional Service both during and outside of their official duties. All personnel will demonstrate good behavior in a way that supports the professional image, both in their words and actions.

Article 12

Clothing

1. The Correctional Officer, while performing his official duty, is obliged to wear the official uniform and security equipment of the Kosovo Correctional Service according to the set specifications.
2. Correctional Officers must keep their uniforms clean and are not allowed to make any changes or wear any insignia other than those officially designated.
3. Shoes/boots must be worn as part of the uniform whenever service trousers are worn; exceptionally, shoes/boots may be different from official ones upon the recommendation of a doctor, provided that they are similar to those of the service.
4. Civil servants are obliged to wear clothing according to the criteria set out in the general standards of the Code of Ethics for Civil Servants.

Article 13

Appearance of Correctional Officer

1. The presentation of the correctional officer should be serious, composed, and authoritative both inside and outside the institution, in order to represent the institution with dignity in accordance with the applicable legislation in force.
2. The correctional officer must make a fair assessment, be confident by showing authority and security, and the manner of communication must be clear and calm.
3. Every correctional officer is required to carry their ID card in a visible place during working hours.
4. The correctional officer, while performing their official duties, must be clean-shaven. If they have a mustache, it should be kept short, trimmed, and clean. The mustache cannot extend beyond the corners of the mouth. Additionally, the hair should be kept short.
5. The female correctional officer, while performing her official duties, must keep her hair in accordance with the standards. The hair must not extend beyond the collar of the uniform shirt. If the officer has long hair, it must be tied or gathered.
6. Correctional officers, when not on duty, should not wear the uniform and the security equipment should not be exposed.

Article 14

Relations with other officials

1. Relations with other staff members should promote mutual respect within the Kosovo Correctional Service and improve the quality of service. The staff is expected to contribute to a safe and healthy environment, free from mistreatment and discrimination.
2. Correctional officers must respect each other's work and collaborate in order to improve work efficiency.
3. The correctional officer must present any issues that arise during the performance of their duties and discuss finding the most effective solutions with the direct supervisor.
4. The head must evaluate the behavior of the correctional officers they lead in a fair, objective, and effective manner, and must not show favoritism towards any correctional officer.
5. The head must provide the correctional officer with equal opportunities for career development, professional advancement, and motivation for work effectiveness.
6. Correctional officers have the responsibility to work as part of a team and achieve the objectives for the correctional field.

Article 15

Relations with prisoners

1. The correctional officer must always behave with prisoners while respecting the limits of professionalism.
2. Staff should encourage and assist prisoners to resocialize and comply with the law. This includes establishing constructive, professional relationships with prisoners to encourage their successful reintegration into society.
3. Relationships should demonstrate honesty, fairness, and integrity. The Correctional Officer should not establish relationships with prisoners that give them favors during the execution of their sentence.
4. Correctional Officers should not establish intimate relationships with prisoners.

Article 16

Correctional Officer Behavior Towards Visitors

1. While performing his/her duties, the correctional officer must:
 - 1.1. behave in a professional manner and respect the principle of equality, excluding any discriminatory behavior towards visitors;
 - 1.2. refrain from restricting the rights of visitors, except when such restriction is necessary and based on law;

1.3. behave in a restrained manner towards visitors, as well as with special care towards the elderly and people with disabilities;

1.4. present correctly and responsibly during direct communication with visitors or through other forms of communication.

1.5. inform politely visitors about control and security procedures, personal belongings of visitors and prisoners are kept and handled with care.

Article 17

Avoiding Conflict of Interest

1. The direct supervisor, based on the data at his disposal, must take care that in any case where he assesses that there may be a conflict of interest, he acts to avoid the conflict of interest.

2. The correctional officer may not be assigned duties that may present a conflict of interest.

3. A correctional officer who has interests that the continuation of their possession would pose a real risk of creating a conflict of interest and would lead to their permanent exclusion from their official duties or the inability to perform their official tasks, must disclose the conflict of interest in order to relinquish or transfer these interests to avoid the conflict of interest.

Article 18

Strikes and Protests

1. Correctional personnel do not have the right to strike, but they do have the right to express their dissatisfaction through protests organized and led by representative and union bodies, as long as the functionality of the Kosovo Correctional Service is not jeopardized.

2. In the event of protests, correctional personnel of the Kosovo Correctional Service are prohibited from carrying their official weapons during the protest.

Article 19

Union Activity

The engagement of a correctional officer in the context of union activities is permissible when it does not hinder the performance of the duty and does not conflict with the nature of the work and the legislation in force.

Article 20

Gifts

1. A correctional officer performing official duty in the Kosovo Correctional Service is prohibited from requesting, accepting, giving, promising, gifts or favors directly or indirectly for himself or his family members for the performance of an official duty or decision-making.

2. All officials are prohibited from receiving payment, compensation or benefits from any other source for performing official duties.

Article 21

General rules of etiquette within the institution's premises

1. The correctional officer, in the institution is obliged:

- 1.1. to respect the institution's internal regulations;
- 1.2. to be careful with the inventory and property of the institution, the property of colleagues and other participants in the institution;
- 1.3. not to damage green spaces;
- 1.4. not to smoke inside the buildings and spaces of the institution, except in designated and permitted smoking areas;
- 1.5. not to bring, consume, or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages or other intoxicating substances on the premises of the institution and outside the institution while wearing the official uniform;
- 1.6. to remain calm and avoid noisy and disruptive behavior.

Article 22

Implementation

- 1. The personnel unit is obliged to inform the correctional officer of the rules of etiquette that must be respected by the correctional officer.
- 2. Violation of the provisions of this code may cause initiating disciplinary proceedings in accordance with the relevant legislation in force.
- 3. The correctional officer's direct supervisor has the responsibility to supervise whether he implements the rules set forth in this code and to propose or take appropriate disciplinary measures for his violations.

Article 23

Entry in force

This code enters into force on April 1, 2025.

Ismail Dibrani

General Director
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27.03.2025