

InterSector website

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About the InterSector forums

What is the purpose of the forums?

The InterSector forums facilitate professional networking and information sharing between WA public sector employees. The forums help participants to form an online network with their peers across the sector.

What can be posted to the forums?

There are several forums available, grouped by topic or profession group. New forums may be introduced over time as the need arises. Forum participants can post a new discussion thread to any of the forums, or make a reply to a post, as long as their contribution is in keeping with the forum rules.

Who can post to the forums?

All of the InterSector forums are available to any WA public sector employee, using their agency email address log-in. Accordingly, all forum participants must abide by the rules included in these guidelines.

Forum rules

There are a few rules to ensure the forums are a productive part of public sector work:

Stay on topic

If there's an existing conversation on the topic you'd like to discuss, please reply to it rather than creating a new post. Use the forum search (or whole site search) to find related topics—if you can't find one, go ahead and create a new post.

It's also important to stay on topic in a particular thread of discussion, so only reply if you feel you have something relevant to add. Other participants may become frustrated if you take a conversation off track, so be mindful of when it may be best to find a more relevant discussion or when to create a new post.

Share what you can, but don't share too much

As the purpose of the forums is to facilitate information sharing, decisions on what to share are best made by each agency. In general, don't post any information that doesn't fall under your business unit's or branch's jurisdiction, unless you've checked for approval.

Please be aware your agency may have policies regarding:

- who may speak on behalf of the agency
- an approval process that you should follow before posting or replying on the forums, including the topics that you may need approval for, and the topics that you can post to without approval
- limits to what you can share on the forums, particularly with regard to confidential information.

Be professional, with personality

Everyone has their own communication style and an informal conversation on the forums is fine. Forums are always more interesting when posts are personable and engaging to read.

However, keep in mind that your posts and replies can be read by any public sector employee with a log-in to the InterSector website; potentially thousands of people. As such, be mindful of how your message may be read, whether by their agency colleagues or relative strangers across the sector. As posts cannot be deleted, you should also be mindful that your post may be read for many months (or even years) afterwards.

Be courteous to others and report issues

You should only create professional posts appropriate for a public sector employee. Good forum etiquette means you should avoid inflammatory topics and refrain from making inappropriate jokes. In that regard, participants should abide by their agency's code of conduct and treat other forum participants with respect and courtesy. Harassment of any kind is unacceptable.

Sometimes a forum participant may make a mistake, take a discussion off topic, or make an inappropriate remark. Please click the 'Report' button to flag inappropriate posts for moderator attention.

Be understanding of moderation decisions

Occasionally, the moderators may intervene to ensure discussions remain professional. The moderators will consider the severity of any breaches of these rules in making a decision to act, and will keep a record of any actions they take. Actions can include:

- editing a post to remove infringing material, if that material constitutes a small proportion of an otherwise appropriate post
- moving a discussion thread, if it would be more appropriate in another forum
- locking a discussion thread, if the infringement is minor
- deleting a post, if the moderator decides that the content is generally infringing
- deleting an entire discussion thread, if the discussion is generally infringing
- warning participants who make infringing posts, and blocking their access to the forums if the infringement is severe or repeated.

If your post is moved, edited or deleted and you don't understand why, please email intersector@psc.wa.gov.au. However, you should not create a forum post or reply asking what happened to your post; this clogs up the forums for other users, and is considered a further breach of the rules.

Participating in the forums

How do I get approval to post to the forums?

To become a forum participant, users must create a log-in selecting the 'I am a WA public sector employee' option during the account creation process.

Once logged in, the forums will appear in the 'Forums' drop-down menu.

How do I make a new post on a forum?

Before making a new post, please search the forums to see if someone else has made a related post already. If there are no related posts already, click the 'New post' button on the relevant forum's page.

How do I reply to a forum post?

There is a 'Reply' button on the bottom-right of every post. Participants can reply either to the first entry in a discussion or replies already made. The process to reply is similar to creating a new post, above.

Can I edit or delete my posts?

Participants cannot edit or delete posts or replies. Please take care when posting, and use the 'Preview' button to check your posts and replies before you submit them.

If you make a mistake when posting, please 'Report' the post for moderator attention.

Do I need to keep records of my posts?

Yes, for posts that would be covered by your agency's recordkeeping plan. The forums themselves are not a recordkeeping system; posts may be moved, edited or deleted by the moderators over time.

Forum privacy

Can I post anonymously or on behalf of a business unit?

No, you will be identified by your full name, job title and agency. You are not permitted to post without these details, nor are you permitted to create an account on behalf of a business unit.

Do I have to upload a photo?

No, it is optional to have a photo. Allowing forum participants to upload a photo to accompany their posts is intended to help regular participants stand out from the crowd.

Photos must be professional and appropriate, though you do not have to upload a photo of yourself; if you have the appropriate approval from your agency, you are permitted to upload your agency's logo or an image from your agency's stock photos.

Will anyone know if I have read their post?

Your presence on the forums is generally invisible to other forum participants. If you never make a post or reply to a discussion on the forums, other participants won't know that you've used the forums.

If you do create a post or reply to a discussion, you will be identified by your full name, job title and agency. Note that you are not able to delete your post, so once these details are posted then they will remain visible to other public sector employees.

To help identify which posts you have already read or where there are new replies available on a topic, the website tracks whether or not you have 'read' a post and displays this information to you. However, the forums do not include a 'read counter' for posts and it is not possible to determine who has actually read any particular post.

Forum moderation

What is the moderation process for forum posts and replies?

Posts and replies are not actively moderated; they go 'live' as soon as they are submitted.

However, the InterSector team performs a reactive moderation function; you can click the 'Report' button on a post or reply if you believe the content is in breach of the forum rules.

If you see an inappropriate post, please 'Report' the post for moderator attention. You should not reply to the post or contact the participant directly by email—please leave this to the moderators.

Note that you will not be notified by the moderators after reporting a post. While the moderators do keep records of any actions taken, correspondence between the moderators and the participant whose post was moderated is generally private.

Can I report a post if I disagree with another participant's opinion?

The goal of reporting a post is to remove inappropriate material and educate participants on the forum guidelines. It is not meant to be used to harass or attack a particular participant for a contradicting opinion. Participants who misuse the reporting feature may themselves face moderation action.

What happens if my post is reported?

When your post is reported, a notification is sent to the moderators for their attention. The moderators will then review the post and assess whether or not any action should be taken.

You will not be notified if your post is reported and the moderators decide not to act on the report. If the moderators do act on the report, they will notify you regarding the action taken.

The moderators keep a record of their actions, in case of review. The InterSector team may report forum activity and moderation statistics to the Commission's senior officers, though these statistics won't generally include participant names.

Participants who regularly post inappropriate material may be warned by email and reminded of the forum rules. If the inappropriate posts continue or are severely in breach of the rules, moderators may block the participant's account, preventing access to the forums and InterSector subscriptions for those users. The moderators may also notify the Commission's senior officers, including the Public Sector Commissioner; those officers may contact the participant or the participant's agency regarding the breaches.

If you would like to discuss any moderation decision, please email intersector@psc.wa.gov.au. You should not make a post to the forums asking about moderation, as this is itself a breach of the forum rules.

Forum disclaimer

Access to the forums

The InterSector team welcomes any WA public sector employee to view or post to the forums, in accordance with these guidelines.

Participants are required to create their account using their agency email address to verify their status as a public sector employee. Any issues with the account creation process—that is, if a public sector employee is not able to access the forums—should be emailed to intersector@psc.wa.gov.au.

Participants should not rely on the forums as a primary communication tool, as access to the forums may be restricted at any time:

- Moderators may respond to reports to ensure discussions remain professional and appropriate, and may take action in accordance with these guidelines to block access to the forums for specific individuals.
- If forum discussions become unmanageable, the moderators may opt to turn on ‘active’ moderation (where all posts and replies must be authorised before they are published), or disable the forums entirely while the issues are investigated.
- The forums, account creation, or the website may be taken offline for maintenance.

Appropriateness of forum posts and replies

Any posts made by participants reflect their views and opinions, which may not necessarily be shared by their agency, InterSector or the Public Sector Commission. Participants are responsible for abiding by the forum rules and any agency processes.

Participants are reminded that posts are made ‘live’ immediately after they are submitted, without ‘active’ moderation. As such, participants should take extra care to check their posts prior to submission.

Participants should only post information that is fair, accurate and not misleading. Any inappropriate posts should be reported to the moderators in accordance with these guidelines. However, the moderators do not have a role to assess the validity of any claims or statements made by forum participants. If a participant sees a post they believe is inaccurate, but is otherwise within the forum rules, they should reply to the post or email the post’s author privately.

Before taking any action based on the views expressed, participants should carefully consider the need for getting their own expert or independent advice on matters of interest or concern. The Public Sector Commission does not invite reliance on, nor accept responsibility for, information provided on any of the forums. Neither the Public Sector Commission nor the Government can give any guarantees, undertakings or warranties about the accuracy, or up-to-date nature of information. Participants should confirm information from another source if their use determines it is of sufficient importance to do so.

Forum discussions regarding articles

Readers may create or participate in discussions about articles on the InterSector forums. These discussions are linked at the end of the corresponding article, directing other readers to join in the conversation. Contributors are not able to prevent discussions about their article.

Other than moderating discussions in keeping with the forum guidelines, the moderators will not intervene in discussions on articles. Given the increased visibility of article discussions, participants are encouraged to title their forum posts sensibly and be respectful when making comments.