



TOGETHER WE ARE KAROLINSKA

# The Compass

Our way of working – helping us do the right thing

Version 2.0



## CEO's statement

Our vision is a clear expression of our intent: 'We will cure and relieve tomorrow what no one can cure and relieve today'. We are already proud providers of world-class healthcare, but we never stand still – there is always something more we can do or improve.

As a guide to doing the right thing, the Compass sets out how we should work and provide care in line with our core values, in order to turn our vision into reality.

Achieving this goal requires us to be a safe, inclusive and sustainable workplace, where everyone can be their best in a culture of kindness and respect. It also means that we as managers and employees must help each other, and be confident about speaking up if we see something that is not in line with our values.

We work together to nurture trust in Karolinska and take responsibility for our common resources. Together, we make our vision a reality.

Together we are Karolinska.

*Björn Zoëga, CEO*



Together  
we are  
Karolinska

UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL MANDATE



Healthcare Research Education



The Compass is a guide to help you do the right thing based on our values



VISION

We will **cure** and **relieve** tomorrow what no one can cure and relieve today



MISSION

We are the **best at the most difficult**.  
We take **responsibility** for our **common resources**.



VALUES

**Responsibility**  
**Compassion**  
**Holistic approach**

  
**KAROLINSKA**  
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

 Vi är en del av  
Region Stockholm



# Why Karolinska has the Compass

Karolinska University Hospital (K) is a public body within Region Stockholm. Its activities are publicly funded, which demands high levels of quality, transparency and sustainability. We work on behalf of the public and, as part of wider society, we are all 'co-owners' of K.

K as an employer and our whole workforce, including managers, have a shared responsibility to run our operation according to the goals set for it – together.

## What the Compass contains

The Compass is based on the laws, conventions, guidelines and Region Stockholm's policy documents, including basic principles of public administration and human rights, that we all have to follow as employees of K.

## Who the Compass is for

The Compass is a cross-party document and applies to everyone participating in its activities by virtue of employment, assignment or similar – including temporary staff, researchers, students and others who carry out their work at K. In this document, the term 'employee' refers to all these categories, not least managers.



# The purpose of the Compass – for me

As an **EMPLOYEE** at K, you are its most important resource. In this capacity you represent the hospital, both within K and in your contact with the wider world. You therefore need to be familiar with the content of the Compass and reflect on how it can be applied in the performance of your duties.

As a **MANAGER**, you have a particular responsibility to ensure an open environment where employees can report suspected violations of the law and our governing documents without risk of reprisal. You must also set a good example, help employees to do the right thing and take action in cases of non-compliance with the Compass.

While the Compass is a guide to doing the right thing, you are expected to make your own judgements, think through your decisions and seek out help and advice if necessary.

## **Support in the employee contract**

An employment relationship is based on reciprocity and trust. The Compass helps with clarifying the employee contract – the responsibilities of K as an employer and the responsibilities of all employees and managers at K.

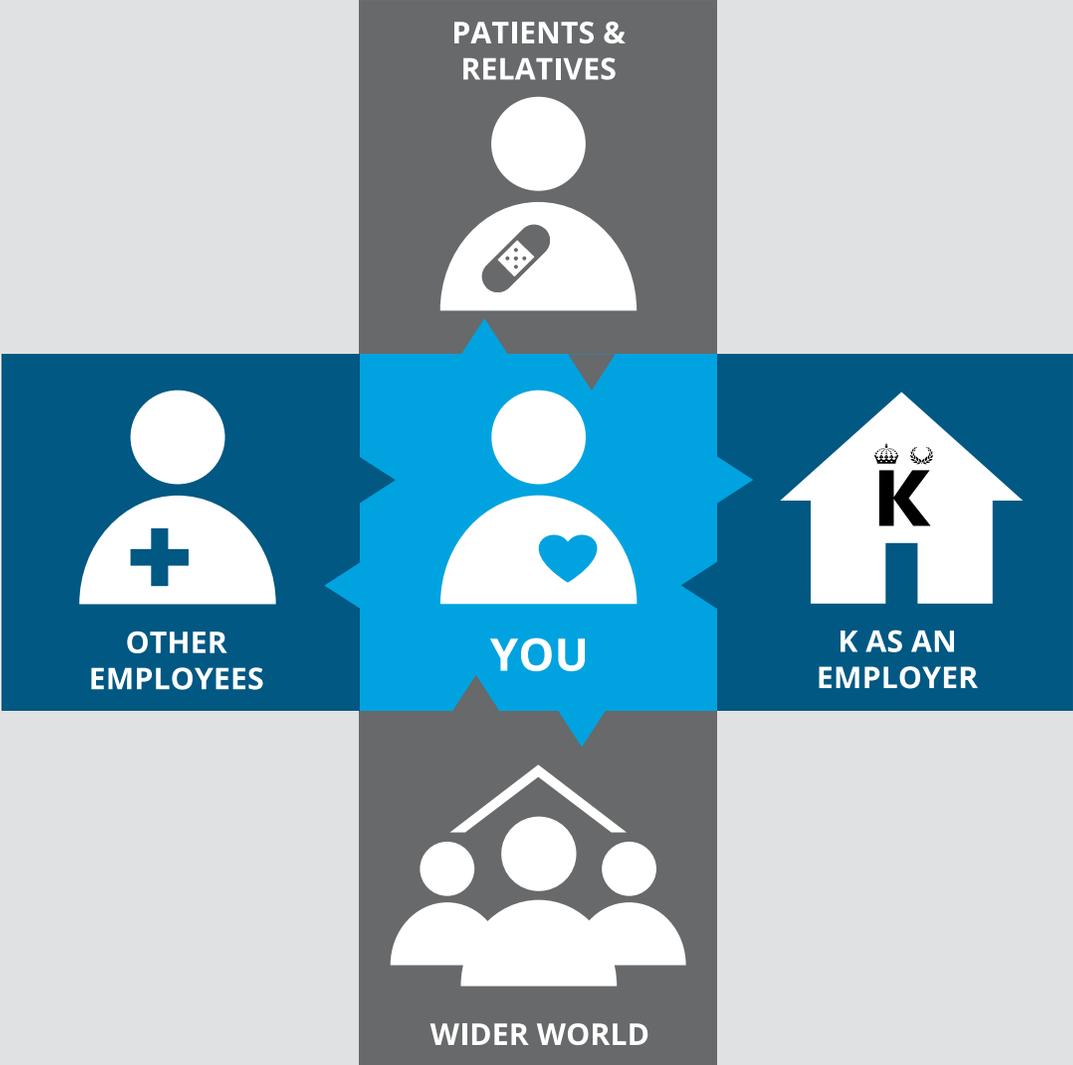
## **Protection against reprisals for those who report suspected violations**

You are encouraged, and have a responsibility as an employee, to point out when something breaches our governing regulations and shared commitments such as those set out in the Compass.

You should feel confident in reporting suspected violations. On page 17 you will find a summary of the reporting channels available within K and externally.

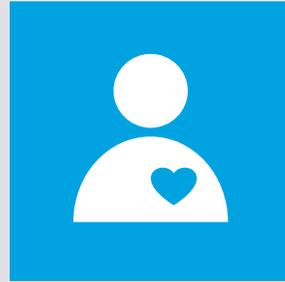
# My relationships at Karolinska

The Compass focuses on you, the employee.



# My relationships at Karolinska

Our key principles, as set out in the following pages, fall into four categories.



*Depending on the nature of your job, you may rarely find yourself in some of the situations described. You should still familiarize yourself with the entire Compass. You need to be fully aware of the elements that are most relevant to your role. If there is anything you don't understand or agree with, speak to your manager.*

Myself, as an employee of the hospital,  
IN RELATION TO ...

**1**  
PATIENTS AND RELATIVES  
– our core focus

**2**  
OTHER EMPLOYEES  
– our working environment

**3**  
K AS AN EMPLOYER  
– our shared workplace

**4**  
WIDER WORLD  
– the trust we nurture from a larger perspective



## Our guiding principles!

- We respect the equal value of every individual and work towards inclusive, accessible and sustainable healthcare.
- We work to high quality standards and put patient safety first. All patients should feel confident that they are receiving good, safe and equitable care.
- We take the patients' needs and wishes as our starting point.
- We are transparent, accessible and invite participation and cooperation.
- We safeguard our integrity in our professional role and do not have private contact with patients or relatives during the period of care. I can of course have private contact with patients who I am personally close to.
- Our research, education and innovation mandate is an integral part of our daily work, aimed at developing the healthcare of tomorrow and the healthcare professionals of the future.

## What does this mean for me?

- I treat every patient and family member professionally, with kindness and respect.
- I help make the hospital environment accessible to all.
- I protect our patients' personal information.
- I always follow basic hygiene procedures.
- I help to improve the quality of care and patient safety by pointing out shortcomings and identifying improvement measures.
- I involve the patient in their own care.
- I enable patients and relatives to help develop care by taking on board feedback and suggestions for improvement.
- I do not disclose my private contact details to patients or relatives.
- We give patients the opportunity to participate in research, education and innovation projects, but we are clear that this is entirely voluntary.



## Our guiding principles!

- We have zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment and victimization.
- We are committed to a workplace with gender equality and equal opportunities. This means that everyone, whether a manager or an employee, treats their colleagues equally.
- We offer our students the support and teaching they need to be confident in, and have the right skills for, their future careers.
- We actively work to create a safe and healthy workplace, with a friendly and inclusive climate.
- We support and see the potential in each other and collaborate across boundaries, in order to get a full picture of the care we provide.

## What does this mean for me?

- I respect the integrity and differences of my colleagues. I never use derogatory language about others.
- I say hello to my colleagues and look out for everyone's wellbeing.
- I act if I suspect a colleague is not feeling well.
- I see each student as a future colleague and contribute to their learning, based on my skills.
- I wear the correct personal protective equipment.
- I protect myself and my colleagues by being alert to risks in the working environment. I mitigate these risks by reporting them so they can be addressed.
- I also report incidents and suggestions for improvement to create a safer and better working environment.
- I empower other employees and promote good cooperation across thematic, functional and staff boundaries – with colleagues in all professional groups.
- I share my knowledge and experience, and am open to learning from the skills and expertise of others.



## Our guiding principles!

- We act independently, ethically and in accordance with the values of Karolinska. As public servants, we act objectively and impartially.
- Those of us who are licensed practitioners have a personal responsibility to practise our profession in accordance with science and proven experience. The employer is responsible for enabling this to be achieved, which includes providing adequate skills development.
- We respect the applicable governing documents and do not hesitate to ask for help in interpreting them.

## What does this mean for me?

- I raise the issue with my manager if I'm not sure what to do.
- I treat everyone equally, no matter who they are.
- I take personal responsibility for keeping up to date with new knowledge in my field of work and participate in the professional development that is offered.
- I speak up if I don't think I have the right skills for the job.
- I actively seek support and knowledge to ensure that I am in a position to work in accordance with laws, procedures and guidelines.
- I speak up if I feel I am not in a position to work in accordance with the laws, procedures and guidelines.



## Our guiding principles!

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- Our operations must be conducted with the least possible environmental impact.

## What does this mean for me?

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- I ensure that the materials used in our operations comply with our environmental and sustainability requirements. When purchasing, I base my decisions exclusively on our agreements and prioritize solutions with the lowest possible impact, in order to contribute to sustainable development.
  - I conserve materials and energy and use efficient transport solutions.
  - I try to take a circular approach and look for new sustainable solutions (for example for consumables and energy use).
  - I actively seek information about, and follow, the rules for handling medicines, chemicals and waste.
  - I take responsibility for the correct handling and sorting of waste.
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## Our guiding principles!

- We are aware that K is a public body operating under the principle of public access to official documents. This means that anyone in society, including the media, has the right to see and access information about K's activities.
- We ensure that the right information can be found, both now and in the future, by filing the documents that need to be filed.
- We keep our information and documents in order. This is vital for adherence to the principle of public access to official documents, while also promoting transparency and public confidence in K.
- We are careful to maintain confidentiality inside and outside the hospital.

## What does this mean for me?

- I am aware that e-mails to anyone outside the hospital are considered public documents and can be requested by the public.
- I am aware that the public has the right to contact me, as an employee of K, to request public documents. In such cases, I am responsible for the production of the documents and the processing of the request.
- I find out the record keeping rules for my particular job.
- If I am also an employee of Karolinska Institutet (KI), I keep my e-mail accounts separate, and in my capacity as a K employee I always reply from my K account.
- I find out what information is protected by confidentiality before I disclose it.
- I do not talk about classified information in public places.
- I do not send confidential information by e-mail, either internally or externally.



## Our guiding principles!

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- We protect sensitive information.
  - We are aware of what information we are allowed to access, through our assigned permissions.
  - We act quickly to report incidents and breaches that could have a negative impact on privacy or information security.
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## What does this mean for me?

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- I always log out and take my e-service card with me when I leave the computer.
  - I'm careful about opening e-mails from senders I don't know. I never click on links or open files from unknown senders.
  - I never lend out my e-service card or password.
  - I regularly restart my computer to install updates, for IT security reasons.
  - I handle sensitive information in purpose-built and secure systems.
  - I behave safely and use computers, mobile phones, the internet and e-mail only as work tools in accordance with the hospital's guidelines.
  - I will report to my immediate manager or to the local information security coordinator if my personal data or the personal data of others has been handled in a way that I feel is inappropriate.
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## Our guiding principles!

- We want external communication to give an accurate, consistent and transparent picture of our hospital and our activities.
- We all have the right, when dealing with the media, to freely express our own opinion and convey our own interpretation of the facts (anonymously or openly).
- We protect our own and others' privacy on social media.

## What does this mean for me?

- I am aware of my right to freedom of speech and freedom of communication as a public employee, and of their limitations (including patient confidentiality). Freedom of communication applies only to verbal information. Freedom of communication also means that the employer is not allowed to investigate who has disclosed the information.
- I am always able to refer the media to the press office, or a designated spokesperson where one exists.
- I am aware that the image I convey, with regard to the work and role of K, reaches a wide audience and is of general interest to the public.
- I bear in mind that images and texts published on social media can easily spread and be misunderstood if taken out of context.
- I don't post pictures of anyone without their consent.
- I refrain from contact with patients and their relatives outside work.



## Our guiding principles!

- We report secondary employment and other external work.
- We are aware of the legal rules on professional misconduct and comply with them.
- Those of us with multiple employers are aware that different rules may apply to each employer.

## What does this mean for me?

- I notify my immediate supervisor of any secondary employment through Heroma.
- I am responsible for providing additional information if anything changes in relation to the secondary employment I have previously reported.
- If I work as an expert, for example on advisory board assignments, I do so as part of my job at K and compensation for participation is payable by K.
- I do not take part in discussions or decisions if I have personal links with the matter or the person to which the decision applies (for example, in the case of employing a close relative).
- I tell my boss if I think I might be guilty of misconduct.
- If I have joint employment, for example with KI, I keep the different roles and their powers separate.



## Our guiding principles!

- We have zero tolerance for financial irregularities of any kind. We must never request, accept, pay or offer to pay bribes, either directly or through anyone acting on our behalf.
- We conduct business with a high level of integrity, and do not tolerate bribery or corruption in any form.
- We contribute to a healthy business environment in the marketplace by demanding the same standards from our suppliers as we do from ourselves.

## What does this mean for me?

- I cannot accept gifts that could be perceived to influence me in my role at K.
- I can never accept alcohol, gift cards or anything that can be equated with money, such as expensive gifts of clothes or shoes, from an external person. A gift to show appreciation to or from a colleague is normally allowed.
- I can accept flowers or cake for the whole team, as well as a symbolic gift of negligible value.
- I am alert to situations that may be perceived as giving me an undue advantage, such as being invited to dinner or on a trip by an external person. This applies regardless of who offers the benefit.
- I do not accept anything that could be perceived as influencing me in the performance of my duties, for example in relation to suppliers.
- I use agreed suppliers for all purchases that generate an invoice, or turn to the purchasing department for help.



## If you have a question

In the first instance, always contact your manager, your manager's manager or the central department to which your question relates, such as HR or the Regulatory Secretariat and Compliance Office.

## If you want to report an incident

### Internal

If you want to report an incident or risk relating to health and safety, care or the environment, or have a suggestion for improvement, you should do so through HändelseVis. Suggestions for improvement can also be sent to [forbattringsforslag.karolinska@regionstockholm.se](mailto:forbattringsforslag.karolinska@regionstockholm.se).

If you wish to report a suspected violation of the Compass, please do so to your manager, your manager's manager, HR or the hospital's lawyers.

A personal data breach, other information incident or IT incident must be reported without delay both as instructed on [Inuti](#) and to [cert@regionstockholm.se](mailto:cert@regionstockholm.se).

### Whistleblowing

If you suspect serious wrongdoing involving senior or key personnel, you can report it anonymously through K's external whistleblowing channel. As a whistleblower, you are protected against all forms of reprisals. You can read more about how these cases are handled [here](#).

### External

You can also turn to one of our supervisory authorities, e.g. the Health and Social Care Inspectorate – [IVO](#).





## Violations of the Compass

The Compass is a tool to help employees and managers do the right thing.

As an employee or a manager, deliberately violating the principles of the Compass may have consequences under employment law.

The way you take on board the principles of the Compass is an important part of what we call employeeship. Doing your best to act in accordance with the principles of the Compass is good employeeship!

TOGETHER WE ARE ...

