



Protecting the public sector from criminal networks

Information sheet

At IBAC, part of our role is to investigate and stop criminal networks successfully exploiting the Victorian public sector.

IBAC is Victoria's independent anti-corruption and police oversight agency. We're here to prevent and expose public sector corruption and police misconduct, with the overall goal of strengthening integrity within our state.

An important part of what we do is acting against the threat of organised crime groups who try to develop contacts within the public sector. They do this to access restricted information, falsify records, or influence decisions, which could help them conduct illegal activities and allow them to avoid detection.

Identifying criminal networks

Criminal networks are groups of two or more people working together to commit serious crimes and offences.

These organised crime groups target public sector employees and attempt to build relationships that could help further their illegal activities and avoid detection by law enforcement.

If you work in the public sector, you could be targeted

Our investigations show organised crime groups target all levels of public sector employees.

Whether you are a council worker, a department officer or work in law enforcement, you need to be aware of the risk of criminal networks.

Reporting any suspicious activity to IBAC will help us keep the public sector free from organised crime.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What makes public sector organisations vulnerable?

- A. If your organisation has access to information or items that may be of value to organised crime groups, then you could be targeted.

Organisations most likely to be targeted are those with:

- decision making and regulatory powers, including organisations overseeing the security, construction, planning, and liquor and gambling industries



- access to sensitive information or law enforcement details
- access to large identity databases with personal identification information that could lead to identity theft, witness intimidation and extortion, or could be sold to other criminal groups
- control of property or goods with high resale value.

Q. How can you protect your organisation from criminal networks?

- A. 1. Make security a priority. Conduct risk assessments, perform regular random audits, and apply protections to high-value information.
2. Identify associations with criminal groups. Implement policies for employees to declare associations; make it mandatory during recruitment and employment; and define consequences for non-compliance.
3. Have strong pre-employment checks in place. Vet employees based on access and sensitivity levels; regularly monitor security clearances; and strengthen vetting for positions with increased access

When using third-party recruitment agencies, follow the appropriate procurement processes and conduct due diligence to ensure they follow merit-based selection processes and have ethical practices.

Q. What signs could suggest that a colleague has criminal associations?

- A. There are several signs that could indicate someone has criminal associations. For example, the person may:
- display unexplained wealth
 - request information that is not part of their role
 - seek access to systems that are not part of their role
 - work overtime or unusual hours
 - not take leave.

Q. How can you protect yourself from criminal networks?

- A. 1. Avoid any risk-taking behaviours that may lead to you being personally compromised by criminal networks including becoming financially implicated or indebted.
2. Exercise caution when using social media platforms because criminals may target you through these channels. Do not use social media to communicate sensitive information about your organisation, do not click on suspicious messages or links from unknown senders, and be wary when accepting friend requests from people you don't know.
3. Don't provide any details on your role, processes, systems or information you hold associated with your employment to anyone who doesn't work at your organisation. Refuse any offers of payment for providing this kind of information to anyone.
4. Consider any pre-existing relationships that could put you in a compromising position through shared interests. Declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest to your employer.

It's your duty to help protect the public sector from organised crime.

If you work in the public sector and:

- you are approached by someone linked to an organised crime group
- or if you have information that an organised crime group is connected to the public sector

...you can report it safely to IBAC.



Fill out the secure online form to report at www.ibac.vic.gov.au



If you have difficulty accessing the online form call us on **1300 735 135** for further assistance.



If you need help with translation, call Translating and Interpreting Service on **13 14 50** or visit www.ibac.vic.gov.au/mylanguage