

# Protective Markings

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## Why do we need markings?

It is important to mark the information we handle with an appropriate protective marking so that those within or outside the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire ('OPCC') including our partners are aware of how the information is to be handled.

All information will fall into a risk classification and must be protectively marked using an OPCC protective marking. Not all information requires a protective marking and the marking may change over time for e.g. a draft policing strategy may be marked as "CONFIDENTIAL" whilst in draft form but as "PUBLIC" once approved.

NB protective markings are for internal and partner use only - you should continue to use the accepted 'Private and Confidential' marking on letters / envelopes to the public.

## What are the markings?

<b>PUBLIC</b> or no marking	Anyone can access the information internally or externally. It may be published on a public website or in paper form (but may still be subject to copyright). Where it has a purpose or adds value, the markings will be "PUBLIC" otherwise there will be no markings on the information or document or alternatively you could use "NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED".
<b>INTERNAL</b>	Anyone can access the information internally. It should not be published on a public website or generally released outside the OPCC. There will be clear markings on the information as "INTERNAL".
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	Information where disclosure or unauthorised access would be inappropriate, inconvenient or cause harm, damage, distress or financial impact to individual(s), the OPCC and any third parties. There will be clear markings on the information as "CONFIDENTIAL".

<b>CONFIDENTIAL - RESTRICTED</b>	Information to be restricted at a higher level of assurance than “CONFIDENTIAL” due to significant inconvenience, harm, damage, distress or financial impact to individual(s), the OPCC and any third parties. There will be clear markings on the information as “CONFIDENTIAL-RESTRICTED”.
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### How to apply the protective markings?

If you are the ‘originator’ of any type of document (paper or electronic) then you are responsible for adding a protective marking, if it is not already marked. If you are forwarded a document that is not protectively marked then query it with the originator, especially before forwarding it on or apply your own judgement using available guidance.

There are just three steps to protective marking:

*ASSESS*

*MARK*

*SECURE*

STEP 1: Assess risk classification

STEP 2: Add a protective marking

STEP 3: Follow our secure information handling procedures

### How do we use the markings on documents?

If you need to mark a paper or electronic document, you should use either the header or footer (or both) of the document and put in the appropriate marking for e.g. “CONFIDENTIAL” and if it is a public facing document then you need not put any marking on at all, or you can use “PUBLIC” or alternatively “NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED”.

If you are using email you can insert the appropriate marking into the ‘subject heading’ of your email.

You can also opt to use a descriptor for CONFIDENTIAL or CONFIDENTIAL-RESTRICTED markings if this will be helpful to the reader such as:

“CONFIDENTIAL-PERSONAL” for employee information

“CONFIDENTIAL-RESTRICTED-PERSONAL” for sensitive personal information

“CONFIDENTIAL-MANAGEMENT”

for policy and planning information affecting the interests of staff or the community

“CONFIDENTIAL-COMMERCIAL”

for commercially sensitive information

**Where can I find further information?**

Our secure information handling policy contains further guidance on assessing information according to risk, how information should be marked and used.