



# INSIDE THE MYSTERY:

What campaign monitoring tells us  
about fundraising compliance

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# What is Mystery Shopping?

***Mystery shopping*** is a quality assurance method used to assess the performance, compliance, and customer experience of a service by having someone pose as a typical customer or client.



# Why mystery shopping matters

Mystery shopping matters because it gives us an honest, real-world view of what is actually happening at the frontline of public fundraising. It's a powerful tool for:

1. Measuring compliance
2. Identifying gaps
3. Improving quality
4. Protecting public trust and building sector credibility
5. Supporting accountability

**Mystery shopping supports our commitment to professional, fair & ethical fundraising.**

# Our mystery shopping programme

- **Frequency:** We aim to mystery shop every charity/supplier partnership 3-4 times per year.
- **Location:** We visit fundraisers throughout New Zealand – we could be anywhere
- **Channel:** We primarily mystery shop at private sites and rostered street sites but may also find fundraisers working door-to-door
- **Unannounced, anonymous** visits
- We assess fundraisers against the PFRA Codes of Conduct & Rule Book using an online form

# What we look for



Appearance



Behaviour



Health & Safety



Compliance



Site rules & suitability



**They work for an accredited member of the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association**

**They are passionate about the charity they represent**

**They will have a council permit and stay in the location they have been rostered too**

**They are a paid professional fundraiser**

**They don't stand too close to the kerb or obstruct your path**

**They wear charity branded clothing and dress smartly**

**They wear a photo ID badge**

**They do not initiate physical contact**

**They are polite and respectful**

**They do not follow you down the street**

**They do not accept cash donations**





# Fundraiser Appearance

A professional appearance is a key focus of mystery shopping in public fundraising because it directly impacts public trust, brand integrity, and fundraiser credibility.

- Charity branded clothing as top layer
- No ripped or stained clothing
- No branded clothing (that is not charity branded)
- Wearing ID badge that meets PFRA requirements
- Bags and other personal belongings tucked away
- Table/stand is clean and tidy



# Fundraiser Behaviour

We check to make sure that fundraisers are not acting in a way that may harm the reputation of face-to-face fundraising or the charity they are representing. This includes things like:

- Behave in a rude or unprofessional manner
- Blocking someone from passing
- Deliberately seek to make someone feel guilty
- Mislead a member of the public or provide false information
- Approach someone who appears to be vulnerable



# Health & Safety

We check to make sure that fundraisers are working safely and not operating in a way that creates risk to their own, or the public's safety. This includes things like:

- Ensure fundraisers know how to report any health & safety issues and have been trained on the suppliers Health & Safety Policy
- Ensuring clear pathways with enough space to walk around – make sure that entrances/exits are not blocked.
- Well lit locations so fundraisers are easily visible to the public and can interact safely
- No fundraising within 10 metres of a pedestrian crossing or in car parks





# Site Rules & Suitability

When fundraising at public sites, it's essential to adhere to minimum accessibility and safety standards to ensure a positive and safe experience for both the public and the fundraisers.

- Following any site rules in the Locations Manager for rostered street sites
- At private sites, fundraisers must keep as far as possible from any PFRA rostered site, particularly if it is being used
- You must not use the public footpath or any other public space while fundraising at a private site.



# Fundraiser Compliance

**During** the mystery shop we check that fundraisers can show us a copy of the PFRA Rule Book & charity disclosure statement.



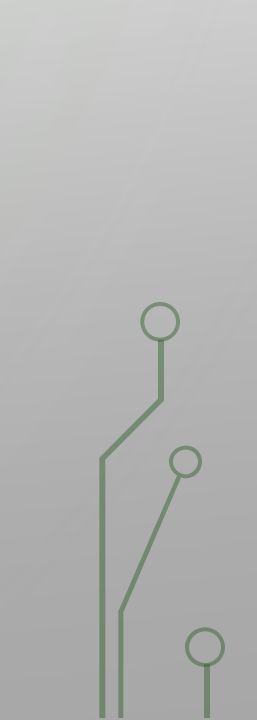
**After** the mystery shop, we check the Fundraiser Register to ensure our members are meeting key compliance requirements, this includes:

- Checking that all fundraisers present are entered into the Fundraiser Register
- Checking that all approved fundraisers present have completed the required Code of Conduct training
- Checking that all approved D2D fundraisers have a completed criminal history checks date entered in the Register
- Checking that any provisional fundraisers have been working on the campaign for less than four weeks.



# What we don't check


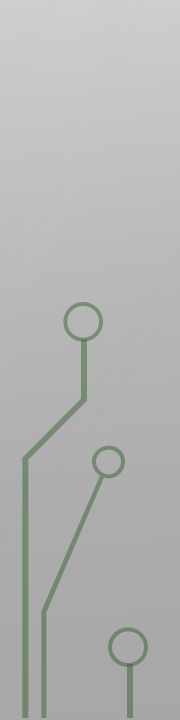
Our mystery shops focus on compliance with PFRA rules and standards, this means that we don't focus on things like:

- **Pitch content and delivery:** as long as it's not misleading
  - **Charity collateral:** what it says and how they are using it
  - **Fundraiser clothing:** If their clothing meets our rules then we don't comment, but their clothing may not meet your guidelines (e.g. jeans or hats)
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# Common compliance issues


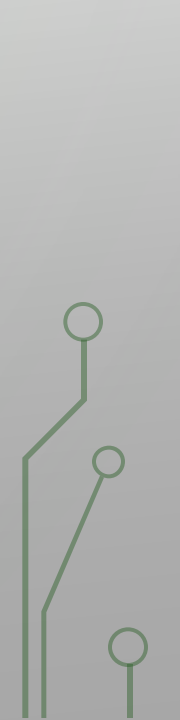
- Branded clothing
  - ID badges
  - Fundraiser behaviour
  - Rule Book & charity disclosure statement
  - Stand/table presentation
  - Health & Safety concerns
  - Compliance breaches
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So what do we do with it?




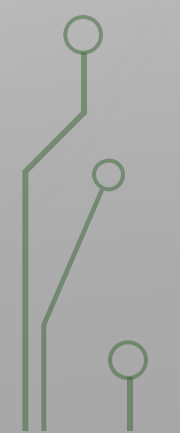
# Turning Insights into Action

- We email both the charity and agency feedback, recommended training, and further steps
  - The email will include details of any breaches found and details about penalties
  - Mystery shopping findings feed into our fundraiser training, and our policies and guidance for fundraisers and members.
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# Encouraging a learning culture


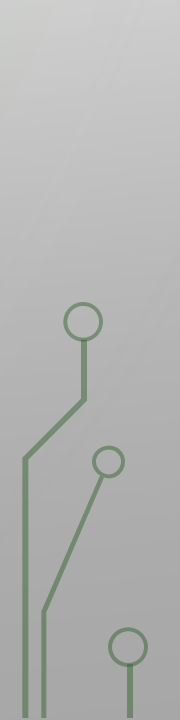
- Not about “catching out” fundraisers, the focus of mystery shopping should always be improvement
  - Helps highlight what’s working well and what needs support
  - Increases fundraiser confidence and campaign quality
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What can you do?



# Proactive Mystery shopping

- Charities and agencies can conduct their own assessments – you don't have to wait for PFRA to do the checks.
  - Many organisations have successfully built their own internal mystery shopping frameworks. This can be as simple as peer-to-peer checks or using staff from another region.
  - Builds a culture of ownership and improvement
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### Activity Question:

Take two minutes to talk to the person next to you about how you proactively monitor your programmes and campaigns

- What works best?
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# Your feedback

If you carry out any mystery shopping or field audits on your fundraising teams, please let us know how it went – we're interested in hearing about successes as well as any challenges that you have found.

You can provide feedback using the [feedback function](#) on our website or email us at [info@pfra.org.nz](mailto:info@pfra.org.nz)



# Charity mystery shopping

We are a small team and can't be everywhere!

We encourage any charity members who are interested in doing some mystery shopping to get in touch (email [nicci@pfra.org.nz](mailto:nicci@pfra.org.nz)).

We'll provide you with information on where fundraisers are working and the mystery shopping report form that we complete.

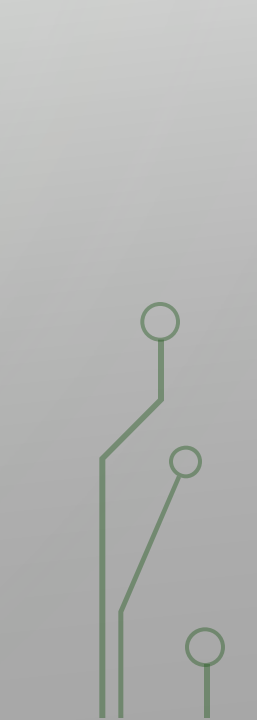




# And remember...

You can provide feedback about any charity or agency you see fundraising!  
Whether they are at your home, work or local supermarket.

It's great to be able to let other members know that their teams are out whether they're doing a stellar job or if there are areas for improvement.

It's really helpful if you can send us a photo of the fundraisers so we can check that they are at the correct site and that their branded clothing is correct.







# Key takeaways

- Mystery shopping helps uphold standards and drive improvement
- Mystery shopping is a collaborative, constructive tool. It supports high standards, and public confidence. With shared responsibility and transparent processes, we can continue to improve public fundraising together.
- Findings offer practical insight and learning
- Charities and agencies can take a proactive approach
- PFRA supports members in raising the bar across the sector
- It is the responsibility of **all members** to engage with insights and act on results.



# Questions



# Thank you

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The logo for the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA) is displayed within a white rectangular box. It features the word "PUBLIC" in a bold, grey, sans-serif font. To the right of "PUBLIC" are three overlapping circles in yellow, green, and teal. Below this, the words "FUNDRAISING" and "REGULATORY ASSOCIATION" are stacked in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

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