

Employee Handbook

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About this Handbook

This Handbook has been drawn up by the Company to provide you with information on employment policies and procedures. It is important for you to read the Handbook carefully as this, together with your Contract of Employment, sets out your main terms and conditions of employment.

The information covers a wide range of subjects relating to your employment and in the event that information in this Handbook conflicts with terms and conditions stated in your Contract of Employment, the Contract will take precedence.

If you have any questions or if any part of the Handbook is unclear to you, please do not hesitate to raise any queries with the Registered Manager. It is important that you do this before signing that you have read, understood and are willing to abide by all the Company's terms and conditions.

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Annual holiday entitlement and authorisation

Entitlement

Full details of your holiday entitlement will be circulated to you at the beginning of the year (or when you join) and updated every three months after that. Your entitlement will be based on your average number of hours worked per week over the previous three months.

Carrying over holidays to the following year

You **MUST** take your full holiday entitlement during the holiday year. Holidays may not be carried forward into the next holiday year, nor will you receive payment for holidays not taken.

Request for holidays

In order to submit a request for annual leave, you should email the Registered Manager giving the dates on which you wish to take leave. The request must be authorised by the Registered Manager before the leave is considered valid.

The amount of notice required normally is four weeks except for single days, when two weeks' notice is normally required.

All requests, providing they have been received in time, will be processed in date and time order and a response given within two working days.

No more than two employees will normally be allowed to take leave at any one time. Two employees who regularly work together on the same double-handed run will not normally be allowed to take leave (including single days off) at the same time. If such employees on the same run have a specific reason for wanting a single leave day off together, management will try to find cover but can give no guarantees. If cover is not available, then the manager reserves the right to decline one of the requests. Employees are free to arrange their own cover in such circumstances by swapping with appropriate colleagues but this swap must be approved by the manager before being confirmed on the roster.

Normally holidays will be sanctioned on a "first come, first served" basis.

The Company reserves the right, on reasonable notice, to require you to take annual holidays during any quiet periods.

Length and timing of holidays

The Company will not normally agree a request for a holiday that involves more than two consecutive weeks.

Refusal of holidays

In the event that the Company has to refuse a holiday request because of business needs, the Company is not responsible for any financial commitment made by you prior to authorisation. You are therefore advised **not** to book holidays with tour operators, travel agents, hotels or passenger carriers, etc. until your holiday request has been authorised.

Adjustment to holidays

At the commencement of your employment you will be entitled to holiday leave in proportion to the holiday year remaining on the date when your employment began. On leaving you will be entitled to holiday leave in proportion to the holiday year worked on the date when your employment ended. If you have been paid for more holidays than your entitlement then the balance will be deducted from your final payment. If you have been paid for fewer holidays than your entitlement then the balance will be paid to you with your final payment.

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Absence from work

Appointments

If you need to be absent from work to keep a medical, dental or other essential

appointment, prior permission should always be obtained from the Registered Manager.

Payment for absences of this nature will not be made.

You must try to arrange such appointments outside normal working hours wherever possible and any regular appointments that have to be made during working hours must be supported by an appointment card. Any such absences from the workplace should be minimal.

Sickness and injury

Notification of absence

If you are absent from work without prior authorisation, you, or someone on your behalf should notify the Company by phone as soon as possible on the first day of absence. Text messages and emails are not acceptable.

Any unauthorised absence must be properly explained in that first contact and, if the absence continues, you must keep us fully informed. This applies to both short and long term situations and you will be expected to contact us on a daily basis during the first week and weekly thereafter.

Period of absence

If your sickness is for more than seven calendar days then you must provide the Company with a doctor's medical certificate. You must continue to provide medical certificates to cover the whole of the absence period.

Please note that the Company will review the attendance levels of all employees on a regular basis. In deciding whether to take further action in respect of sickness absence, the evidence of a medical certificate may not be sufficient and the Company may seek alternative medical information.

Returning from absence

You must give the Company at least 24 hours' notice that you will be returning to work. On your return to work after absence because of sickness, irrespective of the length of absence, you must complete the Company's sickness – return to work - form.

If you have been suffering from a notifiable disease such as food poisoning, measles, mumps, scarlet fever, etc., you must not report for work without clearance from your doctor.

In addition, if you work with foodstuffs and have been suffering from an infectious or contagious disease or illness, or have had a bowel disorder, boils, skin or mouth infection, you must not report for work without clearance from your doctor.

If your absence is related to Covid-19 you must observe all of the regulations in respect of self-isolation in force at the time.

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

The Company is responsible for paying SSP to you if you are eligible.

The maximum period for which SSP is payable is 28 weeks in one period of sickness absence and is paid at a rate specified by law. As with other earnings, SSP is subject to the deduction of income tax and all other normal deductions. We will inform you if you are not eligible for SSP.

SSP is paid in respect of qualifying days on which you are unable to work through sickness. Qualifying days are those days on which you would normally work. Generally SSP is not payable for the first three qualifying days of sickness which are known as "waiting days", but this may not always be the case if you are absent on more than one occasion within a short period of time.

SSP is only paid when the period of sickness is four or more consecutive days.

"Family friendly" rights

Information on the current statutory provisions relating to the following is available from the Registered Manager, with whom you should raise any queries.

- Leave and pay connected with the birth of a baby
- Leave and pay on the adoption of a child
- Unpaid parental leave
- Leave and pay connected with the death of a child (under 18 years of age)
- Unpaid time off for dependants
- Compassionate leave

Maternity rights

This section of the Handbook is for pregnant employees and new mothers. It details their rights, which fall into three main categories:

- Paid time off for antenatal care.
- Maternity leave.
- Maternity benefits.

Ante-natal care

You are entitled to be paid your normal rate of pay for any appointments during working hours related to antenatal care. In order to receive payment an appointment card must be produced confirming the appointment and you will be expected to return to work after keeping your appointment wherever possible.

When a certificate confirming pregnancy is issued, this must be handed in as soon as possible.

Ordinary maternity leave

You are entitled to 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave and have the right to return to work in your old job. These rights apply regardless of length of service or the number of hours worked.

If you work full time you have the right to return to your full-time position; you do not have the right to return part time. However, the Company will discuss any request for part time work and will, if possible, offer part time work. Requests should be made in writing to the Company giving as much notice as possible.

You can start your ordinary maternity leave at any time from the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC). For all maternity leave purposes, "childbirth" is either

a live birth before the end of the 24th week of pregnancy or a live or still birth after the 24th week of pregnancy.

Throughout the ordinary maternity leave period, all your terms and conditions of employment are maintained with the sole exception of pay.

Additional maternity leave

Additional maternity leave starts at the end of the ordinary maternity leave period and ends 26 weeks later. As with ordinary maternity leave, all your terms and conditions of employment are maintained throughout this period with the sole exception of pay.

Notification

The notice periods detailed below must be complied with in order to safeguard your rights.

You must notify the Company in writing by the 15th week before the EWC of the following:

- that you are pregnant,
- the EWC,
- the date on which you intend to start your maternity leave.

You must also provide a certificate (normally a form MAT B1) stating the EWC. The Company will then write to you within 28 days to confirm your date of return to work.

You can change the date on which you intend to start your maternity leave by giving the Company at least 28 days' written notice.

Returning to work

If you take the full entitlement to maternity leave your return date will be the date previously notified to you by the Company. If you wish to return early you must give the Company eight weeks' written notice of your early return date. Your early return may be delayed if this procedure is not followed.

If you intend to return to work at the end of your maternity leave but fail to do so, the Company's normal rules regarding absence will apply.

Maternity benefits

Although you do not need any qualifying service or work a minimum number of hours to be entitled to maternity leave or the right to return to work, in order to qualify for Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) from the Company, you need to have the following:

- at least 26 weeks continuous service at the end of the 15th week before the EWC (this is known as the "qualifying week" for maternity pay purposes),
- average earnings above the National Insurance lower earnings limit during the eight weeks before the qualifying week.

If you meet these conditions you are entitled to a maximum of 39 weeks SMP which is calculated as:

- 6 weeks at 90% of average weekly earnings,
- 33 weeks at the lesser of the lower rate of SMP or 90% of average weekly earnings.

If you do not qualify for SMP from the Company you may be entitled to Maternity Allowance (MA).

Sickness absence during pregnancy

If you are absent from work because of a pregnancy related illness or reason at any time during the four weeks before your EWC, the ordinary maternity leave period begins on the first day of absence. If the pregnancy related absence began before the fourth week, then the ordinary maternity leave period begins at the start of the fourth week.

If you are absent from work and the illness is not pregnancy related, the maternity leave period will begin on the date you have previously notified.

If you are absent from work in the weeks leading up to your maternity leave it may affect the higher rate of SMP (90% of normal pay) because it is based on your average earnings in the eight weeks prior to the qualifying week.

Adoption rights

This section of the Handbook is similar to the previous section but deals with employee rights on the adoption of a child, which fall into three main categories:

- Paid time off to attend pre-adoption appointments,
- Adoption leave,
- Adoption benefits.

Pre-adoption appointments

If you are the primary or sole adopter and you have been advised that a child is due or expected to be placed with you for adoption you are entitled to be paid your normal rate of pay for up to five pre-adoption appointments during working hours.

The appointments must have been made by or at the request of the adoption agency and in order to receive payment an appointment card must be produced confirming each appointment. The maximum time off for each appointment is six and a half hours and you will be expected to return to work after keeping your appointment wherever possible.

Ordinary adoption leave

If you are the adoptive parent who has elected to take adoption leave you have the right to 26 weeks ordinary adoption leave, which includes two weeks' compulsory adoption leave. You can start your adoption leave as soon as the child is placed with you for adoption or, if pre-notified, up to 14 days before that date.

You are entitled to return to work in your old job after the ordinary adoption leave period. If you work full time you have the right to return to your full-time position; you do not have the right to return part time. However, the Company will discuss any request for part time work and will, if possible, offer part time work. Requests should be made in writing to the Company giving as much notice as possible.

Throughout the ordinary adoption leave, all your terms and conditions of employment are maintained with the sole exception of pay.

Additional adoption leave

If you are entitled to ordinary adoption leave, additional adoption leave starts at the end of the ordinary adoption leave period and ends 26 weeks later. As with ordinary adoption leave, all your terms and conditions of employment are maintained throughout this period with the sole exception of pay.

Notification

The notice periods detailed below must be complied with in order to safeguard your rights.

You must notify the Company in writing of the following no later than seven days after being matched with a child for adoption:

- the date of placement of the child for adoption,
- the date on which you intend to start your adoption leave.

You must also provide an Adoption Certificate from the approved adoption agency.

The Company will then write to you within 28 days to confirm your date of return to work.

You can change the date on which you intend to start your adoption leave by giving the Company at least 28 days written notice.

Returning to work

If you take the full entitlement to adoption leave your return date will be the date previously notified to you by the Company. If you wish to return early you must give the Company eight weeks written notice of your early return date. Your early return may be delayed if this procedure is not followed.

If you intend to return to work at the end of your adoption leave but fail to do so, the Company's normal rules regarding absence will apply.

Adoption benefits

Although you do not need any qualifying service or work a minimum number of hours to be entitled to adoption leave or the right to return to work, in order to qualify for Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) from the Company, you need to have the following:

- at least 26 weeks continuous service at the end of the week in which the child was matched with you for adoption,
- average earnings above the National Insurance lower earnings limit during the eight weeks before the week in which the child was matched with you for adoption.

If you meet these conditions you are entitled, subject to special rules where the adoption is disrupted or where the child reaches age 18, to a maximum of 39 weeks SAP, which is calculated as:

- 6 weeks at 90% of average weekly earnings,
- 33 weeks at the lesser of the lower rate of SAP or 90% of average weekly earnings. In order to be paid SAP, you should notify the Company in writing of the following no later than 28 days before the date on which you wish your SAP to begin:
 - the name and address of the approved adoption agency,
 - the date on which the child is expected to be placed for adoption and, where the child has already been placed for adoption, the date of placement,
 - the date on which you were informed that the child was to be placed with you for adoption.

Paternity rights (birth)

Ante-natal appointments

You are entitled to accompany the child's mother on up to two ante-natal appointments without pay during working hours. This is on condition that you have or expect to have responsibility for the upbringing of the child and that you are the biological father of the child or are married to or are the partner of the child's mother.

The maximum time off for each appointment is six and a half hours and you will be expected to return to work after keeping your appointment wherever possible.

Ordinary paternity leave

If you have at least 26 weeks continuous service at the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC), you are entitled to choose to take either one week or two consecutive weeks of ordinary paternity leave if you meet the following conditions:

- you have or expect to have responsibility for the upbringing of the child,
- you are the biological father of the child or married to/partner of child's mother.

You cannot start your ordinary paternity leave until the child is born and it must end within 56 days beginning with the date on which the child is born or the first day of the EWC, whichever is the later. You must give prior notice of the day you intend to start

your ordinary paternity leave, which can be:

- the day on which the child is born,
 - a day which you specify as a number of days after the day on which the child is born,
 - a predetermined date, which must be later than the first day of the EWC.
- Throughout the ordinary paternity leave, all your terms and conditions of employment are maintained with the sole exception of pay.

Paternity benefits

If you are entitled to ordinary paternity leave and your average earnings were above the National Insurance lower earnings limit during the eight weeks up to and including the 15th week before the EWC, you are entitled to be paid Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP). SPP is paid during the entire ordinary paternity leave period and is the lesser of:

- the standard rate of SPP or
- 90% of average weekly earnings.

Notification

To safeguard your rights to ordinary paternity leave and pay you must complete a Form SC3 by the 15th week before the EWC. You can change the date on which you intend to start your ordinary paternity leave by completing a new Form SC3 at least 28 days before the original leave date.

Paternity rights (adoption)

Pre-adoption appointments

If you are the primary adopter's partner and you have been advised that a child is due or expected to be placed with you for adoption you are entitled to attend up to two preadoption appointments without pay during working hours. The appointments must have been made by or at the request of the adoption agency and the maximum time off for each appointment is six and a half hours. You will be expected to return to work after keeping your appointment wherever possible.

Ordinary paternity leave

If you have at least 26 weeks continuous service at the end of the week in which the child's adopter is matched with the child for a UK adoption, you are entitled to choose to take either one week or two consecutive weeks of ordinary paternity leave if you meet the following conditions:

- you are not taking adoption leave in respect of the child,
- you have or expect to have responsibility for the upbringing of the child,
- you are married to or are the partner of the child's adopter.

You cannot start your ordinary paternity leave before the day the child is placed with the adopter and it must end within 56 days beginning with the date of placement. You must give prior notice of the day you intend to start your ordinary paternity leave, which can be:

- the day on which the child is placed with the adopter,
- a day which you specify as a number of days after the day on which the child is placed with the adopter,
- a predetermined date, which must be later than the date on which the child is expected to be placed for adoption.

Throughout the ordinary paternity leave, all your terms and conditions of employment are maintained with the sole exception of pay.

Paternity benefits

If you are entitled to ordinary paternity leave and your average earnings were above the National Insurance lower earnings limit during the eight weeks before the week in which the child was matched for adoption, you are entitled to be paid Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP). SPP is paid during the entire ordinary paternity leave period and is the lesser of:

- the standard rate of SPP or
- 90% of average weekly earnings.

Notification

To safeguard your rights to ordinary paternity leave and pay you must complete a Form SC4 no later than seven days after the date on which the adopter is notified of having been matched with the child for adoption. You can change the date on which you intend to start your ordinary paternity leave by completing a new Form SC4 at least 28 days before the original leave date.

Shared parental rights (birth)

Introduction

Many parents will be able to share leave in the year after their child's birth and take leave in a more flexible way by stopping and starting their shared parental leave, taking their leave at the same time, and returning to work between periods of leave.

To qualify for shared parental leave you must have at least 26 weeks continuous service at the end of the 15th week before the EWC and still be in employment the week before you take the shared parental leave. In addition, you must share the main responsibility for the care of the child that the shared parental leave and pay relates to with the other parent and meet an 'employment and earnings' test.

Opting into shared parental leave and pay

If the mother and her partner agree, the mother can curtail her current maternity leave and 'convert' what remains of the leave period into shared parental leave (SPL). The mother must do this by giving formal notice to her employer and, if you are the mother, we have a form that can be completed to provide the required information. At least eight

weeks' notice must be given to curtail maternity leave, at which time the mother and her partner must also give their respective employers an indication of how they intend to take the shared parental leave and pay.

The mother's notice to curtail maternity leave will normally be accompanied by a notice of entitlement to take shared parental leave and a request for a period of shared parental leave and pay. Once notice to curtail maternity leave has been given, it can only be withdrawn in very limited circumstances. However, if the mother gives notice to curtail her maternity leave before the child is born, she has up to six weeks after the birth to change her mind. If the mother revokes her curtailment notice, she remains on maternity leave and can give a new notice to curtail her maternity leave at a later date.

Taking shared parental leave

Before you can take shared parental leave and pay you must provide your employer with a notice of your entitlement to shared parental leave and pay, and this must be accompanied by a 'declaration' from your partner. This is a 'one off' notice and, if you are the mother, you will already have given this notice with your notice to curtail your maternity leave. If you are the mother's partner we have a form that can be completed to provide the required information. The total number of weeks of SPL available is 52 weeks minus the maternity leave that the mother has already taken (including the compulsory maternity leave period). The leave must be taken in whole weeks part weeks count as whole weeks), and it must be taken before the child's first birthday.

All your terms and conditions of employment are maintained throughout the SPL period with the sole exception of pay and, if your combined total of maternity/paternity and SPL does not exceed 26 weeks, you are entitled to return to work in your old job. If you work full time you have the right to return to your full-time position; you do not have the right to return part time. However, your employer will discuss any request for part time work and will, if possible, offer part time work. Requests should be made in writing to your employer, giving as much notice as possible.

Notification

You are allowed three 'notifications' to take a period of SPL. A minimum of eight weeks' notice must be given before each period of leave, and the mother's first notice to take SPL will usually be included as part of the notice to curtail maternity leave.

If your notice is for a continuous period of SPL, for example six weeks off, it cannot be refused. If, however, your notice is for a discontinuous period of leave, for example six weeks comprising three weeks of SPL, three weeks in work, then three weeks of SPL, this can be refused. The first two weeks of the eight-week notice period are to enable you and your employer to discuss this type of request and to try to reach agreement on the pattern of leave.

If agreement cannot be reached you have until the 15th day after you submitted your request (i.e. the day after the discussion period expires) to either let the request stand or to withdraw the request. If you let the request stand your employer can insist that the SPL is taken as a period of continuous leave (in the above example as a continuous period of six weeks). You then have five days in which to decide the start date for the period of continuous leave, otherwise it will start on the date of the first period you previously notified. Alternatively, you can withdraw the request and it will not count as one of your three notifications.

If you want to change the dates of a previously notified period of SPL and your employer agrees to this, then the change does not count as a formal 'notification'. If, however, your employer does not agree to the change you can submit a formal notification of the

change (giving at least eight weeks' notice). Your employer will have to accept this notification, but the change will count as one of your three 'notifications'.

Statutory Shared Parental Pay

If you qualified for SMP, MA or SPP you will also qualify for Statutory Shared Parental Pay (SSPP). The total number of weeks of SSPP available is 39 weeks minus the number of weeks of SMP already paid to the mother. SSPP is paid at the lesser of:

- the standard rate of SSPP or
- 90% of average weekly earnings.

As there will be more weeks of SPL available than weeks of SSPP, employees who claim SSPP will be required to sign a declaration stating the total pay available and the total pay received.

Shared parental rights (adoption)

Introduction

Many parents will be able to share leave in the year after the adoption and take leave in a more flexible way by stopping and starting their shared parental leave, taking their leave at the same time, and returning to work between periods of leave.

To qualify for shared parental leave you must have at least 26 weeks continuous service at the end of the week in which the adopter is notified of having been matched with a child for adoption and still be in employment the week before you take the shared parental leave. In addition, you must share the main responsibility for the care of the child that the shared parental leave and pay relates to with the other parent and meet an 'employment and earnings test'.

Opting into shared parental leave and pay

If the primary adopter and their partner agree, the primary adopter can curtail their current adoption leave and 'convert' what remains of the leave period into shared parental leave (SPL). The primary adopter must do this by giving formal notice to the employer and, if you are the primary adopter, we have a form that can be completed to provide the required information. At least eight weeks' notice must be given to curtail adoption leave, at which time the primary adopter and their partner must also give their respective employers an indication of how they intend to take the shared parental leave and pay.

The primary adopter's notice to curtail adoption leave will normally be accompanied by a notice of entitlement to take shared parental leave and a request for a period of shared parental leave and pay. Once notice to curtail adoption leave has been given, it can only be withdrawn in very limited circumstances.

Taking shared parental leave

Before you can take shared parental leave and pay you must provide your employer with a notice of your entitlement to shared parental leave and pay, and this must be accompanied by a 'declaration' from your partner. This is a 'one off' notice and, if you are the primary adopter, you will already have given this notice with your notice to

curtail your adoption leave.

If you are the secondary adopter/adopter's partner we have a form that can be completed to provide the required information. The total number of weeks of SPL available is 52 weeks minus the adoption leave that the primary adopter has already taken (including the compulsory adoption leave period). The leave must be taken in whole weeks (part-weeks count as whole weeks), and it must be taken during the first year following the adoption.

All your terms and conditions of employment are maintained throughout the SPL period with the sole exception of pay and, if your combined total of adoption/paternity and SPL does not exceed 26 weeks, you are entitled to return to work in your old job. If you work full time you have the right to return to your full-time position; you do not have the right to return part time. However, your employer will discuss any request for part time work and will, if possible, offer part time work. Requests should be made in writing to your employer, giving as much notice as possible.

Notification

You are allowed three 'notifications' to take a period of SPL. A minimum of eight weeks' notice must be given before each period of leave, and the primary adopter's first notice to take SPL will usually be included as part of the notice to curtail adoption leave.

If your notice is for a continuous period of SPL, for example six weeks off, it cannot be refused. If, however, your notice is for a discontinuous period of leave, for example six weeks comprising three weeks of SPL, three weeks in work, then three weeks of SPL, this can be refused. The first two weeks of the eight-week notice period are to enable you and your employer to discuss this type of request and to try to reach agreement on the pattern of leave.

If agreement cannot be reached you have until the 15th day after you submitted your request (i.e. the day after the discussion period expires) to either let the request stand or to withdraw the request. If you let the request stand your employer can insist that the SPL is taken as a period of continuous leave (in the above example as a continuous period of six weeks). You then have five days in which to decide the start date for the period of continuous leave, otherwise it will start on the date of the first period you previously notified. Alternatively, you can withdraw the request and it will not count as one of your three notifications.

If you want to change the dates of a previously notified period of SPL and your employer agrees to this, then the change does not count as a formal 'notification'. If, however, your employer does not agree to the change you can submit a formal notification of the change (giving at least eight weeks' notice). Your employer will have to accept this notification, but the change will count as one of your three 'notifications'.

Statutory Shared Parental Pay

If you qualified for SAP or SPP you will also qualify for Statutory Shared Parental Pay (SSPP). The total number of weeks of SSPP available is 39 weeks minus the number of weeks of SAP already paid to the primary adopter. SSPP is paid at the lesser of:

- the standard rate of SSPP or
- 90% of average weekly earnings

As there will be more weeks of SPL available than weeks of SSPP, employees who claim SSPP will be required to sign a declaration stating the total pay available and the total pay received.

Parental bereavement leave

Parents who suffer the devastating loss of a child will be entitled to up to two weeks' parental bereavement leave if they meet the following conditions:

- the child was under the age of 18 or still born in or after the 24th week of pregnancy; and
- either they had the responsibility for the upbringing of the child; or they are the biological parent of the child or are married to or are the partner of the child's mother or father.

This may be taken as either two consecutive weeks or two separate blocks of one week and must be taken within 56 weeks of the child's death.

Throughout the parental bereavement leave, all terms and conditions of employment are maintained with the sole exception of pay.

In order to take parental bereavement leave, the employee should give the Company notice of:

- the date of death;
- the date the parental bereavement leave will start; and
- how long the leave will be.

Where the employee wishes to take the leave within eight weeks of the child's death, this notice should be given before the leave starts or where this is not reasonably practicable, as soon as is reasonably practicable. If the employee wishes to subsequently cancel a week's parental bereavement leave, they should give notice to the Company before the start of that working week.

If an employee wishes to take the leave after eight weeks of the child's death but before the 56th week, this notice should be given at least one week before the start of the leave. Such leave can also be cancelled by giving at least one week's notice before the start of that week.

There is no qualifying service or a minimum number of hours worked to be entitled to parental bereavement leave. In order to qualify for Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay (SPBP) from the Company, an employee needs to have the following:

- at least 26 weeks continuous service at the end of the week before the child's death
- average earnings above the National Insurance lower earnings limit during the eight weeks before the week of the child's death.

Where these conditions are met, there will be an entitlement to a maximum of two weeks SPBP, paid at the statutory rate or 90% of average weekly earnings where this is lower.

Time off for dependants

You will be allowed to take reasonable time off work without pay to deal with an

emergency involving a dependant. The amount of time off which is allowed will depend on the circumstances.

For example, if a dependant is ill or injured, reasonable time off will be given to deal with the emergency – this does not mean that you will be allowed to take time off to look after the dependant personally.

Compassionate leave

Paid compassionate leave for one day will be granted to attend the funeral of a close relative. In addition, paid compassionate leave for up to three additional days will be granted in the event of the death of a spouse, civil partner, child or parent.

Flexible working

If you have at least 26 weeks continuous service with the Company you have a statutory right to ask for your contract of employment to be varied.

Any request for a variation must relate to:

- the hours you are required to work,
- the time when you are required to work, or
- the place where you are required to work (i.e. at home or at any place of business operated by the Company).

Requests must be made in writing and must include the following information:

- a statement that it is a request for a variation of your contract of employment,
- the variation you are seeking and the proposed commencement date,
- an explanation of the effect you think the change would have on the Company and how it might be dealt with.

On receipt of your formal request, the Company will arrange to meet with you to discuss.

Normally you can only make one request in any 12-month period for your contract of employment to be varied and, if the Company grants your request, the variation will be a permanent change to your contract of employment.

Jury service/attendance as a witness

If you are called for jury service or as a court witness, you will be granted unpaid leave of absence and you should claim for loss of earnings from the court. You will normally be given a form from the court asking for confirmation of your normal salary, which should be completed by the Company.

Public duties

The Company will allow reasonable time off without pay for designated public duties,

such as a Justice of the Peace.

General

If there are any aspects of this section that are unclear, you are encouraged to put any questions you may have to the Registered Manager.

4

General information

Insurance whilst on Company business

The Company's employers' liability insurance covers all employees for injury or death

from an incident whilst working for the Company. This is only payable when the Company is found to have been negligent in its role as an employer.

Damage or loss to personal property

Compensation for damage to or loss of personal possessions will only be considered if the Company can be held to have been negligent. All damage or loss should be reported to the Company immediately. Where there is evidence that the accident or loss occurred through lack of care on your part, compensation will not normally be paid and you should check whether a claim could be made on your personal insurance policy to cover such circumstances.

You are advised not to leave any personal possessions or valuables unattended on the premises.

Return of Company property

On the termination of your employment for whatever reason, you must return all Company property in your possession or for which you have responsibility. Failure to return all such items will result in the cost of the unreturned items being deducted from any monies outstanding to you. This is an express written term of your contract of employment.

Change of address or personal circumstances

You must always advise the Company in writing when you have a change in personal circumstances that will affect your personnel record. Particular examples include details of your address, telephone number, emergency contact, bank details and any qualifications.

You must also seek authority from the Company if you wish to take additional employment. In order to work more than an average of 48 hours in a week, you must sign an individual waiver form.

Health and safety

From the point of view of safety and appearance, work areas must be kept clean and tidy at all times.

You are required to take reasonable care of your own well-being and that of all other employees. The relevant health and safety notices are posted around the premises and you are expected to be familiar with their requirements.

The use of controlled drugs or the consumption of alcohol by employees is inappropriate at any time during working hours and before work. If your doctor prescribes drugs that may affect your ability to work, you must discuss this with the Registered Manager.

If you have an accident or injury at work you must enter the incident in the Accident Book. The date, time and nature of the incident should be entered and whether it was witnessed.

Hygiene

Any exposed cut or burn must be covered with a first-aid dressing.

If you are suffering from an infectious or contagious disease or illness such as rubella or hepatitis you must not report for work without clearance from your own doctor.

Contact with any person suffering from an infectious or contagious disease must be reported before commencing work.

When attending clients or visiting the office you must comply with all current regulations in respect of Covid-19 infection control including social distances and use of PPE.

Hygiene for food handlers

Overalls/uniforms, including head covering where provided, must be worn at all appropriate times.

Any cuts or sores on the hand or arm must be covered with an approved dressing.

No jewellery should be worn, other than a wedding ring and stud earrings, without the permission of the Registered Manager.

Excessive amounts of make-up or perfume must not be worn, and nail varnish is not allowed.

If you are suffering from an infectious or contagious disease or illness, or have a bowel disorder, boils, skin or mouth infection, you must not report for work without clearance from your own doctor.

Contact with any person suffering from an infectious or contagious disease must be reported before commencing work.

As indicated above employees must follow all current Covid-19 regulations

Pay/Payslips

At the relevant payment interval you will receive a payslip giving details of all payments and deductions e.g. gross pay, income tax, national insurance, etc.

Overpayments

If you are overpaid for any reason you are required to notify the person who pays the wages. The amount of overpayment will normally be deducted from the following payment but if this would cause hardship, alternative arrangements to repay may be made. Any failure to report an overpayment may result in disciplinary action.

Income tax

In compliance with the law, you will receive a P60 each year detailing earnings and

payment of income tax and National Insurance. This document should be kept in a safe place.

5

Company facilities and amenities

Unless specified to the contrary in your Contract of Employment, the benefits and facilities in this section are discretionary and may be withdrawn or altered by the Company at any time.

Food and drink facilities

These facilities are provided at the Office for the convenience of all employees. Where

used, please ensure they are left in a clean and tidy condition after use. Care must be taken when using hot/electrical equipment and you must adhere to all health and safety rules concerning their use.

Please note that for health and safety reasons personal portable electrical appliances must not be brought onto the premises.

Car parking

The Company does not provide any car parking facilities and does not accept liability for any damage or fines imposed on employee vehicles.

6

Company procedures

Disciplinary procedure

Purpose

The Company firmly believes that the fairest way to resolve any problems relating to

conduct or performance is to have a well-structured disciplinary procedure. The procedure is designed to help and encourage all employees to achieve and maintain the Company's standards of conduct, attendance and performance and should be looked upon as a corrective process.

Please read the following principles and procedures carefully as they form an important part of your terms and conditions of employment:

Principles

Apart from an informal verbal warning, you have the following rights in relation to disciplinary action:

- to be informed of the allegations of misconduct or poor performance to be addressed at any disciplinary hearing,
- to be accompanied by a work colleague or by an accredited trade union official,
- to appeal against any disciplinary action.

The procedure

Formal verbal warning

In the case of conduct, attendance or performance not reaching the required standard, the problem will be discussed with you at a disciplinary hearing where you will be given the opportunity to offer a satisfactory explanation. If the explanation is unsatisfactory, you will be issued with a formal verbal warning. The topics discussed at the meeting will be confirmed in writing to you and the verbal warning will remain on your file for six months.

Written warning

A written warning will be issued following a disciplinary hearing where there is a current formal verbal warning on your file and sufficient improvement has not been made or where the misconduct or poor performance is serious enough to warrant the Company bypassing the formal verbal warning stage. A written warning will remain on file for 12 months.

Final written warning

If there is still insufficient improvement in your conduct, or if your performance is still unsatisfactory, you will be asked to attend a further disciplinary hearing. If no satisfactory explanation is offered for the lack of improvement, you will be issued with a final written warning that will remain on file for 12 months.

If the misconduct is sufficiently serious to warrant only one warning but is not sufficiently serious to justify dismissal, a final written warning will be issued. You will be informed in your final written warning that any further misconduct or failure to meet the required standard will result in your dismissal.

Dismissal

Dismissal will normally result if you still fail to achieve the standard of conduct or performance required by the Company.

You will be given every opportunity to offer an explanation for your failure to meet the

required standards at a final disciplinary hearing. As with all previous stages of the disciplinary procedure you will be offered the right to be accompanied and the right to appeal against the decision.

If you are dismissed, you will be provided, as soon as is reasonably practicable, with the reasons for dismissal, the date on which your employment will terminate and details of how you may appeal.

In exceptional circumstances, the Company reserves the right, as an alternative to dismissal, to impose a penalty of suspension without pay for up to a maximum of five working days, together with a final written warning that will remain on file for 12 months.

General

You will always be given as much information as possible regarding the allegations of misconduct, or any documentation detailing the shortfall in performance or capability that will form the basis of the disciplinary hearing. You will also be given fair and reasonable notice of the date and time of the hearing and whenever possible the disciplinary hearing will be held during your normal working hours.

Any disciplinary action will only be taken after a full investigation of the facts, and if it is necessary to suspend you for this period of time, you will receive your normal rate of pay.

The Company reserves the right to vary the disciplinary procedure dependent on either the seriousness of the allegations of misconduct or capability to be addressed, or if you only have a short amount of service. It also reserves the right to call on a third party to assist with the disciplinary process.

If you are a short service employee or are still within the probationary period, you may not be issued with any warnings before dismissal.

NB The Company reserves the right to deduct from pay the cost of any damage or loss to property or goods, which after a disciplinary hearing was found to have been caused by your negligence or vandalism.

Conduct covered

Conduct at work

The Company expects all employees to behave in a normal and reasonable manner. The following list provides examples of the type of conduct that the Company would expect:

- To be punctual for the start of work and to keep within the break times.
- To give regular attendance at work and to minimise all absenteeism.
- To be courteous, helpful and polite to all those with whom you have contact.
- To devote all your time and attention, whilst at work, to the Company and ensure that all its property including confidential information, records, equipment, information technology, etc., is kept safe and used correctly.
- To comply with all the Company rules and regulations and to observe and perform all the terms of your employment as set out or referred to in your Contract of Employment.
- Not to be involved with any company, client or agent who is in direct

competition with the Company. You are expected to devote all your loyalty to the Company.

Conduct outside working hours

Normally the Company has no jurisdiction over employee activity outside working hours. Behaviour outside working hours will only become an issue if the activities adversely affect the Company.

Adverse publicity, bringing the Company name into disrepute, or actions that result in loss of faith in the Company, resulting in loss of business, or loss of faith in the integrity of the individual, will result in the disciplinary procedure being instigated.

The detriment suffered by the Company will determine the level of misconduct and it will also determine which disciplinary stage is most appropriate to suit the circumstances.

If the actions cause extreme embarrassment or serious damage to the Company's reputation or image, a decision may be taken to terminate the employment.

The Company's procedures covering disciplinary hearings and appeals still apply.

Gross misconduct

Gross misconduct will result in summary dismissal, which means you lose your right to notice or pay in lieu of notice.

Here is a list of offences that are normally regarded as "gross misconduct". It is not exhaustive, but it describes the kind of offence that can result in summary dismissal.

- Deliberate failure to comply with the published rules of the Company, including those covering cash handling, security, health and safety, safeguarding, equal opportunities, the duty of candour, the Internet, etc.
- Deliberate falsification of records.
- The committing of offences against current discrimination legislation whilst acting on behalf of the Company.
- Fighting or assaulting another person.
- Using threatening or offensive language towards clients or other employees.
- Making yourself unfit to work by solvent abuse, drinking alcohol, taking of illegal substances or failing to follow medical instructions on prescribed drugs.
- Borrowing money or property from any service user.
- Being in unauthorised possession of our property or service users' property.
- Being in possession of illegal drugs and substances or alcohol whilst on Company or client premises.
- Obscene behaviour.
- Behaviour likely to bring the Company into disrepute.
- Wilful and deliberate damage to or misuse of Company or client property.
- Refusal to carry out reasonable duties or instructions.
- Sleeping whilst on wakeful duties.
- Conviction on a criminal charge that is relevant to your employment with the Company.

- The misuse including use for personal gain, of confidential information in the course of working for the Company.
- Undertaking private work without permission.

Disciplinary appeal procedure

At each stage of the disciplinary procedure, you will be given the right of appeal. If you wish to exercise your right of appeal, you should put your reasons in writing to a Director not previously involved in the disciplinary decision within five days of receiving written confirmation of the disciplinary decision taken against you. You will need to explain why you feel the decision is unfair, or inappropriate in relation to the matters addressed at the disciplinary hearing.

If you have any new information or evidence to support your appeal, please give details in full and include the names of any witnesses you may wish to call to support you in your appeal. This is in order that there will be sufficient time to investigate any additional information before the appeal hearing. You are entitled to be accompanied at the appeal hearing by a work colleague or by an accredited trade union official.

Although the purpose of the appeal is to review any disciplinary penalty imposed, it cannot increase the disciplinary penalty. The decision of the person dealing with your appeal is final.

Grievance procedure

A grievance procedure is quite simply a way for all employees to discuss any problems, or air their views on any dissatisfaction that relates to their work. An informal discussion can often resolve matters, but if you wish to raise the grievance formally, it should be done in the following way.

Submit your formal written grievance to the Registered Manager who will make every effort to hear your grievance within five working days. If you feel that you need help in putting your point of view across, you may ask a work colleague or an accredited trade union official to be present to help you explain the issue you are raising.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your meeting, tell the person who dealt with your grievance that you wish to take the matter further and intend to appeal against the outcome.

Submit your formal written appeal to a Director not previously involved in the grievance decision within five days of receiving written confirmation of the grievance decision, including an explanation of why you are dissatisfied with the original decision.

Every effort will be made to hear your appeal within five working days and you may ask a work colleague or an accredited trade union official to be present to help you. Although the Company will always be willing to try to resolve your grievance as amicably as possible, a decision reached at the appeal stage is final.

Please note that the Company reserves the right to call on a third party to assist in resolving grievances.

Public interest disclosures

Employees and workers who make public disclosures, generally about wrong doings in the workplace, are commonly referred to as "whistle-blowers". Under certain circumstances "whistle-blowers" are protected under legislation for disclosing information that is known as "qualifying". A qualifying disclosure must relate to:

- committing a criminal offence
- failing to comply with a legal obligation
- a miscarriage of justice
- endangering the health and safety of an individual
- environmental damage
- concealing any information relating to the above

All employees are legally protected if they make a qualifying disclosure relating to any of the above points. Anyone wishing to make a disclosure is strongly recommended to raise the issue with the Registered Manager in the first instance so that, where appropriate, there is an opportunity to address the area of concern.

Where an employee wishes to make a disclosure that concerns a matter that cannot be dealt with through the above procedure, it should be raised with *Public Concern at Work*, an independent whistleblowing charity, on 0207 404 6609.

Claiming and accounting for expenses

If you incur or anticipate incurring legitimate expenses on the Company's behalf then you can claim them back on production of valid receipts. Claims can only be made for expenses incurred wholly in respect of business purposes.

Rights of search

The Company has a contractual right of search in order to combat misappropriation of Company property, stock losses, or if the Company genuinely believes that drugs or any illegal substances are on the premises. The right of search is to address problems relating to the above issues.

Under the rights of search procedure the Company may carry out random checks on the identity, person, and property, including vehicles of employees at any time whilst they are on Company premises or business. It is understood that such checks in themselves do not imply suspicion in relation to the individual concerned.

You may be asked to remove the contents of your pockets, bags, vehicle, etc., and you will have the right to be accompanied by a third party who is on the premises at the time of search.

If a personal search is deemed to be necessary, you will be entitled to be searched by a member of the same sex.

Any refusal will be regarded as a refusal to carry out a reasonable instruction and will normally result in dismissal.

The Company reserves the right to call the police for assistance at any stage.

CCTV surveillance

The Company reserves the right to use closed circuit television (CCTV) systems throughout any client premises as deemed necessary and employees should expect all areas (other than those where use would contravene common decency) to be visible on a television monitoring system.

Any information obtained from systems will be used with strict adherence to the GDPR. Information will be used for the prevention and detection of crime and to ensure compliance with our policies and procedures and our legal obligations. This may include using recorded images as evidence in disciplinary proceedings.

Use of private vehicles on Company Business

The use of your own vehicle for Company business requires authorisation. Once authorised, you may claim a mileage allowance providing the Company has approved the travel.

You must have a valid licence to drive the vehicle and you are responsible for ensuring that your vehicle is in a roadworthy condition, with a valid MOT certificate (if applicable) and current vehicle tax, and that you have adequate insurance cover in place before undertaking any business travel. The Company will not accept any liability in the event of an accident, prosecution or fine.

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Company policies

Equal opportunities and discrimination policy

The Company recognises that discrimination is not only unacceptable, it is also unlawful.

The Company's aim is to ensure that no job applicant or employee is discriminated against, directly or indirectly, on any unlawful grounds.

By including this policy in the Employee Handbook, all employees are made aware that the Company will act in accordance with all statutory requirements and take into account any relevant codes of practice.

All job applicants will be considered solely on their ability to do the job. Interview questions will not be of a discriminatory nature.

All promotions will be made on merit in line with the principles of the policy. Employees who have a disability will receive the necessary help, within reason, to enable them to carry out their normal duties effectively.

This policy will be assessed at regular intervals to ensure that equality of opportunity is afforded to all employees.

Harassment policy

The Company will not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying. The purpose of this policy is to inform employees of the type of behaviour that is totally unacceptable and to explain what solutions there are to employees who may suffer harassment or bullying.

The Company intends to provide a neutral working environment in which no one feels threatened or intimidated.

Harassment is a discriminatory act and is also a criminal offence. It is very difficult to define as it can take many forms, but in the main it takes the form of unwanted behaviour by one employee towards another, for example:

- Patronising or belittling comments.
- Comments about appearance/body/clothes.
- Leering or staring at a person's body.
- Unwelcome sexual invitations or pressure
- Promises or threats, concerning employment or conditions, in exchange for sexual favours.
- Displaying offensive or sexually explicit material.
- Touching, caressing, hugging or indecent assault.

Please remember the test is that the behaviour is UNWELCOME, UNINVITED AND UNRECIPROCATED.

Bullying is also difficult to define. Obvious examples are:

- Threats of or actual physical violence.
- Unpleasant or over repeated jokes about a person.
- Unfair or impractical work loading.

Procedure

If you encounter a problem of this nature, it is vital that you make the person responsible aware that his/her remarks or conduct are offensive to you. This should be done in a simple, straightforward way.

It is recognised that complaints of harassment or bullying are often of a sensitive or worrying nature and that it may be difficult to speak directly to the other employee involved. If this is the case, you should put your request in writing and hand it to the harasser or bully.

When or if the informal approach fails or if you believe that the harassment or bullying is of a very serious nature you must bring the matter to the attention of the Registered Manager. If possible, you should keep notes of the harassment or bullying so that the formal complaint can be investigated, including the date, time and whereabouts of the act.

If you make a formal complaint it will be dealt with under the grievance procedure and all possible actions will be taken to separate you from the alleged harasser or bully. If the alleged harasser or bully is a service user or visitor, steps will be taken to relocate you or in the case of a service user consider withdrawing services from the individual concerned where appropriate.

If you bring a complaint of harassment or bullying you will not be victimised for having brought the complaint. However, following a full investigation, if the Company has grounds to believe that the complaint was brought with malicious intent, you will be subject to disciplinary action under the Company's disciplinary procedure.

The Company's appeal procedures apply to appeals against decisions made under the equal opportunities and discrimination policy and the harassment policy.

Anti-bribery policy

Introduction

The Company values its reputation for ethical behaviour and for financial probity and reliability. It recognises that over and above the commission of any crime, any involvement in bribery will also reflect adversely on its image and reputation. Its aim therefore, is to limit its exposure to bribery by:

- setting out a clear anti-bribery policy,
- establishing and implementing anti-bribery procedures as appropriate,
- communicating this policy and any relevant procedures to employees and to others who will perform services for the Company,
- undertaking appropriate due diligence measures before engaging others to represent the Company in its business dealings,
- monitoring and reviewing the risks and the effectiveness of any anti-bribery procedures that are in place.

Policy

The Company prohibits the offering, giving, solicitation or acceptance of any bribe (whether cash or other inducement):

- to or from any person or company (wherever they are situated and whether they are a public official or body or private person or company),
- by any individual employee, agent or other person or body acting on behalf of the Company,
- in order to gain any commercial, contractual or regulatory advantage for the

Company in a way that is unethical,
· or in order to gain any personal advantage (pecuniary or otherwise) for the individual or anyone connected with the individual.

This policy prohibits any inducement that results in a personal gain or advantage to the recipient or any person or body associated with them, and which is intended to influence them to take action that may not be solely in the interests of the Company or of the person or body employing them or whom they represent.

This policy is not meant to prohibit normal and appropriate hospitality or the giving of a gift on a festival or at another special time, providing they are customary in a particular market, are proportionate and are properly recorded.

Inevitably, decisions as to what is acceptable may not always be easy. If you are in any doubt as to whether a potential act constitutes bribery, the matter should be referred to the Registered Manager before proceeding.

Employees' responsibility

The prevention, detection and reporting of bribery is the responsibility of all employees and the Company is committed to:

- encouraging employees to be vigilant and to report any suspicion of bribery,
- providing employees with suitable channels of communication and ensuring that sensitive information is treated appropriately,
- investigating instances of alleged bribery and assisting the police and other appropriate authorities in any resultant prosecution,
- taking disciplinary action against any individual(s) involved in bribery.

Any suspicion of bribery should be reported in confidence to the Directors who have overall responsibility for bribery prevention.

Criminal records

Most posts within the Company are exempt, because of the nature of the work, from the provisions of Section 4(2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, by virtue of the Exceptions Order 1975 as amended.

This means that for exempt posts all convictions, including those that are "spent" under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, but excluding those that are "protected" under the Exceptions Order, will be made known to us.

Criminal record checks are carried out on relevant employees at the commencement of their employment and any subsequent safeguarding investigations or suspensions, police arrests, criminal charges or convictions must be notified to the Registered Manager.

"Convictions" include convictions in a court of law, police cautions, reprimands and final warnings.

Vetting and Barring Scheme

If your work is classed as a 'regulated activity' under the above scheme we will be required to check whether or not your name is included on the Adults' List maintained by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as being barred from working with vulnerable

groups.

In addition, if we believe that you are guilty of misconduct that has harmed or placed a member of a vulnerable group at risk of harm, we have a statutory duty to refer your name to the DBS for possible inclusion on the Adults' List. This duty also applies in relation to ex-employees.

Private dealings with clients

You must not accept gifts of any kind from clients or their relatives without the registered manager's permission. This will normally be granted for non-cash gifts up to a value of **£10** but you must check first. Any such offers made to you must be reported to the Registered Manager.

You must not agree to any request from a client or relative to act as a witness or executor for any will or power of attorney. Any such requests must be re-directed to the Registered Manager.

Staff should not visit or contact Cara clients outside their designated visits without the knowledge and permission of the registered manager

Staff should not visit or maintain contact with clients from previous employment without first gaining clearance from the registered manager.

Statements to relatives

Statements or opinions relating to a client's physical or mental well-being must only be given to clients' family if approved by the registered manager or supervisors.

Communication and representation policy

Introduction

The Company will take every step to communicate to all employees with particular respect to its products, services, and plans for the future, etc. It also encourages employees to express their views in terms of suggestions and opinions.

Notices

All relevant statutory notices will be shared with employees.

The Employee Handbook

All employees will be given a copy of this handbook at the beginning of their employment with the Company. If it is updated a copy of the updated version will be circulated to everyone and this version will supersede any previous version.

A copy of the current version will always be available at the office for reference.

Trade Union membership and recognition

The Company recognises your right either to join or not to join a trade union.

The Company has no current recognition agreement with any union for the purposes of collective bargaining. However, if an individual employee belongs to a trade union, a paid official of that union will be allowed on company premises for the purpose of representation at a disciplinary or individual grievance meeting or any associated appeal meeting.

Mobile phones

As it is necessary for the purpose of operating Cara's CarePlanner rostering system, personal mobile phones must be carried at all times and kept fully charged. However, they should be switched to silent when attending clients.

Computer technology

The Company will not tolerate any employee using Company computers for any purpose other than business use. No one may use any private software on the system. This is necessary to ensure no viruses contaminate the business systems.

The Internet

The Company subscribes to an Internet service in order to provide current information. No employee may use this facility for any personal reasons, including downloading or streaming from the Internet to computers or mobile devices.

The use of social networking sites for personal purposes during working time or on Company terminals or laptops is not permitted and is a breach of Company rules.

Employees using social networking sites away from work must ensure that, if adding personal news items, they do not include reference to the Company by name or by photograph, or to any employee, client, customer or any other person or organisation connected with the Company, or any of their relations or friends.

Failure to comply with this policy will be treated as a serious breach of the rules and will result in disciplinary action being taken, up to and including summary dismissal. Any use of social networking sites that brings the Company into disrepute, or breaches the equal opportunities and discrimination policy or harassment policy, will be regarded as gross misconduct and will result in summary dismissal.

Employee data privacy notice

We are committed to data protection and data privacy. With the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) now in force, we have undertaken a GDPR readiness programme to review our entire business, the way we handle data and the way in which we use it to provide our services and manage business operations.

We hold personal data on all our employees to meet legal obligations and to perform vital internal functions. Our employee data privacy notice details the personal data we may retain, process and share with third parties relating to your employment and vital business operations. We are committed to ensuring that your information is secure, accurate and relevant.

To prevent unauthorised access or disclosure, we have implemented suitable physical, electronic, and managerial procedures to safeguard and secure personal data we hold.

If you would like to see a copy of our employee data privacy notice, please contact the Registered Manager.

Training policy

Introduction

Day to day training is the responsibility of Management who can call on specialised skills and knowledge within the Company and from external sources for advice on training matters.

Aims

The aims of the policy are:

- To provide induction training for all new employees, including relevant health and safety information.
- To provide job specific training to all new employees and to existing employees changing job within the Company, including health & safety information.
- To identify the longer-term development needs of those employees with potential to progress beyond their present job and to meet those needs when they are consistent with the needs of the Company.

Procedures

The procedures for training are:

- A record will be kept for each employee showing the training received.
- The training records will be monitored on a regular basis and the needs checked.
- All training programmes will be monitored and revised as necessary in order to meet changing business needs.

The Company will provide any necessary training and will meet the costs involved.

However, if an employee fails to complete the training or their employment ends within one year of completing any external training course for any reason except redundancy, the employee must reimburse the cost of any training on a pro-rata basis.

Employees will be required to sign an 'Agreement to deduct from pay' prior to starting any external course, which authorises the Company to make this deduction.

Lay off/short time working

If a situation arises where there is a reduction of work, or there is any other occurrence that affects the normal running of the business, the Company has a right to either lay off without pay other than Statutory Guarantee Pay or implement shorter working hours. This procedure is in line with your terms and conditions of employment.

The Company also reserves the right to select the employees best suited to carry out

whatever work is available.

Employees will be offered alternative work wherever possible. Employees who are laid off must still be available for work as and when necessary, since continuity of service is not affected by any period of lay off.

The Company will pay Statutory Guarantee Pay in accordance with the current government regulations.

Any employee who is laid off for longer than the Statutory Guarantee Pay period will be given a letter to take to the relevant government agency. Employees should then be able to sign on as temporarily unemployed, even though they will still be employed by the Company.

Redundancy policy

If a redundancy situation arises, for whatever reason, the Company will take whatever steps are reasonable in an effort to avoid compulsory redundancies, for example:

- Analyse overtime requirement.
- Reduce hours.
- Lay off with Statutory Guarantee Pay.
- Ask for voluntary redundancies, whether anyone has plans to retire or is considering a career move.

If compulsory redundancies are necessary, employees will be involved and consulted at various meetings to discuss selection criteria, any alternative positions, and be given every opportunity to put forward any views of their own.

Employees will be given the opportunity to discuss the selection criteria drawn up. The Company reserves the right to reject any voluntary applications for redundancy if it believes that the volunteer has skills and experience that need to be retained for the future viability of the business.

Drugs and alcohol policy

The Company is committed to maintaining a healthy, safe and productive working environment for its employees. The Company recognises the impact that drugs and alcohol may have on an individual's ability to work safely and correctly and aims to ensure a working environment free from the inappropriate use of substances and where employees are able to carry out their duties in a safe and efficient manner.

The use of drugs or the consumption of alcohol by employees is inappropriate at any time during working hours and before work. If your doctor prescribes drugs that may affect your ability to perform work, you must discuss this with the Registered Manager.

The dispensing, distribution, possession, use, sale or offering to buy controlled drugs or alcohol at work is prohibited. Any such activity (including reasonable suspicion) will be reported to the police. Any employee found to be in breach of these rules will be liable to disciplinary action that may result in dismissal. This will apply whether or not there is any actual threat to health and safety.

Smoking policy

It is illegal to smoke in enclosed or substantially enclosed workplaces and the Company has a policy that prohibits smoking – including e-cigarettes and vaping - except in designated outside areas.

This policy applies to all employees and to visitors to the premises.

Failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary action and possible criminal prosecution.

Smoking on client premises

Smoking is not permitted on client premises, including the use of e-cigarettes or vaping. Any failure to comply with this rule will result in disciplinary action.

Dress code policy

Employees represent the Company whenever they meet clients and we would ask that employees' appearance should be appropriate to the job role at all times.

Employees will be given tunics to wear whilst on Company business. Uniforms must be kept clean, pressed and presentable and should be worn with black shoes with a closed toe/heel and black trousers or, if a skirt is preferred, this should also be black and be at least knee length.

Any personal protective equipment that is issued by the Company must be worn at the relevant time. Failure to wear this equipment may result in disciplinary action.