

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE GROUPS (BARRED LISTS)

The Disclosure and Barring scheme is designed to give greater protection to vulnerable groups. We are obliged, where relevant, to check that potential new workers are not on the Barred List before allowing them to work for us. We are unable to employ anyone in a care capacity who is on this list.

We also have a duty to refer any worker to the Disclosure and Barring Service where we suspect any case of abuse. The Barred Lists are now managed by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AT RISK POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to outline the duty and responsibility of staff and volunteers working on behalf of the organisation in relation to safeguarding adults at risk.

All adults have the right to be safe from harm and must be able to live free from fear of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Abuse of an adult at risk may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may occur as a result of a failure to undertake action or appropriate care tasks. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur where a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which they have not, or cannot, consent.

Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the individual. Concerns about abuse may be raised and reported to the regulatory body as a result of a single incident or repeated incidents of abuse.

Anyone who has concerns about poor care standards and neglect in a care setting may raise these within the service, with the regulatory body and/or with the social services agency.

THE ROLE OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All staff and volunteers working on behalf of the organisation have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of adults at risk. Staff and volunteers may receive disclosures of abuse and observe adults who are at risk. This policy will enable staff/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific adult protection issues.

It is important that adults at risk are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously. This procedure must be followed whenever an allegation of abuse is made or when there is a suspicion that an adult at risk has been abused.

Promises of confidentiality must not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual.

A full record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information. This must include information in relation to the date, the time, the place where the alleged abuse happened, your name and the names of others present, the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the adult who it is alleged has been abused, the nature of the alleged abuse, a description of any injuries observed, the account which has been given of the allegation.

Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the Designated Adult Protection Lead or Senior Manager on that working day where possible.

The nominated member of staff shall telephone and report the matter to the appropriate body/agency. A written record of the date and time of the report shall be made and the report must include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported. The telephone report must be confirmed in writing to the relevant local authority adult social services department within 24 hours.

RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED ADULT AT RISK PROTECTION OFFICER

The role of the designated officer is to deal with all instances involving adult protection that arise within the organisation. They will respond to all adult at risk protection concerns and enquiries.

The designated Vulnerable Adult Protection Lead for the organisation is Jane Howard. Should you have any suspicions or concerns relating to Adult Protection, contact Jane Howard.

Training will be provided, as appropriate, to ensure that staff are aware of these procedures. Specialist training will be provided for the member of staff with vulnerable adult protection responsibilities.

A) INTRODUCTION

We recognise that, from time to time, close personal relationships may develop between members of staff and/or customers, clients or suppliers etc.

Whilst we realise that employees have a right to a private life and therefore do not discourage relationships between employees, such relationships can cause issues where employees are unable to draw an important distinction between private and professional life.

This policy outlines our position on personal relationships between employees in order to ensure our interests are maintained at all times, whilst at the same time balancing the interests of employees. The policy places certain expectations on employees and their managers to ensure that no blurring of judgement or conflict of interest arises.

It also seeks to protect us and you in order to avoid any allegations of improper professional behaviour or harassment.

B) PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

In the context of this policy, a personal relationship is defined as a romantic/sexual relationship.

This policy applies to all our employees, regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

C) YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to ensure potential conflicts of interest are avoided, employees are required to inform their line manager of any personal relationship which may affect their work or compromise the business in any way. Any such information will be treated in the strictest confidence. We fully acknowledge the right of employees to privacy in their personal affairs.

The following points should be observed:

- where the relationship exists between a member of staff and their line manager, it is the responsibility of both to inform a more senior manager
- if an employee is applying for a role in an area of the business in which an individual works with whom they have a personal relationship, this must be declared during the recruitment process to ensure a fair and impartial recruitment exercise
- professionalism must always be maintained both at the workplace and any work-related events which are attended by employees who have a personal relationship
- consistency of treatment is paramount and no preferential or unfavourable treatment of those in the personal relationship or any other person is permitted as a result of the relationship.

D) MANAGERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the manager of a team within which employees are in a personal relationship to take action to ensure the relationship is not the cause of a conflict of interest. Confidentiality must be maintained at all times if the employees do not wish their relationship to be disclosed. Specifically, the manager should:

- consider alternative roles when an employee applies for a role in the same team as their partner and valid concerns are raised regarding the feasibility of this arrangement. This may include consideration of an equivalent role in a different team
- take action where complaints are received from other team members if tensions are caused by the relationship, howsoever they may arise. This may include reorganising working patterns, or moving one or both employees to another department or area of the Organisation. Care should be taken in these circumstances not to make a decision on who is to be moved based on any discriminatory grounds. The manager should seek advice from our HR Consultant before confirming any moves
- report suspicions of fraudulent activity to the Jane Howard
- take advice from our HR consultant in the event that a personal relationship breaks down to avoid allegations of sexual harassment
- maintain an appropriate confidential record of personal relationships using Appendix 1 below.

E) RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES

A more senior manager will be responsible for the conduct of operational matters when a personal relationship exists between a line manager and a person for whom the line manager has responsibility. 'Operational matters' includes but is not limited to:

- dealing with any disciplinary or performance concerns, whether routine or caused by specific incidents
- dealing with any allegations of harassment, including sexual harassment
- signing off any hours worked above normal working hours
- authorising leave of any kind
- confirming any payment arrangements to be made

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- involvement in reorganisation of the area of the business in which the employees work.

F) ANNUAL LEAVE REQUESTS

Annual leave requests from all employees will be dealt with consistently. The authorisation of any requests from employees in personal relationships to take time off at the same time will be made in consideration with the needs of the business at the time, in the same way as requests from other employees.

G) POLICY BREACHES

We will deal with any difficulties caused by personal relationships in the workplace in a sensitive manner and an informal method will always be used in the first instance. However, where this does not bring about a satisfactory resolution, recourse to formal procedures, such as the disciplinary procedure or personal harassment policy and procedure, may be required.

We may deem the following to be disciplinary offences:

- the failure of an employee to declare their personal relationship in accordance with this policy
- actions of a line manager who is in a personal relationship with an employee which are prohibited by this policy
- Inappropriate and / or excessive use of our IT or telephony systems, including email and instant messaging, such as (but not limited to) Microsoft Teams, for personal communication between those involved in personal relationships at work
- The sharing of inappropriate or offensive content using our systems
- Inappropriate physical interactions whilst working or on works premises or clients' sites
- Harassment of any kind, related or unrelated to a personal relationship and including but not limited to sexual harassment.

Employees who are subject to disciplinary action may lodge an appeal to any sanction applied that they are dissatisfied with.

Employees who feel they have been treated unfairly in some way in connection with a personal relationship may raise a grievance in line with our grievance procedure if initial attempts at an informal resolution have not produced a satisfactory outcome for them.

Employees who feel they have been subjected to harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, should raise this in line with our personal harassment policy and procedure.

SIGNATURE:	_____
	For and on behalf of the Employer
DATE:	_____

SIGNATURE:	_____
	Employee
DATE:	_____

Appendix 1

Strictly Private and Confidential

Declaration of Personal Relationship at Work

To be completed by the line manager

<u>Name of employee:</u> 	<u>Department:</u> <u>Job title:</u>
<u>Name of other employee in the personal relationship:</u> 	<u>Department:</u> <u>Job title:</u>
<u>Name of line manager completing the form:</u> 	
Potential or foreseeable conflicts of interest and actions taken	
Potential or foreseeable conflicts of interest	Actions taken
<u>Employee signature:</u> <u>Date:</u>	
<u>Line manager signature:</u> <u>Date:</u>	

