

Agency and employee management policy guidance

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How to use the guide

Why is there a need for policies and procedures?

If a CLH organisation has not agreed on policies and procedures, it means either that all decisions have to be taken at governing body meetings or individuals have to take decisions and the governing body may not be in control.

Some CLH organisations have managed well for years without many agreed policies and procedures. But then something happens – a problem arises, a member or resident complains about how things are done, several people fall out about something or a claim is made against the CLH organisation.

Without written policies and procedures, these things can be very difficult to manage. It is difficult to maintain fairness and objectivity without agreed policies and procedures. Having them means that everyone knows what to expect. Without them, those who are confident and self-assured can run things how they want, and the less confident and less articulate may find it hard to have their say.

There is a judgement call to be made about how detailed policies and procedures should be in a CLH organisation. Larger organisations have extensive policies and procedures because there is a need for clarity about what staff should do. In smaller CLH organisations, the likelihood is that some events are less likely to take place and there may not be such a need for detail.

What a CLH organisation makes policies and procedures about is about balancing practical and sensible judgement with not being overly bureaucratic. There isn't necessarily a right answer!

One size does not fit all. CLH organisations are about local people shaping housing and related services in ways that are right for them. This means that the policies and procedures can be and should be different in each CLH organisation.

How to use this guidance

The differences in CLH organisations means this guidance is intended to be about key issues in each of the subject areas.

The policy templates in the guidance can be adapted to produce what is appropriate for local circumstances. It will require governing bodies of CLH organisations to carefully consider each issue to come up with the approach that is right for them. Some of the policies in the guidance may be fundamental to the CLH organisation – others may be less important and could be worked on later.

Each policy area includes the following:

- **policy aims** – what the policy is seeking to achieve
- **an outline of the policy** – these are the key principles about how the CLH organisation wants the subject matter to be managed. Policies should be particularly aimed at the governing body, the general membership and potentially all residents so that they know the key aspects of how the policy area will be managed. If a policy needs changing it should only be changed by the governing body and probably following consultation with the membership.
- **risks to be avoided** – setting out key things that the policy is aimed to avoid and address



- **notes relating to the procedure** – the procedure is a detailed account of how the policy principles should be implemented. They are necessarily different given local circumstances. They are aimed at people charged with implementing policies – volunteers, staff or support organisations. Procedures should be easier to change than policies.

Terminology

Throughout the document, the following terms have been referred to:

- **CLH organisation** – is a community led housing organisation
- **governing body** – is the part of the CLH organisation that is legally responsible for decision-making. In many cases, this is the Board, committee or management committee of the CLH organisation, but in some smaller CLH organisations, it is the CLH organisation’s general membership.
- **residents** – the people who live in homes owned or managed by a CLH organisation. Some aspects of policies may only apply to tenants, leaseholders or freeholders, and where this is the case, the document identifies this. In many CLH organisations, residents will also be, or may be, members of the organisation – in some cases, its only members.

Registered Provider status

There are regulatory requirements placed on Registered Provider organisations, particularly in relation to their tenants. Whilst it is a good idea for any CLH organisation to have a suite of policies and procedures, it is a requirement for a Registered Provider CLH organisation. A CLH organisation will not be registered as a Registered Provider without a set of key policies and procedures. This guidance is designed to assist CLH organisations who are going through the registration process to become a Registered Provider.

The same regulatory requirements will apply to Registered Providers who CLH organisations have a partnership agreement with. This means that if a Registered Provider housing association has a lease, a management agreement or some other agreement with a CLH organisation, they would pass on their regulatory compliance duties to the CLH organisation.

Responsibility

Clearly CLH organisations who have direct responsibility for some or all of the services covered within this guidance have a responsibility to develop the policies and procedures they need in the subject areas relevant to them.

It is suggested that even where a CLH organisation enters into a long term lease agreement with a housing association, where the housing association is responsible for management of the homes, that the CLH organisation should still use this guidance to enable them to have discussions with and monitor how the housing association is providing services to the residents of the homes owned by the CLH organisation.

Policy review

There is always a need to review, amend and update policies. Policies may need to change because legislation, regulations or best practice may change. A CLH organisation may have drafted a policy with specific aims in mind, but it subsequently turns out that the aims are not being achieved – in which case there is a need to change the aims or the ways they are being implemented. It is usually the case that



there should be a rolling programme of policy review. Such reviews should happen in conjunction with the residents of the homes – particularly in a CLH organisation where residents are likely to be very familiar with local issues, problems and difficulties.

Feedback

Please feel free to provide feedback on this policy guidance. Has the guidance been helpful? Are there policy areas that are missing? Could the policy guidance be improved upon? Please send in any feedback to info@cch.coop

Copyright and intellectual property

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Management agreements

Aims of management agreements

The following may be aims of management agreements:

- Detailing the relationship between a landlord and its managing agent
- Enabling a CLH landlord to outsource management of some or all of its services to a managing agent
- Enabling a non-CLH landlord to outsource management of some or all of its services to a CLH managing agent
- Determining responsibility for how services will be delivered and the performance standards that apply to those services
- Outlining fees and allowances payable for service delivery
- Outlining how disputes and complaints will be managed between a landlord and its managing agent

Standard management agreement terms

Like any contract the following terms should be defined within a management agreement:

- Parties to the agreement – these are the landlord and its managing agent and the agreement should state the company name, registration number and registered address of both parties
- The starting date
- The length of the agreement
- Conditions relating to variations or renewal of the agreement
- Information to be provided by the parties
- Services provided under the agreement
- Fees and allowances payable, terms of payment and processes for annual review of fees
- Reporting and performance management arrangements
- Conditions relating to failure to perform and termination of the agreement

Services provided under management agreements

Landlords have a range of housing management and maintenance services which they must deliver to their tenants and leaseholders; those which may be covered under a management agreement are detailed in the housing management and repairs guidance but the broad areas are:

- Responsive repairs and maintenance
- Planned and cyclical maintenance
- Major works and asset management
- Rent collection and arrears management
- Service charge and ground rents collection and arrears management
- Tenancy and lease management
- Management complaints
- Allocations and lettings
- Sales and pre-assignment enquiries



Risks to be avoided:

- Unrealistic expectations being placed on managing agents
- A lack of penalty clauses or procedures for addressing failures to perform
- The perception within residents that the managing agent is their landlord
- A lack of clarity regarding which party is responsible for providing specific parts of a service
- Landlords believing that they have delegated all responsibility and liability to managing agents



Appendix 1

Management agreement Heads of Terms

The Management Agreement should cover the following areas as a minimum:

Section 1 - Basic Terms

- (a) Parties to the Agreement
- (b) Properties included within the Agreement
- (c) Starting Date
- (d) Insurance
- (e) Indemnity
- (f) Confidentiality
- (g) Conflicts of Interest
- (h) Landlord's Right of Access to Dwellings
- (i) Interpretation of this Agreement and General Provisions
- (j) Continuing the Agreement
- (k) Variations to the Agreement
- (l) Failure to Perform
- (m) Ending the Agreement

Section 2 - Services Being Delivered

- (a) Responsive Repairs and Maintenance
- (b) Asset Management
- (c) Estate and communal Services Provision
- (d) Rent Collection and Arrears Management
- (e) Leaseholder and Freeholder Service Charges and Ground Rents Collection and Arrears Management
- (f) Statutory Consultation
- (g) Tenancy Management including allocations and lettings, anti-social behaviour and transfers
- (h) Leasehold Management
- (i) Sales and pre-assignment enquiries

Section 3 - Finance

- (a) Financial Management
- (b) Calculation and payment of Fees and Allowances
- (c) Penalty Clauses and Set Off Payments
- (d) VAT
- (e) Accounting Procedures and Information Exchange

Section 4 - Monitoring and Performance Management

- (a) Monitoring and Review Meetings
- (b) Key Performance Indicators
- (c) Liaison Officers
- (d) Service of Notices
- (e) Complaints
- (f) Disputes and Arbitration 105



Agency procurement policy

Aims of an agency procurement policy

The following are aims of an agency procurement policy:

- To take a planned approach to appointing a suitably qualified and experienced agency to deliver services
- To comply with requirements regarding public procurement thresholds
- To ensure that excellent value is obtained in service provision

Determining what to outsource

The CLH organisation needs to agree which services it has the capacity to deliver inhouse (by employees or volunteers) and which it wants to outsource to a managing agent; this list of outsourced services provides the starting point for developing the tender specification.

Tender specification

To enable agents to prepare detailed proposals the CLH organisation needs to develop a document which outlines which services are to be outsourced and expected processes for delivering those services; the following should be included:

- Details of the landlord, its management structure and key personnel
- Details of the services which agents are invited to provide a tender response to deliver
- Details of any references and supporting information that agents are required to submit
- The deadline for returning tender responses, the format that responses must be submitted in and details where responses should be sent to
- An outline of the scoring framework against which tender responses will be assessed

Bid scoring and decision making processes

The CLH organisation needs to agree what the scoring criteria and decision making process will be and which members of the organisation will be responsible for making the final decision; will the decision be delegated to a working group or will a final decision need to be made by the organisation's governing body or full membership.

Weighting

When scoring bids not all questions or required items of information have to be scored with equal weight. The CLH organisation needs to decide what relative priority it attaches to individual parts of the tender specification and award points in a weighted manner that gives prioritises those areas of most importance.

Contract negotiation

Starting with a blank piece of paper will be time consuming and simply accepting an agent's standard terms and conditions may mean that a landlord does not get the management agreement that they want. There are many standardised modular management agreements which have been developed within the local authority, housing association and housing co-operative sectors which provide an excellent baseline and help to ensure a short and successful process of contract negotiation.

Timescale and public procurement thresholds



A key factor to determine is how long a management agreement is set to run for; where a CLH organisation is managing local authority housing under the Right to Manage Regulations this issue is not relevant as such arrangements are exempted. In all other circumstances where a CLH organisation is a Registered Provider or where it is managing homes on behalf of a Registered Provider then advice should be sought regarding compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations as they apply to services and capital works contracts.

Risks to be avoided:

- Not attaching appropriate weighting may lead to a scoring decision which is contrary to the CLH landlord organisation's requirements
- A tender specification that is not suitably detailed may lead to items being uncosted in the bidding phase and significant cost increases post contract negotiation
- Avoiding 'horns and halo' perceptions of bidding organisations
- Members seeking to distance themselves from responsibility for appointments if they were not directly involved in decision making processes
- Decision making processes that lead to deadlocks
- Breaching the Public Contracts Regulations thresholds; this can lead to legal challenge of procurement decisions

Procedure

Identifying who does what

The CLH organisation will need to identify who does what in relation to the procurement process.

- Where the CLH organisation is a landlord seeking to outsource services this will include who draws up specifications, scores tender responses, interviews prospective agents and makes final decisions to award contracts; processes will also need to be agreed for informing those not involved in making decisions what has been agreed.
- Where the CLH organisation is a managing agent seeking to manage a non-CLH landlord's homes this will include who meets with the landlord, draws up tender responses and negotiates contracts.
- Where an enabling developer intends establishing a post development CLH managing agent this will include determining how the incoming residents will decide what they want to manage and when management responsibility will transfer to them.



Agency performance management policy

Aims of the agency performance management policy

The following may be aims of the agency performance management policy:

- To ensure that services are delivered to agreed standards
- To enable monitoring of service delivery against key performance indicators
- To support positive contract delivery through regular review meetings
- To address issues of underperformance and failure to perform
- To agree variations to the management agreement and uplifts to fees and allowances
- To resolve issues of uncertainty of management responsibility or disputes

Key performance standards (KPIs)

It is good practice for both parties to a management agreement to regularly review agreed KPIs; the agreed list will be dependent on which services are being delivered but some examples are:

- Rent collected and arrears as a percentage of the total annual rent due by tenants
- Service charges and ground rents collected and arrears as a percentage of the total due by leaseholders
- Rent loss due to void property periods (time when a property is unlet)
- Repairs carried out within agreed timescales as a percentage of total repairs by priority category
- Average expenditure per void property to make it ready for letting
- Annual expenditure per property on responsive repairs and maintenance
- Average number of days for a property to be relet
- Average number of days to respond to a complaint
- Percentage of complaints resolved at Stage 1 of the Complaints Procedure
- Number of complaints received by category (e.g. noise, anti-social behaviour, contractor performance)

Contract review meetings

A standard agenda should be agreed for periodic contract review meetings.

Underperformance and failure to perform

All issues of underperformance should initially be discussed between the parties to the management agreement by exchange of communication from the landlord to the agent outlining the area of underperformance and seeking to gain assurance regarding such issues. If assurance is not provided or the issue persists then it should be discussed at the next available contract review meeting; further failure to perform should then be escalated to the agreed procedure as outlined in the management agreement which should include:

- Service of a warning notice detailing the area of service failure and expected resolutions including a clear timeframe
- Service of a breach notice detailing the prior failure to comply with the warning notice and expected resolutions including a clear timeframe
- Service of a notice of termination of a specific service or the entire management agreement; where breaches are so severe a temporary suspension or immediate termination may be appropriate



Risks to be avoided:

- Setting unclear expectations and non-specific KPIs leading to outcomes that do not meet the landlord's or residents' required levels of service
- Vague performance management processes that prevent corrective actions being taken in a timely manner
- Allowing contract review meetings to become hostile and unproductive

Procedure

Agreeing on KPIs

The parties will need to agree on appropriate KPIs which are reflective of the nature of the homes under management, the geographic and demographic profile of the CLH organisation and the current position regarding individual services; agreeing on undeliverable targets is counterproductive.

Procedure for highlighting areas of underperformance

Both parties should agree on a named individual who will act as the liaison for that party and all information relating to the performance of the management agreement and the services it covers should pass through those liaison officers. Good practice identifies that where more randomised approaches are created for raising such issues, the parties are more likely to descend into dispute and minor issues can quickly become more significant.

Procedure for service of notices

A procedure for serving warning, breach and termination notices must be agreed as part of the contract negotiation process and this procedure should be attached as a schedule to the management agreement.



Employment terms and conditions

Aims of the employment terms and conditions

The following may be aims of the employment terms and conditions:

- To ensure that the CLH organisation as an employer and its employees are clear about the contractual terms of their employment relationship
- To define the entitlements that employees have regarding issues such as pay, sickness and other leave, holidays and pensions
- To define the expectations that the CLH organisation places on its employees regarding issues such as confidentiality, behaviour, timekeeping and conduct

Basic terms and conditions

All employees have a contract of employment; even if not written or signed the contract exists as soon as the employee begins working. A written statement of terms and conditions must be provided within 8 weeks of the start date detailing as a minimum:

- Names of both parties (employer and employee)
- Job title
- Start date (date on which the period of continuous employment began)
- Period and hours of employment (fixed period, permanent, part or full time)
- Salary level and pay date
- Site (where will the employee be based)
- Holiday entitlement
- Sick leave entitlement and pay rates
- Pension entitlement
- Notice periods (both for the employer and employee)
- Disciplinary and grievance procedures
- Any collective agreements which apply

Implied terms

Some contractual terms are 'implied' and apply whether they are written into a contract or not – such as health and safety at work provisions, reasonable behaviour and statutory terms (e.g. sick pay, parental leave and pay, redundancy entitlements).

Annual leave

All employees are legally entitled to a minimum number of days annual leave which can include Bank Holiday entitlements. Employees are normally required to nominate when they wish to take annual leave and a process should be established to enable employees to make requests; employers can state when holidays are allowed to be taken but the principle of flexibility on both sides usually leads to better outcomes than heavy handed approaches.

Pay

All employees are entitled to a statement of gross pay, deductions (for tax, national insurance, trade union subscriptions, pension contributions and student loans repayments) and net pay for each pay period. Employers must ensure that they have processes for making Real Time Information Submissions to HMRC each time a pay period occurs.



Two year service rules

These apply to the period of continuous employment that an employee must work before certain employment rights apply; such as redundancy payments, unfair dismissal protections, recourse to employment tribunals (except in cases such as discrimination). Continuity of employment is preserved with regard to the two year service rules for absence due to sickness or maternity, layoffs, agreed absence and agreed temporary breaks.

Company rules

In addition to the contract of employment, specific company rules are also deemed to form part of the terms and conditions of employment; both parties need to be aware that these are part of the contract and that breaching them can lead to further internal or external actions. These company rules would include but are not limited to:

- Agreed Codes of Conduct that help the organisation work smoothly and effectively
- The internal framework for delegation and reporting
- Policies and procedures to govern employee conduct and performance – these should be contained in a Staff Handbook
- Policies and procedures to govern employer conduct – these should be contained in a Staff Handbook

Risks to be avoided:

- Breaching basic or implied terms and conditions or failing to follow agreed procedures; for employers, employment tribunals can be very unforgiving
- For employees not being clear about terms and conditions regarding areas with statutory minimums; unless otherwise stated in the contract, the minimum applies
- For employers not being aware of the two year rules and employees periods of continuous service; many cases of unfair and constructive dismissal have been brought against employers where they were unaware of their employees' rights
- For employers not making the mistake of making deductions other than those required by statute without the agreement of the employee
- Unclear and vague terms and confusing language is not helpful for either party



Employee recruitment policy

Aims of the employee recruitment policy

The following may be aims of the employee recruitment policy:

- To take a planned approach to appointing a suitably qualified and experienced individual to work for the CLH organisation
- To comply with requirements regarding equality and diversity and to be an equal opportunities employer
- To minimise the risk of making appointments where individuals do not possess the required skills, knowledge and experience for the post
- To avoid cronyism and giving jobs to mates

Advertising and handling responses

CLH organisations should consider where they want to advertise jobs to maximise the likelihood that they will attract a strong list of suitable applicants; going for the free or low cost approach when seeking to recruit senior level employees is unlikely to yield the desired outcome. Interested candidates should be sent the following information:

- An introduction letter outlining the organisation and its purpose
- A recruitment pack outlining the person specification, job description and a summary of the main conditions of service. Ideally guidelines on the interview format and when a decision will be reached will also be included
- An equal opportunities monitoring form to enable the CLH organisation to monitor its recruitment policy

Shortlisting applicants

The person specification outlines a number of key areas of skills, knowledge and experience essential for the job. To compile a shortlist the CLH organisation should devise a scoring process to compare the information supplied by applicants with the key areas asked for in the person specification; not all factors have to be given equal weighting or importance. If a candidate falls short of 1 or more of the criteria, the CLH organisation should consider whether this shortfall could be redressed by training. All criteria should be applied equally and consistently to each applicant. Applicants should only be compared with the person specification, not with each other and must demonstrate how they meet each of the requirements listed in the person specification.

Interviewing and decision making processes

Interviews should be based on an agreed set of questions, a presentation and other appropriate tests which must be equally applied to all candidates. The CLH organisation needs to agree what the scoring criteria and decision making process will be and which members of the organisation will be responsible for making the final decision; will the decision be delegated to a working group or will a final decision need to be made by the organisation's governing body or full membership.



Risks to be avoided:

- Not attaching appropriate weighting may lead to a scoring decision which is contrary to the CLH organisation's requirements
- A person specification and job description that are not suitably detailed may lead to poor recruitment decisions being made on inadequate information being provided
- Avoiding 'horns and halo' perceptions of candidates or stereotyping
- Members seeking to distance themselves from responsibility for appointments if they were not directly involved in decision making processes
- Decision making processes that lead to deadlocks

Procedure

Identifying who does what

The CLH organisation will need to identify who does what in relation to the recruitment process.

- Who will draw up person specifications and job descriptions
- Who will manage applicant requests for information
- Who will manage candidate responses and undertake shortlisting
- Who will form interview panels and agree questions, tasks and presentation topics for candidates
- Who will make decisions about which candidate to offer the job to and undertake the contract negotiation
- Who will inform members not involved in the decision making process and how will personal sensitive data provided as part of the recruitment process be managed



Employee performance management policy

Aims of the employee performance management policy

The following may be aims of the employee performance management policy:

- To set clear and mutually agreed plans for the future
- To ensure that services are delivered to agreed standards
- To enable monitoring of service delivery against key performance indicators
- To support positive delivery in line with agreed job descriptions through regular review meetings
- To address issues of underperformance and failure to perform
- To agree on training and development activities to enhance employee performance
- To resolve issues of uncertainty of management responsibility or disputes

Informal approaches

Such as on the job discussions, advice and guidance

Formal processes

Such as regular one-to-one meetings with a line manager or team meetings

Appraisals

An annual review process where targets are set and reviewed and training and development plans agreed; key points to remember are:

- Appraisals do not need to be a big thing!
- Both parties are usually not too keen on doing them
- For employees they can feel like being sent to the Headmaster's office
- For employers they can feel like yet more form filling and divorced from everyday realities
- Both sides think they will be time consuming and giving feedback can be uncomfortable
- For them to be effective they must be approached in an open and honest manner that are relevant to individual and organisational goals and needs
- Effective appraisal relies on clear, agreed objectives (SMART), is a part of the development and management strategy, links to employee remuneration and reinforces good practice and supports areas for improvement

Appraisal preparation

Appraisal is a two way communication exercise to review past performance, to plan together for the future and to identify training and development needs. Preparation for appraisal meetings is important for both the appraisee and appraiser; at least two weeks before the appraisal meeting both parties should:

- Read the appraisal guidance notes
- Look through the individual's job description and note any changes
- Review the last appraisal record
- Complete an appraisal checklist as appropriate; this will give the opportunity to consider the questions which relate to the job description and business objectives, performance review, training and development and working relationships
- Make a note of any other issues to be raised



Appraisal meetings

At the beginning of the appraisal meeting both parties should agree on the items to be discussed. It is usually most helpful to use the appraisal checklists to guide the discussion. The appraiser is responsible for managing the time and keeping the conversation relevant. Remember that the appraisal meeting provides an opportunity to ensure that every individual is aware of, and is working in accordance with, the organisation's priorities and plans.

- Find a suitable, quiet venue
- Agree a convenient time for both parties
- Do set aside sufficient time for the meeting
- Do be positive
- Do listen to what the other person is saying
- Do share ideas, make suggestions and express your views
- Do not agree to targets or make commitments which are impossible to achieve or beyond your control
- Be clear about the action required
- Make sure you agree and diarise a review date

Training and development

Developing a workforce or individual employees over time is crucial to enable an organisation to achieve its objectives

Training is a narrow area of personal development which includes on and off the job experience, courses attended and projects and acting up or covering other roles.

Development is about growing employees to meet current or future business needs of the organisation, enabling them to do their job and to motivate or retain them (great employees do not want to continue working for lacklustre employers). Development aids succession planning in an organisation and helps to advance or update the business goals or respond to a changing operating environment

Training and development activities should benefit the employee and the employer and should always be linked to business objectives. Managers and employees should discuss the purpose of these activities before, during and after and discuss and agree the outcomes that they seek to achieve; these outcomes can be linked to objectives in performance management processes. Both parties should ask themselves:

- Did the training and development activity add value?
- What was learnt?
- Did the employee use what they learnt?
- Did the training and development activity add to the business objectives?
- Did the training and development activity add value to the organisation?



Potential risks to be avoided

- Setting unclear expectations and non-specific targets leading to outcomes that do not meet the employers or residents' required levels of service or do not stretch the employee which can lead to demotivation
- Vague performance management processes that prevent corrective actions being taken in a timely manner
- Allowing appraisal meetings to become hostile and unproductive
- Not agreeing on training and development plans that add value for the employer and employee can lead to wasted training budgets and undesirable outcomes

Procedure

Agreeing on performance targets

The parties will need to agree on appropriate targets which are reflective of the job description and the nature of the homes under management, the geographic and demographic profile of the CLH organisation and the current position regarding individual services; agreeing undeliverable targets is counterproductive.

Procedure for highlighting areas of underperformance

The employer must ensure that it has appropriate policies and procedures in place for managing employee underperformance and that this forms part of a Staff Handbook which is distributed to all employees.



Staff handbook

Aims of the staff handbook

The following may be aims of the staff handbook:

- To ensure that all employees are aware of the key policies and procedures that impact on their employment

An organisation's employment policies and procedures should be collated in a Staff Handbook a copy of which should be provided to all employees. The core policies and procedures are:

Training and development policy

How the organisation will identify training needs, the types of training that will be provided, how training will be paid for and whether there are any requirements for employees to remain in employment following training and development activities for set periods of time or reimburse the employer for costs it has incurred.

Employee code of conduct

The standards regarding how employees should interact with members and external stakeholders, customer care principles, confidentiality, data and computer use requirements, procurement and purchasing processes, dress code, behavioural standards (including drugs, alcohol and smoking policies), relationships with the media, gifts and hospitality policies, requirements to declare personal and financial interests, political activities and procedures for investigating allegations of corruption and fraud.

Disciplinary and grievance procedures

Outlining grounds for dismissal and the organisation's processes to avoid unfair or constructive dismissals, the employee grievance procedure outlining reporting and investigating processes and stages, the employer's disciplinary procedure outlining stages (including appeals and when summary dismissal may apply) and procedures for external recourse.

Whistleblowing policy

The procedure for employees for reporting breaches of the organisation's Code of Conduct, any actions which might question the organisation's integrity or any potential fraud or misuse of the organisation's assets.

Lone worker policy

How the organisation supports employees who have to work in isolation and employee safety procedures. Specific contractual relationships covered include:

- relationships between CLH organisations and service providers providing services to them
- relationships where CLH organisations manage or lease homes owned by Registered Provider (or other) partners

Health and safety at work policy

Detailing how the employer is complying with its statutory duties regarding employees' health and safety, the responsibilities of the employer and employees, training requirements, reporting processes for breaches and accidents and the component parts of the employee induction.



Appendix 2

Staff handbook

This model Staff Handbook is provided for indicative purposes only; CLH Organisations should ensure that they take appropriate legal advice, including having their employment policies and procedures reviewed by an appropriately qualified human resources agent or solicitor, before employing any staff members. This model handbook is not a substitute for appropriate legal advice.

Part 1	Employment Policy
Part 2	Training and Development Policy
Part 3	Code of Conduct for Staff
Part 4	Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures
Part 5	Lone Worker Policy
Part 6	Whistleblowing Policy



Part 1 Employment Policy

1 Key Objective

THE CLH ORGANISATION will seek to ensure that all its staff have the necessary knowledge, skills and motivation to support the delivery of the excellent services, through the effective implementation of its Business Plan.

This will be through:

- the effective recruitment and selection of staff
- the effective induction for all staff into the role and the organisation
- role clarity through clear, regularly reviewed job descriptions, performance management and appraisal.
- the development and implementation of a Training Plan
- clear and effective communication with its staff
- the establishment of an effective employee relations framework
- pay and conditions and employment policies and practices which are flexible and responsive to service users, employer and employee needs

2 Key Employment Policy Standards

- (a) The CLH ORGANISATION aims to be a community-oriented, modern and efficient organisation. Its culture will reflect the need to provide responsive services to the community and to manage and improve the housing stock under its control effectively.
- (b) In its efforts to provide the best possible service to all its customers, the CLH ORGANISATION will pursue a policy of employing high quality staff.
- (c) The CLH ORGANISATION is committed to a comprehensive training programme for staff and will implement programmes to equip people with the skills necessary to deliver a high quality service.
- (d) The CLH ORGANISATION has adopted the principle of equal opportunities within its employee employment policies. The CLH ORGANISATION will recruit staff within a policy of equal opportunities for all. The CLH ORGANISATION wholeheartedly supports the principle and practice of diversity in employment and opposes all forms of discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristic.
- (e) The CLH ORGANISATION wishes to ensure that its staff are fully trained and properly skilled. An individual appraisal and training audit will be used to identify training needs, and all staff will be encouraged in their personal development and, where relevant, take appropriate qualifications and attend specialist courses and seminars. Emphasis will be placed on customer awareness and core skills training compatible with the CLH ORGANISATION's strategic aims and objectives.
- (f) The CLH ORGANISATION encourages a free and open culture in all dealings between its staff and people with whom it engages in business and legal relations. In particular, it recognises that effective and honest communication is essential to its success and believes that efficiency, high productivity and harmonious working environment are best achieved where effective communications are established between management and the workforce. Systems will be set up and maintained to facilitate the flow of information throughout the organisation. The CLH ORGANISATION aims to ensure that staff are made fully aware and understand what is required



of them and the terms and conditions of their employment. It values input of ideas from staff and recognises the benefits of consultation and discussion.

- (g) The CLH ORGANISATION's policy is to ensure good employee relations are maintained with its staff and it will recognise appropriate trade unions.
- (h) The CLH ORGANISATION will operate clear and fair disciplinary and grievance procedures based on ACAS principles that will be agreed with recognised trade unions and made available to all staff.
- (i) The CLH ORGANISATION seeks to create an environment of understanding by everyone of required levels of behaviour and the avoidance of acts or omissions which may be detrimental to the organisation, customers or members of the workforce. It expects its workforce to act with dignity and respect and aims to gain the approval and confidence of the community and to promote a reputation as an attractive and professional employer.
- (j) The CLH ORGANISATION has established policies and procedures to reflect these aims. These will be communicated to all staff to ensure that there is no doubt as to what is acceptable. Failure to observe these is likely to result in disciplinary action.
- (k) The CLH ORGANISATION has agreed a "whistleblowing" policy that is designed to protect all those who work with or within the CLH ORGANISATION from victimisation if they wish to raise, in good faith, issues of suspected malpractice within the CLH ORGANISATION.
- (l) The CLH ORGANISATION will provide and maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a healthy and safe place of work through the provision of competent staff, adequate premises, and proper and safe work systems



Part 2 Training and Development Policy

1 Background and Objectives

- (a) This policy demonstrates the CLH ORGANISATION's commitment to the training and development of all staff members.
- (b) This policy aims to maximise performance through the continuous development of the skills and knowledge of staff to enable the CLH ORGANISATION to achieve its business objectives.

2 Policy Detail

General

- (a) The CLH ORGANISATION recognises that the continued development of staff members is vital to improving the performance of the organisation, and to the delivery of quality services. The training and development needs of the CLH ORGANISATION will be regularly reviewed against the goals and targets of the organisation, team and individual.
- (b) The CLH ORGANISATION will ensure that all staff are made aware of the training and development opportunities open to them. Staff will be encouraged to help identify and meet their job related training and development needs.
- (c) Where appropriate, training and development objectives are linked to external standards, such as National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs).
- (d) Training and development is an integral part of the CLH ORGANISATION's Human Resources policies and must be considered in association with matters such as recruitment, equality and diversity, development and conditions of service.

Identifying Training Needs

- (a) A clear assessment of training needs is the basis of an efficient comprehensive and cost effective training programme. The identification of training needs can sometimes be reactive due to changes in legislation, etc. However, in many cases training needs can be planned through a training needs analysis geared to improving performance.
- (b) The Line Manager in relation to staff members will be responsible for the assessment of training needs.

Types of Training

A variety of types of training will generally be available to including:

- Induction
- Professional Examinations
- External Seminars and Conferences
- Management Development
- Corporate Training
- Skills and systems training
- National Vocational Qualification (NVQ)



Financial and other support for training

The CLH ORGANISATION will discuss annually the availability of resources for its training plan and for those taking part. This will include conditions relating to repayment, if any, in the case of staff undertaking particular professional or skills courses in the event of their leaving the CLH ORGANISATION within certain timescales.



Part 3 Code of Conduct for Staff

1 Key Objective

To ensure that the CLH ORGANISATION enjoys a reputation as an organisation enjoying a high standard of integrity and behaviour and that it conducts its affairs in an open, and proper manner, consistent with the requirements of statute and of best practice and in accordance with the principles of its Code of Governance.

2 Key Policy Standards

General

- (a) The reputation of the CLH ORGANISATION as an open, fair, professional organisation with a high standard of integrity and commitment to equal opportunities and customer service is dependent upon the conduct and behaviour of its staff. Staff members must have particular regard to the equal opportunities policies of the CLH ORGANISATION and must ensure that they comply with those requirements in their dealings with customers, other staff members and all others having dealings with the CLH ORGANISATION
- (b) Regard should also be had to the seven principles of public life identified by the Nolan Committee namely, Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.
- (c) This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected from staff members of the CLH ORGANISATION.
- (d) The Code of Conduct forms part of staff contracts of employment and staff members are required to abide by it at all times.
- (e) Breaches of the Code of Conduct could lead to disciplinary action.

Responsible officer

The CLH ORGANISATION's Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that staff members are aware of this Code of Conduct. All receipts of gifts or hospitality should be formally recorded by staff members in a register to be held by CLH ORGANISATION Secretary. This is apart from general open events, such as seminars or receptions attended by several organisations or inexpensive items such as calendars, and inexpensive working lunches. Lunches attended by only the CLH ORGANISATION at restaurants should always be recorded.

Customer Care

- (a) All staff members are expected to treat residents and other customers with courtesy and respect at all times.
- (b) From time to time the CLH ORGANISATION will have to deal with difficult individuals. In such circumstances staff members should maintain high standards of professionalism and fairness. Rudeness is not acceptable in any circumstances.
- (c) Staff members' general actions, behaviour and demeanour while at work should be such as to present the CLH ORGANISATION as a professional and effective organisation. Staff members should avoid doing things which might imply a sloppy or uncaring attitude.



Confidentiality

The CLH ORGANISATION is committed to the open conduct of its business. However, there will be times when confidentiality should be maintained

- (a) Staff members should abide by procedures designed to protect the confidentiality of information held about residents, organisation members or other staff members.
- (b) Staff should not disclose information about residents to third parties, including neighbours, unless authorised to do so, or with the resident's consent.
- (c) Confidential business information should not be disclosed to external parties unless it is appropriate to do so. This would include matters relating to the CLH ORGANISATION's finances, future development programmes, discussions with potential partners and contract proposals. Some information in these areas is already in the public domain but staff members who have any doubts should seek clarification from the CLH ORGANISATION's Chair before disclosing any information which might be commercially sensitive. **The wilful or reckless disclosure of confidential information will be regarded as gross misconduct under the CLH ORGANISATION's disciplinary policies and procedures.**
- (d) Staff should exercise care in disclosing information which comes within the Data Protection legislation.

Equal Opportunities

Staff are required to comply with the CLH ORGANISATION's Equality and Diversity Statement and related procedures at all times.

Harassment

- (a) The harassment of other members of staff, residents or other customers, for whatever reason, is considered to be a serious breach of the Code of Conduct and may be regarded as gross misconduct.
- (b) Staff should not display materials in the workplace which other people might find offensive or use language which work colleagues or customers might find offensive.

Policies, Procedures and other Regulations

Staff members should ensure that current policies, procedures, financial standing orders and other regulations are followed at all times.

Health and Safety

Staff members should abide by the CLH ORGANISATION's Health and Safety Policy and procedures at all times. Staff members have a responsibility to ensure that their conduct does not endanger the health or safety of themselves or other staff members, residents and customers of the CLH ORGANISATION. Staff members should bring to the attention of their Line Manager any circumstances which might have health and safety implications.

CLH ORGANISATION's Property and Assets

- (a) Staff members are expected to take reasonable measures to protect the CLH ORGANISATION's property and assets from theft, damage or misuse.



- (b) The copyright in any written material produced by a staff member in the course of their employment shall vest in the CLH ORGANISATION.

Computer Systems and Software

Staff members should not do anything which would risk the integrity of the CLH ORGANISATION's Information Technology systems. This would include the use of unauthorised or unlicensed software on the CLH ORGANISATION's system.

Procurement of Goods and Services

- (a) Staff members involved in buying goods or services on behalf of the CLH ORGANISATION should ensure that:

- decisions provide the best value for money;
- decisions are taken objectively;
- competition between contractors/suppliers is fair and open;
- appropriate procedures are followed.

- (b) It is important to avoid suspicion of preferential treatment of suppliers by separating private purchasing from that of the CLH ORGANISATION.

- in order to avoid any suspicion that a supplier may give or receive favourable treatment, staff members must achieve a separation between their purchasing decisions as individuals and for the CLH ORGANISATION;
- staff members may not normally use for personal or private business any of the CLH ORGANISATION professional advisors, solicitors, architects, surveyors, consultants, builders, maintenance contractors or suppliers of bulk goods or services (except monopolies, or near monopolies – such as utilities companies). Where this is unavoidable, they must inform the CLH ORGANISATION's Chair and confirm that no financial advantage will be secured as a result of their relationship with the CLH ORGANISATION;
- details of the use of the CLH ORGANISATION's approved contractors/consultants by staff members will be recorded in the Register of Interests.

Alcohol, Illegal Drugs and Substance Abuse at Work

Alcohol, drugs or substance abuse impairs judgement and staff members can put themselves, their work colleagues and members of the public at risk if they undertake their duties whilst under the influence of drink, drugs and dangerous substances. Abuse of any such substance whilst staff members are at work, or that affects their work will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.

No Smoking Policy

There is a No Smoking Policy throughout the CLH ORGANISATION. Staff members are not permitted to smoke while at work or on the CLH ORGANISATION's premises. Premises shall include company vehicles and residents' homes.

Corruption and Fraud

Staff members must be aware that it is a serious criminal and disciplinary offence to corruptly receive any gift, loan, fee, reward or other advantage in return for doing (or not doing) anything or showing favour to any person or organisation.

- staff members should only use the CLH ORGANISATION's monies and assets for their intended and lawful purpose;



- if staff members are aware of potentially corrupt or fraudulent activities of other staff members, they have a duty to report this to the CLH ORGANISATION Chair.
- the CLH ORGANISATION's policy is to report all cases of fraud to the police.

Dress Code

- Staff members are expected to attend work dressed in a manner appropriate for their duties.
- Staff members are required to wear uniforms and health and safety clothing provided for the proper and safe performance of their duties.
- Whilst at work staff members' dress and general appearance should be clean, tidy and consistent with the professional image which the CLH ORGANISATION seeks to project.

Press, Media and Social Media

- Staff must not without permission, pass or distribute to the press or media or post on social media any information or materials relating to the CLH ORGANISATION.
- Similarly, staff members must not write letters to the press, write media articles or create social media posts about the CLH ORGANISATION and its activities, or write letters, articles or social media posts in their capacity as a CLH ORGANISATION employee without prior permission.
- Staff members must not make comments or statements to the press. If approached they should take details about the enquiry and pass it on to the CLH ORGANISATION's Chair.

Gifts and Hospitality

- Staff members who receive gifts and/or hospitality, offered in connection with their employment by the CLH ORGANISATION, should not place themselves under an obligation that might influence or be perceived to influence their future decisions or conduct.
- Staff members should not accept cash or personal gifts with a significant monetary value under any circumstances. Under no circumstances whatsoever should gifts or favours of any kind be solicited. Unsolicited gifts of nominal value, ie, not more than £20 can be accepted.
- Staff members should be cautious when accepting hospitality, ensuring that it is appropriate and not too lavish. Staff members should be careful that the receipt of hospitality could not be construed as a way of exerting improper influence over them or the CLH ORGANISATION. As a general rule staff members should not accept hospitality which the CLH ORGANISATION would not reciprocate in similar circumstances.

Staff Interests

- Staff members are required to disclose any pecuniary interest that might conflict with their position within the CLH ORGANISATION. The CLH ORGANISATION's Secretary will keep a record of all declarations of pecuniary interests of staff members and this record is to be available at all reasonable times for public inspection.
- Any candidate for a position in the employment of the CLH ORGANISATION who canvasses Governing Body members will be disqualified.
- No Governing Body member may recommend anyone for appointment or promotion, although, if requested, a written reference can be given.



- (d) Details of the relationship of any candidate for appointment with any Governing Body member or employee of the CLH ORGANISATION shall be required to be indicated on their application. Any candidate who knowingly fails to make such a disclosure will be disqualified and, if appointed, may be dismissed.

Interests and Conduct Outside Work

- (a) The CLH ORGANISATION has no desire to place restrictions on or interfere with an employee's private life. However, there may be circumstances when an employee's external interests affect their employment with the CLH ORGANISATION.
- (b) Staff members must obtain written consent from the CLH ORGANISATION's Chair before taking outside paid employment. Such employment must not interfere in any way with their existing job and should not conflict with the interests of the job or the CLH ORGANISATION.
- (c) Staff members should obtain written permission from the CLH ORGANISATION's Chair before undertaking voluntary activities if those activities or organisations are in some way related to the activities of the CLH ORGANISATION.
- (d) The CLH ORGANISATION's Code of Conduct refers to staff members' work-related conduct. However, there may be circumstances in which a staff member's conduct outside work, while not directly related to their employment, might adversely affect the reputation and perceived integrity of the CLH ORGANISATION. There may be circumstances when conduct outside work (e.g. conviction for a criminal offence) may result in disciplinary action being taken against a staff member. Staff members must notify the CLH ORGANISATION promptly if they are convicted of a criminal offence giving details of the offence and penalty. The condition applies to all motoring offences which result in endorsement of licence, in order to assess whether such a conviction may have a bearing on the work undertaken by the staff member. Criminal convictions must be reported where they are relevant to a person's employment. If staff members are in doubt they should discuss the matter with their Line Manager who will deal with the matter in a confidential manner.



Part 4 Disciplinary and Grievance procedures

(a) Grievance Procedure

It is the CLH ORGANISATION's policy to encourage and promote good communications and to ensure that any questions raised or problems that arise are dealt with quickly. Any queries or problems should initially be raised with the Line Manager who will attempt to resolve them. However, where such a resolution is not possible, the grievance procedure has been designed to enable employees to raise grievances in an orderly and constructive manner, thus ensuring that they are resolved as quickly as possible. The formal Grievance Procedure is detailed below, and employees should make sure they read this carefully.

Stage One

Any employee who has a grievance related to their employment should raise it, either orally or in writing, with the Line Manager. They will arrange a meeting to discuss the grievance with the employee, and this will normally occur within two working days of the grievance being raised.

A union representative or a colleague of their choice may accompany the employee. Should the matter in either case remain unresolved the employee may refer the grievance to stage two.

Stage Two

If not resolved the employee may request a meeting with the CLH ORGANISATION employment sub-committee. The request should be made in writing to the CLH ORGANISATION's Chair (who will convene the meeting where possible within 5 working days), and must include details of the grievance. The Line Manager will be present at the sub-committee meeting. A union representative or a colleague of their choice may accompany the employee. The Line Manager will prepare notes on the meeting and will give copies to the Chair of the Sub-committee and to the Employee and will notify the employee in writing the results of the hearing. Should the matter remain unresolved, the employee may refer the matter to stage three.

Stage Three

If the grievance remains unresolved the employee will notify the CLH ORGANISATION's Chair in writing within 5 working days of the stage two hearing of their intention to raise the matter at the next Governing Body meeting. If a meeting is not to be held within 10 working days a special meeting will be held to hear the grievance. A union representative or colleague may accompany the employee. The CLH ORGANISATION's secretary will inform the employee in writing of the results of the hearing. The decision of the Governing Body shall be final and binding.

If the employee believes they have a grievance, this procedure does not at any time affect the employee's right to seek legal advice on other courses of action at their disposal to pursue the grievance.

(b) Disciplinary Procedure

The CLH ORGANISATION's disciplinary rules and procedures, which cover all employees, are designed to promote fairness and consistency in the treatment of individuals by the CLH ORGANISATION. Only when all reasonable efforts to counsel and assist the employee to achieve agreed standards targets have failed will disciplinary action be taken. The procedure should not be viewed primarily as a means of imposing sanctions; its main purpose is to provide a means for improvement in performance and/or behaviour, which is unsatisfactory.

Counselling Performance



Where the employee's performance is below the required level expected for the job the Line Manager should bring this to the employee's notice at the time of the deficiency and should advise the employee of the areas where improvements are required and define the expected standard of work or conduct. The Line Manager will give assistance wherever possible to bring about this improvement. A review should normally be agreed to monitor subsequent progress.

Conduct

Where an employee's conduct is in question the Line Manager will investigate the facts promptly and if an offence is established, every reasonable endeavour will be made to find the reason for the offence. If the reason is considered to be outside the employee's control, appropriate action to attempt to resolve the problem will be taken or some allowance made. The nature and reason for any allowance should be explained to other employees who may be affected by this. If the reason is considered within the employee's control the Line Manager will interview the employee to give him/her an opportunity to explain the alleged shortcomings. The matter may be closed at this stage; reviewed at a later stage; or disciplinary action within the appropriate section of the procedure may be taken as a result of the counselling session.

Counselling does not form part of the Disciplinary Procedure and any discussions or resulting plans will be regarded as informal. It should be regarded as a desirable activity which should proceed wherever possible any decision to take disciplinary action.

The Disciplinary Procedure

The Disciplinary Procedure is made up of a number of stages, which are applied according to the frequency, and gravity of the offence or misconduct and the circumstances surrounding it. The appropriate section of the procedure may be selected depending on the circumstances giving rise to the need for recourse to the procedure.

Stage One (Oral Warning)

- (i) If employee counselling proves inadequate, the performance or conduct of an employee does not improve, or if it is considered appropriate under the circumstances, the Line Manager will arrange an interview with the employee who will be given an opportunity to state their point of view and the circumstances surrounding the issue. If, following the employee's explanation, the Line Manager is satisfied that the alleged misconduct did occur, they will formally warn the employee that their work performance or behaviour is inadequate.
- (ii) The employee will be advised of the area or areas where improvements are required and the expected standard of work or conduct will be defined. They will be advised of further action that may follow if there is no improvement within a specified time, if appropriate, or in the event of future breaches of discipline. If dismissal is a possibility, then this must be clearly stated.
- (iii) A record of the warning will be put on the employee's file and a copy given to the employee; the warning will remain on the employee's file for an agreed period of time. After a specified length of time, before expiry of the agreed period of time, progress should be reviewed. A record of any improvement should be placed on the employee's file if appropriate and a copy given to the employee.

Stage Two (Written Warning)

- (iv) If an employee's conduct or work performance does not improve within the stated time following a verbal warning, or if a further breach of discipline occurs in circumstances where it is considered appropriate to do so, the employee accompanied by a colleague or union representative or colleague if desired, will be interviewed by the Employment Sub Committee (with 48 hours' notice being given) with the Line Manager present. The nature of the alleged misconduct will be explained to the employee, who will be given the opportunity to explain their point of view and, if necessary, to call witnesses. At the end of the interview, if the Employment



Sub Committee is satisfied that the alleged breach did take place, the employee will be given a written warning as soon as possible but no later than one working day from the date of the interview. A copy of the first written warning will be placed on the employee's personal file to remain in effect for an agreed period of time. The written warning sets out in detail the nature of the misconduct, the reasons and views expressed by the employee, and records the warning of a possible dismissal if further significant misconduct should occur. The employee will be advised of the areas where improvements are required and the expected standard of work or conduct will be defined. If appropriate in the circumstances, a specified time in which to improve before the expiry of the six month's period will be given after which time progress will be reviewed and a record of any improvement will be placed on the employee's file and a copy given to the employee.

- (v) There will also be a written interview report recording the disciplinary discussion to which the employee will be able to add comments; the report will be signed by all those who were present at the interview in confirmation that it contains a true record of this event.

Stage Three (Dismissal)

- (vi) If the employee's conduct or work performance does not improve within the stated time following a written warning or a further breach of discipline or serious misconduct occurs or in circumstances where it is considered appropriate to do so, the employee will be interviewed by the CLH ORGANISATION's Chair; they may be accompanied by a union representative or colleague. The nature of the alleged breach will be explained to the employee who will then be given the opportunity to give their point of view and if necessary to call witnesses. If at the end of the interview, the CLH ORGANISATION's Chair is satisfied that the alleged breach did take place the employee will be informed that they are being DISMISSED.
- (vii) The seriousness of this decision is such that it generally should follow a written warning. The decision will be confirmed in writing and there will be a written interview record, which the employee and their union representative or colleague (if in attendance) will be asked to sign.

Gross Misconduct

Notwithstanding the above stages, employees who commit an act of gross misconduct are liable to instant dismissal. In such cases, the employee will normally be suspended on full pay by the Line Manager after consultation with the CLH ORGANISATION's Chair while the case is being investigated pending a disciplinary interview with the Employment Sub-Committee. Gross misconduct will include theft, bribery, blackmail, or corruption, violence against other employees or CLH ORGANISATION members, refusal or reckless failure to follow health and safety rules involving or likely to involve risk or injury to other persons, use of illegal drugs on CLH ORGANISATION premises. These are examples and do not constitute an exclusive list.

Stage Four (Appeal)

- (viii) An employee who is dissatisfied with a disciplinary decision during any section of the Procedure may, within three working days of being informed in writing of the ensuing disciplinary action, ask for the case to be reviewed. An appeal will be made in writing to the CLH ORGANISATION's Secretary who will convene an Appeals Panel made up of 3 Governing Body members, and if appropriate the Line Manager and the case will be given further detailed consideration. If an appeal against a decision arising from a case of gross misconduct is made, instead of being dismissed at the disciplinary interview, the employee will continue to be suspended on full pay for a period not exceeding two working days pending the results of the review.



Part 5 Lone Worker Policy

The CLH ORGANISATION is committed to ensuring that its staff members are given the maximum level of personal safety as they go about the CLH ORGANISATION's business. The CLH ORGANISATION has assessed the risks involved in delivering its property management and maintenance services. Staff members are made aware of the relevant safety procedures, as laid out below.

Staff Safety Procedure

All staff members are issued with mobile phones so that they may be in communication with each other, the CLH ORGANISATION office, Governing Body members or the Emergency Services as needs be. All staff members check in and out with their manager at the start and end of each day (also at 11am, 12.30pm & 3pm).

Visiting residents at home

Prior to visiting: make sure that your mobile phone is fully charged.

Check the aggressive persons' register (APR): ensure that you undertake a risk assessment prior to any resident contact. Before conducting home visits for any residents who are unknown to you, you must check the APR. Two staff members must visit persons or addresses on the APR. Staff members should not visit if they do not feel that it is safe to do so. Check Support Plans and any other records that may give relevant information about any issues there may be to help you prepare for the visit. In addition, you should check records for any language, communication or disability issues to make sure your visit is carried out effectively.

Guidelines to follow when making home visits:

- Do not put yourself at risk;
- Do not give out your personal home or mobile telephone number and keep your home as separate as you can from your work;
- If your physical safety is threatened, remain calm and leave the premises as soon as possible and as soon as it is safe to do so;
- Assaults and threatened assaults must always be reported to the Police and an internal report completed. As a result, the client may be added to the APR;
- Try to carry only what you need. Don't carry valuable personal possessions or anything you would be reluctant to relinquish;
- Get to know potential risk areas (e.g. poorly lit areas, areas with dense shrubbery);
- If you need to go through a risk area think about what you would do if faced with a problem. Look for escape routes. Walk in the middle of the pavement; don't walk too close to doorways.

On arrival:

- Assess the situation;
- Respect other people's personal territory. Entering someone's home can be an invasion of privacy;
- Trust your instincts. If you don't feel safe don't go in. If necessary, conduct the business on the doorstep;
- If the resident comes to the door inappropriately dressed, don't go in. Give them the opportunity to go back in and cover up while you wait outside;
- If possible, explain the purpose of your visit from the outset;
- If there seems to be a problem (e.g. if you think that they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol) then withdraw and make another appointment and return with a colleague.



Going in:

- Always enter the property after the resident and try to enter rooms after the person you are visiting and remain between them and the door;
- Check the way out and make sure that the way to the exit is clear;
- If they have a dog, ask them to put the dog in another room before you continue;
- If you want to sit down, try to sit on an upright chair if possible, and try to sit nearest to the exit;
- If the client is agitated or aggressive, try not to conduct interviews in kitchens or other areas where equipment could be used as a weapon.



Part 6 Whistleblowing Policy

- (a) All Staff members have a duty to report to their Line Manager or others as appropriate:
- any breaches of the Code of Conduct;
 - any actions which might question the integrity of the CLH ORGANISATION;
 - any potential fraud or misuse of the CLH ORGANISATION's assets.
- (b) If an Employee is aware of serious misconduct or dishonest or unethical behaviour by a fellow employee or Governing Body member, they should raise the matter through the following chain of reporting:
- The Employee's Line Manager
 - The CLH ORGANISATION's Manager
 - The CLH ORGANISATION's Chair
 - The CLH ORGANISATION's Secretary
- (c) If it is not possible to raise the matter in order of the chain of reporting because the matter relates to the next immediate person in the chain, then the Employee should raise the matter to the next person in the chain.
- (d) All allegations made under this policy will be treated in confidence.
- (e) No action will be taken against a person making allegations of dishonesty or fraud if they subsequently transpire to be unfounded, provided they were made in good faith and with some degree of evidence to suggest wrongdoing.



Health and safety (work) policy

Aims of the health and safety at work policy

The following may be aims of the health and safety at work policy:

- To ensure clean, safe and well maintained external and internal communal areas
- To ensure that residents can shape and, in some cases, deliver the services they receive
- To ensure that residents get good value for money for the services they pay for
- To comply with the Neighbourhood and Community Standard (for Registered Provider CLH organisations)

Responsibility for health and safety at work

The Governing Body of a CLH organisation is responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace and working environment for its employees. The Governing Body must take such steps as are reasonably practicable within its authority to meet its health and safety responsibilities and give particular attention to the provision and proper maintenance of the following:

- A safe place of work, safe access to and exit from it which is covered by an up to date Fire Risk Assessment
- A healthy working environment with adequate heating, kitchen facilities and toilet facilities for separate sexes and that meet disability requirements
- The prescription of safe working practices
- The safe condition, operation and regular maintenance of the premises and equipment
- The safe use of materials and processes
- The provision of job safety training, information and supervision for existing and new methods of work, premises, materials, processes and substances; paying particular attention to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations
- The provision and maintenance of adequate first aid arrangements
- Adequate welfare arrangements
- The supply of appropriate protective clothing and serviceable equipment to assist safe working
- Preparation and prominent display of codes of practice, fire and welfare notices and the safety provisions
- Adequate arrangements in the event of emergencies, including the evacuation of premises and workplaces
- A safe environment for all visitors and members of the public using the facilities of the organisation.

Legislative requirements

The particular attention of all employees should be drawn to Sections 7 and 8 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

- it shall be the duty of every employee while at work to take responsible care for the health and safety of themselves or other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work; and
- as regards any duty or requirement imposed on their employer or any other persons by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, to co-operate with them so far as is necessary to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with
- no person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare in the pursuance of any relevant statutory provisions.

Safety Arrangements



The main feature of the CLH organisation's safety arrangements are provision of first aid facilities and appointment of a health and safety officer; the organisation must also maintain an Accident Book on site and record all incidents of injury appropriately.

Health and safety induction checklists

All employers have a responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act to provide information, instruction training and supervision to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety at work of their employees. The new employee who is unfamiliar with the building, the systems of work and the safety arrangements is perhaps the person most at risk in terms of fire or accident. The day of employment should be specified as the day for the completion of the health and safety induction checklist. Basic safety arrangements should be passed on to the new employee on a checklist basis by the person responsible for their first day induction; the induction checklist should include procedures for handling equipment and materials and movement and storage. Each new employee should be required to sign confirming that they have been provided with this instruction and have understood it.

Risks to be avoided:

- Failure to properly establish management systems for health and safety at work places the organisation's employees at risk of harm and the organisation at risk of substantial financial loss and (potentially) legal liability (for it and its Governing Body members)
- Failure to properly induct new employees places the organisation's employees at risk of harm and the organisation at risk of substantial financial loss and (potentially) legal liability (for it and its Governing Body members)



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