



# Operational Policies Booklet



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# **South Ayrshire Community Transport Policies and Procedures**

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

1. Play your part in helping to develop an ethos where all people matter and are treated equally, and with respect and dignity
2. Always put the care, welfare and safety needs of the client first
3. Respect a client's culture (for example their faith and religious beliefs)
4. Respect the client's right to privacy and personal space
5. Retain strict professional boundaries at all times
6. Be aware of the vulnerability of some clients to being isolated (for example, those with disabilities and/or learning difficulties; those suffering from dementia or other cognitive impairment; those from black or other ethnic minorities)
7. Ensure that when you are assisting vulnerable clients you are within sight or hearing of other responsible adults
8. Report immediately any suspicion that a client could be at risk of harm or abuse

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

## **Purpose and scope**

The purpose of this Equal Opportunities Policy is to communicate our commitment to equality of opportunity in employment, with the aims of ensuring that all employees and job applicants are treated fairly and equally, and supporting the Company's objective of providing a working environment that is free from all forms of discrimination.

The policy applies to all staff within the Company, including employees and other workers, such as agency workers, temporary workers and contractors. All staff are expected to put this policy into practice.

A copy of this policy will be distributed to all employees and can also be found in the employee handbook and will be made available to other workers on their engagement. Job seekers and applicants can access the policy via the Company's website and will be sent a copy of the policy on request. In addition, all staff will receive specific briefing on this policy which will also form part of the induction process for any new employees.

Any questions about the policy should be directed to the Community Transport Manager.

This policy does not form part of employees' contracts of employment and the Company may amend it at any time. The policy is regularly reviewed, at least annually, and may be amended at any time.

## **Policy statement**

The Company is fully committed to providing equality in the workplace and all opportunities for, and during employment, will be afforded to individuals fairly and irrespective of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race including colour, ethnic or national origins and nationality, religion or belief or sexual orientation ("the protected characteristics"). We aim to create a working environment that is free from discrimination and harassment in any form, in which all staff, customers, suppliers and contractors are treated with dignity and respect.

The Company will not unlawfully discriminate in the arrangements we make for recruitment and selection or in the opportunities afforded for employment, training or any other benefit. All decisions will be made fairly and objectively. We aim, as far as reasonably practicable, to ensure that all our working practices are applied fairly and consistently and, where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to avoid or overcome any particular disadvantage these may cause and to promote equality.

The Company respects an individual's right to choose whether or not to belong to a trade union and membership status will have no bearing on an applicant's suitability for employment or result in any detrimental treatment when working for the Company.

## **Specific Responsibilities**

The Company has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and associated legislation and for observing relevant Codes of Practice.

The management team and board are responsible for monitoring and reviewing the policy and for ensuring that all employment-related policies, procedures and practices adhere to this policy.

All staff have a responsibility not to discriminate or harass other staff, clients/customers and suppliers and to report any such behaviour of which they become aware to their Manager/Supervisor.

Managers/supervisors are responsible for implementing the Equal Opportunities Policy and must apply the policy as part of their day-to-day management of the Company. All Managers/supervisors will receive specific training in this policy.

## **Forms of discrimination**

The following are forms of discrimination that this policy aims to avoid:

Direct Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic that they either have or are thought to have. Direct discrimination can also occur by way of association, which is when a person is treated less favourably because, for example, their spouse or partner or other relative has the protected characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to everyone, but has a disproportionately adverse effect on people who share a particular protected characteristic. A person with the protected characteristic who is disadvantaged in that way has the right to complain.

To be justified the provision, criterion, or practice must be necessary for legitimate business reasons in circumstances where less discriminatory alternatives are not reasonably available.

Victimisation occurs where someone is treated unfavourably because he/she has raised a complaint under this policy or taken legal action, in relation to any alleged act of unlawful discrimination, against the Company or because he/she has supported someone else in doing this.

Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates an individual's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment can take many different forms and may involve inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments, emails or physical contact that causes offence or are objectionable.

Harassment may involve a single incident or persistent behaviour that extends over a period of time and can occur even if someone did not mean to cause offence. It also means that a

person can be subjected to harassment by behaviour that is not aimed at them directly but which they nonetheless find unpleasant.

Harassment is always unacceptable and where it relates to a protected characteristic it will amount to an unlawful act of discrimination.

*Discrimination arising from Disability* - In addition to the above, it is unlawful to treat a person unfavourably because of something that is the result, effect or outcome of their disability, unless the treatment is necessary and can be objectively justified. Furthermore, employers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled applicants, employees or other workers are not substantially disadvantaged.

### **Creating equal opportunities in the workplace**

There are a number of ways in which the Company aims to ensure equal opportunities in the workplace, including:

- **Recruitment and selection**

- Recruitment and selection procedures will be free from bias or discrimination. Recruitment procedures will be conducted objectively and will be based upon specific and reasonable job-related criteria. Decisions regarding an individual's suitability for a particular role will be based on aptitude and ability.
- We will consider making appropriate reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process to ensure that disabled applicants are not substantially disadvantaged.
- The Company will consider taking appropriate positive action to enable or encourage applications from persons with a protected characteristic that is under represented in the organisation

- **Career development and training**

- All staff will be given an appropriate induction to enable them to fulfil the responsibilities of their role.
- All employees will be encouraged to develop their full potential and we will not unreasonably deny an employee access to training or other career development opportunities. These will be determined objectively, taking into account the needs of the business and available resources.
- Selection for promotion will be based on objective criteria and decisions will be made on the basis of merit.

- **Terms and conditions**

- Our terms and conditions of service will be applied fairly, and benefits and facilities will be made available to all staff who should have access to them, as appropriate.
- Terms and conditions of employment for part-time employees will be provided on a pro-rata basis to full-time employees. Similarly, the terms and conditions for fixed term employees will be comparable with those given to permanent employees, except when different treatment can be objectively justified.

- **Employment policies and practices**
  - The Company aims to ensure that employment policies and practices, including any rules or requirements, do not directly or indirectly discriminate and are applied in a non-discriminatory manner. In particular, we will ensure that all disciplinary decisions are fair and consistent and that selection for redundancy is based on objective criteria.
  - The Company will consider making appropriate reasonable adjustments to the working environment or any work arrangements that would alleviate any substantial disadvantage these cause disabled staff.
  - We will aim as far as reasonably practicable to accommodate the requirements of different religions and cultures and will consider requests from employees to vary or change their working hours to enable them to care for a dependant.
  
- **Working environment**
  - All individuals have a right to be treated with dignity and respect and the Company takes reasonable steps to protect staff from discrimination, bullying or harassment and, in the event of a complaint, we will take appropriate action to prevent, as far as possible, a further occurrence.
  - All staff are encouraged to report any incidents of inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour at work or that occurs during the course of employment, on or off premises, including at work social events (whether organised by the Company or not) or at formal or informal events involving staff, customers or other work-related contacts.
  - The Company has a separate Harassment Policy and procedure for dealing with complaints of harassment.

### **Equal Opportunities Monitoring**

The Company will monitor the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its objectives.

As part of this process we monitor:

- the composition of job applicants and decisions in recruitment
- the composition of our workforce
- access to training, promotion and other opportunities and benefits
- the impact of our employment policies, including use of the disciplinary and grievance procedure
- dismissals and other terminations

Information collected for monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and will not be used for any other purpose.

### **Raising a complaint of discrimination**

If you believe you have been discriminated against, you should raise the matter in accordance with the Company's Grievance Procedure. A copy of the Grievance Procedure can be found in the handbook and on the website. If you believe that you may have been subject to harassment you are encouraged to raise the matter under the Company's Harassment Policy.

Any employee who is found to have committed an act of discrimination, or breached this policy in any other way, will be subject to action under the Disciplinary Procedure, up to and including dismissal. Non-employees will be subject to appropriate formal action that may, depending on the circumstances, involve terminating any contract or agreement.

The Company will also take seriously any malicious or, in its opinion, unwarranted allegations of discrimination and will take appropriate action, disciplinary or otherwise, where necessary.

# CAPABILITY POLICY

## Purpose and Scope

- The overall aim of the capability policy is to assist employees who have difficulty achieving the required standards of job performance. The key objective is to encourage and support improvement rather than to punish failure.
- The purpose of the capability procedure is to provide a fair and consistent process to enable the employee to achieve an acceptable standard of performance. The process involves progressive levels of review and target setting to establish the required standard of performance and to identify any training and support which can be given.
- Continued failure to achieve the required standards of work performance will lead to the termination of employment although the Company will try to avoid this happening and may consider any suitable alternative positions that may be available.
- In cases where the actual or potential consequences of substandard performance are very serious the Company may choose to invoke its disciplinary procedure. Summary dismissal action may be taken in the event of gross negligence.
- This procedure applies to all employees. This procedure does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

## Informal Counselling

- If your performance is causing concern, your manager will normally have an informal counselling meeting with you. The aim of which is to ensure that you are aware of your manager's concerns regarding performance and to discuss ways of trying to resolve the problem without the necessity for the formal procedure.
- Informal counselling may occur during the Performance Appraisal process or at a separate meeting held to discuss the standards expected.

The aim of the informal counselling session is to make sure that you understand what is required and to identify any training and development needs or personal circumstances which could be contributing to the poor performance. Appropriate solutions will be discussed with you and you will be given targets and timescales for improvement. A note of what was discussed and what was agreed will be kept on your personnel file.

If after one or more informal counselling sessions you fail to make a reasonable improvement to your performance the decision may be taken to progress the matter using the formal capability procedure.

## Formal Capability Procedure

The formal capability procedure is appropriate when:

- targets set at an informal meeting have not been met

- targets set at informal meeting have been met but the level of improvement and performance has not been sustained
- there has been a significant failure in performance which warrants entry into the formal procedure without any previous informal warning.

The formal procedure consists of 3 stages. Employees will normally enter the formal procedure at Stage 1 although, the process can be entered into at any Stage depending on the seriousness of the poor performance.

### Monitoring and Review

Your performance will be monitored throughout the formal procedure and review meetings will be held with you after a reasonable period of time has been given for you to demonstrate an improvement, following a Stage 1 or Stage 2 meeting.

If you have reached an acceptable level of performance the decision will normally be taken to remove you from the capability procedure. Alternatively, the Company may extend the review period where there has been some improvement and the indication is that the standards will be achieved in the very near future. If standards have not been achieved the decision will be taken to escalate the matter to the next stage of the capability procedure.

### Stage 1 – First Formal Warning

If it is considered that formal action is appropriate, you will be notified in writing of the nature of the complaint against you. You will be provided with details of any supporting evidence which may be available, and you will be invited to attend a capability meeting. You will be advised that disciplinary action may be taken as a result of this meeting and of your statutory right to be accompanied at this meeting by a colleague or a trade union representative.

The Company may also have someone present at the meeting to take notes. At the meeting your performance will be reviewed against the required standards and you will have an opportunity to discuss any training needs or personal circumstances which could be contributing to the poor performance.

You will be issued with a FIRST FORMAL WARNING and will be informed of the period for which the warning will remain in place. The warning will confirm the improvement that is expected and the timescales for improvement. You will be notified of the consequences of a continued failure to improve and of your right to appeal against the warning.

A copy of the warning will be kept on your personnel file. If your job performance has reached an acceptable level after the specified period, the warning will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes, but will remain on your personnel file.

## Stage 2 – Final Written Warning

If the breach of company standards is more serious, or there is still no improvement in your job performance you will be notified in writing of the nature of the complaint against you. You will be provided with details of any supporting evidence which may be available and will be invited to attend a capability meeting. You will be advised that disciplinary action may be taken as a result of this meeting and of your statutory right to be accompanied at this meeting by a colleague or a trade union representative.

The Company may also have someone present at the meeting to take notes.

At the meeting your performance will be reviewed against the required standards and you will have an opportunity to discuss any training needs or personal circumstances which could be contributing to the poor performance.

You will be issued with a FINAL WRITTEN WARNING. This will include the reason for the warning, giving details of how you should improve, and remind you that if there is no improvement within the specified period, you may be DISMISSED.

A copy of the warning will be kept on your personnel file. If your job performance has reached an acceptable level after the specified period, the warning will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes, but will remain on your personnel file.

## Stage 3 – Dismissal

If the breach of company standards is very serious, or there is still no improvement in your job performance you will be invited to a capability meeting and will be informed in writing of the grounds for the meeting and advised that this may result in DISMISSAL. You will be advised of your statutory right to be accompanied at this meeting by a colleague or a trade union representative.

The meeting will be conducted by board member who, wherever possible will have had no other involvement in the case. He/she will review your level of performance against the agreed standards and will also review the support which the Company has given you.

If, after careful consideration of all the facts, it is decided that you are unable or unlikely to meet a satisfactory standard of performance, or that the consequences of your poor performance warrants termination, dismissal notice will normally be applied.

The Company may consider alternatives to dismissal, for example transfer to another position which may be more suitable to your level of skill and ability. Redeployment will be dependent on the circumstances and the opportunities available and your current level of pay and benefits could be affected.

You will be informed in writing of the decision, given details of the reason for the dismissal, or an offer of suitable alternative employment, your termination date (if relevant), the

appropriate period of notice or amount of pay in lieu of notice, your right of appeal and details of the appeal process.

If you are dismissed under this policy your employment will terminate on the date specified in writing. Your employment will NOT be suspended pending the outcome of any appeal procedure. Should an appeal reverse the decision to dismiss you, you will be reinstated with no break in service and any monies owing to you will be paid.

## **Procedures to appeal**

You can appeal against any level of WARNING or against the Company's decision to DISMISS [or redeploy] you.

If you wish to appeal, your appeal must be made in writing to the Community Transport Manager within 5 working days of the decision being communicated to you in writing and you should detail your reason(s) for appealing against the Company's decision.

Your appeal will be considered by the board of trustees, within 5 working days of receiving your appeal. If it is anticipated that the appeal process will take longer than 5 working days from receipt of your appeal you will be informed of this and of the expected timescale.

You will be notified of your statutory right to be accompanied at the appeal meeting by a colleague or a trade union representative. If additional issues or new evidence arise during this meeting, an adjournment may take place to allow for these to be investigated.

After considering your appeal, a decision may be taken to uphold the dismissal or other disciplinary action or to overturn the Company's earlier decision. You will be informed of the outcome of the appeal and the reasons for the decision in writing, as soon as possible. The decision which is reached is final.

# GRIEVANCE POLICY

## **Purpose and scope**

The purpose of a grievance procedure is to enable employees to raise a work-related problem, concern or complaint and to have the matter dealt with as quickly and fairly as possible. This procedure applies to all employees. It does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment and the Company may depart from it depending on the circumstances of the case.

## **Informally raising a grievance**

Many work-place issues can be resolved quickly and easily by taking informal action. If it is not appropriate to raise your grievance informally, or your grievance has not been resolved to your satisfaction through informal action, you should use the formal grievance procedure

## **Formally raising a grievance**

### **Stage 1**

- You should put your grievance in writing, without unreasonable delay, and send it to your immediate manager. If your grievance involves your immediate manager, then you should send your grievance to a more senior manager or board member
- The appropriate manager will arrange a meeting with you to discuss your grievance, normally within 5 working days of receiving your complaint. You will be given the opportunity to explain your grievance and how you think it should be resolved. The manager hearing your complaint will listen carefully to what you have to say and will discuss the matter thoroughly with you. Your complaint may need to be investigated further and you will be advised if this is the case
- After your grievance has been fully investigated, you will be notified in writing of the outcome and of any action to be taken to resolve your grievance. This response will normally be given to you in writing, within 5 working days of the meeting. If it is anticipated that the response will take longer you will be informed of this and of the expected timescale. You will also be informed of your right to appeal if you are dissatisfied with the outcome

### **Stage 2**

- If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your grievance at Stage 1, you can appeal in writing to a senior manager, sending a copy of your appeal letter to the SACT Board
- An appeal officer (where possible, a board member with no previous involvement in the case) will be appointed to consider your appeal and, normally within 5 working days of receiving your appeal, will arrange a meeting with you to discuss your appeal. The appeal officer will listen carefully to what you have to say and will discuss the matter thoroughly with you. The appeal officer may want to investigate your complaint further and you will be advised if this is the case

- After your appeal has been investigated, you will be advised in writing of the outcome. This response will normally be given to you in writing, within 5 working days of the appeal meeting. If it is anticipated that the response will take longer you will be informed of this and of the expected timescale. You will have no further right of appeal
- During all stages of the formal grievance procedure you will be provided with copies of notes as soon as they become available

### **Right to be accompanied**

You have a statutory right to be accompanied by a work colleague or a trade union representative at formal grievance meetings, which concern a complaint about a duty that we owe to you. If you wish to be accompanied, please confirm your request to a senior manager who will confirm if it is reasonable and appropriate for your chosen companion to attend in the circumstances

### **Ex-employee**

If you wish to raise a grievance after you have left the Company, please forward it in writing. The Company is not obliged to investigate or respond to your complaint but we may decide to do so if it is deemed appropriate.

### **Resolving complaints through the employment tribunal**

- The Company hopes that effective use of this procedure will negate the need for employees to seek external resolution for complaints by way of an employment tribunal claim.
- However, the Company also respects that employees may wish to exercise this right and, accordingly, employees are advised that a failure to follow this procedure beforehand could result in a reduction in any compensation awarded of up to 25%.

# **DISCIPLINARY POLICY**

## **Purpose & Scope**

The purpose of a disciplinary procedure is to ensure the safe and effective operation of the business and to promote fair treatment of individual employees. The following procedure provides a framework to address any lapses in conduct [or attendance] and encourages individual employees to achieve and maintain an acceptable standard.

This procedure applies to all employees. It does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

This policy does not apply to dismissals, where the employment is terminated for a reason unconnected to disciplinary action, such as in the event of redundancy, retirement, or non-renewal of a fixed term contract. If these situations arise the Company will follow a fair and reasonable procedure, which will include consultation with you prior to any dismissal taking effect.

## **Informal Warnings**

- Minor breaches of Company standards may result in an informal warning being given to you by your immediate manager. The objective of the warning is to help you to improve your conduct [or attendance] without having to use a formal procedure.
- An informal warning is normally given verbally, although a note may be kept in your personnel file of what was discussed and what was agreed. Your manager will monitor your conduct [or attendance] over an agreed period. If you do not improve satisfactorily, or there are any further breaches of Company standards, then the formal disciplinary procedure will be invoked.

## **Investigation**

- If it becomes necessary to formally address issues regarding your conduct [or attendance] the matter will first be investigated by an appropriate manager
- This investigation will be carried out thoroughly and as quickly as possible in all the circumstances. Confidentiality will be maintained, as far as is reasonably practicable, during the investigation and throughout the disciplinary process, should this be activated
- Under certain circumstances, including but not limited to harassment, bullying, theft and violence, the Company may decide to suspend you on basic pay, while the matter is being investigated. This is not a disciplinary sanction, but a way of ensuring that a full review of the circumstances can take place as effectively as possible.

## **Criminal Charges**

- Where your conduct is the subject of a criminal investigation, charge or conviction we will investigate the facts before deciding whether to take formal disciplinary action. We will not usually wait for the outcome of any prosecution before deciding what action, if any, to take

- Where you are unable, or have been advised not to attend a disciplinary hearing or say anything about a pending criminal matter, we may have to take a decision based on the available evidence
- A criminal investigation, charge or conviction relating to conduct outside work may be treated as a disciplinary matter if we consider that it is relevant to your employment

### **Disciplinary Meeting**

- If, after an investigation has been carried out, it is considered that there is a case to answer, you will be notified in writing of the nature of the complaint against you. You will be provided with details of any supporting evidence which may be available and will be invited to attend a disciplinary meeting. You will be advised that disciplinary action may be taken as a result of this meeting and of your statutory right to be accompanied at this meeting by a colleague or a trade union representative
- You should take reasonable steps to attend this meeting. If you are persistently unable or unwilling to attend, the Company reserves the right to proceed in your absence
- This meeting will be conducted by an appropriate manager. The Company may also have someone present at the meeting to take notes
- At this meeting, the nature of the alleged breach of Company standards will be made clear to you and you will be given the opportunity to state your case and call any relevant witnesses. If any additional issues arise during this meeting, an adjournment may take place to allow further investigation
- During the disciplinary process or appeal, you will be provided with copies of any notes, witness statements or interview transcripts that the Company considers to be relevant as soon as they become available

### **Right to be Accompanied**

- You may bring a companion to any disciplinary hearing or appeal hearing under this procedure. The companion may be either a trade union representative or a colleague. You must inform the company who your chosen companion is at least 24 hours before the hearing.
- The companion is allowed reasonable time off from duties without loss of pay but no-one is obliged to act as a companion if they do not wish to do so. If your companion is unavailable at the time a meeting is scheduled and will not be available for more than five working days afterwards, we may ask you to choose someone else

### **Disciplinary Action**

- If, at the conclusion of a disciplinary meeting, or shortly thereafter, it is decided that there has been a breach of standards, formal disciplinary action will be taken
- If you are issued with a warning, you will be informed of the period for which the warning will remain in place. A copy of the written warning will be kept in your personnel file. If your conduct [or attendance] has reached an acceptable level after the specified period, the warning will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes, but will be kept on your personnel file

- If you wish to appeal against any level of disciplinary sanction, including dismissal, you should follow the procedure for appeals set out below

### **Stage 1 – Oral Warning**

If your conduct [or attendance] is unsatisfactory or there is no improvement, or another breach of Company standards occurs after an informal warning has been issued, you will be given a formal ORAL WARNING, a note of which will be held on your personnel file. You will also be reminded that if there is no improvement, or a further breach occurs, within a specified period, further disciplinary action will be taken.

### **Stage 2 – Written Warning**

If the breach of Company standards is more serious, or there is no improvement in your conduct [or attendance] or another breach of Company standards occurs, you will receive a WRITTEN WARNING. This will include the reason for the warning, give details of how you should improve and remind you that if there is no improvement, or a further breach occurs within the specified period, further disciplinary action will be taken.

### **Stage 3 – Final Written Warning**

If the breach of Company standards is very serious, or there is still no improvement in your conduct [or attendance], or another breach of Company standards occurs despite a previous warning, a FINAL WRITTEN WARNING will be given. This will include the reason for the warning, giving details of how you should improve, and remind you that if there is no improvement, or a further breach occurs, within the specified period, you may be DISMISSED.

### **Stage 4 – Dismissal or other disciplinary action**

- If there is no satisfactory improvement in your conduct [or attendance] or if a further breach of Company standards occurs, you may be DISMISSED (or other disciplinary action may be taken i.e. demotion/ transfer/ reduction of pay/ suspension without pay). You will be informed in writing of the decision, given details of the reason for the dismissal, or other disciplinary action, your termination date (if relevant), the appropriate period of notice or amount of pay in lieu of notice, and details of your right to appeal
- A decision to dismiss or impose other disciplinary action will normally be taken by [a senior manager] and dismissal will only be applied if the Company does not consider any alternative to dismissal would be appropriate
- If you are dismissed under this policy your employment will terminate on the date specified in writing. Your employment will NOT be suspended pending the outcome of any appeal procedure. Should an appeal reverse the decision to dismiss you, you will be reinstated with no break in service and any monies owing to you will be paid
- Any of the above stages of disciplinary action may be omitted, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct

## **Gross Misconduct**

If you are found guilty of gross misconduct, the Company is entitled to summarily dismiss you. This means that you will be dismissed with immediate effect, without notice or pay in lieu of notice. Alternatively, the Company may impose another penalty short of dismissal.

Examples of gross misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- Theft, fraud or deliberate falsification of records
- Misuse, abuse or deliberate damage to Company property, including intellectual property, or that of other employees
- The supply or possession of alcohol or illegal drugs, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs on the Company's premises or during working hours
- Physical violence, actual or threatened
- Serious act of insubordination
- Inappropriate use of internet, intranet and email facilities
- Harassment or discrimination on any grounds
- Accepting or offering a bribe
- Disclosure of confidential information
- Serious breach of the health and safety rules
- Serious or repeated negligent acts in the performance of your duties
- Persistent or serious failure to follow reasonable instructions
- Giving false or misleading information to the Company
- Leaving the workplace without permission or reasonable excuse
- Serious disregard for rules or instructions given by the Company
- Unauthorised absence
- Bringing the Company into disrepute

## **Procedures to appeal against Dismissal or other Disciplinary Action**

- Your appeal must be made in writing to your senior manager within 5 working days of the decision being communicated to you in writing and you should detail your reason(s) for appealing against the disciplinary action.
- Your appeal will be considered by the senior manager and a board member, who, when practicable, will not have had any previous involvement in your case, within 5 working days of receiving your appeal. If it is anticipated that the appeal process will take longer than 5 working days from receipt of your appeal you will be informed of this and of the expected timescale.
- You will be notified of your statutory right to be accompanied at the appeal meeting by a colleague or a trade union representative. If additional issues or new evidence arise during this meeting, an adjournment may take place to allow for these to be investigated.
- After considering your appeal, a decision may be taken to uphold the dismissal or other disciplinary action or to overturn the findings of the disciplinary meeting. You will be informed of the outcome of the appeal and the reasons for the decision in writing, as soon as possible. The decision which is reached is final.

# **BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY**

## **Introduction**

SACT is committed to providing a working environment free from bullying and harassment. We aim to ensure that all staff are treated, and treat others, with dignity and respect. This policy covers bullying or harassment which occurs at work and out of the workplace including on work trips or at work-related events or social functions. This policy applies to all staff at all levels including employees, management, agency and casual workers, and independent contractors.

## **What is harassment?**

Harassment is any unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. A single incident can amount to harassment. A person may be harassed even if they were not the intended "target". Harassment also includes treating someone less favourably because they have submitted or refused to submit to such behaviour in the past. It is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010 to harass a person because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. It also includes conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment). Harassment is unacceptable even if it does not fall within any of these categories.

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:

- unwanted physical conduct including touching, pinching, pushing and grabbing
- unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour
- offensive e-mails, text messages or social media content or the display of offensive materials
- unwanted jokes, banter, mocking, mimicking or belittling a person

## **What is bullying?**

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying can include the use of personal strength or the power to coerce through fear or intimidation, not necessarily from someone in a position of authority.

Bullying may be physical, verbal or non-verbal. It can include conduct that is not face-to-face, including via text message, email and social media. Examples of bullying include:

- physical or psychological threats;
- overbearing and intimidating levels of supervision;
- inappropriate derogatory remarks about a person or their performance;
- shouting at staff;
- persistently picking on people in front of others or in private;

- blocking promotion and training opportunities;
- regularly and deliberately ignoring or excluding staff from work activities or work related social events;
- setting a person up to fail by overloading them with work or setting impossible deadlines;
- regularly making the same person the butt of jokes.

*Legitimate and reasonable criticism of a staff member's performance or behaviour, or reasonable management instructions, **do not** amount to bullying.*

### **Breaches of this Policy**

Bullying and harassment are not tolerated in our workplace and all staff are required to treat each other, along with our customers, suppliers, and visitors, with dignity and respect. Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our disciplinary procedure. Serious cases of bullying or harassment may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal. Staff who make complaints or who participate in good faith in any investigation must not suffer any form of retaliation or victimisation as a result. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our disciplinary procedure. Anyone found to have retaliated against or victimised someone in this way will be subject to disciplinary action under our disciplinary procedure.

### **If you believe you are being Harassed or Bullied**

If you believe you are being harassed or bullied, you may wish to raise the problem informally with the person responsible. Explain the situation and how it has made you feel. It can be helpful to describe the event, so the other person is clear about your concerns. Use the opportunity to ask the person to change or stop their behaviour. Alternatively, you may speak to your manager who can provide confidential advice and assistance in resolving the issue formally or informally.

If you do not feel that informal steps are appropriate, or they have been unsuccessful, you should raise the matter formally under our grievance procedure. All complaints will be investigated in accordance with our grievance procedure. If we consider that there is sufficient evidence to suggest you have been harassed or bullied we will consider the appropriate action to take. If the person accused is an employee, this may include invoking our disciplinary procedure. Whether or not your complaint is upheld, we will consider how best to manage any ongoing working relationship between you and the person concerned.

## PROTECTION FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS POLICY

All employees are protected by law from unfair treatment, victimisation and loss of employment if they report genuine concerns relating to any of the following areas of malpractice, or suspected malpractice:

- Criminal activity
- Miscarriages of justice
- Practices endangering health and safety
- Practices damaging the environment
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation
- Bribery
- Financial malpractice, impropriety or fraud
- Serious failure to comply with any codes of practice or ethical rules covering the business and/or
- Attempts to conceal any of the above

The malpractice can be past, present or prospective. You are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. No action will be taken against you if you raise genuine concerns even if the concern you raised is not confirmed by any subsequent investigation.

If you wish to report any such incident, you should:

- Report directly to your line manager or higher (where possible)
- The report should be put in writing as well as given verbally
- You must inform your line manager/employer if you do not wish it to be known who has raised the concern
- If the report is made anonymously, it may be difficult for the line manager to take the claim further if all the information is not provided
- If you request confidentiality, this will be respected absolutely. The line manager/employer must make every effort possible to protect your identity
- Your line manager/employer will keep you informed of the action which has been taken but may not be able to give much detail if they have to keep the confidence of other people

Investigation

- Once a concern has been raised, we will investigate this. If you have not made the complaint anonymously, you will be asked to attend a meeting as part of this investigation.
- We will keep you informed as to the progress of the investigation, as far as is possible and appropriate bearing in mind, in particular, any confidentiality obligations that apply. Please note that you will not be given details of any disciplinary action taken unless we consider this appropriate.

- If you do not wish to report to anyone in the company, you may also contact the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS), the whistleblowing charity Public Concern at Work or their trade union for more guidance

#### Dissatisfaction with the outcome of the process

- If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, you should raise this with the Chairman of the Board, giving the reasons for your dissatisfaction. He/she will respond in writing notifying you of his/her acceptance or rejection of the need for further investigation and the reasons for this
- If you still feel that the complaint has not been dealt with in a satisfactory manner, you have the right to obtain legal advice or report the matter to a prescribed body. Further information on the relevant prescribed bodies is available here:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/blowing-the-whistle-list-of-prescribed-people-and-bodies--2/whistleblowing-list-of-prescribed-people-and-bodies>

#### Training

- All of our workers will receive an appropriate briefing to ensure that they are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities under this Policy. This Policy will be made available to all employees via the company website and the employee handbook
- All managers will be fully briefed as to their role in supporting this Policy and the appropriate action to take in the event of any disclosure being made to them

### **Breach of this Policy**

- SACT may invoke the Disciplinary Procedure if anyone is found to have subjected a whistle-blower to any form of detrimental treatment. It may also be invoked if anyone within the company has intentionally misled us in respect of any matter, breached this Policy in any other way and/or if we believe that they have made a false allegation maliciously.

# HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

## Management

SACT management has overall responsibility for Health and Safety and will:

- Administer and interpret the effective implementation of SACT's Health and Safety policy
- Understand the application of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other legislation relevant to the Company's business
- Ensure that adequate resources are available to fulfil the Company's obligations
- Be responsible for the safety performance and for monitoring and coordinating performance within SACT
- Monitor contractor activities to ensure compliance with any Permit to Work issued
- Regularly inspect equipment to ensure that standards of Health and Safety are maintained
- Ensure that persons are adequately trained and fully aware of any hazards which are likely to be encountered and the precautions that are to be observed
- Personal protective equipment will be supplied by the Company to employees to meet the requirements of the Personal Equipment at Work Regulations 1992. Employees and contractors will be required to report loss or damage of any equipment to SACT management so that it can be replaced
- Ensure that people know what to do in the case of emergencies
- Consider any issues of Health and Safety for any employee/trainee under their supervision
- Report any accident or near miss as soon as possible
- Set a personal example at all times with respect to Health and Safety

## Employees

All employees are responsible for fulfilling their statutory duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. In particular, they should:

- Report any hazardous conditions in the first instance to their Line Manager
- Observe all safety rules at all times and refrain from intentionally misusing or recklessly interfering with anything that has been provided for Health and Safety reasons
- Wear appropriate safety clothing/equipment and use appropriate safety devices where necessary
- Conform to all instructions given by their Line Manager and others with a responsibility for Health and Safety
- Report to the Line Manager if there are any problems with regard to Health and Safety during their course of their work
- Obtain First Aid treatment for any injury sustained and notify representative
- Regularly inspect equipment to ensure that standards of Health and Safety are maintained

## Training

- Health and Safety training will be an essential part of specific job training within the company
- MiDAS training will be arranged for all SACT drivers where necessary
- Manual Handling and Safer handling of People – in respect of the Manual Handling Operations 1992 Regulations, an initial assessment will be made. Those employees involved in manual handling and/or Safer Handling of People will be trained in appropriate handling technique

# WORKPLACE DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY

## 1. Introduction

This company is committed to providing a safe, healthy and productive working environment for all employees, contractors, customers and visitors involved in its operation. This policy sets out the company's aims in reducing and managing alcohol and drug problems in the workplace.

Alcohol and drug problems are prevalent in society and are associated with a wide variety of costs for both employers and employees. These costs include ill-health sickness absence, reduced work performance and accidents. The consumption of alcohol and drugs has implications for health and safety at work since these substances impair co-ordination, judgement and decision making; as such this is a policy matter. This policy has been compiled by the SACT Board and Management following consultation with the relevant authorities and Healthy Working Lives.

## 2. Policy Aims and Objectives

### Aim

- To clearly state the company's position on alcohol and drugs within the workplace.

### Objectives

- To ensure the company complies with appropriate legislation
- To minimise the risks associated with alcohol and drugs in the workplace
- To have clear rules regarding alcohol and drugs in the workplace
- To provide employees with an education programme on the adverse health effects of alcohol and drugs
- To encourage the early identification of employees who may be experiencing alcohol or drug problems
- To provide support for employees experiencing alcohol and drug problems
- To provide training and support to line managers to ensure they are equipped to support employees experiencing problems

## 3. Definitions

- Alcohol problem - An alcohol problem is defined as any drinking, either intermittent or continual which interferes with a person's health and/or social functioning and/or work capability or conduct
- Drugs - Any drug, whether illegal, prescribed or over the counter or solvents such as glue, butane, etc. In the case of prescribed and over the counter drugs, their possession and use by the employee is acknowledged as legitimate
- Drug problem - The use of illegal drugs, the deliberate use of prescribed or over the counter drugs (when not for a medical condition) and the use of solvents, either intermittent or continual which interferes with a person's health and/or social functioning and/or work capability or conduct

#### **4. Legal**

4.1 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires employers to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees and others who may be affected by their activities, as far as is reasonably practicable

4.2 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires employers to carry out a risk assessment to identify hazards in the workplace and put measures in place to minimise these risks

4.3 The Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) is the main legislation covering drugs and categorises them as classes A, B and C. These drugs are called controlled substances and class A drugs are considered to be the most harmful under this act. It is illegal for anyone, whether at work or not to produce, supply or be in possession of illegal drugs. Employers may be liable if they knowingly allow dispensing, manufacturing, possession, using or selling on their premises

#### **5. Policy Rules**

5.1 The company requires all employees to report for duty free from the effects of alcohol and drugs\*. It is not acceptable to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs at work or consume alcohol or drugs during hours of work – this includes paid and un-paid breaks

5.2 Employees found in possession of illegal drugs or using illegal drugs whilst at work will normally be reported to the police

5.3 In some cases the legitimate use of prescribed drugs can affect a person's ability to do their job. In such instances, employees should inform their line manager

\* As per definition in section 3

#### **6. Education**

6.1 The company is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles to employees via the Healthy Working Lives programme. Alcohol and drug issues will be incorporated into the staff health programme and employees will be provided with information on the current health guidance in relation to safe and sensible drinking and the risks associated with using drugs. This information will be disseminated by means of written material, email communication and workshops run by health specialists from the alcohol and drugs field

6.2 Training will be provided for managers to outline their responsibilities for enforcing this policy and additional support can be sought from a Human Resources Advisor. New managers will be made aware of their responsibilities in relation to this policy via the company induction programme

6.3 This policy will be sent to all staff on launch. New staff will be made aware of this policy at induction and will be sent a copy with their contract of employment

## **7. Implementation of the Policy**

### **7.1 Identification of a problem**

Alcohol and drug problems may become apparent through a number of means, for example the following (particularly in combination) may result in a problem being suspected:

- Persistent short-term absence
- Unauthorised absence
- Poor time keeping
- Reduced work performance
- Poor working relationships
- Deterioration in appearance

However, it must be remembered that these factors can have a number of other causes. Employees experiencing alcohol or drug problems may first become apparent to their colleagues. If a member of staff suspects an alcohol or drug problem in a colleague, they should either:

- Encourage the person to seek help from support agencies e.g. [www.alcoholfocus-scotland.org.uk/local-services](http://www.alcoholfocus-scotland.org.uk/local-services)
- Report the matter to a manager (particularly if the person is involved in a safety critical job)

### **7.2 Misconduct**

This policy is primarily concerned with ongoing alcohol and drugs problems which are classed as capability issues, i.e. where the problem impacts on the person's ability to do their job. One-off cases where the rules of this policy are breached, such as someone reporting for work clearly under the influence of alcohol or drugs or suffering from the effects of alcohol will be classed as a conduct issue and will be dealt with under the normal disciplinary procedures as outlined in the company hand book.

Very serious incidents such as violence at work whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs or dealing illegal drugs at work will be deemed serious misconduct justifying summary dismissal. In some instances of misconduct where the employee admits to having an alcohol or drug problem, disciplinary proceedings may be held in abeyance subject to successful outcome of treatment.

In instances of serious misconduct where the employee subsequently admits to having an alcohol or drug problem, the support route and the disciplinary route may be implemented in tandem.

### **7.3 Voluntary Referral for Support**

Employees who suspect or know they have a drug or alcohol problem are encouraged to seek support at an early stage. Sources of support are outlined in Appendix 1. Employees may or may not wish to inform their line manager in such instances

#### 7.4 Referral by Management

Employees suspected of having an alcohol or drug problem will be offered support by their manager. The flowchart in Appendix 1 will be followed. Where the problem has become apparent through deterioration in work performance, the employee will have to demonstrate satisfactory completion of a programme of support and an improvement in work performance or disciplinary action will be taken. Employees will be given the opportunity of attending treatment within work time. Alternatively, if employees require to be absent from duty normal sick pay arrangements will apply

#### 7.5 Confidentiality

The company aims to ensure that the confidentiality of all employees experiencing alcohol or drug problems is maintained by appropriate people, for example, human resources, occupational health and line manager. Information regarding individual cases will not be divulged to third parties unless the safety of the person concerned or others would be compromised by not doing so.

#### 7.6 Equal Opportunities

This policy will apply equally to all staff regardless of grade, experience or role within the company

#### 7.7 Relapse

The company acknowledges that relapse is common with alcohol and drug problems. Employees will normally be supported through two relapses after treatment. Subsequent relapses will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the needs of the department affected and the business needs of the organisation. Employees should be aware that the disciplinary route might be followed after any subsequent relapses.

#### 7.8 Return to Work

Following treatment, the company will endeavour to ensure the employee returns to their existing job. If the employee is unable to fulfil those duties the company will consider alternative duties. Promotional prospects will be unaffected following treatment.

### 8. Monitoring and Review

8.1 This policy will take effect from 1st April 2020. As this policy constitutes a change in employment terms and conditions employees will be given a 12-week notice period of the policy taking effect. This notice period will commence on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

8.2 Those responsible for HR will compile an annual report on the implementation of the policy to be presented to the board. The report will include compliance levels, awareness amongst staff and implementation by managers.

8.3 If employees have concerns about this policy, they can be raised with their line manager.

8.4 This policy will be reviewed in 12 months' time.

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

South Ayrshire Community Transport (SACT) believes that the welfare and well-being of the child is paramount. Our objective is to ensure that all children in our care are protected from any form of abuse or harm and that their rights and views are met and respected by all. SACT will also respect parental rights to be kept informed of any concerns our employees may have regarding their children, including their rights to confidentiality and equality.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that: Each child has the right to protection from all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

### What is Child Abuse?

“Children may be in need of protection where their basic need is not being met in a manner appropriate to their stage of development and they will be at risk from avoidable acts of commission or omission on the part of their parent/s, sibling/s, relative/s or a carer. To define an act of omission as abusive and/or presenting future risk for purpose of registration, a number of elements must be taken into account. These include demonstrable or predictable harm to the child which must have been avoidable because of action or inaction by the parent or other carers.” (Protecting children A Shared Responsibility – Scottish Office 1998)

### Categories of Abuse

**PHYSICAL INJURY** – actual or attempted physical injury to a child, including the administration of toxic substances, where there is knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

**INDICATORS** – these can include the fear of returning home, untreated injuries, failure to thrive, aggression towards others, fear of medical help, bald patches and unexplained injuries or burns with inconsistent excuses given as an explanation

**SEXUAL ABUSE** – any child may be deemed to have been sexually abused when any person/s, by design or neglect, exploits the child directly or indirectly, in any activity intended to the sexual arousal or other forms of gratification of that person or any other person/s including organised networks. This definition holds where or not there has been genital contact and whether or not the child is said to have initiated, or consented to the behaviour.

**INDICATORS** – itching or soreness in the genital area, pain on urination, difficulty in walking or sitting, stained or bloody underclothes, bruising to the inner thighs or buttocks, in appropriate language, making sexual advances towards adults or other children and wariness of being approached by anyone.

**EMOTIONAL ABUSE** – failure to provide for the child’s basic emotional needs such as to have a severe effect on the behaviour of the child. Examples of this could include rejection,

denigration, scapegoating, the child being denied opportunities to play or socialise/form relationships.

INDICATORS – overly withdrawn, aggression, constant wetting or soiling, frequent vomiting, poor language development, fear of new situations or the inability to relate to peers or adults.

PHYSICAL NEGLECT – when a child’s essential needs are not being met and this is likely to cause impairment to physical health and development. Such needs include food, clothing, cleanliness, shelter and warmth. The lack of appropriate care, including deprivation of access to health care, may result in persistent or severe exposure, through negligence, to circumstances which endanger the child.

It is important to recognise that some signs and symptoms may occur for other reasons; however, if these signs and symptoms are occurring on a regular basis they should be noted within a child protection diary, recording details of the site of injury and description. A second signature from a co-worker should always be sought as corroboration.

In addition to this, it may be useful to take notes of anything a child says which could be indicative of neglect or abuse.

### **ALWAYS SEEK ADVICE ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN OR HEARD**

#### RESPONDING TO A DISCLOSURE

- Believe the child
- Avoid showing shock (facial expressions)
- Tell the child they are not to blame
- Give reassurance
- Do not say you will not tell anyone else
- Don’t ask leading questions
- Make a written note of what is said – in the child’s own words without interpretation, and of who was present as soon as possible
- Report what was said to your line manager
- Complete an Incident Report Form
- Seek advice
- Make a referral if required
- Do not treat the child differently
- REMEMBER CONFIDENTIALITY
- Continue to observe and record

#### RESPONDING TO THE PARENT/CAREGIVER OF A CHILD YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT

- Always treat the parent with respect
- Ask for an explanation of an unusual injury
- Be open about your concerns, unless this is putting the child at further risk

- Explain what will happen next
- Offer support at every stage
- Encouragement should be given for the parent to continue to use the service
- Do not treat the parent any less favourably or equally than others

#### PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING/SHARING SUSPICIONS OR CONCERNS

- Get advice and report suspicions/concerns. **In the first instance, staff should report to their line manager.** In his/her absence, staff should report to the next level of management
- Monitor the child
- Record
- All information should be stored in a lockable cabinet or drawer
- Please note that it is not the responsibility of any member of staff to investigate a suspected case of child abuse

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff should always refer to SACT's confidentiality policy and procedures to ensure good working practices.

#### **Advice must be taken from line manager in relation to Child Protection Incident. All incidents must be reported immediately to your line manager.**

If there are child protection concerns then a referral should be made to Social Services or, in an emergency, to the Police. This will be made by your line manager or yourself (depending on the circumstances).

#### When a referral is made to Social Services or Police, the following details are required:

- The child's name, address and date of birth
- Parent's name and current whereabouts
- Your details (e.g. your involvement with the child)
- What your concerns are and why they have arisen
- Any recent changes in the child's behaviour or presentation
- Whether a child said anything which has made you concerned
- Whether there are any other children in the household
- Whether there are any other agencies currently involved with the family (if known)
- Whether there have been any previous concerns about this child or other children in the household
- Whether the child has any disabilities or special needs
- Whether there are any cultural or religious factors which need to be taken into account
- Whether the parents are aware of the concerns and, if so, what is their reaction

## **PROTECTION FOR VULNERABLE ADULTS**

The same recording and reporting procedures must be followed in cases where abuse of vulnerable adults is suspected and when responding to a disclosure:

- Believe the vulnerable person
- Avoid showing shock (facial expressions)
- Tell the person they are not to blame
- Give reassurance
- Do not say you will not tell anyone else
- Do not ask leading questions
- Make a written note of what is said – in the person's own words without interpretation, and a note of who else was present as soon as possible
- Report what was said to your line manager
- Seek advice
- Complete an Incident Report Form
- Make a referral if required
- Do not treat the person differently
- REMEMBER CONFIDENTIALITY
- Continue to observe and record

**ALL SUCH INCIDENTS MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO YOUR LINE MANAGER WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR INITIATING ANY FURTHER ACTION IN LINE WITH THE ORGANISATION'S POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

## **SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY**

This Social Networking policy applies to all staff members employed by South Ayrshire Community Transport (SACT) – both paid and voluntary.

Social Media, professional networking sites, rapid-fire communications, blog sites and personal web sites are all useful technologies. Every employee has an opportunity to express and communicate on-line in many ways, and we do not wish to discourage an on-line presence. However, above all else, everyone needs to use good judgement on what material makes its way on-line and how, and with whom they communicate it.

This policy will set forth guidelines that employees should follow for all on-line communications in reference to the setting.

This policy includes (but is not limited to) the following specific technologies:

Personal Blogs, Twitter, Facebook, My Space, Personal Web Sites, Digg, Instagram, Snapchat

### **Responsibility**

Any material presented on line in reference to South Ayrshire Transport by any employee is the responsibility of the poster. At no times should any posts be made in reference to clients, passengers or other professionals with whom employees may come into contact through work. At no time must any photographs or materials be published which identify clients, passengers or staff without the express permission of the individuals concerned.

- Any member of staff found to be posting remarks or comments that breach confidentiality; and/or are deemed to be of a detrimental nature to the company or other employees; or posting/publishing photographs of clients, passengers or staff unless permission has been gained may face disciplinary action in line with the company disciplinary procedures.

### **All employees are encouraged to use the following guidelines in social networking practices:**

- Remember that no information sent over the web is totally secure and, as such, if you do not wish the information to be made public, refrain from sending it over a social network site
- Even though you may think that you are anonymous or use an alias you may be recognised
- Maintain professionalism, honesty and respect
- Apply a 'good judgement' test for every activity related to the setting – could you be guilty of leaking information, discussing confidential information or overstepping professional boundaries?
- Activity showing good judgement would include statements of fact about the company, and its products and services; facts about already-public information; or information available on the Website.

Should any employee become aware of social networking activity that would be deemed distasteful; crossing professional boundaries; or failing the good judgement test, please contact the SACT Coordinator or Manager.

Any on-line communication regarding proprietary information such as lay-offs, strategic decisions, or reduction of working hours deemed inappropriate for uncoordinated public exchange is forbidden.

***Please see Whistle Blowing Policy***

### **Advertising & Promotion**

The company promotes the service through the use of social media sites. Where photos of children are used, the anonymity of the child and the prior permission of the parent/guardian is imperative. Where photos of adults are used, their prior permission is imperative. Where previously published photos of locations are used, copyright law must be observed.

***Please see Child Protection Policy/Procedure***