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# Employee Handbook

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Turas Training

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1. Responsibility for approval of policy	Board of Directors and Project Coordinator
2. Responsibility for implementation	<i>Employees role</i>
3. Responsibility for ensuring review	<i>Employees role</i>

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## Part One: Introduction

### 1.1 Welcome to TURAS

On behalf of the management team we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to your employment with Turas . Our aim is to provide a safe and secure work environment to help you to realise your career potential and maintain a high level of job satisfaction.

We hope that you will enjoy working with us over the coming years and that we will be able to provide you with guidance and support to drive your career forward.

### 1.2 Purpose of Handbook

Our objective is to provide you with a positive, rewarding and safe work environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. This Employee Handbook will act as a useful reference tool for you throughout your employment here. It contains information about working conditions, benefits, and policies affecting your employment. It also outlines the ethos, values, aims, objectives and structures of the organisation, as well as the services we provide.

The information contained in this Handbook applies to all employees of Turas . Working in accordance with the policies described in this handbook is a condition of continued employment. However, nothing in this handbook alters an employee's legal status. The contents of the handbook shall not constitute nor be construed as a promise of employment or as a contract between the company and any of its employees.

The handbook is a summary of Turas policies, for further information on any area please refer to policy referenced in each section. The policies contain more detailed information and will supersede any information within this handbook. The policies can be found on the company website at [www.Turas training.ie/policy-library](http://www.Turas training.ie/policy-library).

If you have any questions in relation to any area of service operations it is your responsibility to seek clarification from your line manager as soon as you are possible as being unaware of these requirements will not be accepted as a reason for not observing them. You are responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with the provisions of this handbook and any other policies relevant to your role.

Changes in employment legislation and/or best practice may, from time to time, lead to changes in some conditions. The handbook will be reviewed regularly and updates will be provided to you as necessary.

### 1.3 Introduction to TURAS

This section is designed to give you an overview of both the ethos and operational structure of TURAS by introducing you to the history of the organisation, it's values and how these values are realised through the services we provide.

#### 1.3.1 Background Overview

Turas is a rehabilitative education and training programme specifically designed as a response to the needs of stabilised drug users. TURAS is a Special Community Employment Scheme or Drug Rehab Project (DRP) funded and supported by the Dept. of Social Protection, the Health Service Executive and the Canal Communities Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force.

#### 1.3.2 History

1.3.3 Turas began as a joint initiative of the Canal Communities Partnership and the Canal Communities Local Drugs Task Force. A feasibility study was commissioned in 1998 to explore the possibility of a training programme for drug users who are stabilised on methadone. The

programme was developed to fulfil the identified gap in the overall provision of services for drug users; where rehabilitation and training is seen as part of the continuum of care for individuals who are stabilised on methadone.

- 1.3.4 A Project Coordinator was appointed in 1999 and set about the task of putting an advisory committee together (which later became the management committee). It comprised representatives from community, voluntary and statutory services. January 2000 saw the first intake of programme participants in the TURAS 's first location in the Jamestown Road. Rialto Network sponsored TURAS until the formation of the limited organisation in April, 2001.
- 1.3.5 Vision**
- 1.3.6 *Our Vision is a community free of the harms associated with substance misuse.*
- 1.3.7 Mission**
- 1.3.8 *Our mission is to provide a holistic rehabilitative education and training programme for people living with addiction in the Canal Communities area.*
- *Core values and approach*
  - **Safety**
    - Safe Welcoming Environment
    - Psychological and Physical Safety
  - **Respect, Equality and Fairness**
    - For Ourselves, Others, and Property
    - Everyone Treated and Valued Equally
  - **Confidentiality**
    - Recognise the Need for Privacy
    - Deal with Information Sensitively & Appropriately
    - Acknowledge Boundaries
  - **Transparency**
    - Openness & Honesty
    - Clear Communication
    - Accountability
  - **Commitment**
    - Attendance, Punctuality and Participation
    - Work Towards Goals
    - Take Responsibility
  - **Peer Support and Teamwork**
    - Provide & Accept Support
    - Share Relevant Experiences & Knowledge
- 1.3.9 Overview of programmes, services and Management structure / organisational chart please see the company website at [www.Turas.training.ie](http://www.Turas.training.ie)

## Part two: Joining the Organisation

Prior to and upon joining Turas there are several steps which must be taken. These are outlined below with a particular focus on what you can expect from Turas and what is expected of you.

### 2.1 Our recruitment process

All roles will be filled through application and interview processes. Only after an unsuccessful recruitment process, will the organisation offer posts to individuals, in this instance an interview and receipt of CV will still be necessary.

Prior to commencement of work all employees must successfully provide two work references from former employers, confirming the candidate's suitability for the role. Applicants must also provide original copies of all qualifications so that a copy can be made for the employee file.

We are an equal opportunities employer which means that processes are developed to ensure that no individual is discriminated on the nine grounds of the equality legislation. In practice this means that interviews will be conducted by a panel, which has a gender balance and that questions will be asked fairly of all applicants in a consistent manner.

See Recruitment Policy and Equal Opportunities Policy for more information.

### 2.2 Garda vetting

Garda Vetting is an essential safeguard in the protection of service users across the community and voluntary sector. It is our policy to undertake garda vetting for all employees, volunteers and students within the organisation. It is important to note that a criminal record does not mean that you cannot work with Turas. Each case will be looked at in a structured yet individual manner in which both the nature of the prior offence along with the functions of the role will be considered.

All employees working with young people or vulnerable adults must complete the garda vetting process prior to starting work. If Garda vetting takes a number of months following your acceptance of an offered role the service will hold the position open for you for a reasonable period of time.

See Garda Vetting Policy for more information.

### 2.3 Your induction

Your induction is the process that will help you to understand the organisation more fully, and to begin to feel part of the team. It should take about two weeks, and will be done through meetings with your manager, shadowing other employees and by reading through policies relevant to your role. By the end of your induction you should have a clear understanding of the following:

- Your role, the role of other employees and the role of your managers.
- How we do what we do, and the ethos behind it.
- Key health and safety issues relevant to your job.
- An overview of the building and its environs.
- General information on policies and practice in the organisation.
- Basic information on sickness, leave, hours and other conditions of your employment.
- Your wages and how they'll be paid, along with issues such as tax and pensions.

Section 6.1 of this handbook has a full list of policies that relate to what the organisation does, as part of your induction your line manager will identify what policies relate to your role and set out a schedule with you to read and discuss these. As part of this process every employee should read and understand the following five policies within their first week:

- Code of Conduct
- Confidentiality Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Complaint Policy
- Case Notes, Written Records and Correspondence Policy
- Sickness and Leave Policy

If after reading any of the service operations policies you have questions or do not understand an aspect of the policy, it is your responsibility as an employee to make this known to your line manager so that your questions can be answered and if necessary appropriate training can be put in place.

## 2.4 Your contract

Your contract is the written document which contains the terms of your employment, and must be signed by you and by the project coordinator within the first month of the start of your employment. There are several pieces of legislation informing what goes into your contract, and if you would like to know more about this, you can check out the National Employment Rights Authority. The following should be included;

- Employers name
- Your place of work
- Job title/nature of work
- Rate of remuneration (pay)
- Hours of work
- Details of paid, sick and other leave entitlements
- Details of pension schemes
- Details about notice to quit
- Details of changes in terms of employment

## 2.5 Your probation

For the first six months of your employment, you will be on a probation period. This helps your manager to evaluate your progress, skills and suitability for the role. In consultation with you, your manager will decide how successful your probation period has been through a review of your performance and goals in the form of an appraisal, which will draw from feedback in your supervision sessions. While your probation period is stated as being six months, it may be extended following your probationary appraisal. The final say in continuation of employment will lie with the organisation. While you are on probation, your employment can be terminated with one week's notice from either yourself or from the organisation.

For more information see the Supervision and Appraisal Policies.

## Your employee file, data protection and access to information

**2.2.1 Your File:** As you are now an employee with this organisation, there will be an employee's file which contains information relating to you. It is treated with the utmost confidentiality, which you will have full access to. Any hard copy material will be stored in a secure place in the administrator's office and is accessible only to the management and other appropriate professionals in relation to an external audit or review. This is where we keep all of your records including your application for the position along with:

- P45 or equivalent.
- A signed contract of employment
- Education references/professional membership associations
- References from previous employers
- Your bank details for payment
- Completed Garda Vetting Forms
- Completed Application Form
- Driving Licence (as necessary)

This file contains all relevant information relating to your employment, as well as important contact information for you including emergency contact details so it's important that these records are kept up to date. The documents listed above should be handed in to your line manager or the administrator within the first week of your employment. Please inform your line manager or the administrator of any changes to your record. This includes changes made to the following:

- Your name (due to change in marital status or otherwise)
- Address and contact details
- Next of kin / emergency contact details
- Additional qualifications acquired
- Bank details
- Notification of any employment outside of this organisation

**2.2.2 Data Protection:** In line with our data protection policy the following records will be kept: Address, date of birth, marital status, educational or previous employment background, CV's applications and interview records, references, performance ratings or reviews, salary, bonuses, records of internet or e-mail usage if relevant, CCTV footage if relevant, records of disciplinary investigations, pensions and other insurance documentation, payroll details etc. The organisations will also hold the following information, deemed sensitive under data protection legislation:

- Information about your racial or ethnic origin including passport details, visa/work permit documentation.
- Medical information, including any medical questionnaire which employees complete prior to taking up employment, records of sickness, absence and medical certificates, medical reports following a medical examination.
- Information on commission / alleged commission of any offence, any proceedings for an offence. We hold this information to meet the requirements of various professional bodies and to satisfy ourselves of an employee's suitability for their position.

In accordance with the Data Protection Acts information held by Turas will be retained for no longer than is necessary for the purpose/s for which it was obtained. If the purpose for which the information was obtained has ceased and the personal information is no longer required, the data will be deleted or disposed of in a secure manner.

A list of all information, including sensitive information which we hold on each individual employee is available to you upon request. Restrictions to access of information are outlined in the Data Protection Policy, and are only under exceptional circumstance. If you wish to view stored personal data, contact your line manager.

For the purposes outlined above it may from time to time be necessary to disclose personal information to third parties (e.g. payroll processors, auditors etc) or in compliance with legal obligations. When doing so measures will be taken to ensure that your information is managed respectfully.

For more information see the Data Protection Policy.



## Part Three: Terms of Employment

In this section, you can learn about your hours of work, as well as pay and holidays. You'll also get information on other leave entitlements like sick leave, maternity leave and other kinds of leave. This section provides a basic overview and in order to understand it fully you should refer to the relevant policies mentioned in each section.

### 3.1 Hours

As Turas is a day service we are open usually from 8.00am to 4.00pm and require all employees to work during these hour hours. Your hours and rota will be detailed in your contract.

Your lunch is at a time decided by the duty manager and dependant on the daily schedule. You may leave the premises during this time. You are not paid for your lunch break.

See your contract for more information.

### 3.2 Pay and other remuneration

#### Salary

Your salary entitlements are set out in your Contract of Employment. This is paid to you on a weekly basis by electronic transfer into your bank account.

#### Other Deductions

On your request the organisation will make provisions for the following: union fees, pension payments.

#### Income tax

Your income is calculated in line with information received from Irish Revenue. The amount you contribute in taxation will be clearly identified on your payslip, which you will receive with every weekly / monthly pay. Receiving your pay slip is your legal right.

#### Pension

The organisation can arrange for you to pay into a pension fund at your request. The services pension provider is Irish Life.

#### Overpayments

The organisation will endeavour to ensure that you are correctly paid. In the unlikely event that an error is made and you are mistakenly overpaid, the organisation will need to recoup this money. The way in which this will done will be agreed between yourself and the organisation and will be organised to ensure no hardship on the employees' behalf, this process can involve union representation if requested by the employees member.

#### Increments

The organisation will pay increments when there is sufficient funding available to do so.. Increment amounts are detailed on your employment scale, which is available on request from your line manager.

See your Contract of Employment for more information.

### 3.3 Overtime and TOIL

As far as possible, working hours above the norm will not occur. Where overtime is required you will never work more that 48 hours per week. Where it is required that you work more than your contracted hours, this needs to be agreed in advance through your line manager and recorded. Overtime not having prior managerial approval will not be honoured by the organisation. Any overtime needs to be taken in lieu

within two months of this being recorded.

### 3.4 Holidays

Turas opens 48-50 weeks per year. If you are full-time you are entitled to 21 annual leave days per annum. The annual leave year runs from January 1st to December 31st each year. If you are part time, this is worked out pro rata (proportionally according to the amount of hours you work). In your first year with the organisation, your leave will be worked out pro rata from the day you start.

There are a number of compulsory leave days, these are subtracted from of your overall holiday leave; dates for compulsory leave are: Easter and Christmas Holidays and one or two other annual leave days.

**Other leave you are entitled to:**

There are nine public holidays in the year that you are entitled to leave for. These are as follows:

New Years Day (January 1st)	St. Patrick's Day (March 17th)
Easter Monday	First Monday in May
First Monday in June	First Monday in August
Last Monday in October	Christmas Day
St. Stephen's Day	

If the public holiday falls on a day on which you work, you will receive a paid day off on that day.

**Public holidays and part time work:**

Part-time employees qualify for public holiday entitlement provided they have worked at least 40 hours during the five weeks ending on the day before a public holiday. If the public holiday falls on a day which you don't normally work, then you are entitled to one fifth of the equivalent time off.

If you are sick while on a holiday and bring a sick note signed by a doctor to your line manager on return to work, then, contingent upon your sick leave entitlements, the days that you were sick will not be counted as holidays and will be counted as sick leave.

For more detailed information on these entitlements you should read the Sickness and Leave Policy

**Booking your leave:**

To arrange your leave, you have to give adequate notice and obtain consent from your line manager before making leave arrangements. The following notification must be given when planning vacation:

- 1.1.1. Leave of one or two days – two weeks
- 1.1.2. Leave 3 – 5 days – three weeks
- 1.1.3. Leave 6 days + – six weeks

You must submit a 'Leave Request Form' to your line manager using the relevant form on the IT system, and they will respond within a week of receiving the form to let you know whether your leave is granted or not. If you're planning on taking a week or two, you should give as much notice as possible, especially if this falls during the high demand times in summer or around Christmas. Management will normally try to accommodate your preferences for holiday dates, but the needs of the organisation may have to take precedence. The approval of annual leave may also be subject to the leave requests of others within the team.

### 3.5 Sick Leave

**General info:**

If you can't come into work you must contact your line manager or another manager by telephone prior to your normal starting time. If you can, you should provide some indication of when you are likely to return to work. See the sickness and leave policy for further details.

**Sick leave entitlements:**

There is provision for 12 medically certified sick days in any one contract year. At the management's discretion there may be provision for an additional 2 days paid self-certified sick leave. A pro rata entitlement applies to part time employees. All sick-leave must be certified: medical certs in first instance or self-certs if this discretionary provision is approved.

**Procedure:**

If you're sick for more than two consecutive work days a dated and signed medical certificate from a medical practitioner that covers your period of absence must be submitted to your line manager. A medical certificate must be submitted on a weekly basis thereafter. The medical certificate must state the general nature of your ailment, and the precise period for which you will be unfit for duty. You must keep submitting certs if your absence continues beyond the period covered by the initial medical certificate.

In the event that employees may exhaust their allotted paid sick leave, they should continue to submit a medical certificate.

Where employees are absent due to illness for more than three days they should request an illness benefit form from their doctor.

**Returning to work:**

If you're suffering from a contagious illness, you must inform your line manager immediately and not return to work until the condition has fully cleared. In the case of prolonged illness or contagious diseases, a dated and signed certificate should be produced from a medical professional stating that you are fit to return to work.

The organisation reserves the right to request you be examined by an independent medical practitioner in cases of protracted periods of certified absence, or regular certified absence due to illness or other situations where an independent medical opinion is considered necessary by the organisation.

**General points to note:**

- Sick pay is a discretionary benefit and management reserve the right to withhold it should they feel there is abuse of the policy.
- You have an obligation to inform your line manager if you are on medication that may affect your work capabilities.
- If you wish to attend a doctor's, dentist or other health professional's appointment you should try to do this outside work hours. If you need to attend an appointment during work hours this should be taken as annual leave following permission from your line manager.

For more information refer to the Sickness and Leave Policy.

## 3.6 Leave relating to parenting

**Maternity Leave:**

Statutory maternity leave is available to all female employees regardless of how long they've been in the role. It consists of 26 consecutive weeks leave where you receive statutory maternity / social welfare benefit from the Department of Social and Family Affairs, details of current Maternity benefit payments can be found on [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie). You are entitled to avail of a further sixteen (16) weeks unpaid leave, which must be taken immediately after the Maternity Leave, plus additional unpaid leave for ante- and post-natal care. At least two weeks have to be taken before the end of the week of the baby's expected birth and at least four weeks after.

You are not entitled to salary payments during maternity leave. However you may qualify for maternity benefit during the 26 weeks provided you have sufficient PRSI contributions. When you are absent on maternity leave, you are considered to be in employment and your employment rights, with the exception of remuneration, are preserved as if you were present at work.

**Notification:**

If you are pregnant, try to inform your line manager as soon as possible so we can give you as much support as possible. You are entitled to attend all anti-natal appointments within work hours, although your line manager should be informed of appointments at least one week prior to the date and evidence of appointments may be required for your employees file. At a minimum you are required to give four weeks notice of pregnancy leave, with certificates to confirm the pregnancy and due date, before you go on maternity leave. Although it should be noted that applications for statutory maternal leave need to be completed six weeks prior to the leave being taken and the employer is required to complete part of the application.

You must notify your line manager in writing, of your intention to take additional unpaid maternity leave not later than four weeks before the date that you would have expected to return to work.

If you are breastfeeding, on return to work, in line with statutory requirements, you will be provided with the space and time to facilitate this.

**Paternity Leave:**

Since September 2016 employees are entitled to two weeks' paternity leave following the birth of their child and in cases of adoption. You are not entitled to salary payments during paternity leave. However you may qualify for paternity benefit during the 26 weeks provided you have sufficient PRSI contributions.

**Adoptive Leave:**

If you are adopting, adoptive leave consists of twenty four (24) weeks unpaid plus up to sixteen (16) weeks additional unpaid leave, and conditions are the same as those described above in relation to maternity leave. This applies to you if you are an adopting mother; if you are a sole male adopter, and if you are an adopting father where the adopting mother has died before or during the period of adoptive leave or additional adoptive leave.

All employment rights (except remuneration and superannuation benefits) associated with the employment, such as annual leave and seniority, are protected during adoptive leave and additional adoptive leave.

**Notification:**

You must give at least one month's written notice of the intention to take adoptive leave before the expected placement of the child.

You must notify your line manager in writing, of your intention to take additional unpaid adoptive leave not later than four weeks before the date that you would have expected to return to work.

**Parental Leave:**

If you are a natural or adoptive parent or in loco parentis of a child who is younger than eight years of age, you are entitled to 14 weeks leave per child. If your child has a disability the age limit is 16 years. Where you have more than one child, parental leave is limited to 14 weeks in a 12-month period. This can be taken in one lot or taken incrementally over a number of weeks. Parental leave must be requested and approved by the line manager and a minimum of 6 weeks' notice should be given.

In order to access this entitlement fully, you must have completed one year's continuous service with Turas. However, if you have more than three month's service but less than 12 and where the child is approaching the age threshold, you will be entitled to one week for every month of continuous service with the organisation.

Taking parental leave does not affect your employment rights and time spent on parental leave can be used to accumulate annual leave entitlement.

For more information see the Sickness and Leave Policy

#### Carer's Leave

If you have at least 12 months' continuous service here, and if you find yourself in a position where you must provide care for a person deemed to be in need of full-time care and attention by the Department of Social and Family Affairs, you are entitled to take Carer's Leave for this.

Carer's Leave enables you to personally provide full time care and attention for one person for a minimum statutory period of 13 weeks up to a maximum of 104 weeks according to the Carer's Leave Act 2001. Before you can commence Carer's Leave you must provide your line manager with a copy of the decision of a deciding officer (or appeals officer) of the Department of Social and Family Affairs that the relevant person has been medically certified as being in need of full time care and attention. Again one month's notice should be given of the decision to take leave.

During an absence on carer's leave, you shall be regarded as still working in the employment and none of your rights or obligations related to employment should be affected with the following exceptions:

- There is no right to remuneration or superannuated benefits
- The right to annual leave is restricted to the period of the first 13 weeks only of the carer's leave entitlement
- The right to public holidays is also restricted to the period of the first 13 weeks only of the carer's leave entitlement.

#### Compassionate Leave

In the unfortunate event that you lose someone close to you, you are entitled to the following:

- Loss of a spouse / partner, son or daughter; you can take a maximum of 3 days
- Loss of a mother, father or sibling, you can take a maximum of 3 days

All bereavement leave is negotiable with your line manager, and may be increased should the management team deem that your circumstances warrant it.

#### Attendance at funerals

If an employee wishes to attend a funeral they should request this as soon as possible from their line manager and may need to take this as annual leave.

#### Force Majeure Leave

This refers to leave taken following a sudden injury or illness affecting a member of your immediate family, making your presence to assist that family member indispensable. It is usually applied for after the incident has occurred. For full details of who is included, see the Sickness and Leave Policy

In such a situation you are entitled to immediate paid leave up to 3 days in any 12 month period, but no more than 5 days in any three years. You must submit an application detailing the circumstances of the leave to your manager as soon as is reasonably practicable.

#### Jury Service

You are entitled to paid leave for jury service but you must return to work if not called. You should provide your line manager with all relevant paperwork and evidence of attendance for your employees file.

For more information on leave please see Sickness and Leave Policy.

### **3.7 Expenses**

In general line managers will ensure that employees are provided with petty cash sufficient to cover work related costs. On the occasion that an employee pays a cost from their own resources the employee member will be able to claim this back through the expenses system.

Expenses will not be reimbursed without a receipt and if an employee is unsure of whether an expense is covered by the expenses policy they should in all cases ask their line manager prior to expenditure.

Items that are generally paid as expenses include:

- Public transport to external meetings
- Parking costs when attending external meetings
- Taxi fares only when prearranged with the line manager
- Client expenses when meeting offsite, this is limited to a coffee or tea in relation to employees and may be extended to include food for service users where appropriate.

Items which are not paid as expenses include:

- Taxi travel not previously agreed with a line manager
- Lunches / refreshments when working away from the building
- Call costs – employees are expected to use phones within the premises

### 3.8 Training and Development

Turas is committed to the professional development of its employees. Where possible we will devote resources for training which provide organisational benefit, although it needs to be noted that this will be done within budget limitations. As an organisation we will ensure that you receive the necessary training to work in line with policies and statutory procedures relevant to your job description.

All employees have a responsibility to participate fully in training opportunities, and to make line managers aware of any personal training needs they may have in relation to any aspects of their position.

Requests for training must be received in writing in the form of a letter to their manager/supervisor with a clear justification as to how training will benefit the organisation. Adequate time should be made for requests to be processed. It is recommended that requests are formally made two months prior to a decision being required. Each case will be considered on its own merits and the primary considerations will always be the needs of the project, cost and employees cover.

Should an employee not complete a training programme that has been funded through the organisation, they would have to pay the cost back to the company. This would not apply if the individual demonstrated that they had taken every effort possible to complete the course but had been unable to do so. Note this only applies for continued development, or personal development courses. It does not apply to mandatory trainings.

Should the employee leave the company within a year of attaining the qualification or completing the course, the employee is liable to pay back the cost of the training including any leave days given. If they leave within two years, they are expected to pay back 50% of the costs. Note this only applies for continued development, or personal development courses. It does not apply to mandatory trainings.

As part of your role within Turas you will be required to participate in relevant training. All employees within the organisation are required to attend these mandatory trainings.

In cases where training is in the employee's own time and funded by an employee, attendance is entirely at the discretion of the employee. However, when the organisation contributes to the training through time and/or funding attendance is required. If an employee fails to attend their training they must follow the same procedures as they would if reporting absence from work. The organisation has the right to seek proof of attendance for all training attended during work hours. All training received by employees, mandatory as well as continued and professional development will be recorded in their employees file. This will include copies of any certificates received.

For more information refer to the Training Policy.

## 3.9 Working conditions

### Lunch

Lunch can range from 30 to 45 minutes every day depending on the schedule. Employees' lunch area is situated in the kitchen and contains a fridge and microwave which can be used by employees.

### Tea and Coffee

Tea, coffee and milk are supplied by the organisation and facilities are located in the kitchen.

### Hours and Place of Work

These will be detailed in your individual contract. The service is open to service users from 9.00am to 4.00pm and working hours can vary to accommodate service needs.

## Part 4: Communications

In the course of your daily work, you'll communicate with a number of different groups of people such as clients, employees, management and other agencies in a number of ways. This may be face-to-face contact employees meetings/one to one meetings/other face-to-face communication or through written contact emails/day-book/case notes/other written records. This section we'll discuss some of the guidelines and rules relating to written contact.

### 4.1 Your work email

You should use the work email/organisation's email for all professional email contact. Under no circumstances forward spam mail or send on non-work related e-mails. Employees are responsible for their own e-mail accounts. This means any emails that come from your account are considered to be your responsibility, so it's important that you log off every time you leave a computer, and don't let anyone else use your account. If you're concerned that someone else knows your password, then change it or get it changed.

When you do send emails, it's good to remember that you're essentially sending something on headed paper from Turas and so you should ensure you are happy with the content, and that it is of a standard that represents the organisation and the needs of our service users, and that it has received appropriate approval where appropriate. All emails should be spelled checked before being sent.

When using *any* email account you must keep an eye out for suspicious mail that could contain viruses. The other emails you should be alert to are emails that you find abusive, offensive or time wasting. If you receive this kind of mail, you should request that the sender no longer sends such menials and bring it to the attention of your line manager if appropriate.

For more information read the Case notes, Written Records and Correspondence Policy.

### 4.2 Using the internet

The internet is a very useful tool and it will be a valuable to you while you work here, but there are a number of things that you should not use the internet for (either on our system or using a wireless connection). A full list is available in the policy, but to name the more obvious ones, employees are not to access inappropriate – meaning hateful, pornographic or violent- content. Nor should you do anything illegal such as- hack into unauthorised areas, copy or download software, music or other copyrighted material. You shouldn't use the internet to harass or be hateful towards anyone, and this includes making negative comments about Turas.

#### Personal email and personal internet use

Employees are encouraged to use their personal email for personal contact, as the organisation's emails may be monitored and confidentiality isn't guaranteed. You can use the internet and your email during your break/before or after your shift. The same rules as above apply regardless of whether you're accessing the internet for professional or personal use.

#### Monitoring internet use

Generally, the organisation has no cause to monitor internet use but the organisations reserves the right to review work email usage, particularly if there's a suspicion of breach of the internet policy. There's no occasion where the organisation can access your personal email or other personal accounts that you may have accessed through work, although your work email access information may be requested. This will not be done without informing you first.



***Using social media***

Sometimes a difficult situation can arise where a service-user asks you to be their Facebook 'friend', view your blog or profile, or to follow you on Twitter. In order to maintain boundaries, you should not have personal contact with service users outside of work, and this includes through social media. In the case that this occurs you should politely and empathetically explain to a service user that you are not permitted to be their 'friend' or follow one another as there is a policy against this. Your line manager should be informed.

Unless you have written permission from the organisation, do not post pictures of employees or service users on the internet. In all cases the organisation has a policy of not making pictures of services available except where express permission has been granted and individuals are informed of who can access these.

If you are using the organisations blog, Facebook, Twitter or other social media account, remember to act in the same professional manner as you would in any other work role.

***Using fax to transmit client information***

You should only really use this when you have to get a particular document or piece of information to somewhere under time-pressure. If you can post something, or pass the information over the phone then you should do it this way. When you send a fax, make sure that the confidentiality of the information is clearly stated on a cover sheet. Call the person you are sending it to in order to alert them to the fact that a confidential fax has been sent. Stay by the fax machine and make sure you gather up any receipts, records of transmission or print outs and store them as appropriate.

***Using email to transmit client information***

Email is considered a non-secure form of communication; sensitive client information should not be emailed. When sensitive information is transferred by email this should be only be emailed when sent separately to the individuals identifying details.

***Storing Client Info in your computer account***

Information on service users should only be recorded in designated folders. This information should not be downloaded onto personal devices such as USB keys or personal laptops. Further information on computerised client records can be found in our Data Protection Policy.

For more information read the Internet, Email and Fax Policy and the Data Protection Policy.

**4.3 Mail, correspondence and case notes**

As far as possible, service users should write letters themselves, or be encouraged to participate in writing a letter with the member of employees. When letters are from the service, these should always be on letterhead, and be signed and dated. It is important that all correspondence from the organisation maintains a high standard, if it does not, this may affect the ability of the organisation to advocate for service users in the future. Employees are personally answerable under law for everything they write / don't write. The following guidelines are in place:

- All official letters should be approved by your line manager prior to being sent.
- There are template letters available on file to assist with letter writing. All letters should follow the agreed format. All letters should be electronically and visually spell checked. If you are not confident that the letter meets the highest standards then have your line manager review this prior to its being sent.
- In all cases, letters in relation to service users will be written in accordance with the provisions of the Confidentiality Policy.
- In relation to case notes, these should express fact not opinion and should be written in a way that is potentially understandable to the service users and other members of employees.

For more information read the Case Notes, Written Records and Correspondence Policy.

#### **4.4      *Media and public relations***

Invitations to speak on behalf of the organisation may only be accepted with prior permission of the project coordinator or the assigned spokesperson. Additionally no employee can give information to the media without the permission of the project coordinator or chair. No employee may permit a member of the media onto the organisations premises without the permission .

All media requests should be forwarded to the project coordinator as soon as possible. Employees should never deal with the media without prior permission.

For more information read the Media Policy.

## Part 5: Supervision and Appraisal

### 5.1 *Management supervision*

All employees should have regular supervision, focusing on reviewing, guiding and supporting their practice. All employees are obliged to have management supervision regardless of whether they are also availing of clinical or self organised external supervision.

Supervision will be held quarterly. During the first 6 months of employment, employees will receive support more regularly, possibly weekly. Additional supervision can take place at the supervisor's discretion, or at the request of the employee.

It is important to note that in the course of day to day work where an employee has any serious doubts about how to handle a particular situation, they should discuss this with their supervisor / line manager at the earliest opportunity rather than waiting for a scheduled supervision session.

Booking your next supervision session is the last action in each supervision session. If either one of you needs to cancel they should let the other know as soon as possible and another date should be arranged. Regardless of the busyness of schedules supervision is seen by the organisation as a priority and an important way of ensuring planning, employees support and quality service provision.

All supervision will follow a set outline as described in the supervision policy. Both supervisor and supervisee should be fully prepared for supervision. The supervisee should bring the following to supervision:

- Any issues to be discussed (in relation to cases or other matters).
- Any relevant reports / documentation relating to work progress.

The supervisor will bring the following to supervision:

- A copy of the work plan.
- A list of clients/cases, if relevant.
- The supervision form from the last session.

See Supervision Policy for more information.

### 5.2 *Clinical Supervision*

Clinical supervision can be requested for the following roles: addiction practitioners/care team members. It is expected that those attending for clinical supervision will also receive management supervision as both supervisions have different functions in relation to governance, support and professional development.

Clinical Supervision will be held every 8 weeks. During the first 6 months of employment, employees will receive additional support as necessary. Additional supervision can take place at the supervisor's discretion, or at the request of the member of employees.

Clinical supervision will be conducted by an individual with appropriate training in counselling and supervision as outlined by the IAAAC.

The provision of clinical supervision incurs a cost to the organisation and while it is acknowledged that this should be provided as good practice, the service reserves the right to reduce or remove clinical supervision if this becomes economically unviable for the organisation.

If you as an employee wish to independently undertake clinical supervision as part of your personal development or as part of training programme you should inform your line manager of this.

See Clinical Supervision Policy for more information.

### **5-3      *Appraisal***

Appraisals aim to provide assessment and feedback to employees and managers on performance throughout the year.

Appraisals will be conducted by your line manager . These will be held annually. If for any reason the appraisal is postponed, this will be re-scheduled at the earliest opportunity.

You will be asked to complete an appraisal form, which will also be completed by your line manager, this form will then form the basis of the appraisal. The aim is to reach agreement between all present on the final marks in each area of the appraisal as well as review any recommendations for future development and employees support. If the employees member and line manager can not agree on a final mark the managers decision will be final.

If an employee is unsatisfied with the outcome of the appraisal then this may be pursued through the grievance procedure.

See Appraisal Policy for more information.

## Part 6: Our Values and How We Work

### 6.1 *What we do and how we do it*

We have written policies that govern each area of work, it is important that in your first 2 months of work that you familiarise yourself with all the policies that relate to your area of work, your line manager will assist you to identify what policies are relevant to your role from the list below. This will first be discussed in your induction and should be then reviewed in supervision.

The aims of the policies are to ensure;

- you are aware of the principles that govern service delivery
- that you understand the model the service is working from and can apply this in your own practice
- that you are familiar with the procedures relating to this area of work practice

If after reading the service operations policies you have questions or do not understand any aspect of the policy, it is your responsibility as an employee to make this known to your line manager so that your questions can be answered and if necessary appropriate training can be put in place.

The policies that guide specific aspects of service provision in Turas include;

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| - Suicide, Self-Harm and Injury Intervention Policy | - Overdose Policy                      |
| - Counselling Service Provision Policy              | - Family Support Policy                |
| - Outreach Policy                                   | - Harm Reduction Policy                |
| - Group Work, Facilitation and Training Policy      | - Alcohol Use Service Provision Policy |
| - Substance Use Education and Training Policy       | - Service User Involvement Policy      |
| - Inclusion Policy                                  |  |
| - Case Management and Key Working Policy            | - Case Meeting Protocols               |
| - Assessment and Care Planning Protocols            | -                                      |

### 6.2 *Code of conduct*

#### **General**

All employees should be reliable and punctual, and employee's appearance should be appropriate for professional relations. Employees shall avoid all acts which are likely to bring the name of Turas into disrepute.

#### **Professional Competencies**

You should keep your knowledge and skills up-to-date and should not attempt to work beyond what you feel competent to do. If a situation arises where you do not feel comfortable with a task in relation to your competence and experience, you should talk to your line manager at the earliest possible convenience. During all professional interactions, employees should take care to present their qualifications and experience accurately and to avoid these being misrepresented / misinterpreted.

It is important that if your ability to act professionally is impaired, or could be, as a result of a psychological or physical condition, for example; an on-going or recent alcohol or drug related problem, illness, personal stress etc then you inform your line manager as soon as possible.

Except for medication taken under direction of a doctor, employees should not take any mood altering substance, including alcohol, prior to, or while carrying out, their work. Employees should never work while their competence is impaired by the use of any mood altering substance.

Employees need to be aware of their role as defined in their job description and the policy framework of the organisation. If there is ever a situation where the application of the organisations policies is

unclear the employees member should seek advice from their line manager or, in the event that they are not available, a senior member of employees at the earliest convenience.

#### ***Relationship with Colleagues***

Employees should maintain professional communications with colleagues at all times and should be aware of, and work within the provisions of the Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Policy. You must never condone, support, conceal or otherwise enable the unethical conduct of colleagues. Where you are aware of, or have good reason to suspect, misconduct on the part of a colleague this should be discussed with your line manager as soon as possible.

If you are approached by a colleague with a complaint regarding another employees member, advise your colleague to address the issue with their line manager.

If a conflict arises that cannot be managed within the general communications of the service this should be brought to the attention of each employees member's line management as soon as possible. It would be expected that employees will engage in any required meetings or mediation outlined by the management in order to resolve any issues arising.

#### ***Relationship with Service Users***

It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure a professional relationship with service users and to be aware of the social, legal and professional consequences of any act requested by a service user. As a general guideline, you may not:

- Lend or borrow money to or from service users
- Give or receive gifts to or from service users. Any exceptions to this rule, where a decision is made by an employee based on a specific circumstance, should be discussed with their line manager.
- Sell or purchase items to or from service users

You must not abuse the trust of service users in order to gain sexual, emotional, financial or any other kind of personal advantage. Under no circumstances shall you engage in sexual relations, or any other type of sexualised behaviour, with or towards service users.

You should exercise considerable caution and consult your manager before entering into personal or business relationships with former service users and should expect to be held professionally accountable if the relationship becomes detrimental to the service user or to the standing of the profession.

You should not carry out an assessment or intervention with, or provide supervision to, someone with whom you have an existing close personal relationship. If you have an existing close relationship with any person who is referred to you in any of these capacities then talk to your line manager about this as soon as possible.

You should never impose your personal beliefs (for example: religious, spiritual or political) on service users.

See the Code of Conduct Policy and the Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Policy for more information on these points.

## **6.3 Child protection**

The Department of Health and Children guidelines on protecting children place clear duties on service providers to protect children from abuse. It is therefore the responsibility of Turas to report any suspicions about physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect to the Health Service Executive or the Gardaí. A copy of "Children First" will be made available to all employees and will be available on the website. It is the responsibility of all employees to have read and understood these National

Guidelines. This can also be downloaded from:

[http://www.omc.gov.ie/documents/publications/Children\\_First\\_A4.pdf](http://www.omc.gov.ie/documents/publications/Children_First_A4.pdf). All employees must also have read and understood the services Child Protection Policy as part of their induction process, if employees do not understand any aspect of the policy they should discuss this with their line manager as soon as possible.

See the Child Protection Policy for more information.

## 6.4 Confidentiality and consent

The confidentiality of service users and the seeking of their consent before engaging in communications with any other professionals or people external to the organisation in relation to their case is a paramount consideration. There are exceptions to this and these should be explained to the service user at the beginning of any professional relationship. No information about a service user will be passed on to any third party except in the following cases:

- Where consent has been obtained.
- Where there is a legal obligation to extend confidentiality.
- Where a decision is taken by management to extend confidentiality as per the terms of this policy.

Application of extensions of confidentiality will in all cases be decided by the project coordinator or assistant project coordinator in their absence this decision will be delegated to the most senior employees person. Confidentiality may be extended when a service user discloses that:

- They have perpetrated sexual / physical abuse on another person
- They intend to perpetrate sexual / physical abuse on another person
- Any other issues in relation to Child Protection, as described in Children First
- They have committed a criminal act (Criminal Law Act, 1997)
- They intend to commit a criminal act (Criminal Law Act, 1997)
- They have self-harmed / attempted suicide and at risk of causing harm to self
- They intend to self-harm / attempt suicide

In the event of a disclosure of any of the above, the employees should inform the service user that they will need to report the issue to their line manager. If it is necessary to pass on the information, the service users consent should be obtained if possible. If this is not possible, the service user should where appropriate be informed of the decision to share information.

Turas operates a team confidentiality policy, so that information is confidential to the service not the individual employees member, this should be made known to any service users you are working with.

**See the Confidentiality Policy and Counselling Policy for more information on this.**

## 6.5 Complaints and how to manage them

We see the service user complaints policy as an important way of facilitating service users to communicate with the service around issues they are unhappy about. As such we will actively inform service users of their right to complain and will support them to undertake the various steps in an appropriate manner. The taking of a complaint can be an important experience in relation to self-advocacy and employees should see all complaints in this light. Also note that an advocate (with the services users consent) or a parent of an under 18 can take a complaint on another's behalf.

Other stakeholders or community members can also take a complaint and employees should always be helpful and polite if there are any enquiries in relation to a complaint and should direct concerned individuals to a line manager and inform them that there is a formal complaints process should they wish to use this.

If an employee wishes to complain about an aspect of the service the appropriate method is through a grievance procedure which is briefly outlined in this handbook and is detailed in the Grievance Policy.

The steps in the policy are, in general:

Step one	Step two	Step three	Step four
<p>An employee who receives an oral complaint should seek to solve the problem immediately if possible. If employees cannot solve the problem immediately they should offer to get the manager to deal with the problem.</p>	<p>If the suggested plan of action is not acceptable to the complainant then the member of employees or manager should ask (and if useful support) the complainant to complete a Complaints Record Form. Employees members should ensure they fully understand the complaints procedure.</p> <p>If the complaint involves an employee the service user should be informed that the employee will be made aware of this.</p>	<p>A completed copy of the Complaints Record Form should be given to the manager. This should include information on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The nature of the complaint.</li> <li>- Why the original response to the complaint was unsatisfactory, if there was one.</li> <li>- What the complainant's desired outcome would be.</li> </ul>	<p>An investigation will be completed within ten days (unless otherwise agreed) and the complainant will be informed of any outcomes in writing and verbally.</p> <p>If the complainant is found to be rightly aggrieved, an apology should be offered by the organisation in writing and all steps should be taken to ensure the any negative outcomes arising from the initial issue are addressed.</p> <p>If the service user is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, a meeting should be set up with the Director/senior officer within four weeks. The outcome of this meeting will be communicated in writing within 3 working days.</p>

See the Complaints Policy for more information.



## Part 7: Health, Safety and Welfare

### 7.1 Health and safety

Turas works to ensure that all practical steps are undertaken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of all employees, volunteers, visitors and service users on the premises and in the course of service activities, as far as is reasonably practicable. We recognise our obligations to provide a safe environment under the terms of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Applications) Regulations 2007 and under Section 18(2) of the Fire Services Act, 1981 & 2003.

Employees should have read the health and safety policy and statement and be aware of what this means for their own role. Furthermore employees should;

- Never work under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that they endanger their own or others safety, health and welfare at work.
- Attend any health and safety related training, work as described in service policies, and make use of any safety related equipment provided.
- Contact your manager at the earliest opportunity if you become aware of unsafe practices, any health and safety risks, any contravention of the relevant health, safety and welfare provisions, any defect in the place or systems of work, or article or substance which might endanger yourself or other persons, or any health and safety contraventions which might pose a danger.

For more information see the Health and Safety Policy / Statement.

### 7.2 Harassment, sexual harassment and bullying

The service takes its responsibilities in relation to preventing harassment, sexual harassment and bullying seriously, if you have concerns about this issue it is suggested that you read the full policy and discuss the issue with your line manager.

Step one	Step two	Step three	Step four
If possible employees are encouraged to seek to resolve the situation by explaining to the person involved that their behaviour is unwanted or inappropriate. The person may be unaware of the affects of their actions. In such cases every attempt should be made to resolve the issue on an informal basis.	If the situation continues or is serious, a formal (written) complaint should be made to the complainant’s immediate supervisor. If the complaint is in regard to the supervisor, the complaint should be raised with the next person in a senior role. The respondent, against whom the complaint is being made, will be notified in writing that an allegation has been made against them. He or she should be given a copy of the complaint and any supporting documentation and be	An investigation will be conducted by the Manager. The investigator will meet the complainant and the respondent and any witnesses or relevant parties on an individual confidential basis. Both the complainant and the respondent may be accompanied by a work colleague or employee/trade union representative. The complainant and respondent should be informed in writing of the findings of the investigation. Both parties should be given the opportunity to	Should management decide that the complaint is well founded; the respondent will be engaged in a formal disciplinary procedure. If the organisation becomes aware that a complaint about harassment, sexual harassment or bullying is false or malicious in nature, the person making the allegations will be investigated and may face disciplinary action. The respondent is able to appeal a decision at this point.

	advised that they shall be afforded a fair opportunity to respond to the allegation(s).	comment on any findings before an action is decided upon.	
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See Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Policy for more information.

### 7.3 Alcohol and drugs in the workplace

Employees should not be adversely affected by alcohol or drug use during work hours and must at all times carry out their duties and responsibilities in a safe manner. Work premises are alcohol and drug free during work hours. Use of alcohol or drugs outside of work hours should not impair performance and behaviour at work.

Employees taking prescription drugs that are not recommended to be taken whilst driving a car or operating machinery should notify their line manager where the role may necessitate either driving or the operation of machinery.

Any member of employees who is concerned that he/she may have a problem with alcohol or drugs is encouraged to seek help and advice by contacting their supervisor and making them aware of the issue. The service will take a proactive and supportive approach to individuals who identify as having an issue in this regard.

Non-compliance with the drug and alcohol policy will be viewed as a very serious manner and treated in the same way as any breach of policy. Any individual who is adversely affected by alcohol or another drug will not be allowed to work while intoxicated. If an employee affected by alcohol or another drug is sent home, they will not be paid for lost time. Disciplinary action may be taken when they return to work.

Employees may be asked by their line manager, to submit to any appropriate, reasonable and proportionate drug and alcohol tests by a competent person as requested.

For more information see the Alcohol and Drug Policy.

### 7.4 Violence in the workplace

The service will do everything it can to minimise the potential for violence in the workplace although also recognises that due to the nature of the service provided, aggressive incidents may be an aspect of the work. Service policies serve to balance the health, safety and welfare of employees and issues around promoting active inclusion by working with services users on developing appropriate behaviours.

To manage potential violence in the workplace the service has a number of procedures in place:

- Risk assessments will be undertaken with service users
- Employees are supported to deescalate aggression where this it is safe to do so
- In the case of a violent episode employees should ensure their own safety as paramount and where possible that of other service users and the most senior employees member, generally the manager will contact the Gardai.
- In the event of a violent incident in the workplace all employees present will be provided with a formal debriefing session.
- Employees will be fully supported by Turas if they are the victim of a violence in the workplace

For more information see the Violence in the Workplace Policy and the Debriefing Policy.

## 7.5 Vehicle use, escorting service users and lone working

The safety of employees is at all times paramount in how we make decisions as to what services we provide and how we provide them. Before engaging with a service user in a lone working situation, or before accompanying a service user on foot or in a vehicle a risk assessment should be undertaken by the manager and employees member, this may be done very quickly, although work of this nature should not be undertaken without consideration of safety issues for the employees member of the service user. Employees need to be aware of the provisions of the policies relating to these issues.

For more information see the Vehicle Use Policy, Escorting Service User Policy and the Lone Working Policy.

## 7.6 Management of sharps / exposure incidents

All members of employees should be vaccinated against Hepatitis B, once completed they should be aware of their status and if the vaccination was not successful (i.e. the person was a non-responder) their Manager should also be aware of this.

Employees need to fully understand the Management of Sharps, Percutaneous Injury and other Exposure Incidents Policy, and in all cases need to follow procedures in relation to management of any potential exposures as described in the policy.

In the event of an employee or volunteer sustaining a needle stick injury, or being exposed to blood or bodily fluids, the following procedures must be followed immediately:

### Recipient

- Don't panic. Seek assistance. Stop immediately what you are doing. In the event of a wound caused by a needle stick or sharp, treat the wound appropriately:
- Employees should, where possible, attempt to manage the bleed themselves to protect the safety of their colleagues.
- Wash the area under running water
- Encourage bleeding from the puncture wound, and continue to flush the wound with water for 5 minutes.
- Do not use your mouth to suck blood out of the wound.
- Ensure a manager is informed.
- A senior employee will accompany the recipient to A&E.

### Management has a responsibility to:

- Escort the recipient to the hospital
- Support the recipient. This may involve providing access to external counselling services.
- Report the incident appropriately. This includes informing the hospital employees. In the event that the recipient refuses assistance or medical attention, ensure that they sign a statement saying that support was offered. Incidents should be reported to the insurance and to the Health and Safety Authority (HAS) IR1 Form.
- Conduct an investigation into the cause of the injury and review the relevant risk assessment to ensure everything is done to ensure the event doesn't happen again.
- The escort must respect the privacy of the recipient at all times, ensuring confidentiality with regard to any follow-up procedures, such as blood test results.

For more information see the Management of Sharps, Percutaneous Injury and other Exposure Incidents Policy.

## 7.7 Incident reporting

All incidents need to be identified, reported, communicated and investigated by the manager if required. The purpose of having an incident reporting system is to solve and learn from problems. It is through the reporting of incidents that causes can be identified, and appropriate control measures and/or training programmes developed and implemented to prevent a recurrence. The ultimate aim is to make the service as safe as possible for employees and service users.

Incidents include;

- Adverse incident: anything that could have or did lead to harm, loss or damage.
- Near miss: An incident, which resulted in no actual harm, loss or damage but had the potential to do so, had particular circumstances been different.

If an incident occurs a employees member's first response is to ensure the safety, health and welfare of the injured person(s). Any care that is required must be provided without delay the area should then be made safe for others. As soon as possible the manager should be informed of the incident and response verbally. Once the incidents immediate affects have been responded to appropriately, the employee should complete an incident reporting form and deliver this to the manager. It is the manager's role to ensure that any steps are taken to learn from the incident and reduce future risk.

For more information see the Incident Reporting Policy.

## Part 8: When Something Goes Wrong – Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

### 8.1 Grievance procedures

Grievance procedures are in place for employees that have a problem within the organisation which can not be resolved through informal means. Grievance processes are in place to clarify how issues can be resolved promptly and fairly. As a general rule employees should aim to resolve issues as close to the source as possible with graduated steps for further discussions and resolution at higher levels of management as necessary. The general steps in the Grievance Procedure are illustrated below:

Step one	Step two	Step three	Step four
<p>The employee should attempt to resolve the complaint as close to the source as possible. If the employee does not want to deal directly with the individual with whom they have the grievance, they should discuss this issue with their line manager. If the matter itself concerns the employee’s immediate manager, then the grievance should be taken to their superior.</p>	<p>If the issue can not be resolved through informal channels the employees member should immediately report this to their manager in writing. Notification should include: the substance of the grievance; the remedy sought; and the fact that this is a formal grievance notification. A mediation process may be an appropriate intervention at this stage. If the manager or supervisor or mediation is unable to resolve the matter to the employees member’s satisfaction at the time; then a formal written grievance hearing should be initiated.</p>	<p>In a grievance hearing the employee taking the grievance has a right to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative. After the meeting the manager or supervisor will give a decision on the outcome of the grievance, in writing, within ____ days. Where a grievance involves another employees, both employees will be met separately. The meeting will be conducted to ensure that all parties have the right to explain their views and to respond to the other parties’ comments and views. If no communally agreed resolution is reached throughout the meeting process then the manager will make a decision on the outcome of the grievance.</p>	<p>In most instances the organisation would expect the managers’ decision to be final and for the matter to come to a close. However the employee has the right to appeal the decision if he / she still feels aggrieved. An employee who wishes to appeal against a grievance decision must do so within ____ working days from receipt of official correspondence. The appeal should contain the original formal grievance notification. The appeal will be handled by an appeals committee. This committee can include members of the board and senior management other Than those who were involved in the original grievance Process.</p>

For further information see the Grievance Policy.

### 8.2 Disciplinary procedures

The disciplinary procedures are designed to help and encourage all employees to achieve and maintain standards of conduct and job performance. All employees who receive a disciplinary action should familiarise themselves with the full Disciplinary Policy. Guidelines on misconduct that can lead to disciplinary action are described below, it is important to note that these lists are not exhaustive.

**Minor Misconduct:** Below are listed examples of misconduct which may warrant either a verbal warning or written warning. It is stressed however that this list is not exhaustive.

- Persistent lateness and poor time-keeping
- Absence from work without valid reason, notification or authorisation
- Smoking within unauthorised areas
- Failure to work in accordance with prescribed policies and procedures
- Incompetence
- Unreasonable standards of dress or personal hygiene

**Gross Misconduct:** Listed below are examples of misconduct which may be considered to be gross misconduct and may warrant a final warning, demotion or dismissal. This list is not exhaustive:

- Theft, including unauthorised possession of company property
- Physical assault, breach of the peace or verbal abuse
- Deliberate damage to organisational property
- Serious incapability through alcohol or being under the influence of illegal drugs
- Breaches of confidentiality, prejudicial to the interest of the organisation
- Fraud or deliberate falsification of records
- Failure to observe organisational rules, regulations or procedures that results in risks to safety or the operational wellbeing of the organisation
- Incompetence or failure to apply sound professional judgement that results in risks to safety or the operational wellbeing of the organisation
- Insubordination including refusing to carry out lawful work directions
- Unauthorised possession of goods or documents
- Seriously breaching health and safety rules or procedures
- Harassment, sexual harassment, bullying behaviour or obscene conduct
- Viewing and/or downloading inappropriate material or images from websites
- Sending or distributing inappropriate or offensive material within the project either on paper or electronically
- Other substantial reason

The disciplinary process has six stages; although these do not always have to be used sequentially. It is important to note that if you feel the process is unfair or has not been followed or you are unhappy with the outcome you can appeal the action or decision, see the more information on what issues can be appealed and the process for doing this.

#### Stage 1: Informal Verbal Warning

An informal verbal warning is appropriate when it is necessary for a manager to take action in regard to an employee's minor failing or misconduct. This will set out the performance problem, the improvement that is required, the timescale and any organisational support that may be provided. This does not go on the employee's record.

#### Stage 2: Formal Verbal Warning

A formal verbal warning is appropriate when it is necessary for a manager to take action in regard to an employee's minor failing or misconduct that has not been improved following an informal verbal warning. The manager will inform the employees member that it is the second stage in the disciplinary process. A formal record of the warning will be signed by the line manager and the employee; this will be kept in the employees file.

#### Stage 3: First Written Warning

You may be issued with a first written warning when:

- A formal verbal warning has not been heeded and the misconduct is either repeated or performance has not improved as previously agreed and within the stipulated timeframe.
- An offence is of a more serious nature for which a written warning is more appropriate.
- The recurrence or accumulation of (an) offence/offences, if left, will lead to more severe disciplinary action.

#### Stage 4: Final Written Warning

A final written warning may be issued when:

- An offence is of a serious nature falling just short of one justifying dismissal.
- An employee persists in the misconduct which previously warranted a verbal and first written warning.
- If the offence is sufficiently serious, or there is a failure to improve during the designated time-frame of a prior warning for the same type of offence, a final written warning may be given to the employee.

#### Stage 5: Suspension (only used in some instances)

Suspension can be used when it is necessary to remove a member of employees from the workplace.

This may be as a result of an investigation pending, to prevent them influencing others, or to prevent possible interference with evidence. Suspension will be approved by the most senior person available at the time within the service. Where possible the decision will be approved by the senior officer within the organisation.

#### Stage 6: Dismissal (including a disciplinary hearing)

Dismissal may occur when:

- Behaviour is considered to be gross misconduct, or;
- Misconduct has persisted, exhausting verbal, first and final warning systems.
- If there is a failure on behalf of the employee to address improper conduct or performance deficiencies, a final step may be dismissal or some other action short of dismissal such as demotion.

If an employee faces dismissal, a disciplinary hearing will be held to provide an opportunity for a discussion of this decision. Any employee who faces a potential disciplinary meeting must be allowed fair procedures including having right of representation and right of reply at a disciplinary meeting. In the case that the chosen representation can not attend on the proposed date, reasonable efforts will be to select a date that is suitable to all parties.

For more information see the Disciplinary Policy