

# Team Handbook

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Home Health UK

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# **Welcome to Home Health UK**

## **The Handbook**

This Handbook contains our current policies and rules and has been designed to help you understand how Home Health UK is organised, what standards and procedures you are expected to follow and what you can expect from us in return. The policies and procedures contained within this handbook are non-contractual. We hope this will help our new employees to feel part of the team more quickly and be a gentle reminder to us all of the right way to work here.

## **Everyone is welcome**

Home Health UK is an equal opportunities employer and actively supports Human Rights, and all Equality legislation. Our ethos is to respect and value people's differences, to help everyone achieve more at work as well as in their personal lives so that they feel proud of the part they play in our success. Our Grievance Procedures ensure sympathetic handling, and hopefully satisfactory resolution, for all aspects of employee concerns or dissatisfaction.

We believe that all decisions about people at work should be based on the individual's abilities, skills, performance and behaviour and our business requirements. Our Policy must be strictly adhered to by all of our team. Discrimination, abuse or harassment will result in disciplinary action being taken including dismissal for serious cases.

# From the Start

## References

Your employment with us is subject to the receipt of two satisfactory references. One of which should be your most recent employer (or head teacher for school leavers).

If we receive unsatisfactory references, we may end your employment or withdraw an offer of employment.

## Medical Assessment

If we have concern for an employee's or applicant's health, we may require that a medical examination, by a Doctor or Occupational Health Professional appointed by the Company, be undertaken. This will not be done until an offer of employment has been made.

We will advise the applicant or employee on the medical advice received and will consider what, if any, appropriate action is to be taken. No applicant or employee with a disability will be unlawfully discriminated against.

## Induction

To welcome you to our team and ensure you settle in as quickly as possible, we will always take the time to introduce you to your colleagues and explain how the business operates day-to-day. On your first day of work, whether you are an employee or a casual worker, you will receive information on your terms and conditions of work which include pay, hours of work and how they vary, benefits, leave, training and other key information.

As part of your induction, you will receive Health and Safety training and an overview of all our Company policies.

Everyone here is happy to help and answer any questions you may have relating to any aspect of your work, so please ask.

## Probationary Period

Starting a new job can be challenging and your employment is subject to the satisfactory completion of a probationary period, which is normally three months. This is the time for you to learn about your job and for us to review your progress. After the first month of your employment and during the Probationary Period, either the Employer or you may terminate your employment by giving one week's notice. The probationary period may be extended for up to a further three months if we consider it appropriate to do so.

The full disciplinary and grievance procedures do not apply during the probationary period.

Upon the successful completion of the probationary period you will continue on the terms and conditions received at the commencement of employment.

## Dress Code

It is important to wear clothing appropriate and suitable for the role you carry out. No overly tight or revealing clothing and items with inappropriate logos.

## Protective clothing

If you have been provided with personal protective clothing or shoes, these must be worn at all times whilst working.

## Conduct

Home Health UK takes pride in fostering good relationships with our customers and associated businesses. Despite on occasions their lack of consideration, it is essential that we always act in a dignified and professional manner. We will never tolerate rudeness, brusqueness or off-hand behaviour to our customers or our fellow colleagues.

## **Flexibility**

Your Job Description provides details of your day-to-day duties. However, as a small team we need to work well together and be flexible about our work. We will, from time to time, issue reasonable instructions which you will be expected to follow. This may be asking you to do different tasks to your normal work to enable us to meet our customers' expectations. We will not ask you to do anything that you are not capable of doing, or to undertake anything that could be considered a health and safety risk.

## **Breaks**

If you are working full time you are entitled to a daily paid lunch break of thirty minutes and two additional breaks of fifteen minutes each Monday to Thursday. On Friday, you are entitled to a paid lunch break of thirty minutes and 1 additional break of fifteen minutes. If you work part time, please refer to your contract of employment for details.

Please ensure that you only take your allocated time for breaks as extended breaks may cause disruption on other employees.

## **Smoking Policy**

As well as being a legislative requirement, it is our responsibility to care for the health, safety and wellbeing of all our team. Our Smoking Policy applies to everyone who works here, as well as visitors, contractors or business partners. We ask all our employees to help us enforce it. In addition to cigarettes, cigars and pipes, electronic cigarettes are also banned. This is because the vapour may annoy others and the long-term effects are unknown but also from a distance some electronic cigarettes are difficult to distinguish from the real variety. This in turn may confuse visitors and make managing this Policy more difficult.

### **Where this smoking policy applies:**

#### **Premises**

Smoking is strictly prohibited within the Company buildings and at the entrance to the premises. Those wishing to smoke during their allocated break may do so in a designated area. Please make sure the area is left tidy. Those smoking must ensure they wash their hands thoroughly before returning to your workstation.

#### **Criminal offence**

We would remind everyone that it is a criminal offence to smoke in a smoke free area. Breaches of this Policy will result in disciplinary action.

## **Computer use**

Please ensure you have read our IT Security and Data Protection Policy as we do monitor this regularly. Breaches of these policies can lead to disciplinary action. Personal use must be outside your normal working hours and subject to our rules.

## **Respect**

We ask all employees to show respect for each other and for Company property.

## **Personal mobile phones**

Please leave these on silent during working hours. Calls to and from personal mobile phones (including text messages) should only take place during breaks and you should be away from your workstation.

Taking or sending of photographs or video on your mobile is not permitted whilst on duty unless authorised by a Director for business use only and with the prior consent of the subject(s) to be photographed or videoed.

## **Mail**

You may at your own cost use the Company's mail service to post private letters and parcels. All private letters and packages must carry the full amount of postage and be paid for by you.

The use of the Company's business stationery and headed notepaper for private purposes is strictly prohibited.

**Other office equipment and supplies**

For eligible employees, you may have access to a Company laptop. This is to be used for business use only. Please see details on the IT Policy [here](#).

**HR Cloud based software system**

The Company uses a personnel system called HR Cloud based software system. All employees have access to this system and it records employment details and personal contact details. If your personal details change (such as home address, emergency contact details), it is your responsibility to update these. Training will be provided as part of your induction. The data that is held about you, and how it is used, is covered in our Privacy Statement and Data Protection Policy.

# Pay, hours of work, expenses & benefits

## Pay

You will be paid monthly in arrears by bank transfer on or around the 25th day of each calendar month. Overtime payments will be paid one month in arrears. You will be given an itemised payslip each month detailing the payments and deductions.

You will be asked to supply your bank/building society account details when you start work with us. If these details change you should let us know as soon as possible so your payments go through smoothly.

## General Policy

We aim to maintain remuneration at all levels which:

- Enables us to recruit and retain quality employees who will perform their roles effectively
- Motivate employees to achieve the objectives set by their Line Managers so that the goals are met
- Provide progression for employees assuming greater responsibility and duties that are more demanding
- Is non-discriminatory.

## Queries on pay and income tax

Any queries regarding pay should be discussed first with your Line Manager.

Any individual queries relating to income tax should be to the local tax office.

Your starting salary will be notified in the Terms and Conditions of Employment. Subsequent changes will be notified in writing.

## Deductions from pay

All deductions required by law or authorised by you will be made from salary and shown on your payslip. Other deductions from salary may be made including, but not limited to: season ticket loan, loans, over payment of salary, holiday taken in excess of your accrued entitlement, pension contributions, damage caused to Company property, excess on any insurance payable as a result of your actions and fines incurred as a result of your actions

## Hours of work and time keeping

It is your responsibility to attend work punctually. This means that you should be ready to commence work at the start of your start time, not arrive then.

You may not leave work before your normal finishing time without the permission of your immediate Line Manager.

## Overtime

If you are required to work outside of your normal hours, ie public holidays or weekends, you may be entitled to take time off in lieu. You must seek approval to take this time.

## Pensions

If you are eligible you will be automatically enrolled into the Company pension scheme. Full details will be given during your induction including the right to opt out.

If you have been automatically enrolled into the workplace pension scheme you will receive a letter telling you:

- The date you were added to the pension scheme
- The type of pension scheme and who runs it
- How much we will contribute and how much you will have to pay in
- How to leave the scheme, should you want to
- How tax relief applies to you.

## **Bonus**

The Company operate an entirely discretionary bonus scheme, which if payable may be received at the end of the year. The Company will determine the amount and the timing of the bonus. In order to be eligible for the discretionary payment, you must be in employment and not serving out any period of notice, whether given or received.

All discussions regarding bonus and salary are to be kept confidential between you and the Directors. Should there be any open discussions with other employees regarding your remuneration details you may be subject to a disciplinary.

## **Expenses**

The Company will reimburse all business expenses reasonably and properly incurred, provided that VAT receipts and expense claims are submitted according to Company Policy.

If you need to travel on business to a destination other than your normal place of work you will be repaid for fares/mileage, accommodation, meal costs and all reasonable out-of-pocket expenses. All such spending must be authorised by your Line Manager. All claims must be supported by proper receipts or invoices.

All expenses must be submitted monthly. Expenses which are outstanding for three months or more will not be paid unless there are mitigating factors.

## **Flexible Working Policy**

Employees who have more than 26 weeks' continuous service have the right to make a formal flexible working request.

### **Eligible employees can request:**

- A change in hours i.e. working less than normal hours and or fewer days
- A change to the times when they are required to work
- A change to the place of work i.e. to work from home
- A different pattern of work
- Job sharing

To make an application you must submit a written request setting out the change to the working conditions you want, when this change would be effective from, and how you believe it could work. An accepted application will mean a permanent change to your contract of employment.

Your Line Manager will hold a meeting with you and complete the process including any appeal within three months of your request unless you both agree to extend this period. You are entitled to be accompanied at the meeting by a work colleague.

At this meeting a practical business assessment of how the proposed arrangement can work will be undertaken. The changes you have proposed, the effect of the proposed changes and any possible alternative work patterns that might suit both parties will be discussed.

The Company will properly consider the request and will make a practical business assessment on whether, and if so how, the flexible working request could be accommodated.

Following the meeting and consideration, your Manager will write to you to either:

- Accept the request, setting out any action on which agreement is dependent and establishing a start date or
- Reject the request, explaining the business reasons surrounding this and setting out the appeals procedures.

If your request is accepted, you will receive either a new contract of employment or a contract amendment detailing the new working pattern.



If the request is refused it will be for a business reason, for example:

- The burden of additional costs
- Detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand
- Inability to reorganise work among existing staff
- Inability to recruit additional staff
- Detrimental impact on quality and/or performance
- Lack of work during the period when the employee proposes to work
- Planned structural or workforce changes

Following any refusal, you may appeal in writing against the decision setting out the reasons for the appeal. Your appeal letter should be sent within five working days.

Should you appeal you will be invited to an appeal hearing. At the appeal meeting you will have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague.

Following the appeal meeting an outcome will be given in writing.

Each request for flexible working will be dealt with individually, taking into account the likely effects the changes will have on the Company, the work of the department in which the employee making the request is employed and the employee's colleagues. This means that if the Company agrees to one employee's request, this does not set a precedent or create a right for another employee to be granted the same or a similar change to their work pattern.

#### **Repeated Requests**

Further to submitting your request, regardless of whether your request was agreed or refused, you must wait for 12 months before making a new request.

#### **Sabbatical Policy**

At Home Health we believe in balance. This is why we've introduced a sabbatical policy to make sure that work doesn't get in the way of the once in a lifetime trip you've always dreamt of taking!

#### **How much time can I take off?**

If you've been with us for over 2 years, you can request a period of unpaid sabbatical. This will not automatically be approved; it will depend upon the needs of the business.

#### **What should I do if I'm planning to take a sabbatical?**

If you'd like to request sabbatical leave, we ask that you give your line manager as much notice as possible - ideally at least 6 months, but no less than 3 months.

#### **How do I book it off?**

Once it's been approved by your line manager, please request the time off via TimeTastic as "unpaid leave".

#### **What else do I need to know?**

- You will not accrue holidays whilst on sabbatical
- You will not be entitled to any company benefits whilst on sabbatical
- You must regularly check in with your line Team Lead whilst you are on a sabbatical
- If you do not return from your sabbatical on the agreed date, you will be treated as absent without authorization.

If anyone has any questions around sabbatical leave, please contact your line manager.

#### **Longevity Awards**

We are extremely lucky to have such a hard-working a loyal team and to recognise this, all staff are rewarded with additional holiday based on length of continuous service. The first additional holiday day will be awarded after 5 years' service and then you get an additional day at regular intervals up to a maximum of 5 extra days

after 15 years. For 20 years' service we issue a tax-free £1,000 reward. A summary of the rewards are given below:

5 years' service = 1 extra holiday day each year  
8 years' service = 2 extra holiday day each year  
10 years' service = 3 extra holiday day each year  
13 years' service = 4 extra holiday day each year  
15 years' service = 5 extra holiday day each year  
20 years' service = £1,000

These additional days can be carried over and/or sold back to the company in addition to your current 5 day (pro-rata) allowance.

# Recruitment, training and development

## Recruitment

Home Health UK will advertise all positions internally as well as externally where appropriate. The recruitment method will be detailed in the advert and internal applicants should inform their Line Manager of their intention to apply.

Candidates will be screened and the interviewing processes will be conducted fairly, objectively and without unlawful bias. Person and Job Specifications will be limited to those requirements necessary for the effective performance of the position concerned.

The interview and selection process will be undertaken in a fair and consistent manner and the candidate who meets the specification in terms of knowledge and skills and attitude will be offered the position. For internal candidates the normal notice period will apply.

## Remuneration

All salary and remuneration packages will be governed by an individual's ability to do their job and their experience.

## Promotion

Promotion may arise from the recognition that an individual has reached a point of being able to take on additional responsibilities, or from vacancies resulting from the departure of another employee. The assessment of an individual's potential for promotion involves consideration of many aspects of both current performance and future capabilities. Length of service on its own does not lead to promotion; the only consideration is the person's ability to fulfil the role in question.

## Disability

We will never use discriminatory practices during our selection process and welcome applications from disabled candidates. If an applicant, either external or a current employee, needs any specific help to enable them to apply for a role they should make this clear as part of their application.

## Personnel records

You have a personnel file which contains all the relevant information about your employment including records from appraisals, individual meetings, training and development undertaken, self-certification forms, Fit Notes and Occupational Health Reports where applicable.

You have the right to know what data is held by the Company about you and can request to be supplied with a copy of your file. Details of this process are in the Data Protection Policy under Subject Access Request.

## Training and development

We know that our most valuable resource is our employees. Our continued success depends upon having highly motivated people with proper skills in the right job, at the right time. We recognise the need to, where possible, offer all employees a clear path of progression within the business. Therefore, job descriptions and personal objectives will be reviewed on a regular basis.

## Induction

Upon joining, each new member of the team receives an induction to the Company, our aims and goals, the individual's department and role and how they will contribute to our success. We will also introduce you to your colleagues and try to ensure you settle in quickly. If at any time you have any queries or are unsure about any aspect of your work, please ask us.

## Ongoing training

Once your induction training has been finished and you have settled into your new role, you will be given opportunities to learn and develop existing and new skills.

## **External training**

It is recognised that some training needs cannot be addressed in a timely or effective way through any of the methods detailed above. In these cases, training delivered by external providers may be the only choice. Advice on the most suitable training solution to address any identified need and recommended training will be sought by your Line Manager.

## **Self-development**

### **Study Assistance Policy**

Home Health UK will support employees who wish to take professional or technical qualifications relevant to their role within the Company. There will be limited numbers of sponsorship available and the Company must approve all applications. Please speak to your line manager for further details.

### **Appraisals**

We believe in harnessing and developing the skills of our employees for today and for future business growth.

As part of our commitment to you, you will receive a formal review annually (usually in July) conducted by your Line Manager. This is a brief, positive and structured meeting to review your performance over the last year and for you and your Manager to agree on your personal development plan and objectives for the year ahead. We will then review your progress 6 months after the formal reviews (usually in January).

You will be given any necessary documentation to complete prior to the meeting so that the meeting is of maximum benefit to both parties.

# Communication and team events

## Communication

Home Health UK is committed to developing effective communications throughout the business. Obtaining everyone's views and feedback is central to our communication strategy, and we welcome constructive ideas and suggestions from all our team as to how we improve the Company and make this a better place to work.

All communication should meet the following standards:

- Clear - Easy to understand
- Consistent - Dependable, constant
- Relevant - Appropriate to audience
- Timely - At the right time
- Honest - Believable, trustworthy
- Open - Good and bad news

The purpose of communication is to inform and motivate employees so that they can support and play an active role in achieving the organisation's objective.

Communication is a fundamental task in each employee's daily working life and personal development. It also plays a role in people management and leadership.

What should you do?

- Understand your communication responsibilities to your colleagues, your Manager and your organisation
- Know where and how to access the information you need to perform your role
- Participate fully and actively in all internal communications
- Seek clarification on any communication that is not understood
- Gather information which will make you more knowledgeable about your own area of expertise
- Share your knowledge and experience
- Respect information that is confidential.

## Employee communication forum

### Social events

We usually hold a Christmas party every year. Hopefully these are enjoyable opportunities to mix with your colleagues. All employees are asked to remember that they are representing the Company at these events and behave accordingly.

### Public relations

If you receive an enquiry from the media or even if you just suspect that you are speaking to a member of the press, you must refer them to a Director. This is to ensure that the question is dealt with effectively and accurately, to protect the image of the Company.

### Charity sponsorship

We support charities in a variety of ways. Colleagues have been sponsored to participate in a variety of fund-raising events from running in marathons as well as specific charity events such as *Children in Need*.

During the year we hold several events which, as well as being fun, aim to raise money for charity.

### Matched Giving Policy

At Home Health, we recognise the importance in giving back, and want to support our team members in their volunteering and fundraising efforts. The purpose of this Policy is to encourage and back charitable initiatives carried out by team members, by offering a donation match to the chosen charity.

### **Guidelines for matched giving:**

- All Home Health team members are eligible to apply for matched donations; fundraising held by friends, family members or by the charities themselves are not eligible for match funding.
- Each successful submission will be matched up to £1,000 (excluding gift aid). For example, if a team member raises £400 it will be matched with £400. If £1,500 is raised it will be matched with £1,000. We may match submissions for more than £1,000, but these will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- Applications should be submitted within 3 months of completing fundraising and once funds have been paid to the charity.
- When submitting your request, please provide proof of your fundraising and donation. This could be a list of pledges, a link to your online fundraising site or a letter of confirmation from your chosen charity.
- Most fundraising for registered charities will be eligible. It could be a sponsored activity like running or cycling, or things such as bake sales, birthday donations or sponsored silences.
- Only organisations that are registered with the Charity Commission (England and Wales) or OSCR (Scotland) are eligible for a match funding donation.

### **To request a matched donation:**

- **Fundraise:** Decide how you'd like to fundraise for your chosen charity and get the ball rolling.
- **Donate:** The funds you have raised should be given to the charity before requesting a matched donation from the company.
- **Request Proof:** Ask the charity for proof of your fundraising. If you are raising funds online, then please provide a link to your fundraising page on your application. Otherwise please ask the charity to provide a letter or email specifying the amount you have raised for them.
- **Apply:** Once you have completed the above, please email [jamie.baxter@homehealth-uk.com](mailto:jamie.baxter@homehealth-uk.com) to request your matched donation request with the required proof attached.
- **Celebrate!** Once processed, you will receive an email to confirm that your donation has been matched. Please share your story with us by sending any photos of your event and encourage your colleagues to fundraise for their chosen charity so we can help them too!

If you have any questions about this policy, please speak to your Line Manager.

# Controlling risks

## General

It is everyone's responsibility to prevent the theft or damage of goods, Company property or resources from the business.

The security rules are designed to minimise the risks of loss, and your fullest co-operation in implementing, maintaining and improving our procedures is required. These rules and procedures are also designed to protect you. Failure to follow the security rules may on its own lead to the inference that you have acted dishonestly.

We may use a variety of security and surveillance techniques for the protection and management of the business and its employees, including monitoring communication, CCTV cameras and search.

If you notice anything suspicious, report it to your Manager or another available member of management as soon as possible. Any suggestions for improvements in the security procedures are always most welcome - these should be taken up with your Line Manager in the first instance.

## Goods in/ordering

You may only sign for goods received, or accept deliveries, or order goods or services if you are specifically authorised to do so and follow the procedures issued to you.

## Stock

The warehouse and pharmacy team will carry out weekly stock checks.

## Right of search

In the interests of security, we reserve the right of search. Searches of employees, their bags, other possessions and Vehicles may take place from time to time. You may, if you wish, be accompanied by a colleague during the search. If you refuse to allow yourself or possessions to be searched, this may be treated as gross misconduct.

## Visitors

It is your responsibility to ensure that your visitor is looked after during the time they are in our premises and they should be made aware of our fire procedure and escape routes.

## Personal property

Please do not bring valuables or large sums of money to work with you as we cannot accept responsibility for your money, clothing or other property on our premises.

# Absence from work

## Holidays

The Company's holiday year runs from January to December. All full-time employees are entitled to 25 days' paid holiday per annum plus Statutory Bank and Public Holidays. Part time employees are entitled to a pro rata equivalent, as are employees with flexible hours. If you work flexible hours, your holiday pay will be pro-rated based on your last 52 weeks worked. Additional holiday days are also awarded based on longevity (please refer to the "Pay, hours of work, expenses & benefits" section for full details).

If you are absent for more than 4 weeks, your holiday will accrue in line with the statutory holiday entitlement (pro rata for part time employees).

To book a holiday you must gain approval in advance from your Line Manager. All holiday is to be booked and logged using the HR Cloud based software system. Employees are required to submit their holiday request via this system, which is then sent directly to your Line Manager who will then confirm whether the request has been approved.

You must give your Manager not less than one weeks' written notice of your proposed holiday dates, for less than one week. For proposed holiday dates over one week, you must give your Manager not less than two weeks' written notice. Holiday must be timed to minimise disruption to work schedules and your Manager may refuse to authorise your request if it causes severe disruption to work schedules, other employees are absent or another substantial reason. Therefore, no bookings should be made before approval is received. Your Manager will explain any refusal.

The Company expects employees to take all their holiday entitlement within the year it is accrued. Where this is not possible a maximum of 5 days (pro-rated for part time employees) may be carried forward with express approval from the Directors. This carried over holiday must be taken within the following calendar year. Alternatively, staff can "sell" up to a maximum of 5 unused holiday days back to the company. Staff would be paid for each unused holiday day in line with their regular salary. Employees can choose to both sell and carry over holiday if they wish - for example if they have 4 days' unused holiday, they could carry over 1 day and sell 3 days back.

In addition, any staff members that have been awarded additional holiday can carry over more than 5 days. For example, if you work full time and have been with us for 11 years, you would now have 28 days' holiday per year, so could carry over and/or sell up to 8 days per year.

Should you be incapacitated for work during any period of pre-booked holiday (whether in whole or in part) the Company will, subject to the correct notification and certification, pay Statutory Sick Pay. You must follow the absence reporting procedure and provide the Company with a relevant medical certificate covering the period of incapacity.

## Holiday Pay on termination

On termination of employment, employees shall be entitled to receive a payment representing holiday accrued but as yet untaken. If you have taken more than your holiday entitlement when you leave, a sum representing the amount of additional holiday will be deducted from your final salary.

## Bank and public holidays

Employees are not normally required to work Bank Holidays and will be paid their normal salary as part of their holiday entitlement (a pro rata share for part time employees).



## **Sickness & absence rules**

As a Company we need to measure and record sickness absence, and to know when and why we need to do something about it. This is why we record and keep all records relating to absence, in line with our Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice. These records will be kept on HR Cloud based software system and in some instances as a hard copy. As an employee, you need to know that you work for someone who cares about your health and welfare.

The following absence Policy has been drawn up to meet these needs and must always be followed.

### **Your responsibilities**

You must take responsibility for your own attendance at work and, if you are ill, your recovery and return to work. It is a requirement that you:

- Comply in a timely manner with our notification and certification procedures, whether set out in this Policy or as notified from time to time, and maintain communication with us while you are absent from work
- Co-operate with a reasonable request for a medical and/or Occupational Health report to be obtained from your general practitioner and/or another Doctor nominated by us and/or an Occupational Health adviser (where appropriate), and for that purpose to undergo any medical and/or Occupational Health examination
- Provide sufficient information to us, as and when required, to keep us informed of your condition and prognosis; and
- Co-operate with us to implement any advice from medical and/or Occupational Health Practitioners in order to facilitate a timely return to work
- Adhere to the Policy and do nothing to aggravate or delay recovery such as working for another employer or taking part in inappropriate social or sporting activities.

### **Reporting**

All unauthorised absence must be reported to your Manager within an hour of your start time on the first day of absence. Contact should be made directly by you, not text message, and only in exceptional circumstances should partners, parents or friends ring on your behalf.

You will be asked to give the reason for your absence and an indication of when you may return, and details of any outstanding work that needs to be attended to in your absence.

If your absence continues for more than one day you must keep your Manager informed on every subsequent day for the first seven days. And then as agreed with your Manager, but as a minimum on a weekly basis until your return.

If the absence is due to sickness and continues for seven days or less (Saturday and Sunday included), you must complete a self-certification form and give it to your Manager. (A copy of the self-certification form can be found below).

If absence continues for more than seven days (Saturday and Sunday included), a “statement of fitness for work” (also known as a “Fit Note”) signed by your Doctor or other treating Doctor must be sent immediately to your Manager, and thereafter at weekly intervals for as long as the absence continues.

During all periods of absence your Manager will maintain contact with you.

Time off for absence due to any medical intervention that you have chosen to undertake (rather than being medically advised), will not be treated as sickness absence. However, any time off sick resulting from such medical intervention will be treated as sickness absence in accordance with the reporting and absence procedures.

## **Statement of Fitness to Work (Fit Note)**

Where a Fit Note indicates that you may be partially fit for work, the Doctor may have suggested ways of helping you get back to work. These could include:

- A phased return to work
- Altered hours
- Amended duties
- Workplace adaptations.

Your Line Manager will discuss the advice on the Doctor's Certificate with you. They will consider any comments made by the Doctor, any of the return-to-work tick boxes and any other action that could help you return to work despite your illness. If you return to reduced hours your pay would reflect this. If the Company is not able to make any adaptations or adjustments to help you return to work, your Line Manager will explain the reasons to you and will set a date for review. You may then use the Doctor's Certificate as if the Doctor had advised 'not fit for work'.

## **Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)**

Subject to certain exceptions, you will be entitled to receive Statutory Sick Pay ('SSP') for a maximum of 28 weeks in any period of entitlement (the maximum such period being three years) in accordance with, and subject to, the prevailing regulations. Payment of Company Sick Pay, if any, discharges any obligation to pay SSP (i.e. SSP is not in addition to Company Sick Pay but is included in it).

SSP is not payable for the first three days of absence (called waiting days). The rate of SSP will vary depending on your normal weekly earnings and the rate prescribed by the prevailing regulations. You will only receive SSP when there is a period of four or more days' sickness. SSP will only be paid on days on which you would normally be working.

The main requirements in order to qualify for SSP are that you must:

- Have four or more consecutive days of sickness (which may include Saturdays, Sundays and holidays) during which you are too ill to be capable of doing your work
- Follow the sickness absence reporting procedures as detailed above
- Supply evidence of incapacity, namely a self-certificate for periods of less than seven calendar days and a statement of fitness for work (also known as a Fit Note) for any period after the first seven calendar days.

## **Company Sick Pay**

After the successful completion of the probationary period and subject to the correct notification and certification process, the Company may, at its absolute discretion, pay up to two weeks' full pay which will include any SSP in a 12-month rolling period.

Further amounts of Sick Pay will be made at the Company's absolute discretion.

If you are absent due to incapacity caused by a third party or for an accident covered by insurance, any payments made by us under the Sick Pay Scheme will be a loan. You or your personal representatives must include in any claim you make against a third party or insurance Company, a claim in respect of that loan.

## **Holidays during absence**

If you wish to take holiday whilst absent (in receipt of Company Sick Pay or SSP) you should book leave, and have it authorised in the usual way. Sick Pay will not be paid in respect of any period that is taken as holiday. The normal restrictions on carrying over holiday entitlement will apply. As such, any holiday accrued but not taken by the end of the holiday year will be lost. The exception to this is if you have not had the opportunity to take your minimum Statutory holiday entitlement due to being absent for the whole or part of the holiday year. If this is the case, please speak to us.

## **Return-to-work and absence meetings**

When you return to work following any period of absence, your Line Manager will usually conduct a return to work interview. This is to establish the reason for and cause of your absence, that you are in fact fit to return to work and, whether we can do anything to assist you.

If you are taking any medication that may impact on your ability to work safely, please discuss this with your Line Manager.

Our disciplinary procedures will be used if an explanation for absence is not forthcoming or is not thought to be satisfactory.

Where your Line Manager is concerned about the level or pattern of absence, they may conduct an informal guidance meeting with you, and/or monitor your attendance and/or deal with the situation under our disciplinary procedure.

## **Long-term Absence or Absences**

In cases of long-term absence, we will normally keep in regular contact with you in order to keep up-to-date with your state of health and when you might be expected to return. The contact will usually be with your Line Manager. The frequency of such contact will vary according to the particular circumstances and may, for example, be weekly, fortnightly or monthly.

We may seek to understand your medical condition by obtaining a medical report. We will then seek to meet with you to discuss the terms of the medical report(s) obtained and any recommendations made (including whether any measures can be taken by us to assist you in returning to work) and your own view on the situation.

## **Termination of employment**

The Company will endeavour to support employees through long term sickness, but if it's unlikely that there will be a return to work or the employee is not medically capable to carry out their role, their employment may be terminated.

## **Medical/dental appointments**

Appointments should be made where possible outside working hours. Where this is not possible, they should be made at the start or end of the day. You must inform your Line Manager of any such appointments in advance and at the Manager's discretion you may be asked to make the time up.

## **Compassionate Leave**

An appropriate period of paid leave will be granted at the discretion of management in cases of bereavement involving immediate family. Apart from this, days off for attending funerals, religious services etc. will be treated as being part of holiday entitlement unless otherwise agreed.

## **Statutory Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay**

If, sadly, you lose a child under 18 and were the legal parents or had primary caring responsibilities, you are entitled to 2 weeks bereavement leave. This also applies if you are a parent who has suffered a still birth after 24 weeks.

- Leave must be taken in a block of two weeks, or two single weeks and must be taken within 56 weeks from the date of the child's death.
- Notice in the first 7 weeks after the death can be given before you are due to start on the first day. From the 8<sup>th</sup> week up until 56 weeks, the notice required is 1 week.
- Leave can be cancelled or changed using the notice periods above.
- You will be entitled to Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay if you have been continuously employed for 26 weeks up until the week preceding the death, and meet the qualifying criteria for National Insurance limits.

## **Jury Service**

If you must attend court for Jury Service or as a witness, please let us know as soon as possible and provide a copy of the court summons to support your request for time off work. Payment of salary during this period is at the absolute discretion of the Company. You will be able to claim an amount for loss of earnings and we need you to provide this to us so that this amount can be deducted from any discretionary pay that may be paid.

If you attend court and are told your services are not required that day, you must telephone us immediately and then return to work.

## **Time off for dependant emergencies**

We recognise the right of all employees to reasonable amounts of unpaid leave to deal with incidents involving a dependant. This is defined as any person who reasonably relies on you to make provision of care. The type of situations when this leave may be taken would be when a dependant:

- Is ill, injured, gives birth or is assaulted
- When care arrangements unexpectedly break down
- When a dependant dies
- To deal with an unexpected incident involving a child at school.

Employees wishing to take leave to deal with any of the above must telephone their Line Manager personally prior to the start of their working day. They must give the reason for the absence and the expected duration of the absence.

## **Falsifying claims**

In the event of an employee taking time off fraudulently under any of the above sickness and absence policies, we will investigate and disciplinary action may be taken.

## **Severe weather and disruptions to travel**

The Company acknowledges that employees may occasionally have problems travelling to and from work due to either severe weather conditions or major disruptions to public transport (for example, train strikes or accidents on the roads). Whilst we understand and are committed to protecting the health and safety of all our employees, we must also ensure that the business and our customers are not unduly disrupted by external factors.

## **Reporting for work**

We expect you to report for work regardless of the situation. You should therefore make every effort to attend work in all circumstances. When severe weather conditions occur or where there are major disruptions to public transport, you should take steps to obtain advice on the position from the appropriate external agencies. You should allow extra time for your journey, making alternative travel arrangements where appropriate. You will still be expected to attend work on time.

Unjustified or unacceptable absence or lateness may give rise to disciplinary action under the Company's disciplinary procedure.

Should the Company decide to close your place of work, and it deems that you are unable to carry out work at alternative places, it will pay you your normal working hours.

## **Accepted absence or lateness**

If you are unable to attend work or are going to be delayed by the weather conditions or public transport disruptions, you should contact your Manager as soon as possible to discuss the position. If your Manager is unavailable, you should speak to an alternative Manager. Where the Company accepts that you have used your best endeavours to attend work, but you are unable to do so, or you are late because of the severe weather conditions or the major disruptions to public transport, your Manager will discuss the various options potentially available. At the Company's discretion, you may be required or permitted to:

- Make up the time at a later date
- Take any absence from work as part of your annual leave entitlement
- Take any absence from work as special unpaid leave (in this case, your pay will reduce accordingly to take account of the hours/days you have not worked)
- Be paid as if you had attended work on the day(s) of absence
- Work from home or otherwise work remotely.

The Company will base its decision on your individual circumstances. For example: your distance from home to work, your mode of transport, how viable it is for you to work from home and on the needs of the Company.

## **Leaving work early**

If severe weather conditions or major disruptions to public transport occur during the working day which will cause problems for you in travelling home, your Manager will decide whether to allow you to leave work early (and to make up the time at a later date if necessary). The Company will again base its decision on your individual circumstances. For example, your distance from home to work, your mode of transport, how viable it is for you to take work with you and work from home for the rest of the day, and on the needs of the Company.

## **Health and safety**

The Company is committed to protecting the health and safety of all its employees. This includes during severe weather conditions and where there are major disruptions to public transport. Therefore, a reasonable approach will be taken to the situation. You also have a duty to take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of other persons who may be affected by your acts or omissions. This includes taking extra care when travelling to and from work in severe weather conditions and allowing more time for your journey, including making alternative travel arrangements where appropriate.

# Family Friendly Policies

## Maternity & Paternity, Surrogacy and Adoption Leave

If you are pregnant, please do speak to us as early as possible so that we can discuss with you any particular health and safety risks which may affect you or the baby. By the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the baby is due, you need to provide the following information to us (preferably in writing):

- Your expected week of childbirth
- The date on which you intend to start your Maternity Leave. You can start your Maternity Leave anytime from 11 weeks before the baby is due.

We will then write to you to confirm all the details and state the date we will be expecting you to return to work. You can change your mind about the date you wish to start your Maternity Leave, but you must give us 28 days' notice of the change.

All pregnant employees are entitled to 52 weeks' Maternity Leave, and this is made up of 26 weeks Ordinary Leave and 26 weeks Additional Leave. The first two weeks after the birth are compulsory.

Throughout the Maternity Leave you are entitled to all your non-pay related contractual benefits.

If you are not planning to take all your Maternity Leave, you must let us know when you will return. You can change your mind but must give us eight weeks' notice of a change.

If you decide not to return to work, you are required by law to give the correct notice if you are resigning, but giving longer is helpful. You are still entitled to Statutory Maternity Pay or Maternity Allowance even if you are not returning to work.

We reserve the right in any event to maintain reasonable contact with you from time to time during your Maternity Leave. This may be to discuss your plans for return to work, to discuss any special arrangements to be made or training to be given to ease your return to work, or simply to update you on developments at work during your absence.

You are encouraged to take any outstanding annual leave due to you before the commencement of your Maternity Leave. Generally, holiday should normally be taken in the year that it is earned and therefore if the holiday year is due to end during Maternity Leave, you should try to take the full year's entitlement before starting your Maternity Leave.

## Health and safety

We have a duty to assess any risks that may affect you at work during your pregnancy. We will provide you with information as to any risks identified in any risk assessment and look at ways in which we can minimise the risk.

## IVF

You will be entitled to paid time off for antenatal care only after the fertilised embryo has been implanted. From that point onwards, all entitlements are the same.

## Antenatal care

All pregnant employees are entitled to paid time off to receive antenatal care, provided such care is on the advice of a Doctor, Midwife or Health Visitor. Where such appointments can be arranged to take place outside of working hours you should do so. Copies of all appointment times should be given to your Line Manager.

Prospective fathers to be and partners of pregnant women, as well as surrogacy parents and the secondary adopter, are allowed unpaid time off to attend two antenatal appointments. The main adopter is allowed up to five paid adoption appointments.

We need you to provide us with your MATB1 Maternity Certificate which your midwife will give you when you are about 25 weeks pregnant.

Adoptive parents must give us the matching certificate or notification that one is being issued within seven days of having been matched with a child, or as soon as is practicable.

**Pay & benefits during Maternity Leave**

To receive Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) you must have been:

- Earning before tax an average that is no less than the lower earnings limit, which applies to National Insurance (NI). This is the amount you must earn to qualify for benefits. You must earn more than this amount before you actually start paying NI
- Employed by the same employer continuously for at least 26 weeks up to and into the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the week your baby is due.

The earliest date that SMP can start is from the 11th week before the week your baby is due and the latest from the day following the birth.

If you continue to work after the 11th week before the week your baby is due, you can choose when you want your SMP to start. SMP will start from any day you choose, once you have stopped work to have your baby. This means that your SMP should start from the first day of your Maternity Leave.

The start of your SMP will change if:

- Your baby is born before the start of the 11th week, or before the start of your SMP Pay period. If this happens SMP will start from the day following the birth of your baby.
- You are off sick from work with a pregnancy-related illness at the start of, or in the four weeks before your baby is due, SMP will start from the day following the first complete day you are off sick from work for that reason.

If you are entitled to SMP and you leave your employment with us:

- After the start of the 15th week before your baby is due but before the start of the 11th week - SMP will start from the beginning of the 11th week before the week your baby is due.
- At any time after the start of the 11th week before the week your baby is due and before the start of your Maternity Pay period, your SMP will start from the day after you left employment.

SMP is paid for a continuous period of up to 39 weeks.

First six weeks	90% of your average weekly earnings with no upper limit
Remaining 33 weeks	Standard rate or a rate equal to 90% of your average weekly earnings. You will get whichever rate is lower.

**Enhanced Maternity Pay**

To be eligible to receive enhanced maternity pay (EMP) the following applies:

- You must be entitled to SMP.
- You must have completed 2 years continuous service up to and into the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the week your baby is due.

If you are entitled to EMP this will be inclusive of SMP. This will be paid as follows:

First 6 weeks	90% of your average weekly earnings with no upper limit OR Normal full pay, whichever is greater
Remaining 33 weeks	Paid at 50% of your normal salary, inclusive of SMP.

## Maternity Allowance

If you are not eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay you may be entitled to Maternity Allowance if:

- You have worked (including self-employment) for 26 weeks during the 66 weeks before your baby is due
- You can find 13 weeks in which you earned over £30 a week or paid Class 2 (self-employed) National Insurance contributions or held a certificate of small earnings exception.

To claim Maternity Allowance (MA), ask your local Jobcentre Plus for form MA1.

## Pension

Pension contributions will continue to be made during the period when you are receiving SMP, but not during any period of unpaid Additional Maternity Leave. Your contributions will be based on your actual pay whilst the Company's contributions will be based on the salary you would have received had you not gone on Maternity Leave.

## Keeping in Touch Days

Whilst you are on Maternity Leave we will try to keep you up to date with all that is happening here. This may be to let you know about any changes; invite you to attend a particular event or to offer a training opportunity. You do have the right to refuse to attend.

If we offer and you wish to accept, you can work up to 10 days during your Leave without this affecting your Statutory Maternity Pay.

## Returning to work

Whilst you are under no obligation to do so, it would assist us if you could confirm as soon as convenient during your Maternity Leave that you will be returning to work as expected.

If you plan to return to work before the end of your Additional Maternity Leave you must give us eight weeks' notice. If you come back to work after the Ordinary Maternity Leave, you may return to the same job with the same terms and conditions as you had before your leave. If you return after Additional Leave, you are entitled to return to the same job on the same terms and conditions. But if for a good reason we cannot do this, we will find a position which is at the same level and with terms and conditions at least as good as your previous role.

If you are planning to breast feed when you return to work, please let us know so that we can carry out a risk assessment and provide suitable rest facilities for you.



## Adoption Leave

To qualify for the right to take Adoption Leave, you must be adopting a child through an approved UK adoption agency. Surrogacy parents may be entitled to Adoption Leave if they fulfil eligibility requirements.

If you are jointly adopting a child with your spouse, partner or civil partner, only one of you will be entitled to take Adoption Leave. You can choose which adopter will take Adoption Leave. The other adoptive parent will normally be entitled to take Ordinary Paternity Leave. The right to Adoption Leave is not available to a step-parent who adopts their partner's child.

Assuming you are eligible, you may take up to 26 weeks' Ordinary Adoption Leave and up to 26 weeks' Additional Adoption Leave, making a total of 52 weeks.

If you wish to take Adoption Leave, you must inform your Line Manager in writing of your request no later than seven days after the date on which notification of the match with the child is provided to you by the adoption agency. You must provide written details of the date on which you were notified of having been matched with the child, the date the child is expected to be placed with you for adoption and when you want your Adoption Leave to start.

Adoption Leave can start on the day the child is placed with you for adoption (whether this is earlier or later than expected) or on a date that is up to 14 days before the expected date of placement.

As evidence of your entitlement to Adoption Leave, you will also be required to provide a copy of the relevant matching certificate and adoption papers from the adoption agency.

You can change your mind about the date you wish to start your Adoption Leave but you must give us 28 days' notice of the change.

Throughout the Adoption Leave you are entitled to all your non-pay related contractual benefits.

If you are not planning to take all your Adoption Leave you must let us know when you will return. You can change your mind but must give us 8 weeks' notice of a change.

If you return after Additional Leave you are entitled to return to the same job on the same terms and conditions. But if for a good reason we cannot do this, we will find a position which is at the same level and with terms and conditions at least as good as your previous role.

If you decide not to return to work, you are required by law to give the correct notice if you are resigning. But giving longer is helpful. You are still entitled to Statutory Adoption Pay even if you are not returning to work.

We reserve the right in any event to maintain reasonable contact with you from time to time during your Adoption Leave. This may be to discuss your plans for return to work, to discuss any special arrangements to be made or training to be given to ease your return to work or simply to update you on developments at work during your absence.

You are encouraged to take any outstanding annual leave due to you before the commencement of Adoption Leave. Generally, holiday should normally be taken in the year that it is earned and therefore if the holiday year is due to end during Adoption Leave, you should try to take the full year's entitlement before starting your Adoption Leave.

## Statutory Adoption Pay

Paid Adoption Leave is available for a child adopted under UK law - but some details may vary for parents adopting outside the UK.

### To receive Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) you must:

- Be the child's adopter
- Earn before tax an average that is no less than the lower earnings limit which applies to National Insurance (NI). This is the amount you must earn to qualify for benefits. You must earn more than this amount before you start paying NI
- Be employed for a continuous period of at least 26 weeks ending before the placement of the child
- Have received the official matching certificate or notification that it is being issued.

Statutory Adoption Pay is paid for up to 39 weeks.

Statutory Adoption Pay is paid as 90% of your average weekly earnings for the first six weeks followed by the Statutory rate or 90% of your average weekly earnings (whichever is lower) for the remaining 33 weeks.

## Enhanced Adoption Pay

### To be eligible to receive enhanced adoption pay (EAP) the following applies:

- You must be entitled to SAP.
- You must have completed 2 years continuous service up to the week ending before the placement of the child.

If you are entitled to EAP this will be inclusive of SAP. This will be paid as follows:

First 6 weeks	90% of your average weekly earnings with no upper limit OR Normal full pay, whichever is greater
Remaining 33 weeks	Paid at 50% of your normal salary, inclusive of SAP.

## Pension

Pension contributions will continue to be made during the period when you are receiving SAP but not during any period of unpaid Additional Adoption Leave. Your contributions will be based on your actual pay whilst the Company's contributions will be based on the salary you would have received had you not gone on Additional Adoption Leave.

## Keeping in Touch Days

Whilst you are on Adoption Leave we will try to keep you up to date with all that is happening here. This may be to let you know about any changes; invite you to attend a particular event or to offer a training opportunity. You do have the right to refuse to attend.

If we offer and you wish to accept, you can work up to 10 days during your Leave without this affecting your Statutory Adoption Pay.

## Return to work

Whilst you are under no obligation to do so, it would assist us if you could confirm as soon as convenient during your Adoption Leave that you will be returning to work as expected.

If you are intending to return earlier than the return date you stated, then you must give the Company at least eight weeks' written notice of your intention. Failure to do so may mean the Company postpones your return

to work for up to eight weeks, provided of course this is not later than your originally stated return to work date.

## **Paternity Leave**

To qualify for the right to take Paternity Leave, you must meet each of the following eligibility criteria:

- You have, or expect to have, responsibility for the upbringing of the child
- You are either the biological father of the child; or you are married to, are the civil partner or the cohabiting partner of the child's mother; or you are married to, are the civil partner or the cohabiting partner of the child's adopter; or you are one of a couple jointly adopting a child.
- You are taking the leave to care for the child or to support the child's mother or adopter.
- You have worked continuously for the Company for 26 weeks calculated as at the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the expected week of childbirth, or, in respect of an adopted child, calculated as at the week in which the child's adopter is notified of having been matched with the child.

A cohabiting partner is a person, whether of a different sex or the same sex, who lives with the mother or adopter and the child in an enduring family relationship but is not an immediate relative of the mother or adopter.

If you wish to take Paternity Leave and are eligible, you are entitled to two weeks on the birth or adoption of a child. You are entitled to take either one week or two consecutive weeks of Paternity Leave. It cannot be taken as odd days.

You are required to inform the Company of your intention to take Paternity Leave by the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the expected week of childbirth. Or in the case of an adopted child, no later than seven days after the date on which notification of the match with the child was given by the adoption agency, unless this is not reasonably practicable. You are required to provide the following information in writing to the Company:

- The date the child is expected to be born or adopted
- Whether you wish to take one or two weeks' Paternity Leave
- When you want your Paternity Leave to start.

In the case of an adopted child, your notice should also specify the date on which the adopter was notified of having been matched with the child.

Paternity Leave can start on any day of the week on or following the child's birth or placement for adoption. But it must be completed either within 56 days of the actual date of childbirth or adoption or, if the child is born early, within the period from the actual date of childbirth up to 56 days after the first day of the expected week of childbirth.

In the case of multiple births from the same pregnancy, only one period of Paternity Leave is available.

On resuming work after Paternity Leave, you are entitled to return to the same job on the same terms and conditions of employment as if you had not been absent.

## **Statutory Paternity Pay**

During the period of Paternity Leave you will receive Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) if you are eligible to receive it. Your contract of employment continues in force and you are entitled to receive all your contractual benefits, except for salary.

## Enhanced Paternity Pay

In order to be eligible for Enhanced Paternity Pay (EPP), you must have been continuously employed by the Company for 2 years as at the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the expected week of childbirth, or, in respect of an adopted child, calculated as at the week in which the child's adopter is notified of having been matched with the child.

EPP will entitle you to be paid at your normal rate for the period of statutory paternity leave, this payment will be inclusive of SPP.

## Shared Parental Leave

This Policy applies to a parent wishing to share traditional Maternity or Adoption Leave. Unpaid Parental Leave remains, as does the right to take 52 weeks' Maternity or Adoption Leave. Surrogacy parents may be able to take Shared Parental Leave if they fulfil the eligibility requirements.

To take advantage of this provision the mother must commit, in writing, to ending their Maternity/Adoption Leave and Pay at a set date, and to share the untaken balance of Leave and Pay as Shared Parental Leave and Pay with their partner. Or to return to work early from Maternity or Adoption Leave and opt in to Shared Parental Leave and Pay at a later date.

The timescales and process to plan Shared Parental Leave is quite complex, so please speak to your Line Manager if you have any queries or wish to discuss possible arrangements. Good communication during the planning is the key to finding a workable plan for both employee and the Company.

To help understand this Policy we have listed the meaning of the following terms:

**Mother:** the woman who gives birth to a child, or the adopter.

**Adopter:** is the male or female who is eligible for Adoption Leave and or Pay.

**Partner:** the child's biological father or the partner of the mother/adopter. This may be a spouse, civil partner or a partner who is in an enduring relationship with the mother and the child.

**SPL:** Shared Parental Leave.

**ShPP:** Shared Parental Pay.

**Continuous Leave:** a period time of leave that is taken in one block for example four weeks' leave.

**Discontinuous Leave:** a period of leave that is arranged around weeks where the employee will return to work. For example, an arrangement where an employee will work every other week for a period of three months.

**SPLIT day:** Shared Parental Leave in touch day.

**Match:** when an adopter is approved to adopt a named child or children.

**Curtail:** where an eligible mother brings their Maternity/Adoption Leave and, if appropriate, Pay or Allowance entitlement to an end early.

This Policy applies to employees whether they are the mother or the partner. If it is the mother who is employed by the Company, a partner must follow his/her own employer's Policy if he/she wishes to take a period of SPL. If it is the partner who is employed by us, then their partner must follow their own Company Policy. Good communication is essential with both employers to ensure requests are dealt with properly.

## Are you eligible?

There are some criteria which must be met for this Policy to apply. The mother is eligible for SPL if they:

- Have at least 26 weeks' continuous employment ending with the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth or matching date of the child, and remains in continuous employment with the organisation until the week before any period of SPL that is taken
- Have, at the date of the child's birth or placement, the main responsibility, apart from the partner, for the care of the child
- Are entitled to Statutory Maternity/Adoption Leave in respect of the child
- Comply with the relevant Leave curtailment requirements (or have returned to work before the end of Statutory Maternity/Adoption Leave), and SPL notice and evidence requirements.

In addition, for the mother to be eligible for SPL, the partner must:

- Have been employed, been a worker or been a self-employed earner in at least 26 of the 66 weeks immediately preceding the expected week of childbirth
- Have average weekly earnings meeting the lower earnings test for any 13 of those 66 weeks
- Have, at the date of the child's birth or placement, the main responsibility, apart from the mother, for the care of the child.

## Partner's eligibility for Shared Parental Leave

The partner is eligible for SPL if he/she:

- Has at least 26 weeks' continuous employment ending with the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth or placement of the child and remains in continuous employment with the organisation until the week before any period of SPL that he/she takes
- Has, at the date of the child's birth or placement, the main responsibility, apart from the mother, for the care of the child
- Complies with the relevant Shared Parental/Adoption Leave notice and evidence requirements.

In addition, for the partner to be eligible for SPL, the mother must:

- Have been employed, been a worker or been a self-employed earner during at least 26 of the 66 weeks immediately preceding the expected week of childbirth or placement of the child
- Have average weekly earnings meeting the lower earnings test for any 13 of those 66 weeks; and
- Have, at the date of the child's birth or placement, the main responsibility, apart from the partner, for the care of the child
- Comply with the relevant Leave or Pay curtailment requirements (or have returned to work before the end of Statutory Maternity/Adoption Leave).

## How to calculate the amount of Leave available

The amount of SPL to which an individual is entitled will depend on when the mother brings her Maternity/Adoption Leave period to an end and the amount of Leave that the other parent takes in respect of the child.

SPL may only be taken in complete weeks but may start on any day of the week. An eligible employee can request to take SPL in one continuous block in which case the Company is required to accept the request as long as the correct notification has been given. Alternatively, she/he may request to take the Leave as a number of discontinuous blocks, with breaks between the Leave where the employee returns to work. In requests of continuous blocks, the Company must agree to these. A maximum of three requests for Leave or amendments to Leave booked can be made by each parent.

The first two weeks following birth are the compulsory Maternity Leave period and may only be taken by the mother. This means that the mother cannot curtail her Maternity Leave to take SPL until two weeks after the birth and the absolute maximum period that the parents could take as SPL is 50 weeks between them. In most cases, mothers commence their Maternity Leave before their expected due date and so any time taken before the birth is also deducted from the available 50 weeks.

The mother's partner can begin a period of SPL at any time from the date of the child's birth or placement. However, he/she would lose their entitlement to the two weeks' paid Paternity Leave if this has not been taken before the start of any SPL.

### **Notice requirements for Shared Parental Leave**

To take advantage of SPL it is important that the following notifications are given in the correct timeframe. An employee may only make three Leave notice requests or variations of Leave notices during a period of SPL. A notice for discontinuous Leave that has been withdrawn before it is agreed does not count towards the total number of requests for Leave that an employee can make.

If the mother wishes to take SPL, a curtailment notice must be provided stating the date the Maternity/Adoption Leave is to end.

That date must be:

- After the compulsory Maternity Leave period, which is the two weeks after birth.
- At least eight weeks after the date on which the mother gave the Maternity/Adoption Leave curtailment notice to her employer
- At least one week before what would be the end of the Additional Maternity/Adoption Leave period.

### **Information required in any Shared Parental Leave notice of entitlement**

With the curtailment notice the employee must also provide the Company with the following details:

- The names of the mother and partner
- The start and end date of any Statutory Maternity or Adoption Leave
- The total amount of SPL available
- The child's expected week of birth, actual birth date or date of placement
- How much SPL the mother and partner each intend to take
- An indication as to when they intend to take the Leave, although this will not be binding.

A signed declaration to confirm that:

- They will be taking the Leave to care for the child
- The mother has given notice to end her Maternity/Adoption entitlement
- The information they have given is true and accurate
- Should, for whatever reason, they cease to be eligible for SPL they will inform the Company.

In addition, the mother's notice of entitlement must include a declaration signed by her partner stating:

- Their name, address, and National Insurance number
- That they are the father of the child; or are married to, the civil partner of, or the partner of, the mother or adopter.

If the employee is the partner, the partner's notice of entitlement and intention must set out:

- The names of the mother and partner
- The start and end date of any Statutory Maternity or Adoption Leave
- The total amount of SPL available
- The child's expected week of birth, actual birth date or date of placement
- How much SPL the mother and partner each intend to take
- An indication as to when they intend to take the Leave, although this will not be binding.

A signed declaration to confirm that:

- They will be taking the Leave to care for the child

- The mother has given notice to end her Maternity/Adoption entitlement
- The information they have given is true and accurate.

Within 14 days of receiving a notice of entitlement and intention from the employee, whether the mother or partner, the Company can request from the employee:

- An MATB1 Certificate, a matching certificate or birth certificate
- The name and address of the other parent's employer.

The employee has 14 days from the request to provide the information.

### **How to book**

To take a period of SPL, the employee must write to the Company giving not less than eight weeks' notice before the start date of the first period of Leave.

The employee must set out the start and end dates of each period of SPL requested in that notice. This written notification may be given at the same time as a notice of entitlement. It can be a request for a continuous period of Leave or discontinuous periods of Leave.

### **Continuous period of Shared Parental Leave**

If an eligible employee gives a period of Leave notice requesting one continuous period of Leave, he/she will be automatically entitled to take that period of Leave.

### **Discontinuous periods of Shared Parental Leave**

An employee may submit a period of Leave notice requesting discontinuous periods of Leave. For example, the mother and partner could request a pattern of Leave from their respective employers that allows them to alternate childcare responsibilities.

If the employee submits a period of Leave notice requesting discontinuous periods of Leave, the Company, in the two weeks beginning with the date the period of Leave notice was given, can:

- Consent to the pattern requested
- Propose an alternative pattern
- Refuse the pattern of Leave requested.

The Company will have to consider what impact the arrangements would have on the business. If agreement is reached within those two weeks, the employee is entitled to take the Leave on the dates agreed.

If no agreement has been reached within that two-week discussion period, the employee is entitled to take the Leave as one continuous period of Leave (the default provision). In that event, the employee can choose a start date for when this Leave period will begin within 19 days of the date the notification was given. But the Leave cannot start sooner than the initial notified start date. If no date is notified within this time period, the Leave will begin on the start date stated in the original notification.

Alternatively, if the Company has refused the request or no agreement has been reached during the two-week discussion period, the employee may withdraw a period of Leave notice requesting discontinuous periods of Leave. The employee can withdraw a period of Leave notice at any time on or before the 15th day after the period of Leave notice was given.

### **Cancelling or varying curtailment notice or booked Shared Parental Leave**

In certain circumstances the employee may wish to withdraw a Maternity or Adoption Leave curtailment notice. In this case the request must be in writing and can be given only if the mother has not returned to work. It could only be withdrawn in the following circumstances:

- The mother and partner cease to be eligible for SPL or ShPP and the mother withdraws her Maternity Leave curtailment notice within eight weeks of the date on which the notice was given

- If the notice was given before the birth, and the mother revokes the Maternity or Adoption Leave curtailment notice in the six weeks following the birth (for mothers only)
- The partner has died.

Sometimes circumstances change, and the employee may need to change or cancel his/her proposed SPL dates. To do this they must write to the Company at least eight weeks before the dates varied begin and making clear what change they are seeking. This will count as a second notification.

The written notice must contain:

- An indication as to when the employee intends to take SPL (including the start and end dates for each period of Leave)
- Details of any periods of SPL that have been notified through a period of Leave notice
- Details of any periods of ShPP that have been notified in relation to periods where SPL was not to be taken
- A declaration signed by the mother and the partner that they agree to the variation.

### **Rights during Shared Parental Leave**

During SPL, all terms and conditions of the employee's contract except remuneration will continue. Pay will be replaced by ShPP if the employee is eligible for it.

### **Communication and SPLIT Days**

Whilst an employee is on SPL, the Company will try to keep them up to date with important changes and developments within the Company. It is also helpful to discuss the employee's plans to return to work during this time.

An employee can agree to work for the Company (or to attend training) for up to 20 days during their SPL without that work bringing the period of his/her SPL and Pay to an end. These are known as "Shared Parental Leave in touch" (SPLIT) days. If you are entitled to receive ShPP for any week during which you attend work for SPLIT days, you will still receive this in the usual way. In addition, we will also pay you an agreed rate for the work you do during a SPLIT day.

There is no obligation on the Company to offer work or on the employee to accept it.

### **Returning to work following Shared Parental Leave**

The employee has the right to return to the same job when returning to work from SPL if the period of Leave is 26 weeks or less.

If the employee is returning to work from SPL and the period of Leave taken is more than 26 weeks, they have the right to return to the same job unless this is not reasonably practicable. In these circumstances the Company will find another job that is suitable and appropriate for him/her.

## **Parental Leave**

Unpaid Parental Leave may be taken to look after a child or make arrangements for the good of the child.

### **Eligible employees:**

- All employees employed by the Company for a minimum of one year
- Employees who have a child or children under the age of 18
- Employees who have become the adoptive parents of a child under the age of 18

A maximum of 18 weeks per child (pro rata for part-time employees) may be taken in total.

If you wish to take Parental Leave, you should submit an application to your Line Manager. Leave should normally be taken in one-week blocks (unless your child is disabled), up to a maximum of four weeks in a year. Requests for longer periods will be dealt with on an individual basis.



You should submit an application to take the time off 21 days prior to Leave being taken. The Company must respond in two weeks. We will respond sympathetically to all requests but on occasions may ask you to postpone the Leave for business reasons. However, this cannot be for more than six months. Any Leave at the time of childbirth or adoption cannot be postponed.

We will keep a record of Parental Leave taken.

# Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

We believe that your mental wellbeing is important, and we are committed to promoting a healthy and supportive workplace.

We prioritise your safety, mental health and wellbeing. Some of the ways we will do this is through:

- Support. We will support everybody in the business to ensure they feel comfortable in discussing their mental health and are aware of how to raise any concerns.
- Reviewing our policies to ensure they work for everyone. We have policies around office hours, flexible working and holidays to encourage a work-life balance. We commit to always trying to do better and we will review these periodically to ensure they still work for our team members.
- Offering accommodations if needed. For people who need support with their mental health we will commit to exploring options. We will discuss what this looks like depending on what feels most suitable and helpful.

## Stress

At Home Health UK we realise that stress is easier to manage before it becomes a greater issue. Please speak to your line manager if you feel that high stress levels are affecting your wellbeing and ability to do your work. We will work together with you to identify the problems and find solutions where possible.

## Mental Health First Aiders

At Home Health we also have fully trained mental health first aiders (Lisa, Jessi, Neil, Casey and Jamie). If you're struggling with your mental health, please speak to one of our trained members of staff if you feel comfortable to do so. They will support you in any way they can.

## Wellness Action Plan

We encourage all staff members to complete [a wellness action plan](#) so that they think about how work affects their mental health and how we can help them.

## Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

All employees have access to at least 8 hours' free therapy sessions via the EAP with Spill (after successful completion of their probation period). All staff members have been provided with a link to register with their service. Any therapy you sign up for will be completely confidential.

## Monthly Wellbeing Treatments

Each month Home Health organise for every team member to have a 20-minute treatment (massage or reflexology) from a qualified therapist. Speak to your line manager for details on how to book a slot.

## Physical Activity

We recognize the importance of taking a break from work to get some fresh air and physical activity. To encourage this, every staff member is allotted an additional 20 minute break every week to go for a walk. These breaks are to be taken between Monday to Thursday and should be combined with morning or lunch breaks - so for example, if you combined to with your 15 minute morning break, you would have 35 minutes in total for break. Before taking this extra break, you must get approval from your line manager. Everyone is encouraged to make a note of their mileage so that we can keep a running total of the extra collective activity completed each week.

## Wellness Room

We have a dedicated wellness room that staff are encourage to use every day to take a complete break from work. We have a variety of games and puzzles as well as air purifying plants, plus a wellbeing board with a host of information and recommendations. If you feel that you just need some peace and quiet, you can close the doors so that you won't be disturbed. The wellness room can be used during your breaks as well, but staff are encouraged to use it outside of these times too, with approval from their line manager. Please note that the wellness room is a phone free zone.

## Resources

The following is a list of free resources you can access to help with mental wellbeing:

[Mind](#)

[Shout](#)

[Samaritans](#)

[Rethink](#)

[Black Minds Matter UK](#)

[NHS](#)

[Time to Change](#)

## Financial Wellbeing Policy

Financial wellbeing is an important aspect of our mental and physical health and wellbeing. We want to ensure you feel supported and empowered financially. This policy covers our financial benefits and resources for financial wellbeing.

If you are struggling financially, or would like further information on financial wellbeing and how we can support you, please speak to your line manager. If you know of any free financial advice services or resources and you would like to see them listed, please let us know!

## Our Benefits

We can support you financially in the following ways:

- We are part of the Nest Pension scheme, where you will be automatically enrolled (unless you opt out), enabling you to plan for your future and reduce your tax burden now. We will contribute to the pot every month on top of your own contributions.
- We are part of the Electric Car scheme, allowing you to reduce your carbon footprint and make tax savings at the same time.
- We are also part of the Cycle to work scheme, which has similar benefits to the above, as well as being a great way to keep fit.
- Minimum 2 weeks' fully paid sickness absence for all staff on completion of their probationary period.
- We have an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) via Spill, where all employees have access to at least 8 hours' free therapy sessions per year via the EAP.
- We allow all staff to "sell" up to 5 days' unused holiday back to the company (pro-rated for part-time staff).
- We offer enhanced maternity and paternity pay and enhanced adoption pay to all staff with at least 2 years' continuous service.
- We hold bi-annual performance related pay and bonus reviews.
- It is important to us that anyone working for Home Health is fairly compensated and so we are proud to be an accredited National Living Wage employer.

## Resources

The following is a list of free resources to access to help with financial advice and wellbeing:

- [The Money and Pensions service](#) - government service aiming to help with financial wellbeing
- [Money Helper](#) - free guidance and resources from the government
- [Citizens Advice](#) - advice from mortgages, to borrowing, debt and tax
- [Natwest Budget Calculator](#) - a calculator for budgeting your finances
- [Step Change](#) - free debt management advice from the UK's leading debt charity

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy

At Home Health we want everyone in the team to feel they belong, not just work here. Our DE&I policy is not something we pay lip-service to; we want to embed these values throughout all we do at Home Health.

We also want to equip everyone with a 'diversity eye' whilst doing their job – to encourage everyone to seek for different perspectives and ask difficult questions about who's not there. Everyone deserves an opportunity to thrive at work and that is the culture we are striving to create.

We want to learn to spot our biases and create a truly diverse and inclusive working environment. We believe that only by welcoming the people that challenge us, who push us to think outside of our comfort zones, will we be able to grow as a team and as a business.

We know this will be a team effort, and this policy outlines how we can hold ourselves accountable and make work safe and equitable for our entire team.

DE&I touches many aspects of employment and this policy covers:

- Hiring diverse teams
- Communication
- Belonging and education
- Progressive policies

We are constantly learning and will be building on our strategy for DE&I going forward. This is an open and transparent conversation we want to have with our team, so if you have any thoughts or feedback then please come and chat to us.

### Hiring diverse teams

The research is clear: ambitious goals are solved better by diverse teams. People with different backgrounds and experiences can bring new perspectives to the team. So when we're thinking about hiring and bringing on new talent, it's a no-brainer that our focus is on ensuring we're hiring diverse teams to help us reach our goals.

At Home Health, we hire people by assessing how their skill-set fits the role, how their values and experiences add to our team's diversity and what energy they bring to us. As an equal opportunities employer, we don't discriminate against team members or any candidates on the basis of gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, age, neurodiversity, disability status, or any other aspect that makes them different. We recognise that these differences in physical ability, unique perspective and background add so much value and we are always looking for ways to empower this at Home Health.

### Communication

At Home Health we're also committed to creating a welcoming and safe environment at work so that our team members can express themselves freely. Home Health has a zero tolerance approach to any kind of discrimination.

There are 2 main areas that we believe help to create a safe working environment for everyone:

- Feedback - We're always open to feedback, both positive and constructive. We might not know we can improve, so please do bring things to our attention so we can change. All team members will have regular catch ups with their line manager and it is a great time to flag any concerns or anything you feel can be improved. We will take any feedback on board, and make appropriate changes to create a positive work environment for you.
- Training - We know that training is a really important factor when it comes to diversity and inclusion which is why we're committed to educating our team members to give them awareness and understanding of how to contribute to our diversity goals.

## **Belonging**

Belonging is an important aspect of diversity and inclusion. We want you to feel accepted and understood at Home Health and fundamentally feel like you belong here.

As a small business, we do not yet have employee internal networks or groups. However, we firmly encourage you to join external networks or charities, and feedback what you learn to us so we can grow as an organisation.

## **Policies**

We have a range of policies to support everyone in the team. We want these policies to add value to your life at work, and be aligned with what is important to you. Our policies are designed so that they're inclusive, progressive and follow fair equitable practises.

Just some examples of policies we've introduced to achieve this are:

- Flexible Working Policies
- Period Policy
- Breastfeeding at Work Policy
- Menopause Policy
- Transitioning at Work Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

## **Ongoing commitment**

Agreeing to do better is not a one-time commitment: it takes consistent awareness, effort and action. At Home Health we are committed to continuous improvement and work around DE&I. We are dedicated to developing a transparent culture based on open dialogue and active listening to embed DE&I in our every day.

We will regularly review and evaluate our progress to highlight barriers to DE&I and the impact of our initiatives. This policy will be updated when necessary, and the responsibility to ensure we remain a progressive, understanding workplace is with the team as a whole.

If you have any ideas around other ways that we can create an inclusive environment via hiring, communication, belonging, or our policies, please do speak to your line manager.

## **Period Policy**

At Home Health we want to make sure our whole team feels supported and understood. Part of this is breaking down taboos and making sure we can all be our true selves at work, and we know that periods and menstruation can still be a source of embarrassment or concern in the workplace. We feel it's important that members of our team who have menstrual cycles can have access to supplies, facilities, and adjustments whilst menstruating, if they require it.

We recognise that not everyone experiences periods in the same way, and sometimes they can be extremely debilitating - especially if an individual has endometriosis, menorrhagia, dysmenorrhea or other medical conditions. Periods can cause, amongst other symptoms, extreme headaches, back and joint pain, severe cramping, vomiting and fainting. If you experience these symptoms regularly, and you feel comfortable to do

so, please speak to your line manager or a member of the Senior Management Team so we can discuss how to best support you.

We encourage all team members - those who menstruate and those who do not - to show support to colleagues if they are suffering. We also want to encourage the team to educate themselves on the topic if they feel uncertain, and be supportive of colleagues as they learn more about periods. We have zero tolerance for discrimination and bullying at Home Health.

## **Supplies and Facilities**

We supply sanitary towels and heat pads/packs for all team members. You can find these in the toilets and/or kitchen areas. If there are further products you think would be beneficial, please let us know.

## **Flexible Working for Appointments**

If you have a severe period pain due to a medical condition (either diagnosed or undiagnosed), we want to support you in visiting doctors and specialists appointments as best we can.

Please let your line manager know as soon as possible if you have medical appointments booked within the working day, and block out time for these in your calendar. Please book medical appointments at the start or towards the end of the working day if you can - however, we know this is not always possible, so please book your appointment and we will try our best to accommodate.

## **Further Support**

Please book sick days if you also need to, and follow the usual reporting procedure outlined under the Sickness Absence policy.

If period pain is impacting your work regularly, please discuss this with your line manager so we can put a plan in place and make any reasonable adjustments to help you.

If you have any ideas or suggestions about how we can better support our menstruating team members, please let us know. We are constantly learning and will update this policy when necessary.

## **Breastfeeding for Mothers Policy**

We want to provide a workplace environment that supports breastfeeding team members in continuing to breastfeed their infants following their return to work. We encourage team members and management to have a positive, accepting attitude toward working women who are breastfeeding and discrimination and harassment of breastfeeding mothers in any form is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Team members who wish to continue to breastfeed following return to work shall receive:

- Breaks for expressing milk; breastfeeding team members are allowed to express milk during work hours using their normal breaks and as part of additional lactation breaks (usually 20 minutes once or twice a day) as agreed with their Line Manager.
- A private room (not a toilet) shall be available for team members to express milk. The room will be private, lockable and clean. Expressed milk should be stored in a personal cool bag or if available the cool bag can be placed in a designated refrigerator.

## **Staff support**

When using this policy, it is your responsibility to:

- Communicate with supervisors - Keep us informed of your needs so that appropriate accommodations can be made to satisfy the needs of both the team members and the workplace.
- Maintenance of milk expression equipment - You are responsible for leaving the designated milk expression area clean and tidy for the next user.
- Milk storage - Please label all milk expressed with your name and the date collected so that it is not inadvertently confused with another team member's milk. You are responsible for proper storage and transportation of your own milk, and it is recommended that personal cool bags are used including within a designated refrigerator.

- Try to use break times to express milk.

If more than one breastfeeding team member needs to use the designated expressing room, you can use a sign-in log provided in the room to negotiate milk expression times that are most convenient or best meet your needs.

Further information available at:

[www.ukbreastfeeding.org](http://www.ukbreastfeeding.org)

[www.unicef.org.uk](http://www.unicef.org.uk)

[www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk](http://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk)

## Menopause Policy

Home Health recognises that women experiencing the menopause, whether before, during or after this time of hormonal change and associated symptoms, may need additional consideration, support and adjustments.

- We recognise that the menopausal symptoms can also affect transgender people including non-binary people.
- We are committed to developing a workplace culture that supports workers experiencing the menopause in order for them to feel confident to raise issues about their symptoms and ask for reasonable adjustments at work.
- We recognise that some team members experiencing the menopause may find that related symptoms may impact on their health and wellbeing, and we aim to provide as much support as is reasonably practicable for individuals.
- We recognise that the menopause is a very personal experience and therefore different levels, and types of support and adjustments may be needed.

Team members experiencing the menopause are encouraged to let their Line Manager know if they are struggling with symptoms that may impact on their work, so that appropriate support is provided. Such information will be treated confidentially and in accordance with our data protection policy. An alternative contact is available to team members experiencing the menopause should they not feel comfortable discussing their problems with their line manager (particularly if they are male).

Team members who are experiencing the menopause can apply for reasonable adjustments to support them at work, including but not limited to flexible working arrangements, a change in duties, and professional support. We will aim to provide temporary staff cover or redistribute work wherever possible, where there is a lengthy absence related to menopausal symptoms.

Managers will consider all requests for support and adjustments sympathetically and will not discriminate against those team members who are experiencing the menopause and put in place the required support or adjustments in a timely manner. All requests for support or adjustments must be dealt with confidentially and in accordance with the data protection policy.

Team members experiencing the menopause are encouraged to seek support through their GP and other external organisations.

## Supplies and Facilities

We supply cooling neck pads for all team members. You can find these in the kitchen areas. If there are further products you think would be beneficial, please let us know.

## Resources

The following is a list of free resources to access that offer information and support with the menopause:

[The Menopause Charity](#)

[NHS](#)

[Menopause and Me](#)

[Women's Health Concern](#)

## Transitioning at Work

We want everyone at Home Health to feel comfortable to be themselves at work. Transitioning is a term used to describe the process and steps an individual takes in order to live in the gender they identify as. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity in the workplace, and that includes equality of opportunity for trans people throughout recruitment and employment, including supporting trans team members through any transitioning process. We will not tolerate discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the basis of a person's gender identity, gender expression or trans status. We also recognise and commit to following The Gender Recognition Act (2004) and the Equality Act (2010).

This policy is for our whole team, and applies to team leads, team members, senior leadership and directors. This policy aims to provide a starting place for approaching transitioning at work, from the perspective of the individual transitioning, and the whole business in supporting them. As a business we are on a journey of learning about how best we can support trans rights and transitioning at work, and each individual's experience is different, so we want to work together to ensure transitioning at work is as safe, smooth and supportive as possible. We have also linked to resources and charities that provide in depth information and guidance.

We encourage our whole team to educate themselves on trans rights, and understand what it means to transition:

- The Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIRES) outlines definitions and explanations of terminology here
- The Gender Trust explains gender laws here, and explains more about discrimination, harassment, and victimisation in the workplace for trans people here
- We will also provide access to DE&I training

Everyone at Home Health has the following responsibilities:

- To comply with this policy and suggest updates and amendments to ensure we can all support in the best way possible.
- To report any instances of harassment, bullying, discrimination or victimisation according to our Bullying and Harassment policy.
- To support colleagues transitioning and educate colleagues who may inadvertently show discriminatory behaviour.

### How we will support you

We understand that telling work about your transition can be daunting, but if you feel comfortable to do so, please let your line manager or another senior team member know. We will work with you to create a plan for your support, covering time off for appointments, change of name and pronouns, how you would like your colleagues and others to be informed, introducing any reasonable adjustments, as well as any other aspects of work at Home Health you'd like to discuss.

We will also support team members with family members who are transitioning, whether that be with time off for appointments with them, and care post-surgery.

For all time off for requests for medical appointments and care responsibilities, please let your team lead know as soon as possible. You will be required to make up the time, but please discuss alternative options with your line manager as we want to be as accommodating as possible.

If you have any questions about how we can best support you, please speak to your line manager or another member of the senior leadership team who you trust and feel comfortable with.

### Other resources

The following is a list of resources that can inform and support you:

- The Beaumont Society - national self-help body
- Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIRES) - charity delivering training and e-learning



- The Gender Trust - provides advice and support on gender identity issues
- Press for Change - UK's leading experts in transgender law
- Stonewall - lobby for and educate on LGBTQ+ rights
- Gender Care - UK specialists in gender therapy
- Mermaids - charity supporting trans children and their families

## Resolving problems

We believe that by having clear, open and fair procedures for the resolution of problems, we create a basis for the fair treatment of all our team.

### Disciplinary and grievance procedure

We expect our staff to meet high standards of conduct. Minor departures from our standards may be dealt with informally to avoid the need to engage this procedure. Nevertheless, we recognise that there will be occasions when informal action is not appropriate, and in such cases this Policy will be implemented. This Policy will not usually be applied in the first two years of an employee's employment.

This Policy does not form part of your contract of employment and may be altered or amended at the absolute discretion of the Company. We may start this procedure at any stage.

For disciplinary and grievance issues we may, at our absolute discretion, use an external third party to carry out any part or parts of this procedure.

### Procedure

- **Investigation**
  - An investigation may be undertaken prior to any disciplinary action
  - You must fully co-operate with any investigation
  - If you are invited to an investigation meeting, there is no right to be accompanied.
- **Suspension**
  - If appropriate, we may suspend you on full pay. If you are suspended, your contract of employment will remain in force, but you will not be entitled to access any of our premises except at our prior request, or with our prior consent, and subject to such conditions that we may impose.
- **Disciplinary hearing**
  - If it is decided that there is a disciplinary case to answer, you will be informed of this, normally in writing
  - You will be invited to attend a disciplinary hearing
  - You are entitled to be accompanied to a disciplinary hearing by a workplace colleague or a trade union representative
  - You will be given the opportunity to state your case before any decision is made
  - The chair of the hearing may decide the issue at the hearing or adjourn the hearing to consider their findings
  - You will be informed of the decision. This will normally be in writing.
- **Appeals**

- If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the disciplinary hearing you may appeal. If you wish to appeal you must do so within five days of the date of the outcome letter (or where no letter is issued, the date you are informed of the decision)
  - An appeal should be in writing and must set out the grounds for your appeal along with any accompanying documentation
  - At an appeal hearing, you are entitled to be accompanied by either a workplace colleague or a trade union representative
  - The outcome of the appeal will be conveyed to you, normally in writing. The appeal decision will be final.
- **Misconduct**
    - Examples of misconduct are:
      - Occasional and minor poor timekeeping
      - Minor breaches of our rules
      - Minor failure to observe our procedures.
    - These examples are not exhaustive or exclusive. Offences of a similar nature will also be dealt with under this procedure.
    - Misconduct, short of gross misconduct, will, depending on severity, normally result in a written warning. This would normally last for six months. If it is a final written warning, this would normally last for 12 months.
- **Gross Misconduct**
    - Examples of gross misconduct are:
      - Unauthorised absence
      - Theft, fraud and bribery (giving and receiving)
      - Falsification of records
      - Breaches of confidentiality or trust
      - Fighting or assault
      - Insubordination
      - Failure to obey a reasonable management order
      - Deliberate or reckless acts of damaging Company property or property of another person
      - Serious breaches of Company policies or procedures
      - Bringing yourself or the Company into disrepute
      - Acting in a manner which undermines the trust and confidence in the employment relationship
      - Bullying, victimisation and/or harassment towards an employee, or external representative of another organisation
      - Being under the influence of alcohol (including below the drink drive limit) or drugs and/or consuming alcohol or drugs during working hours
      - Acts of verbal abuse and/or acts of violence or threats of violence towards either an employee, customer/customer or representative of another organisation
      - Possession and/or use/being under the influence of illegal drugs or legal highs
      - Negligence or incompetence that causes loss, damage or injury, or a serious risk of injury
      - Breaches of health and safety regulations
      - Covert or unauthorised recording of meetings

- These examples are not exhaustive or exclusive and offences of a similar nature may be dealt with as gross misconduct. Gross Misconduct will normally result in dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice. Please be aware that we may take into account your length of service and vary our disciplinary procedures as necessary. This could mean that if you have under 2 years continuous service with Home Health then you may not be in receipt of any formal warnings before dismissal.

### **Grievance Procedure**

Where you have a grievance relating to any aspect of your employment, you should have no hesitation in raising the matter informally with your Line Manager.

If the grievance cannot be resolved informally and you wish to make a formal grievance, this must be set out in writing to your Line Manager.

Where it is not possible to raise the matter with your Line Manager, for example if they are absent for a significant period of time or if the grievance relates to them, then you should raise your concerns with a more senior Manager.

You will usually be invited to attend a meeting to discuss your grievance. You are entitled to be accompanied by a workplace colleague or trade union representative at the grievance meeting.

After the meeting the meeting Chair will inform you of their decision in writing. You have the right to appeal against the decision.

If you wish to appeal, you must do so in writing within five days of the date of the outcome letter. You will then be invited to attend another meeting, after which you will be informed of the final decision in writing.

### **Colleagues**

We are pleased for colleagues to support each other through these proceedings but you are not obliged to do so. Having a colleague present helps to ensure that matters are dealt with fairly and we appreciate your assistance. You are asked to respect the confidentiality of these proceedings and sometimes where there is sensitive information about individuals or the Company, we may ask you to sign confirming this.

### **Bullying and Harassment**

The Company actively encourages an environment in which everyone is entitled to work without harassment, victimisation and bullying.

Harassment may be described broadly as "unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of men and women". Where a particular form of conduct has the effect of making a person feel humiliated, threatened or that their Privacy is being invaded, then that conduct will constitute harassment and should cease immediately.

We will not condone harassment and the procedure for dealing with complaints is set out below.

The Policy applies to employee's conduct in or out of office hours, when entertaining customers, or at work events.

All employees have a responsibility for complying with this Policy and treating all colleagues with dignity and respect. If you believe that you have been subject to, or witnessed harassment, victimisation or bullying, you must inform your Line Manager or Director so that we can keep our workplace free from unacceptable behaviour.

### **The procedure for dealing with cases of harassment is set out below:**

If you believe you are being subjected to any harassment then, in the first instance you should ask the offender to stop or make it clear that such attention is unwelcome. If necessary, ask a friend or colleague to help you do this.

Such an informal approach may be all that is needed, but you should make a note of the details and keep them.

If your request is ignored and the harassment continues, or you feel unable to make the informal approach, please contact your Line Manager or Director immediately. Details will be taken and should be confirmed in writing by the victim. This constitutes a formal complaint.

Either a Manager nominated by the Manager who took the complaint, or an independent consultant, will investigate the complaint. Allegations will be dealt with seriously and confidentially and there will be no victimisation of any employee making, or being involved in, a complaint.

In cases of serious alleged harassment, any employee directly involved may be suspended on full pay pending investigation.

If the harassment has taken place, then the accused will be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary and grievance procedures.

It is hoped that the implementation of this Policy will ensure that all our employees work in an atmosphere of mutual trust, dignity and respect.

## **Dealing with poor performance**

The success of the Company depends on all employees working together to achieve the best possible standards of performance. We aim to provide support and training to enable all employees to fulfil their potential and deal with any changes that the Company may require.

However sometimes people perform below the standard that the job requires, although they are not doing anything deliberately wrong.

In these cases, we believe that it is best to deal with these problems openly and fairly and to provide clarity and practical support to improve performance.

## **Monitoring performance**

We monitor performance formally and informally through regular discussions that your Manager will have with you about your job, at the end of projects and through the appraisal process.

## **Dealing with poor performance**

Initially your Manager will discuss any concerns about your performance informally with you. Often raising issues promptly helps to solve them by identifying acceptable standards and any support that may be needed.

If your performance continues to fall short of that required, your Manager will arrange a formal meeting to discuss this with you. You will have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or a trade union representative. The letter inviting you to this meeting will outline what the potential sanction of the meeting may be.

At this meeting your Manager will explain specific areas of your performance that aren't acceptable, and you will have the chance to give reasons for this. You and your Manager will agree a plan, covering ways in which you can be supported to achieve acceptable standards, a date for review and a clear indication of what will happen if there is no improvement e.g. transfers, dismissal. Where a formal performance plan is implemented, a disciplinary sanction may also be issued as an outcome of any formal capability meeting.

The timescale for improvement, with formal reviews, will vary depending on the nature of the problem and the role that the employee has within the Company. However, there will be a minimum of two formal capability meetings prior to any dismissal meetings.

At the final review, overall performance will be assessed and in most cases this will be the end of the matter, as performance will have improved as agreed.

If sufficient improvements have not been made, consideration should be given to whether you should be transferred to another role better suited to your skills set, or as a last resort, dismissed. Please be aware that we may take into account your length of service and vary our disciplinary and capability procedures as

necessary. This could mean that if you have under 2 years continuous service with Home Health then you may not be in receipt of any formal warnings before dismissal.

### **Appeal procedure**

If you are dismissed because you are not capable of performing your job to an acceptable standard, you have the right of appeal against this decision. Your appeal should be in writing and sent to the nominated individual within five working days of the decision and state the reasons for your appeal. The decision from the appeal hearing will be final.

# Drug and Alcohol Policy

It is the responsibility of the Company to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees. Employees who are under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol whilst at work may adversely influence their own safety and that of their colleagues. By establishing clear and comprehensive rules, which apply to all employees we also aim to provide a supportive environment to those with a drug or alcohol related problem, who are committed to changing their behaviour.

## Definition

Alcohol covers all alcoholic beverages. Drugs include all Class A, B and C substances; 'legal highs' or psychoactive drugs; drugs which are only legally available on prescription; solvents which are misused and any other drug that has an adverse effect on your ability to carry out your work in a safe and effective way.

## Rules

The taking of alcohol and drugs is strictly prohibited before working hours where appropriate functioning at work would be adversely affected, and at all times during working hours. For the avoidance of doubt, working hours include meals and other breaks.

## Special circumstances

Where employees are entertaining customers or attend social functions or work-related activities outside of the normal working day, we accept that moderate amounts of alcohol may be consumed. However, we insist that employees stay within the legal limit whilst driving a car and would strongly advise that no alcohol at all should be taken if driving.

## Medication

Where employees are taking medication for a pre-diagnosed condition, the type of drug and its possible contra-indications must be reported to their Line Manager. This sensitive information will be treated confidentially.

## Confidentiality

An employee who has a drug or alcohol related problem may approach their Line Manager in confidence, within the provisions of the law, and receive help and support. Any absence during a rehabilitation period will be treated as normal sickness absence.

## Drug and alcohol testing

Random alcohol and drug testing will be carried out on employees who work in safety critical roles within the Company including those whose role involves caring for others/driving/working with machinery.

Selecting an employee for testing does not indicate that they are under suspicion and test results will be treated confidentially.

Should an employee unreasonably refuse to submit to drug and alcohol testing then they will be subject to our disciplinary process.

## Disciplinary action

Any employee who is found to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol during working hours will be suspended on full pay pending a disciplinary hearing. This may result in the employee's dismissal for Gross Misconduct.

Any employee found to be in possession of, or dealing in, illegal substances will be suspended on full pay pending a disciplinary hearing. This may result in the employee's dismissal for Gross Misconduct. In all instances of this kind, the employee will be reported immediately to the police.

## Smoking Policy

Smoking is dangerous to the health both of smokers and non-smokers and can be a fire hazard. This Policy has been developed to protect all employees, service users, customers and visitors from exposure to second-hand smoke and electronic cigarette vapour. It is also designed to ensure the Company complies with its responsibilities under the *Health Act 2006*, the *Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006*, *Smoke-free (Exemptions and Vehicles) Regulations 2007*, *Smoke-free (Signs) Regulations 2007*. Under this legislation, it is a criminal act to smoke in any public or work place, including Company Vehicles. For clarity, the use of electronic cigarettes or similar devices are not permitted in the workplace, Company Vehicles or whilst on Company business.

We acknowledge that some employees may wish to make use of electronic cigarettes, particularly as an aid to giving up smoking. Although they fall outside the scope of smoke-free legislation, we do prohibit the use of these. This is due to the vapour which could provide an annoyance or health risk to other employees and as some e-cigarette models can look like cigarettes, using these could make our Policy difficult to manage and create an impression for other visitors, customers, service users, customers or employees that it is acceptable to smoke.

It is our Policy that all Company workplaces are smoke and vapour free. Accordingly, we do not allow anyone be they employees, services users, customers or visitors to smoke on its premises or in its Vehicles.

You are not permitted to smoke cigarettes or e-cigarettes anywhere on our premises, whether inside or out, at any time, whether during or outside your normal hours of work. You are required and obliged to adhere to this Policy. We will inform any visitors, customers or service users who come onto the premises that they are not permitted to smoke.

If you smoke or vape on Company premises, you will be subject to our disciplinary procedures. Those who do not comply with this Policy and the Health Act, may also be subject to a fixed penalty fine and possible criminal prosecution.

It is your responsibility, as our employee, to inform any visitor, whether or not you are responsible for them personally, that they are not permitted to smoke on the premises. You should speak to any Manager immediately if any visitor smokes on the premises and refuses to stop when requested, whether by you or anyone else.

# IT Security Policy

Technology is an integral part of our business. However, it also poses risks in terms of data breaches, reputational damage and financial impacts.

Any breach of the Policy will be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure, with a sanction up to and including Gross Misconduct (or termination of engagement), we may withdraw your Internet and/or email access.

Examples of Gross Misconduct include (this list is not exhaustive):

- Unauthorised use of the Internet
- Creating, transmitting or otherwise publishing any false and defamatory statement about any person or organisation
- Creating, viewing, accessing, transmitting or downloading any material which is discriminatory or may cause embarrassment to other individuals, including material which breaches equal opportunities legislation
- Accessing, transmitting or downloading any confidential information about us and/or any of our staff and/or customer or customers, except where authorised in the proper performance of your duties
- Breach of our obligations in respect of data legislation
- Accessing, transmitting or downloading unauthorised software
- Bullying, discriminatory or inappropriate use on social media, email or any other communication network
- Viewing, accessing, transmitting or downloading any material in breach of copyright.

## Use of the Company's computer systems

You may use our computer systems, tablet, mobile phone, smartphone or personal digital assistant for the purposes of our business. To reduce the risk to the Company's systems or network of virus infections, hacking etc you may only access the Company's systems and network as follows:

- From your workplace or other Company premises, using authorised equipment only;
- Remotely (via broadband, mobile data, dial up, etc, using authorised equipment via secure means, e.g. VPN software only

You must never access the Company's systems or networks using an unsecure Wi-Fi connection.

## Email use – general

All communications, including email, should reflect the highest professional standards at all times. Here are some simple checks:

- Keep messages brief and to the point, check emails before sending, including spelling and grammar, and use spell check
- Check the recipient(s) – it can be embarrassing if a message is sent to the wrong person, but it can also result in data breaches
- Don't send messages from another person's email address (unless authorised in the proper performance of their duties), or under an assumed name. You must not send or post messages or material that are offensive, obscene, defamatory or otherwise inappropriate in the work environment; including messages that are discriminatory or amount to bullying, criticise our competitors or their staff or that could embarrass the Company, its customers or customers
- If in doubt as to the appropriateness of a message don't send it. Equally if you receive an inappropriate message delete it immediately, don't forward it to anyone, other than to report it
- Don't send trivial messages - it wastes everyone's time
- Always use the Company email address for all business communications, and not for any other purpose
- Emails are not confidential, use password protection where appropriate



- We have antivirus software, however, this does not eliminate risk. Be careful when opening unknown emails and let your Line Manager know if you suspect an issue.

### **Emails – personal use and monitoring**

Although the email system is primarily for business use, we understand that you may occasionally need to send or receive personal emails while at work.

Personal use must be minimal (both in terms of time spent and frequency) and reasonable, and must take place exclusively outside normal working hours, i.e. during lunch or other breaks, or before and after work. It must not affect the job performance of any member of staff or otherwise interfere with our business.

We may monitor Company email systems or a network to see if it is relevant and appropriate to our business:

- To determine whether the message is relevant to the carrying on of our business
- To establish the existence of facts in an investigation
- To check whether regulatory or self-regulatory practices or procedures to which we or our staff are subject have been complied with, i.e. to detect unauthorised use of the system
- To check whether staff using the system in the course of their duties are achieving the standards required of them in line with contractual requirements, Company Policy or data protection rights
- For the purpose of investigating or detecting the unauthorised use of the system
- For the purpose of preventing or detecting crime
- To respond to, or review, emails in your absence
- For the effective operation of the telecommunication system.

### **Telephones – personal use**

Telephones are for business use, however you may occasionally need to make or receive personal calls. Please keep these to a minimum outside normal working hours, i.e. during lunch or other breaks, or before and after work. Our telephone system may not be used for premium rate or international calls unless expressly authorised by your Line Manager. Our calls are recorded, and we do check calls primarily for training purposes but also in some cases to carry out investigations.

### **Internet – general**

Internet use in Company time should be for work related issues. Reasonable, limited personal use of the Internet is permitted. Any unauthorised use of the Internet is strictly prohibited, for example:

- Creating, viewing or accessing any webpage, or posting, transmitting or downloading any image, file or other information that is unrelated to your employment. In particular, those which could be regarded as pornographic, illegal, criminal, offensive, obscene, in bad taste or immoral and/or which is liable to cause embarrassment to us, our staff or to our customers/customers and/or suppliers
- Engaging in computer hacking and/or other related activities
- Attempting to disable or compromise security of information contained on our systems or network or those of a third party.

Postings placed on the Internet may display our address, so ensure that information reflects our standards and policies.

Under no circumstances should confidential or sensitive information be placed on the Internet. You must not use the Company's name in any Internet posting (inside or outside work) unless it is for a work-related purpose and approved by your Line Manager. Information posted or viewed on the Internet may constitute published material, so check if it is protected by copyright and meets licence conditions.

In some instances, we may block or restrict access to any websites.

### **Internet – personal use**

Reasonable personal use of our systems or network to browse the Internet is allowed provided that it does not interfere with the performance of your duties and the terms of this Policy are strictly adhered to. We reserve the right, at our absolute discretion, to withdraw this privilege at any time and/or to restrict access for personal use.

Personal use must meet these conditions (in addition to those set out elsewhere in this Policy): the time spent, and frequency, must be minimal and reasonable and should take place mainly outside normal working hours, i.e. during lunch or other breaks, or before and after work. The golden rule is that it must not affect the job performance of any member of staff or otherwise interfere with our business. And it must not commit the Company to any costs.

### **Internet – monitoring**

We may monitor Internet usage (including searches made, the IP addresses of sites visited, and the duration and frequency of visits) if we suspect that an individual has been using the Internet inappropriately and in a way that is potentially detrimental to the Company e.g.: by viewing material that is pornographic, illegal, criminal, offensive, obscene, in bad taste or immoral and/or which is liable to cause embarrassment to us, our staff or to our customers/customers or supplier or by spending an excessive amount of time viewing websites that are not work-related.

Monitoring may include Internet usage at the workplace, Internet usage outside the workplace during working hours using Company systems or network, and Internet usage using hand-held or portable electronic devices.

### **Passwords and security**

You must use passwords on all IT equipment allocated to you, keep them confidential, and change them regularly. You must not use another person's username and/or password to access our systems or network, nor allow any other person to use your password(s) unless required for business reasons.

### **Data protection**

The Company ensures that all data is dealt with in line with legislation - please see our Data Protection Policy.

### **Bring your own device**

Before using your device at work to connect to the Company's IT systems and/or to access Company information, you must ensure that you follow Company guidelines by discussing this with your Line Manager. We accept no liability for use of your own devices at work. All confidential information must be transferred to the Company on leaving employment with us.

### **Off-site work**

Remember that, when working off-site, third parties may be able to view your device's screen or may attempt to access your device if unattended. Do not leave your device unattended or lock the screen, be aware of who could see your device's screen and avoid using confidential information.

### **Social media**

Any social media produced in our name must be approved by the Director. It must reflect our values and be in our best interests, be grammatically correct, accurate, objectively justifiable, reasonable and appropriate. Never use your work email address to sign up for personal social media. Please be aware that we may monitor social media use in the same way as we monitor Internet usage. Remember that even if you are using social

media in a personal capacity, other users who are aware of your association with us might reasonably think that you speak on our behalf. Harassment, bullying or inappropriate behaviour on social media will be dealt with in the same manner as had it happened in the workplace.

Any contacts created on social media through your employment with the Company are the property of the Company.

# Data Protection Policy

The security and privacy of your data is taken seriously by us, but we need to gather and use information or 'data' about you as part of our business and to manage our relationship with you. We are committed to complying with all our Data Protection legal obligations.

This Policy applies to current and former employees, workers, volunteers, interns, apprentices and consultants. If you fall into one of these categories, then you are a 'data subject' for the purposes of this Policy. You should read this Policy alongside your contract of employment (or contract for services) and any other notice we issue to you from time to time in relation to your data.

The Company has separate policies and Privacy Notices in place in respect of customers, suppliers and other categories of data subject. A copy of these can be obtained from the person responsible for data in the Company.

The Company has taken steps to protect the security of your data in accordance with our Data Protection Policy. We train staff about their Data Protection responsibilities as part of the induction process. We will only hold data for as long as necessary for the purposes for which we collected it.

The Company is a 'data controller' for the purposes of your personal data. This means that we determine the purpose and means of the processing of your personal data.

This Policy explains how the Company will hold and process your information. It explains your rights as a data subject. It also explains your obligations when obtaining, handling, processing or storing personal data in the course of working for, or on behalf of, the Company.

This Policy does not form part of your contract of employment (or contract for services if relevant) and can be amended by the Company at any time.

## Data Protection Principles

Personal data must be processed in accordance with six 'Data Protection Principles.' It must:

- Be processed fairly, lawfully and transparently
- Be collected and processed only for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes
- Be adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary for the purposes for which it is processed
- Be accurate and kept up to date. Any inaccurate data must be deleted or rectified without delay
- Not be kept for longer than is necessary for the purposes for which it is processed
- Be processed securely.

We are accountable for these principles and must be able to show that we are compliant.

## How we define personal data

'Personal data' means information which relates to a living person who can be **identified** from that data (a 'data subject') on its own, or when taken together with other information which is likely to come into our possession. It includes any expression of opinion about the person and an indication of the intentions of us or others, in respect of that person. It does not include anonymised data.

This Policy applies to all personal data whether it is stored electronically, on paper or on other materials.

This personal data might be provided to us by you, or someone else (such as a former employer, your Doctor, or a credit reference agency), or it could be created by us. It could be provided or created during the recruitment process or during the course of the contract of employment (or services) or after its termination. It could be created by your Manager or other colleagues.

The types of personal data we collect and use about you is included in the Privacy Notice that is issued with your contract of employment.

### **How we define special categories of personal data**

‘Special categories of personal data’ are types of personal data consisting of information as to:

- Your racial or ethnic origin
- Your political opinions
- Your religious or philosophical beliefs
- Your trade union membership
- Your genetic or biometric data
- Your health
- Your sex life and sexual orientation
- Any criminal convictions and offences.

We may hold and use any of these special categories of your personal data, as detailed in the Privacy Notice, in accordance with the law.

### **How we define processing**

‘Processing’ means any operation which is performed on personal data such as:

- Collection, recording, organisation, structuring or storage
- Adaption or alteration
- Retrieval, consultation or use
- Disclosure by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available
- Alignment or combination
- Restriction, destruction or erasure.

This includes processing personal data which forms part of a filing system and any automated processing.

### **How we will process your personal data**

The Company will process your personal data (including special categories of personal data). We will use your personal data for:

- Performing the contract of employment (or services) between us
- Complying with any legal obligation
- Or if it is necessary for our legitimate interests (or for the legitimate interests of someone else).  
However, we can only do this if your interests and rights do not override ours (or theirs). You have the right to challenge our legitimate interests and request that we stop this processing.

We can process your personal data for these purposes without your knowledge or consent. We will not use your personal data for an unrelated purpose without telling you about it and the legal basis that we intend to rely on for processing it.

Examples of when we might process your personal data can be found in the Privacy Notice. We will only process special categories of your personal data in certain situations in accordance with the law. For example, we can do so if we have your explicit consent. If we asked for your consent to process a special category of personal data, then we would explain the reasons for our request. You do not need to consent and can withdraw consent later if you choose by contacting the person responsible for data in the Company.

We do not need your consent to process **special categories** of your personal data when we are processing it for the following purposes, which we may do:

- Where it is necessary for carrying out rights and obligations under employment law
- Where it is necessary to protect your vital interests or those of another person where you/they are physically or legally incapable of giving consent
- Where you have made the data public
- Where processing is necessary for the establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims
- Where processing is necessary for the purposes of occupational medicine or for the assessment of your working capacity.

We might process special categories of your personal data for the purposes stated in the Privacy Notice, in particular, we may use information in relation to:

- Your race, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation or gender to monitor equal opportunities
- Your sickness absence, health and medical conditions to monitor your absence, assess your fitness for work, to pay you benefits, to comply with our legal obligations under employment law including to make reasonable adjustments and to look after your health and safety
- Your trade union membership to pay any subscriptions and to comply with our legal obligations in respect of trade union members.

We do not take automated decisions about you using your personal data or use profiling in relation to you.

## **Sharing your personal data**

Sometimes we might share your personal data with group companies or our business partners, contractors and agents to carry out our obligations under our contract with you or for our legitimate interests.

We require those companies to keep your personal data confidential and secure and to protect it in accordance with the law and our policies. They are only permitted to process your data for the lawful purpose for which it has been shared and in accordance with our instructions.

We use the following contractors to carry out our Company business:

- Payroll to store and manage your personal data with regard to your pay
- HR Dept Toolkit to store and manage your personal data to enable effective management
- The HR Dept as an outsourced HR provider

We do not send your personal data outside the European Economic Area. If this changes you will be notified of this and the protections which are in place to protect the security of your data will be explained.

## **How you should process personal data for the Company**

Everyone who works for, or on behalf of, the Company has some responsibility for ensuring data is collected, stored and handled appropriately, in line with this Policy and the Company's IT Security and Data Retention Policies.

The Company's Data Protection Officer, Mark Hanson is responsible for reviewing this Policy on the Company's Data Protection responsibilities and any risks in relation to the processing of data. You should direct any questions in relation to this Policy or Data Protection to this person and address any written requests to them.

You should only access personal data covered by this Policy if you need it for the work you do for, or on behalf of, the Company and only if you are authorised to do so. You should only use the data for the specified lawful purpose for which it was obtained.

- You should not share personal data informally
- You should keep personal data secure and not share it with unauthorised people
- You should regularly review and update personal data which you have to deal with for work. This includes telling us if your own contact details change
- You should not make unnecessary copies of personal data and should keep and dispose of any copies securely
- You should use strong passwords
- You should lock your computer screens when not at your desk
- Consider anonymising data or using separate keys/codes so that the data subject cannot be identified
- Do not save personal data to your own personal computers or other devices
- Personal data should never be transferred outside the European Economic Area except in compliance with the law and authorisation of the person responsible for data in the Company
- You should lock drawers and filing cabinets. Do not leave paper with personal data lying about
- You should not take personal data away from Company's premises without authorisation from your Line Manager or of the person responsible for data in the Company
- Personal data should be shredded and disposed of securely when you have finished with it
- You should ask for help from the person responsible for data in the Company if you are unsure about Data Protection or if you notice any areas of Data Protection or security we can improve upon
- Any deliberate or negligent breach of this Policy by you may result in disciplinary action being taken against you in accordance with our disciplinary procedure
- It is a criminal offence to conceal or destroy personal data which is part of a Subject Access Request (see below). This conduct would also amount to gross misconduct under our disciplinary procedure, which could result in your dismissal

## How to deal with data breaches

We have robust measures in place to minimise and prevent data breaches from taking place. Should a breach of personal data occur (whether in respect of you or someone else) then we must take notes and keep evidence of that breach. If the breach is likely to result in a risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals, then we must also notify the Information Commissioner's Office within 72 hours.

If you are aware of a data breach you must contact the person responsible for data immediately and keep any evidence you have in relation to the breach.

## Subject Access Request

Data subjects can make a '**Subject Access Request**' ('SAR') to find out the information we hold about them. This request must be made in writing. If you receive such a request, you should forward it immediately to the person responsible for data in the Company who will coordinate a response.

If you would like to make a SAR in relation to your own personal data, you should make this in writing to the person responsible for data in the Company. We must respond within one month unless the request is complex or numerous, in which case the period in which we must respond can be extended by a further two months.

There is no fee for making a SAR. However, if your request is manifestly unfounded or excessive, we may charge a reasonable administrative fee or refuse to respond to your request.

## Your data subject rights

- You have the right to information about what personal data we process, how and on what basis as set out in this Policy
- You have the right to access your own personal data by way of a Subject Access Request (see above)

- You can correct any inaccuracies in your personal data. To do this, you should contact the person responsible for data in the Company
- You have the right to request that we erase your personal data where we were not entitled under the law to process it or it is no longer necessary to process it for the purpose it was collected. To do so, you should contact the person responsible for data in the Company
- While you are requesting that your personal data is corrected or erased or are contesting the lawfulness of our processing, you can apply for its use to be restricted. To do so, you should contact the person responsible for data in the Company
- You have the right to object to data processing where we are relying on a legitimate interest to do so, and you think that your rights and interests outweigh our own and you wish us to stop
- You have the right to object if we process your personal data for the purposes of direct marketing
- You have the right to receive a copy of your personal data and to transfer your personal data to another data controller. We will not charge for this and will in most cases aim to do this within one month
- With some exceptions, you have the right not to be subjected to automated decision-making
- You have the right to be notified of a data security breach concerning your personal data
- In most situations we will not rely on your consent as a lawful ground to process your data. If we do however request your consent to the processing of your personal data for a specific purpose, you have the right not to consent or to withdraw your consent later. To withdraw your consent, you should contact the person responsible for data in the Company
- You have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. You can do this by contacting the Information Commissioner's Office directly. Full contact details including a helpline number can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office website ([www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)). This website has further information on your rights and our obligations.



## How we do business

Home Health UK has strived hard to build a good reputation over the years. This policy sets out requirements for employees, which are designed to maintain the reputation for integrity and protect employees from accusations of impartiality in commercial matters.

### Conflict of Interest

The requirements are based on three principles and relate to the activities of all employees.

- Employees will not allow their outside activities to interfere with their work, or allow any conflict between their duties and their private interests to affect their ability to carry out these duties effectively
- Employees will not make use of, or exploit, the Company, or brand names associated with Home Health UK, their connection with the Company or information obtained in the course of their duties, to further their own private interests or those of any outside organisation, to the detriment of the Company
- Employees will not act in a manner likely to bring the Company [or its shareholders/directors/partners] into disrepute or to affect its reputation for integrity.

### Ethical Policy

Home Health UK has documented quality standards for levels of service given to customers. We monitor these standards and always seek to improve. Similarly, we have high expectations of all our Managers and employees about the way in which they conduct their business transactions.

The Company does not support the offering or acceptance of personal gifts. Any gifts, favour or hospitality offered to a member of the Company must be declared to the Director. Where it would be offensive to refuse, gifts will be raffled, and the proceeds donated to charity.

### Bribery Policy

The Company is committed to ensuring that all our commercial dealings meet the highest professional standards. It would never be acceptable for anyone to accept or offer bribes in any business transaction.

Bribes may come in a variety of forms such as corporate hospitality, charitable donations and personal gifts, as well as money. Any employee being offered any of these must report this to the Director who will advise how to manage the situation. Breaches of this rule will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

This Policy applies to the Directors, our employees throughout the business, suppliers, outsource partners, consultants and to all markets in which we do business.

As part of our induction training all staff will be made aware of this Policy.

### Purchasing and Commissioning

The overriding principle is that all dealings with current and potential suppliers and customers are seen to be properly handled, with the application of high standards of objectivity, integrity and fairness.

Customer Home Health UK is involved in commissioning work and in tenders for contracts with other organisations. Unless the Managing Director has given specific permission, employees must not provide information, support or assistance to any Company or organisation tendering for work with them that would in any way enhance their chances of being successful in their bid.

## **Public Interest Disclosure Policy (Whistle Blowing Policy)**

We encourage an open culture in all our dealings with employees, Managers and everyone with whom we come into contact. Effective and honest communication is essential if malpractice is to be effectively dealt with. The procedure below provides guidelines to all our employees, casual, temporary agency staff, freelancers, trainees, home workers and contractors, who feel they need to raise certain issues, in confidence.

The *Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998* (commonly known as the 'Whistle Blowing Act') protects workers who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters from being dismissed by the Company or being subjected to detrimental treatment or victimised by either the Company or colleagues, provided certain criteria are met. Certain kinds of disclosures qualify for protection and these are set out below. These are disclosures of information which a worker reasonably believes are made in the public interest. They tend to show one or more of the following relevant failures is either happening now, took place in the past, or is likely to happen in the future:

- A criminal offence has been committed including offences such as theft, fraud or acts of bribery
- A person has failed, is failing, or is likely to fail to comply with a legal obligation which they are subject to
- A miscarriage of justice
- A danger to health and safety of any individual
- Damage to the environment
- Deliberate covering up of information tending to show any of the above five matters.
- Modern slavery and exploitation

The procedure is not a substitute for the Disciplinary and Grievance Policy and is not a channel for employees to raise matters in relation to their terms and conditions of employment. The procedure allows individuals to have their concerns treated in confidence.

### **Your protection**

If you raise a genuine concern, you will not be at risk of damaging your position as a result. Provided you are acting in the public interest it does not matter whether or not your concern proves to be well founded. You must however make your complaint to the right person and in the right way as detailed in this Policy. The Company does not of course extend this assurance to someone who acts from an improper motive and raises a matter they know to be untrue.

### **Your confidence**

The Company will not tolerate the victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern and anyone responsible for such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action. You may decide that you want to raise a concern in confidence. Therefore, if you ask for your identity to be protected, it will not be disclosed without your agreement. If a situation arises where it is not possible to deal with the concern without revealing your identity (for instance because your evidence is needed in court or a disciplinary hearing), there will be a discussion as to whether and how we can proceed. This Policy does not cover the situation where information about malpractice is received anonymously. However, discretion will be used in the investigation of such information.

### **How to raise your concern**

#### ***Stage 1: Internal Line Management***

If you have a concern about malpractice, we hope you will feel able to raise it first with your Line Manager or a more senior Manager. This should be done in writing. It will help if you state the facts of the matter clearly. You can outline how you would like it to be investigated. If you have a direct or personal interest in the matter, you should also tell us at this stage.

## ***Stage 2: Alternative contacts***

If you feel unable to raise the matter with someone in your Line Management, for whatever reason, please speak to the Director.

If you want to raise the matter in confidence, we will ensure that practical measures are put in place to protect your identity. We will contact you by the most secure means. We will not disclose your identity without your agreement, unless we are required to do so by law.

Once you have reported your concern, the Company will look into it to assess initially what action should be taken. If your concern falls more appropriately within other policies, we will tell you. A Manager will be asked to carry out the investigation.

The disclosure will be treated seriously and promptly investigated. As part of the process the worker will be interviewed and asked to provide a written statement.

Once the Company has finalised the investigation, any necessary action will be taken.

While the purpose of this Policy is to enable us to investigate possible malpractice and take appropriate steps to deal with it, we will give you as much feedback as we properly can. If requested, we will confirm our response to you in writing. Please note, however, that we may not be able to tell you the precise action we take where this would infringe a duty of confidentiality owed by us to someone else.

### **If you are dissatisfied**

If you are unhappy with the Company's response, you may then go to the proper authority. However, we do ask that matters are reported to the Company in the first instance. While we cannot guarantee that we will respond to all matters in the way that you might wish, the matter will be handled fairly and properly. By using this Policy, you will help us to achieve this.

# Leaving the Company

## Notice period

Sadly, you may choose to leave us, and if/when you do, it would be appreciated if you could give as much notice as possible in writing to your Line Manager. The least amount of notice you are required to give is detailed in your contract of employment.

Please check your contract of employment to confirm your notice period, as this may be different for some positions.

On termination of your employment, you must return to the Company all property, documentation, records, customer lists, customer/prospect database information, memory sticks, magnetic discs, tapes or other software media belonging to the Company which may be in your possession. You shall not, without the express written consent of a Director, retain any copies. If so required by a Director, you will sign a statement confirming that you have complied with the requirement.

Those with a Company Vehicle must return it on the day of termination, cleaned inside and out.

## References

If you have left to join a new Company, the prospective employer will usually request a reference to confirm the accuracy of statements made in your application and to provide an opinion on your suitability for the new post. As a matter of courtesy, you should ask your Line Manager if they are happy to provide a reference first.

Where Managers are asked to provide a reference in a personal capacity (e.g. as a friend) for past or present employees, they must make this clear and not under any circumstances use our headed paper. The reference should follow the guidelines in this Policy.

Reference requests from banks, building societies, other lenders or landlords should be provided by a Director.

## Providing the information requested

The first thing the Manager dealing with the reference request should do is to confirm that the individual has given their consent for a reference to be provided and only continue if their consent has been given.

We are committed to providing information that is true, accurate, fair and non-discriminatory. Therefore, it must be based on facts which can be confirmed if challenged. The Manager providing the reference must not provide personal opinions about the individual's performance or conduct.

The reference should be marked "Private and Confidential" for the "Addressee only" and a disclaimer should be included in the reference making it clear that, while the information provided is, to the best of our knowledge, completely accurate, the Company cannot accept any liability for decisions based on it. All references must be in writing with a copy made for our files.

## Requests to see the reference

The Manager providing the reference may allow the employee to see the draft reference before it is provided to the prospective employer, but this is not obligatory.

## Dealing with enquiries raised by the prospective employer

The Company operates a strict Policy of only providing factual information relating to employment dates for current or former employees. Requests should go to the employee's Line Manager who will provide the information and explain this Policy.

## Retirement

For employees who have reached or are approaching retirement, we will support this major change in their life and will develop an individual plan to meet each person's needs. This may include a phased reduction in working hours, financial planning assistance and lifestyle guidance.

## **Redundancy**

The Company is committed to providing a stable working environment for employees consistent with the need to manage the business effectively and economically. When redundancies need to be considered we will manage the process sympathetically and support employees during the consultation process.

We will comply with all Statutory obligations, as detailed by employment legislation at the time.

We will explore alternatives to limit job losses and will listen to employees' suggestions during the consultation period.

We will ensure a fair, consistent and sympathetic process is applied in the selection of employees for redundancy. Employees who are selected for redundancy will have the right to appeal against the decision.

## **Restrictive Covenant**

Where there is a restrictive covenant in your contract of employment please remember that this continues for a period after you have left the Company. If you are unclear about your obligations, please speak to us.

## **Final Salary P45**

Your final salary will be paid at the usual time and will take into account any adjustments in respect of over payment to you, monies owed by you, by us, or outstanding holiday pay. Your P45 will be prepared at the same time and forwarded to your home address.

## SELF-CERTIFICATION OF ABSENCE FORM

TO BE COMPLETED FOR ABSENCES OF UP TO SEVEN CONSECUTIVE DAYS

Employee name: \_\_\_\_\_

### PERIOD OF ABSENCE

I hereby certify that I was absent from work:

First day sickness: \_\_\_\_\_ Last day sickness: \_\_\_\_\_ Total days absent: \_\_\_\_\_

Record ALL days of sickness including weekends or non-working days.

Give brief details of the reason for absence which prevented you from attending work. (If off sick, words like ILL or UNWELL are not enough, please be specific.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Did you visit your Doctor \*YES/NO. Date of visit: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you obtain a Doctor's Certificate \*YES/NO. Attached herewith \*YES/NO

Doctor's name and address: \_\_\_\_\_

I declare that the above information is complete and accurate and that I am now fit to return to work.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Countersigned: \_\_\_\_\_ Manager/Supervisor

No payment for any period of Sick Leave will be authorised unless this form is completed to the Company's satisfaction. Any false declaration on this form will be regarded as an act of misconduct.

### AUTHORISATION FOR PAYMENT

Pay as entitled \*should/should not be paid

Reasons if pay should not be paid:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_