

DRUMHORC PALLETS – COMPANY HANDBOOK



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Introduction

This handbook contains information about your general terms of employment, including some of the key policies and procedures relating to your employment with the Company. Should you have any queries about these, please do not hesitate to speak to your Manager. We will always endeavour to apply policies and procedures fairly. Decisions by the Company as to the interpretation and operation of the policies and procedures are final. These policies and procedures are not contractual and therefore do not form part of your contract of employment, unless specifically stated otherwise. We reserve the right to vary or amend policies and procedure at our discretion. You will be notified of any material amendment in writing or by e-mail. We hope you will find this information useful.

Change of personal details

Should any of the employee's personal details change the appropriate member of Management should be advised as soon as possible, in order to enable records to be maintained up to date. Such changes may be for example:-

- Address
- Bank details
- Next of Kin
- Doctor
- Emergency contact

Communications

It shall be the Company's policy to attempt to ensure that a high level of communication with all staff members takes place. Such communications shall generally take the form of departmental meetings but will on occasions be based on a group/company announcement – this shall be the case where the issue is such that it affects all staff.

Confidential information

During your employment with us you will be provided with, and may have access to, information relating to the Company, its clients/customers, or suppliers, which is considered to be confidential. You are expressly forbidden to disclose any such information, either verbally or in writing, to any person or company, or to make use of such information without the authorisation of your Manager. This restriction applies both during and after employment, as set out in your contract of employment. Any documents or tangible items which belong to the Company or which contain any confidential information must not be removed from the Company's premises at any time without proper authorisation, and must be returned to the Company upon request and, in any event, upon the termination of employment. If requested by the Company, all confidential information, other documents and tangible items which contain or refer to any confidential information, and which are in the possession or under the control of you, must be deleted or destroyed.

Company Standards

Introduction

This section gives a guide to some of the standards we have set in the Company and some of the rules and regulations we have in place. These are necessary in order to promote a positive and effective working environment for all our employees.

Alcohol and Drugs

Employees are not permitted to consume alcohol or drugs on company premises or to report for duty having recently consumed alcohol or drugs or any other illegal substances. Breach of this rule will be dealt with in accordance with the Company's Disciplinary Procedure.

Care of personal property

You should ensure that your bags, wallets and other personal property are not left unattended in offices or elsewhere. The Company will take reasonable steps to ensure the physical security of your place of work but will not normally accept liability or make any reimbursement for loss or damage to personal property whilst on Company premises. It is recommended that you do not bring unnecessary sums of money or valuables to work. We do not accept responsibility for personal items lost or stolen at work. Any incidences of theft or suspected theft on company premises will be reported to the Police. Lost or found items must be reported to your Manager.

Company property

If you are issued Company property you must take reasonable care of it and will be responsible for neglect or reckless loss or damage of it. Care should therefore be exercised by all staff with regard to usage, handling, proper control and security of Company property and equipment. The defacing of Company, customer or supplier premises or property or that of other employees is strictly prohibited and will lead to disciplinary action being taken.

Dress Code Policy

We expect you to maintain the highest standards of personal hygiene and look clean and tidy in appearance. The Company will supply you with appropriate personal protective equipment. This must be worn at all times when at work.

Company telephone and personal mobile phone usage

Reasonable use of the Company telephone system and reasonable use of your personal mobile phones is allowed during working hours. Their use must not hinder your ability to carry out your normal job duties and support our clients.

Smoking

The Company operates a smoke free workplace.

Computer, email and Internet use

Introduction

You have access to the Company's computers (including email and access to the internet) as part of your job. Although the Company's computers (including email and the internet) is intended for business use, the Company allows limited personal usage if it is reasonable and without detriment to an employee's work or the Company.

Monitoring

All Computer, email and internet use is monitored. Accessing pornographic or other unsuitable material is strictly prohibited. Sending or forwarding emails containing libellous, defamatory, offensive, racist, sectarian, sexist, pornographic or obscene remarks or materials is strictly prohibited. Such actions would be considered a serious disciplinary offence which may result in dismissal.

Duty of care

Users must take the same care in drafting an email as they would for any other form of business communication. Never send any confidential information via email. There is a natural tendency to treat email messages in a less formal manner than letters on company headed stationary. You should be aware that email messages may be considered, in legal terms, the same as such letters and can be produced in court as evidence. Please be aware of this when communicating with business contacts. If you are in doubt as to whether to send certain information via email, check with your manager first. If in doubt do not send it. Only software packages properly authorised and installed by the Company may be used on Company equipment, you must therefore not load any unauthorised software onto Company computers.

Computer viruses

Email is now the main method by which computer viruses are spread, typically hidden within files attached to email messages. You must exercise caution when opening email attachments if you are unsure of the source of the email or the contents of the attachment. Although incoming Internet email is scanned for viruses, if you have any doubts about the safety of opening an attachment do not open it and seek assistance from your Manager.

Confidentiality

Email is transmitted over the Internet as plain text i.e. anyone who can intercept the transmission can read it. Material of a confidential nature should never be sent via email unless it is encrypted. Encryption ensures that even if a transmission is intercepted that it is impossible or at least extremely difficult to gain access to the contents of the message.

“Blogging”, Facebook and Twitter

Online diaries (known as web ‘blogging’) have become increasingly popular, for example, sites such as Facebook and Twitter. However, care should be taken when posting comments and views on these platforms. Employees should note that disciplinary action will be taken (up to and including potential dismissal) if they publish confidential or inappropriate comments and views (libellous, defamatory, offensive, racist, sectarian, sexist, pornographic or obscene) in Blogs, Facebook or Twitter (or any other electronic communications platform).

GDPR Privacy Notice

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), we have implemented this privacy notice to inform you, our employees, of the types of data we process about you. We also include within this notice the reasons for processing your data, the lawful basis that permits us to process it, how long we keep your data for and your rights regarding your data.

This notice applies to current and former employees and workers.

A) DATA PROTECTION PRINCIPLES

Under GDPR, all personal data obtained and held by us must be processed according to a set of core principles. In accordance with these principles, we will ensure that:

- a) processing is fair, lawful and transparent
- b) data is collected for specific, explicit, and legitimate purposes
- c) data collected is adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary for the purposes of processing
- d) data is kept accurate and up to date. Data which is found to be inaccurate will be rectified or erased without delay
- e) data is not kept for longer than is necessary for its given purpose
- f) data is processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of personal data including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing, accidental loss, destruction or damage by using appropriate technical or organisation measures
- g) we comply with the relevant GDPR procedures for international transferring of personal data

B) TYPES OF DATA HELD

We keep several categories of personal data on our employees in order to carry out effective and efficient processes. We keep this data in a personnel file relating to each employee and we also hold the data within our computer systems, for example, our holiday booking system.

Specifically, we hold the following types of data, as appropriate to your status:

- a) personal details such as name, address, phone numbers
- b) name and contact details of your next of kin
- c) your photograph
- d) your gender, marital status, information of any disability you have or other medical information
- e) right to work documentation
- f) information on your race and religion for equality monitoring purposes
- g) information gathered via the recruitment process such as that entered into a CV or included in a CV cover letter
- h) references from former employers
- i) details on your education and employment history etc
- j) National Insurance numbers
- k) bank account details
- l) tax codes
- m) driving licence
- n) criminal convictions
- o) information relating to your employment with us, including:
 - i) job title and job descriptions
 - ii) your salary
 - iii) your wider terms and conditions of employment

- iv) details of formal and informal proceedings involving you such as letters of concern, disciplinary and grievance proceedings, your annual leave records, appraisal and performance information
- v) internal and external training modules undertaken
- vi) information on time off from work including sickness absence, family related leave etc

- p) CCTV footage
- q) building access card records
- r) IT equipment use including telephones and internet access.

C) COLLECTING YOUR DATA

You provide several pieces of data to us directly during the recruitment period and subsequently upon the start of your employment. In some cases, we will collect data about you from third parties, such as employment agencies, former employers when gathering references or credit reference agencies. Personal data is kept in files or within the Company's HR and IT systems.

D) LAWFUL BASIS FOR PROCESSING

The law on data protection allows us to process your data for certain reasons only. In the main, we process your data in order to comply with a legal requirement or in order to effectively manage the employment contract we have with you, including ensuring you are paid correctly. The information below categorises the types of data processing, appropriate to your status, we undertake and the lawful basis we rely on.

Activity requiring your data	Lawful basis
Carry out the employment contract that we have entered into with you e.g. using your name, contact details, education history, information on any disciplinary, grievance procedures involving you	Performance of the contract
Ensuring you are paid	Performance of the contract
Ensuring tax and National Insurance is paid	Legal obligation
Carrying out checks in relation to your right to work in the UK	Legal obligation
Making reasonable adjustments for disabled employees	Legal obligation
Making recruitment decisions in relation to both initial and subsequent employment e.g. promotion	Our legitimate interests
Making decisions about salary and other benefits	Our legitimate interests
Ensuring efficient administration of contractual benefits to you	Our legitimate interests
Effectively monitoring both your conduct, including timekeeping and attendance, and your performance and to undertake procedures where necessary	Our legitimate interests
Maintaining comprehensive up to date personnel records about you to ensure, amongst other things, effective correspondence can be achieved and appropriate contact points in the event of an emergency are maintained	Our legitimate interests

Implementing grievance procedures	Our legitimate interests
Assessing training needs	Our legitimate interests
Implementing an effective sickness absence management system including monitoring the amount of leave and subsequent actions to be taken including the making of reasonable adjustments	Our legitimate interests
Gaining expert medical opinion when making decisions about your fitness for work	Our legitimate interests
Managing statutory leave and pay systems such as maternity leave and pay etc	Our legitimate interests
Business planning and restructuring exercises	Our legitimate interests
Dealing with legal claims made against us	Our legitimate interests
Preventing fraud	Our legitimate interests
Ensuring our administrative and IT systems are secure and robust against unauthorised access	Our legitimate interests
Providing employment references to prospective employers, when our name has been put forward by the employee/ex-employee, to assist with their effective recruitment decisions	Legitimate interest of the prospective employer

E) SPECIAL CATEGORIES OF DATA

Special categories of data are data relating to your:

- a) health
- b) sex life
- c) sexual orientation
- d) race
- e) ethnic origin
- f) political opinion
- g) religion
- h) trade union membership
- i) genetic and biometric data.

We carry out processing activities using special category data:

- a) for the purposes of equal opportunities monitoring
- b) in our sickness absence management procedures
- c) to determine reasonable adjustments

Most commonly, we will process special categories of data when the following applies:

- a) you have given explicit consent to the processing
- b) we must process the data in order to carry out our legal obligations
- c) we must process data for reasons of substantial public interest
- d) you have already made the data public.

F) FAILURE TO PROVIDE DATA

Your failure to provide us with data may mean that we are unable to fulfil our requirements for entering into a contract of employment with you. This could include being unable to offer you employment, or administer contractual benefits.

G) CRIMINAL CONVICTION DATA

We will only collect criminal conviction data where it is appropriate given the nature of your role and where the law permits us. This data will usually be collected at the recruitment

stage, however, may also be collected during your employment. We use criminal conviction data to determine your suitability, or your continued suitability for the role. We rely on the lawful basis of legal obligation and our legitimate interests to process this data.

H) WHO WE SHARE YOUR DATA WITH

Employees within our company who have responsibility for recruitment, administration of payment and contractual benefits and the carrying out performance related procedures will have access to your data which is relevant to their function. All employees with such responsibility have been trained in ensuring data is processing in line with GDPR.

Data is shared with third parties for the administration of payroll only.

We may also share your data with third parties as part of a Company sale or restructure, or for other reasons to comply with a legal obligation upon us. We have a data processing agreement in place with such third parties to ensure data is not compromised. Third parties must implement appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure the security of your data.

We do not share your data with bodies outside of the European Economic Area.

I) PROTECTING YOUR DATA

We are aware of the requirement to ensure your data is protected against accidental loss or disclosure, destruction and abuse. We have implemented processes to guard against such.

J) RETENTION PERIODS

We only keep your data for as long as we need it for. Some data retention periods are set by the law. Our retention periods are normally for a period of seven years after the employment relationship had concluded. On the basis of a risk assessment information may be held for a longer period and you will be advised of this.

K) AUTOMATED DECISION MAKING

Automated decision making means making decision about you using no human involvement e.g. using computerised filtering equipment. No decision will be made about you solely on the basis of automated decision making (where a decision is taken about you using an electronic system without human involvement) which has a significant impact on you.

L) EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

You have the following rights in relation to the personal data we hold on you:

- a) the right to be informed about the data we hold on you and what we do with it;
- b) the right of access to the data we hold on you. More information on this can be found in our separate policy on Subject Access Requests;
- c) the right for any inaccuracies in the data we hold on you, however they come to light, to be corrected. This is also known as 'rectification';
- d) the right to have data deleted in certain circumstances. This is also known as 'erasure';
- e) the right to restrict the processing of the data;
- f) the right to transfer the data we hold on you to another party. This is also known as 'portability';
- g) the right to object to the inclusion of any information;
- h) the right to regulate any automated decision-making and profiling of personal data.

M) CONSENT

Where you have provided consent to our use of your data, you also have the right to withdraw that consent at any time. This means that we will stop processing your data.

N) MAKING A COMPLAINT

If you think your data rights have been breached, you are able to raise a complaint with the Information Commissioner (ICO). You can contact the ICO at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF or by telephone on 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or 01625 545 745.

O) DATA PROTECTION COMPLIANCE

Our appointed compliance officer in respect of our data protection activities is:

Ciara Murphy
Main Office

Health and Safety Policy

Introduction

The Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 requires both employers and employees to maintain a safe working environment. The Company recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer to maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety and health of its employees, and of other persons who may be affected by its activities.

It is your duty (as an employee) not to put at risk either yourself or others by your acts or omissions. You should also ensure that you are familiar with the Company health and safety arrangements. Should you feel concern over any health and safety aspects of your work, this should be brought to the attention of your Manager immediately.

Any action taken by an employee, which endangers the health or safety of another person whilst at/in the work premises, may lead to disciplinary action being taken which could result in dismissal.

Procedure in the event of an accident

An Accident Book is available in the main office and it is the responsibility of each individual employee to report and record any accident involving personal injury. Any accident or near miss occurrence (i.e. no one was injured but the incident had the potential to injure or kill) at work should be reported immediately to your Manager.

First Aid

The Company believes that best practice is to ensure staff have access to a trained First Aider or Appointed Person (someone who can take charge in the event of an accident). This person is the Production Manager. Further details of trained staff will be displayed on the notice board or from your Manager and you should familiarise yourself with names and contact details.

Fire Safety

Employees should follow these steps to help prevent fires:

- Before you use any electrical appliances carry out a quick check to make sure that the cables, plugs etc. are not damaged.
- Do not use any electrical equipment that shows signs of damage, even if you think it is only minor. Report any faults you find to your Manager and find an alternative appliance.
- Ensure that you place your rubbish in the proper waste bins. Do not overfill the bins, and ensure that your waste bin is accessible to the cleaners at the end of each day.

Action to take when the fire alarm goes off:

- Immediately stop what you are doing and walk (do not run) to the nearest available safe fire exit. If your nearest exit/route is obstructed, choose another route. Make sure that you are aware of the fire exits and routes in your area.
- Follow the instructions of the Production Manager and/or your supervisor.
- Direction signs should indicate the route to your fire exit. These comprise a white arrow on a green background sometimes accompanied by the words 'FIRE EXIT' and also a pictogram of a running man. The arrows indicate the direction of the nearest fire exit.
- Make your way to the appropriate assembly point.
- Once you are at the assembly point you should report to the Fire Warden, so that they can account for the people in their designated area.

- Do not leave the designated assembly point, or attempt to re-enter the building, until you have been instructed to do so by the Fire Warden.
- Fire Wardens / Managers are responsible for ensuring that all staff and visitors leave the building and should check all public areas as far as possible to ensure that the building is vacated

Action to take if you discover a fire:

- **RAISE THE ALARM!** This can be achieved by breaking the glass on the call points or by shouting the instruction "Fire – call the fire brigade".
- Raise the alarm even if your building is fitted with an automatic fire alarm system, which has not yet activated - you must not wait for it to do so of its own accord. The alarm must be raised for every occurrence of a fire, no matter how small it appears to be. This will ensure that people in the building have adequate notice to evacuate should it begin to spread quickly. In addition, modern furnishings may allow the fire to develop unnoticed, so time is of the essence if everyone is to get out safely.
- Call the fire brigade at the earliest available, and safe, opportunity and do not attempt to tackle the fire unless you have been appropriately trained and can safely do so e.g. a small fire in a waste paper basket. Unless you have been trained you could be putting yourself or somebody else at risk.

Health and Safety Policy Statement

Formed in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978

Our statement of general policy is:

The Company believes that health and safety is of the utmost importance. We will endeavour to ensure we have a safe and healthy work place all employees and visitors. We recognise that a systematic approach to health and safety, based on systemic risk assessment procedures can minimise injury and ill health to both employees and visitors.

We aim to:

- provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities;
- consult with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety;
- provide and maintain safe plant and equipment ;
- ensure safe handling and use of substances;
- provide information, instruction, and supervision for employees;
- ensure all employees are competent to do their tasks and give them adequate training;
- prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health;
- maintain safe and healthy working conditions; and
- review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

Signed: Kevin Murphy

Date: November 2019

Review Date: Annually

Who is responsible?

As employers we recognise that we hold the overall and final responsibility for health and safety. In the interest of keeping the health and safety of all our employees and visitors a priority we have decided to delegate responsibility of various tasks to other members of staff. We wish to outline clearly the responsibilities of each group of staff members so that if health and safety concerns arise they can be reported to the right individual.

Staff Member(s)	Responsibility
Ciara Murphy	Ensure appropriate resources are available to facilitate the correct implementation of health and safety requirements. Review management documentation and procedures relating to health and safety at regular intervals.
Production Manager	Take on the role of day-to-day responsibility of ensuring that this policy is put into practise. Implementation of this policy will involve ensuring that the policies and procedures are effectively communicated to all staff and ensuring that staff are adhering to procedures and showing continued vigilance regarding health and safety issues and raising awareness amongst staff and visitors.

All Staff	Ensure that the health and safety of everyone at the Company is of the upmost priority in all situations. In order to fulfil this desire staff should comply with health and safety procedures at all times, make sure that equipment is fit for purpose and report any defects to Management immediately and show continued vigilance regarding health and safety issues and raising awareness amongst all and visitors.
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All employees have to:

- co-operate with senior staff members on health and safety matters;
- not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety;
- take reasonable care of their own health and safety; and
- report all health and safety concerns to an appropriate person (as detailed in this policy).

Health and safety risks arising from our work activities - risk assessment

Risk assessments will be undertaken by our external Health and Safety Consultants. The findings of the risk assessments will be documented and stored in the risk assessments file. Should any issues be identified from the assessments that need to be addressed the Production Manager agrees to approve and implement the action required to remove or minimise risk. From this point it is then the responsibility of management to check that the implemented action has effectively removed or minimised the risk identified. Assessments will be reviewed at identified regular intervals or when the work activity changes, whichever is soonest.

Type of assessment	Review basis
Fire Safety	Annually
General risk	On-going

Safe plant and equipment

The Production Manager accepts responsibility for identifying any plant and equipment that needs maintenance and drawing up effective maintenance procedures for such equipment. Any problems found with plant and equipment should be reported to management with the aim of getting the information to the Production Manager as soon as possible.

Safe handling and use of substances

The Office Manager and the Production Manager accept the responsibility of identifying any substances which are considered hazardous to health under the control of substances hazardous to health regulations (COSHH). They agree to carry out COSHH assessments and implementing the actions that are identified from the assessment. They, with the help of Manager, will be responsible for ensuring that all relevant employees are informed about the findings of the COSHH assessments and will check that all substances can be used safely before they are purchased. Assessments will be reviewed annually or when the work activity changes, whichever is soonest.

Information, instruction and supervision

The Health and Safety Law poster is accessible to all staff and is displayed in the staff canteen. Additional health and safety advice is available from the Health and Safety

Executive. The Office Manager and the Production Manager jointly accept responsibility for ensuring that our employees are given relevant health and safety information.

Competency for tasks and training

All employees will be given a health and safety introduction when they start work at the Company, which will cover basics including first aid procedures and fire safety. Where appropriate job specific special training will be provided.

Accidents and First Aid

The appointed person for first aid is the Production Manager. The first aid boxes are located in the main office. All accidents and cases of work related ill health are recorded in accident books which can be found in the main office. The procedure for recording an accident is outlined in the opening pages of each accident book.

Monitoring

In order to ensure that we are continually monitoring health and safety we aim to undertake a number of monitoring activities to ensure our safe working practices are being followed and are working.

To check our working conditions are safe we will:

- Carry out relevant risk assessments on a regular basis or when work activity changes, whichever comes first.
- Review accident books monthly to identify any recurring incidents and work towards removing or minimising any incidents that could be avoided.

The Office Manager and the Production Manager will take responsibility for investigating accidents, work-related causes of sickness absences and for acting on investigation findings to prevent a recurrence.

Emergency Procedures - fire and evacuation

The Office Manager and the Production Manager acknowledge responsibility for ensuring the fire risk assessment is undertaken and implemented. They agree to check escape routes and fire extinguishers on an annual basis. Emergency evacuation will be tested quarterly as arranged by the Office Manager and the Production Manager.

Absence Policy

Policy Statement

The Company recognises that from time to time employees may be absent from work due to sickness. If this happens reasonable support will be offered to assist employees during the period of absence. All employees have a responsibility to make themselves aware of this Policy and to adhere to the following procedure when absent from work.

Absence Notification

Employees are required to contact the Office Manager and/or the Production Manager in person by telephone between 9.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m. on the first day of sickness absence, stating why they are absent and when they expect to return. No other member of staff will accept phone calls. If they are unable to return on the expected date, employees should notify the Office Manager and/or the Production Manager as soon as possible. Employees must maintain regular contact with the company either until their return to work, or until a doctor's certificate is received. If an employee is suffering from a prolonged illness that may result in frequent absences or requires time off for medical treatment, they must inform Office Manager and/or the Production Manager as soon as possible.

If an employee is absent from work and makes no contact with the company they will be considered absent without leave. The Company will try to contact the employee after 10.00 a.m. and write to the employee if no contact can be made, requesting that they get in contact to discuss their absence. Failure to adhere to the procedure outlined in this policy is considered as misconduct and may be dealt with under the company disciplinary policy.

Self-Certificates and Doctors Certificates ("Fit notes")

In the case of absence of up to and including seven consecutive days (including Saturdays and Sundays and any non-working days) a self-certification form must be completed and sent to the Company without delay. For periods of absence exceeding seven days (including Saturdays and Sundays and any non-working days), one or more doctor's certificates or "Fit notes" (previously called a "sick note") must be forwarded to the Company immediately following the seventh day of absence and at intervals of no more than seven days during the period of sickness absence. Delays in notifying the company or failure to provide evidence of incapacity may result in the withholding of any statutory sick pay (SSP).

Return to Work Interview

On returning to work, employees will be required to attend a return to work interview with their Manager to discuss their absence. The following guidelines should be followed:

- Interviews should be carried out in an area where there will be no interruptions and where both parties may feel at ease.
- The employee should always be informed of the reason for the meeting.
- The meeting should be prefaced by an indication of concern for the employee as well as the need for the Manager to be aware of the health of his/her employees.
- The employee should be encouraged to discuss any problems they may be having with their health and to actively contribute to the solution to the problem.
- Any apparent problem or patterns of absence should be brought to the employee's attention, and
- A return to work interview form will be completed and retained on the employees personnel file.

Informal Approach

Managers will consider cases of sickness absence on an individual basis and ensure the provision of appropriate support, advice and company approved Doctor input where

appropriate. However, it is recognised that in some cases, patterns/levels of absence will be unacceptable and formal management action will be required.

In situations where an employee's sickness record is giving some cause for concern, then the employee's Manager will discuss those concerns with the employee, providing support and counselling where appropriate. They will advise the employee that their level of sickness absence is causing a concern and ask if there are any underlying reasons for this we may not be aware of. If there are underlying reasons then a referral to a company appointed doctor or occupational health doctor may be necessary.

At this stage it is important to let the staff member know that if there is no improvement of their attendance, a more formal approach to the management of the issue may be adopted via the company's Disciplinary Policy. The Manager will note the date and the contents of the discussion on the employee's personal file.

Formal Approach

Where levels of absence have failed to reduce following informal management of the case, the company may wish to treat the matter as a conduct issue and will follow the relevant procedures in the Disciplinary Policy using the following trigger points:

- 3 or more separate periods of absence in a rolling 12 week period. Or
- 5 or more separate periods of absence in a rolling 12 month period. Or
- Where it is apparent that the employee will be absent from work for 2 calendar weeks or more, regardless of the nature of the absence. Or
- An unacceptable pattern of absence, for example regular Mondays and Fridays or absence immediately before and/or after holidays etc.

Long-Term Absence

In cases of long-term absence Managers will arrange to conduct regular care and concern interviews to discuss possible courses of action should the absence continue (these interviews should be recorded and notes sent to the employee concerned). If employees are too ill to travel, Managers may choose to conduct a home visit at a mutually convenient time.

Medical Advice

In cases of long-term absence, regular medical assessments must be sought. Where there is doubt regarding an employee's ability to return to work on a permanent basis advice must be sought from a doctor nominated by the Company or a suitably qualified clinician. If you fail to cooperate with our request to attend a medical assessment we may not be able to perform our contract with you (e.g. paying you) and it may prevent us from complying with our legal obligations (e.g. ensuring the health and safety of our workers).

Returning To Work

Wherever possible the Company will aid a return to work on a permanent basis. To establish the most effective way of doing this the company may seek further medical advice. This may include making reasonable adjustments to the employee's job, allowing a phased return to work, or by allowing the employee to return to work on a reduced or alternative hours basis.

Redeployment

If medical opinion is that an employee is unfit to return to their former employment, the possibility of alternative employment may be considered. However, depending on the availability of alternative posts, this may not be possible.

Resignation

At any time during this process an employee may choose to resign from their employment. They are required to give their contractual notice and any outstanding accrued holiday entitlement will be paid in lieu. Payment in lieu of notice may be agreed by the Manager.

Dismissal on the grounds of capability

Should the potential of dismissal of an employee be identified during the course of care and concern interview(s) as the only appropriate option (i.e. all other options as outlined above have been investigated and found to be inappropriate), a formal capability review meeting must be held with the employee in question and their Manager to fully consider the situation. At this meeting the employee has the right to be accompanied as outlined in the Company Disciplinary Policy. Following the meeting, if the employee is dismissed, they will be given a letter confirming the reason for dismissal, the date of dismissal, their right to appeal, any payment in lieu of contractual notice and any other outstanding payments to which they are entitled e.g. annual leave.

Medical examinations

An employee may be required at any time to undergo a medical examination by a medical practitioner nominated by the Company whether or not they are suffering or have suffered any period of sickness or incapacity for work. If you fail to cooperate with our request to undergo a medical examination we may not be able to perform our contract with you (e.g. paying you) and it may prevent us from complying with our legal obligations (e.g. ensuring the health and safety of our workers). The cost of any such examination will be met by the Company and the employee shall co-operate in the disclosure of all results and reports to the Company.

Access to Medical Reports

There may be occasions where the Company considers it necessary to request a medical report on an employees health from their GP or consultant. Where a medical report is necessary, the employee will be informed of their rights under the Access to Personal Files and Medical Records (Northern Ireland) Order 1992 and will be asked to give their written consent for the Company to contact their GP or consultant to obtain a medical report. If you fail to cooperate with our request to obtain a medical report we may not be able to perform our contract with you (e.g. paying you) and it may prevent us from complying with our legal obligations (e.g. ensuring the health and safety of our workers).

Sick Pay

If you meet the qualifying conditions, you may be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP). Please note that the first 3 days of Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) are unpaid.

Absence and Disciplinary

The Company reserves the right at its discretion at any time to take disciplinary action against employees whose absence is excessive or employees who fail to comply with the Absence Policy.

Disciplinary Policy

Policy statement

The aim of the Company Disciplinary Policy is to help and encourage employees to improve, achieve and maintain standards of conduct, attendance and job performance. It also enables management to deal effectively with those employees who do not comply with the company standards of conduct, attendance and performance in the workplace. Equally, the policy is designed in a manner which is non-discriminatory and which is fair, consistent and effective. It must also be applied in a timely manner and without undue delay.

All employees are to be informed of the standards of conduct and work performance expected of them and Managers should ensure that these standards are fully understood by those who work to them. This policy identifies who has authority to take disciplinary action and aim to ensure that employees are protected against unjustifiable or inconsistent disciplinary action. It also identifies the type of offence which would result in disciplinary action being taken, what that action would be and what further action would result if there is no improvement or a recurrence takes place.

Managers, whose responsibilities require them to participate in or hold disciplinary meetings, will be given appropriate training to enable them to undertake their role effectively and dispassionately. The nature of the disciplinary action taken will be determined according to the nature and seriousness of the alleged misconduct and a dispassionate assessment of the facts based on the balance of probabilities.

Grievances raised during a disciplinary process

Situations where grievances are raised during a disciplinary process will be dealt with as follows;

1. If the grievance is totally unrelated to the disciplinary allegations the disciplinary process will progress and the grievance will be dealt with at a later stage.
2. The grievance essentially constitutes the employees defence to the disciplinary issue. In this instance the Disciplinary and Grievance processes will be dealt with concurrently.
3. The grievance seeks to criticise or cast doubt on the integrity of the individual who is to make the disciplinary or dismissal decision. In this instance the disciplinary procedure will be suspended for a short period of time whilst the grievance is dealt with.

Matters relating to or arising under the Disciplinary Procedure must be treated as confidential at all times. Failure to do so may itself constitute grounds for initiating disciplinary action.

Informal procedure

Using an informal procedure is an attempt to correct a situation and prevent it from getting worse without having to use the formal disciplinary procedure. A quiet word of caution or advice and encouragement is often all that is required to improve an employee's conduct.

If appropriate the employee should be informed that failure to improve may result in the formal procedure being invoked.

General Principles

1. The employer expects all its employees to abide by the terms and conditions of their employment and the rules, regulations and standards established by the employer.

2. Prior to taking any form of disciplinary action there will be a thorough investigation into any allegation of misconduct.
3. In such cases of alleged misconduct employees have:-
 - (a) The right to a fair disciplinary hearing, with the opportunity to state their case before any disciplinary actions are taken
 - (b) The right to receive, prior to any disciplinary hearing, a written statement of the alleged misconduct and particulars of the basis for the allegation.
 - (c) The right to reasonable opportunity, prior to disciplinary hearings, to consider their responses to the information provided on the allegation.
 - (d) The right to be accompanied at a disciplinary hearing by a work colleague or a trade union official
4. The employer further acknowledges the right of individuals to appeal against what might appear to be an unjust or unfair penalty. The right of accompaniment, as outlined above, will also apply at disciplinary appeal hearings.
5. The employer is responsible for ensuring that the disciplinary rules and procedure are applied fairly and consistently.
6. The employer will endeavour to ensure that:-
 - (a) All steps under the procedure are taken without delay
 - (b) The timing and location of all hearings are reasonable
 - (c) Hearings are conducted in a manner which enables employees to explain their cases
 - (d) Disciplinary appeal hearings will be conducted, as far as is reasonably practicable, by a more senior manager than the manager who took the disciplinary action being appealed.
7. The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend hearings under this procedure.
8. Precautionary Suspension:-
 In certain cases, for example in cases involving gross misconduct, where relationships have broken down or there are risks to an employer's property or responsibilities to other parties, consideration will be given to a brief period of suspension with full pay whilst unhindered investigation is conducted. Such a suspension will only be imposed after careful consideration of the necessity for this. The employer will also consider alternative actions which may be more acceptable to the employee yet serve the same purpose as a suspension. Alternatives may include temporary transfer to other duties or another work station, or the taking of annual holidays to which the employee is entitled. It will be made clear that any action taken, including suspension, is NOT considered a disciplinary action.
9. Disciplinary Warnings:-
 Once warnings have lapsed through time they are erased from the employee's personnel file. All warnings will clearly state the misconduct concerned and clearly indicate what the eventual outcome will be if there is no improvement on the employee's part or a recurrence takes place within the period of the warning. Warnings normally relate to the same or similar misconduct and are not generally transferable between different types of misconduct. However, where a number of warnings are called for in respect of different types of misconduct this will entitle management to review the employee's overall suitability for the continued employment and if necessary to issue a final general warning irrespective of the offence.
10. Keeping records:-
 The employer will keep written records during the disciplinary process for future reference. Records will include:
 - (a) The complaint against the employee
 - (b) The employee's defence
 - (c) Findings made and action taken
 - (d) Whether an appeal was lodged

- (e) The outcome of the appeal
- (f) Any grievances raised during the disciplinary procedure
- (g) Subsequent events

Formal Procedure

The Formal Procedure will be applied where an employee does not respond appropriately or adequately to the informal procedure or the manager considers that the breach of conduct that is believed to have occurred is too serious to be dealt with informally. Examples of behaviour that may constitute misconduct or gross misconduct are set out at Appendix A.

1. Investigations

Prior to conducting a formal Disciplinary Hearing the Company will ensure that the situation has been thoroughly investigated. This will be a fact finding process and will necessitate the gathering of detailed information as well as carrying out formal interviews and the taking of statements. Formal investigations should be carried out by the most appropriate manager who is not directly involved with the incident being investigated. All the relevant facts should be gathered promptly as soon as is practicable after the incident. Statements should be taken from witnesses at the earliest opportunity. Once the investigation has been completed the Manager will inform the employee of the findings and outcome. If the decision is taken to proceed to a Disciplinary Hearing then the employee will be informed of the case against them so that they can respond in an informed manner at the Disciplinary Hearing.

2. Disciplinary Hearing

The Disciplinary Hearing will be conducted, as far as is reasonably practical, by another Manager not involved in the original incident or investigation process. At the Disciplinary Hearing the employee is entitled to be accompanied by a fellow Work Colleague or Trade Union Official. At the Disciplinary Hearing the Manager will present the company case again to the employee and the employee will have the opportunity to fully explain their case and put forward any points that they wish to raise in connection with the allegation being made against them.

3. Decision

Following the disciplinary hearing the company will advise the employee of their decision in writing and advised of his / her right of appeal with the outcome of the hearing.

Possible outcomes

Minor Misconduct

If the breach is in the minor misconduct category and the employer is satisfied that an offence has occurred the procedure will be as follows:

Stage 1 - The employee will be given a verbal warning. This will be recorded and retained on the employee's personnel file for a period of 6 months.

Stage 2

If the same or similar offence is repeated within 6 months the employee will be issued with a first written warning. This will be recorded and retained on file for a period of 12 months.

Stage 3

If the same or similar offence is repeated within 12 months the employee will be issued with a final written warning. This will contain a clear notice that a repeat of the offence within 12 months will result in dismissal.

Stage 4

If the same or similar offence is repeated within 12 months the employee will be dismissed.

Major Misconduct

If an offence which falls within the major misconduct category is committed and the employer is satisfied that it has occurred the disciplinary procedure will be invoked at Stage 3 (i.e. final written warning)

Gross Misconduct

If it is decided that gross misconduct has been committed the employee will be dismissed summarily: i.e. without notice and without payment in lieu of notice.

Appendix A

The following list shows examples of the type of rule / offences which the employer has categorised for each level of misconduct. This is not an exhaustive list and the company reserves the right to decide how misconduct shall be categorised.

A MINOR MISCONDUCT

- Lateness
- Failure to comply with Absence Notification and Certification Procedure
- Careless work and poor effort at work
- Minor breach of safety/hygiene/security rules
- Extended tea and meal breaks
- Failure to maintain a tidy and safe working environment
- Misuse of telephone
- Minor use of foul or offensive language
- Failure to complete records as instructed

B MAJOR MISCONDUCT

- Absenteeism
- Excessive time away from the job or place of work
- Dangerous physical horseplay
- Neglect causing damage to or loss of company's customer's or other employee's property
- Serious neglect of safety/hygiene/security rules
- Performance of duties below an acceptable standard
- Willful or excessive wastage of material
- Unsatisfactory attitude to staff / Contractors / Visitors
- Use of intentionally offensive language
- Insubordination
- Smoking in prohibited areas
- Refusal to carry out a reasonable work instruction
- Committing a motoring offence in a company vehicle

C GROSS MISCONDUCT

- Theft
- Leaving the premises or site without permission or just cause or reason
- Physically violent or obscene behaviour
- Deliberately ignoring safety/ hygiene/ security rules and thereby endangering one's own or another's physical well-being or safety
- Fraud or other falsification of records

- Willful damage to or gross negligence of company's customer's or other employee's property
- Consuming or having in your possession or control, intoxicants or unauthorized substances during working hours
- Undertaking work in competition with own employer or other such activities, without permission, as may affect the proper discharge of your duties
- Intoxication induced by alcohol or drugs
- Unauthorised use of property, materials, equipment or systems
- Conduct which might bring the employer into disrepute
- Disclosing confidential business information to a third party
- Publishing confidential or inappropriate comments and views (libellous, defamatory, offensive, racist, sectarian, sexist, pornographic or obscene) in Blogs, Facebook or Twitter (or any other electronic communications platform).

NOTE: -

Any allegation of bullying in the workplace or any allegation of discrimination, victimisation or harassment linked to anti-discrimination legislation including sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, disability, race, religious beliefs, political opinion, age, pregnancy or maternity will be thoroughly investigated and where appropriate will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure. The disciplinary response will depend upon the nature and seriousness of the incident; and in extreme cases will result in summary dismissal.

Appeal Hearing

The employee has the right to appeal any disciplinary decision under this procedure. All appeals must be made in writing within five working days of being informed of a Disciplinary Hearing decision and be directed to the Manager who chaired the Disciplinary Hearing. Any subsequent Appeal Hearing shall be heard, as far as reasonably practicable, by a more senior manager than the manager who chaired the disciplinary hearing. As far as is reasonably practicable the Appeal Hearing shall be held within five working days of receipt of the employee appeal letter. The result of the Appeal Hearings shall be notified to the employee, as far as is reasonably practicable, within five working days of the Appeal Hearing. Disciplinary action/penalty decisions taken following disciplinary hearings may be implemented before appeals against these decisions are heard.

Equal Opportunities Policy

The Company is committed to equality in the workplace for all, irrespective of.

- Sex
- Religious or similar philosophical belief
- Political Opinion
- Disability
- Racial Group
- Gender reassignment
- Age
- Sexual orientation
- Marital or Civil Partnership status
- Pregnancy or maternity

by way of

- preventing unlawful discrimination;
- Promoting equal opportunities for all;
- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment where employees are treated with respect and dignity and in which no form of intimidation or harassment will be tolerated;
- Fulfilling all legal obligations under the relevant legislation and associated Codes of Practice; and
- Taking positive/affirmative action when required, including setting goals and timetables.

Employer's responsibilities

Each manager and employee must abide by the policy and help create an environment where equal opportunities are the norm. Breaches of the Equal Opportunities policy and practice could be regarded as misconduct and will be managed according to the Company Disciplinary policy. In order to implement this policy, the Company will ensure that;

- The policy is provided to and communicated to all employees and made known to job applicants.
- Managers are aware of their responsibilities.
- Appropriate training and guidance is provided to all employees.
- ensure that all complaints of discrimination or harassment are dealt with promptly, seriously and confidentially and in accordance with our internal grievance procedure.
- set a good example by treating employees with fairness, dignity and respect.
- be alert to unacceptable behaviour and will take appropriate action to stop it.
- monitor all incidents of discrimination and harassment and review the effectiveness of this policy periodically.

The Managing Director has overall specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy and will be responsible for ensuring that employees are aware of the terms of this policy.

Employee responsibilities

All our employees must comply with this policy. They must treat each other with dignity and respect. They must not themselves commit any acts of unlawful discrimination or harassment against any other person, such as their co-workers, our job applicants or our clients/customers. Such behaviour will not be permitted or condoned. We will treat it as misconduct which may warrant dismissal from employment. All our employees should

discourage discrimination and harassment by making it clear that they find such behaviour unacceptable and by supporting co-workers who suffer such treatment. Any employee who is aware of any incident of discrimination and harassment should alert a manager or supervisor to enable us to deal with it.

Fair Selection

All employees, workers and job applicants will be treated fairly, and selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of qualification, experience and ability, in accordance with the guidance in this policy and relevant legislation.

Complaints

Employees who believe that they have suffered discrimination, harassment or victimisation may raise the matter to their Manager or to the Managing Director. If an employee believes that the discrimination has been carried out by their Manager, then it should be raised with the next level of management. All complaints of discrimination will be addressed promptly and confidentially under the Company Grievance Policy.

In addition to our informal and formal procedures, an employee is entitled to pursue complaints of discrimination to an Industrial Tribunal or the Fair Employment Tribunal. Employees are encouraged to follow the Labour Relations Agency's Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures, which recommends that complainants lodge an internal grievance first. A failure to follow this recommendation, without a reasonable excuse, does not prevent a complainant from lodging a complaint in a tribunal, but there may be a penalty if the complaint is ultimately successful. Every effort will be made to ensure that employees (or job applicants) making complaints will not be victimised. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

Symbols and Emblems

The Equality Commission has detailed a variety of symbols and emblems with the potential to cause disharmony, especially those that have been directly linked to community conflict in Northern Ireland and/or to local politics. These include:

- Sports shirts;
- Badges and insignia linked to paramilitary or political organisations e.g. buttonholes, tattoos;
- Badges and insignia, e.g. Easter Lilies, Orange symbols; and
- Posters, displays, tracts, emblems, screensavers, ringtones etc.

Pursuant to the Equality Commission recommendation, the Company does not permit the display or wearing of any such symbols and emblems at work. The wearing of any of these symbols and emblem will be viewed as misconduct and will be dealt with under the Company Disciplinary Policy.

Emblems which tend to distinguish one community from the other in Northern Ireland but are not directly connected with the community strife are unlikely to be regarded as creating an intimidating or hostile working environment, when worn with decorum, and at the appropriate period. These include:

- Marks of religious observance, insignia associated with organisations attached primarily to one religion, community or culture (e.g. crosses, crucifixes, ashes, pioneer pins, Christian Union badge, fáinnes); and
- Marks of remembrance, celebration or commemoration (e.g. poppies, shamrock).

Harassment and Dignity at Work Policy

Introduction

We are an equal opportunities employer. This means that we will make good faith efforts to comply with the spirit and letter of the equality laws and other laws. We will promote a good and harmonious working environment in which our employees will be treated with dignity and respect. We will not bully them, nor will we discriminate unlawfully against them or harass them on the “equality grounds”; which are-

- Sex
- Religious or similar philosophical belief
- Political Opinion
- Disability
- Racial Group
- Gender reassignment
- Age
- Sexual orientation
- Marital or Civil Partnership status
- Pregnancy or maternity

What is Harassment?

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to the equality grounds which damages, or which is done with the aim of damaging, a person’s dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

Many forms of misbehaviour may amount to harassment; examples include:

- Physical conduct such as assaulting a person or making obscene gestures.
- Verbal conduct such as making racist, sexist, sectarian or homophobic remarks; making derogatory comments about a person’s age or disability; or singing songs of this nature.
- Visual or written material containing racist, sexist, sectarian, homophobic or other derogatory words or pictures (e.g. in posters, graffiti, letters or emails).
- Isolating a person (e.g. “sending them to Coventry”) or refusing to co-operate or help them at work or by excluding them from work-related social activities.
- Forcing a person to offer sexual favours or to take part in religious or political activities.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is similar to harassment in the sense that it too is offensive, hostile or oppressive behaviour. The main difference is that bullying behaviour need not be related to the equality grounds, but may be done for other reasons, such as jealousy or personal dislike or revenge or insecurity.

Implications of Harassment & Bullying

Harassment and bullying can damage the health, confidence, morale and performance of employees who are affected by it. Harassment is unlawful under the equality laws. Harassment and bullying may also be civil or criminal offences and may contravene health and safety law. Quite apart from the legal implications, both harassment and bullying are contrary to the standards of behaviour that we expect of our employees. Both types of

behaviour are unacceptable in our workplace and are not permitted or condoned. We will treat such behaviour as misconduct which may warrant dismissal from employment.

Employees' Rights

Our employees have a right to work in a good and harmonious environment that is free from harassment and bullying and to complain about such behaviour should it occur. We have established a Company Grievance Policy to deal with such complaints and we would encourage aggrieved employees to use it. All complaints will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Our Company Grievance Policy does not replace the right of aggrieved employees to also pursue complaints to an Industrial Tribunal, the Fair Employment Tribunal or to the courts. Employees are encouraged to follow the Labour Relations Agency's Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures, which recommends that complainants lodge an internal grievance first. A failure to follow this recommendation, without a reasonable excuse, does not prevent a complainant from lodging a complaint in a tribunal, but there may be a penalty if the complaint is ultimately successful.

Employees who make complaints, and others who give evidence or information in connection with such complaints, will not be victimised (i.e. they will not be discriminated against, harassed or bullied in retaliation for their actions). Victimisation is also discrimination contrary to the equality laws and this policy. We will treat it as misconduct which may warrant dismissal from employment

Employees' Responsibilities

All our employees must comply with this policy. They must treat each other with dignity and respect. They must not themselves commit any acts of harassment or bullying against any person, such as their co-workers, our job applicants or our customers. Such behaviour will not be permitted or condoned. We will treat it as misconduct which may warrant dismissal from employment. All our employees should discourage harassment and bullying by making it clear that they find such behaviour unacceptable and by supporting co-workers who suffer such treatment. Any employee who is aware of any incidence of harassment or bullying should alert a manager or supervisor to enable us to deal with it.

Employer's responsibilities

We will continually make good faith efforts to implement this policy. The main responsibility for this will be carried out by the Managing Director. But, line managers and supervisors also have a special responsibility for enforcing this policy on a day-to-day basis, especially in setting a good example for other employees to follow and for intervening where necessary to protect and reassure employees. To implement this policy, we will-

- provide all employees, line managers and supervisors with a copy of this policy and explain it to them.
- provide appropriate training to line managers and supervisors.
- ensure that all complaints of harassment and bullying are dealt with promptly, seriously and confidentially and in accordance with our internal grievance procedure.
- set a good example by treating employees with fairness, dignity and respect.
- be alert to unacceptable behaviour and will take appropriate action to stop it.
- monitor all incidents of harassment and bullying and review the effectiveness of this policy periodically.

Grievance Policy

Policy Statement

The Grievance Policy sets about how the Company deals with the early resolution of grievances. A grievance is any complaint, concern, or problem which an employee has in relation to their employment. All grievances, whether informal or formal, will be heard sympathetically, given proper consideration and dealt with within a reasonable timescale. All employees are directed to use the grievance procedure as laid out in this policy.

If an employee raises a grievance, that employee will not be victimised for having raised the grievance. Equally, no-one should victimise anyone else because of a grievance they have raised or because a grievance has been raised against them. Anyone found to be doing so may be subject to disciplinary action as detailed in the Disciplinary Policy.

This policy is not intended to deal with:

- Dismissal or disciplinary matters that are dealt with in the Disciplinary Policy; or
- Disputes, which are of a collective nature.

Informal Process

It is preferable that any grievance raised by an employee can be resolved quickly, effectively and satisfactorily between that individual and their Manager in an informal setting. The Manager will be the person to whom the grievance should be reported in the first instance. If an employee wishes to raise a grievance against their immediate Manager, then it should be raised with the next level of management.

If the matter has been resolved informally, a note of what the grievance was and how it was resolved, may be kept on the employee's personnel file.

Where an employee chooses to raise matters informally, the formal procedure as outlined hereunder does not apply.

Formal Process

This policy has been drawn up to establish the appropriate steps (the grievance procedure) that must be followed when formally pursuing and dealing with a grievance.

The grievance procedure contains three stages. However, as it is the aim of this policy to settle matters at the earliest practicable moment, and at the first possible appropriate management level, it is not anticipated that all grievances will go through all of these stages.

The employer will endeavour to ensure that:

- All steps under the procedure are taken without unreasonable delay.
- The timing and location of all hearings are reasonable.
- Hearings are conducted in a manner that enables employees to adequately explain their cases.
- As far as is reasonably practicable, appeal hearings will be conducted by a manager more senior than the manager who took the decision that is being appealed.

Keeping Records

The company will keep written records during the grievance process for future reference detailing:

- The nature of the grievance raised.
- A copy of the written grievance.
- The employer's response.
- Action taken.

- Reasons for action taken.
- Whether there was an appeal and, if so, the outcome.
- Subsequent developments.

Records will be treated as confidential and kept no longer than necessary in accordance with current data protection legal requirements. Under current data protection legislation individuals have the right to request and have access to certain personal data.

Stage 1 – Submission of Grievance

The aggrieved employee must set out clearly in writing the grievance, as soon as possible after the event giving rise to the grievance occurs. This should be delivered to the aggrieved employee's Manager, unless the grievance is directly against that Manager, in which case a copy of the grievance should be sent to the next level of management, setting out the following:

- Making it clear that this is a complaint under the formal grievance procedure.
- Setting out the reasons for the grievance.
- Outline what action, if any, has been taken to resolve the matter.
- Clearly stating how the aggrieved employee wishes the grievance to be resolved.

Stage 2 – Grievance Meeting and Investigation.

The aggrieved employee will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the grievance with the investigating manager, as far as is reasonably practicable this will be within 5 working days of receipt of the written grievance. The aggrieved employee has the right to be accompanied to this meeting by a work colleague or Trade Union Official. The aggrieved employee will have the opportunity at the meeting to explain the grievance and thoughts on possible resolution.

There may also be a need to investigate the grievance further; for example, to interview witnesses or to make other enquiries. If so, the meeting may have to be adjourned to allow for this. The investigating manager may need to speak to the aggrieved employee again as the investigation proceeds.

Where the grievance concerns an allegation of harassment, bullying or of other misconduct against another person, the aggrieved employee will be informed that that person has the right to a fair hearing, including the right to have an opportunity to defend the allegation.

The investigating manager will also consider and discuss with the aggrieved employee whether special measures are required to ensure that the aggrieved employee and the other person avoid having further contact with each other while the complaint is being investigated.

Meeting the other party (if necessary)

This step will be followed where the grievance concerns an allegation of harassment, bullying or other misconduct against another employee or manager.

Following the meeting with the aggrieved employee, the investigating manager will meet with the other person against whom the complaint is made to-

- outline the nature of the allegation that has been made;
- confirm that it is being handled as a formal grievance;
- give him or her an opportunity to answer the allegation;
- inform him or her that the matter will be investigated further;

- inform him or her of the next steps under both the grievance and disciplinary procedures and the possible disciplinary action that may be taken should the allegation be proven;
- Inform him or her of the need to avoid contact (or, of any steps to be taken to avoid contact) with the aggrieved employee until the matter is resolved.

Having heard all relevant submissions at the meeting, the investigating manager will review the grievance. Any further investigation or fact-gathering required at this stage should be carried out as necessary, including where appropriate meeting with other relevant parties and obtaining any further information required from other parties. At all times the investigation should be carried out in a sensitive and confidential manner. The investigating manager will then make a decision on the grievance after giving proper consideration to the facts and findings.

The aggrieved employee will be informed by the investigating manager, in writing, of the decision as soon as possible, as far as is reasonably practicable this will be within 5 working days from the date of the final grievance investigation meeting.

Stage 3 - Appeal

If the aggrieved employee is not satisfied with the decision reached in respect of their grievance they may appeal this decision. The aggrieved employee must set out the reasons for the appeal in writing within 5 working days from the date of the decision letter.

Appeals should be addressed to the Company Managing Director and, as far as is reasonably practical, will be heard by a more senior management official who had no previous direct involvement in the matter. It is the responsibility of the manager hearing the appeal to make arrangements for the appeal hearing to be held, as far as is reasonably practicable this will be within 5 working days of receipt of the appeal request letter.

The manager hearing the appeal will review the grievance in light of the case made by the aggrieved employee at the meeting. Further investigation may be carried out, if required. The manager hearing the appeal will then make a decision on the appeal, having considered all the facts presented. The aggrieved employee will be notified in writing of the outcome of the appeal, as far as is reasonably practicable this will be within 5 working days of the final grievance appeal investigation meeting. This decision is final and there is no right of appeal beyond this stage.

Further Information

- All time scales referred to in this document shall be adhered to, or if this is not possible, the matter will be dealt with without unreasonable delay.
- Any employee who has a grievance must exhaust each stage of the procedure before proceeding to the next stage. Where this has not taken place, the matter shall be referred back to the appropriate stage. The matter shall not be progressed unless and until the appropriate procedural stages are complied with.
- Employer and employees must adhere to this policy and follow the grievance procedure fully.
- Under current Disability legislation, employers are required to make reasonable adjustments throughout the grievance process. This may include assisting employees to formulate a written grievance if they are unable to do so because of a disability.

Family Friendly Policies

It is the policy of the Company to ensure that as far as possible you are able to combine your career and family responsibilities. Statutory entitlements will apply in relation to the following;

- Maternity leave
- Paternity leave
- Adoption leave
- Parental leave
- Shared Parental Leave
- Flexible working

HGV Vehicle Policy

Overview

The Company requires that all lorry drivers act responsibly and exercise a duty of care while driving company vehicles.

Eligibility to Drive

Lorry drivers must submit a copy of their driving licence prior to driving any of the company vehicles. Both parts of their driving licence must be submitted. Should a lorry driver lose their driving licence or eligibility to drive for any reason (or incur any penalty points on their licence) they must immediately inform the Company and must not drive any company vehicles until their eligibility to drive is restored. It is the lorry driver's responsibility to maintain their eligibility to drive. Failure to do so may result in dismissal.

The Company will not pay fines accumulated by lorry drivers whilst driving company vehicles. Payment of any fines is the responsibility of the lorry driver. In addition any lorry driver committing a motoring offence while in charge of a company vehicle may be subject to disciplinary action.

Completing the pre-start check

On commencement of each day lorry drivers are required to complete a safety check before starting their journey.

Tachograph

Digital tachograph is downloaded monthly by the Company Office. All lorry drivers have a personal responsibility to remain concurrent with and comply with tachograph regulations governing breaks, rest periods and drivers hours.

Employee obligations

We expect lorry drivers to;

- Drive safely.
- Respect traffic laws, regulations and fellow drivers.
- Document any driving-related expenses i.e. fuels costs.
- Check their vehicle regularly to ensure it is mechanically safe to drive and ensure that fuel, tire pressure and all vehicle fluids are at appropriate levels.
- Report any damage or problem with your vehicle to the Company as soon as possible.
- Ensure that you are medically fit and able to drive safely.

- If you are fatigued and/or sick you must avoid driving if you feel your driving ability is impaired.

Lorry drivers are not allowed to:

- Smoke inside a company vehicle.
- Use a phone or text while driving.
- Leave the vehicle unlocked, unattended or parked in dangerous areas.
- Allow unauthorised people to drive a company vehicle

Accidents

If lorry drivers are involved in an accident they should contact the Company immediately. The company will then get in touch with our insurance provider. Lorry drivers should not accept responsibility or guarantee payment to another party in an accident without company authorisation. Lorry drivers should follow legal guidelines for exchanging information with other drivers and contact the police if required.

Company obligations

We want to ensure that all our employees are safe at work. We will;

- Ensure company vehicles are safe to drive
- Schedule periodical maintenance to ensure company vehicles remain in good condition.
- Ensure company vehicles are insured.

Receipt and Acknowledgement

I _____ (INSERT NAME)

Acknowledge receipt of the Company Handbook containing the following policies and procedures;

Company Standards	Computer, email and Internet use
GDPR Privacy notice	Health and Safety Policy
Health and Safety Policy Statement	Absence Policy
Disciplinary Policy	Equal Opportunities Policy
Harassment and Dignity at Work Policy	Grievance Policy
Family Friendly Policies	HGV Vehicle Policy

I confirm that I have read and understand the policies and procedures and I will abide by their terms, content and intent at all times.

The policies and procedures are subject to review by Management and may be changed at any time. Please note that the policies and procedures do not form part of your Contract of Employment and they are not intended to confer Contractual rights and obligations.

Signed _____

Date _____