**Staff Handbook**

Here is some information relating to your employment with <insert company name> which you should know about.

1. **How you look**: we don’t want to inhibit individual choice in relation to your appearance. However, you are expected to dress appropriately at all times in relation to your role, and to ensure that your personal hygiene and grooming are properly attended to prior to presenting yourself at work.

Optional: We have supplied you with company apparel / protective clothing which you must wear at all times when required to do so; it is your responsibility to ensure that this is clean and presentable.

1. **How you do your job:** we want you to enjoy work and to perform to the best of your abilities and to meet the requirements of your job.

If you fall short because you don’t have the necessary skills, knowledge or experience then we will do all we can to help you attain these. If you fall short because of your attendance record, then we will work with you to try to improve this where possible. If you fall short because of your attitude or behaviour then we will try to help you gain insight into these problems. We will initially take an informal approach to performance issues; however we reserve the right to move to a more formal process including disciplinary action if necessary.

It is a condition of your employment that the company is satisfied on your medical fitness to carry out your duties. Should it be deemed necessary during the course of your employment, you may be asked to request a medical report from your doctor, or attend for a medical examination from an external Occupational Health Service. This will be for the purposes of assessing your physical or mental fitness to undertake your job and to advise on any reasonable adjustments necessary to support you should that be necessary.

By law we must abide by the requirements of the Bribery Act (2010). If you bribe (or attempt to bribe) another person, intending either to obtain or retain business for the company, or to obtain or retain an advantage in the conduct of the company's business; or you accept a bribe yourself (or allow another person to receive a bribe), this will be considered gross misconduct and you will be subject to formal investigation, and disciplinary action up to and including dismissal may be applied.

You are entitled to work in an environment free from any type of discrimination or harassment. If this becomes an issue for you please let us know quickly. Please also remember that we expect you to treat your work colleagues, and anyone else you come into contact with through your job, with respect.

1. **Our property:** you may be issued with keys or access codes to company premises. These remain the property of the company and loss of your key / code (or accidental disclosure to someone) must be reported immediately. You must not bring any unauthorised person on to our property without prior agreement and you must not remove company property from our premises unless prior authority has been given.

Company equipment such as vehicles, telephone / mobile phone or postal facilities must not be used for private purposes without prior permission. If you have access to the company’s computers including email and access to the internet as part of your job, you must not abuse this by using these facilities for purposes unrelated to company business. Please do not make reference to the company or represent yourself on behalf of the company on social media without formal permission from us to do so.

During the course of your employment you may find yourself in possession of confidential information. It is a condition of your employment that you have a duty of confidentiality to the company, and you must not discuss any company sensitive or confidential matter whatsoever with any outside individual or organisation including the media.

Please do not bring or consume alcohol or any unlawful drugs into the workplace during work time or during a period prior to work where the effects may carry over to the workplace. Any such instances may lead to disciplinary action including summary dismissal.

Legislation now exist which makes it illegal to smoke in enclosed public spaces. Smoking (including e-cigarettes) is therefore strictly prohibited on company premises and vehicles.

1. **Your property:** any personal property such as jewellery, cash, credit cards, clothes, cars, motorbikes or bicycles etc. left on company premises is done so entirely at your own risk. You are strongly advised not to leave any valuables unattended, and the company does not accept liability for loss or damage to any personal property whatsoever.
2. **Keeping us all healthy and safe:** do not put yourself or anyone else at risk in the workplace by your actions or failure to act. Please be continuously aware of any potential hazards and ensure these are reported or if possible sorted out straight away (if safe to do so!). If you are involved in or see an accident (or near miss) please ensure this is reported and also recorded in our accident book.

In the event of a fire, only very small fires should be dealt with using an extinguisher, and then only if safe to do so. Otherwise raise the alarm and exit the building; once safe call the fire brigade.

If you are at all concerned that you are being placed in a dangerous situation in any way through your employment, please discuss this with us immediately.

1. **When you or your partner are expecting a baby**: when you are pregnant you will be entitled to take up to 52 weeks maternity leave if you want to, irrespective of your length of service or the number of hours you work each week. If you have sufficient service and earnings you may also be eligible for statutory maternity pay for 39 weeks. Parallel arrangements are available if you are expecting to adopt.

Statutory **paternity leave** and pay is available for a maximum of two weeks’ leave following the birth of a child, taken in order to support the mother or care for the new child. To qualify you must have worked for the company for at least 26 weeks by the end of the 15th week before the baby is expected. It can be taken as a single week or two consecutive weeks.

You may be also be entitled to **shared parental leave** which is designed to give parents / adopters more flexibility in how to share the care of their child in the first year following birth or adoption. If you are eligible you can share up to 50 weeks leave, and can decide to be off work at the same time and/or take it in turns to have periods of leave to look after the child.

An employee who has or expects to have responsibility for a child is also entitled to take unpaid **parental leave** to care for that child. To be eligible to take parental leave, you must have been employed by the company for at least one year. Parental Leave consists of 18 weeks’ unpaid leave for each child born or adopted, taken at any time up to the child’s eighteenth birthday.  Up to four weeks’ parental leave can be taken in respect of each child, each year, in blocks of one week or more. We need at least 21 days notice of your intention to take parental leave.

The situation around pregnancy and adoption is complex, and so when this becomes an issue for you please let us know and we will arrange to let you have further details of your entitlements and what you need to do.

1. **Time Off for Dependants:** you are legally entitled to take a reasonable amount of time off to deal with certain prescribed emergencies involving certain dependants. A dependant is your child (including adopted child), husband, wife or parent. It also includes someone who lives in your household, and someone who reasonably relies on you, such as an elderly relative. Time Off for Dependants can be taken, for example, if a dependant falls ill or is injured, if care arrangements break down, or to arrange or attend a dependant's funeral. Any time taken off must be necessary and reasonable in the particular circumstances. Time Off for Dependants is not paid.
2. **Flexible working:** when you have at least 26 weeks service with the company you can make a formal written request for flexible working arrangements. Should you wish to progress this you should let us know and we will ensure you know what information we will need to assess your request. Please note that only one such request may be made in any 12 month period. Flexible working is not an automatic or statutory entitlement, and any such request will be dependent on whether it is viable for the business.
3. **Disciplinary action**: should any disciplinary action be deemed necessary, no action will be taken without a proper investigation and you will have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague of your choice (or a trade union representative) at any disciplinary meeting. You will also have a right of appeal against any decision made.
4. **If you have a grievance:** if you have a complaint in relation to your employment, then you should let us know. Write it down and we will give you a reply as soon as possible. If that does not satisfy you, you can ask for this to be escalated within the company. Where possible, we will do all we can to resolve the issue that you have.