



Code of Conduct:
Individuals, Staff and Committee Members

Updated

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Introduction

The following Conduct defines the conduct required of all individuals directly involved in delivering the association's activities. Except where otherwise indicated, the code applies equally to board members, staff, committee members, volunteers and involved service users.

It provides guidance on how to ensure that your actions and behaviour are consistent with the association's values and the high standards of conduct required to maintain confidence in the association and its work.

You must familiarise yourself with the contents of the code and act in accordance with its principles and provisions at all times. Failure to comply with the code may be an employment or governance disciplinary matter.

If you have any doubts or questions regarding the application of the code, or in relation to a specific issue, they should seek advice and guidance from the company secretary. Members of staff should seek advice and guidance from their line manager or the company secretary if they prefer.

Main Principles

A. **General Responsibilities**

You must fulfil your duties and obligations responsibly, acting at all times in good faith and in the best interests of the association, its residents and other service users.

B. **Conflicts of Interest**

You must take all reasonable steps to ensure that no undeclared conflict arises, or could reasonably be perceived to arise, between your duties and your personal interests, financial or otherwise.

C. **Bribery, gifts and hospitality**

You must not offer, seek or accept bribes or inducements to act improperly or corruptly. You must not seek or accept gifts, hospitality or other benefits from individuals or organisations that might reasonably be seen to compromise your judgement or integrity or place you under an obligation to those individuals or organisations.

D. **Funds and resources**

You must not misuse the association's funds or resources.

E. **Confidentiality**

You must handle information in accordance with the law and the association's policies and procedures.

F. **Respect for others**

You must treat others with respect at all times.

G. **Relationship between board members, staff, committee members, volunteers and involved service users**

Board members, staff, committee members, volunteers and involved service users must maintain a constructive, professional relationship based on a sound understanding of their respective roles.

H. **Relationship with service users**

You must maintain high standards of professionalism, fairness and courtesy in all your dealings with residents and other service users.

I. **Health, safety and security**

Your conduct must not endanger the health, safety or security of yourself or others.

J. Conduct at meetings

Your conduct at board and other meetings must meet a high standard of integrity, commitment and courtesy.

K. Representing the association

In representing the association at external events and in dealings with outside bodies, you must uphold and promote the association's values, objectives and policies.

L. Learning and development

In partnership with the association, you must take responsibility for your own learning and development, regularly updating and refreshing your skills and knowledge.

M. Reporting concerns

You must report any reasonable and honest suspicions you may have about possible wrongdoing.

A: GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Main principle

You must fulfil your duties and obligations responsibly, acting at all times in good faith and in the best interests of the association, its residents and other service users.

Provisions

A1 You must comply with the law, your terms of appointment and the association's policies and procedures relating to your role.

A2 You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing the association into disrepute. This includes membership of, or participation in, activities organised by groups or organisations whose values are inconsistent with the association's (for instance, racist organisations) which could create reasonable doubt in your ability to comply with the association's values and this code.

A3 You must not bring the association's name into disrepute or affect its integrity by your actions or words, either within the organisation or outside. This includes the use of, or entries on, social networking sites (such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and others). This includes making derogatory comments about the association, its residents or other service users, partners or services, either in person or in writing or via any web-based media such as a personal blog or other site. This also applies if you do not name the association but where its identity can reasonably be inferred, or where you use a pseudonym but your identity can reasonably be inferred. If you have a genuine concern about possible wrongdoing, you must report it to the appropriate senior person within the organisation (see section M below).

A4 You must not act in a way that unjustifiably favours or discriminates against particular individuals, groups or interests.

A5 You must respect the appropriate channels for handling tenancy and service provision issues. You must not act outside the association's established procedures in any matter concerning any resident or other service user.

A6 You must not misuse your position, for example, by using information acquired in the course of your duties for your private interests or those of others.

A7 You must respect the principle of collective decision-making and corporate responsibility. This means that once the board has made a decision you must support that decision.

A8 You must not engage in any political or campaigning activity that might compromise the position of the association. Board members or involved residents intending to stand for political office must discuss the matter with the chair; members of staff with their line manager.

Board members

A9 If you take up new employment or appointments during your term of office on the board, you must make any necessary declaration of interest. Any such work or position must not interfere with your role as a board member.

Staff members

A10 You must consult your manager before taking on any outside work or any position, paid or unpaid. Any such work or position must not interfere with your existing job or conflict with the interests of your job or the association.

B: CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS

Main principle

You must take all reasonable steps to ensure that no undeclared conflict arises, or could reasonably be perceived to arise, between your duties and your personal interests, financial or otherwise.

Provisions

B1 You must comply with the association's policies and procedures for declaring, recording and handling conflicts of interest. Amongst other things, these require you to declare any private interests which may, or may be perceived to, conflict with the duties of your role.

B2 You must ensure that your entry in the association's register of interests is complete, accurate and up-to-date.

B3 You must comply with the association's policies and procedures relating to the application for employment or housing from members of staff, board members, involved residents or others to whom they are related or closely connected. (The association's policies and procedures are designed to ensure, and to demonstrate, that no preferential consideration is given to any such application).

B4 You must not be involved in the appointment of staff where you are related, or are closely connected, to an applicant. You must declare any such relationship to the appropriate person. You must not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion, pay or benefits for any member of staff to whom you are related or closely connected.

B5 You must not be involved in the appointment of a contractor or supplier where you are related, or closely connected, to an organisation or individual applying or tendering for a contract. You must declare any such relationship to the appropriate person. You must not be involved in establishing the terms of a contract, or its ongoing monitoring and management, where you are related, or closely connected, to the contractor or supplier.

B6 Except where specifically permitted, you must normally avoid using the association's contractors and suppliers for private purposes. Where this is unavoidable, you must not receive a favourable service as a result of your connection with the association. Prior approval must be sought before using the supplier or contractor and a written declaration made confirming that no financial or other advantage has been secured as a result of the relationship with the association.

B7 You must not use, or attempt to use, your position to promote your personal interests or those of any connected person, business or other organisation.

C: BRIBERY, GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

Main principle

You must not offer, seek or accept bribes or inducements to act improperly or corruptly. You must not seek or accept gifts, hospitality or other benefits from individuals or organisations that might reasonably be seen to compromise your judgement or integrity or place you under an obligation to those individuals or organisations.

Provisions

C1 You must comply with the law and the association's policies and procedures in relation to:

- (1) bribery and corruption; and
- (2) the giving, receipt, approval and recording of gifts and hospitality.

C2 You must not canvass or seek gifts or hospitality or other benefits.

C3 If you are offered gifts or hospitality, they should either be declined, or prior approval sought for their acceptance. The only exceptions are gifts of token value or modest hospitality given in connection with normal work meetings. The association's policies give further guidance.

D: FUNDS AND RESOURCES

Main principle

You must not misuse the association's funds or resources.

Provisions

D1 You must comply with the association's policies and procedures regarding the use of its funds and resources. 'Resources' includes staff, information, telephone, computer and other IT facilities, equipment, stationery and transport.

D2 You must ensure that the organisational funds and resources entrusted to you are used efficiently, economically and effectively.

D3 You must comply with the association's policies and procedures regarding procurement, ensuring value for money and fairness in decision-making.

D4 You must take reasonable measures to protect the association's funds, resources, property and assets from theft, damage and misuse.

D5 You must comply with the association's policies and procedures relating to the acceptable or unacceptable use of email, intranet and internet services. Amongst other things, these policies and procedures prohibit access to pornographic or racist material, and the use of unauthorised or unlicensed software.

D6 You must claim reimbursement only for expenditure that was properly and reasonably incurred in carrying out the association's business. You must ensure that any expenses claim you make is accurate and complies with the association's policies and procedures.

E: CONFIDENTIALITY

Main principle

You must handle information in accordance with the law and the association's policies and procedures.

Provisions

E1 You must comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 which governs the protection of personal data. All personal data held about residents and other service users, employees and others, whether on paper or electronically is subject to the provisions of the Act. The association's policies and procedures give further guidance.

E2 You must not disclose without authority any confidential business information. This duty continues to apply after you have left the association or relinquished your position.

E3 You must not, without permission, pass or distribute to the press or media or any other external recipient(s) information or materials relating to the association.

E4 In your capacity as a board or staff member or involved resident, you must not, without prior authority:

- (1) appear to represent the views or position of the association;
- (2) write letters to the press or other recipient(s);
- (3) write media articles, blog posts or tweets etc., about the association and its activities;
- (4) make comments or statements to the media – if approached you must pass the enquiry to the appropriate person.

E5 You must not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which they are entitled by law.

F: RESPECT FOR OTHERS

Main principle

You must treat others with respect at all times.

Provisions

F1 You must comply with the law and with the association's policies and procedures relating to equality and diversity. Equality laws prohibit discrimination on grounds including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation and impose positive duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality. The association's policies give further guidance.

F2 You must not harass, bully or attempt to intimidate any person. The association's policies give further guidance.

F3 You must not display materials in the workplace which other people might reasonably find offensive or use language which board or work colleagues or customers might reasonably find offensive.

G: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BOARD MEMBERS, STAFF AND INVOLVED RESIDENTS

Main principle

Board members, staff and involved residents must maintain a constructive, professional relationship based on a sound understanding of their respective roles.

Provisions

Board members

G1 You have a duty of loyalty and support towards the association and this must be reflected in a constructive, professional relationship with its staff.

G2 You must not go beyond your role as a board member and become inappropriately involved in operational matters.

G3 In your dealings with staff, formally and informally, you must set an example by demonstrating the highest standards of integrity and ethics and your alignment with the values, policies and objectives of the association.

Board members and involved residents

G4 Where it is necessary to raise issues of poor staff performance at a formal meeting, these must be raised in a constructive way, aimed at getting things right in future, and not at criticising individuals. Any concerns about the performance of individuals must be discussed in confidence with the chair of the board, committee or panel, or with the chief executive.

G5 You must not appear to undermine the authority of a senior officer in his or her dealings with a more junior member of staff.

G6 You must avoid inappropriate personal familiarity with members of staff.

G7 You must not ask or encourage a member of staff to act in any way which would conflict with compliance with this code or the association's policies and procedures.

Involved residents

G8 You must not seek to instruct or direct a member of staff or contractor. The relevant manager or member of staff must convey all instructions.

Staff members

G9 If your work brings you into contact with the board, a committee or a residents'/service users' committee or panel, you must:

- (1) take direction from the board, or in accordance with any delegated authority of a committee or panel;
- (2) respond constructively to questioning or challenge;
- (3) respond willingly to requests for information.

G10 You must avoid inappropriate personal familiarity with board members and involved residents.

G11 You must not use informal channels to lobby or influence board members or involved residents on matters of the association's business.

G12 You must not knowingly mislead the board or any of the association's committees or panels. In presenting information you must set out the facts and relevant issues truthfully.

H: RELATIONSHIP WITH RESIDENTS AND OTHER SERVICE USERS

Main principle

You must maintain high standards of professionalism, fairness and courtesy in all your dealings with residents and other service users.

Provisions

H1 You must treat all residents and other service users with courtesy and respect.

H2 You must not allow any personal relationship with a resident or other service user to conflict with your role and responsibilities.

H3 You must not give gifts or loans of money to, or receive loans or gifts of money from, residents or other service users.

H4 You must take great care in handling residents' and other service users' money, ensuring that a receipt is completed for every transaction.

H5 You must not invite or influence a resident or other service user to make a will or trust under which you are named as executor, trustee or beneficiary.

H6 When handling information relating to residents and other service users, you must comply with the law and the association's policies and procedures relating to the protection of personal data.

I: HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY

Main principle

Your conduct must not endanger the health, safety or security of yourself or others.

Provisions

I1 You must comply with the association's health and safety policies and procedures and bring to the attention of the appropriate person any risks to yourself or others. In particular:

- (1) where you are provided with protective clothing this must be worn; and
- (2) for your own safety, you must comply with the association's policy and procedures relating to lone working.

I2 You must comply with the law and the association's policies on smoking and on the use of alcohol, illegal drugs and other substances.

I3 You must comply with the association's policies relating to the security of premises.

J: CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

Main principle

Your conduct at meetings must show respect for all, and comply with the association's standards.

Provisions

J1 You must be courteous to all other attendees, and respect the position of the meeting chair.

J2 You must not use threatening or aggressive behaviour, or act in a disruptive way.

J3 You must not attend meetings while intoxicated or under the influence of drugs.

J4 Once a board, committee or panel meeting has properly reached a decision, you must share responsibility for that decision, even where you had not supported it.

K: REPRESENTING THE ASSOCIATION

Main principle

In representing the association at external events and in dealings with outside bodies, you are an ambassador for the association and must uphold and promote its values, objectives and policies.

Provisions

K1 You must not become involved in, or be seen to endorse, any activity that may bring the association into disrepute. This includes but is not limited to illegal, immoral, racist or other discriminatory activity.

K2 In engaging in activities which promote the work of the association to the outside world, you must demonstrate commitment to the association and support for its values, policies and goals.

K3 In representing the association at formal or informal events, you must be appropriately dressed for the occasion.

L: LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Main principle

In partnership with the association, you must take responsibility for your own learning and development, regularly updating and refreshing your skills and knowledge.

Provisions

L1 You must play an active part in the association's supervision and performance appraisal processes and welcome constructive feedback.

L2 At the appropriate induction, appraisal or supervision meeting, you must make clear your personal training and development needs, so that they can be taken into account in the association's forward budgeting and planning.

L3 Unless there are exceptional reasons, you must attend all learning and development events that have been arranged, either for you alone or as part of a group.

Board members

L4 You must take responsibility for keeping your knowledge up to date in those areas in which you are a specialist.

M: REPORTING CONCERNS

Main principle

You must report to the appropriate senior person within the association any reasonable and honest suspicions you may have about possible wrongdoing.

Provisions

M1 If you are aware of potentially dishonest or fraudulent activity, or material breaches of this code – by board members, staff or others – you must report it to the appropriate senior person within the association. The association's policies and procedures relating to fraud and confidential reporting (whistle-blowing) give further guidance.

M2 If you believe that you are being required to act in a way which conflicts with this code, you must report it to the appropriate senior person within the association.

M3 You must not victimise any person who has used – or intends to use, or is suspected of having used – the association's confidential reporting procedures to report the misconduct, or alleged misconduct, of others.

Appendix 1

<p>This form is for the purposes of declaring any actual or potential or perceived conflicts of interest which may arise. It is one of the means by which we demonstrate our commitment to uphold the requirements and spirit of the law (Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011) as it applies to the Group and all its subsidiaries</p>
<p>This form is to be completed by all Board and Committee members and all employees on commencement, and by involved residents. It must be updated annually or at any time by Board and Committee members, staff and involved residents who need to make a declaration where a new conflict or potential conflict or perceived conflict of interest may arise</p>
<p>Any fields that do not apply should be left blank Completed forms should be given to the Head of Legal and Governance, and will be recorded as appropriate in the Group's register of interests.</p>

Your Details		
Your Name		
Your position(s) with the Housing Association. Please note all that apply.	Board Member (please state all boards)	
	Committee Member (please state all committees)	
	Staff Member (please state job title)	
	Involved service user or volunteer (please state which)	

Declaration of compliance		
<p>I declare that I have read and understood the Group's Code of Conduct and the Code of Conduct for individual Board and Committee members, staff and involved residents, and I agree to comply with the Codes in full. In accordance with the Codes, I make below a full declaration of any and all interests which may, or may be perceived to, conflict with my position with the Group and any of its members</p>		
Details of the Declaration		
	Question	Y/N If yes, please provide details
1.	Are you or any of your close relatives or close connections a tenant of any of EMSH? If there is a relationship, please state the nature of the relationship	
2.	Are you or any of your close relatives or close connections directly involved with any company or organisation which could result in potential conflicts of interest?	
3.	To your knowledge, does EMSH do business with any company or organisation in which any of your close	

relatives or close connections are a partner, director or person directly concerned in the organisation's management?		
4. Are you a member of another housing provider or voluntary agency as a Board or Committee member or an elected member of a local authority?		
5. Have you any business relationship with any company or organisation with which EMSH do business?		
6. Are you aware of any conflict or potential conflicts of interest arising from your connection with EMSH and your personal/business interests?		
7. EMSH is compiling a list of companies which Board and Committee members, staff volunteers and service users or their close relatives or close connections are either a partner, director or person directly connected with that organisation's management. Please provide details of these companies and your relationship in order that EMSH may avoid placing contracts with these companies, and therefore avoid any breach of our Codes of Governance and Conduct.		
8. In the interest of openness, are you a member of any organisation which is not open to members of the public that has secrecy about its rules or membership or conduct that may impact on any decision that you may make in undertaking EMSH related activities?		
9. In the interests of openness, are you a member of any political or campaigning group?		
10. You may be required to resign your position if you have any business interest relating to the work of EMSH which directly or indirectly gives continuing personal advantage. If you consider that another Board or Committee member, employee or involved resident has such an interest, you have a duty to raise it with the Line Manager, Exec Director, or head of your committee if a member of a committee		
NB Subject to the consideration of individual privacy, the interests of Board and Committee members, staff volunteers and service users will be made available on request for inspection by Companies House, the FCA, Charity Commission, the HCA and HMRC		

Conduct in meetings		
Where an interest is declared in accordance with the above at any EMSH meeting, the declaration and action taken must be recorded in the minutes of that meeting. A copy of the minutes or separate record must be forwarded to the Company Secretary for recording in a register held specifically for this purpose		
If you are present at a meeting that is discussing an item that poses a conflict of interest for you, you should declare an interest. If the interest is clear and substantial, you should withdraw from the meeting and take not part in the discussion. You should leave the room if necessary. Please refer to the Code of Governance and Code of Conduct for further clarification		
Signed	Print Name	Date
Received for and on behalf of East Midlands Shelter for the Homeless CIC		
Print Name	Position	Date

**East Midland Shelter for the Homeless CIC
DECLARATION OF INTERESTS FORM
ACCOMPANYING GUIDANCE**

1. TERMINOLOGY

1.1 In the Code of Conduct and the associated guidance and model documents:

(i) The terms '**housing association**' and '**association**' refer to all organisations that are members of the National Housing Federation. This includes other types of housing organisation – such as charities, co-operatives and companies – that are members of the Federation, and that are members of EMSH's which are led by a Federation member.

(ii) '**Board**' includes any board of management, management committee, board of trustees, and all similar governing bodies under whatever designation. It includes Committees of the Board.

(iii) '**Board member**' includes all members of governing bodies whether they are formally known as directors, trustees, board members, management committee members etc. It includes co-optees and any other nominee. This applies whether or not the co-optees or nominees enjoy voting rights. 'Board member' in this context also includes all members of all subsidiary Boards and Committees who are not also members of the Board.

(iv) '**Staff member**' and '**staff**' includes the organisation's paid employees and any other persons fulfilling the role of a paid employee, such those employed by an agency or on secondment from another organisation.

(v) '**Service Users**' and '**volunteers**' includes residents, tenants, leaseholders, part time and full time volunteers and users of other services provided by EMSH.

(vi) '**Involved resident**' includes residents and other service users (as defined above) who are involved in delivering, or scrutinising, the organisation's business activities. This includes members of standing committees – such as scrutiny panels and other residents' boards and committees – and members of ad hoc panels convened to assist in selecting contractors or staff, determining the allocation of resources or resolving complaints or appeals from other residents. It does not include – as they are covered elsewhere – residents and other service users who are also members of the organisation's governing body or its committees or who are members of staff.

(vii) '**Contractors**' includes those other than board members, staff and involved residents who are directly involved in delivering the organisation's business activities. This includes contractors, sub-contractors, consultants and agents.

2. FAMILY MEMBERS AND CLOSE CONNECTIONS

2.1 The code refers to persons with whom board and committee members, staff or involved residents are 'closely connected'. A 'closely connected' person includes family members and persons with whom the individual has a close association. The guidance on good practice and excellence accompanying the code suggests that 'family member' be given a very wide meaning and include persons who might reasonably be regarded as similar to family members even where there is no relationship by birth or in law. It would include:

- (i) a partner (someone to whom the individual is married, a civil partner or someone with whom they live in a similar capacity);
- (ii) parent, parent-in-law;
- (iii) son or daughter, stepson or stepdaughter, the child of a partner;
- (iv) brother or sister, brother or sister of a partner;
- (v) grandparent, grandchild;
- (vi) uncle or aunt, nephew or niece;
- (vii) the partners of any of these people;
- (viii) any dependents; and
- (ix) any person on whom the individual depends.

It would include estranged, separated and divorced family members (and estranged, separated and divorced persons who might reasonably be regarded as similar to family members).

2.2 A person with whom the individual has a 'close association' would be someone with whom they were in regular or irregular contact over a period of time who was more than an acquaintance. It would be someone a member of the public might reasonably think the individual would be prepared to favour or disadvantage when discussing a matter that affects them. It may be a friend, colleague, neighbour, business associate or someone known through general social contacts.

3. CONNECTION WITH AN ORGANISATION

3.1 Someone is connected with a company, partnership or other organisation if he or she, or a family member, or close connection:

- is employed by the organisation, either directly or as a sub-contractor or agent;
 - is a director, owner, board member, trustee, or has some other controlling or financial interest in the organisation;
 - holds shares in the organisation, or has some other financial stake or interest in its success;
- or
- if there is some other connection or link that a reasonable person could take to create a conflict of interest.

This form and the accompanying guidance were approved by the EMSH Board on XXXX

Appendix 2- Supported Housing Code of Conduct

Supported Housing Code of Conduct

Summary of the Code

- To offer clear and comprehensive guidance to all staff
- To ensure all staff members and service users are treated with respect and safeguarded from abuse
- To ensure staff take responsibility for their conduct

Context

Adherence to this policy will ensure that all staff members have high standards of personal conduct and that all service users and staff members treat each other with dignity and respect. It will also ensure that service users and staff are safeguarded from abuse and clarify their rights and responsibilities.

In addition, all staff must adhere to their job description and meet the competencies and objectives as set out in their appraisal.

Failure to follow this Code of Conduct may result in investigation under the disciplinary procedure, and subsequent disciplinary action being taken.

Detail

This policy relates to EMSH's aims:

Closer to the Customer – to ensure staff members are honest, open, knowledgeable and approachable, whilst challenging inappropriate conduct and behaviour. To ensure that all staff performs their duties to a high standard, thereby safeguarding themselves and service users

For the purposes of this document service user means any current service user or any service user who has left the service within the last 3 years.

The Code

Boundaries

The only acceptable relationship between staff and service users is a professional one. Staff must not have physical contact of any kind with a service user. There will be occasions where staff may feel they have been inadvertently placed in a difficult or uncomfortable situation with a service user and if this occurs it is imperative that the line manager or director is notified immediately to avoid any compromise of professional integrity.

Staff Conduct

Staff must not:

- Directly shout at or raise their voice to service users
- Use swear words or profanities
- Use offensive or discriminatory language or in any way discriminate against a service user or another staff member with regard to their race, religion, culture, sexuality, gender, age or disability

- Use threatening, intimidating or aggressive body language
- Enter into an argument or heated exchange
- Remain in an antagonistic situation
- Use any means of physical violence or restraint
- Bring friends, relatives etc to their place of work.
- Invite service users to their own home
- Divulge their personal contact details or the contact details of any other staff member
- Buy from or sell to any service user
- Engage in any business activity with service users
- Ask service users to buy anything for the scheme or vice versa
- Consume alcohol or illegal substances when on duty
- Present themselves for duty while under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances
- Interact with service users or ex-service users through social networking websites or other media
- Engage in any form of discussion, conversation or debate regarding direct work matters with colleagues or any other persons through social networking sites or other forms of social media
- Gamble while on duty
- Smoke outside the designated areas or in the company of service users
- Give cigarettes to or receive cigarettes from service users
- Take responsibility for service users' property, including documents, medication, money, personal items, etc.
- Enter a service user's home for any reason other than that stated in the Tenancy Agreement and/or a Support Plan
- Make telephone calls to service users outside of their normal hours of work unless in an emergency. Any calls made must concern a current service user's support needs only
- Continue any contact with service users outside of their normal hours of work unless dealing with a crisis or anti-social behaviour
- Make contact with other staff re: work related matters when they are off duty, except in an emergency
- Visit a service user in their own home once they have left the service
- Give gifts or offer services to a service user
- Collect gifts from a service user. Generally staff should make it clear to all service users that the receiving of gifts is not encouraged. If a staff member receives a gift they should make it clear to the service user that the gift is for the whole team and not just for themselves. Any gift that is received must be declared to the Area Service Manager. This matter should be recorded on Contact Manager and if an item over the value of £10 is received then Head Office must be notified so that it can be included on the Register of Interests
- Staff must take care not to exploit their professional relationship with service users; discussions relating to personal, religious, political or ideological views should be conducted in a balanced and even-handed manner. Staff should also be mindful of the need to keep discussions within the parameters of equal opportunities and ensure it is not discriminatory or prejudiced and encourage open debate. If in any doubt staff should contact their line manager for guidance.
- Staff must ensure an even-handed approach to all service users and should not display any behaviour that could be deemed as preferential or discriminatory in terms of disability, gender, sexuality, age, race, culture or religion, or any other reason.
- The sending of personal correspondence is not permitted (ie: a birthday card sent to a service user from a member of staff). If a service user sends personal correspondence to a member of staff this must be declared to their line manager and kept in the office.

Conflict of Interest

Staff should be mindful when divulging personal information about themselves, be aware of the risks associated with this and take guidance from their line manager if they are unsure about what is appropriate.

It is recognised that there may be times when a 'conflict of interest' arises between a staff member's personal and professional life. For example, a member of staff may:

- Know a service user through attendance at the same community group, church, etc
- Be a closely/distantly related to a member of staff
- Be friends with a member of the service user's family, for example their parents, siblings, grandparents
- Live in close proximity to a service user
- Go to the same pub as a service user

NB: The above list is not exhaustive

If a member of staff feels there could be a conflict of interest that needs clarification, they must immediately notify their line manager or a director to get further advice and support.

Staff members also have a duty to ensure that their behaviour outside work does not bring EMSH's name into disrepute in any way. Should a member of staff receive a conviction or caution then they have a duty to report this to the line manager or a director immediately.

Where staff have concerns or become aware of matters that bring into question the conduct of another member of staff, they should bring this to the attention of the SHM/ASM as soon as possible, or invoke EMSH's Whistleblowing or Grievance Procedure. If the concern relates to a line manager, staff should approach the Exec Director invoke the Whistleblowing or Grievance Procedure.

Relationships at Work

EMSH does not seek to discourage personal relationships between staff members, but requests that such relationships be declared immediately it becomes likely that the relationship may have an impact on our business, or that a conflict of interest or breach of confidentiality may arise. One example of this might be a relationship between an employee and their Line Manager. All employees must avoid any actions which may lead to a potential or actual conflict of interest or breach of confidentiality.

Close personal relationships are of concern to us only where there may be an abuse of the employee's position of trust, a breach of our required standards of propriety, a compromise of professional standards, a conflict of interest or a potential breach of confidentiality.

Personal relationships may include:-

- immediate family relationships
- sexual relationships
- very close friendships
- Close business, commercial and financial relationship

All employees are expected to ensure that they do not cause difficulty or embarrassment to colleagues through behaviour such as arguing about personal matters, public displays of affection, sulking or clear animosity between staff members. Should such behaviour begin to have a negative impact on the workplace a meeting to discuss this may be called and disciplinary action may be taken.

Personal Appearance

Staff must:

- Always present themselves appropriately while on duty

- Have clean clothing and neat and presentable hair and facial hair
- Have a high standard of personal and oral hygiene
- Dress appropriately for each setting eg: whilst on training or attending meetings all staff are expected to dress smartly.
- Wear clothing that is modest and provides appropriate coverage
- Wear appropriate and clean footwear

Accountability

Staff must:

- Take responsibility for their actions and decisions
- Meet relevant standards of practice and work in a lawful, safe and effective way
- Maintain clear and accurate records, including details of: telephone calls, texts, letters, meetings, visitors, support planning sessions
- Ensure that their Outlook calendar is accurate at all times. Any changes that occur whilst out of the office must be immediately communicated to an Administrator, in the first instance, or failing that to the Duty Desk or an ASM
- Inform EMSH about any personal difficulties that might affect their ability to do work in a competent and safe way
- Seek assistance from EMSH if they do not feel able or adequately prepared to carry out any aspect of their work, or are not sure how to proceed with a work related matter
- Work openly and co-operatively with colleagues and treat them with respect
- Recognise and respect the roles and expertise of workers within Supported Housing and from other agencies and work in co-operatively in partnership with them
- Pro-actively undertake relevant training to maintain and improve knowledge and skills and contribute to the learning and development of others

Honesty

Staff must:

- Behave in an honest way at all times
- Not use the office phone for making personal calls, except in an emergency
- Never call premium rate lines or international numbers from office phones
- Keep the use of personal mobiles to a minimum - phones should be kept out of sight and on silent while on duty
- Any personal use of the internet should only occur during designated breaks and the IT procedure must be adhered to at all times
- Not store any information relating to EMSH on a personal computer.
- Not use personal computers at a scheme
- Inform their line manager of changes in their personal circumstances that may affect or impact on their ability to carry out their duties to full effect.
- Have relevant insurance, MOT and road tax and provide evidence of this when requested

Smoking

Smoking is permitted in designated areas only.

Staff should keep their smoking breaks to a minimum.

Smoking breaks must not interfere with the smooth running of the service.

The points above are not intended to be an exhaustive list but provide guidance on the most common areas of conduct within EMSH's Supported Housing Service.

Measurements

The success of this policy will be measured by:

- Customer satisfaction through the annual surveys

- Monitoring of Service Standards
- Reduction in breaches of Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Hearings

Equality and Diversity Issues

None

Budgetary Implications

No budgetary implications connected to this policy.

I have read and understood this Code of Conduct and agree to abide by it as part of my contractual responsibility to East Midlands Shelter for the Homeless.

Signed Staff Member:

Printed Name Staff Member:

Date:

Signed Line Manager: