

# **Elderpark Housing Association Limited**

## **Statement of Terms and Conditions of Employment**

**April 2016**

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## Introduction

### Elderpark Housing Association Limited

We offer a warm welcome to you as a new employee of Elderpark Housing Association Limited. These Conditions of Service are based on the Conditions of Service as issued by the federation of employer's known as Employers in Voluntary Housing, of which Elderpark is an Associate Member.

### Continuity of Service

If you transfer your employment to another Registered Social Landlord (RSL), this will represent continuity of employment. This applies if:

- Your contract is permanent
- You are working on a fixed- term contract with a RSL who offers you a permanent post; or
- Your fixed term contract lasts for at least two years.

So, in terms of all contractual terms and conditions of employment, we will carry forward your reckonable service to the new workplace. Your salary and incremental entitlement is also protected unless the transfer is to a job of a lower grade. This benefit applies even if you have a break in service between moves, as long as the break is no more than one year.

If we negotiate any changes to your terms and conditions of service, resulting from negotiations between staff and committee they will be separately notified to you. Any variation to the terms and conditions of service, either coming from staff or committee must go the next available Elderpark Joint Consultative Committee Meeting for discussion and, if required, negotiation. Changes will only be effective once the Management Committee have approved the change.

Please study this document carefully and make sure you ask your line manager if there is anything you do not understand. As well as your contract of employment letter (which formally offered you employment), these terms and conditions will form the basis of your contract with Elderpark Housing Association Limited.

We sincerely hope that you will enjoy your employment with us and that the experience will be both a rewarding and successful one.

A1

## **Hours of work**

Your normal full-time hours of work will be 35 a week, but your exact working pattern including breaks is as specified in your contract of employment .

You may have to work different shift patterns to meet business needs. The Association also operates a flexible working arrangement between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm

If you work part-time, your normal working hours will be shown in your contract of employment letter.

We expect all employees to be on time and come to work when possible. Persistent lateness or unacceptable levels of absence will lead to disciplinary action, which could lead to dismissal.

You may be required on occasions to work outwith and in excess of normal working hours. Reasonable notice of this will be given whenever possible. Compensation will be made in the form of half day plus subsistence payment or payment at the agreed overtime rates. Any overtime paid must be approved in advance of the work being carried out.

## Pay arrangements

### 1. Method

We will pay you by direct credit transfer to your bank account. This will normally be on a monthly basis and we will let you know about any change to this. We give an itemised pay statement to every employee showing all payments and deductions leading to your final net pay.

### 2. Salary scales

Elderpark HA operates a common job-grading system and salary structure based on EVH salary scales or per your contract of employment. For each job grade, there are a series of spinal points giving specific salary amounts. Your contract of employment letter will state the specific job grade which applies to you, with the appropriate spinal point and salary.

On 1 April each year, any employee who has served at least six months in their current grade will automatically receive a salary increment, by moving up one spinal point until reaching the top within that job grade

Salary scales are published each year and available for inspection at your place of work.

### 3. Responsibility allowances

If you temporarily have to cover a post of a higher grade for a continuous period of at least 4 weeks, the following rules will apply.

- We will pay a responsibility allowance to you, which will increase your salary, usually to the lowest spinal point of the grade that would apply to you if you were promoted.
- We will not use this kind of temporary cover as a way of leaving a necessary post unfilled.

### 4. Death in service

If you die while still employed with us, we will pay your executor (or the person entitled to be appointed as an executor), all outstanding salary due to you up to the time of your death. (This will include sick pay, pay in lieu of holidays, overtime, allowances and so on.)

The association will immediately inform the pension scheme administrators (as appropriate). The pension scheme administrator will then contact your executor.

## A 3

### Annual leave

All employees should enjoy a break from work each year. The standard paid annual leave entitlement is 25 working days for full-time employees. On completion of one full year (as at 1<sup>st</sup> April) an additional 1 days annual leave entitlement will accrue each year up to a maximum of 30 days.

The annual leave year runs from 1 April to 31 March.

To book leave, you must get approval from your manager as they will need to make sure that the business demands are met. (Please read the relevant procedures and minimum notice periods.)

Part time staff are entitled to a proportion of annual leave corresponding with the ratio of their contracted hours compared with the full time hours.

For example, for a job involving 20 hours a week, the following would apply:

*175 hours (full time entitlement – based on 25 working days) divided by 35 multiplied by 20 hours, which gives 100 hours a year.*

You accrue annual leave days during the current annual leave year. Because of this the following apply.

- a) We give you your whole entitlement on the 1st April on the assumption that your employment will continue for the whole annual leave year.
- b) If you join after 1 April, we will calculate your entitlement on the assumption that your employment will continue for the rest of the annual leave year.
- c) If you stop working for us during the year, we will calculate your annual leave entitlement again based on the period of the annual leave year which you have actually worked.

You can use the same formula as above to work out the amount of annual leave entitlement earned during a period of employment for both new employees and leavers.

- a) If we have taken more leave than you are entitled to, we will deduct the balance from your final pay.
- b) If you have accrued more leave than you have taken, we will pay you the balance in your final pay, if you are not able to take it before you stop working for us.

You and your manager will try and schedule dates for the full year's entitlement by the start of the annual leave year. This way, we can make sure we have enough staff cover and you will get the maximum benefit of the planned breaks from work. Where long term sickness prevents employee from taking their full annual leave entitlement, the balance will be carried forward to the next annual leave year.

Annual leave up to a maximum of 5 days not taken by the 31st March can be carried forward to the following year. In exceptional circumstances, any annual leave, beyond 5 days, not taken due to sickness or pressure of work may be carried forward into the next year, with the agreement of the Director/Management Committee. (Employees are

referred to the relevant policy).

As well as annual holiday, the following 13 general and public holidays will apply to all staff.

- 25, 26 December } or on alternative days (either where days
- 1, 2 January } fall on a weekend or where agreed differently)
- Good Friday and Easter Monday
- First Monday in May
- Monday on or after 24 May and the Friday before
- Local Summer 'Fair' Friday and Monday
- Last Monday in September and the Friday before this (or local alternative)

In addition to annual, general and public holidays, the association's offices will close each year between Christmas and New Year. This amounts to 3 days leave and staff are required to take this from their annual leave entitlement or leave based on the association's "Flexi System Policy". It is a staff member's responsibility to ensure that they have the appropriate number of days.

The relevant dates will be decided each year by your management committee and displayed on staff notice boards.

Part-time staff will receive a proportion of public holidays. The entitlement can be worked out using the same example method as set out for the annual leave. It will also depend on whether part-time staff are contracted to work on days which fall on bank holidays and may need to be balanced out with their annual leave entitlement.

For example,

- An employee works three days per week at 7 hours per day (totalling 21 hours).
- This means they are working 0.6 of a standard full-time working week (i.e.  $21/35 = 0.6$ ). Therefore they are entitled to 0.6 of the general/public holidays (i.e.  $15 \times 0.6 = 9$  days or 63 hours).
- Their working pattern should be checked to see if any of their working days fall on a public holiday or not for that financial year. This could result in 3 ways:
  - a) The number of days their working pattern falls on is more than they are entitled to. E.g. Their working days fall on 10 of the public/general holidays but they are only entitled to 9 days. The extra day should be deducted from their annual leave.
  - b) The number of days their working pattern falls on is less than they are entitled to. E.g. Their working days fall on 8 of the public/general holidays but they are entitled to 9 days. The extra day should be added to their annual leave.
  - c) The number of days their working pattern falls on is equal to what they are entitled to. No action required.

We realise that the list of public and general holidays above includes some Christian festivals, but not those of other religions. If you ask for paid time off to honour other religious festivals, we will normally allow this and take the days from your normal annual leave entitlement.

If a general or public holiday falls within a period of annual leave entitlement, we will not take this from your annual leave entitlement for that day.

## **Absence**

If you cannot come to work, either due to illness or for any other reason, you must tell your line manager (or if not available, another manager) at your place of work as soon as is reasonably possible. You should do this before you were due to start your shift and if not possible, preferably within one hour of your starting time. You must fill in a self-certification form, whether or not you are entitled to sickness allowances and whatever the length or reason for the absence. Pre-arranged authorised absences including annual leave are not covered by this procedure.

### **1. Keeping in touch**

You are responsible for letting your manager know the reasons for any absence and how long it will last. If you cannot get to a phone on day one of your absence, you should make sure that someone else calls on your behalf. After this, you should contact your line manager as soon as you can and maintain regular contact by calling at least once a week.

If you fail to keep in touch, in accordance with the association's Absence Management Policy we reserve the right to withdraw company sick pay and also try to contact you if we feel this is appropriate or necessary. If we feel a meeting is necessary to discuss your health and return to work, we will give you notice in writing.

### **2. Fit notes**

If you are off due to illness or injury for more than seven calendar days in a row, you must provide a fit note as soon as possible.

If the doctor ticks the 'may be fit for work' box, you will meet with your line manager to discuss any adjustments suggested. Although the employer does not have to follow the doctor's advice, we will do our best to help you return to work. However, if we cannot agree about the adjustments, you will have to stay off sick.

If we agree a phased return to work, the days you are still off sick within the agreed period will count as one period of absence.

### **3. Prolonged absence – beyond 8 weeks**

If you are off sick for more than 8 weeks, and you are not sure when you can return, we will ask your permission to contact your GP for a written report. If you are off for less than 8 weeks or you are not currently off sick but we feel there is a pattern to your absence, or there is a concern of an underlying medical condition, we may ask for this report (or refer you to an occupational health provider for an independent medical assessment). We will make you fully aware of your rights relating to giving us permission. In these cases, we will tell your doctor what our fitness requirements are for the job and ask for their medical opinion in relation to your job with us.

In certain circumstances, we may ask that you are examined by a registered medical practitioner we have chosen. We will pay any costs involved in this. This examination will be concerned with whether you are fit to resume your duties. You will receive a copy

of any resulting medical report. We will treat all medical records in the strictest confidence.

#### 4. Managing absence and attendance

We treat these two processes differently.

- Managing absence relates to managing a person back to work by making reasonable adjustments and dealing with the ability to carry out your work duties, taking into consideration any medical advice, an employee's comments and our business needs.
- Managing attendance refers to dealing with unacceptable levels of attendance, with no reference to any particular absence or medical condition. We will follow this route in line with our disciplinary procedure.

## A5

### Sickness benefit scheme

All employees can benefit from this scheme as long as their absence from work is due to their own sickness or injury and they keep to the requirements of section A4. However, the scheme will not apply if:

- they go off sick while taking part in a stoppage of work due to a trade dispute at their place of work;
- they go sick while on maternity leave
- on the first day of sickness they have already used up their sickness allowance entitlement in the previous 12 months; or
- the sickness or injury arises out of or in the course of following another occupation or sport as a profession.

You must also not take any other paid work while receiving sickness allowance. You may ask for unpaid leave and we will consider if we are able to accommodate this. However, if you do not tell us about these instances, we may take disciplinary action, which may lead to your dismissal.

#### 1. Scale of allowances

In any one period of 52 weeks, we will pay a sickness allowance in line with the following scale.

<b>Continuous service at the date sickness starts</b>	<b>Full allowance paid for:</b>	<b>Half allowance paid for:</b>
Up to 1 year	5 weeks	5 weeks
Over 1 and under 2 years	9 weeks	9 weeks
Over 2 and under 3 years	18 weeks	18 weeks
Over 3 and under 5 years	22 weeks	22 weeks
Over 5 years	26 weeks	26 weeks

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) is not a benefit of employment. It is quite different to the sickness allowances mentioned here, and we pay it on behalf of the Government.

The scale of entitlement to SSP is published by the Government and normally changes at the beginning of each tax year.

If you are not entitled to SSP, we will tell you by sending you the appropriate government form. It is then your responsibility to claim any other State Benefit which you may be entitled to.

## 2. Working out sickness allowances

Your allowance is worked out based on your current rate of basic pay. (See below.) We refer to this as your 'normal pay'.

- The full allowance, referred to above, equals your normal pay, and includes any Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) which you may be entitled to.
- The half allowance referred to above, equals half your normal pay plus SSP (if you have any left). However, you cannot receive more than your normal full pay.
- In working out the level and period of allowance still due, we will review the previous 12 months before the start of your current sick leave. We will add up all periods of sick leave. We will then take this from the full allowance entitlement first and then any balance from the half allowance entitlement. Anything left will be what you are still entitled to.
- We will pay you the sickness allowance according to your basic contractual hours (not including overtime).
- For the purposes of working out SSP, qualifying days are treated as Sunday to Saturday. Before paying SSP you must be unable to work for at least the first four days in a row of a spell of sickness.
- If you cannot come into work as a result of coming into contact with a notifiable infectious disease (that is reportable to RIDDOR in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act), you should tell us. You will then receive your full pay sickness allowance. We will not take the period of absence from your normal entitlement.
- If you return to work on a phased basis, we will only pay the salary for the hours and days actually worked. The days and hours that you are still off sick will entitle you to SSP and the occupational sick pay you are eligible to and this will be taken off your entitlement. Or, you can ask to take it from your annual leave, time off in lieu or unpaid leave instead.

We work out your occupational sick pay using your basic pay. We will only consider overtime if this is stated in your employment contract.

## 3. Criminal or civil compensation

If you are injured as the result of being the innocent victim of a criminal act, we will not take any sick leave from your normal entitlement.

If the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board grants you compensation, you will not need to refund any sickness allowance we have paid out.

If you are paid damages from a third party for loss of earnings due to a sickness or injury, we will ask you to repay any sickness allowance paid out but not more than the actual allowance paid or the amount of damages received for loss of earnings.

#### 4. Work-related sickness or injury

We will not take a period of absence due to sickness or injury caused by an accident in the course of your employment from your entitlement to sickness allowance.

If you are still unfit for work at the end of the appropriate full allowance period, the Management Committee will review the case to decide on any appropriate levels of allowance which should be made.

If your absence is the result of an accident at work directly resulting from your deliberate misconduct, we will withhold sickness allowance and we will also investigate it under the disciplinary procedure (see A12). If you disagreed, use the grievance procedure (see A 13).

#### 5. Unpaid sickness

We will tell you in writing when your period of sickness allowance is going to end. After this, you will not receive any pay from us for any period of sickness. (SSP may still be due to certain employees.)

#### 6. Absence due to an underlying medical condition

We will manage all periods of sickness sympathetically and make sure that at all times we are aware of your current condition and likelihood of your return to work. We may also ask for a medical opinion. However, we would tell you about this and you will be given a copy of the report.

If a doctor confirms that you are permanently unable to return to your current job, we will try to find you other suitable employment. If this is not possible, you can apply to retire for reasons of ill health retirement (if available under a pension scheme) or to end your contract on the grounds of medical incapability.

If you may be able to return to work, but not in the short term, we will do our best to keep your post open for as long as is reasonably possible. When we need to review the situation, we will:

- make all necessary enquiries from you and your doctor (as explained in A4) or the independent medical examiner (or both);
- consult you before we make a decision; and
- consider the nature of your job, the nature, effect and length of illness, the size of *the company*, and *our ability to offer other suitable work, where necessary*.

However, if we can no longer continue with temporary arrangements and cannot offer you other suitable employment, we may dismiss you on capability grounds.

## 7. Sickness during annual leave or a public holiday

If during an authorised period of annual leave you fall ill, and you produce an appropriate fit note, we may count the period as sick leave and not as annual leave. You must hand the fit note to your manager on the first day of your return to work or earlier if possible.

If there is a public or general holiday during your period of sickness, you will receive full contractual payment for that day. However, we will not take that day from your current entitlement under the sickness allowance scheme. We will treat it as you having the holiday.

## A6

### Maternity

#### 1. General

If you are pregnant, you are entitled to 52 weeks of continuous maternity leave (26 weeks' continuous **Ordinary Maternity Leave** and 26 weeks' continuous **Additional Maternity Leave**).

If you have completed **one year** service by the beginning of the **28<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy**, you will be given the extra benefits associated with the occupational maternity pay (depending on the conditions explained below).

You are also entitled to paid time off during working hours to receive antenatal care as long as you can produce an appointment card for all antenatal visits (after the first one).

The benefits of leave and pay as outlined in this section will not apply if a pregnancy ends before the 24th week of pregnancy unless you give birth and the baby survives. However, if there is a stillbirth after the **24<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy**, we will provide the benefits of pay and leave the same as for a live birth.

#### 2. Notice

You should tell your line manager as soon as possible if you plan to take maternity leave. You must do so in writing no later than by the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the expected week of confinement (EWC) (or as soon as is reasonably possible). This should state:

- a) the fact you are pregnant;
- b) your EWC (or actual date of birth if it has already happened); and
- c) the date you want your leave to begin.

You should also enclose a copy of your maternity certificate (MAT B1) as soon as your midwife/doctor gives you it.

You can change your mind about the start of your maternity leave (as long as this is no sooner than 28<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy and not later than the expected date of confinement (EWC). If you do, let your line manager know in writing, at least 28 days before the new date.

#### Employers notice

The finance section will give you notice in writing about the date your maternity leave will end. This will be the first day after the 52 weeks from the start of your maternity leave. We will do this within 28 days from receiving your notice about the date you plan to start your leave (or, if you change that date, 28 days before the new date or as soon as reasonably possible).

#### 3. Maternity leave

- a) Maternity leave can begin at any time you want from the 28<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy. It will however automatically begin when you give birth and you need to let us know as soon as you can about this. If you are off work for any reason totally or partly related to your pregnancy or childbirth within four weeks of the EWC, this will automatically trigger the start of your Ordinary Maternity Leave.
- b) The **Ordinary Maternity Leave** continues for 26 weeks. You are not allowed to work during the first two weeks starting from the date you give birth.
- c) Your statutory right to **Additional Maternity Leave** will begin immediately after the Ordinary Maternity Leave and can continue for a further 26 weeks.

#### 4. Returning to work

You will return to work at the end of your maternity leave. We will have given you this date in writing as mentioned above. If you want to return sooner, you must give at least eight weeks' written notice. If you don't, it will delay your return date and you will not be paid during the period you do not work. You cannot return to work later than the end of the 52-week leave period. If you do not automatically return at the end of the 52-week leave period, we will treat this as an unauthorised absence.

If you return at the end of your ordinary leave, you will return to the same job.

If you decide to take additional leave, you will return to the same kind of job you had before your maternity leave, at the same place and in the same capacity. If this is no longer available, we will offer you a suitable alternative job. Your terms and conditions will be no less favourable than would have applied had you not been away, including the quality of working environment, and the job must also be suitable and appropriate for you.

If you are on Additional Maternity Leave, you can apply to make a phased return to work on reduced hours and pro-rata pay. You should apply to your line manager at least eight weeks before the proposed date of return. The phased return can last for up to four weeks and you must work at least 50% of your contracted working hours each week.

If you were full time and you ask to work on a permanent part-time basis, or in a job-share arrangement, we will consider this sympathetically and in good faith. You should make your request by following the flexible working request procedure.

#### 5. Contact during maternity leave

During your maternity leave we may contact you (as long as this is reasonable) and you can contact us. Before your maternity leave begins, we will agree with you the frequency and form of contact and also what subjects should be discussed. In all cases, we will keep in touch with you about any promotion opportunities and important changes to the workplace that may affect you when you return.

#### 6. Keeping-in-touch days (KIT)

If we agree, you may work up to 10 days under your contract of employment during your

maternity leave, without losing your right to the maternity leave or pay. The 10-days limit stands no matter how long your maternity leave is. The 10 days can be worked at any time during your maternity leave apart from the first two weeks after you give birth.

You do not have to work these days and we do not have to agree to you working them.

Before you start your maternity leave, we will discuss with you the type of work that may be done during the KIT days.

We will pay you your normal daily rate for working the KITs.

## 7. Maternity pay

### 7.1 Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)

#### 7.11 General

Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) is paid for up to 39 weeks. The first six weeks equals 90% of your average earnings over a set period, and the rest is paid at the lower rate, or 90% of your average earnings, whichever is lower. The government sets this lower rate each year.

SMP is paid via payroll in the normal way – even if you have resigned and will not be returning after the baby's birth. However, you will not be entitled to SMP if you resign before the 24<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy.

The maternity pay period cannot start earlier than at 28<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy. It can only start when you are on maternity leave. Your entitlement will end when you return to work even if this is before the end of the 39-week period.

We will start to pay you the SMP on the first day of your maternity leave.

#### 7.12 Eligibility

To qualify for SMP, you must:

- a) have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks continuing into the qualifying week (QW) (the 24<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy);
- b) have average weekly earnings which are above the minimum for paying National Insurance contributions;
- c) still be pregnant at the 24<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy or have given birth by then; and
- d) have given us notice as explained in section 2 above.

If you do not meet the eligibility criteria, we will tell you in writing (form SMP1) and refer you to the local benefits agency office where you can claim any State Maternity Allowance you may be entitled to.

### 7.2 Association Maternity Pay

If you have worked for us for one year at the 28<sup>th</sup> week of your pregnancy, you will also

be eligible to receive our occupational maternity pay. This is equal to:

- a) 7 weeks at full pay (including any SMP paid at the higher rate for six weeks and lower rate for one week);
- b) 16 weeks at half pay (not including SMP at the lower rate, or 90% of your normal pay - whichever is lower); and
- c) 16 weeks at SMP lower rate (or 90% of your normal pay, whichever is lower).

A week's pay refers to the basic pay given in your current contract of employment.

You can choose to receive occupational maternity pay, either with your SMP on normal pay dates, or as a lump sum when you return to work. We will claim this amount back from you if:

- you fail to return to work ; or
- you return but leave within three months.

If you fail to return, you will also have to repay us for any annual leave we prepaid at the start of your maternity leave.

## 8. General conditions

### 8.1 Contractual benefits

All terms and conditions shown in your contract (apart from pay) continue to apply during maternity leave, whether ordinary or additional. We will continue to pay all contractual allowances as long as you receive any maternity pay. We may withdraw non-contractual benefits but only in line with the procedures which apply to all periods of prolonged absence.

### 8.2 Holidays

Annual leave is accrued throughout their entire Maternity leave period (whether ordinary or additional leave). Before you start your maternity leave, you should agree with us the dates of your annual leave. If it is not possible to take the leave within the annual leave year, we will transfer the rest to the next year's entitlement. You cannot be paid instead of taking the leave accrued during maternity leave.

If you plan to take annual leave before you return from maternity leave, you must notify us in writing :

- the date you want your maternity leave to end;
- the period you then want to take as annual leave; and
- the date you will come back to work.

You must do this 8 weeks before the end of your maternity leave.

### 8.3 Pension membership and contributions

The following rights apply to an employee on maternity leave.

- The period of Ordinary Maternity Leave and paid maternity leave (when you are receiving either occupational maternity pay or SMP), will count towards

pensionable service. The benefits you build up during this time are based on your pay when you were working normally, before taking maternity leave.

- Your contributions during this time are based on the amount of maternity pay you actually receive. The association's contributions will continue on the basis agreed by the administrators of the pension scheme.
- We will tell you in writing (after consulting the administrators of the relevant pension scheme) of the options available to you during any unpaid period of maternity leave.

Note: These rights apply whether or not you plan to return to work.

## 8.4 Information and training

If you are on Maternity leave, you will still receive relevant items of information sent to all staff. We will also invite you to staff training days, as part of the keeping-in-touch (KIT) days.

## 8.5 Union payments

We will take your union payments, as appropriate, throughout the period of maternity leave at the reduced rate. We will send the Union Finance Officer written confirmation of your EWC and the date your leave actually begins.

## 8.6 Dismissal and resignation during the maternity leave

If we end your contract during the maternity period, you will be entitled to whatever period of notice shown in your contract.

If you resign, you must also give us notice as shown in your contract. The termination date may be the end of your 52-week maternity leave or any date before then.

If you resign or are dismissed before the date you have given us for starting your maternity leave, you will lose your right to maternity leave but will still be eligible for SMP as long as you are employed after the 24<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy.

## 8.7 Health and safety

We must protect the health and safety at work of all employees, including new and expectant mothers and mothers who are breastfeeding.

Once you tell us about your pregnancy, recent childbirth or breastfeeding, we will carry out a specific risk assessment to identify any risks to your health and safety. If we identify any risks, we will do our best to avoid them. If this is not possible, we will take a series of steps to make sure you are not exposed to those risks.

If you ask for time off for breastfeeding or expressing milk, we will discuss with you how we can accommodate your request.

## A7

### **Paternity**

#### Eligibility for paternity leave

If your partner or surrogate mother is due to give birth, or you receive notice that you and your partner have been matched with a child to adopt or you are a surrogate parent and you have at least 26 weeks' continuous service when your partner is 28 weeks pregnant, or if you are at the point of being matched with a child by an adoption agency, you are entitled to paternity leave.

To apply, you should write to your line manager at least four weeks before you want the leave to start, enclosing the maternity certificate (MAT B1) or notice from the adoption agency.

We will grant paternity leave for any live birth or a stillbirth which happens from the 24th week of pregnancy onwards. You can take it within eight weeks of the actual birth of the baby or the date the child was adopted.

You also have a right to attend up to two unpaid antenatal appointments with your partner/surrogate mother or meetings with a child to be adopted.

#### Entitlement to paternity pay

You are entitled to one week's leave with full pay including Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) and a second week (which must be taken immediately after the first week), for which you will receive SPP only.

#### Eligibility for Additional Paternity Leave (APL)

If you meet all the qualifying criteria for paternity leave, you will also be eligible for Additional Paternity Leave.

You are entitled to take up to 26 weeks of Additional Paternity Leave. This leave can start from the 20<sup>th</sup> week after the child's birth or after the child is placed for adoption and it must be taken in a continuous period. The leave can only be taken once your partner who takes maternity or adoption leave is back at work. The leave will end once your partner's maternity or adoption leave would have ended (52 weeks in total) or earlier.

If you want to take APL you need to make a written request at least eight weeks before the leave is due to start, giving us the following information.

- Details of your eligibility to take APL.
- When the leave is to start and how long it is to last.
- When your partner will be finishing their maternity or adoption leave.
- How many weeks of the Statutory Maternity or Adoption Leave would have been taken by the end of your partner's leave.

- Your partner's National Insurance number.

You can find the forms to be filled out by new parents, adoptive parents and adopting a child from abroad on the HMRC website.

We may also ask for details of your partner's maternity or adoption leave from their employer.

### Entitlement to Additional Paternity Pay

Your Additional Statutory Paternity Pay will be the balance of your partner's remaining Statutory Maternity or Adoption Pay.

A8

## Adoption

### 1. General

If you adopt a child, you have a right to Statutory Adoption Leave in line with the conditions set out below. This right applies to one of surrogate parents too.

If you have completed one year's service at the date of adopting a child, you will be given extra benefits under our occupational adoption pay as long as you meet the conditions set out below.

The benefits of leave and pay are outlined in this section.

If a couple are jointly adopting a child, one person may be eligible to adoption leave and pay and the other to paternity leave and pay (as outlined in the paternity leave section).

The same leave rule applies to surrogate parents.

You will also get up to five periods of paid time off before the adoption to deal with the necessary formalities. You will need to agree this with your line manager on the bases of the requirements in your case. If you are a surrogate parent, you are entitled to take unpaid time off to attend two antenatal appointments with the woman carrying the child.

### 2. Notice

Your leave can start no sooner than 2 weeks before the child is placed with you and no later than the actual placement date. You will need to give notice in writing to your line manager as soon as possible but at least 28 days before the date you want your leave to begin (if at all possible). The notice must say:

- when the child is expected to be placed with you;
- when you want to begin your adoption leave; and
- the period of leave you want to take (see 3 below).

You will also need to provide a statement from the appropriate adoption body confirming that you have been accepted for the proposed adoption.

You can change your mind about the start of your adoption leave (as long as this is no later than the actual date of the child's placement and no sooner than 14 days before that date). In that case, you should give notice to your line manager in writing, at least 28 days before the new date.

#### Our notice

We will notify you in writing about the date your adoption leave should end. This will be the first day after the 52 weeks from the start of it. We will do this within 28 days from receiving your letter and, if you change that date, 28 days before the new date (or as soon as reasonably possible).

### 3 Adoption leave and pay

#### 3.1 The adoption leave

Your leave can start no sooner than 2 weeks before the child is placed with you and no later than the actual placement date

The Ordinary Adoption Leave (OAL) continues for 26 weeks and is paid at the Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) rate.

The Additional Adoption Leave continues for a further 26 weeks immediately at the end of the OAL. 13 weeks out of 26 are paid at the Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) rate and the other 13 weeks are unpaid.

If the adoption is unsuccessful and the child no longer lives with you, your leave and pay will continue for a further eight weeks and then both will end.

#### 3.2 Eligibility

To qualify for SAP, you must:

- a) have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks leading into the week in which you are told that you have been matched with a child;
- b) be newly matched with a child for adoption by an approved adoption agency;
- c) have told the agency that you agree that the child should be placed with you and agree the date of the placement; and
- d) have told us when you want your adoption leave to start no more than seven days after you are told that you have been matched with a child.

#### 3.3 Association adoption pay

If you have one year's service by the week you are told that you have been matched with a child, you are eligible to receive our enhanced adoption pay (OAP). The occupational pay is as follows:

- a) **7 weeks** at full pay (including SAP)
- b) **16 weeks** at half pay (not including SAP or 90% of the normal pay, whichever is lower)
- c) **16 weeks** at SAP rate or 90% of the normal pay, whichever is lower.

You will need to sign a declaration confirming that you plan to return to work and stay for at least three months. If you fail to meet these conditions, you will have to repay the OAP pay we have paid you.

## 4. Returning to work

You will return to work at the end of your adoption leave. Your line manager will have given you notice of this date as explained above. If you want to return sooner, you must give at least 8 weeks' written notice. If you don't, your return date will be delayed and you will not be paid during the period you do not work. You cannot postpone your return beyond the end of the 52 week leave period.

With Ordinary Adoption Leave, you will return to the same job.

If you take additional leave, you are guaranteed the same kind of job as you had before your adoption leave, at the same place and in the same capacity. If this is no longer available, we will offer you a suitable alternative job. Your terms and conditions will be no less favourable than would have applied had you not been absent, including the quality of working environment, and the job must also be suitable and appropriate for you.

### 4.1 Discretionary leave

We realise that some adopted children of any age may suffer emotional or medical problems. We may grant you further leave at the discretion of the Director / Management Committee

## 5. Contact during adoption leave

During the adoption leave period, we may make reasonable contact with you and you may do the same. Before the adoption leave begins, we will agree with you how often this contact will be, how it will take place and what subject should be discussed. In all cases, we will keep in touch with you about any promotion opportunities and important changes to the workplace that may affect you when you return.

## 6. Keeping-in-touch days (KIT)

If we agree, you may work up to 10 days under your contract of employment during your adoption leave, without losing your right to the adoption leave or pay. The 10-day limit applies no matter how long the adoption leave is. You can work the 10 days at any time during the adoption leave.

You do not have to work these days and we do not have to agree to you working them if you ask.

Before you start your adoption leave, we will discuss with you the type of work that may be done during the KIT days.

We will pay you your normal daily rate for working the KITs.

## 7. General conditions

### 7.1 Contractual benefits

All terms and conditions in your contract, apart from salary, continue to apply during the entire ordinary adoption leave, whether ordinary or additional. All your contractual allowances will continue to be paid as long as you receive either form of adoption pay. We may withdraw non-contractual benefits but only in line with the procedures which apply to all periods of prolonged absence.

### 7.2 Holidays

Annual leave is accrued throughout the entire Adoption leave period (whether ordinary or additional leave). Before you start your adoption leave, you should agree with us the dates of your annual leave. If it is not possible to take the leave within the annual leave year, we will transfer the remaining balance to the next year's entitlement. You cannot be paid instead of taking any of the leave you have built up during adoption leave.

If you plan to take annual leave before you return from adoption leave, you must confirm in writing:

- the date you want your adoption leave to end;
- the period to be taken as annual leave; and
- the date you will actually return to work.

You must do this eight weeks before the end of the adoption leave period.

### 7.3 Pension membership and contributions

The following rights apply when you are on adoption leave.

- The period of paid adoption leave will count towards pensionable service. The benefits built up during this time are based on the remuneration paid when you were working normally, before taking adoption leave.
- Your contributions during this time are based on the amount of adoption pay you have actually received. Our contributions will continue on the basis as agreed by the administrators of the pension scheme.
- We will tell you in writing (after consulting the administrators of the relevant pension scheme) the options available during any unpaid period of adoption leave.

Note: These rights apply whether or not you plan to return to work.

### 7.4 Information and training

If you are on Adoption Leave, you will still receive items of information sent to all staff. We will also invite you to attend staff training days as part of the keeping-in-touch days (KIT).

## 7.5 Union payments

We will take your union payments, as appropriate, throughout the period of adoption leave at the reduced rate. We will send the Union Finance Officer written confirmation of when your adoption leave begins.

## 8. Dismissal and resignation during adoption leave

If we end your contract during the adoption period, you are entitled to whatever period of notice your contract provides for in the circumstances.

If you resign, you must also give us notice as provided for in your contract. The termination date may be the end of her 52-week adoption leave or any date before then.

If you resign or are dismissed before the date you have given us for your intended adoption leave to start, you lose your right to adoption leave but will still be eligible for SAP as long as you have been continuously employed for 26 weeks at the time you are matched with a child.

A9

## Shared parental leave

Shared parental leave (SPL) allows eligible employees to take up to 50 weeks leave during the first year after their child's birth/adoption. This includes surrogate parents. It can be taken by both parents separately or at the same time. You may be able to apply if you are one of the following: a mother, adopter, surrogate parent or father/spouse/civil partner/partner of the mother/adopter/surrogate mother.

The **mother/adopter** has to meet the following criteria:

- have a partner,
- be entitled to statutory maternity/adoption leave and/or statutory maternity/adoption pay/allowance
- still be working for us at the start of the SPL
- have worked for us for at least 26 weeks at the 24<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy or when the adoption is confirmed

The **father or spouse/civil partner/partner** of the mother/adopter has to meet the following criteria:

- share the primary care of the child at the time of birth/adoption
- have notified us of his/her entitlement providing any necessary evidence
- have worked for us for at least 26 weeks in the 66 weeks leading up to the date the baby is born/expected to be born/matched and have earned at least £30 per week in any 13 weeks during that period.

## Entitlement to shared parental pay

You may be entitled to receive up to 37 weeks of shared parental pay (ShPP) and the amount depends on how many weeks of maternity/adoption pay has been taken.

## How to apply

Details on how to apply for the leave and pay can be found in our Shared Parental Leave Policy, which also details criteria for eligibility, options for leave, how to apply and everything else you need to know.

## A 10

### Special leave

We may grant requests for time off work in various situations and depending on our demands.

#### 1. Special leave

We may agree, in special circumstances, to grant leave. This will depend on our current work demands and the nature of the individual case.

The following is a guide as to the types of leave and approximate periods of time off which we may consider.

1.1 **Social purposes** – For example, attendance at weddings: duties of an honorary, charitable or philanthropic nature. Normally, this leave will not last for more than one day.

1.2 **Bereavements** – We will normally grant the following leave with pay for a bereavement:

- If you are responsible for making funeral arrangements - five days' leave.
- Where employee is an immediate close relative (e.g. parent, child, partner or similarly close), up to a maximum of 5 days.
- In the case of other relatives - up to one day's leave.
- In other cases, the necessary time off to go to the funeral service.

We may also consider allowing leave without pay to extend these periods if necessary.

We will use our discretion and act sensitively when considering requests for bereavement leave.

1.3 **Domestic stress** – If you need to make special domestic arrangements as a result of an unexpected situation, we will normally grant leave with pay for one day. We may extend this on a paid or unpaid basis according to the circumstances, and by agreement with the Director

1.4 **Medical treatment** – You should make every effort to arrange medical and related appointments outwith normal working hours. If your manager is satisfied that this is not possible, time off with pay will be granted.

1.5 **Moving home** – We will grant one day's leave with pay if you are moving home.

## 2. Jury and witness service

2.1 Jury duty – If you receive a summons to serve on a jury, you should report this to your line manager. We will grant you time off with pay, unless an exemption is secured.

### 2.2 Witness citations

2.2.1 If you are a professional witness, we will grant you time off with pay.

2.2.2 In other cases, we will grant leave without pay. You will be responsible for reclaiming the amount from the person asking you to be a witness for loss of pay.

## 3. Leave for public duties

3.1 Council duties – If you are a local authority councillor, we will grant you unpaid leave as and when needed to carry out approved duties with the authority concerned.

3.2 Advisory roles – If you are in an unpaid advisory role we will grant you paid leave to carry out these duties.

3.3. Positions of public responsibility – You may be appointed to a position of responsibility where no fees or allowances are paid for loss of earnings (for example, a justice of the peace or member of a children's panel). We will grant you paid leave to carry out associated duties. This will be limited in the first instance to 24 half days a year before we reconsider this. We will then decide if we can grant you further paid or unpaid leave.

## 4. Other family or domestic emergencies

When asking for time to deal with other emergencies involving your dependants not otherwise covered above, we will normally give you reasonable unpaid time to make arrangements to deal with the emergencies. We will expect you to tell your line manager the reason for the leave and how long it is likely to last.

Examples of these situations are as follows.

- To provide help if your dependant falls ill, gives birth or is injured or assaulted.
- To make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependant who is ill or injured (physically or mentally).
- If a dependant dies.
- If there is an unexpected disruption to the arrangements for caring for a dependant.

- To deal with an incident which involves your child and which happens unexpectedly when the child is at school or in care.

We will not extend leave beyond the period which is necessary to deal with the emergency.

## A11

### Parental leave

#### 1. General

You have the right to take up to 18 weeks' unpaid parental leave (for each child) if you have one year's continuous service and you:

- are the parent (and named on the birth certificate) of a child who is under eighteen years old;
- have adopted a child under 18 years; or
- are a surrogate parent of a child who is under 18 years old;
- have formal parental responsibility for a child under 18 as a result of the Children Act or Children (Scotland) Act

You can start taking this leave when a child is born, adopted or placed, or whenever you have completed one year's service – whichever is sooner.

#### 2. Giving notice

- 2.1 We will expect you to give at least 21 days' notice of taking this leave. In exceptional cases, we may not enforce this requirement.
- 2.2 We may postpone your leave for up to six months if our business would be seriously disrupted by you taking the leave. However, we won't do this if you give us notice to take leave immediately after maternity, adoption or paternity leave.

#### 3. Taking leave

- 3.1 The right to take leave will last until the child's **18<sup>th</sup>** birthday or until five years from the date the child was adopted or placed.
- 3.2 You must take leave in blocks or multiples of at least one week. This does not apply if your child is disabled.
- 3.3 We will allow up to 4 weeks' parental leave in any given leave year.

#### 4. Records

- 4.1 We may ask you to demonstrate proof of your entitlement to parental leave. We will also ask new staff about any parental leave they have taken in their previous jobs.
- 4.2 When you move to a new job, we will pass on details of parental leave you have taken if we are asked by your new employer.

## 5. Returning to work

If you take parental leave, you will return to the same job, except in cases where the parental leave begins immediately after the end of a period of additional maternity or adoption leave.

A12

## **Flexible working**

### **General**

You are entitled to apply to change your contract as long as you meet the conditions below.

### **Eligibility**

If you have worked for us continuously for 6 months, you have the right to request a change to your contractual terms and conditions of employment. We do not have to agree to this, but we have a duty to consider it and we use the following process to do this.

### **Making a request**

You must make your application, in writing, to your line manager. You can only make one statutory request within a 12 month period. Once your line manager has received your written request you will be invited to a meeting with the Director and line manager to discuss your proposal. Following the meeting the Director will confirm in writing the decision of your application.

### **Appeal**

If your request for flexible working has been rejected you can appeal the decision. This should be done in writing stating the reasons for your appeal. The appeal will be carried out by the Joint Consultative Committee after which the final decision will be confirmed to you in writing.

Please refer to the flexible working policy.

## A 13

### **Disciplinary procedure**

#### Purpose

We have designed this procedure to help and encourage employees to achieve and maintain standards of conduct, attendance and job performance.

This procedure applies to all employees.

#### Informal action

In the first instance and for minor issues with conduct, performance or attendance, your line manager will approach you informally. To make sure that you are clear about what is required, the meeting will be followed up with an informal action note. This will give details of the points discussed, actions required and support and training provided.

If personal issues affect your work performance, we would like you to feel free to speak to your line manager about it. However, we realise that you may not want to do this. In this instance, we encourage you to get independent confidential counselling out of work, if this applies.

You can get this through the Employee Counselling Service, which is one of benefits that we provide to our employees.

If informal action fails or the matter is more serious, we will use the following formal procedure.

#### The formal procedure

- 1 At any stage in the procedure we will let you know the nature of the allegations against you and will give you the opportunity to state your case before any decision is made. We will also confirm the outcome to you in writing.
- 2 There are three areas that we can deal with in line with the disciplinary procedure – conduct, capability (performance) and attendance and we will tell you which of these applies at the beginning of the process.
- 3 We will not take any disciplinary action against you until we have fully investigated the case. If dismissal is one of the possible outcomes of the disciplinary procedure, we will suspend you until we have carried out our investigations. We will write to you about the suspension which should not normally last longer than five working days without a review. We will explain the progress of our investigation. During the suspension you will receive your normal pay.
- 4 We will not dismiss you if this is the first issue with your conduct, performance or attendance unless you have committed gross misconduct, when the penalty will normally be summary dismissal without notice or pay in lieu of notice.
- 5 At all stages of the formal procedure you will have the right to be accompanied by either your trade union representative or a fellow employee of your choice.

- 6 We will make all information and documents passed to the Joint Consultative Committee available to you and your representative before the hearing.
- 7 You will have the right to appeal against any formal disciplinary penalty imposed.
- 8 If we have told you to improve your performance (for example, poor performance or poor attendance) we will tell you in writing what is required, in what time scales, whether and how often reviews will take place and what action may be taken if there is no improvement.
- 9 We can begin the procedure at any of stages 1 to 3, depending on the seriousness of the allegations against you.
- 10 For the purpose of the procedure to be followed, we will add together warnings given for different reasons.
- 11 We will not take disciplinary action or suspend you if you are a trade union representative until we have had discussions with a full-time official of the union. If the full-time official is not available, we will contact a district officer instead.
- 12 We will not normally allow recording devices to be used during any investigatory, disciplinary or appeal meetings.
- 13 If there is police involvement or investigation, we will carry out our own investigation and make decisions based on evidence and information available to us at the time. The matter will not be put on hold until the police investigation or court proceedings are concluded.

## Formal procedure

### Stage 1 – First written warning / improvement note

If there is no improvement in the standard of conduct, performance or attendance after informal action, or the act of misconduct or underperformance is of a more serious nature, your line manager will interview you and you can explain your actions.

If the explanation is not satisfactory, you will receive a first written warning or an improvement note.

You will be told in writing about your right to appeal.

### Stage 2 – Final written warning

If there is still no improvement in the standard of conduct, performance or attendance or the act of misconduct or underperformance is of a more serious nature, your line manager will interview you and give you an opportunity to explain your actions.

If the explanation is not satisfactory, you will receive a final written warning.

We will give you written information about your right of appeal.

## Stage 3 – Dismissal

If you cannot provide an acceptable explanation, we will dismiss you, with or without notice (as appropriate) if:

- there is still no improvement in the standard of conduct, performance or attendance while you still have a final written warning on your file; or
- there is an allegation of gross misconduct.

The formal hearing will be carried out by the representatives of the committee.

In cases of gross misconduct, we will dismiss you without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

We will give you written reasons for your dismissal within two working days and tell you the date on which your employment ends and give you details about your right of appeal.

## Types of offences

The following are examples of the various categories of misconduct or poor performance (the list is not exhaustive). However, we will investigate individual cases and take action at the appropriate stage depending on the circumstances.

### Misconduct – action taken at stage 1 of the procedure

- Poor timekeeping (repeated lateness or leaving early).
- Failure to let us know within a reasonable time the reasons for your absence in line with procedures.

### Serious misconduct – action taken at stage 2 of the procedure

- Deliberate damage or misuse of our property.
- Deliberate unauthorised absence.
- Unsafe working practices.
- Deliberate and persistent refusal to follow reasonable instructions.

### Gross misconduct – action taken at stage 3 of the procedure

- Theft from association, our employees or clients.
- Fighting or threatening anyone in connection with your employment with the association.
- Being under the influence of drink or drugs while at work.
- Fraudulent wage claims or falsifying records.
- Serious deliberate damage or misuse of association's property.

- Sexual and racial harassment.
- Deliberately accessing internet sites containing pornographic, offensive or obscene material.
- Refusing to follow management instructions, which then has serious consequences.
- Bringing the organisation into serious disrepute.

### Authority to take disciplinary action

First written warning	-	line manager
Final written warning	-	line manager
Dismissal	-	representatives of the committee

### How long the warnings stay on file

Stage 1 – First written warning. This will stay on your personal record for six months.

Stage 2 – Final written warning. This will stay on your personal record for 12 months.

### Records

We will keep records on your personal file of any disciplinary action, which will only be seen by you, your line manager and the Director if appropriate. It is the responsibility of Director to make sure that disciplinary warnings are removed from your file when relevant.

### Appeals

You have the right of appeal against any formal disciplinary action. We will tell you in writing when and how you can use this right when the warning is issued.

No person involved in the original disciplinary decision should take part in the appeals hearing unless it is not possible to avoid this.

### Appeals procedure

Appeals against any formal warnings will be made to one level above that at which the disciplinary action was taken, if possible.

You have a right to one internal appeal against the first written warning or performance note. This should be made in writing to the director, who will then consider the appeal.

You have the right to one appeal against the final written warning. This should be made in writing to the Joint Consultative Committee, who will then consider the appeal.

If you are appealing against dismissal, you must do so to the independent solicitor appointed by the association.

You should make your appeal within five working days of our notice of the decision.

All internal appeal hearings will be held within 10 working days of the appeal being lodged.

Appeal hearings should be held within 20 working days (where possible).

At all levels, appeal hearings will be entitled to:

- confirm previous action;
- dismiss previous action; or
- substitute a lesser penalty.

## **Grievance procedure**

### **Introduction**

We want to make sure that our employees have the opportunity to raise grievances and disputes so we can sort them out.

We hope to settle most doubts and problems quickly through constructive informal discussions. However, we know we need a formal procedure designed to meet those circumstances which cannot quickly be resolved through informal discussion.

### **1 Representation**

At all formal stages of the grievance procedure you will have the right to be accompanied by either your trade-union representative or a fellow employee.

### **2 Right of appeal**

You have the right to appeal against any formal decision taken on a grievance issue. Notice of your right of appeal will include details of the time limit within which you must make the appeal.

### **3 Until the matter is resolved**

If you want to use the grievance procedure, you and association will agree that no changes or action will be made or taken until the grievance is resolved.

### **Informal stage**

If you have a concern related to your employment, you should discuss this first with your immediate line manager or Director.

If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved at this stage, the following formal procedure will apply.

### **Formal procedure**

#### **Stage 1**

You should first raise your grievance with your line manager, who will try to resolve the matter within two working days.

We will keep a written record of your grievance and any proposed solution in your personal file.

## Stage 2

If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction within the time agreed, you should ask for a meeting with the Director.

They will hold a meeting within three working days of your request and carry out an investigation to give you a decision within five working days of the meeting.

A written record of your grievance and any proposed solution will be recorded in your personal file.

## Stage 3

If you are still not satisfied, you should present the grievance in writing to the chair of the Joint Consultative Committee or equivalent. The chair will then arrange a meeting of the representatives of the committee or within 10 working days. The chair should tell you the date and time of the hearing. After hearing the grievance, the Joint Consultative Committee or equivalent will give their decision in writing to you within three working days of date of meeting.

## Stage 4

Appeals from the decision of the representatives of the committee or equivalent will be to an independent solicitor.

You should appeal in writing within 14 days of receiving notice of the decision, stating the reasons for your appeal.

The hearing will be arranged within 20 working days, where possible. After hearing the grievance, The independent solicitor will give their decision in writing to both you and your trade union within five working days of the date of the hearing.

This is the final stage of internal appeal process.

## Grievances raised after your employment has ended

If you raise a grievance after your employment has ended, we will consider it and respond to you in writing (without holding a meeting).

## Collective grievances

Collective grievances are complaints raised on behalf of two or more employees by a representative of a recognised trade union or other appropriate workplace representative. These grievances should be handled in accordance with the procedures set out below.

You should first raise these at stage 2.

If the issue is not sorted out after going through the internal procedure, either you or we may refer the matter to ACAS conciliation.

Timescales may be amended at each stage of the procedure by mutual agreement – and for

the independent solicitor hearing each side may apply for an extension to the panel which may be granted by the Chair.

A15

## **Pensions**

We provide an occupational pension scheme for all staff. The only restriction on this will be if your salary falls under the limit or you fall outside the lower and upper age limits for entry set by the Government.

You will be given details of the particular scheme which applies to you in your contract of employment offer letter. Admission to the scheme takes place within a year from starting to work for us.

or

You will be automatically enrolled in the pension scheme we provide. You may opt out if you wish but if you do, we will enrol you again within three years time.

You can get more details from the Finance department.

## A 16

### **Periods of notice**

The following are the minimum periods of notice to end your contract of employment.

- 1 BY ALL EMPLOYEES  
please refer to your contract of employment
- 2 BY THE EMPLOYER  
please refer to your contract of employment

### **Other conditions:**

1. We may give you a payment in lieu of notice.
2. If we dismiss you for gross misconduct, we will end your employment immediately without payment in lieu of notice.
3. If we make you redundant, the redundancy terms will apply. (See A16)
4. If you want to retire, you should write to the Director at least three months before your intended retirement date.
5. If you fail to give or serve the set period of notice, we may take an amount off any amounts due to you (including accrued holiday entitlement) to cover the period you have not served.
6. If the total annual leave you have already taken is more than you are entitled to when you leave, we will take off an amount from any final payment to you.
7. We may, at our discretion, require you not to attend work and/or not to undertake all or any of your duties during any period of notice (whether notice is given by you or by us). We shall continue to pay your salary [and benefits] while you remain our employee

## A 17

### Redundancy

#### 1. General

We try to reduce the need for redundancies as much as possible by forward planning and good management of staffing budgets. To avoid redundancies, we will:

- not fill vacancies;
- make best use of temporary transfers or secondments to other organisations;
- reduce the use of overtime working;
- reduce similar work carried out by outside consultants or agencies;
- retrain staff;
- introduce work sharing; and
- offer voluntary redundancy.

Whether we can do this will depend on the resources we have available. Redundancy implies a reduction in the requirement for employees to carry out work of a particular kind in the place they were employed.

If redundancy is unavoidable, we will contact Unite the Union as soon as possible so that consultation may begin. At the same time, we will tell EVH so we can get advice and guidance.

#### 2. Consultation

The consultation process should start before any public announcement of redundancy or issuing notices of termination. We will ask for and listen to the staff and union's views before making any decisions. The minimum time periods needed for consultation are set by law if more than 20 employees are to be made redundant. (30 days for 20 or more employees and 45 days for 100 or more employees.)

The association, as with members of Employers in Voluntary Housing, undertake to observe the 30-day consultation period no matter how many employees we propose to make redundant. In other words, consultation will begin at least 30 days before the first dismissal takes effect. For the purposes of consultation, we will give the union written notice of:

- the reasons why any posts have become redundant;
- the numbers, descriptions and locations of the affected posts;
- the total number of employees affected;
- the proposed method of choosing the employees who may be dismissed;
- the proposed method of carrying out the dismissals, including the period over which they are to take effect; and
- the proposed method of calculating severance pay (if different to the contractual arrangement).

We will send this information to the trade union branch convener, the trade union district officer, and the Director of EVH. We will provide any other information which would be of use to the union in the consultation process (such as staff levels and structure), when they ask for it and in line with good industrial relations practice.

We will also consult individual employees who are expected to be affected by redundancies. They will also be allowed to make their comments.

The individual periods of notice for employees will only start once the consultation period has finished. However, we may make a payment in lieu of notice.

### 3. Selection for redundancy

The first method of selection will be to ask for volunteers for redundancy. If the volunteers come from an area where we have surplus capacity, we will consider this.

The second method will be to use fair and factual criteria we set, in consultation with the union. The main consideration here will be to keep a balanced workforce.

If the above cannot provide the number of candidates we need for redundancy, we will use conditions related to performance, attendance, conduct, and the last-in-first-out method. (Continuous service will include that with any other housing association.)

If you want to appeal against redundancy, your rights will be explained at the formal meeting when redundancy notice is given, and again in the letter confirming the decision. (The annex below outlines the general procedure.)

### 4. Alternative work and trial periods

We may offer you a suitable alternative employment (if available) to avoid the need for redundancy. We will do this before the end of your original contract and it will apply within four weeks of the end of that contract. We will give you enough information to allow you to decide whether or not to accept the offer, and illustrate the differences between the new position and your original one.

If we offer you employment which involves a different type of work or different terms of employment, you will be entitled to a four-week trial period. If this involves training, we can extend this period by written agreement. The agreement will give the date on which the trial period will end and the terms and conditions that will apply after this. If during the trial period either we or you give notice to end the contract, we will treat you as having been made redundant. Notice should be given to end the trial period as follows.

- (1) You must give 4 weeks' notice or the rest of the trial period (whichever is shorter).
- (2) We must give 4 weeks' notice or the period of any outstanding contractual notice (whichever is longer).

If you refuse an offer of alternative employment, or resign during the trial period, you will lose your right to a redundancy payment unless we consider your refusal or resignation as reasonable for example, involving significant changes in travelling time, skills needed, or status.

If you accept redeployment at a lower grade, you will protect your current salary for a period of up to 3 years.

## 5. Help for employees

If you are under a notice of redundancy, we will give you the following help to get training or future employment:

- Reasonable paid time off during working hours to go to interviews or to make arrangements for future training or employment.
- Access to secretarial and photocopying facilities to help you prepare a CV, application forms and so on.
- Written notice to other local employers giving details of your skills.
- If you ask, we will give you information on the EVH temporary register and details of how to register for the EVH weekly jobs bulletin.

## 6. Redundancy payments

All redundant staff with at least 2 years service will receive redundancy pay. Payments are based on your length of service (in complete years up to 20 years), and age at the date your employment ends. The following table shows the calculation.

<b>Age</b>	<b>Number of weeks pay per complete year of service (up to 20)</b>
Up to 21	1 week
22 – 40	1.5 weeks
41 and over	2 weeks

A week's pay for this calculation refers to basic contractual pay.

We will give redundancy pay as well as any payments which may be made to end your contract in-lieu-of-notice. You are entitled to a notice period (as in A16). If we agree that you do not have to work this notice, we may make a payment-in-lieu of notice for all or part of the period.

If you leave voluntarily during your contractual notice period, you will not lose your entitlement to redundancy pay as long as you leave with our permission. We will allow you to take up alternative employment or training during that time.

## Annex to the redundancy agreement

### Appeals

If you do not believe you should have been selected for redundancy, you can appeal.

Appeals will be heard by the Joint Consultative Committee of the management committee, which will not take part in the selection of those to be made redundant.

### Procedures for hearing appeals

1. We will tell you about your right to appeal at the formal meeting when your redundancy notice is given and in the letter confirming the decision.
2. You must send your appeal in writing to the secretary of the management committee within 2 working days of your letter of redundancy.
3. The letter of appeal must clearly state why you want to appeal against your selection for redundancy.
4. Appeal hearings will be heard without delay, and no later than 5 working days after receiving your appeal. We will give you 2 working days' notice of the time and place, and reasonable time off to meet with your trade-union representative.
5. At the appeal hearing, you have the right to be accompanied by either a union representative, or a workplace colleague or ex-colleague.
6. The Appeal Committee will consider the issue in private and make a decision as soon as possible, and no later than 2 working days after the hearing. Senior staff or Office Bearers of the Management Committee will be called to the hearing by either side, if required. If your appeal is unsuccessful, we will give you and your representative documented reasons for your selection to prove that we followed the agreed criteria.

## B 1

### Health and safety

Health and safety law imposes duties on both employers and employees. So that we can meet ours, we will make sure that:

- we carry out our responsibilities for safety and health at all levels of the organisation;
- we take all practical steps to manage the health, safety and welfare of all employees; and
- we carry out our business so that we make sure that the health and safety of visitors, to any premises under our control, are not put at risk.

We will give you any instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to make sure your health and safety are protected.

You must read the full policy statement which is displayed on the staff notice board.

You can also refer to the Health & Safety Manual which is held in the offices.

### Your responsibilities

You must make sure that:

- you take reasonable steps to protect the health and safety of yourself and anyone else who may be affected by your actions or failure to act at work; and
- you co-operate with the management committee to the best of your abilities to make sure you comply with any duty or requirement placed on you, or any other person, by law.

If you do not do this, we may take disciplinary action against you, which may include dismissal.

### General information

#### 1. Accidents

Any accident at work should be reported at once as shown in the procedures in the Health and Safety Manual.

You should report details of any accident to the Director / Management committee

- you will be off work or your performance is likely to be affected; or
- the accident is alleged to be due to the negligence of some other person

## 2. Protective clothing

If we provide protective clothing, you must wear it and are responsible for looking after it and making sure it remains effective.

## 3. First-aid allowances

The association will have at least 2 employees trained to carry out a first-aid role. We will give the name of the first-aider on the notice board alongside the safety policy statement together with a list showing where all the first-aid boxes are. The employee will need to hold a current approved certificate in first aid and will be paid the appropriate first-aid allowance. This amount will be shown in the current agreement on salaries.

The relevant certificates are those approved by the Health & Safety Executive for the purposes of the Health & Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 (for example, St Andrews Ambulance Association). A refresher course will have to be taken at required intervals.

## 4. Eye Test / Reimbursement for Spectacles

For those staff whose duties involve the regular use of a VDU, the association will pay for an eye test every 2 years. Only if there is a change in the prescription, then association will make a contribution towards the cost of prescribed spectacles. This amount will be shown in the current agreement on salaries.

## B 2

### Equal opportunities

We are fully committed to the principles of equal opportunities in employment, as stated in the Equality Act 2010.

You should read the full policy statement which is displayed on the staff notice board.

#### Main points

- We will not discriminate against anyone for any reason.
- The policy also lists our responsibilities and the procedures we will follow to make sure discrimination does not happen in employment-related decisions.
- As far as is reasonably possible we will make sure that we give employees any instruction, training and supervision needed to meet the requirements of our equal opportunities policy.

#### Your responsibilities

You must accept personal responsibility by law and in relation to the policy for following the principle of equal opportunities.

1. You must:
  - not discriminate against fellow employees, contractors, job applicants, clients or customers in the course of your employment with us;
  - tell management about any apparent instances of discrimination; and
  - tell management about any perceived problem relating to this policy.
2. If you are guilty of discrimination, we will take disciplinary action against you, which may include dismissal.
3. If you feel you are being discriminated against you should speak to your line manager or use the grievance procedure (or do both).
4. If you feel that you are being harassed, you should raise the issue, in confidence, and in line with our policy on dignity at work (B3).

## B3

### Dignity at work

We are committed to providing a working environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

You should read the full dignity at work policy statement.

#### Main points:

- The policy aims to make sure that all employees are treated with dignity at work.
- The policy lists our responsibilities and the procedures we will follow to make sure that harassment does not take place.

#### Your responsibilities

##### 1 You:

- must accept personal responsibility by law and in relation to the policy to make sure harassment does not take place;
- must make sure that your behaviour does not cause offence, or discriminate against fellow colleagues, contractors, job applicants, clients or customers in the course of your employment with us;
- must offer support to anyone suffering harassment
- must tell management about any apparent instances of harassment; and
- must not indirectly support the person committing the harassment by ignoring an incident.

2. If you commit discrimination or harassment, we will take disciplinary action, which could lead to dismissal.

3. If you feel you have been harassed, you should raise the issue, in confidence, in line with procedure in our Dignity at Work policy.

## Training and development

### 1. General

We are fully committed to developing all of our employees. Through the regular appraisals, you will be aware of how your work as an individual contributes to the organisation achieving our overall aims. We will encourage you to carry out training which relates directly to your work and career so you can improve your job performance and the service we provide.

You should read the full policy statement displayed on the staff notice board.

### 2. Vocational training and qualifications

If you want to take part-time vocational courses directly relevant to your career, you can discuss this with your line manager and see what help we can provide.

2.1 At the committee's discretion, for appropriate courses (such as those leading to technical or professional qualifications), we can provide up to 100% of the cost or fees. We will pay the fees directly to the educational organisation or institution.

Rules which apply to this funding:

We treat the fees paid as a loan. We will write off the loan 12 months after finishing the relevant course or examination. We will ask you to refund the full or part of the cost of fees (as outlined in the undertaking attached to this policy) if you voluntarily leave your employment within those 12 months, if you or the training institution prematurely ends your course or if you are dismissed during that period.

If you withdraw from a course, you will have to repay the fees on the basis of 2.1.1 above, unless:

- you give us written justification and we agree that you withdraw from the course; and
- you have had to withdraw due to long-term sickness, maternity leave or redundancy.

2.2 We will give you paid leave to sit examinations for courses approved by the management committee. This leave with pay will include the previous half-day (if the examination lasts half a day) or the previous day (if the examination is over a full day).

If you ask to take annual leave around the time of examinations, we will give this priority and consider your request sympathetically.

2.3 The Management Committee shall award an extraordinary merit payment to any employee, on an approved course of study, lasting not less than 12 weeks, upon successful completion of the course. The payment will range from £200 - £500.

University – Degree Qualification or equivalent	£500
University/College – HND or Equivalent	£350
All Others	£200

This payment does not affect the employee's salary.

### 3. Professional membership fees

We will refund annual fees you pay for membership of professional institutions depending on the following conditions.

- Your membership must be directly relevant to your job
- We will only refund one set of fees if you are a member of more than one institution.
- You will need to give us receipts for the fees.
- We will make payments after tax.

## Undertaking to repay a loan for professional or vocational training fees

I,..... , agree that I will continue working for Elderpark Housing Association Limited, for 12 months after completing any course you have paid the fees for.

If I leave your employment or am dismissed before the end of 12 months after completing the course or if I leave the course (or the institution makes me leave), I will refund you an amount to cover the period of service I would be due to work. This will be worked out using all money loaned to me for the course of studies.

I agree that you may take any amount I owe from my salary or other payments due to me under my contract of employment.

Signed ..... Date .....

B5

## Travel and subsistence

### 1. Normal travel to work

You will travel to and from your normal place of work in your own time and at your own expense. If we need you to make extra travel in connection with your work, we will refund reasonable costs you incur as a result of our request.

### 2. Business travel

- 2.1 If you are travelling on authorised business for us, you will be entitled to reclaim fares for public transport. We will refund rail travel at second-class rates only.
- 2.2 Taxis may be used on prior approval of Director or line manager.
- 2.3 You may use your private car when travelling on business only when authorised to do so by your line manager.

Before receiving this authorisation, you will need to have your vehicle comprehensively insured for business as well as private purposes. The senior or health & safety officer will also make sure that the car owner has completed a certificate declaring that they have valid insurance and that this has been kept in a designated file. The certificate should state the following.

**I confirm that I have examined the insurance policy for my private car, registration number ....., and the car is comprehensively insured for business purposes. I will renew the policy while the car is in my possession and insure any future vehicle which I will use for business travel.**

We will not accept responsibility for damage to your car or for injury to the people in it while the car is being used for business purposes.

Authorised car users will be able to claim allowances for business travel authorised by their line managers. The scale of allowances will be in line with the current EVH and Unite agreed rates. These are added to the current set of salary scales, which are reviewed every year.

### 3. Subsistence allowances

### 3.1 Eligibility

The rates of allowance are based on your time away on business so you need to give us details of the start and finish times of these instances when claiming subsistence allowance.

### 3.2 Rates

The rates are reviewed on 1 April each year as part of annual pay negotiations, and you can find up-to-date amounts by referring to the most recent wage agreement.

We can pay two levels of subsistence rates.

- If you need to be on approved or official duty for more than 10 hours, in any one day.
- For official duties of between 5 and 10 hours in any one day outwith our geographical area of activity.

### 3.3 Train meals

If you have a main meal on a train during a period qualifying for subsistence allowance, we may refund the actual cost of the train meal (including VAT but not alcoholic beverages) in full, as long as you give us receipts. These payments are made instead of the normal subsistence allowances. The number of train meals allowed would be:

- one main meal for absences of more than 5 but less than 10 hours; or
- two main meals for an absence of more than 10 hours, or one main meal plus a claim for the normal 5 - 10 to 10 + hours subsistence allowance.

### 3.4 Overnight

If you are on official duty and away from home overnight, a standard overnight rate, to cover reasonable out of pocket expenses applies.

### 3.5 Emergency Call out

Where an employee, who is on the emergency call out rota is called out, a subsistence allowance will be paid. Staff members on the emergency call out rota will also receive a one off responsibility payment per annum.

## **Trade union membership**

### **1. General**

Employees may become members of an appropriate trade union.

You may apply to be elected as a union representative and hold office within that union. If suitable accommodation is available, we will provide facilities for meetings of trade-union members.

### **2. Time off for trade union activities**

2.1 Branch meetings (and the travel to and from) should take place out with normal working hours. However, meetings of union representatives or the Joint Negotiating Committee may be held within working hours.

2.2 We will give you leave of absence with pay if you are a shop steward so you can go to one meeting each calendar month.

2.3 If you are a union branch official (e.g. a branch secretary, negotiating secretary, or treasurer), we will allow you time off with pay so you can carry out your duties. We will limit this to up to four hours in any one week. You cannot carry this time forward.

2.4 If you want to go to an official conference of your trade union or association, you should ask your manager for time off, giving reasonable notice and providing the relevant details (in writing). We will normally give you leave of absence without pay if this is possible.

2.5 To qualify for paid time off as a union learning representative, you must be trained to carry out duties as a learning representative. Your trade union would need to confirm this to us in writing and it will be valid for six months from the training date.

## C 1

### **Code of conduct**

Please make yourself familiar with the full Code of Conduct policy available in the policy library.

You must keep to the following rules during the course of your employment. If you do not, we may take disciplinary action against you.

#### **1. Handling information**

In the course of your employment you may have access to confidential information about our organisation, employees, customers, partners and anyone else in relation to our business. You must not reveal this information to anyone unless you are authorised to do so by the Director or the management committee.

You also need the permission of the senior officer before you remove confidential correspondence or documents from the work premises.

#### **Social networking**

We respect your right to a private life and that includes joining any social sites you want. However, information posted on these sites is classed as public and not private. As a result, you are not allowed to reveal confidential information relating to us, our customers, partners, suppliers, board members, employees and so on. You are also not allowed to post any comments on people and events connected to us, or make any remarks which could possibly bring us into disrepute. Any actions could result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

#### **2. Interest in contracts and appointments**

You must, as soon as possible, tell your line manager in writing, if you discover:

- we have, or plan to enter into, a contract or an appointment; and
- you have a financial or private interest in that contract or appointment. This interest can be direct or indirect (which includes some situations where you are not a party to it but your relatives or friends are).

#### **3. Publications and lectures**

You may not publish any material or deliver any lecture relating specifically to us or our business without getting approval beforehand. You should ask for this approval in writing from the Director or management committee.

#### **4. Using official premises**

You may not use official premises for unofficial purposes at any time without getting the approval of the management committee beforehand.

## 5. Other employment and volunteering activities

You may not accept a post or carry out any occupation or activity which would:

- mean you need to take time off during your contracted hours; or
- affect your performance at work.

In exceptional circumstances, we may grant permission for these extra activities. You should ask for this permission beforehand. If you are in any doubt as to whether this condition would apply, please ask your line manager.

## 6. Private calls / Mobile phones / Internet / E-mail Usage

### Private calls

You can use the office landline for private purposes within reason.

You must inform your line manager if making any non-local calls beforehand and re-imburse the association when itemised phone bill is received.

### Mobile phones

Please refer to Mobile Phone policy

### Internet / E-mail usage

Please refer to Information Technology policy

## 7. Gifts and hospitality.

You should not accept any gift, favour or hospitality which is intended as, or might be seen by others as an inducement. It is normally clear whether an offer of hospitality and so on might be considered excessive or unreasonable. However, if you are in any doubt, speak to your line manager.

## 8. Bribery

We do not allow any form of bribery. You are not allowed to accept or give bribes from or to anyone we do business with. You must also report any instances of suspected bribery within either the organisation or any of our business partners. Accepting or giving bribes will result in disciplinary action including dismissal and can also result in criminal prosecution and imprisonment of up to 10 years for individuals found guilty of these acts.

You must immediately report any act of attempted, suspected or detected fraud, theft, bribery and corruption. You can do this in a confidential way to an appropriate person, for example, a senior officer, the chair, a board member, the audit committee or the company solicitor.

## C 2

### **Personal information**

#### **1. Personal details**

We ask that you give us up-to-date and accurate information relating to:

- your home address;
- your phone number;
- your next of kin;
- details of a person to be contacted in an emergency and how this can be done;
- the name and address of your GP; and
- details of any allergies or conditions which may be important in an emergency.

#### **2. Confidentiality**

At all times we will respect your confidentiality. We will not give your personal information to anyone without your approval.

(This does not apply if we have a legal duty to provide the information.)

We will give you access to your own personal file upon formal request to the Director.

C 3

### **Personal property**

We will not accept any responsibility for your personal property while it is on our premises, even if you are using it for official purposes. You should make sure you protect your property at all times. We will give you a lockable drawer if you ask.

**ELDERPARK HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED**  
**STATEMENT OF TERMS & CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

I have received a copy of the document shown above. I have also had the opportunity to read it in full and asked my manager any relevant questions.

I confirm that I fully understand the contents and accept the terms and conditions within it.

I understand that you will inform me separately about any amendments to these terms and conditions in the future.

SIGNED: .....

NAME: .....

DATE: .....

(To be put in employee personal file.)