

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct set out below is designed to cover the main areas of the required standards of behaviour and performance. The code includes Company Rules, which all employees are required to comply with, and examples of misconduct which the Company normally regards as Gross Misconduct (p??). A breach of the Company Rules will render an employee liable to disciplinary action in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure (p??). An instance of Gross Misconduct will render an employee liable to dismissal without notice.

The Company Rules and the examples of misconduct are not exhaustive. Employees are under a duty to comply with the standards of behaviour and performance required by the Company, and to behave in a reasonable manner, at all times.

COMPANY RULES

Employees are required to comply with the rules relating to notification of absence which are set out in the Company's Absence Policy and Procedure.

Employees are required to arrive at work promptly, ready to start work at their contracted starting times, and are required to remain at work until their contracted finishing times.

HFLS employees may take a one hour break for lunch at any time between the hours of 12 and 2.00, ensuring phone cover at all times.

Employees may be required to work additional hours at short notice, as the needs of the business require.

Employees must obtain management authorisation if for any reason they wish to arrive later or leave earlier than their normal start and finish times.

Employees are not permitted to leave the premises during work hours without management permission.

Part-time and temporary employees and volunteers are required to sign in and out at the start and finish of each working day. Falsification of these entries will be regarded as gross misconduct and may lead to dismissal without notice.

The Company reserves the right not to pay employees in respect of working time lost because of poor timekeeping.

Persistent poor timekeeping will result in disciplinary action and could lead to dismissal.

Employees are required to maintain satisfactory standards of performance at work, a high level of quality, accuracy, and diligence.

Employees are required to keep confidential, both during their employment and at any time after its termination, all information gained in the course of their employment about the HFLS' business, and that of HFLS' clients and their service users, except in circumstances in which they are required to disclose information by law or in the course of the performance of their duties with the HFLS.

Employees are not permitted to engage in any activity outside their employment with another Company which could reasonably be interpreted as competing with the HFLS.

Employees are required to dress in an appropriate manner. Employees who fail to meet the HFLS standard of personal appearance may be sent home by management.

Employees may be required from time to time to undertake duties outside their normal job remit. Training will be provided where needed.

Employees may be required to work at locations other than their main place of work.

Employees are required to co-operate fully with their colleagues and with management, and to ensure the maintenance of acceptable standards of politeness.

Employees are required to take all necessary steps required to safeguard HFLS' public image and preserve positive relationships with its clients and their service users.

Employees are required to comply with HFLS' Policies and Procedures as issued from time to time.

Employees are required to ensure that they do not behave in a discriminatory manner.

Employees are required to gain an understanding of the Company's health and safety procedures and observe them.

Fire doors must never be wedged or weighted open.

If a fire alarm sounds, all employees must exit the building via the front entrance and await management permission to return to the building.

All accidents, however small, must be reported to management as soon as possible, and an entry made on the Accident Report Form.

Employees are required to comply with all reasonable management instructions.

Employees are not permitted to make private use of HFLS' telephone, fax, or postal facilities and services without management permission. Personal telephone calls may only be made during breaks, except in the case of a genuine emergency.

It is a strict Company rule that employees must switch off personal mobile telephones during working hours, with the exception of authorised break times or in the event of a genuine emergency, for which specific dispensation to use the phone during work time must be obtained from the General Manager. Disciplinary action will be taken against employees who do not comply with this rule.

HFLS' property and equipment must not be taken from the premises unless for use on authorised HFLS business.

Employees are solely responsible for the safety of their personal possessions while on the Company's premises.

Employees should not bring valuables onto the premises, as HFLS will not accept responsibility for such items.

Employees who find an item of personal property on the premises are required to inform the General Manager. Failure to do so will be treated as gross misconduct.

The security of door is of great importance. Employees must not leave keys lying around. Employees are responsible for the loss of keys and will be liable for the cost.

Deliveries may only be signed for by authorised employees. Employees who sign for a delivery without authority which causes a loss to HFLS will be liable for the value of that loss.

In order to provide a working environment which is pleasant and healthy, smoking is not permitted on the premises. Smoking is permitted only outside the premises and only during authorised breaks.

Employees are not permitted to introduce any software or files to any computer at HFLS unless specifically authorised to do so by the General Manager. Memory sticks may only be brought onto the premises by authorised personnel.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

HFLS' Management is under a duty to maintain standards of performance and discipline; employees are entitled to expect fair, just, and consistent treatment. The prime objective of HFLS' Disciplinary Policy is to ensure that all cases of discipline are dealt with fairly and

consistently. Where there has been a breach of discipline, HFLS will try to encourage an improvement in individual conduct or performance through the disciplinary procedure.

All offences dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure will be investigated to establish the facts. At each stage of the procedure the individual will be given the opportunity of stating his or her case at a disciplinary meeting before any decision is reached about action to be taken.



It may be necessary to suspend an employee whilst an investigation is taking place. Any suspension will be kept to a minimum, and will be on full pay. In these circumstances the suspension itself will not constitute disciplinary action. Employees are entitled to be accompanied by an employee of HFLS or by a Trade union official at any stage in this procedure, and are encouraged to make use of this facility. Disciplinary action will fall into one of the following categories:

Verbal Warning: The employee will be advised that his or her standard of conduct or performance has been unacceptable. The required standard will be outlined. The warning will be given verbally and subsequently confirmed in writing.

Written Warning: The procedure followed will be the same as for a Verbal Warning. This warning remains active for six months. Repetition of the same type of matter within this period may result in a final written warning being issued.

Final Written Warning: The procedure followed will be the same as above. On this occasion the employee will be advised, in writing, that a failure to improve the standard of conduct or performance will result in dismissal. This warning will remain active for 12 months.

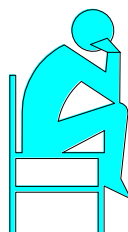
Dismissal: A dismissal occurs when the Company terminates the contract of employment, either with or without notice.

The disciplinary action taken will be determined by the severity of the offence. For relatively minor offences the procedure will normally commence with a Verbal Warning and progress through the stages, eventually arriving at dismissal. HFLS may decide, however, to commence the procedure at the Written Warning stage or even Final Written Warning stage if the offence is serious enough. In cases of gross misconduct the Company will normally move directly to the dismissal stage of the procedure. HFLS reserves the right to terminate an employee's employment without having used the Disciplinary Procedure where the employee has completed less than one year's continuous service.

Employees have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action taken against them in accordance with the Appeal Procedure.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Where an employee has a grievance relating to any aspects of his or her employment s/he should first discuss the grievance with the Line Manager, who will attempt to resolve the matter within five working days.



Where the matter is not resolved at the conclusion of the first stage of this procedure, the employee may refer the grievance to the Managing Director in writing, who will consider the matter and attempt to resolve the matter within five working days.

Where the matter is not resolved at the conclusion of the second stage of this procedure, the employee may refer the matter to the Board of Directors in writing. The Board will consider the matter and attempt to resolve the matter within five working days.

The Board's decision will be final.

At each stage of the procedure a meeting will be held to enable the employee to give full details of his or her grievance.

All meetings provided for in this procedure will be arranged as quickly as possible. It is the intention of the procedure to resolve any issues raised at the earliest opportunity. While every effort will be made by HFLS to settle issues within the time limits indicated, this may not be possible on occasion. In these circumstances an extension of time may be arranged.

At all stages of the procedure an employee is entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or a Trade Union official.

Suspension

HFLS reserves the right to suspend you from work during any investigation, or during disciplinary or grievance proceedings.

GROSS MISCONDUCT

Set out below are examples of behaviour which HFLS treats as Gross Misconduct. Such behaviour will render employees liable to dismissal without notice. Employees should note that this list is not exhaustive.

Theft, dishonesty, or fraud

Deliberate recording of incorrect working hours

Smoking on HFLS' premises

Acts of violence, or aggression

Unacceptable use of obscene or abusive language

Possession or use of non-prescribed drugs or alcohol on HFLS' premises, or during working hours

Wilful damage to HFLS', employees', or clients' property

Serious insubordination

Falsification of records or other HFLS documents, including those relating to obtaining employment.

Unlawful Gender, Race, or Disability Discrimination

Refusal to carry out reasonable management instructions

Gambling, bribery or corruption

Acts of indecency, or sexual harassment

Serious breach of the Health and Safety policies and procedures

Accepting gifts from outside organisations which have not been approved by management

Breach of confidentiality, including the unauthorised disclosure of HFLS' business to the media or any other party

Unauthorised access to or use of computer data

Introducing or running software programmes in HFLS' computer system without management authorisation

Introducing viruses to HFLS' computer system

Violating, or assisting other employees to violate, the integrity of HFLS' company's computers, network, telephony or security systems.

Copying computer software, other than when authorised in the normal course of employment.

N.B. Persistent poor timekeeping will result in disciplinary action and could lead to dismissal.

RIGHT OF APPEAL

Employees have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action taken against them.

All appeals must be made in writing no later than the end of the third working day after the disciplinary decision was notified in writing to the employee. The first of these three working days is the day on which the employee received written confirmation of the disciplinary decision.

The written appeal should be submitted to the General Manager.

An appeal hearing will be organised and held as quickly as possible, and, in any event, within 10 working days of the date on which the appeal was submitted. The employee will be entitled to attend the appeal hearing and will be given an opportunity to state his or her case.

The findings of the appeal hearing will be notified to the employee within three working days of the hearing.

If the employee remains dissatisfied then a further appeal may be made to the HFLS Board of Directors. This appeal must again be made in writing and the same procedures and time scales detailed above will apply.

The Board's decision will be final.

Employees are entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or a Trade Union official at all stages of the procedure.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

HFLS is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to providing a working environment in which employees are able to realise their full potential and to contribute to business success irrespective of their gender, race, or disability. This is a key employment value to which all employees are expected to give their full support.

In order to create conditions in which this goal can be realised, HFLS is committed to identifying and eliminating discriminatory practices, procedures, and attitudes throughout the organisation. HFLS expects employees to support this commitment and to assist in its realisation in all possible ways.

Specifically, HFLS aims to ensure that no employee or job applicant is discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or racial origins, marital status, religion or disability. This commitment applies to all the aspects of employment outlined below:

- Recruitment and selection, including advertisements, job descriptions, interview and selection procedures.
- Training.
- Promotion and career development opportunities.
- Terms and conditions of employment, and access to employment related benefits and facilities.
- Grievance handling and the application of disciplinary procedures.
- Selection for redundancy.

Equal Opportunities practice is developing constantly as social attitudes and legislation change. HFLS will keep its policies under review and will implement changes where these could improve equality of opportunity. This commitment applies to all of HFLS' employment policies and procedures, not just those specifically connected with equal opportunity.

Confidentiality

In the course of your employment you will have access to confidential information. You must not use such information for your own benefit nor disclose it to other persons both during and after the termination of your employment.

If any member of staff is found to have revealed confidential information the disciplinary procedure will be applied.

If you are in doubt regarding the use of information in the pursuit of your duties, you should

seek advice from HFLS before communicating such information to any third party. Nothing in this clause inhibits the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Sexual Harassment

The Company believes that all employees are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect while at work and when representing the business in any capacity outside of work.

This policy statement has been prepared to make clear to employees that HFLS will not tolerate the sexual harassment of one employee by another employee, client or service users of the Company.

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct directed towards an employee by a fellow employee (or group of employees), client or supplier which is of a sexual nature, or which is based on a person's sex, and which is regarded as unwelcome and offensive by the recipient. This could include:

- Unwanted physical contact.
- Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions, suggestions or pressure to participate in social activity outside work, where it has been made clear that this is not welcome.
- Conduct which is intimidating, physically or verbally abusive, including the display of explicit material, the use of sexually explicit humour, and comments of a sexual nature whether directed specifically at any particular individual or not.
- Suggestions that sexual favours may further an employee's career, or that refusal may hinder it.

The HFLS regards sexual harassment as a form of intimidation which has the effect of insulting and demeaning the employee against whom it is directed. It is therefore unacceptable in the working environment and HFLS will take positive action to prevent its occurrence.

How complaints of Discrimination and Harassment will be dealt with

Discrimination and harassment are often complex matters, and there is no single way of dealing with every suspected or alleged instance. In some cases employees may be able to deal satisfactorily with an issue by raising it with his or her immediate manager.

A more formal means of complaint is to utilise HFLS' Grievance Procedure set out in the Employee Handbook. Irrespective of how an issue of harassment arises, the Company commits itself to making a thorough attempt to resolve all matters of harassment.

If you are accused of Discrimination or Harassment

If you are accused of acting in a discriminatory manner towards a fellow employee, or a job applicant, or if you are accused of harassment, the complaint will be fully investigated.

In the course of the investigation you will be given a proper opportunity to rebut the allegation, and provide an explanation of your actions.

If it is concluded that there was no discrimination or harassment this will be the end of the matter. If it is concluded that a false claim has been maliciously made against you, the person or persons responsible may be subject to disciplinary action.

If it is concluded that you have acted in a discriminatory manner, or have harassed another employee your manager will consider what action to take. This may range from counselling to formal disciplinary action, including dismissal in serious cases.

Management Responsibilities

Managers are the guardians of equality of opportunity within their areas of responsibility. Equal opportunities are part of the larger management responsibility of ensuring that the employment environment provides employees with motivation to do a good job. This will be impossible to achieve if individuals feel that they are being treated unfairly.

Where problems or complaints arise managers must take these seriously and make sure they are fully investigated and that any necessary follow-up action is taken. This may include initiating disciplinary action against employees who have committed acts of discrimination or harassment.

Employees' Responsibilities

Employees have a personal responsibility for the practical application of equal opportunities initiatives. The co-operation of all employees will be needed for HFLS to make real progress in this area. In everyday ways we can all contribute to an improved working environment, for example by not making assumptions about people based on their sex or their ethnic background, by challenging those who express prejudice, and by making suggestions to managers about how the working environment can be improved to enhance equal opportunities.

Finally, remember that equality of opportunity is about good and effective employment practice, and about creating an environment in which everybody can be assured that their contribution is valued.

ABSENCE PROCEDURE AND RULES

GENERAL

Employees must ensure that any time off required (other than in the case of sickness) is authorised in advance and authorised by management.

ABSENCE DUE TO SICKNESS

Employees are required to notify HFLS as soon as possible of their sickness absence, and the reasons for it. Notification should be made personally wherever possible, and by no later than five hours prior to a weekend or night shift and two hours prior to all other shifts.

It is essential that employees keep HFLS updated on the circumstances of the absence and of its estimated duration.

Where the absence lasts for seven calendar days or fewer, an Absence Form must be completed by the employee immediately upon return to work.

Where the absence lasts for more than seven calendar days a Medical Certificate completed by a medical practitioner must be forwarded to management to cover the absence. An Absence Form must be completed by the employee on his or her first day back at work.

Every employee who has been absent (other than those authorised in advance) will be interviewed by management immediately upon return to work. The reasons for the employee's absence will be discussed and the completed Absence Form will be considered. Management must decide whether to authorise the absence or not. The onus is on the employee to satisfy management that there was a genuine medical reason for the absence.

Each employee's attendance at work will be monitored so that any unacceptable levels of absenteeism can be examined by management.

ACCESS TO MEDICAL REPORTS

It may be necessary from time to time for HFLS to obtain a medical report from an employee's Doctor in order to gather further information about the employee's medical condition and its probable effect on future attendance at work or ability to do the job.

Employees have certain rights under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988. Should HFLS find it necessary to obtain a medical report then the employee will be asked for his or her written consent. At the time of the request for consent being made the employee will be advised of his/her rights under the Act.

STATUTORY RIGHTS TO TIME OFF

Employees have the right to request time off work in the following circumstances:

Time off to carry out Trade Union Duties

An employee who is a trade union official, a shop steward, or union representative elected in accordance with the rules of the union, and who is concerned with industrial relations at work, has the right to request reasonable time off with pay during working hours to carry out trade union duties and to undergo relevant training. The provision applies only to independent trade unions recognised by the employer for collective bargaining purposes or, in Northern Ireland, trade unions subject of an operative Labour Relations Agency recommendation for recognition.

The amount of time off to which the employee is entitled is that which is reasonable in the circumstances.

Time off to take part in Trade Union Activities

An employee has the right to request a reasonable amount of time off without pay to take part in the activities of his or her trade union. The provisions only apply to independent trade unions recognised by the employer for collective bargaining purposes or, in Northern Ireland, trade unions subject of an operative Labour Relations Agency recommendation for recognition.

The amount of time off to which the employee is entitled is that which is reasonable in all the circumstances.

Time off for Public Duties

An employee is entitled to ask for time off work for specified public duties. There is no statutory right to be paid for this time off (although there may be a contractual right). The amount of time off is that which is reasonable in the circumstances.

The public offices which qualify in respect of this provision are as follows:

- Justice of the Peace.
- Members of a Local Authority i.e. Local Councillors.
- Members of a Statutory Tribunal
- Members of a Police Authority
- Prison Visitors
- Members of health bodies (NHS Trusts, Health Authorities, Health Boards)
- Members of education bodies (managing or governing bodies of local authority educational establishments, grant maintained schools, school councils, self-governing schools, colleges of further education, central institutions).
- Members of the Environmental Agency or the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency.

Time off in Redundancy Situations

Employees are entitled to a reasonable amount of time off to look for other work or make arrangements for retraining if they are under notice of dismissal for redundancy.

Employees must have completed two years' continuous employment to qualify for the right.

Time off to receive Ante Natal Care

Pregnant employees are entitled to take time off with full pay during working hours to receive ante-natal care. The employer may require an employee who wishes to take time off for these purposes to provide medical certification of her pregnancy, and an appointment card, except for the first appointment.

Time off for Safety Representatives

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 an HFLS employee may be selected as a

safety representative. These representatives are entitled to carry out relevant activities during what would otherwise be normal working hours.

AUTHORISED TIME OFF

Jury Service

Employees are entitled to time off work to attend for Jury Service. Employees should notify management immediately on receipt of the Jury Summons giving full details.

Employees will not normally be paid for this time off, and are advised to claim the expenses which they are entitled to from the Court. These will normally include compensation for loss of earnings.

Bereavement Leave

HFLS may grant paid or unpaid bereavement leave at its discretion.

GP Appointments

Appointments should be requested out of work hours????? [ACAS]

COMPUTERS

GENERAL RULES

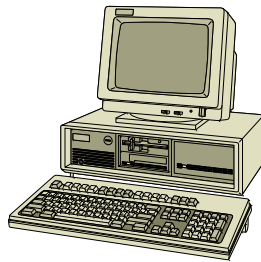
HFLS holds virus protection software. It is a strict rule that no software may be loaded onto any computer without specific management authorisation to do so.

Employees are not permitted to copy HFLS' software.

Employees are required to log on to HFLS' computer system using their own password, which they are required to keep secret.

Any employee who uses another employee's password to log on to the computer system, with or without that employee's permission, will be liable to summary dismissal for gross misconduct.

Any employee who discloses his or her password to another employee may be liable to disciplinary action.



On leaving HFLS' employment, and at any other time at management request, employees are required to hand in all HFLS' information and data held in computer-useable format.

Employees are not permitted to play games on the computers.

No private work may be done on the computers without management authorisation.

Employees must not load any third party software onto HFLS' computers. Employees found in breach of this rule may be liable to summary dismissal for gross misconduct.

INTERNET USE

HFLS has software and systems to monitor and record all Internet usage.

HFLS regularly inspects files stored in private areas of the network in order to assure compliance with this policy.

The display of sexually explicit or otherwise offensive images or documents on any HFLS system is a very serious breach of HFLS' rules, and may be dealt with by summary dismissal.

If an employee finds him or herself accidentally connected to a site that contains sexually explicit or offensive material, he or she must disconnect from that site immediately, and report the incident to his or her superior.

Use of HFLS' Internet access facilities which results in the misuse of HFLS' assets or resources, sexual harassment, unauthorised public speaking or the misappropriation or theft of intellectual property is also strictly forbidden.

E-MAIL USE

HFLS' e-mail is not a personal e-mail facility and staff are not generally permitted to use HFLS' e-mail address except for legitimate business purposes or for limited personal use with the permission of their superior.

If an e-mail is received with an attached file this must not be opened or executed without first using virus screening software.

HFLS' confidential messages should be distributed to HFLS personnel only. Forwarding these to locations outside HFLS is prohibited.

Misuse of e-mail may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Examples of misuse include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Transmitting obscene, profane or offensive material.
- Accessing sexual materials.
- Transmitting or displaying messages, jokes, or forms which breach HFLS' harassment policy or create an intimidating or hostile work environment.
- Using HFLS' communications systems to set up personal businesses or send chain letters.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

HFLS endeavours to ensure that employees use of either alcohol or drugs does not impair the safe and efficient running of HFLS or the health of its employees.

Establishing the Problem

Managers should be aware that the misuse of drugs or alcohol by employees may come to light in various ways. The following characteristics, especially when arising in combinations, may indicate the presence of an alcohol or drug-related problem.

Absenteeism

- Instances of unauthorised leave
- Frequent Friday and/or Monday absences
- Leaving work early
- Lateness (especially on returning from lunch)
- Excessive level of sickness absence
- Strange and increasingly suspicious reasons for absence
- Unusually high level of absence in respect of colds, flu, stomach upsets
- Unscheduled short-term absences, with or without explanation

High Accident Level

- At work
- Elsewhere i.e. driving, at home

Work Performance

- Difficulty in concentration
- Work requires increased effort
- Individual tasks take more time
- Problems with remembering instructions or own mistakes

Mood Swings

- Irritability
- Depression
- General confusion

Misconduct

An employee's alcohol or drug problem may come to light as a mitigating factor in a disciplinary interview. It should be treated as a mitigating factor for certain 'less serious' disciplinary offences, such as poor timekeeping or lateness, provided the person is prepared to undergo treatment.

Self-referral

In some instances, employees may seek help and advice themselves.

Intervention

Supervisors and managers who feel an employee's unsatisfactory performance may be drug or alcohol-related should arrange to hold a meeting with the employee.

Treatment

Where employees acknowledge that they have a problem and are given help and treatment, this will be on the understanding that:

- They will fulfil the obligations of the treatment arranged by HFLS.
- Where necessary, while undergoing treatment, they will be on sick leave and will be entitled to sick pay, where applicable.
- In the event of in-patient treatment being necessary for a prolonged period, they will be on sick leave and will be entitled to sick pay, where applicable.

Where a return to work would jeopardise either a satisfactory level of job performance or the employee's recovery, the manager will review the full circumstances of the case and agree a course of action to be taken. This may include the offer of suitable alternative employment, the consideration of retirement on the grounds of ill-health, or dismissal.

Refusal of Help

Any employee who declines the offer of referral for assessment and treatment, or discontinues treatment before its satisfactory completion and who continues to fall below standards required, will be subject to the normal and recognised procedures, e.g. disciplinary procedures.

Relapse

Where an employee, having received treatment, suffers a relapse, HFLS will consider the case on its individual merits. Medical advice will be sought in an attempt to ascertain how much more treatment/rehabilitation time is likely to be required for full recovery. At HFLS' discretion, more treatment or rehabilitation time may be given in order to help the employee to recover fully.

Recovery Unlikely

If, after an employee has received treatment, recovery seems unlikely, HFLS may be unable to wait any longer for the employee's recovery. In such cases, dismissal may result, but in most cases a clear warning will be given to the employee beforehand and a full medical investigation will have been undertaken.

Serious Misconduct Caused by Alcohol or Drugs

Intoxicated Employees:

If an employee is intoxicated by alcohol or drugs during working hours or on HFLS' premises arrangements will be made for the employee to be escorted from the premises immediately. Disciplinary action will take place when the employee has had time to become sober or recover from the effects of drugs. This kind of behaviour will normally be treated as gross misconduct and result in summary dismissal.

Consumption of Alcohol on the Premises:

Employees are expressly forbidden to consume alcohol when at work, (except at the annual staff party) or to bring alcohol onto HFLS' premises under any circumstances. Any breach of this rule will be treated as gross misconduct which is likely to result in summary dismissal.

Drug Abuse on the Premises:

Employees who take drugs which have not been prescribed on medical grounds during working hours or on HFLS' premises, will be committing an act of gross misconduct and will thus render themselves likely to be summarily dismissed, as will any employee believed to be in possession of, or buying or selling unprescribed drugs, during working hours or on HFLS premises.

GENERAL

All employees are encouraged not to cover up for employees with a drink or drug problem but to recognise that collusion represents a false sense of loyalty and will in the longer term damage those employees.

Employees who recognise that they have a drink or drug problem, or that they are at risk of developing one, are encouraged to come forward for confidential help. They should speak in confidence with their manager, or secure the help of a colleague in this respect.

COMMUNICATIONS

POLICY STATEMENT

It is HFLS' firm belief that efficiency, high productivity and a harmonious working environment are best achieved where effective communications are established between management and employee. In order to achieve this, systems will be set-up and maintained by managers to facilitate the flow of information throughout the organisation both from management to employees and vice versa, namely memo, email to interpreting@hfls.org.uk (addressed to relevant member of staff).

PROCEDURE

Job-related information - Managers are responsible for ensuring that staff are provided with all the information they need to perform their duties satisfactorily and safely. Details of employees' terms and conditions of employment are contained in the following documents:

- offer letter
- terms and conditions statement
- job description
- handbooks containing company rules and procedures

Management is responsible for keeping these items up-to-date and for distributing amendments and additions when necessary and on general guidance on health and safety matters. Managers are responsible for:

- explaining procedures to be followed when working in their office, operating equipment, completing documentation, etc.
- supplying information to employees on safe working practices.

Any queries employees may have relating to the work they are required to carry out, should be raised with their manager.

Staff meetings will be held monthly to discuss issues connected with the smooth operation of the two sites. Weekly 5-minute individual meetings will be held with staff and the General Manager (usually on Fridays 11-12). Employees are encouraged to make suggestions which they believe may assist in improving efficiency and promoting job satisfaction.

Suggestions and comments raised by employees should be fully considered and transmitted to senior management where appropriate, by memo, email to interpreting@hfls.org.uk (addressed to relevant member of staff), by phone and using MSM Messenger.

Notice boards are placed in strategic positions. These boards will carry relevant information about the Company's activities.

HFLS distributes an Interpreters Newsletter and a Service Users Newsletter.

MEDIA QUERIES

Any queries received from the media must be passed immediately to management. Employees must not attempt to deal with queries themselves.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidential Disclosure Agreement

THIS AGREEMENT is made on
(date) _____

between (*name of employee*)

Of (*address of employee*)

and *HFLS, Office F, Poynter House, 1 Queensdale Crescent, W11 4TA*

OBJECTIVE:

This Agreement is being entered into to ensure confidentiality*, whilst in employment as a HFLS member of staff, whether on a temporary or permanent basis.

I HEREBY AGREE TO ABIDE BY THE FOLLOWING OBLIGATIONS OF CONFIDENTIALITY:

1. To keep any and all information supplied by HFLS, HFLS' staff, HFLS' clients and users of their service **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL** and not to disclose it to any person, firm, or individual.
2. Not to use information supplied by HFLS, HFLS' staff, HFLS' clients and users of their services for any purpose other than the aforementioned **Objective**.
3. The termination of engagement as a HFLS member of staff for any reason shall not affect the obligations of confidentiality contained in this Agreement.
4. This Agreement is subject to the Laws of England.

*All items of information disclosed to you during your employment with HFLS, whether on a temporary or permanent basis, are deemed confidential

Signed for and on behalf of
HFLS

Signed by
HFLS Staff Member

Signature _____

Signature _____

Name (in capitals) _____

Name (in capitals) _____

Position _____

Date _____

Date _____

BUSINESS GIFTS

As a general policy HFLS does not believe that giving and receiving gifts is appropriate to the efficient conduct of its business. There are, however, limited exceptions to this policy.

In exceptional cases, for example, where the Company decides that a gift was made as a token of the donor's gratitude for a service carried out to very high standards, the recipient will be allowed to retain the gift.

Promotional gifts such as stationery, which are not of significant value, are exempt from this policy and need not be disclosed. However, employees are reminded that, since such gifts are sent only to a limited number of employees, they should be distributed to other members of staff where appropriate.

Failure to disclose gifts will constitute a disciplinary offence which will be handled in accordance with HFLS' formal disciplinary procedure. If the gift in question was of significant value and, for example, the recipient is in a position to influence business dealings with the donor, the offence will be treated as gross misconduct.

Giving gifts

While it is not HFLS' policy to offer gifts to customers etc., HFLS recognises that, on occasions this may be necessary - for example, during Christmas and New Year.

Employees who send gifts which have not been approved in accordance with this procedure will not be reimbursed for the cost of the gift. Further, such action may, depending on the circumstances, be treated as a disciplinary offence which will be dealt with under the formal disciplinary procedure.

REDUNDANCY, SHORT-TIME WORKING & LAY OFF

It is the Company's intention to develop and expand its business and to provide security of employment for its employees. However, circumstances may arise when changes in funding, the market, technology, organisational requirements, and similar, will lead to the need for reductions in staff.

Where a redundancy situation arises, consideration will be given to alternative options, including:

- Imposing a restriction on recruitment
- Restricting the use of voluntary, temporary and casual employees
- Reducing the amount of overtime working in the organisation
- The implementation of temporary lay off or short time working where this is appropriate
- Implementing compulsory retirement for those employees who are over the Company's normal retirement age
- Considering applications for voluntary redundancy

Where, after consideration of these and any other alternatives, management considers that the need for redundancies still remains, consultation will take place.

Selection for redundancy will be based on the following criteria:-

- Flexibility
- Capability
- Conduct
- Attendance
- Service length

These criteria may be differently weighted depending on the circumstances, but will be assessed in an objective manner.

The above criteria are subject to HFLS' requirement to retain specific knowledge, skills, and a balanced workforce at all times.

HFLS reserves the right to introduce short-time working or a period of temporary lay off without pay where this is necessary to avoid redundancies or where there is a shortage of work.