

Code of Conduct for Employees

Introduction

This document sets out the Code of Conduct for all employees.

The Code encapsulates Lancashire Mind's Vision, Values, and desired Behaviours, which in turn support and drive our business, and help ensure our actions and decisions, are integrity-based, connecting with ethical, social and environmental objectives.

Aims and objectives

The Code is intended to:

- provide a clear framework for the standards of conduct expected of all staff working at Lancashire Mind
- it should be read in conjunction with Lancashire Mind's Competency Framework (Staff), which sets out expected behaviours at each of the different job grades and Lancashire Mind's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, which highlights the procedure for ensuring misconduct is managed appropriately
- provide a behavioural and value-driven framework within which all involved in delivering services act in accordance with their relevant codes of professional conduct.

General Principles

Lancashire Mind expects all staff to:

- Make the duty of care to and the safety of individuals their first concern and act quickly to protect them from risk
- Respect the public, individuals, relatives, carers, staff and partners in other agencies
- Be always honest and act with integrity
- Accept accountability for their own work and ensure that they inform other appropriate persons within the organisation when problems occur
- Demonstrate a commitment to team and partnership working by co-operating with colleagues within Lancashire Mind and in the wider community
- Safeguard the health and safety of themselves, colleagues, and anyone else who may be affected by what we do or fail to do
- Create and maintain an environment free from harassment, victimisation, discrimination, and violence
- Operate within professional boundaries

Our CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Equality and Diversity

Lancashire Mind is committed to creating a culture in which every individual is treated with dignity and respect, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, sex, religion or belief, race, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity or other material factor. Please see Lancashire Mind's Equality and Diversity Policy for details.

2. Individual services

In ensuring that the best service is provided we must:

- Respect and protect confidentiality demonstrating awareness of the procedures and Data Protection Act
- Use Lancashire Mind resources in the best interests of the public and individuals, encouraging effective and efficient use of resources is achieved
- Promote an inclusive service that values diversity and gives our service users and people with experience of mental health issues opportunities to improve, grow and deliver our services.
- Promote equality by ensuring the way we work promotes equity, inclusion and actively addresses discrimination

Related policies; Confidentiality Policy, Information Governance Policy

3. Learning & Developing

Lancashire Mind recognises that in order for us all to be able to give our best we must develop an environment that encourages all staff to develop appropriate skills and a sound knowledge base. To do this effectively Lancashire Mind will:

- Encourage staff to admit to errors or incidents when these occur, so that we can effectively learn from our mistakes and put into place future safeguards
- Ensure that staff are appropriately supervised, through an effective supervision and appraisal system
- Invest in training and development for all staff and ensure equality of accesses
- Ensure staff are briefed and kept up to date with Lancashire Mind's policies and initiatives and are encouraged to use their learning to actively develop services.

Related policies; Continual Professional Development Policy, Volunteer Policy, Safeguarding adults and children and young people policies.

4. Performance of Duties

A climate of mutual confidence and respect between managers and employees is critical to achieving work objectives and providing a high quality service.

Related Policies: Performance Management Policy

5. Working Hours and Attendance (Staff)

Lancashire Mind promotes a flexible working environment and supports staff who need to take unexpected absence. All staff are required to comply with their official start and finish times, including taking rest breaks and attend work when expected and ensure that the organisation is notified of any unexpected absences within the defined time frames.

Unexpected absences include sickness absence, time off to look after a dependant, emergency absence, compassionate leave.

Staff must notify their line manager in line with policy and procedure at the earliest opportunity where unexpected absence or lateness/finishing earlier the usual is unavoidable.

Related Policies: Staff Absence Policy, Flexible Working Policy, TOIL procedure, Compassionate, Emergency and Bereavement Leave Policy.

6. Complaints and Safeguarding Incidents

Employees are required to report to their manager any complaints about service or treatment, or any incident of unacceptable behaviour to individuals, public or employees (particularly safeguarding concerns), which have been noted, reported or alleged.

Related Policies: Adult/CYP Safeguarding Policies, Information Breach Policy, Complaints Policy, Disciplinary & Grievance Policies.

7. Health and Safety

All employees have the responsibility to ensure that in their work they take constant care of the health, safety and welfare of themselves and others who may come into contact with them, or be affected by them, or their work, and that they do nothing to put this at risk.

Related Policies: Health & Safety, ASB Policy (tenancy), Lone Working, Health & Wellbeing, Alcohol & Drugs Policy, Unacceptable Behaviour (service users).

8. Confidentiality of Information

Individuals and employees have the right of protection in terms of the confidentiality of information. All employees are expected to treat each other with dignity and respect.

On commencement of employment or volunteering at Lancashire Mind, all staff are required to agree to and sign a confidentiality agreement in line with the Confidentiality Policy. Staff should not share data which relates to the business, its stakeholders or its beneficiaries outside the service and should only disclose

information with colleagues or third parties where legal or necessary to protect individuals, where consent is obtained to be able to carry out their duties.

Lancashire Mind collects and stores personal and sensitive data for legitimate purposes. This is stored confidentially and staff should ensure that they have read and understood the Information Governance Policy. Any failure either deliberate or accidental which leads to the breach of data must be reported in a timely fashion, as per the policy. Failure to comply with this policy, or other actions that may bring into disrepute the reputation of the organisation may face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Related Policies: Confidentiality Policy, Information Breach Policy, Data Breach Policy

9. Declaring Interest

On the commencement of employment at Lancashire Mind all employees must declare any interests of a nature personally beneficial, either directly or indirectly to them, which may affect, or be affected by, a contract other than their own employment contract. This is renewed annually though employees must inform Lancashire Mind of any interests that may arise at any time during their employment with the organisation.

10. Acting with Integrity

All employees must act in a manner that is honest and open and ensure that they:

- Are at all times objective, impartial and act without favour or judgement
- Use Lancashire Mind resources in an appropriate and effective way
- Understand and comply with any financial control policies in place relevant to individual's roles
- Promote public and individuals' interests
- Decisions must not be influenced by gifts or inducements
- Do not carry out private work using any Lancashire Mind property or equipment e.g. phone calls or photocopies unless given prior permission to do so
- Do not undertake private work during work's time
- Bring to the attention of Lancashire Mind any act they witness, or anything they are made aware of, which is detrimental to the wellbeing of another or the organisation
- Disclose any other form of paid employment

11. Accountability

Employees should ensure that they:

- Are impartial and honest in the conduct of their official business
- Do not seek to advantage or further private business or other interests, in the course of their official duties
- Do not abuse their position for personal gain or to the benefit of their family, friends, or other individuals or organisations with which they are associated

- Do not undertake outside employment that could compromise their duties
- Do not seek to advantage or further their private business or interest in the course of their official duties
- Protect themselves and Lancashire Mind from any allegations of impropriety by seeking advice from their line manager, or from the appropriate contact point, whenever there is any doubt as to the interpretation of this section

12. Acceptance of Gifts or Hospitality

Under the Prevention and Corruption Acts 1906 and 1916, it is an offence for employees to corruptly accept any gifts or considerations as an inducement or rewards.

Related policies: Anti Bribery and Corruption Policy

13. Fraud and theft

If an employee believes they have reason to suspect a colleague, individual, contractor or other person of fraud or an offence against Lancashire Mind or a serious infringement of Lancashire Mind's rules, they have a responsibility to inform the Head of Operations in the first instance.

Employees suspected of fraud – for example, submitting or approving fraudulent expense claims, falsifying time sheets – will be investigated under Lancashire Mind's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, and may face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Employees suspected of claiming or knowingly authorising incorrect expenses, or fraudulently claiming other monies e.g. sick pay, will be reported to the Local Counter Fraud Specialists. This may result in legal action.

Likewise, any employees suspected of theft– for example, taking stationery or merchandise for non-work purposes – will be investigated under Lancashire Mind's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, and may face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. see also Antibribery and Corruption policy.

Related policies: Anti Bribery and Corruption Policy, Disciplinary Policy, (Expenses Policy).

14. Professional Registration

Where required, employees must at all times be professionally registered or comply with any other specific requirements to be properly authorised to do their job. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure that professional registration is maintained.

15. Disclosure

It is every employee's responsibility to:

- Disclose any convictions, even 'spent' convictions, under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1975.

- Disclose the details of any crime that you have been charged with, at the point of being charged during your employment with Lancashire Mind.
- Comply with Lancashire Mind's Safer Recruitment requirements
- Disclose when applying for a post subject to business mileage or involving driving duties, if you have any points or endorsements on your driving licence

Related documents: Safer Recruitment Guidance, Rehabilitation of Offenders Guidance, Recruitment of Ex-offenders Policy, Recruitment Policy.

16. Personal Relationships

16.1 Relationships between Employees

Whilst Lancashire Mind does not seek to define standards for personal relationships between employees outside of the workplace, Lancashire Mind does not find it acceptable to have a close personal relationship which impacts on role performance in the workplace. This may relate to situations where formal decisions are being made, for example in relation to recruitment and selection, organisational change, disciplinary and grievance issues. In particular, this applies to jobs where:

- There is a direct line management/supervisory relationship between the two individuals
- Where employees work in the same section or unit, it is their responsibility to ensure that their relationship does not affect or comprise their work or the work of the department

Where there is the potential for a conflict of interest due to the nature of a personal relationship between employees or prospective employees, for example, in making recruitment and selection decisions, or undertaking a formal Lancashire Mind procedure, employees are required to inform their line manager of the situation. Where this is not possible to be resolved informally, the disciplinary procedure will be implemented..

16.2 Relationships between a Lancashire Mind Employee and an Individual accessing services

Lancashire Mind regards as wholly unacceptable any close personal relationship between an employee and a vulnerable individual whom they meet as a result of their employment. If this type of relationship exists/develops, the situation can be regarded as:

- An abuse of the employee's position of Lancashire Mind;
- A breach of the standards of propriety expected in the post;
- A compromise of professional standards/code of conduct.

Where there are concerns about the relationship between an employee or volunteer and a child, the named individual must be informed by managers, and the named professionals will instigate the Local Safeguarding Children Procedures which will run parallel to Lancashire Mind's disciplinary procedures.

16.3 Relationships between a Lancashire Mind employee and a child up to age 18

It is illegal for a person in a position of power to groom or have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 years of age. Any Lancashire Mind employee would be deemed to be in a position of power. The Named Staff or volunteer Member must be informed by managers if this is suspected and the named professionals will instigate Lancashire Mind's Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy and Procedure, which will run parallel to Lancashire Mind's disciplinary procedures. Staff can contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy for advice if they suspect professional abuse is occurring. If they consider a child or young person to be in immediate danger, they should contact the police and relevant child protection services, in line with Lancashire Mind's policy guidance.

16.4 Non-reciprocated Behaviour

Employees must be aware that behaviour towards another employee or volunteer that is not reciprocated and not acceptable can amount to harassment, which may be dealt with under Lancashire Mind's grievance and disciplinary policies.

17. Social Media and Communication Systems

Lancashire Mind's Social Media policy outlines the expectations of staff in relation to social media and communications. Staff who breach these guidelines may face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Related Policies: Social Media Policy.

18. Conduct

All employees are expected to adhere to the principles set out in this code of conduct and to always behave in a manner, which does not bring the organisation into disrepute. Behaviour that is considered would bring the organisation into disrepute will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. All employees must refer to the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures for full details

Unacceptable conduct can include where an employee has acted inappropriately or in an unacceptable manner. Gross misconduct occurs where an employee has done something that is very serious or has very serious consequences.

Related Policies: Disciplinary and Grievance policies

19. Management Standards

In addition to the principles outlined above which apply to all staff, those with responsibility for the line management of other staff should also:

- Ensure that they are consistent, fair and unbiased in their judgements about colleagues or staff (including appraisals or references), including all

information which has a bearing on their competence, performance, eligibility and conduct.

- Be responsible for the performance of those staff they manage and ensure that they accept that they are accountable for their actions.
- Represent the organisation to the public and partner organisations in a positive manner.
- Answer questions and complaints from people who use services and/or their carers in a manner which accepts the responsibility for the individual and collective individuals' experience, giving a full explanation of what has happened and what will be done to deal with poor performance, ensure client safety and improve delivery
- Be open and honest in their explanations and justification for decisions on the use of resources and responding positively to suggestions for improvements.
- Be accountable for the use of resources, the performance of the team and the implementation of policy and delivery of targets.

In line with the Code of Conduct, Lancashire Mind expects that our managers will;

- make the care and safety of individuals a first concern, and act to protect them from risk
- respect the public, individuals, relatives/carers, Lancashire Mind staff, and partners in other agencies
- be honest and act with integrity
- accept responsibility for their own work and the proper performance of the people they manage
- show commitment to working as a team member
- take responsibility for their own learning and development

20. Link with grievance procedure

If an employee feels they are being victimised and/or unfairly treated, they have recourse to the grievance procedure (unless disciplinary proceedings have begun).

21. Breaches of the Code

Breaches of this code will be investigated fairly and consistently. Where an individual's conduct is not conducive to the principles set out in the code, it is right that individuals should be held to account for their actions – in particular if there is evidence of gross negligence, recklessness or criminal behaviour. Where the failure is symptomatic of wider issues, particularly where they demonstrate organisational defects, Lancashire Mind will ensure that it takes action to learn from these and actively put into place appropriate mechanisms.



Where action is taken under the procedure and no agreement can be reached on an informal and voluntary basis it will become necessary to invoke the disciplinary procedure and it may ultimately be necessary to dismiss the employee(s). Every opportunity would be taken to resolve the matter without recourse to dismissal. Managers considering redeployment and/or disciplinary action must seek early advice from the Head of Operations and where necessary our legal employment advice contractor.