



**STAFF HANDBOOK**  
*April 2012 Edition*

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## Welcome to York Mind

York Mind is an independent provider of high quality recovery-focused mental health services in York and its surrounding area. Our wide range of services help people as they recover from a variety of mental health problems.

At York Mind we believe that with the right support, everybody, regardless of how serious their diagnosis is, can make progress towards recovery and that by working towards recovery and integration, even for those with severe mental health problems we can make a significant positive difference to the future health and wellbeing of our beneficiaries.

York Mind exists in order to promote recovery from mental ill-health, emotional well-being and independent living.

We achieve this by having a three stage process.

- Entry level activities designed to help individuals make new contacts and friends. These activities include drama, yoga, craft, walking, reading, gardening and creative writing, which also have an extremely positive effect on the participants' wellbeing.
- Training activity designed to meet gaps in skills or education and provide qualifications that lead on to employment or mainstream learning.
- Work placements and specialist mentoring within our Design and Print Workshop for those ready to develop their employability skills and begin preparing for move-on from mental health services.

This pathway approach has been very successful, preventing much of the dependency and institutionalisation that has been associated with mental health service providers in the past.

Underpinning our pathway projects is an on-going programme of individual mentor-support which we believe is the key to successful recovery.

Mentors help beneficiaries develop plans for moving on in their lives. They provide information advice and guidance on learning, volunteering or employment opportunities and help individuals develop coping strategies to overcome barriers they might face in their recovery from mental ill-health.

In order for the 'Pathway' to succeed we also have a number of specialist projects designed to help individuals overcome the crises or barriers they

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might encounter. These specialist projects are fundamental to the success of the pathway approach and include:-

**Befriending:** providing community based support to isolated individuals.

**Self-Help groups:** led by paid staff and volunteers, aimed at giving people the opportunity to share experiences and offer coping strategies.

**Advocacy:** giving vulnerable people the support they need to make and act upon informed choices and decisions about aspects of their lives they wish to change.

**Counselling:** supporting people through a period of crisis or distress. As well as those diagnosed with a mental-health condition, we also work with people emotionally affected by situations such as redundancy, bereavement, bullying at work and general anxiety.

We have 60 years experience of responding to local mental health needs and reaching out to our client group. We give a high priority to working closely with other organisations and agencies active in this field. We operate from modern, custom-built premises funded by the Big Lottery Fund. We are a registered charity and we value our independence.

## **Our Values**

We believe in providing **care** for people who come to us. We will **accept** them as individuals and **respect** their beliefs, needs and wishes

We will provide a **happy** and **empowering** environment in which to **encourage** recovery, well-being and progression

We will deliver our work in an organisation that is **professional** and **accountable** with an **enterprising** and **sustainable** business model

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What we aim to achieve

York Mind is not just about staying still, it's about Recovery....

'Recovery' is a personal process of tackling the adverse impact of experiencing mental health problems, despite their continuing or long-term presence. Used in this sense, recovery does not mean "cure".

Recovery is about people seeing themselves as capable of recovery rather than as passive recipients of professional interventions. The personal accounts of recovery suggest that much personal recovery happens without (or in some cases in spite of) professional help.

Recovery involves personal development and **change**, including acceptance that there are problems to face, a sense of involvement and control over one's life, the cultivation of hope and using the support from others, including collaborating in solution-focused work with informal carers and professional workers.

York Mind has adopted the recovery concept for many years and has developed its projects to facilitate this process.

### **Main Ingredients of Recovery**

- Belief by the person experiencing mental illness/distress that they can and will recover
- Belief by people supporting them
- Commitment by the person experiencing mental distress to recover
- A personal strategy for recovery
- Resources to enable the person to recover
- Personal growth is shared with others seeking to recover

### **Social Inclusion**

Reducing personal isolation has always been one of York Mind's core activities and for us forms an important part of the recovery process.

York Mind is one of several organisations working with clients in the area to reduce social exclusion: Sycamore House, The Driveway, Mind, Mainstay and many more mainstream organisations provide an opportunity for clients to meet and socialise with other people. Our own service has been centered on social and leisure activities that run throughout the week.

The other aspect of social inclusion that we have been involved in is helping people gain the confidence and skills they need to move into mainstream

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activity once they have reached that point in their recovery. We do this work as we believe inclusion in mainstream activity is one of the most effective ways of combating social exclusion.

### **What York Mind can do to help**

York Mind has evolved over the years and now exists to help people recover and improve their lives. Our activities have purpose and are designed to help clients gain the skills and confidence to progress further in their recovery.

Everybody who comes to York Mind does so in order to achieve a specific set of outcomes – these outcomes are entirely at the discretion of the individual themselves and the person who is referring them. At their initial interview we will look at the outcomes they want to achieve and see which, if any, of our projects can help them to do so.

In order to measure recovery we have a robust monitoring framework that is carried out as part of our regular mentoring and support sessions. Indicators for progress are tracked using a variety of methods and follow up monitoring is carried out to ensure our work provides long term benefit. Without this focus neither we, nor the clients can measure the success of their work.

Many of our clients will experience set backs and relapses during their journey towards recovery. Often this may only be a temporary blip but sometimes people will need to start again, almost from the beginning with a new plan and set of outcomes for what they want to achieve.

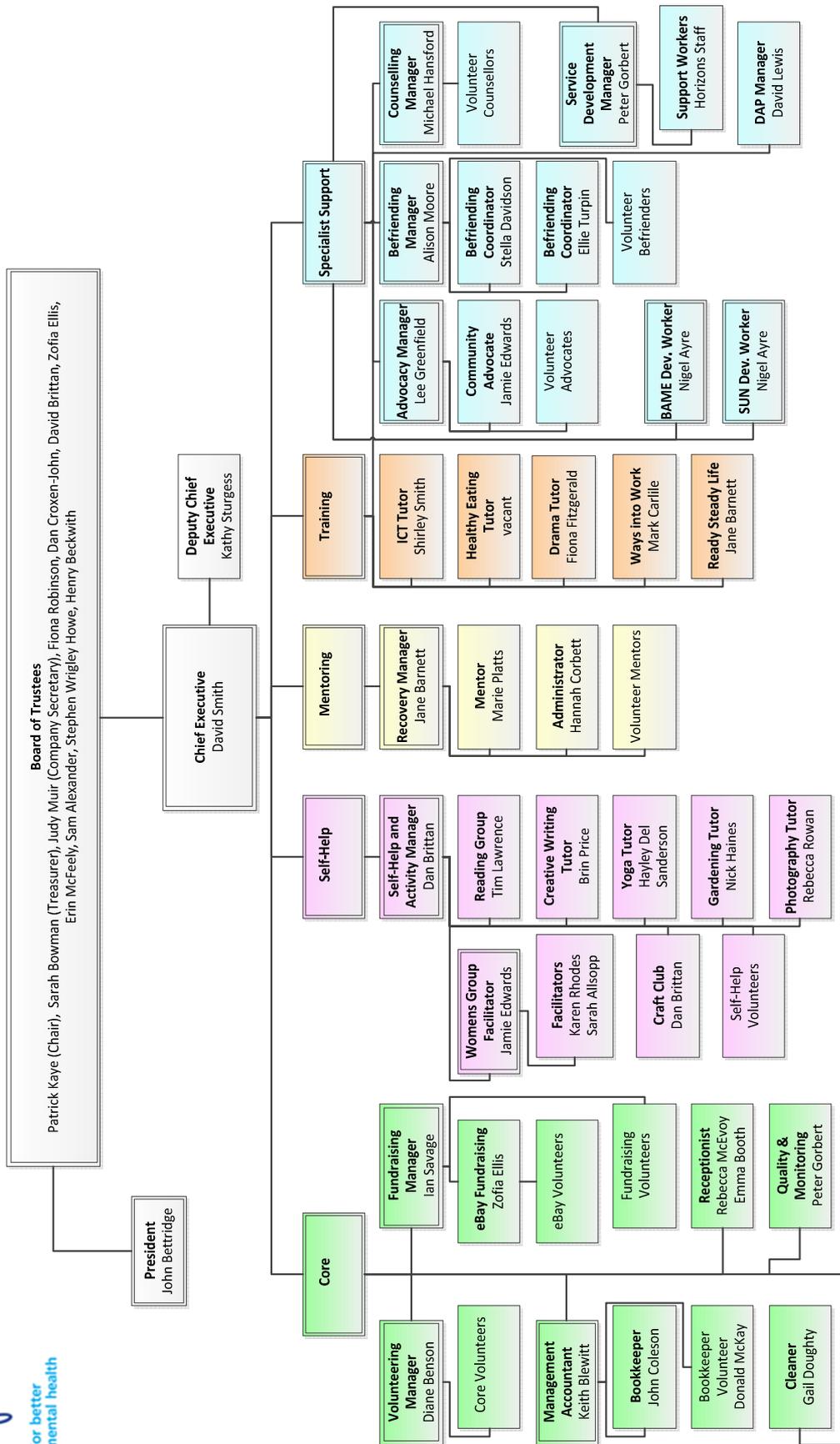
Recovery is a personal journey often taking many years. York Mind has an important role to play in part of that journey and can begin to support people as soon as they are well enough to join in with and benefit from our projects.

York Mind will remain involved **as long as we can help** our clients achieve useful outcomes that will assist their recovery. For those with severe and enduring difficulties it is inevitable that progress will take considerable time and outcomes, especially in the early days may be modest. Our hope is that for a client who is relatively stable, over time, useful outcomes will include progression into mainstream services and a reduced reliance on mental health services in the future.

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# Organisational Structure

## York Mind – Organisational Structure – April 2012



## Joining York Mind

As a new employee, there are details that we will require from you to ensure that your salary, benefits and employee records are complete and accurate. It is also important that you understand the terms of your offer relating to references, the right to work in the UK, a standard Criminal Records Bureau disclosure and probationary periods.

### Personal Details

It is important that we have up to date contact details, including an emergency contact, at all times and you will be asked to provide your personal details on joining. If your personal details such as allergies, address, contact numbers, emergency contact and bank account should change at any time during your employment you must notify your line manager as soon as possible. The Charity will treat all personal information in the strictest of confidence.

### P45

Your P45 contains information about your tax in the current tax year and details of your current tax code. Your previous employer should have given it to you on leaving. You should retain part 1A and pass the other two sections of the form to your line manager as soon as you join, or as soon as your previous employer has forwarded it on to you.

If this is your first job, or you have not been in paid employment for some time and do not possess a P45, please inform your line manager on joining. You will be given a P46 which must be completed and returned immediately to enable the correct tax code to be applied as soon as possible.

### References

Your employment is subject to the receipt of references deemed satisfactory by us. We will seek to obtain at least two professional references, including one from your most recent employment. If you have not been in paid employment for some time we will seek to obtain references from organisations you have been associated with in a professional capacity. A personal referee, that is a reference from a friend or colleague, is not acceptable. We may seek additional references where we are unable to obtain relevant information.

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## **Right to Work within the UK**

Under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, it is against the law to employ anyone who does not have permission to live and work in the UK. As your employer we have a responsibility for ensuring you do have this right before your employment commences.

You may have been asked to produce one, or two, of a number of specified documents during the recruitment process to enable us to check proof of your eligibility. If you produced the specified document(s) during the recruitment process then you do not need to do anything else.

If you have not already produced one, or two, of the specified documents to satisfy these requirements, then you must bring one, or two, of the original documents from the list in Appendix One with you on the first day of your employment and give this to your line manager. You will not be allowed to commence employment with us without the appropriate documentation.

We will need to take a copy of the original document(s) and retain them on file.

## **Disclosure of Criminal Convictions**

Due to the nature of our work and individuals being in positions of trust, we demand the highest standards of integrity and honesty from our employees. You are requested to disclose details of criminal convictions and cautions prior to joining, as well as during your employment. Due to the nature of our work, positions are exempt from the general principle of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 that spent convictions do not have to be disclosed. Therefore, all prospective employees and volunteers are also required to disclose details of spent convictions and cautions.

Failing to inform the Charity of a criminal conviction or caution prior to joining could lead to the withdrawal of an offer of employment. Equally, if an employee fails to disclose any criminal conviction or caution issued during their employment, they may be subject to disciplinary proceedings for gross misconduct.

We will obtain a Standard Disclosure through the Criminal Records Bureau and it is a condition of your employment that you consent to this. Standard Disclosures contain details of all convictions held on the Police National Computer including current and "spent" convictions, as well as details of any cautions, reprimands or final warnings.

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The Charity works with Disability Action Yorkshire, a registered umbrella body, to process applications for a Standard Disclosure. Individuals will be required to provide a range of personal information to confirm their identity.

A form will then be sent to the individual for his/her signature and consent. The form needs to be returned to the umbrella body to send to the Criminal Records Bureau for processing accordingly. A copy of the Disclosure will be sent to the individual and umbrella body, who will forward it to the Chief Executive.

The Charity will cover the costs of Disclosure fees.

The Charity has a policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders.

### **Probationary Periods**

All offers of employment are subject to a probationary period of 6 months during which time employees' performance and conduct will be carefully appraised and monitored. During the probationary period either you, or the Charity may terminate your contract, by giving 1 weeks notice in writing.

The Charity reserves the right to extend your probationary period should this be considered necessary.

Disciplinary procedures do not apply during the probationary period and the Charity reserves the right to terminate your employment at any time during your probationary period if your work performance or conduct is deemed unsatisfactory.

The following guidelines are to assist line managers in making appropriate and accurate decisions in relation to the assessment, training, counselling and development of employees during probationary periods, leading to the final decision whether or not to confirm appointments.

### **Probationary Review Procedure**

The Charity is committed to ensuring all new employees receive regular guidance, feedback on progress, advice on targets and expectations, training and development for the purpose of supporting and equipping you to achieve the requirements of your role and successful completion the probationary period.

Procedures are in place to support the decision-making process, ensuring employees are fairly and consistently assessed against objective criteria.

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During the first few weeks of employment new employees will be provided with an introduction to their role, the organisation and relevant procedures, policies, practices and guidelines as part of the induction process.

All employees will participate in supervision meetings during their probationary period to monitor and appraise performance. During these meetings, standards of conduct and performance will be explained to you and feedback provided.

Prior to the end of the probationary period, your line manager will arrange a meeting with you to confirm your appointment, as appropriate. The decision made will take account of supervision meetings, overall progress made, and if standards are not being met, an overall assessment of your suitability for the post and likelihood of achieving the standards required.

The Charity may decide to extend the probationary period allowing for more time to reach a final decision. The decision to extend a probationary period will only normally be made if it is deemed likely you will be able to demonstrate the ability to consistently undertake the job to the required standards in the timescales.

If you have not successfully completed the probationary period, you will be provided with a weeks notice of termination of employment. In the event that your employment is terminated, consideration may be given to paying you in lieu of working the notice period.

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## **Pay & Benefits**

### **Salary**

Your basic salary is paid in equal monthly instalments, in arrears, directly into your bank or building society account, on the last working day of each month. You will receive a payslip each month detailing all payments and deductions.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy in the calculation and payment of salaries, it is possible that under- or overpayments of salary may occasionally occur, due to the time needed to process and input data of a variable nature.

If this happens and results in an overpayment to you, we will make an adjustment to your pay in the following month. Where the error results in an underpayment to you, it will be corrected in full as soon as possible.

If you believe there is an error in your pay, you should notify your line manager immediately. If you do not advise us of a payment to which you are not entitled, this may constitute gross misconduct.

### **Deductions from Salary**

We are legally obliged to deduct income tax (PAYE) and National Insurance contributions from your salary where appropriate. There may also be other circumstances where we are legally obliged to deduct money from your salary, for example, student loans.

We reserve the right in our absolute discretion to deduct any sums which you may owe the Charity from your pay, including, but not limited to, any overpayments made to you, losses suffered by the Charity as a result of your negligence, breach of contract or breach of rules.

When you leave, any overpayments or pay in respect of any holidays taken in excess of your entitlement, or any other amounts owing to us, will be deducted from any final pay due to you.

Where the amounts due to us exceed any amount due to you, it is a term of your employment that you repay the Charity immediately, unless alternative arrangements are agreed between you and the Charity.

### **Salary Reviews**

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Your salary will be reviewed on an annual basis in April according to your individual performance and York Mind's policy in operation at the time of the review. There is no contractual entitlement to a salary increase.

### **Salary Queries**

Any questions relating to your payslip or general salary queries should be directed to your line manager or the Chief Executive.

Any queries regarding your tax code and / or tax and National Insurance deductions should be referred to the tax office.

### **Tax Office**

Address: Swinson House, 23 Piccadilly, York, YO1 9PG

Telephone: 0845 302 1433

### **Travelling and Subsistence Expenses**

In addition to your salary, you are entitled to be repaid by the Charity the amount of all reasonable travelling and other expenses properly and necessarily incurred by you in carrying out your duties whilst away from your normal place of work. The allowances may be increased or decreased at the discretion of York Mind. Further details can be found in the Expenses Policy.

### **Pension**

Staff TUPE'd from other organisations may have individual pension entitlement. For other employees the general position is as follows:

The Charity provides employees with access to a Stakeholder Pension Scheme, the details of which can be obtained from your line manager. For qualifying members of staff the Charity will contribute 6% of your gross salary providing you contribute at least 1% yourself.

### **Hours of Work**

#### **Working Hours**

Full time employees' normal hours of work are 37.5 hours per week based on Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm with an unpaid lunch break of 30 minutes per day. There is no entitlement to any paid meal breaks.

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If you work part time or a different working arrangement applies to you this will be confirmed in writing at the time of appointment.

The Charity reserves the right to vary your hours of work to suit operational requirements, for which reasonable notice will be given.

Employees are required to work such additional, reasonable hours as may be necessary to fulfil the requirements of their role, for which time off in lieu will be provided.

### **Timekeeping and Attendance**

Employees are expected to be in their work position ready to start promptly at the beginning of the working day and must not end an activity or leave before the agreed finishing time unless arranged in advance with a line manager, the Chief Executive or a member of the Board of Trustees.

### **Working Time Regulations**

You shall not be required to work in excess of the average working week as stipulated in the Working Time Regulations 1998, unless you agree in writing that this limit should not apply. You should work in conjunction with your line manager to ensure the hours you work do not adversely impact on either your health or your job.

To comply with the Working Time Regulations, employees who work for more than six hours in a day must take at least a 20-minute break from their work.

### **Holidays, Time Off, Special Leave & Sickness Absence**

#### **Holidays**

Staff TUPE'd from other organisations may have individual holiday entitlement. For other employees the general position is as follows:

The holiday year runs from 1 April to 31 March.

In each year, in addition to bank and statutory holidays, your holiday entitlement will be as follow (these are calculated on a pro rata basis for part time employees

- Employees are entitled to 25 working days per year of paid holiday (reduced pro-rata for part-time employees). The Board of Trustees reserves the right to stipulate that 2 days' holiday are taken over the Christmas period.

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- On completion of 2 years continuous service employees will be entitled to an additional 1 day per year at the start of the next holiday year up to a maximum of 30 days.

Holiday pay is calculated on the basis of your current basic salary.

Entitlement in any holiday year in which you join or leave the Charity will be calculated in proportion to the number of complete calendar months worked in that year.

All leave must be agreed in advance with your line manager and you are required to complete an annual leave record form with as much notice as possible. Your line manager must approve all requests and leave will not be granted without your line manager's written approval. Under no circumstances should you make any plans, or book a holiday, before your request for time off has been approved. It is recommended that you give as much notice as possible in order for York Mind to approve your holiday request and arrange holiday cover.

Unless otherwise agreed by your line manager, no more than 2 consecutive weeks are normally allowed to be taken at any one time.

We reserve the right to refuse a request for holiday at certain times if this would have a detrimental impact on the Charity. Equally, we reserve the right to determine the dates of your holidays if it is necessary for operational reasons.

Normally, holiday not taken by the end of the holiday year will be forfeited and you will not be entitled to any payment in lieu of the unused entitlement. In exceptional circumstances, and with the prior written agreement of the Chief Executive, you may be able to carry over up to 5 days' holiday to the following year.

Annual leave which has accrued but not been taken at the end of a temporary contract or when the employment is terminated will be paid in lieu. Likewise any overpayment of holiday will be recovered from your final pay on termination of your employment.

### **Time off in Lieu**

In certain, exceptional cases where extra hours have been worked, employees may be given time off in lieu, provided this has been agreed in writing by your line manager or the Chief Executive. The following guidelines apply:

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- normal working hours are to be adhered to as far as possible.
- time off in lieu will not usually be given for routine administrative work.
- time off in lieu should be taken as soon as possible and no later than 4 weeks after the additional time worked.
- time owing should not exceed 4 hours – if this occurs, further time cannot be accrued without the prior agreement of the Chief Executive.

### **Time off for Medical Appointments**

Wherever possible, dentist, doctor or hospital appointments should be arranged for outside your working hours. Where this is not possible, reasonable time off will be allowed to attend medical appointments as agreed by the Chief Executive.

### **Special and Compassionate Leave**

There may be occasions when employees' personal circumstances necessitate the need to request paid and / or unpaid absence from work. This may include bereavement, jury service and time off for public duties and it is our aim to accommodate your needs wherever possible. We will generally agree to requests for time off in line with the following up to a maximum of 10 days. However, time off, whether paid or unpaid, is entirely discretionary and additional days or variations to these guidelines based on individual's circumstances must be agreed by the Board of Trustees.

It is important that you submit your request in writing to the Chief Executive and provide us with as much notice as possible. We will confirm whether any requests for leave will be paid or unpaid at the time of your request.

The following are not covered by the Special and Compassionate Leave Policy. If time off is required for anything listed below, then employees should request to take holiday.

- Leave to attend weddings
- Leave to look after pets/animals
- Leave to move house
- Leave to attend interviews (except in a redundancy situation)
- Leave to attend to a domestic crisis that is not directly linked to a person for whom an employee has responsibility as a carer.

This list is not exhaustive.

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## **Bereavement Leave**

If you suffer a bereavement in your immediate family, you may be granted up to one week's paid leave. This includes time off to make arrangements for, and to attend, the funeral. In exceptional circumstances, additional paid time off may be granted with the prior agreement of the Chief Executive.

Immediate family includes your husband, wife or partner, parents, children, brothers and sisters.

For all other bereavements, you will be expected to take holiday or, where you have exhausted your entitlement, unpaid leave.

## **Compassionate Leave**

In the case of severe domestic distress or upheaval an employee may be granted, at the entire discretion of the Charity, up to one week's leave on full pay. In appropriate cases, additional days may be granted, at the Board of Trustees's discretion.

## **Jury Service and attending Court as a Witness**

We will normally grant as much time off as required if you are called for jury service or to attend court as a witness. Time off will not be paid if you require time off work to answer civil or criminal charges.

You should advise your line manager as soon as you are called for jury service and produce the relevant summons and attendance instruction. You will receive full pay during any jury service but will be required to claim back the maximum reimbursement for loss of earnings from the Court. To do this, you will need to give the form sent to you by the Court to the Chief Executive for completion. You can then take it to Court for reimbursement of loss of earnings.

## **Time off for Public Duties**

Reasonable unpaid leave will be provided to individuals holding certain civic or public positions (such as a magistrate, school governor, or councillor) to perform certain duties associated with them. If this applies to you, please speak to your line manager in the first instance to discuss the time off required.

## **Time off for Dependents**

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You are entitled to reasonable unpaid leave to deal with an emergency involving a dependent. A dependent is defined as your:

- husband, wife or partner, or;
- child, or;
- a person who lives in the same house as you (such as a parent, but not tenants or boarders), or;
- any person who reasonably relies on you for assistance or for the provision of care arrangements when they fall ill or are injured.

If you need to take immediate time off for a dependent, you need to advise your line manager by telephone as soon as possible and inform them of the reasons for your absence, in line with our normal absence notification procedures.

The amount of time off agreed will depend on your individual circumstances and judged according to the immediate emergency.

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## **Sickness Absence**

All employees have a duty to attend work on time and in accordance with the working patterns and contracted hours of work as set out in their Statement of Main Terms and Conditions of Employment.

If you anticipate requiring time off work for any reason you should seek permission from your line manager in the first instance.

In the event you are unexpectedly late or prevented from coming to work due to sickness, the following notification and certification procedures must be complied with. If you fail to follow the sickness absence notification and certification procedures without good cause you will lose any entitlement to sick pay and your absence may be treated as unauthorised, for which disciplinary action will be taken.

Whilst absent from work you are still bound by the terms of your employment. It is a condition of your employment that you provide us with up to date contact details whilst absent from work and co-operate with any requests from us to maintain contact and provide information relating to your absence.

## **Notification of Absence**

If you are unexpectedly late or prevented from coming to work, you must contact your line manager by 10am, or as soon as possible on the first day to explain the reason for your absence.

When notifying your manager of an absence due to sickness, you should indicate the date on which the illness commenced, the nature of the illness and if possible, the date you expect to resume work.

If your absence continues after the first day, you must keep your line manager informed and are expected to phone in on each day of absence, unless agreed otherwise with your line manager.

## **Certification of Absence**

If you are absent from work for any reason, including sickness or injury for up to, and including, 7 calendar days, you must complete one of York Mind's sickness forms. These forms are available from your line manager or the Chief Executive.

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In addition, employees who are absent for between 4 and 7 days must complete a S.C.1 (self-certification form) and hand it to your line manager on your return to work.

For periods of absence in excess of 7 calendar days, or as soon as you know that you will be away from work for more than 7 calendar days, you must submit a Doctor's medical certificate to your line manager. Thereafter, medical certificates must be sent to your line manager on a weekly basis unless the certificate covers a longer period. You will also need to complete an York Mind sickness form on your return to work.

It is your responsibility to ensure a current Doctor's medical certificate covers your absence at all times.

### **Statutory and Charity Sick Pay**

Staff TUPE'd from other organisations may have individual statutory and charity sick pay entitlement. For other employees the general position is as follows:

York Mind is responsible for paying employees Statutory Sick Pay (SSP). Payment of SSP is subject to certain qualifying criteria set by the Government and dependent upon employees following the Charity's notification and certification procedures. SSP is only payable from the fourth qualifying day of absence, the first three being "waiting days". If an employee is not entitled to SSP they will be advised accordingly.

The Charity operates a discretionary sick pay scheme. If an employee is absent from work because of sickness or injury, the Charity will pay the employee up to the following entitlements, less the amount of any SSP or social security sickness benefit, in any one twelve month period. Payment of Charity sick pay is dependent upon the employee following the Charity's absence notification and certification procedures.

If an employee is absent due to sickness or injury during their first three months of employment they will be entitled to receive up to 5 working days (pro-rata for part time staff) on full pay and thereafter only statutory sick pay to which they may be entitled.

Employees appointed before 1st January 1999, with continuous service, may be eligible to receive payments to give the equivalent of a total of six months' full pay and six months' half pay.

Employees appointed after 1st January 1999 may be eligible to receive payments to give the equivalent of:

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- During the fourth to twelfth months of employment: a total of one month's full pay and one month's half pay.
- During the second year of employment: a total of two months' full pay and two months' half pay.
- In each subsequent year of employment: a total of three months' full pay and three months' half pay.

Employees appointed after 1st January 2011 may be eligible to receive payments to give the equivalent of:

- After the successful completion of your probationary period: a total of one month's full pay and one month's half pay.

Any previous period of sickness absence for which benefit was payable in the twelve months preceding the first day of a new period of absence will be counted against the permitted limits of sickness payments. If an employee's service reaches a new qualification period during a period of absence, then this will be deemed a new period of absence starting on the day they acquired the new entitlement.

Employees who are sick for longer than these periods will be entitled to statutory benefits only. In the case of half pay periods, the allowance is the sum equal to half pay plus an equal amount equivalent to SSP so long as the total sum does not exceed full pay.

With the exception of SSP, all payments for sickness absence are entirely at the Charity's discretion and may vary in individual circumstances.

**Charity sick pay is not payable for any period of sickness absence during an employee's notice period.**

Statutory and Charity sick pay is paid through the normal payroll procedure and is subject to tax and NI deductions.

**Recovery of Damages**

When absence results from an occurrence where damages may be recoverable from a third party (e.g. road accident) employees must sign a form undertaking to repay all sick pay received from York Mind up to the amount of any damages for loss of earnings received.

**Sickness during Holiday**

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If sickness accruing payments under these provisions occurs during annual holidays, then an employee will be credited with the equivalent number of days' holiday to be taken at a later date. To attain this credit an employee must provide a medical certificate for all the days of sickness including the first three days.

### **Medical Examinations & Reports**

If there is a cause for concern over the amount of sickness absence, the reason for absence or your general physical and mental well being we may require you to be examined by a Doctor, or medical specialist, nominated by us. This is necessary given our duty so far as is reasonably practical to ensure your health, safety and welfare at work. As a result, you must give your consent if reasonably required to do so by us.

In addition, or as an alternative, there may be times when it is necessary to seek a medical report from your own GP or medical specialist regarding your health and capability to carry out your role. Such requests will be subject to the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988.

### **Management of Sickness Absence**

In the case of frequent/persistent illness, if York Mind, after consultation with an employee, is concerned about absences, or is not satisfied with the reasons given, he/she may be required to produce a medical certificate when he/she is next absent from work.

York Mind may in the case of prolonged and/or recurrent absence from work, seek a report from the G.P and/or a second medical opinion as to the cause of the incapacity and prognosis. York Mind will meet all costs incurred, and no steps will be taken without reasonable cause and prior consultation with the employee.

York Mind reserves the right to vary its procedure for managing sickness absence depending on individual circumstances.

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## **Leaving Employment**

### **Resignation**

If you wish to leave the Charity you are required to give written notice of this to your line manager. The minimum notice period you are required to give is 4 weeks.

We reserve the right to pay you in lieu of notice or not require you to attend work during your notice period. Any payment in lieu of notice will be subject to tax and NI contributions.

If we require you to remain away from work during your notice period, we reserve the right not to provide you with work. However, you are required to remain on call at home and are still bound by the terms of your contract. You will be entitled to receive your salary and all contractual benefits, in accordance with the terms of your employment, until the termination date. During this time you are not permitted to work for any other person, firm, corporate body or on your own behalf without the prior written permission of the Board of Trustees.

### **Termination by the Charity**

Upon satisfactory completion of the probationary period, you are entitled to receive 4 weeks' written notice to terminate your employment. Authority to terminate this employment rests with York Mind's Board of Trustees.

The Charity may terminate your employment without notice, or pay in lieu of notice, if you commit any serious breach, or repeat or continue (after warning) any material breach of your obligations under this agreement or if you are guilty of conduct tending to bring yourself or the Charity into disrepute or prejudice the interests of the Charity.

### **Probationary Period**

Your first six months of employment are subject to the satisfactory completion of a probationary period. During the probationary period either you, or the Charity may terminate your employment by giving one week's notice in writing. We reserve the right to extend your probationary period should this be considered necessary.

### **Retirement**

The charity has no set retirement age.

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## **Redundancy**

In the unfortunate event that the Charity has no option but to consider redundancies, we will fulfil our statutory obligations in line with the procedure laid down in the Redundancy Policy.

## **Holidays on Leaving the Charity**

On termination of your employment, your paid holiday entitlement will be calculated in proportion to the number of completed calendar months worked during the current holiday year and will be paid in your final payment.

We reserve the right to require you to take any outstanding holiday entitlement during your notice period. If you have taken paid holiday in excess of your entitlement, we will deduct the overpayment of holiday pay from your final payment.

If you leave without giving proper notice or are dismissed for gross misconduct, we reserve the right not to pay any accrued holiday pay to which you may otherwise have been entitled, subject to the provisions of the Working Time Regulations 1998.

## **Obligations on Leaving the Charity**

On leaving the Charity, you must hand over all files, passes, documents, keys, client lists, records and any other property of, or relating to, the Charity in your possession, together with all copies thereof.

In addition, you must not represent the Charity in any way or allow yourself to be represented as being connected with the Charity in any way.

## **Code of Conduct**

We are committed to maintaining the highest professional standards in the way we conduct our affairs and in our relationships with clients, volunteers, employees and third parties. The standards we set ourselves are to ensure all our affairs are conducted visibly and in a professional manner. All employees and volunteers are expected to adhere to our Code of Conduct and actively contribute to developing and maintaining a successful and positive working environment based on integrity, trust and high professional standards.

## **Accidents, Fire Emergency and Medication**

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Details are set out in the Health and Safety, and Medication Policies. In particular all staff and volunteers must ensure they know who the First Aiders are and where the first aid box is kept.

### **Dress Code**

It is important that we portray a professional image at all times, not just to our clients but also to each other.

You are asked to adopt a common sense approach and not wear clothes which are inappropriate to the workplace (e.g. jeans, trainers etc.) or could offend clients, colleagues and partners. We expect your dress and standards of hygiene to be of a high standard at all times.

### **Alcohol and Drugs Policy**

The Charity takes its responsibilities in this respect very seriously and any breach of these rules will be treated as gross misconduct and may result in dismissal or in the case of volunteers, termination of our agreement with you.

Any employee or volunteer presenting him/herself at work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs will be refused admittance to the premises and will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedures. Alcohol and illegal drugs must not be brought on to our premises, or those of third parties. Similarly, you must not be involved in any transaction in connection with the handling, possession, sale or purchase of illegal drugs, or alcohol acquired illegally during the course of your employment or association with us.

Consumption of alcohol on our premises, or those of third parties, except during social activities approved by the Board of Trustees, is strictly forbidden.

### **Car Parking**

Due to the restricted amount of local parking places, staff based at Highcliffe House should endeavour to park away from Highcliffe Court whenever possible.

### **Charity and Personal Property**

### **General Obligations**

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You must treat York Mind’s property with care to ensure that it is kept safe, in good condition and properly maintained.

We reserve the right to deduct monies from an employee’s salary to cover losses or damage to our property arising from negligence, breach of contract or breach of rules.

Where you become aware of a defect which could result in a danger to others, damage or disruption to the business, you must report it to your line manager or the Chief Executive.

You must not take our property from the business premises without the prior permission of your line manager. This will normally only be allowed where you need a particular item when carrying out your role whilst working away from our main premises.

You may be issued with keys to office premises, along with security details. You must not under any circumstances, pass these onto anyone else without the express approval of the Chief Executive. If your keys or ID card are lost or stolen, you must report this immediately to the Chief Executive. We reserve the right to deduct monies from an employee’s salary for the cost of replacing lost keys, including costs associated with replacing locks, and ID cards.

### **Safekeeping of Property**

You are responsible for the safekeeping of your own personal belongings whilst at work. You should not bring unnecessary personal belongings to work and are advised to insure against all risks, as we do not accept liability for any damage to, or loss of, your personal belongings however caused whilst on our premises, or whilst you are undertaking business on behalf of the Charity.

For your own benefit don’t leave cash or valuables in desk drawers overnight and keep valuables out of sight at all times, as you are responsible if anything goes missing.

### **Copyright**

York Mind has exclusive ownership and rights (including copyright) to any documents, designs or other original work, produced or worked on by you during the course of your employment or association with us.

### **Conflicts of Interest and Other Commitments**

During your employment or association with York Mind you must not take any other form of employment or work whether of a casual, part time, voluntary,

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or other nature, without the prior agreement of the Charity. The Charity will not unreasonably refuse employees from taking other forms of employment, providing this does not represent a conflict of interest or affect an individual's ability to fulfil the requirements of their role.

You must not belong to, be involved, or have any financial or other interest in any business or organisation which gives rise, or may give rise, to a conflict of interest or affects your ability to fulfil the requirements of your role. If you become aware of any such conflict, or are concerned about such a conflict arising, you must disclose this to your line manager without delay.

## **Confidentiality**

In the course of your employment or association with us you may have access to, and be entrusted with, confidential information relating to the affairs, dealings and transactions of the Charity and its clients. See York Mind's Data Protection Policy for more details.

You must not at any time disclose or communicate to any other person (other than in the proper performance of your duties or when properly authorised by the Board of Trustees), or use for your own purposes or for purposes other than the Charity's, any of the confidential information relating to the Charity and its clients which you may have received or obtained during the course of your employment. You should refer to the Charity's Data Protection Policy for more information, the details of which can be seen in Section B of this Handbook.

Whilst employees and volunteers, through the nature of their work, will often have access to carer or clients' personal details, it is the Charity's policy that this information will be treated as confidential.

Although all employees and volunteers are encouraged to promote the work of the Charity, individuals have to be careful not to disclose any confidential information relating to our clients or any third party.

These restrictions shall continue to apply after the termination of your employment (however it arises) without limit in point of time but shall cease to apply to information which you are required to disclose by law or which comes into the public domain other than by unauthorised disclosure.

## **Medication Policy**

York Mind provides support and training for people recovering from mental ill health.

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The Charity has no medically trained staff. Employees and volunteers must not under any circumstance offer medical advice or become involved in administering medication of any kind.

### **Mobile Phones**

Some members of staff may be supplied with a mobile. Phones must be returned to your line manager or the Chief Executive on termination of employment.

If you bring a personal mobile phone into the office it should be switched off or turned to silent during the working day.

### **Press Enquiries and Making Public Statements**

You are not permitted to communicate with the media about the affairs of the Charity unless agreed and approved in advance with the Chief Executive. Similarly, you are not authorised to make public statements about the Charity to any third party. Any queries or requests for statements from the press or third parties should be directed to the Chief Executive, or a member of the Board of Trustees in his/her absence.

### **Personal Legal Liability**

Where a civil action connected with an employee or volunteers work is taken out against them personally, providing the individual has carried out his/her duties in accordance with York Mind's policies, then the Charity will assist that individual in every way possible.

### **Signing In**

In the interests of safety, all persons entering the building must sign the fire book on arrival and departure.

### **Trade Union Membership**

Whilst York Mind does not recognise any Trade Unions for negotiation, consultation or representation purposes, any individual is entitled to join a Trade Union.

### **Violence and Aggression**

York Mind has a formal policy on Violence and Aggression, which applies to employees, volunteers and clients. All employees and volunteers are required

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to study this policy and, in particular, the guidelines on handling an incident and recommended de-escalation techniques.

Employees and volunteers are to be particularly vigilant concerning potential incidents of violence or abuse, which could include threatening behaviour, bullying or harassment due to age, gender, religion / belief or sexual orientation. You should consider in advance how you might deal with a violent incident and how to employ the recommended de-escalation techniques.

Employees and volunteers should note that it is York Mind's policy that doors of training rooms and offices are kept open when sessions are in progress - this makes it easier to call for help if a potentially violent incident develops.

The decision on whether or not to remove a violent or aggressive person can be a difficult one and may have to be taken by the most senior employee if the Chief Executive is not present. The principal factor to be considered will usually be the safety of others, including employees, volunteers and clients.

### **Working Alone with Clients**

In addition to project specific requirements, the following policy is to be adopted if there is only one employee or volunteer on duty with clients.

If you, as an employee or volunteer, are a lone worker, then you must take the following steps:

- Arrange to tell a relative, friend or member of staff that you are working in the building alone. Let that person know working times, and phone number and let him/her know when you are leaving the offices.
- Carry York Minds mobile phone (which has emergency numbers programmed in) and one of York Minds personal alarms with you at all times.
- If a violent or potentially dangerous situation develops, follow the de-escalation guidelines as set out in the Violence & Aggression Policy. If in doubt, consider your own safety and call for help.
- During darkness, make sure you go with someone else to the back courtyard to lock the gate. Everyone should leave by the front door.
- Make sure that doors are kept open in all rooms in use.

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