

Deaf Village Ireland



Employee Handbook

Approved by Board 28/3/2023.

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Welcome

As employees of Deaf Village Ireland we are all responsible for conducting ourselves according to the highest standards of ethics, integrity, dignity and behaviour when dealing with our clients, colleagues and other stakeholders. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, full compliance with all legal obligations imposed by statute or any other source of law.

It is the policy of DVI to provide, as far as is possible, a safe and healthy environment for all DVI's employees as well as meeting its obligations to tenants, visitors, contractors and any members of the public using the facilities or affected by its activities.

This handbook sets out information and guidance to improve safety, behaviour and a strong positive culture within DVI. It also aims to eliminate risks and accidents as a result of poor practice.

Please read this handbook carefully and follow the guidance set out within each section. Once you have read this, please sign the employee compliance slip at the end and return it to your line manager. If you have any queries relating to the handbook or indeed have any suggestions, observations please raise these immediately with your line manager.

This handbook will be reviewed by the board and Manager of DVI on a regular basis. This handbook and the policies herein supersede and replace in their entirety any previous employee/staff handbooks and pre-existing policies. The written, English language version of this Staff Handbook shall prevail in case of any inconsistencies with translated versions, if any.

Introduction to DVI

Purpose

Deaf Village Ireland (DVI) based in Cabra Dublin, is at the heart of the Deaf community in Ireland providing office and social space for twelve organisations that provide a range of services to the Deaf community.

DVI's provides a welcoming space for members of the Deaf community to feel comfortable where they can socialise and work in an environment that promotes the use of Irish Sign Language (ISL)¹

DVI has been established since 2012 and promotes the following:

- Recognition and promotion of ISL as a third language in Ireland ((Irish Sign Language 2017 Act)

¹ ISL is the third language of Ireland recognised and signed into law December 2017.

- Encourages and supports the use of ISL within the campus
- A centre for supporting and enhancing Deaf Culture
- A centre that brings the Deaf and hearing community in Cabra and the wider surroundings to join and participate in the activities within the campus.
- An opportunity for the wider population to learn ISL through classes on campus

In providing office and meeting space for organisations and individuals DVI enables best practice and support to be shared between and across organisations within the village allowing peer support as expertise.

Having a Deaf School on the Campus allows DVI as a centre to embrace the next generations of Deaf/ Hard of Hearing children to learn and experience their culture whilst also seeing role models to assist them in developing their own futures.

DVI believes that it is important to build partnerships with our stakeholders and critically to build up external relationships, at the same time keeping our core ethos. With collaborative interaction, information signage, in ISL and English this helps to maintain our priority of ISL, plus encouraging others to learn by this exposure.

This handbook may not be fully comprehensive but endeavours to be compliance with all relevant legislation.

Vision

Deaf Village Ireland's vision is to create an inclusive place showing community life celebrating Deaf culture.

Mission Statement

To develop and promote:

- A working model promoting cross organisational cooperation building trust and respect.
- A welcoming meeting place for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people and their families to participate, learn and share experiences.
- A social hub for the Deaf community, providing a range of social activities to enable Deaf people to feel a sense of belonging.
- An inclusive sports centre, providing a range of sport facilities, involving deaf and hearing communities.
- Provision of social, advisory, information and pastoral care services, delivered by several organisations' resident in the centre.
- A positive learning environment for hearing people to develop awareness and understand Deaf culture and sign language skills.

- A Deaf heritage centre, promoting Deaf culture and history.
- A lifelong educational centre, enabling Deaf people to fulfil their potential.
- A participation programme for Deaf children, enabling them to fulfil their own potential.
- A centre of education in partnership with Chime Irish Deaf Society, Schools for the Deaf, Trinity College Dublin and Reach Deaf Services

Value Statement

Deaf Village Ireland will embody the Vision and Mission Statement by adopting the following values in their everyday operations within the DVI.

- Recognise and encourage the use of Irish Sign Language.
- Respect the different ethos and abilities in the community.
- Maintain the spirit of cooperation with all organisations.

About this handbook

This employee handbook is designed to assist each employee understand their terms and conditions of employment and it is important that you take time to familiarise yourself with the contents detailed in the following pages.

Standards of Code of Conduct for Staff

The code of conduct for employees outlines the standards of behaviour expected of anyone employed by DVI. Employees should be aware of and fulfil all regulatory and statutory obligations of the organisation and enforce them in a fair, responsible and consistent manner, acting within the legal authority given to them.

It is incumbent on all employees to conduct their business and personal activities in a manner that does not adversely reflect on DVI.

It is common practice for employers to develop a formal Code of Business Conduct that provides guidance to employees in recognising and resolving the ethical and legal issues they encounter in conducting their duties. The provisions of the Code of Conduct forms part of the Terms and Conditions of Employment for all employees.

The purpose of this Code is to set down the general principles and standards, which govern the professional activities and conduct of management and employees, both permanent and contract, of DVI (collectively referred to as employees throughout) thereby maintaining a high level of public confidence in the organisation as an employer.

Wherever we operate, we must ensure that our business is conducted and managed effectively, efficiently and objectively in a manner consistent with the highest professional standards of accountability and responsibility and in accordance with the law. Employees are obliged to comply with policies and procedures, employee regulations, work rules and any standards and codes of practice adopted by the organisation. This Code of Conduct is binding on all employees (including those on leave, secondment etc.).

Employees charged with the task of delivering services as defined by DVI. Employees have a duty to operate with integrity, diligence and impartiality and with courtesy, consideration, fairness and promptness. Employees should respect the principle of non-discrimination and equal treatment.

Employees must observe appropriate professional boundaries in their dealings with those they encounter in the course of their work on behalf of DVI, including their work colleagues. Queries or concerns regarding business conduct should be directed to the employee's Line Manager.

Obligations

Employees have an obligation to attend at work as required and perform their official duties honestly and efficiently, respecting the rights of the service users and their colleagues. There are legal obligations also on all employees to properly perform the duties for which they are employed including:

- To obey the law
- To obey all lawful and reasonable instructions from the employer and to work as directed
- To be competent and efficient in the performance of assigned duties
- To refrain from conduct which might impair work performance
- To show reasonable care, and neither use nor allow the use of the employer's property, resources, funds for anything other than authorised purposes
- To incur no liability on the part of the employer without proper authorisation

As well as being responsible for their own conduct, employees also have a duty to contribute to the smooth running of the workplace by treating their colleagues & customers with courtesy and respect.

Professional practice

Staff employed or engaged by DVI and including CE Scheme staff should:

- Adhere to DVI's policies and procedures at all times
- Avoid behaviour which might endanger or cause distress to their colleagues, or

otherwise contribute to disruption of the workplace

- Respect the privacy of individuals when dealing with sensitive information
- To have due regard for the safety, health and welfare of others in the use of organisation property and resources
- Engage with each other in a respectful, courteous and co-operative manner
- Engage with each other in an equitable, non-sexist and non-racist manner
- Not engage in the use of sexist, racist, or other vulgar or inappropriate language while on duty or in the proximity of DVI property
- Not engage in a disrespectful, bullying or intimidating manner towards other members of the staff team
- Not discuss any aspect of the business of their work in an inappropriate location.
- Not come on duty under the influence of alcohol or other substances that may affect their ability to carry out their duties or engage in alcohol consumption whilst on duty
- Inform line management of any personal difficulties that may affect their ability to perform duties competently and safely
- Maintain clear and accurate records as required by the policies and procedures of DVI
- Recognise and respect the roles and expertise of workers from other agencies and work in partnership with them in the best interest of service users
- Improve knowledge, skills and work practices
- Attend staff meetings and all training provided by DVI
- Work phones must be kept on staff persons at all times and responded to in a timely manner
- Respond to emails within 24 hours of a working day
- Not smoke anywhere
- Not smoke in any vehicle being used for the business of DVI
- Staff members are expected to present for work in appropriate dress.

Conflict of Interest

Engaging in outside activities, employees must avoid the risk of conflict with their official duties. Employees may not allow a situation to arise where there is a conflict or potential for conflict between their own interests and those of DVI. Employees must observe their duties and obligations to the organisation in accordance with the contract of employment and associated terms and conditions of employment.

Any employee who is involved with any outside organisation, whether economic, social, cultural or political, has the responsibility to ensure that such involvement is not prejudicial to the interests DVI and that it does not create a conflict of interest or potential conflict with their employment with the organisation.

Any employee becoming aware of such a conflict/potential conflict must declare this to his/her Line Manager immediately who will decide how the situation should be dealt with.

Disclosure of information

Employees are prohibited from making use of, or disclosing, any confidential information gained as a result of employment with the organisation. The unauthorised use or disclosure of confidential information to which they have had access may lead to disciplinary action. If an employee leaves the employment of DVI (resigns, retires or terminates the contract of employment) they are obliged to protect and respect the confidentiality of the organisations information. An employee who is convicted of a criminal offence or given the benefit of the Probation Act when charged with a criminal offence must report the fact to his / her Line Manager in circumstances where it has implications for his / her official position. In certain circumstances, this could have implications for their official position. Such information will be treated in strict confidence and no record of it will be kept unless the information is considered relevant to the official position of the employee.

Gifts and entertainment

Under no circumstances may an employee solicit, either directly or indirectly, gifts, hospitality etc. for personal use, gain or benefit. Under no circumstances may an employee accept the offer of any unsolicited gifts, including hospitality, travel, payments, services or benefits-in-kind on a scale which could affect, or be considered to affect, the ability of an employee to exercise independent judgement or provide a service in an impartial manner.

However, gifts of a nominal value may be accepted provided that

- (a) The donor is made aware that acceptance of the gift will not influence any business relationship between the donor and DVI or its employees
- (b) Receipt of the gift is notified to the recipient's Line Manager immediately

Outside Occupation

Employees are obliged to give their full commitment to their duties and responsibilities in the organisation. In no circumstances should an employee engage in matters unconnected with his / her duties and responsibilities during work hours. DVI is dedicated to the health safety and welfare of all its employees. Under the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 the onus lies with DVI to ensure that all employees work within a 48-hour working week. Permission must be sought and obtained from the relevant Line Manager, before engaging in any outside work. Employees should not engage in work outside of DVI to the extent of impairing the employees work performance with the organisation.

As it is not possible for this Code of Conduct to provide for every situation which may arise, employees must bear in mind that it is primarily their personal responsibility to ensure that all their activities, whether covered specifically or otherwise in this Code of Conduct, are governed by the ethical considerations implicit in the Code.

Language Policy

Policy

This policy details the use of language in DVI. As an organisation, DVI recognises and respects ISL as a language and places great importance on ensuring that it facilitates effective communication at all times with those using our services. It is the expectation that all staff will promote an ISL and Deaf aware environment. DVI provides mandatory training in ISL and all staff will receive training to an ISL QQI level 4 standard. An ability to use ISL competently is an essential requirement of the role when working in DVI.

Definitions

- *ISL*: Irish Sign Language is the sign language of Ireland, used primarily in the Republic of Ireland.
- *Deaf and Hard of Hearing*: for the purpose of this policy, Deaf and Hard of Hearing refers to those whose first and preferred language is ISL , who are partially Deaf or unable to hear.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Describe how Irish Sign Language will be used as the primary mode of communication with all staff members in communicating with colleagues and service users, customers.
- Reinforce that it is the responsibility of staff members to be or become efficient in the use of ISL
- Ensure we create and maintain an inclusive, safe and effective environment for service users, customers and staff
- Create clear expectations for those working in the organisation.

Procedure

- Staff will be expected to be proficient in signing and the use of ISL will be regularly monitored in practice through observations, formal supervision, performance management objectives and internal audits.
- The use of and understanding ISL is an essential requirement to work in DVI.
- Staff will be expected to use ISL on arrival to the workplace and throughout the working day
- DVI are committed to the provision of QQI accredited ISL, Linguistic and Deaf awareness courses for all employee's as relevant to their role and to enable them to

fulfil their responsibilities.

- Where new employees are not proficient at the time of their start date, they will be expected to successfully complete QQI Level 3 and 4 in ISL over an agreed amount of time i.e. within the first two years of employment. The level of proficiency and expectations required is specified in all job descriptions for all roles.
- Support will be provided to staff if required to bring them up to the necessary standard through all means available.
- Where staff are not achieving ISL requirements, additional supports will be put in place
- Provision of interpreters will be made where necessary so that meetings, training and other events can take place.
- Where there is no interpreter present staff are expected to communicate through ISL in an inclusive manner for all and the team should work together to support this communication.

Employment Policy & Procedures

Policy Statement

In DVI we see our employees as the most important asset that we have. You play a key and important role in ensuring DVI delivers a quality service to all our tenant organisations as well as visitors to the village. The board recognises the importance of valuing staff and ensuring appropriate training and development is put in place to allow each employee to do their job to the best of their ability.

We also work in partnership with the Department of Social Protection (DSP) to ensure we create opportunities for staff employed through this scheme to have every opportunity to develop in their role and build a knowledge base and skill set that will assist them in the future. At all times we will adhere to the guiding principles set by the DSP for the Community Employment (CE) Scheme.

DVI provides appropriate processes around support, supervision and appraisal mechanisms to allow staff to develop and realise their potential in the workplace. In addition, where things do go wrong, DVI also has procedures in place to act quickly in solving problems as smoothly as possible.

Scope

This document provides guidance on all aspects of aid employment within DVI. It applies to all paid staff whether permanent, temporary, full-time, part-time, or on a community

employment scheme such as the Community Employment (CE) or Community Service Programme (CSP).

Responsibility

The Board of DVI has overall responsibility for overseeing human resource management and ensuring the meeting of legislative requirements. The Board supports the Senior Management Team in its human resource role, both strategically and practically. All line managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the policies and procedures in this document are implemented efficiently and effectively. All other staff are expected to facilitate this process.

Measures

These procedures list the measures that must be taken in order to fulfil the policy. They must be adhered to at all times.

Training and instruction

DVI commits to providing or organising training or instruction to staff to facilitate implementation of these policies and procedures.

Evaluation and review

Constructive feedback on this document is always welcome. It should be given to the Manager who will ensure the Board considers it. The document will be reviewed in full consultation with staff on a regular basis, or as frequently as needed if circumstances change.

Recruitment and Selection

Purpose

This policy outlines the DVI's commitment to compliance with the Employment Equality Acts, 1998-2015, by providing equality of opportunity in our recruitment procedures.

Scope

This policy applies to all applicants for employment with DVI and to existing Employees applying for internal positions in the Organisation. Anyone involved in recruitment and selection on behalf of DVI is expected to comply with the provisions of this policy.

Policy

DVI is committed to providing equality of opportunity with respect to vacancies that arise. As such, the Organisation strives to ensure a recruitment process free from any form of illegal discrimination. Recruitment decisions will be taken without reference to an applicant's gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, religion or membership of the Traveller community, unless these are legitimate requirements for the post as permitted in the relevant legislation. In order to source the best candidates, selection criteria will be based on the skills, qualifications and experience necessary for successful performance in the role.

Procedure

Prior to engaging in the recruitment process, the skills, experience and qualifications necessary for the successful candidate will be identified. Applications will be screened against these requirements. Interviews will be conducted in a fair manner ensuring that questions are designed to seek information relevant to performance in the position. Other selection methods may be employed where appropriate, for example reference checking.

A candidate for employment who has a disability will be provided reasonable accommodation to facilitate their ability to compete for a post, and to fulfil a post where he/she is the most suitable candidate for the role. Reasonable accommodation will only be provided where it does not present a disproportionate burden on DVI.

Records related to unsuccessful candidates may be retained for up to 13 months following appointment of the successful candidate.

Commencing employment

General

DVI contacts new employees soon after notifying them about their appointment, with specific instructions about the starting day and their initial period at work. DVI recognises the importance of being fully prepared for the arrival of new recruits, so that they receive a

good impression of the organisation and find out in a proper manner, what is expected of them. This is only possible through a well-organised induction programme that covers all the necessary paperwork, as well as ensuring that new workers get to know the organisation, their colleagues, their own jobs and the external environment in which they will be working.

Induction

Sufficient time and preparation are invested in induction to ensure its effectiveness. It is the responsibility of the new employee's line manager to plan and undertake the induction process. While the duration and nature of the process is dependent on the particular post in question, the following elements should always be considered:

- Going through and signing the contract of employment
- Agreeing a procedure for pay (including tax/banking details)
- Checking home and emergency contact details
- Familiarisation with workplace (keys, housekeeping, safety wear, communication methods, etc.)
- Going through the job description in detail and deciding in conjunction with the worker how quickly they will be expected to take on each new task
- Considering any urgent training and development needs
- Gaining familiarity with all DVI policies and procedures, rules and regulations
- Understanding building emergency procedures and other relevant health and safety information
- Meeting relevant people
- Reading relevant materials
- Attending relevant meetings
- Explaining the supervision, support and appraisal/review systems
- Invitations to join colleagues for lunch or social activities

In every instance where possible all relevant reading material will be supplied in ISL format and staff will be required to sign off as having understood the contents.

Probationary period

It is the policy of this Organisation to use a probationary period of six months at the commencement of employment in order to assess the suitability of newly appointed Employees, and to assist their integration into their role and the Organisation. The period is used to ensure that the new hire is performing in their new role, and that they are settling into the Organisation. The duration of probation is outlined in the individual statement of terms and conditions of employment and may be extended at the discretion of Management.

During probation there should be dialogue between the Manager and the Employee with regard to performance, conduct, attendance and any other issues impacting on the new Employee's ability to settle into the role and the Organisation. Issues may also be addressed formally by way of probation review meeting(s).

Where there are issues which affect an employee's ability to successfully complete probation, then probation may be extended at the discretion of Management, but will not, in any case, exceed 11 months.

Dismissal may arise without application of the full rigours of the disciplinary process during probation. Termination of this agreement within the probationary period shall be at the discretion of the organisation and in the event of such a termination during this period you will receive one week's notice. Likewise, where you intend to resign from your employment during your probationary period you will be required to give the organisation 1 weeks' notice in writing.

Where there are serious misgivings with an Employee's fit in the Organisation or their role, then the employment relationship may be terminated at the end of the probation period.

Where an Employee successfully completes probation, this will be confirmed to them by their manager.

Attendance at work

General

Deaf Village Ireland (DVI) aims to be an employer of choice by providing fair remuneration and attractive working conditions for all employees. DVI attaches immense importance to timekeeping and attendance and uses appropriate means to record and monitor attendance at work in line with the requirements of the Working Time Acts 1997. Employees should be at their place of work, ready to start work at their normal starting time. Disciplinary action up to and including dismissal may be taken against any employee, who has an unacceptable level of timekeeping record.

Pay

Apart from CE rates of pay which are established by DSP and CSP each job in the organisation is assessed on the basis of the job description and role remit. Salary reviews are carried out annually by the audit committee and any recommendations presented to the Board for approval. Rates of pay and payment methods are specified in the contract of employment.

Hours of Work

These are specified in the contract of employment. If an employee is required to work unsociable hours and/or have regular absences from home, this is made clear at the time of recruitment. Any substantial increase in the requirements to work under such conditions will be agreed with the employee concerned. However, from time to time the organisation may require you to be more flexible to meet the needs of the business. This will be done in accordance with the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997. You may be required to work overtime and time off in lieu is granted for all hours worked in excess of the normal working week in agreement with your manager.

Rest breaks

Breaks are as detailed within the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 – after 4.5 hours worked you will be entitled to a 15-minute unpaid break and if you are working for more than 6 hours you will be entitled to a 30-minute unpaid break.

Where you do not get an opportunity to take your break(s), please inform your manager / supervisor in writing within 7 days and an alternative break period will be assigned.

Overtime

Overtime working results in additional costs to DVI and should not be an automatic or regular solution to a manning problem. Overtime working must be approved and agreed in advance with the manager. Overtime working must be approved and agreed in advance with your Supervisor/Manager. If an employee fails to do so they won't accrue overtime.

Employees may, in exceptional circumstances be required to work a reasonable amount of overtime. Any employee who consistently refuses requests to work overtime or who having agreed to work overtime, does not attend without good reason, may be liable for disciplinary action.

Time in Lieu will be paid for any hours worked over and above the standard contracted hours. Time in lieu will be granted for hours worked in excess of the standard 39 hour week. Employees who work less than the standard working hours must have worked 39 hours in the week before they become entitled to time in lieu.

However, time off in lieu (TOIL) will not be accrued for periods of time of less than 15 minutes. For example if an employee is due to finish work at 4.30pm and they work until 4.45pm, TOIL will not be accrued. However if they work until 5pm or beyond, TOIL may begin to accrue after

5pm, once at least 15 minutes over normal time has been worked. A maximum of 1.5 days TOIL is permitted per month and must be used within 30 days.

Employees who work less than the standard working hours must have worked 39 hours in the week before they become entitled to the overtime rate of time and a half.

CE Participants are unable to accrue TOIL.

Flexible working arrangements

DVI recognises the importance of a work/life balance and respects staff's family and/or personal responsibilities or preferences. In this regard, requests for flexible working arrangements will be considered on its merits. This may include job-sharing or part-time working.

Working from home

DVI will facilitate staff working from home for work tasks capable of being performed from home (for example, interpreting services), where this is suitable for both DVI and for the staff member and by having prior approval of an application to work from home by the staff person's line manager. Working from home will not be possible in cases where staff have roles that require them to be on the premises (for example, reception) All staff must be contactable by telephone when they are working away from the office.

Absence from Work

In the event of absence from work you are required to contact your supervisor/manager before your normal starting time on the first day of absence and thereafter keep your supervisor/manager fully informed throughout the period of absence. A poor record of attendance may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. At all times DVI reserves the right to refer an employee to a nominated medical doctor for an independent assessment.

Sick Pay

The purpose of this policy is to outline the Organisation's approach to payment for Sick Leave and an employee's entitlement to social welfare payments. This policy demonstrates compliance with the General Scheme of the Sick Leave Act 2022 in relation to the statutory sick pay scheme.

Deaf Village Ireland's Policy is to assist employees during periods of genuine sickness. There is an occupational sick pay scheme which is provided by Deaf Village Ireland to employees who are genuinely unfit for work because of illness. It is not an automatic entitlement and is at the discretion of Deaf Village Ireland, subject to complying with the organisational rules as outlined below.

Employees, who have completed a satisfactory probationary period, may be paid for up to 6 weeks of illness at their full rate of pay, in any rolling 12-month period. This benefit is inclusive of statutory sick pay and not in addition to.

Payment is on a pro rata basis, depending on the individual employee's contract/average working hours.

Deaf Village Ireland's Sick Pay Policy does not contain provisions in respect of any payment for longer-term absence from work. However, Deaf Village Ireland reserves the right, at their discretion and on an exceptional basis, to make payments to an employee in respect of a serious or critical illness.

Statutory Sick Pay Scheme

Payable to employees from 13 weeks service to 6 months service.

An eligible Employee is entitled to avail of statutory sick pay in line with the statutory sick pay scheme. A rate of payment for statutory sick leave of 70% of the Employee's normal wages will be paid by the Organisation (up to a maximum €110 per day).

To qualify for the statutory sick pay scheme an Employee must be in employment for a minimum of thirteen weeks continuous service. An Employee seeking to avail of statutory sick pay must provide their Manager with a certificate from a registered medical practitioner stating they are unfit to work due to illness or injury to cover each day of absence, up to a maximum of 3 days. The first day in a calendar year that an Employee is incapable of working due to illness or injury shall be the Employee's first statutory sick leave day, and any subsequent statutory sick leave days shall be construed accordingly.

An employee may be entitled to claim illness benefit from the Department of Social Protection, subject to them meeting certain qualification criteria. Employees are recommended to contact the Department directly for further information.

The occupational sick pay benefits outlined here apply to full-time Employees. Part-time Employees will receive a pro-rata benefit based on normal working hours. Where an Employee does not work the same hours every week, payment will be based on the average hours worked over the 13 weeks prior to the first date of absence.

Condition of payment for occupational sick pay

The full amount of any entitlement to Social Welfare benefit must be claimed and surrendered to Deaf Village Ireland as soon as possible after receipt. Employees are entitled to claim State benefit when absent through illness for more than three days. Where an employee fails to claim benefit Deaf Village Ireland reserves the right to deduct the equivalent amount from his/her wage/salary.

The employee must inform their Supervisor/Manager on the first day of absence and may be asked to substantiate the absence by medical certification.

Medical certification will be required from the third day of absence.

In any rolling period of 12 months, the maximum number of days allowable without medical certification may not exceed 7 days. Any period of sick leave in excess of this must be certified, even if it is for a single day. (The rolling period referred to here, relates to any period back 365 days, not the first day of the year).

Normally a medical certificate should not cover a person for more than 2 weeks.

Payments from Deaf Village Ireland Sick Pay scheme are made on the clear understanding that if you have been absent as a result of an injury caused by the negligence of a third party and make a claim for compensation you should include in such claim an amount to recover any monies paid to you by Deaf Village Ireland by way of sick pay. Any monies so recovered must be refunded to Deaf Village Ireland.

If there is evidence of abuse of the sick pay scheme Deaf Village Ireland reserves the right to withdraw this benefit from an individual.

DVI's policy is to assist employees during periods of genuine sickness. The sick pay is benefit provided by DVI to employees, who are genuinely unfit to work as a result of illness. It is not an automatic entitlement and is at the discretion of the DVI manager. Employees, who have completed a satisfactory probationary period, may be paid for up to 6 weeks of illness at their full rate of pay in any rolling 12-month period. Payment is on a pro-rata rate, depending on the individual employee's contract. Subsequent claims in that period for other illness can be reviewed but no commitment made to payment.

DVI's Sick Pay Policy does not contain provisions in respect of any payment for longer-term absence from work. However, DVI reserves the right, at their discretion and on an exceptional basis, to make payments to an employee in respect of a serious or critical illness.

An employee may be entitled to claim illness benefit from the Department of Social Protection, subject to them meeting certain qualification criteria. Employees are recommended to contact the Department directly for further information.

The benefits outlined here apply to full-time Employees. Part-time Employees will receive a pro-rata benefit based on normal working hours. Where an Employee does not work the same hours every week, payment will be based on the average hours worked over the 13 weeks prior to the first date of absence.

Condition of payment of sick pay

The full amount of any entitlement to social welfare benefit must be claimed and given to DVI as soon as possible after receipt.

Employees are entitled to claim state benefit when absent through illness for more than three days.

If a member of staff fails to claim benefit, DVI reserves the right to deduct equivalent amount from his/her wage/salary.

Where an employee persistently fails to refund social welfare benefit, DVI reserves the right to withdraw the sick pay.

The employee must inform his/her supervisor/manager on the first day of absence and may be asked to prove the absence by medical certificate. It will be required following the third day of absence.

In any rolling period of 12 months, the maximum number of days allowable without medical certificate must not exceed 7 days. Any period of sick leave in excess of this must be certified even it is for a single day. (The rolling period referred to here relate to any period back 365 days, not the first day of the year).

Normally, a medical certificate should not cover a person for more than two weeks.

Payment from DVI Sick Pay scheme are made on the clear understanding that if you have been absent as a result of an injury caused by the negligence of a third party and make a claim for compensation, you should include in such claim an amount to recover any monies made to you by DVI by way of sick pay. Any monies so recovered must be refunded to DVI. If there is evidence of abuse of the sick pay scheme,

If there is evidence of abuse of the sick pay scheme DVI reserves the right to withdraw this benefit from an individual.

DVI expects acceptable levels of attendance from Employees in fulfilling their statement of terms and conditions of employment. To this end, Management retains the right at any time during employment to refer an Employee to a suitable medical practitioner nominated solely and exclusively by the Organisation and to seek a full medical report in order to make reasonable decisions in relation to the Employee's capacity to fulfil their terms and conditions of employment.

Circumstances which are likely to give rise to such a report being sought are where absence is excessive or there are patterns of absence leading to a suspicion of abuse of sick leave or where it is felt that Employee's health is having a negative impact on work performance. The Organisation is committed to encouraging Employees to return to work following periods of absence. However, persistent and/or excessive absenteeism may result in disciplinary action or frustration of the Employee's contract of employment.

The Organisation is committed to protecting the rights of any Employee who has a disability, and where a disability is affecting an individual's ability to perform in their role, reasonable accommodation may be provided. All cases of disability will be dealt with in a fair and consistent manner.

If you are employed on a CE scheme, you are entitled to 56hrs certified sick leave over a 52-week period, pro rata. You are not entitled to any uncertified sick days, where you are employed on a CE SCHEME. The organisation will not make any payment for any day of illness or unauthorised absence from work. You may be entitled to claim social welfare benefit from the Department of Social Protection.

For a CE Scheme supervisor they will be entitled to up to 15 days certified and 4 days uncertified during the 52-week project period.

Lay off/Short Time Working

While it is DVI's intention to provide the continuity of employment, both parties recognise that there may be circumstances beyond the control of DVI, which necessitates the short time working or lay off. In order to delay and if possible, avoid such circumstance employees must be prepared to accept reasonable alternative work if their own work is not available.

Should the need arise to put staff on short time or lay them off, DVI will give as much notice as is reasonable in the circumstances.

No payment will be made for any period of lay off. Payment will be made only for hours actually worked during any period of short time. Any changes required in respect of lay off or short-term working will be discussed with staff and their representatives prior to any possible implementation.

Training and development

General

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the Organisation's commitment to equality of opportunity in relation to training and to highlight the Organisation's commitment to providing development opportunities for Employees in line with job requirements. This policy also demonstrates the Organisation's compliance with the Employment Equality Acts, 1998-2015.

In addition to the induction programme for new workers, most staff will from time to time need and want further training. DVI recognises the value of training and development, and provided that it is properly analysed, believes that training can enhance the professional and personal development of individual employees and widen the skills base of the organisation as a whole. DVI endeavours to meet staff's training and development needs, within its budgetary constraints and in accordance with identified priorities.

The specific training policy for CE participants is set out in the CE terms and conditions document. All CE staff will be required to complete Health & Safety training and complete an individual learning & personal training plan specific to their job role.

This Organisation is an equal opportunities employer. In this regard, all decisions relating to the provision of training will be taken with reference to the requirements of an employee's position, their individual development needs and the requirements of the Organisation. No

reference will be made to an employee's gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, religion, or membership of the Traveller community in decisions regarding the provision of training, except where these present objective determining requirements for the training.

Where possible, reasonable accommodation will be provided to facilitate an Employee with a disability to participate fully in training. Although every effort will be made to arrange training to facilitate attendance by part-time Employees during their working hours, there is an expectation that part-time Employee will make themselves available, from time to time, to attend training outside their normal hours of work. Reasonable notice of such a requirement will be provided.

Eligibility

Personal development is the individual responsibility of each Employee. Therefore, Employees should seek to establish their own training needs. These requirements should be discussed with the Employee's Manager where appropriate, and the Employee's Manager will consider requests for training in line with any needs identified by the Organisation. Where appropriate, training may be approved by the Employee's Direct Manager.

All staff are eligible for training whilst working for DVI. Training is prioritised in the following order:

- Initial training – all new staff receive the training necessary to enable them to carry out their jobs as soon as possible after commencing employment.
- Continuing training – training to enable staff to do their jobs better is identified on an ongoing basis through monthly supervision and support sessions and the performance appraisal system.
- Personal development training (for example, stress management, assertiveness) – training opportunities will be identified and facilitated when possible.

Additional factors that may influence eligibility and approval for training include:

- Amount of time or money already spent by DVI in a given year on individual employees.
- Availability of cover while an employee is away training.

Types of Training

Training comes in many forms. It may be done in-house or externally and includes:

- Induction training
- On the job training
- Work shadowing
- Visiting other organisations/inviting outside organisations to DVI
- Attending conferences, workshops, lectures and seminars
- One off training sessions
- Medium to long term professional, academic or vocational courses
- Online learning.

Resourcing Training

Effective training can only take place if it is adequately resourced, both in terms of time and money. DVI allocates a budget for training each year. In the case of training required to enable an employee to improve performance on the job, the line manager decides in conjunction with the employee what type of training is most appropriate to satisfy the training needs that have been identified. Primary consideration is given to courses/tuition available in DVI itself, whether provided as part of a regular training programme (for example, Training and Support Service courses), or those that can be organised to be delivered by an in-house trainer. If in-house training is not available, attendance on relevant courses run by external trainers either on or off site can be arranged.

For other training opportunities, staff can request financial assistance and/or time off to undertake training. Each case will be considered on its own merits and the resources available at the time. If the amount of money and/or time spent on a particular type of training is considered to be higher than normal, prior approval from the Board will be sought. There may be occasions when requests for training are not approved due to budgetary constraints or resourcing issues and therefore may be deferred till a later time.

Training information and feedback

Materials and information obtained as part of training paid for by DVI or attended in working hours remain the sole property of DVI and must be filed in the appropriate office. Training information must be disseminated to relevant people within the organisation. The line Manager should have a debrief with staff after training to ensure that training needs were met.

Non-cooperation with training policy

Failure to attend training, without good reason, which has been identified, agreed and approved with the individual staff member, will be viewed seriously and may lead to action under DVI's disciplinary procedures.

Dignity at Work – Bullying & Harassment

Policy Statement

DVI is committed to providing an environment for work which upholds the dignity and respect of the individual and which supports every individual's right to work in an environment free from bullying and harassment. DVI recognises the right of every individual to such an environment and requires all members of staff and those working on behalf of DVI to recognise their responsibilities in this regard. Every person working in conjunction with DVI is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect by our employees. Equally, all persons working in conjunction with DVI are expected to support the principles of dignity and respect in relation to their work. DVI is committed to equal opportunity of employment and all employment policies, DVI will not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form. This policy applies specifically to employees of DVI both in the workplace and at work associated events such as meetings, conferences and work-related social events, whether on the premises or off site. This policy applies to bullying and harassment not only by fellow employees but also by a client, customer or other business contact to which employees might reasonably expect to come into contact with in the course of his/her employment.

DVI's employment and recruitment practices will not be influenced or affected by an employee's "race", colour, religion, sex, marital status, nationality, family status, sexual orientation, disability, age or membership of any minority Community. Dignity is about celebrating the individual differences and similarities that each person brings to the workplace. It is about providing a range of perspectives that contribute to solving problems and creativity. It is not solely about different nationalities or genders working together, but embraces a mixture of people in age, education, geographic origin, and family status, type of work, cultures, religions, personal styles and sexual orientations.

Responsibilities

As a Manager / Supervisor, your responsibility is to:

- Be aware of the impact of your own conduct and be impartial in your dealings with staff

- Listen to complaints or instances of unacceptable behaviour and agree follow-up action with the complainant(s)
- Take prompt action to stop unacceptable behaviour as soon as it is identified
- Be alert to the possibility that someone being subjected to unacceptable behaviour may feel reluctant to deal with the matter him/her or seek assistance
- Ensure that any potentially offensive material is not displayed or circulated in the workplace
- Make clear to staff, including all new staff that disrespectful behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated by DVI.
- Follow and co-operate with this policy.

Supervisors are expected to make clear any aspects of performance that are unacceptable including unsatisfactory work performance. All comments should be constructive and seek to improve performance.

As an employee your responsibility is to:

- Be aware of your role in upholding dignity and respect at work.
- Make sure your own behaviour does not cause offence or misunderstanding.
- Be prepared to offer support to a colleague affected by this type of situation. This support must be constructive and not based on bias and/or taking sides.
- Follow and co-operate with this policy.

Anti-Bullying

DVI is committed to providing all of its employees and others who avail of its support and services with an environment free from bullying. DVI will not tolerate bullying of adults or children in any form.

This policy applies specifically to employees of DVI both in the workplace and at work associated events such as meetings, conferences and work related social events, whether on the premises or off site.

The policy applies to bullying not only by fellow employees but also by a client, customer or other business contact to which an employee might reasonably expect to come into contact with in the course of his/her employment.

Purpose

This policy is designed to assist DVI in providing a work environment free from workplace bullying. The complaints procedure is in place to ensure that any employee who feels that they have been subject to inappropriate behaviour, as defined in this policy, may raise the matter and have it resolved in an appropriate manner. This procedure is supported by the disciplinary procedure, which may be utilised where an employee is found guilty of engaging in behaviour constituting bullying.

This policy sets out to ensure that DVI fulfils its legal responsibilities under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, with regard to workplace bullying. This policy also complies with the requirements set out in the Codes of Practice relating to workplace bullying.

Scope

This policy is in place to protect all employees from acts of bullying perpetrated by other employees, members of Management, or any other person with whom the employee comes into contact in the course of employment e.g. a supplier or contractor. This policy applies where the unacceptable behaviour occurs in the workplace, or any other place attended in the course of employment e.g. an off-site training event.

Policy

DVI is committed to providing a work environment free from bullying and ensuring that all employees are treated with dignity and respect. All employees are protected by this policy and are urged to raise any concerns in relation to workplace bullying through the complaints procedures outlined in this policy. If you are a witness to bullying behaviour, you should make the recipient of the behaviour aware of this policy and urge them to raise the matter through the complaints procedures. You are also expected to bring the matter to the attention of Management.

All employees have a responsibility in creating and contributing to the maintenance of a work environment free from bullying or conduct likely to contribute to bullying. Employees will not be victimised for involvement in complaints.

Definition of Workplace Bullying

Workplace Bullying is defined as repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and / or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work.

An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work but, as a once off incident, is not considered to be bullying.

The following list contains examples of bullying behaviours; however, this is provided for illustrative purposes only and is not an exhaustive list. All situations will be considered on their own merits:

- Exclusion with negative consequences.
- Verbal abuse/insults
- Menacing behaviour
- Taking credit for other peoples' ideas.
- Public humiliation.
- Constantly undervaluing effort.
- Persistent or unfounded criticism.
- Shouting or other intimidatory behaviour.
- Sneering, ridicule, innuendo.
- Withholding work related information

What is Not Bullying

It is important to note that reasonable and essential discipline arising from the good management of an employee's performance, conduct or attendance is not considered to be bullying. Actions taken which may be justified on health and safety grounds will also not be considered to be bullying.

Procedure

There are both informal and formal procedures to deal with the issue of bullying at work. Although DVI would prefer that issues be addressed through the informal procedure in the first instance, it is acknowledged that this is not always suitable; therefore, there is no requirement to exhaust the informal procedure before progressing an issue through the formal process.

Informal Procedure

It is often preferable for all concerned that complaints under this policy are dealt with and resolved informally between the parties whenever possible. This is likely to produce solutions, which are speedy, effective and minimise embarrassment and the risk of breaching confidentiality, while also protecting the working relationship. The objective of the informal

approach is to stop the bullying with the minimum conflict and stress for the individuals concerned.

In many cases, the employee whose behaviour is causing offence may be unaware that his or her actions are inappropriate, or it may be that his or her words or actions have been misinterpreted. In such cases, every attempt should be made to clear up any misunderstanding quickly, on an informal basis.

The informal process provides options for resolving disputes including mediation, where appropriate.

The informal procedure consists of a low key and non-confrontational approach by the recipient of the behaviour to the party causing offence to advise him/her of the impact of their behaviour and to ask them to cease behaving in this manner. The approach should be made in private and should be non-confrontational. Advice in relation to this procedure should be sought from the Manager in DVI.

If a person finds it difficult to approach the alleged perpetrator directly then a person should seek help and advice on a confidential basis from the designated contact person. The role of the designated contact person is not to judge but rather to provide advice and assistance about what the company's policy says.

In DVI, the designated contact person is the Manager of DVI. In matters concerning the Manager, it is the Chairperson of the DVI Board.

Having consulted with the contact person, the complainant may request the assistance of a manager/supervisor in raising the issue with the alleged perpetrator(s). In this situation, the approach of the manager / supervisor should be by way of a confidential, non-confrontational discussion with a view to resolving the issue in an informal low-key manner.

Formal Procedure

It is acknowledged that it may not always be practical to use the informal procedure to resolve an issue. An employee may not feel comfortable approaching the other party, or the employee may feel that the issue is too serious to be addressed through the informal procedure. In such circumstances, or where the informal process has failed to resolve an issue, the formal procedure set out in this policy should be followed.

In order to make a formal complaint an initial approach may be made to any Manager regarding the issue. Although the initial complaint may be provided verbally, it is a requirement that the complaint is lodged in writing to ensure that a fair process may be followed. Where assistance is required to put the complaint in writing, the employee should consult their manager to arrange this. The complaint should state:

- The name of the person(s) complained of (alleged bully).
- The nature of alleged bullying i.e. the behaviours/conduct constituting bullying.
- Dates/times and locations of where and when the alleged bullying occurred.
- Names of witnesses to any alleged incidents.
- Details of any action already taken to stop the bullying.
- Consent to your identity and the facts of the allegation being disclosed to the alleged bully.
This is required in order to allow DVI to take action in appropriate circumstances.

If the behaviour complained of does not concern bullying as defined, an alternative approach may be put in place and a rationale recorded. If there are no concrete examples given, it will be deemed that there is no complaint to be answered by the person(s) complained of, as they have no recourse to repudiating an accusation that does not give any specifics.

Where an alternative approach is not deemed appropriate, the person(s) complained of will be notified in writing that a complaint has been made against him/her and provided a copy of this complaint. The person investigating the complaint will indicate a timeframe for the resolution of the complaint; however, such timeframes may be extended where necessary. He/she shall be afforded a fair opportunity to respond to the allegation(s), normally five working days.

Prior to commencing an investigation, the complaint and the response may be subject to an initial examination by a designated impartial member of Management or other appropriate person, with a view to determining an appropriate course of action. An appropriate course of action at this stage could, for example, include exploring a mediated solution or a view that the issue can be resolved in accordance with the Informal Procedure. Should either of these approaches be deemed inappropriate or inconclusive, a formal investigation of the complaint will be undertaken with a view to determining the facts of the case. In all cases, there will be no inference of guilt against the person(s) complained of, and they will be afforded a fair opportunity to respond to the allegation(s). The principles of natural justice will be adhered to throughout the investigation process.

All employees involved in an investigation must respect the need for confidentiality – failure to do so may represent a serious disciplinary offence. Confidentiality is assured in so far as it is reasonably practicable. Both parties may be suspended with pay, without any negative inference, pending the outcome of an investigation, where deemed appropriate by Management. However, where this is not possible, the parties to the complaint will be expected to maintain a positive working relationship.

Investigation Procedure

The investigation will be conducted in accordance with DVI Anti-Bullying Policy and will be governed by terms of reference which will detail the likely time scale for its completion (an indicative timeframe will be outlined) and the scope of the investigation, indicating that the investigator(s) will consider whether the complaint falls within the definition of bullying at work and whether the complaint has been upheld.

The investigation will be conducted by an independent member of Management or external assistance may be necessary to deal with complaints in some circumstances so as to ensure impartiality, objectivity and fairness. The investigation will be conducted thoroughly, objectively and with sensitivity. Utmost confidentiality will be protected in so far as it is reasonably practicable. Due respect will be had for the rights of the complainant, the person(s) complained off and any witnesses involved in the process.

The investigator(s) will meet with the complainant in the first instance to learn more regarding the complaint and to put the responses of the person(s) complained of to the complainant. Next, the person(s) complained of will be invited to a meeting to explore their responses to the complaint and to put any relevant evidence to them. Evidence will be provided in advance of the meetings in order to allow the employee to prepare their responses to that evidence.

As many interviews as are necessary will be conducted until the investigator(s) is/are satisfied that all evidence has been collected and all parties have had a fair opportunity to state their case. Witnesses may also be interviewed with a view to establishing the facts surrounding the allegation(s).

Statements from the complainant, the person(s) complained off and any witnesses will be recorded in writing.

DVI recognises that any employee involved in an alleged harassment process may be accompanied to formal meetings with management by a work colleague of their choice or a trade union representative.

All parties required to attend investigation meetings are entitled to be accompanied by a representative, whose role is to provide moral support, oversee the process and ensure that the interviewee is afforded a fair opportunity to respond and provide evidence at any investigation meetings.

Every effort will be made to carry out and complete the investigation as quickly as possible and preferably within an agreed timeframe. On completion of the investigation, the investigator(s) will submit a written report to a member of Management, containing the findings of the investigation. Both parties will be given the opportunity to comment on the findings before any action is decided upon by Management.

The complainant and the person(s) complained of will be informed in writing of the findings of the investigation, i.e. whether the complaint is upheld, not upheld, or whether the complaint is deemed to be malicious or vexatious.

Investigation Outcomes

Where a complaint is upheld, both parties will be informed of this outcome, and the relevant level of Management will also be advised. Management will take appropriate action based on the outcome of the investigation. This may include formal disciplinary action in line with DVI disciplinary procedure, or training, or another appropriate intervention deemed necessary to prevent a recurrence of the behaviour.

DVI will also consider providing further supervision, re-assignment or re-organisation of work. Prior to any disciplinary action being taken, a fair disciplinary hearing will be held in line with DVI disciplinary procedure. It is important that employees are aware that certain acts of bullying may be deemed gross misconduct by DVI and may result in summary dismissal.

Where an investigation is inconclusive, and therefore not upheld, there will be no negative inference against any party to the complaint. All parties to the complaint will be expected to continue working as normal, and to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at work.

Where it is found that the complaint was malicious or vexatious, then a disciplinary hearing will be held with the complainant to explore this further. In this situation only may a disciplinary sanction be imposed on the complainant. Lodging a malicious or vexatious complaint is a serious disciplinary offence, and, depending on the seriousness of the issue, may be deemed gross misconduct by DVI and may result in summary dismissal.

In all cases, whether the complaint is upheld or otherwise, the workplace will be monitored to ensure that the parties to the complaint conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and do not engage in any improper conduct. Appropriate support will be made available to both parties. DVI will take such action as is required to eliminate the risk of that behaviour recurring or continuing and will keep records of interventions used for this purpose.

Appeal

Either party may appeal the decision, outlining in writing to Management the reason for the appeal. Such appeals will be heard by a manager not previously involved in the investigation and independent advice and support will be sought if required.

Victimisation

No person engaging in the procedures outlined here will be subject to unfavourable treatment for their role in the process, whether they are making a complaint in good faith, supporting a complainant, giving evidence in the proceedings or giving notice of intention to do any of the foregoing, whether they are making a complaint in good faith, supporting a complainant, giving evidence in proceedings or giving notice of intention to do any of the foregoing, except where they are found guilty of an offence under this policy.

Third Party Bullying

The procedures outlined in this policy should be employed to deal with bullying by a third party. Sanctions that may be imposed on a third party may include exclusion from the premises, termination of a contract, or other measures to prevent the recurrence of the inappropriate behaviour.

Responsibilities

Management will endeavour to ensure that this policy is communicated to all employees and will ensure that the policy is maintained and updated in line with legislative changes and any amendments to the relevant Codes of Practice. Management will act appropriately and in line with this policy in order to eliminate workplace bullying.

Management has a particular responsibility to prevent workplace bullying and is expected to lead by example, promote awareness of this policy, be vigilant for signs of bullying, tackle problems before they escalate, deal sensitively with employees involved in a bullying complaint and monitor the situation in the workplace so that bullying does not occur or reoccur.

Employees are expected to comply with this policy and to raise issues of concern through the procedures outlined in the policy.

Dignity at Work – Anti-Harassment and Sexual Harassment

Purpose

This policy is designed to assist DVI in providing a work environment free from workplace harassment and/or sexual harassment. The complaints procedure is in place to ensure that any employee who feels that they have been subject to inappropriate behaviour, as defined

in this policy, may raise the matter and have it resolved in an appropriate manner. This procedure is supported by the disciplinary procedure, which may be utilised where an employee is found guilty of engaging in behaviour constituting harassment and/or sexual harassment.

This policy sets out to ensure compliance with the relevant sections of the Employment Equality Acts, 1998-2011, which provide that every individual has a right to a work environment free from harassment or sexual harassment. This policy also complies with the requirements set out in the Code of Practice on Sexual Harassment and Harassment at work.

Scope

This policy is in place to protect all employees from acts of harassment and/or sexual harassment perpetrated by other employees, members of Management, or any other person with whom the employee comes into contact within the course of employment with whom DVI has a business relationship e.g. a supplier or contractor. This policy applies where the unacceptable behaviour occurs in the workplace, or any other place attended in the course of employment e.g. an off-site training event.

Policy Statement

DVI is committed to providing all of its employees, service users and others who avail of its support and services with an environment free from harassment and sexual harassment. DVI will not tolerate harassment or sexual harassment in any form.

This policy applies specifically to employees of DVI both in the workplace and at work associated events such as meetings, conferences and work related social events, whether on the premises or off site.

The policy applies to harassment or sexual harassment not only by fellow employees but also by a client, customer or other business contact to which an employee might reasonably expect to come into contact with in the course of his/her employment.

All employees are protected by this policy and are urged to raise any concerns in relation to harassment or sexual harassment through the complaints procedures outlined in this policy. If you are a witness to harassing behaviour, you should make the recipient of the behaviour aware of this policy and urge them to raise the matter through the complaints procedures. You are also expected to bring the matter to the attention of Management.

Definition of Harassment

Harassment is defined as any form of unwanted conduct relating to any of the discriminatory grounds of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and/or membership of the Traveller community, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

Harassment is defined in the Employment Equality Acts 1998 – 2015, as “unwelcome acts or conduct of an offensive nature that includes spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material.” Harassment may be based on sex, religious belief, political opinion, race, disability or other specific grounds. It is harassment if the action or other conduct is unwelcomed to the recipient and could reasonably be regarded as offensive, humiliating or intimidating to that person in line with current employment legislation.

The policy extends to situations, where the employee does not have the relevant characteristic, but the harasser believes that he/she has that characteristic, for example, if the harasser thought the employee was gay and that the employee was not. Harassment is any act or conduct, including spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material if the action or conduct is unwelcomed to the employee and could reasonably be regarded as offensive, humiliating or intimidating. Many forms of behaviour may constitute harassment including:

- Verbal harassment – jokes, comments, ridicule or slogans, songs.
- Written harassment – including faxes, text messages, emails or notices.
- Treating people less favourably or subjecting them to ridicule on any of the nine discriminatory grounds. Demeaning and derogatory remarks, name-calling.
- Inappropriate comments on appearance.
- Persistent negative body language
- Physical harassment – jostling, shoving or any form of assault.
- Intimidating harassment – gestures, posturing or threatening poses.
- Visual displays such as posters, emblems or badges, graffiti, flags, which may be inflammatory or are likely to give offence or cause apprehension to particular individuals or groups of employees
- Isolation, non-cooperation or exclusion within the workplace or social activities.
- Pressure to behave in a manner that the employee thinks is inappropriate, for example being required to dress in a manner unsuited to a person's ethnic or religious background

- Undermining the authority of a colleague in the workplace.
- Production, display or circulation of offensive material.
- Excessive monitoring of work
- Unreasonably changing a person's job content or targets, pressure to behave in a manner that the Employee thinks is inappropriate, for example being required to dress in a manner unsuited to a person's ethnic or religious background

A single incident may constitute harassment.

The unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display, circulation of written words, pictures or other material.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any form of verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

The unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials.

A single incident may constitute sexual harassment.

The unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures, or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material.

The following list contains examples of sexually harassing behaviours; however this is provided for illustrative purposes only and is not an exhaustive list of behaviours. All situations will be considered on their own merits:

- Physical conduct of a sexual nature — this may include unwanted physical contact such as unnecessary touching, patting or pinching or brushing against another employee's body, assault and coercive sexual intercourse.
- Verbal conduct of a sexual nature — this includes unwelcome sexual advances, propositions or pressure for sexual activity, continued suggestions for social activity outside the work place after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome, unwanted or offensive flirtations, suggestive remarks, innuendos or lewd comments.

- Non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature — this may include the display of pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures, objects, written materials, emails, text-messages or faxes. It may also include leering, whistling or making sexually suggestive gestures.
- Gender-based conduct — this includes conduct that denigrates or ridicules or is intimidatory or physically abusive of an employee because of his or her sex such as derogatory or degrading abuse or insults which are gender related.

An essential characteristic of the type of behaviour, which constitutes sexual harassment, is that it is unwanted by the recipient. This distinguishes it from behaviour, which is welcome or reciprocated.

Sexual harassment is unacceptable whether from superiors, peers, juniors, non-employees or by persons of the same sex.

It is important that all employees understand that DVI is obliged to investigate all complaints of sexual harassment whether or not it was the intention of the alleged harasser to engage in such behaviour.

Procedure

There are both informal and formal procedures to deal with the issues of harassment and/or sexual harassment at work. Although DVI would prefer that issues be addressed through the informal procedure in the first instance, it is acknowledged that this is not always suitable; therefore, there is no requirement to exhaust the informal procedure before progressing an issue through the formal process.

Informal Procedure

It is often preferable for all concerned that complaints under this policy are dealt with and resolved informally between the parties whenever possible. This is likely to produce solutions, which are speedy, effective and minimise embarrassment and the risk of breaching confidentiality, while also protecting the working relationship.

The objective of the informal approach is to stop the harassment or sexual harassment with the minimum conflict and stress for the individuals concerned.

In many cases, the employee whose behaviour is causing offence may be unaware that his or her actions are inappropriate, or it may be that his or her words or actions have been misinterpreted. In such cases, every attempt should be made to clear up any misunderstanding quickly, on an informal basis. The informal process provides options for resolving disputes including mediation, where appropriate.

The informal procedure consists of a low key and non-confrontational approach by the recipient of the behaviour to the party causing offence to advise him/her of the impact of their behaviour and to ask them to cease behaving in this manner.

If a person finds it difficult to approach the alleged perpetrator directly then a person should seek help and advice on a confidential basis from the designated contact person. The role of the designated contact person is not to judge but rather to provide advice and assistance about what the company's policy says.

In DVI, the designated contact person is the DVI Manager. In matters concerning the DVI Manager it is the Chairperson of the DVI Board.

Having consulted with the contact person, the complainant may request the assistance of a manager/supervisor in raising the issue with the alleged perpetrator(s). In this situation, the approach of the manager / supervisor should be by way of a confidential, non-confrontational discussion with a view to resolving the issue in an informal low-key manner.

Formal Procedure

It is acknowledged that it may not always be practical to use the informal procedure to resolve an issue. An employee may not feel comfortable to approach the other party, or the employee may feel that the issue is too serious to be addressed through the informal procedure. In such circumstances, or where the informal process has failed to resolve an issue, the formal procedure set out in this policy should be followed.

In order to make a formal complaint an initial approach may be made to any Manager regarding the issue. Although the initial complaint may be provided verbally, it is a requirement that the complaint is lodged in writing to ensure that a fair process may be followed. Where assistance is required to put the complaint in writing, the employee should consult their manager to arrange this.

The complaint should state:

- The name of the alleged perpetrator.
- The nature of alleged harassment i.e. the behaviours/conduct constituting harassment/sexual harassment.
- Dates/times and locations of where and when the alleged harassment / sexual harassment occurred.
- Names of witnesses to any alleged incidents.
- Details of any action already taken to stop the harassment / sexual harassment.

- Consent to your identity and the facts of the allegation being disclosed to the alleged perpetrator. This is required in order to allow DVI to investigate and to take action in appropriate circumstances.

If the behaviour complained of does not concern harassment or sexual harassment as defined, an alternative approach may be put in place and a rationale recorded. If there are no concrete examples given, it will be deemed that there is no complaint to be answered by the alleged perpetrator, as they have no recourse to repudiating an accusation that does not give any specifics.

Where an alternative approach is not deemed appropriate, the alleged perpetrator(s) will be notified in writing that a complaint has been made against him/her and provided with a copy of this complaint. The person investigating the complaint will indicate a timeframe for the resolution of the complaint; however, such timeframes may be extended where necessary. He/she shall be afforded a fair opportunity to respond to the allegation(s), normally five working days.

Prior to commencing an investigation, the complaint and the response may be subject to an initial examination by a designated impartial member of Management or other appropriate person, with a view to determining an appropriate course of action. An appropriate course of action at this stage could, for example, include exploring a mediated solution or a view that the issue can be resolved in accordance with the Informal Procedure. Should either of these approaches be deemed inappropriate or inconclusive, a formal investigation of the complaint will be undertaken with a view to determining the facts of the case. In all cases, there will be no inference of guilt against the alleged perpetrator, and they will be afforded a fair opportunity to respond to the allegation. The principles of natural justice will be adhered to throughout the investigation process.

All employees involved in an investigation must respect the need for confidentiality; a failure to do so may represent a serious disciplinary offence. Confidentiality is assured as far as it is reasonably practicable. Both parties may be suspended with pay, without any negative inference, pending the outcome of an investigation, where deemed appropriate by Management. However, where this is not possible, the parties to the complaint will be expected to maintain a positive working relationship.

Investigation Procedure

The investigation will be conducted in accordance with the Anti-Harassment & Sexual Harassment Policy and will be governed by terms of reference which will detail the likely time scale for its completion (an indicative timeframe will be outlined). It will also include the scope

of the investigation, indicating that the investigator(s) will consider whether the complaint falls within the definition of harassment or sexual harassment and whether the complaint has been upheld.

The investigation will be conducted by either an independent member of Management or external assistance may be necessary to deal with complaints in some circumstances to ensure impartiality, objectivity and fairness. The investigation will be conducted thoroughly, objectively and with sensitivity. Utmost confidentiality will be protected as far as it is reasonably practicable. Due respect will be had for the rights of the complainant, the alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses involved in the process.

The investigator(s) will meet with the complainant in the first instance to learn more regarding the complaint and to put the alleged perpetrator's responses to the complainant. Next, the alleged perpetrator will be invited to a meeting to explore their responses to the complaint and to put any relevant evidence to them. Evidence will be provided in advance of the meetings in order to allow the employee to prepare their response to that evidence.

As many interviews as are necessary will be conducted until the investigator(s) is/are satisfied that all evidence has been collected and all parties have had a fair opportunity to state their case. Witnesses may also be interviewed with a view to establishing the facts surrounding the allegation(s).

Statements from the complainant, the alleged perpetrator and any witnesses will be recorded in writing.

DVI recognises that any employee involved in an alleged harassment process may be accompanied to formal meetings with management by a work colleague of their choice or a trade union representative.

Every effort will be made to carry out and complete the investigation as quickly as possible and preferably within an agreed timeframe. On completion of the investigation, the investigator(s) will submit a written report to a member of Management, containing the findings of the investigation. Both parties will be given the opportunity to comment on the findings before any action is decided upon by Management.

The complainant and the alleged perpetrator(s) will be informed in writing of the findings of the investigation, i.e. whether the complaint is upheld, not upheld, or whether the complaint is deemed to be malicious or vexatious.

Investigation Outcomes

Where a complaint is upheld, both parties will be informed of this outcome, and the relevant level of Management will also be advised. Management will take appropriate action based

on the outcome of the investigation. This may include formal disciplinary action in line with our disciplinary procedure, or training, or another appropriate intervention deemed necessary to prevent a recurrence of the behaviour.

DVI will also consider providing further supervision, reassignment or re-organisation of work. Prior to any disciplinary action being taken, a fair disciplinary hearing will be held in line with our disciplinary procedure. It is important that employees are aware that certain acts of harassment or sexual harassment may be deemed gross misconduct by DVI and may result in summary dismissal.

Where an investigation is inconclusive and the complaint is not upheld, there will be no negative inference against any party to the complaint. All parties to the complaint will be expected to continue working as normal, and to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at work.

Where it is found that the complaint was malicious or vexatious, then a disciplinary hearing will be held with the complainant to explore this further. In this situation only may a disciplinary sanction be imposed on the complainant. Lodging a malicious or vexatious complaint is a serious disciplinary offence, and, depending on the seriousness of the issue, may be deemed gross misconduct by DVI and may result in summary dismissal.

In all cases, whether the complaint is upheld or otherwise, the workplace will be monitored to ensure that the parties to the complaint conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and do not engage in any improper conduct. Appropriate support will be made available to both parties. DVI will take such action as is required to eliminate the risk of that behaviour recurring or continuing and will keep records of interventions used for this purpose.

Appeal

Either party may appeal the decision, outlining in writing to Management the reason for the appeal. Such appeals will be heard by a manager not previously involved in the investigation and independent advice and support will be sought if required.

Victimisation

No person engaging in the procedures outlined here will be subject to unfavourable treatment for their role in the process, whether they are making a complaint in good faith, supporting a complainant, giving evidence in the proceedings or giving notice of intention to do any of the foregoing, except where they are found guilty of an offence under the policy.

Third Party Harassment/Sexual Harassment

The procedures outlined in this policy should be employed to deal with harassment or sexual harassment by a third party. Sanctions that may be imposed on a third party may include exclusion from the premises, termination of a contract, or other measures to prevent the recurrence of the inappropriate behaviour.

Responsibilities

Management will endeavour to ensure that this policy is communicated to all employees and will ensure that the policy is maintained and updated in line with legislative changes and any amendments to the relevant Code of Practice. Where required, measures will be taken to ensure the accessibility of policies and procedures for all employees.

Management has a particular responsibility to prevent workplace harassment and is expected to lead by example, promote awareness of this policy, be vigilant for signs of harassment, tackle problems before they escalate, deal sensitively with employees involved in a harassment complaint and monitor the situation in the workplace so that harassment or sexual harassment does not occur or reoccur.

Employees are expected to conduct themselves so as to respect the rights of others to dignity in the workplace, to comply with this policy and to raise issues of concern through the procedures outlined in the policy.

Holiday Entitlement & Leave Arrangements

Annual Leave

The holiday qualifying year for all employees of Deaf Village Ireland (DVI) runs from 1st January to 31st December of the same year. Your entitlement is granted in accordance with the provisions of Part III of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997. Employees are expected to take their holiday entitlement at times convenient to their work. The holiday entitlement should be taken after obtaining the permission of your Supervisor/Manager.

Preferred holiday periods will be respected as far as possible within the framework of DVI's work and operational needs. The final decision in allocating annual leave rests with management. It is in the best health and welfare interests of employees to make full use of their annual holiday entitlement each year. Holidays cannot be carried forward from one holiday year to the next except by prior arrangement with your supervisor/manager. In such instances a maximum of four days may be carried over to the next leave period.

DVI has a duty and responsibility to ensure that employees use their leave entitlement within the holiday year. If an employee fails to plan and reserve holidays to be taken before the end of the holiday year, their supervisor/manager reserves the right to specify the dates on which the employee will use outstanding holiday entitlement.

Any holidays carried over from the previous holiday year, by arrangement with management, must be taken within six months of ending of the leave year.

This does not apply in the case of CE, where holiday leave must be taken within the 52-week period.

When a termination of contract occurs and the paid holidays already taken exceed the paid holiday entitlement on the date of termination, DVI reserves the right to deduct the excess holiday pay from any termination pay.

Public Holidays

Public holiday entitlements will be granted in accordance with the provisions of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997. DVI recognises nine public holidays. These are:

- New Year's Day
- St Bridget's Day
- St Patrick's Day
- Easter Monday
- First Monday in May
- First Monday in June
- First Monday in August
- Last Monday in October
- Christmas Day
- St Stephen's Day

Under normal circumstances DVI will give employees a day off with pay on the day of a public holiday. In exceptional circumstances employees may be required to work. On such occasions staff will be compensated as per the provisions of the Organisation of the Working Time Act, 1997.

You may be required to attend for work on a public holiday. In respect of each public holiday, an Employee is entitled to either:

(a) A paid day off within a month; or

(b) An extra day's annual leave.

If the public holiday falls on a day on which the Employee normally works, the Employee is entitled to one of the benefits outlined above in respect of the day. If the public holiday falls on a day on which the Employee does not normally work, the Employee is entitled to one fifth of his/her normal weekly wage as a benefit in respect of the day.

There is no qualification requirement in respect of public holidays for Employees working fulltime.

In order for a part-time Employee to qualify for a benefit in respect of a public holiday they must have worked at least 40 hours during the five weeks ending on the day before the public holiday

The working days which fall when DVI is closed for the Christmas period are part of the annual leave allocation.

Christmas Eve and Good Friday are normal working days.

Grace days

DVI grants the following grace days each year

- Two days during the Christmas period
- Good Friday

Employees who are required to work these days will be given a day in lieu. This does not apply to staff who are paid a premium for these days.

Maternity Leave

Maternity leave consists of:

- 26 consecutive weeks' leave when the employee is in receipt of statutory maternity pay; not her DVI salary (two weeks must be taken before the expected due date and four weeks after the birth of the child)
- 16 weeks' additional unpaid leave, notification of which must be given at least four weeks before the due date to return to work
- A pregnant employee is entitled to paid leave for ante and post-natal care (subject to two weeks' notice and written confirmation of appointments after the first appointment)
- In special circumstances, DVI may grant further unpaid leave to the

employee.

Arrangements for maternity leave will be in accordance with the provisions of the Maternity Protection Acts, 1994 and 2004. Information leaflets are available from the Institute. All employees covered by the Maternity Acts are entitled to:

- Time off without pay from DVI for maternity leave and additional maternity leave.
- Time off, without loss of pay, for ante-natal/post-natal care.
- Time off, without loss of pay to attend one set of ante-natal classes (other than the last three).
- Health and safety leave where the employment results in a hazard to the employee.
- Accrual of annual leave whilst on maternity leave and additional maternity leave.
- Protection against unfair dismissal on grounds of pregnancy or matters connected therewith.
- Return to work after maternity and protective (health and safety) leave and at the option of DVI to either breaks of one hour in the workplace where facilities are provided for breastfeeding or to a reduction in working hours
- Subject to agreement with DVI, a right to terminate additional maternity leave in the event of becoming ill and to postpone maternity or additional maternity leave if the child is hospitalised.

In the case of fathers DVI will grant:

- Time off to attend, on a once off basis, the last two ante-natal classes before the birth.
- The balance of the maternity leave or additional maternity leave where the mother dies on maternity leave or additional maternity leave

These entitlements cover:

- All pregnant employees.
- All employees who have recently given birth, for a period of not more than 14 weeks from the date of the birth.
- All employees who are breastfeeding, for a period of not more than 26 weeks from the date of the birth and who have informed Deaf Village Ireland of their condition

Fixed term Employees:

All fixed term employees are covered where their contract is due to expire during the maternity or health and safety leave period. Their entitlement also expires on that date.

Procedure and Notification

The right to take maternity leave is subject to the employee concerned giving to her supervisor/manager at least four weeks written notice of intention to take maternity leave, and also giving or producing for inspection, a medical (or similar) certificate, confirming the pregnancy and specifying the expected week of confinement. Subsequently, if the employee wishes to change the starting date of her maternity leave a second notification must be made which also gives at least four weeks' notice of the beginning of maternity leave.

The employee's right to return to work is conditional on written notification of intention to return to work and must be given at least four weeks before the due date of return. The supervisor/manager should prepare a copy of DVI's advice to employees taking Maternity Leave form so that there is a clear understanding between the employee and DVI about dates and procedural requirements to be observed.

To be entitled to take additional maternity leave, an employee must inform DVI in writing of her intention to take such additional leave not later than four weeks before the end of the maternity leave period.

Ante-Natal and Post-Natal Care Appointments

A pregnant Employee is entitled to paid time off to attend ante-natal medical care appointments, and for post-natal medical appointments for up to 14 weeks after the birth of her child. The entitlement to paid time off for post-natal care is extended to 26 weeks where the Employee is breastfeeding. At least 2 weeks written notification must be provided to the Organisation, except in the case of the first appointment. Where possible, appointments should be scheduled at the beginning or at the end of the working day. If the appointment finishes during the working day, the Employee is expected to return to work.

Time Off for Ante-Natal Classes

Female Employees are entitled to paid time off to attend one complete set of ante-natal classes (other than the last three classes in a set). An expectant father is entitled to paid time off to attend the last two ante-natal classes in a set. This is a once off entitlement in respect of one pregnancy only. However, where an Employee is unable to attend a class through no fault of their own, they may be permitted to attend that class on a subsequent birth. At least 2 weeks' notice of the intention to avail of this leave must be provided before the class and appropriate documentation submitted.

Return to Work

Employees are required to provide at least 4 weeks written notice of their intention to return to work following leave. This notice should confirm the intended return to work date. Where possible, employees will return to the position held immediately prior to the commencement of leave (provided this was their normal position), however where this is not feasible, he/she may return to work to suitable alternative employment that is no less favourable in terms and conditions.

Breastfeeding on Return to Work

Should an Employee be breastfeeding on return to work, and their child is under 6 months old, the Organisation will facilitate a temporary reduction of working hours, without loss of pay, for the purposes of breastfeeding. The Employee must provide notification of her intention to avail of this entitlement at least 4 weeks before her proposed return to work date.

Annual Leave and Public Holidays

Annual leave and public holiday benefits will continue to accrue during the period of maternity leave and additional maternity leave.

Paternity Leave

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate our compliance with the Paternity Leave and Benefit Bill 2016 and associated regulations as issued, whilst also protecting the rights of employees under this legislation.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees who are relevant parents to a child (other than the mother):

- The father of the child.
- The relevant adopting parent.
- The spouse, civil partner or cohabitant of the mother of the child.
- A parent of a child where the child is a donor conceived child.

Policy

A relevant parent is entitled to avail of 2 weeks paternity leave from employment, to enable him or her to provide or assist in the provision of care to the child or to provide support to the relevant adopting parent or mother of the child. The period of leave comprises a single period of 2 continuous weeks. Only one person who is a relevant parent in relation to a child is entitled to paternity leave in respect of that child. Where a child is part of a multiple birth, or a person adopts 2 or more children at the same time, the relevant parent is only entitled to one period of paternity leave.

Paternity leave is applicable where the date of confinement in respect of the child falls on or after the 1st September 2016, or where a child is or is to be adopted and the date of placement in respect of the child falls on or after the 1st September 2016. All employees with more than one year's service, covered by the Paternity Leave and Benefit Bill are entitled to time off with full salary minus the social welfare payment for 50% of the leave period (1 week) and half pay for the remaining 50% of the leave period (1 week).

An employee may be entitled to claim paternity benefit from the Department of Social Protection, subject to qualification criteria. In order to claim this benefit, an Employer is required to submit a form (Form PB2) to certify that an employee is entitled to paternity leave for the dates provided. This form is available from the Department of Social Protection. The relevant parent must have a Public Services Card to apply for Paternity Benefit)/ (Please see Section G for details in relation to Paternity Pay/ Paternity Benefit).

Notification Procedure

Paternity leave can begin at the time of the birth/adoption or within 26 weeks of the birth/placement of the child.

Entitlement to paternity leave shall be subject to an employee, who is a relevant parent, notifying his or her Employer in writing of his or her intention to take paternity leave:

- As soon as reasonably practicable but not later than 4 weeks before the expected week of confinement of the expectant mother concerned.
- In the case of a child who is/ is to be adopted, as soon as reasonably practicable but not later than 4 weeks before the expected day of placement.

At the time of notification, or as soon as reasonably practicable, an employee must provide the Employer with a medical certificate confirming the pregnancy of the expectant mother concerned and specifying the expected week of confinement. An employee who has not given a notification to his or her Employer in line with the requirements set out above, or who

revoked such notification, may notify the Employer of his or her intention to take paternity leave not later than 4 weeks before the commencement of such leave.

Commencement

The period of paternity leave shall commence on such a day as the relevant parent selects in his or her notification to the Employer of their intention to take paternity leave, being not earlier than the date of confinement or day of placement, and not later than 26 weeks after such date or day. Where the employee intends to take paternity leave, the employee must notify the employer of the length of leave that the employee intends to take.

Early Confinement

Where the date of confinement occurs in a week that is 4 weeks or more before the expected date of confinement, the relevant parent will be deemed to have complied with the requirements in terms of notification to DVI if the notification required is given in the period of 7 days commencing on the date of confinement.

Postponement

Where, as the case may be, the day of placement is postponed or the date of confinement occurs after the date selected by a relevant parent in his or her notification, the relevant parent shall be entitled to select another date on which the paternity leave shall commence.

Sickness during Paternity Leave

Where a relevant parent who has complied with the notification procedures becomes sick prior to the commencement of his or her paternity leave and wishes to postpone the paternity leave, he or she may, by notice in writing given to his or her employer as soon as reasonably practicable after becoming sick and accompanied by the relevant evidence in respect of the sickness, postpone the taking of the leave to such time as the relevant parent is no longer sick.

Abuse of Leave

Where an Employer has a reasonable belief that an employee who is on paternity leave is not using the leave for the purpose outlined, the employer may, by provision of notice in writing to the employee, terminate the leave. The notice shall summarise the grounds for terminating the leave, and the day by which the employee must return to work.

Employee Rights

During a period of paternity leave, an employee shall be deemed to have been in the employment of the Employer and be treated as if he or she had not been absent from work. Availing of paternity leave shall not affect any right related to the employment, other than the right to remuneration during the absence. Where an employee is on probation, undergoing training, or employed under a contract of apprenticeship, the employer may require that the probation, training or apprenticeship shall stand suspended during the period of leave.

Return to Work

Employees are entitled to return to work to the same job and under the same terms and conditions of employment following paternity leave. Where this is not reasonably practicable, DVI will provide suitable alternative employment that is no less favourable in terms and conditions.

Adoptive Leave

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate this Organisation's compliance with the Adoptive Leave Acts, 1995 and 2005, and associated regulations as issued, whilst also protecting the rights of Employees under this legislation.

Adoptive leave is available to all adoptive mothers, sole male adopters and adopting fathers where the adopting mother has died before or during the period for adoptive leave or additional adoptive leave.

The employee must give at least one month's written notice of the intention to take adoptive leave before the expected placement of the child.

DVI recognises the burdens placed on adopting parents and will maintain the employment rights of:

- All adopting mothers under a contract of employment.
- All sole male adopters, under a contract of employment
- All adopting fathers, under a contract of employment, where the adopting mother has died before or during the period for adoptive leave or additional adoptive leave

All such employees will be entitled to 24 weeks of statutory adoptive leave and 16 weeks additional adoptive leave, subject to certain notification requirements. Social welfare

payments are available for statutory adoptive leave only additionally, an employee will be granted time off during work hours without loss of pay to attend preparation classes and pre-adoption meetings with social workers/health board officials required during the pre-adoption process.

Procedure and Notification

The employee must give a minimum of four weeks advance notice of their wish to take Adoptive Leave before the expected placement of the child. The expected day of placement may be given later where this is not possible. However written notification must be given not later than the proposed date of commencement of the leave.

If the employee wishes to take additional adoptive leave, they must inform DVI in writing, at least four weeks before they wish to commence this leave.

To benefit from their protected employment rights during Adoptive Leave the employee must inform DVI, in writing, at least four weeks before the date in which they wish to return to work after adoptive leave or additional leave.

Leave to Attend Classes and Meetings in Advance of the Adoption

Any Employee involved in the adoption process is permitted to avail of paid time off to attend pre-adoption classes and meetings which they are obliged to attend, provided the meetings are held within the state 2 weeks written notice of the first request must be provided. Evidence of the requirement to attend the class or meeting may be sought by the Organisation.

Leave in Advance of Foreign Adoptions

In the case of a foreign adoption, an adopting mother or sole male adopter may avail of some of their additional leave before the placement of the child for the purposes of familiarisation with the child in advance of the adoption. 4 weeks written notice of this intention must be provided, and a declaration of suitability and eligibility must also be supplied. This entitlement is in addition to the time permitted to attend classes and meetings in the state.

Return to Work

Employees are required to provide at least 4 weeks written notice of their intention to return to work following leave. This notice should confirm the intended return to work date. Where possible the Employee will return to the position held immediately prior to the commencement of leave (provided this was their normal position), however where this is not

feasible, the Employee may return to work to suitable alternative employment that is no less favourable in terms and conditions.

Annual Leave and Public Holidays

Annual leave and public holiday benefits will continue to accrue for the period of adoptive leave and additional adoptive leave.

DVI may, at its discretion depending on the financial circumstances of the organisation at the relevant time, pay a proportion of salary during adoptive leave.

Protected Leave

During any period of:

Maternity leave

Additional Maternity leave

Leave for fathers on death of mother

Leave on health and safety grounds

Carer's leave

Adoptive leave

Parental leave

Force Majeure leave

The employee will be treated as being on protected leave and remain in the employment of DVI. Any notice of resignation given by an employee during maternity leave that would take effect during the period of maternity leave is void and will not be accepted by DVI. During these periods of leave an employee's continuity of employment in respect of any right (whether statutory, contractual or otherwise) with the exception of remuneration are preserved as if present at work.

During natal care absence and time off for breastfeeding, the employee's continuity of employment in respect of any right are preserved as if she had been at work. Absences on protective leave, natal care absence and time off for breastfeeding count as reckonable service for the purposes of annual leave and redundancy calculation and will not be counted against any other leave, such as annual leave or sick leave, to which the employee is entitled. Employees will retain entitlement to public holidays occurring during maternity leave, additional maternity leave and leave for fathers. Employees on health and safety leave do not have such entitlement.

Probationers and Trainees

The duration of training or probationary period is extended by the period of the protected leave. The training or probation stands suspended for the leave period and must be completed on return to work.

Return to Work

An employee who has been on protected leave will be entitled return to work in the same job under the same contract of employment. If the employee had been in a different job than usual immediately before leave such as giving her suitable work during pregnancy, she is entitled to return to her normal work or as soon as is permitted by law where protective legislation is concerned.

Alternative Work

Where it is not reasonably practicable for DVI to permit an employee to return to work in the same job, suitable alternative work may be offered under a new contract of employment. Alternative work offered will be work of a kind that is suitable to the particular employee. Offers of alternative employment will not be less favourable than those previously obtaining.

Procedures and Notification

All rights are subject to employees observing notification procedures.

Parental Leave

DVI recognises that there will be occasions when employees, who have or are expecting to have parental responsibility, will be required to care for, or make arrangements for the good of a child. Arrangements for the taking of parental leave will be in accordance with the provisions of the Parental Leave Act, 1998 – 2019 and the Parental Leave (Amendment) Bill 2017

All qualifying employees who are natural or adoptive parents of, or who are persons acting in loco parentis to, a child under the relevant age have an entitlement to avail of up to 26 working weeks parental leave in respect of that child over a defined period of time.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees who are natural or adoptive parents or acting in loco parentis to a child under the relevant age.

Policy

All qualifying employees who are natural or adoptive parents of, or who are persons acting in loco parentis to, a child under the relevant age have an entitlement to avail of up to 26 working weeks parental leave in respect of that child over a defined period of time.

Parental leave is unpaid leave. However, employees should note that they are entitled to two weeks payment by the Department of Social Protection and where a block of leave is taken with the result that no PRSI contributions will be made by DVI or employee in that week, then the Department of Social Protection may make PRSI contributions on the employee's behalf. This is subject to the employee notifying the Department of Social Protection of the fact that they are on leave.

Who is a qualifying Employee?

In order to qualify for parental leave an employee must meet the following criteria.

- he/she must have completed 12 months' service with DVI to qualify for 26 working weeks leave, or
- Where the child is about to go over the relevant age, and the employee has completed more than 3 months service but less than 12, he/she will be entitled to avail of 1 working week of leave per completed month of service.

What age must the child be in order to be deemed under the relevant age?

The relevant age of the child in respect of whom leave may be taken may vary depending on certain factors. Parental leave is allowed in respect of a child:

- Up to 12 years of age, or
- within two years of an adoption order where the child is adopted between the ages of 10 and 12 years, or
- Aged under 16 years in the case of a child with a disability/ long term illness.

Applications Procedure

Applications for parental leave must be made in writing at least 6 weeks prior to the intended commencement of leave. A response to this application will be issued by DVI 4 weeks before the intended commencement of leave indicating whether the leave can be approved, or

whether it is necessary to postpone the leave. Postponement of leave will not exceed 6 months except where this is permitted by legislation and necessary for operational reasons. In all cases discussion will be held to establish a suitable new timing for the leave. Where the leave is approved, a confirmation document will be produced for signature and filing.

If both parents are employees of DVI, employees may request that a portion of the leave (not more than 14 weeks) be transferred to the other parent, approval of such a transfer of leave will be at the discretion of DVI.

Patterns of Leave Permitted

Leave may be availed of as a continuous period of 6 weeks or greater at any one time. Periods of leave of a lesser duration are entirely at the discretion of Management, and it may not be possible to permit these. Consult your manager for further information.

Sickness During Parental Leave

Should an employee fall ill during parental leave, and as a result is unable to care for their child, they may suspend their parental leave and the time may be treated as certified sick leave. This is subject to the employee complying with normal sick leave reporting procedures and submission of a doctors certificate confirming the illness irrespective of the number of days of sickness. This certificate should confirm that the employee is incapable of caring for the child in respect of whom leave is being taken.

Abuse of Leave

An employee must use parental leave for the purpose of caring for the child in respect of whom it is taken. Employees may not work in alternative employment while on this leave. Abuse of parental leave may be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

Annual Leave and Public Holidays

Annual leave entitlements continue to accrue, and public holiday benefits will continue to be provided during the period of an employee's parental leave.

Returning to Work

Employees are entitled to return to work to the same job and under the same terms and conditions of employment following parental leave. Where this is not reasonably practicable,

DVI will provide suitable alternative employment that is no less favourable in terms and conditions.

Employees may request a change in working hours / patterns, or both, to apply for a set period of time following their return from Parental leave. Such requests must be submitted not later than 6 weeks prior to the proposed commencement of this set period. DVI will consider all requests having regard for the Organisational needs, and the employee's needs at the time and will respond within 4 weeks of receiving the request.

Bereavement /Compassionate Leave

DVI would wish to support employees during times of bereavement and allows employees paid leave.

- In the event of the death of a close relative (a parent, spouse/partner, child, brother or sister) 3 days paid leave will be granted.
- In the event of the death of a member of the employee's extended family, (grand-parent, grand-aunt/uncle, aunt, uncle, first cousin, parent-in-law) 1 day's paid leave will be granted.
- In the event of the death of a friend or more distant relative, unpaid time off for attendance at a funeral may be granted at the discretion of manager

CE Scheme

Bereavement leave may be funded. The number of days to be funded will for the most part depend on the closeness of the deceased relative. Special consideration is usually given to the particular circumstances of the situation. Up to 3 days paid leave for the death of close family members may be funded

Force Majeure Leave

DVI wishes to support employees in times of personal or family difficulties and grants Force Majeure Leave. Force majeure is a legal term to describe unforeseeable circumstances that prevent someone from fulfilling a contract. An employee is entitled to leave with pay for urgent family reasons, owing to the injury or illness of a close family member. Entitlement to

force majeure leave is limited to circumstances where the immediate presence of the employee, at the place where the ill or injured person is situated, is indispensable.

Eligibility

An employee wishing to take Force Majeure Leave may do so in respect of:

- A parent or grandparent of an employee
- Spouse/ partner of an employee
- Brother/sister of an employee
- Child/adopted child of an employee
- A person to whom the employee is acting in loco parentis
- A person with whom the Employee lives in a relationship of domestic dependency. This includes any person who resides with a staff member who, in the event of their injury or illness, would reasonably rely on that Employee to make arrangements for the provision of care. This includes but is not limited to same sex partners.

Entitlement

Employees are entitled to up to three (3) days paid Force Majeure Leave in a twelve (12) month period or no more than five (5) days in a thirty-six (36) month period. Part days absent will be regarded as one (1) day. In accordance with legislation, a day is deemed to be the period of work for which the employee was rostered on that occasion

Entitlement to force majeure leave is limited to circumstances:

- where the immediate presence of the employee is indispensable,
- where the employee is present at the place where the ill or injured person is situated.

Notification

On the day in question, the employee should notify their Supervisor/Manager as early as possible of their intention to take Force Majeure Leave and the reasons for it. DVI acknowledges that it is not feasible for employees to give notice requesting Force Majeure Leave, as it is designed to cater for emergencies only. However, on return to work, a Force Majeure Leave application form (see appendix II) should be completed and submitted to the manager for approval.

In addition, evidence of the family emergency may be required. This will normally be a medical certificate from the doctor attending the family member, outlining the nature of the injury or

illness and confirming that the employee's presence was urgently required. In emergency situations, the medical certificate will be self-explanatory.

DVI will inform employees if their application for Force Majeure Leave has been successful and will hold records of all Force Majeure Leave taken by employees.

Carer's Leave

DVI will grant unpaid Carer's Leave to employees, who have a minimum of one year's continuous service have an entitlement to unpaid leave in order to look after someone in need of full-time care and an entitlement to Carer's Benefit from the Department of Social Protection for the relevant time period the (Carers' Leave Act 2001). To qualify, the employee must provide DVI with a decision from the deciding officer in the Department stating that the person requiring care is considered a 'relevant person'.

Carer's leave of at least 13 weeks and up to 104 weeks may be applied for. This may be extended to 208 weeks in respect of two persons in need of care in certain circumstances.

Carer's leave may be taken as a continuous block of leave or broken into shorter periods of leave. Where the leave is broken down, the employee may not commence a subsequent period of leave until 6 weeks have elapsed since the termination of the previous period of leave.

Notification

The employee must make application for leave to both the Institute and the Department of Social and Family Affairs at least 8 weeks before they propose to commence Carer's Leave. At least two weeks before the proposed date of commencement of the Carer's Leave, the Institute will prepare confirmation document. This document specifies:

- The date the leave will begin.
- Its duration and
- The manner in which it will be taken
- The employee must produce Department of Social Protection certificate

A response will be issued in respect of the application at least two weeks prior to the proposed commencement of the leave. Where the leave is approved a confirmation document will be produced for signature by the Employee & the organisation and this will be retained by the organisation.

Staff on carer's leave should give written notice of their intention to return to work four weeks before the intended date of return. In situations where DVI suspect's carer's leave is being abused, DVI will inform the Department which may lead to DVI requesting the employee's immediate return to work.

Termination of Carer's Leave

Carer's leave shall terminate on the pre-agreed date in the confirmation document, or in the following circumstances, whichever is the sooner:

- On an alternative date agreed between the Employee and Management,
- Where the person in respect of whom carer's leave is taken ceases to qualify as a relevant person, or the Employee ceases to qualify as a carer
- Where a deciding officer from the Department of Social Protection determines that it should end,
- Where the relevant person dies during a period of carer's leave. In such circumstances, the Employee should return to work on the date within 6 weeks after the date of death, or as agreed in the initial confirmation document, whichever is the sooner.

An Employee availing of carer's leave will be regarded as still being in employment, and none of their rights relating to employment shall be affected, with the exception of remuneration, annual leave (after 13 weeks), public holidays (after 13 weeks), superannuation benefits or any obligation to pay contributions in, or in respect of, the employment. Such absence shall be reckonable for redundancy purposes. Existing PRSI rights will be protected by the award of credited contributions during the period of carer's leave by arrangement with the Department of Social Protection.

Working while on Carer's Leave

Employees can work for up to 18.5 hours a week while they are on carer's leave, as long as they earn less than €350.00 a week. (This is an Employee's take-home pay after deductions such as tax, PRSI and union dues). Alternatively, Employee can attend an educational or

training course or do voluntary work for a maximum of 18.5 hours a week. Employees must notify the 'Relevant Department' before they start work or training.

Return to Work

An Employee on carer's leave must provide at least 4 weeks written notice of their intention to return to work. This notice should confirm the intended return to work date. Where possible the Employee will return to the position held immediately prior to the commencement of leave (provided this was their normal position), however where this is not feasible, they may return to work to suitable alternative employment that is no less favourable in terms and conditions.

Jury Service

DVI will continue to pay full salary to an employee who is called to serve on a Jury. The employee is responsible for claiming loss of earnings from the Court. This amount should be reimbursed to DVI. It is a condition of this arrangement that employees will return to work during any reasonably available hours of the normal working day not spent on jury duty.

In order to avail of this leave, an employee must present the summons for jury service to their manager as soon as they receive this notification. Their manager will then approve the leave. In exceptional circumstances DVI may seek to have an employee excused from jury service, however this will only occur where business requirements are such that it is not feasible to permit the employee to avail of the leave.

Where leave is granted, an employee will generally be required to attend the court for a period of each day for selection as a juror, usually for a few hours in the morning each day. Where the employee is not selected as a juror, he/she must return to work for the remainder of the day. A certificate of attendance will be produced by the clerk of the court on request, and this should be presented to the employee's Manager on return to work each day for record keeping purposes.

Where an employee is called for jury service, he/she should also obtain daily certificates of attendance from the Clerk of the Court confirming attendance at court. Again, where an

employee is excused from the court for part of the day, he/she is expected to return to work, where appropriate.

The employee is responsible for claiming loss of earnings from the Court. This amount should be reimbursed to DVI. It is a condition of this arrangement that employees will return to work during any reasonably available hours of the normal working day not spent on jury duty.

Employment rights, including remuneration, are protected during this leave.

Time off for Medical Appointments

Wherever possible, dental and medical appointments should be arranged in employees' own time and not during working hours. Where an appointment outside of working hours is not possible, evidence (such as appointment card) may be requested of the medical appointment.

This policy does not extend to employees seeking time off for ante-natal appointments. This is covered under our Maternity Leave policy.

Employees should give their line Manager as much notice as is reasonably practicable of medical appointments. Subject to operational requirements, the employee will be allowed reasonable time off to attend appointments, taking into account travel time, waiting periods etc.

Time off to attend medical appointments will be paid.

Parents Leave

Parent's Benefit and parent's leave are statutory entitlements for parents in the first 2 years after their child's birth or adoption. They are available for children born or adopted **after 1 November 2019**.

From July 2022 the regulations changed as follows:

- Parent's leave increased from 5 weeks to 7 weeks for children born or adopted after 1 July 2022

- You can claim the additional 2 weeks' parent's leave if your child **is under the age of 2 on 1 July 2022** or your adopted child **has been placed with your family less than 2 years on 1 July 2022**
- You must complete the extra leave on or before your child's second birthday or within 2 years of the adoption placement
- Parent's Benefit increased from 5 weeks to 7 weeks for each parent (if you qualify)

Parents of children born between November 2019 and July 2020 will not be eligible for the additional 2 weeks.

Each parent is entitled to Parent's Benefit during parent's leave. DVI does not top up Parents Leave. You can take 5 consecutive weeks or 5 separate weeks of leave.

Notification Procedure

You must notify your manager in writing that you intend to take parent's leave and of your intended dates no later than 6 weeks before your leave. You then apply for Parent's Benefit at least 4 weeks before the date you start your parent's leave.

Commencement & Postponement of Leave

Commencement

The period of Parent's leave shall commence on such a day as the relevant parent selects in his or her notification to the Employer of their intention to take Parent's leave, being not earlier than the date of confinement or day of placement, and not later than 2 years after such date or day. Where the Employee intends to take Parent's leave, the Employee must notify the Employer of the length of leave that the Employee intends to take.

Early Confinement

Where the date of confinement occurs in a week that is 4 weeks or more before the expected date of confinement, the relevant parent will be deemed to have complied with the requirements in terms of notification to the Organisation if the notification required is given in the period of 7 days commencing on the date of confinement.

Postponement

Where, as the case may be, the day of placement is postponed or the date of confinement occurs after the date selected by a relevant parent in his or her notification, the relevant parent shall be entitled to select another date on which the Parent's leave shall commence.

Sickness during Parent's Leave

Where a relevant parent who has complied with the notification procedures becomes sick prior to the commencement of his or her Parent's leave and wishes to postpone the parent's leave, he or she may, by notice in writing given to his or her employer as soon as reasonably practicable after becoming sick and accompanied by the relevant evidence in respect of the sickness, postpone the taking of the leave to such time as the relevant parent is no longer sick.

Abuse of Leave

Where an Employer has a reasonable belief that an Employee who is on Parent's leave is not using the leave for the purpose outlined, the Employer may, by provision of notice in writing to the Employee, terminate the leave. The notice shall summarise the grounds for terminating the leave, and the day by which the Employee must return to work.

Postponement of Parent's Leave

In certain limited circumstances the Organisation may need to exercise its right to postpone for up to 12 weeks their employee's intended parent's leave commencement date. The Organisation may arise where the Organisation is satisfied that the taking of the parent's leave at the time specified in the notification would have a substantial adverse effect on the operation of his or her business, profession or occupation by reason of seasonal variations in the volume of work concerned, the unavailability of a person to carry out your duties during the period of the leave, the nature of your duties, the number of other colleagues availing of parent's leave during the period. If this postponement results in the child reaching 2 years before the leave has been drawn down, the 2-year cap will be extended by up to 12 weeks.

Employee Rights

During a period of Parent's leave, an Employee shall be deemed to have been in the employment of the Employer and be treated as if he or she had not been absent from work. Availing of Parent's leave shall not affect any right related to the employment, other than the right to remuneration during the absence. Where an Employee is on probation, undergoing training, or employed under a contract of apprenticeship, the Employer may require that the probation, training or apprenticeship shall stand suspended during the period of leave.

Return to Work

Employees are entitled to return to work to the same job and under the same terms and conditions of employment following Parent's leave.

Parents Benefit

A relevant parent is entitled to avail of 7 weeks' parent's leave from employment which must be taken within the first 2 years of the birth or placement of the birth/ adoption of the child. A relevant parent can take one week at a time or take the two weeks together.

No payment is made in respect of absence by an Employee during Parents leave.

In order to be entitled to this benefit the Employee must also apply to the Department of Employment and Social Protection for Parents benefit. This is a benefit payable for the period of Parents Leave, subject to qualification criteria.

Study Leave

An employee can avail of up to two days study leave per term where the course that is being studied has been deemed relevant and beneficial to the work of DVI. The CE supervisor can also apply for study leave subject to formal agreement of the Manger.

This leave does not apply to CE scheme staff.

Notification Procedure

You must request study leave in writing to your line manager no later than 4 weeks before your leave. Study leave is not a guaranteed leave and is subject to the needs of the service.

Time in lieu will not be given for exams that fall on weekends.

Special Leave

If you need time off work for reasons other than the above, discuss it with your manager. If an urgent personal need arises which necessitates asking for leave of absence without payment, this may be granted by management after consideration of the circumstances, at the sole discretion of management.

Absence from your work, which includes lateness, without agreement of your manager, means that you are in breach of your Contract of Employment and will be dealt with under Deaf Village Ireland's Disciplinary & Performance Improvement Procedure and could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Wherever possible dental and medical appointments (except in Pregnancy) should be arranged in employee's own time and not during working hours.

Data Protection Policy

Policy Statement

Deaf Village Ireland (DVI) must comply with all applicable data protection, privacy and security laws and regulations, particularly with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), taking the full effect on 25th May 2018.

Through maintaining a high standard of data protection the DVI wants to foster a culture that is honest, compassionate, transparent and accountable.

Objectives

The objective of this policy is to protect personal data where we act as a data controller and to protect the rights of data subjects, in line with EU and Irish legislation.

DVI is required to collect and use certain types of information about people, known as data subjects in line with the regulation, including personal data as defined by the GDPR. This information can relate to service users, current, past and prospective employees, CE Scheme participants and others with whom staff communicate.

The DVI manager shall perform as DVI data coordinator with responsibility to adhere, comply and uphold the data protection policy in accordance with the GDPR.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, work experience interns or students, contractors, sub-contractors, agency staff and authorised third party service providers and other persons or entities when receiving, handling or processing personal data as defined by the GDPR. It is

the policy of the DVI that all data is processed and controlled in line with the requirements of the GDPR and relevant Irish legislation. The following data protection requirements apply to all instances where personal data is stored.

- Personal data shall only be processed fairly, lawfully and in transparent manner.
- Personal data shall be obtained only for specified, explicit, lawful, and legitimate purposes and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with those purposes.
- Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed.
- Personal data shall be accurate, and where necessary kept up to date.
- Personal data shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed
- Personal data shall be processed in a secure manner, which includes having appropriate technical and organisational measures in place to:
 - Prevent and/or identify unauthorised or unlawful access to, or processing of personal data.
 - Prevent accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data
- The DVI is responsible for these key principles, ensuring that data subject's rights are protected as set out in the GDPR.
- Through the principles of the GDPR, the data subjects have the following rights:
 - request access to data we hold on them.
 - request to change or correct any inaccurate data.
 - object to having their data processed.
 - request to delete data that we hold excluding medical records.
 - request to have their data moved outside of DVI if it is in an electronic format.
 - object to a decision made by automated processing, with certain limited exceptions (such as legitimate grounds for the processing or the defence of legal claims)
 - request that any decision made by automated processes have some human element

Data Processing Policy Requirements

To comply with these GDPR Requirements, we will:

- Process personal data in accordance with the rights of data subjects.
- Communicate with data subjects in a concise, transparent, intelligible and easily accessible form, using clear language.
- Only transfer personal data to Third Parties within Ireland and outside of the European Economic Area (EEA) in accordance with this policy.
- Conduct all personal data processing in accordance with legitimate conditions for the processing of personal data which may include:
 - In the case of employees performance of a contract of employment.
 - In the case of CE Scheme participants, performance of a contract with DEASP
 - In the case of clients or service users, consent to process their personal data for one or more specific purposes.

Unauthorised Disclosure

All persons covered under this policy are prohibited from disclosing a data subject's personal data, unless this policy or a legal basis allows for such disclosures. All persons covered under this policy must report all suspected incidents of unauthorised access to the manager. Incidents include disclosure, loss, destruction or alteration of personal information, regardless of whether it is in paper or electronic form.

Third Parties Relationships Policy

Where the DVI engages a Third Party for processing activities, DVI must protect personal data through sufficient technical and organisational security measures and take all reasonable GDPR compliance steps. When engaging a Third Party for personal data processing, the DVI must enter into a written contract, or equivalent.

This contract or equivalent shall:

- Clearly set out respective parties responsibilities.
- Must ensure compliance with relevant European and local Member State Data Protection requirements/legislation
- At the expiry of the manager contract, the manager is contractually obliged to return the full dataset to the DVI and provide unequivocal evidence that their copy of the dataset is erased.

Roles and Responsibilities

As the designated data coordinator, the DVI manager is required to be involved, properly and in a timely manner, in all issues which relate to the protection of personal data. The manager shall maintain confidentiality concerning the performance of their tasks, in accordance with GDPR with responsibility for monitoring compliance with the GDPR and have overall control of how data is processed within the DVI, including:

- Collecting information about processing activities.
- Analysing and checking the compliance of processing activities.
- Informing, advising and issuing recommendations management and the relevant data processors and controllers.

Implementation

The DVI reserves the right to take such action as it deems appropriate against individuals, who breach the conditions of this policy. DVI staff, who breaches this policy, may be subject to disciplinary action as provided for in the DVI's Disciplinary & Performance Improvement Policy & Procedure.

If a breach occurs due to reckless behaviour and a breach occurs and is knowingly not reported, the person responsible may be held accountable.

Where a breach of this policy is committed by contractors, sub-contractors, and agency staff and authorised third party commercial service providers, the DVI reserves the right to remedy via the contracts in existence.

Information Systems Policy

Policy Statement

Deaf Village Ireland (DVI) must safeguard its business and reputation from security breaches, exposure to litigation, defamation, loss of productivity through time wasting web surfing, protect their IT systems from viruses, hacking, protect employees from bullying/harassment and obscenity/pornography. Various internet and e-mail activities listed in this policy document are expressly forbidden.

Usage of I.T. facilities may be monitored in accordance with law, and as these are systems belonging to DVI, employees should not expect privacy on these systems. DVI at all times reserves the right to access an employee's email, internet or phone records as well as other records relating to the information technology usage to ensure compliance with the our standards and policies, to ensure that employees' obligations to DVI are being complied with and to ensure that the employee is not engaging in prohibited activities as identified in this policy or activities otherwise deemed inappropriate.

All breaches of e-mail and internet rules will be treated seriously and will be dealt with under DVI's Disciplinary & Performance Improvement Policy & Procedure and could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Employees must not remove computer equipment, hardware and software, from DVI's premises without specific approval of the manager. They must ensure that, at all times, management can have access to information or data held on their PC or laptop. Employees who work on various sites and are authorised to carry DVI laptop from site to site must ensure that these are available for monitoring/inspection at all times and that all information held on a laptop is backed up on a weekly basis.

No confidential material should be held on DVI laptop. Such equipment must be left in the safe custody of an appropriate person on the DVI's premises during periods of holidays, sickness or leave, e.g. Maternity Leave, Carer's Leave, etc.,

Use of Internet

It is the policy of DVI that all I.T. facilities, including telephones, e-mail internet, PCs, laptops & other mobile devices are used solely for business purposes. Employees are not permitted to access such systems for personal use on company computers without the permission of their Supervisor/Manager. However, excessive use for personal purposes during working time or otherwise will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.

Activities which the Internet may not be used for during working hours or non-working hours include the following. Please note the list provided is for illustrative purposes only and is not an exhaustive list. All situations will be considered on their own merits:

- Non-compliance with the legislative and contractual requirements concerning the copying of software – including licenses or illegally copying material protected under copyright law or making that material available to others to copy

- Disseminating or storing commercial or personal advertisements, promotions, solicitations, or any other unauthorized materials
- Using the internet system to break or otherwise 'hack' into internal computers of other companies or any other party
- Secondary employment
- Personal gain or profit, this includes the pursuit of private commercial business activities or profit making ventures, including online gambling
- Engaging in any illegal, unethical, immoral or fraudulent conduct
- Jeopardizing DVI' computer system/network by failing to ensure that downloaded files and email attachments are taken from untrusted sources and/or not properly scanned for viruses
- Use of personal CD's, Diskettes portable disk drives and memory sticks that create a risk of the introduction of viruses onto DVI systems
- Accessing, downloading or transmitting offensive or unlawful remarks, jokes or slurs, obscenities or profane or other offensive and inappropriate materials
- Use of Internet sites which result in a charge to DVI
- Engaging in prohibited discriminatory conduct
- Obtaining or viewing of sexually explicit material
- Sending confidential company information or data, without permission
- Any other activity which would discredit DVI

Outside of working time authorisation may be sought to access the internet for personal use, e.g. to make purchases, or to conduct research for personal purposes. However, such use should be limited, and the user must accept liability for any losses incurred while using the systems for personal use. No software should be downloaded from the internet, due to the risk of infection by viruses or infringement of licence agreements.

Use of Email System

The e-mail system is only to be used by authorised persons. Employees shall not disclose their passwords or codes to others and may not use someone else's password or code. Excessive use of email for personal purposes is prohibited. The following e-mail activities are strictly prohibited.

- Using someone else's ID to send mail or representing themselves as somebody else.
- Retrieving or reading any email messages other than such addressed to them.
- Using email to circulate joke mail or chain letters, internally or externally.

- Using email to harass, sexually harass or intimidate another person, by broadcasting unsolicited messages, or by sending unwanted mail.
- Using vulgar, abusive, or hateful language in emails.
- Saving, downloading, transmitting or purposely viewing sexual, pornographic, racist, profane or other offensive material.
- Posting or downloading messages that will reflect poorly on DVI's name and reputation.
- Time wasting and frivolous emails to other employees or external persons.
- Sending chain letters, or other forms of mass mailing and spamming (sending a message repeatedly in order to sabotage someone else's system).

Any use of the internet to send, view, display, request, print or download pornographic or other potentially harassing or sexually harassing material, obscene material, or material which is fraudulent, offensive or otherwise unlawful will be deemed to be a disciplinary offence and may constitute gross misconduct.

It should be remembered that all personal data contained in e-mails may be accessible under Data Protection legislation and, furthermore, a substantial portion of e-mails to government and other public bodies may be accessible under Freedom of Information legislation.

E-mails should be regarded as potentially public information that carries a heightened risk of legal liability for the sender, the recipient and the organisations for which they work. DVI reserves the right to review, audit, intercept, access and disclose all messages created, received or sent over the electronic mail system for any purpose. Any electronic mail messages, such messages should be treated as confidential by other employees and accessed only by the intended recipient.

DVI understands that email forms a large part of an individual's daily life and is an integral communication tool used by most people. As such, we allow the accessing of personal email, with the below stipulations: -

- Personal email can only be used or accessed on personal devices such as smartphones and must never be accessed via corporate computers or devices
- Use and access to personal email is restricted to non-working periods such as prior to, and after work and lunch, break times
- Employees must never use personal email to send or receive material or information relating to or owned by the Company or for business purposes
- Personal email can only be accessed via an employee's own 4G or Wi-Fi access and must not use or access the Company's internet connection for personal use
- Personal email must never be used to send or receive inappropriate content on DVI devices or the DVI network

Managers Responsibility

No personal use of the internet/email is permitted. It is the responsibility of the manager/supervisor to ensure that:

- Employees are aware of this policy.
- The policy has been communicated successfully and that this is recorded in the employee's personnel file.
- Adequate training has been provided to employees who are authorized to use the IT systems.

Internet and Email

In exceptional circumstances managers may specify when internet access is allowed the manager should specify, when internet access is allowed such as amount of employees' access the internet/email times during the working day or during specified periods such as during breaks or outside working hours. Employees must ensure that the email system is used properly as a means to communicate with other people without causing offence to any person.

Here are some basic guidelines that should be followed.

- Messages should be clear, concise and to the point.
- Include a subject line in your message.
- Take the same care and attention when writing an email as they would any other form of communication. An unchecked email written in haste or carelessly, could give rise to legal liability on DVI's part, for example in claims of defamation.
- Do not assume that the email is private.
- Respect copyright, Deaf Village Ireland's confidentiality, data protection rules, and avoid defamation.
- Letter, files and other documents attached to emails may belong to others and there may be copyright implications in sending or receiving them without permission.
- Care should be taken when sending confidential or sensitive information. Emails may go to persons other than the intended recipient. If the message is confidential or sensitive, this could be damaging for the organization. Employees should ask themselves if it is safe to send the information by email.
- Employees should not send or store large email attachments, because of their potential impact on the performance of the DVI's server.
- Employees should inform their manager if they receive any offensive or harassing emails.

- Messages should not be typed in all uppercase as it is extremely difficult to read.
- Capitalise words only to highlight an important point.
- Be professional and tactful of what you say about others.
- Remember email is easily forwarded.
- Be careful with using sarcasm and humour. Without face to face communications, your joke may be viewed as criticism.
- Definitions of offensive vary widely so always avoid quotes that might offend people on the grounds of religion, race, politics or sexuality.
- Read your message before sending, check spelling, grammar and context. Once you send it, you are committed.
- If replying to a message containing a distribution list, consider if the response is more appropriate for the entire group or just the original sender.
- Remember there is no such thing as a private email. Be careful of what you write and send. A number of things could go wrong when sending a message, such as sending it to the wrong email address.
- Do not send chain letters.
- Avoid messages sent in anger. Messages sent in the heat of the moment generally over exacerbate the situation and are usually regretted later

Signature Files

All business mail should carry a signature which will say where and who the email is from; provide a contact phone number, as well as a disclaimer clause covering the information in the message.

Threats Caused by Improper Use of the Internet

The following threats can be caused by improper use of the Internet:

- Loss of information.
- Reduced operational breaches.
- Exposure to legal liability.
- Lost productivity.
- Damage to reputation through misuse of email.
- Infection from email borne viruses.
- Loss of network service from spam and spoof attacks.
- Network congestion from system misuse

Approval for Installation of Additional Hardware and Software

Approval for the installation of additional hardware and software must be sought from DVI manager to ensure compatibility with current systems, anti-virus and other software checked and also to ensure inclusion in the computer register.

I.T. Usage Policy

All I.T. facilities should be used solely for business purposes. Employees who have access to any password-restricted systems are required not to disclose that password to any other person, except with the prior approval of their manager. Employees should make arrangements to permit their manager access to password-restricted systems prior to or during any period of absence, where necessary. Passwords should be carefully selected so that they cannot be easily guessed. In order to ensure the security of physical data and equipment, Employees are required to ensure that laptops and other mobile devices are appropriately stored and locked away whilst in their possession.

General

Employees must not remove computer equipment, hardware and software, from DVI premises without specific approval of their manager. They must ensure that, at all times, management can have access to information or data held on their PC or laptop. Employees who work on various sites and are authorised to carry a company laptop from site to site must ensure that these are available for monitoring/inspection at all times and that all information held on a laptop is backed up on a weekly basis. No confidential material should be held on a DVI laptop. Such equipment must be left in the safe custody of an appropriate person on DVI premises during periods of holidays, sickness or leave, e.g. Maternity Leave, Carer's Leave, etc

PCs, laptops and other mobile devices, where provided, should not be used for personal purposes. Printing for personal purposes should be limited, and excessive use will be dealt with as a disciplinary offence.

Laptops and other mobile devices, if provided, should be stored in the boot of the employee's car when travelling, and taken indoors rather than left unattended in vehicles. If a laptop/mobile device is left in the open in a vehicle it may attract thieves or vandals, resulting in possible damage to the vehicle, and theft of the laptop as well as personal items contained within the vehicle.

Screensavers should not be downloaded from the internet, and only screensavers approved by Management may be used.

Employees should not transfer digital photographs or music, DVD or movie files onto their PC, laptop/mobile device without prior permission from their manager. Employees must observe copyright regulations in relation to any content they upload/download to business systems.

DVI I.T. systems should not be used for the purposes of engaging in secondary employment.

DVI telephone systems should not be used for personal use, without the consent of your manager. Where an employee receives a personal call, they should keep the call brief.

Social Media/Networks

Social networking and social media are communication tools, which can have significant impact on Organisational and professional reputations. Examples of social media may include blogs, twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, wikis, WhatsApp, Viber etc. Employees are personally responsible for the content they publish online.

Personal usage of Social Media

Your work e-mail address should not be used as your primary means of identification on your personal social media platform. DVI may impose the disciplinary process up to and including dismissal for posting inappropriate material on social networking sites in circumstances where the posts breach confidentiality, dignity at work, Anti-Bullying, Harassment or Sexual Harassment, internal policy or brings DVI into disrepute.

Respect your audience. Employees should refrain from engaging in the use of inappropriate slurs and personal insults referring to work colleagues, others and/or DVI, as this may lead to disciplinary action.

DVI IT equipment, where provided, should not be used for personal purposes. The use of social media for personal purposes is prohibited on DVI systems.

Using Social media/networks for work purposes

Any contact details or business information acquired and maintained on DVI systems remain the property of DVI. This includes any uploaded information (including personal contacts) brought by an employee from a previous employment.

Where it is a requirement as part of your role to engage in social media, the following guidelines must be adhered to:

- Respect copyright, fair use and data protection.
- Do not provide DVI or another's confidential or other proprietary information and never discuss DVI performance or other sensitive matters publicly.
- Do not cite or reference clients, partners or suppliers without their approval. When you do make a reference, link back to the source. Do not publish anything that might allow inferences to be drawn which could embarrass or damage a client.
- Refrain from the inappropriate use of ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the workplace. Employees should also show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.
- Refrain from using DVI logos or trademarks unless approved to do so.
- Do not post material that could be deemed to be threatening, harassing, illegal, obscene, defamatory, slanderous or hostile towards an individual or entity.
- Ensure that the content you are posting is accurate and reviewed for grammatical and spelling errors.

Queries

All queries in relation to this policy should be addressed to the Employee's Manager.

Continual Professional Development

The policy of Deaf Village Ireland (DVI) is to encourage life-long learning to enable staff to self-develop beyond the specified training for their post. Those who undertake continual professional development training by private arrangement in their own time may be eligible for financial support from DVI if the course is approved prior to enrolment. This support may be in the form of a grant of 50% of the fees plus a loan of 50%, which is extinguished on successful completion of the course. Employees, who qualify for the above mentioned support may be allowed time off with pay to attend examinations.

Any employee who wishes to take advantage of DVI support for professional development should discuss their plans with their manager before signing up for a course. This discussion must take place far enough in advance of the course to allow DVI adequate time to consider all implications and costs.

Every effort will be made to try and support individuals, who are interested in further professional development, providing there is a relevance to their career with Deaf Village Ireland. DVI shall be the sole arbiter as to the relevance and while it will wish to support staff willing to undertake such continual professional development, its ability to cover, such training will be dependent on the availability of funds.

In the event of the employee leaving DVI within three years of successfully completing the course 50% of the support given would be refundable to the DVI.

Disciplinary & Performance Improvement

General Principle

Deaf Village Ireland (DVI) has the right to expect every employee, whilst on DVI business and/or DVI property to conduct themselves in a proper manner and to abide by, the terms and conditions of their Contract of Employment. Additionally Deaf Village Ireland expects the employee, whilst outside work to conduct themselves, in a manner, which would not bring Deaf Village Ireland into disrepute. In the normal course of their duties, managers/supervisors are expected to acknowledge good performance, and to make employees aware of unsatisfactory conduct/performance, including timekeeping and attendance.

The policy is to be applied in order to assist and encourage employees to achieve and maintain acceptable standards of conduct, attendance and performance where shortcomings are identified. The policy and procedure aim, where appropriate, to be corrective rather than punitive.

Policy

The primary objective of this procedure is to ensure that employees are made aware of any shortcomings in their performance/conduct/attendance and provided with an opportunity to resolve this situation. To this end, issues will generally be addressed through the informal procedure whereby the Manager will raise the issue with the employee and agree a corrective action plan in order to resolve the situation without recourse to the formal procedure. However, where this fails to resolve a situation, or the informal process is deemed inappropriate in the given circumstances, then the formal process may be initiated.

During the formal stages of the procedure, employees have the right to be accompanied by a representative (a fellow colleague or union representative) at a meeting. The role of this representative is to provide support, to ensure that the procedures followed are fair, and, if appropriate, to help the employee present their case. However, it should be noted that the contractual relationship exists between the employee and the employer. Therefore, questioning will be directed to the employee, and where possible the employee must speak on their own behalf. The stage at which any employee enters the disciplinary procedure depends upon the severity of the issue being dealt with.

Minor Offences

Often minor instances of misconduct and cases of poor performance are best dealt with by informal advice, coaching, counselling and training rather than through the Disciplinary & Performance Improvement Procedure.

Sometimes managers/supervisors may issue informal counselling, but they need to ensure that problems are discussed with the objective of helping and encouraging staff to improve. It is important that employees understand what needs to be done, how performance, attendance and/ or conduct will be reviewed and over what period. They should also be made aware of what action would be taken if they fail to improve either their performance attendance and / or conduct. Informal counselling is not part of the formal Disciplinary & Performance Improvement procedure, and the employee should be informed of this.

However the Supervisor/Manager should record details of such informal counselling meetings in the personnel file.

The following behaviours may be considered misconduct and may result in disciplinary action being initiated under the disciplinary procedure. Note that these examples are provided for illustrative purposes only, and this list is not exhaustive. All cases are considered on their own merits:

- Minor breach of a workplace policy or procedure.
- Poor timekeeping.
- Abuse of sick leave policy.
- Insubordination.
- A refusal to carry out a reasonable request.
- Minor breaches of health and safety regulations.
- Bringing DVI into disrepute.
- Misuse of company property.

- Refusing to follow reasonable instructions or perform appropriate work assigned by a manager /supervisor
- Unauthorised absence from the workplace
- Smoking in unauthorised places
- Minor violation of health and safety rules, established policies and procedures

Where normal management fails to produce the desired result, the formal Disciplinary & Performance Improvement Procedure shall be used. This document outlines the Disciplinary & Performance Improvement Procedure for employees of DVI.

Gross Misconduct

The following behaviours may be considered gross misconduct and may result in summary dismissal, depending on the circumstances of the case.

- Abuse of service users or boarders -
- Falsifying, destroying or wasting property of DVI, records or work in progress, or repeated disregard for quality standards
- Theft, unauthorised use of, or wilful damage/defacement to company or other employee's property or other fraudulent behaviour
- possession of, sale or distribution of a controlled substance in the workplace
- Being under the influence of alcohol, narcotic drugs or other intoxicant at work or the course of employment, or unauthorised consumption of them at work on the course of employment
- Possession of dangerous weapons
- Serious bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, victimisation or other act of discrimination.
- Fighting, horseplay, violent or threatening behaviour.
- Smoking in unauthorised places
- Minor violation of health and safety rules, established policies and procedures
- Serious breaches of health and safety rules or endangerment of another person in the workplace.
- Violation of security rules
- Serious violation of security rules
- Unauthorised access to or use of confidential information including computer systems
- Serious misuse of email and internet
- Serious breach of confidentiality
- Conviction of an offence which is inconsistent with your position
- Falsification of timesheets, expense claims or other company records

- Deception or provision of false or misleading information on employment applications or medical forms, or at interview
- Downloading, display or distribution of pornography or other inappropriate material
- Serious abuse of sick leave
- Refusal to participate in a workplace investigation or other action
- Serious failure to adhere to an agreed workplace procedure or other agreed terms of employment

Note that these examples are provided for illustrative purposes only. This list is not intended to be exhaustive. All cases are considered on their own merits.

Procedure

Informal Disciplinary Procedure

In general, where there is an allegation of poor performance, attendance or conduct, the direct Supervisor / Manager of the employee concerned will address the issue informally with him/her. This may be done by way of an informal counselling meeting, or through the normal performance management process. The objective of the informal discussion is to correct the issue of concern in a frank and constructive manner.

The informal discussion will:

- Focus on helping the employee to understand how their performance/conduct/attendance has fallen short of the acceptable level; and
- Suggest possible solutions and timeframes for improvement.

After the discussion, brief notes will be taken and held by the Supervisor / Manager who led the informal discussion. Provided the employee achieves and sustains the necessary level of improvement, no further action will be taken. If the necessary improvements have not been made within the agreed timeframe, the formal disciplinary procedure will commence.

Where normal management through the informal process as outlined above fails to produce the desired result, the formal Disciplinary Procedure shall be used. This document outlines the formal Disciplinary Procedure for lay employees of DVI.

Formal Disciplinary Procedure

In all cases where an employee's standards of performance, attendance and/or conduct fall below those expected by DVI, the formal disciplinary procedure may be initiated. In all cases in which the Formal Procedure is initiated, a hearing will be held with the employee to put

the allegation to him/her and to hear his/her responses to the issue. It may be necessary to formally investigate the facts surrounding a case and this may occur prior to the hearing, but in the majority of cases a hearing will suffice to ensure that the employee is afforded a fair opportunity to respond. Where there is a dispute of the facts of a case, and an investigation is necessary, the investigation procedure will be explained to the employee by Management.

In cases where the issue concerned is related to an allegation of inappropriate behaviour or abuse towards a service user or boarder the procedures outlined in the HSE Trust in Care policy will be followed.

Disciplinary Sanctions

Where the informal process fails to resolve an issue, or where it is deemed inappropriate given the particular circumstances of a situation, then the following sanctions may be imposed by Management. Disciplinary action, if required, will normally follow an incremental warning process as set out in this policy. However, in appropriate circumstances, DVI reserves the right to initiate the process at any particular stage, or to move to any particular stage in the process, where the matters of concern are deemed sufficiently serious. The decision on what level of sanction to be imposed will only be taken following a formal disciplinary hearing having considered the circumstances of the particular situation.

Objective of the Formal Procedure

The objective of the “Disciplinary Procedure” is to help and encourage improvement in conduct and performance - it is not intended to be a means of imposing sanctions or to be punitive.

Natural Justice

All disciplinary meetings, investigations and actions should comply with what are known as the principles of natural justice. When it becomes evident that the attendance, conduct or performance of an employee is to be handled within the Disciplinary procedure:

- Advance notification of the requirement to attend a disciplinary hearing must be provided together with the fact that the outcome of the meeting may be disciplinary action.
- The manager handling the disciplinary action must check that the employee is aware of the Disciplinary and Performance Improvement procedure. If they do not have a copy of the procedure, they should be given one in advance of any disciplinary meeting

- The employee must be presented with the case against them, including any allegation(s) and supporting evidence in advance of any disciplinary meeting
- The employee must be advised of their right to be accompanied at any disciplinary hearings or meetings and be allowed representation (colleague or trade union representative)
- The employee must be permitted and allowed an opportunity to state their case
- The manager must only form a judgement after having considered all the facts disclosed and following a fair hearing where the employee is allowed to respond to complaints and these responses are considered in the given circumstances
- An employee may be suspended on full pay at any stage during the disciplinary process, even before any allegation is presented to the employee. This is done with no inference of guilt or otherwise against the employee. Suspension will be for a reasonable period only and will often depend on the duration of the disciplinary investigation process.
- The decision on what level of disciplinary sanction, if any, is to be imposed will be taken during the adjournment. A follow up disciplinary meeting will be held with the employee where this decision will be communicated to the employee. The employee may have a representative present at this meeting. Formal disciplinary action will be confirmed in writing.
- Any sanction must be appropriate to the charge. Dismissals should not be seen as excessive
- The employee must be advised of and afforded a right to appeal (if and when a decision is made)

Formal Warning Process

Providing the rules relating to “Natural Justice” have been followed before each stage of the disciplinary process sanctions may be applied as outlined below. Any warnings given should clearly specify the reason(s) for the warning, the change(s) required and timescale in which improvement must be achieved, the consequences of failing to improve and that the employee has a right to appeal.

Stage 1: Formal Verbal Warning

If the informal procedure does not result in the improvement(s) required or there is a further breach of conduct, poor attendance or lapse from performance standards, or where more serious disciplinary action is deemed appropriate given the particular circumstances of the case, a formal disciplinary hearing will be arranged and held as outlined in this procedure.

Following the meeting, a formal verbal warning may be issued to the employee by his or her immediate manager/supervisor. This warning will be recorded on the employee's personnel file.

An action plan will also be agreed in order to attempt to resolve this issue in the future. A copy of the notes from the meeting, the agreed action plan and a copy of the verbal warning, along with any other relevant documentation, will be placed on the employee file.

The verbal warning will expire following a period of satisfactory performance, conduct or attendance, as outlined in the formal verbal warning document. A formal verbal warning may be appealed through the appeals procedure outlined in this policy. Failure to achieve the requirements set out in the corrective action plan may result in further disciplinary action.

Stage 2: First Written Warning

Where a formal verbal warning fails to resolve an issue, or where more serious disciplinary action is deemed appropriate given the particular circumstances of the case, a formal disciplinary hearing will be arranged and held as outlined in this procedure.

Following the meeting, a first written warning may be issued by the appropriate Manager / Supervisor. An action plan will also be agreed in order to attempt to resolve this issue in the future. A copy of the notes from the meeting, the agreed action plan and a copy of the first written warning, along with any other relevant documentation, will be placed on the employee file.

The first written warning will expire following a period of satisfactory performance, conduct or attendance, as outlined in the first written warning document. A first written warning may be appealed through the appeals procedure outlined in this policy. Failure to achieve the requirements set out in the corrective action plan may result in further disciplinary action.

Stage 3: Final Warning

Where a first written warning fails to resolve an issue, or where more serious disciplinary action is deemed appropriate given the particular circumstances of the case, a formal disciplinary hearing will be arranged and held as outlined in this procedure.

Following the meeting, a final written warning may be issued by the appropriate Manager / Supervisor. An action plan will also be agreed in order to attempt to resolve this issue in the future. A copy of the notes from the meeting, the agreed action plan and a copy of the final written warning, along with any other relevant documentation, will be placed on the employee file.

The final written warning will expire following a period of satisfactory performance, conduct or attendance, as outlined in the final written warning document. A final written warning

may be appealed through the appeals procedure outlined in this policy. Failure to achieve the requirements set out in the corrective action plan may result in further disciplinary action.

Stage 4: Dismissal

Dismissal may occur in two ways. Generally, the employee will have been notified of concerns and have been provided with an opportunity to improve through one or more stages of the disciplinary procedure.

The other form of dismissal is a summary dismissal, which normally results from an act of gross misconduct. An act of misconduct will be considered as gross misconduct where the act is so serious that DVI cannot reasonably be expected to retain the employee in employment. Summary dismissal occurs without recourse to the earlier stages of the disciplinary procedure.

In all cases an appropriate and fair hearing, which adheres to the principles set out in this procedure, will be undertaken and careful consideration given to the decision on whether or not dismissal is the appropriate sanction given the circumstances of the case. In cases of alleged gross misconduct, an in-depth investigation may be necessary, and an employee will be suspended on pay pending the outcome of this investigation. Suspension on pay is not deemed a disciplinary sanction, and there will be no negative inference against an employee as a consequence of any such suspension.

Where there is an allegation of gross misconduct or gross incompetence, it may be appropriate after a formal investigation to initiate the procedure at stage 4. In such circumstances, there is no obligation on DVI to provide advance notice of dismissal. Decisions to dismiss in such circumstances may only be taken by a senior Manager in DVI, or a nominated officer, following a full and fair investigation and hearing process. The decision will be confirmed in writing to the employee.

Alternative Disciplinary Sanctions

In addition to the sanctions outlined in stages 1 to 4 of the disciplinary procedure, DVI also retains the right to impose alternative disciplinary sanctions as outlined in this section. This will only occur where deemed appropriate. Such action is an optional stage of the procedure, rather than a required stage. Where deemed appropriate, alternative sanctions, which may be imposed, may include a transfer, demotion, suspension without pay, or withholding of a salary review for a period or removal of another benefit.

Note on Probation

During the period of an employee's probation, including extended probation, the full rigours of the disciplinary process may not apply, and DVI retains the right not to exhaust the disciplinary procedure during probation.

Disciplinary Hearing

Purpose of the Disciplinary Investigation and Hearing

The purpose of the formal Disciplinary Investigation and Hearing is to:

- Emphasise to the employee that disciplinary action is now at a very serious level and has moved beyond the control of their normal manager
- Establish the facts, review the evidence
- Give the employee an opportunity to present their case and challenge the allegation(s) and the evidence
- Give the employee an opportunity to explain any mitigating circumstances
- Judge cases of unacceptable conduct on the part of an employee
- Impose such sanctions as are authorised by these rules, with the objective of helping and encouraging improvement, minimising the effect or preventing recurrence of the unacceptable conduct

Operation

Should the employee in question fail to attend, then the hearing will normally proceed as arranged. If this non-attendance is caused by sickness or other acceptable reason(s) then the Chairperson of the Disciplinary Investigation and Hearing has the discretion to postpone the hearing until a later date.

The members of the Disciplinary Investigation and Hearing should be introduced to persons participating in the meeting and their roles explained.

Witnesses giving evidence to the Disciplinary Investigation and Hearing may have their written or verbal statements queried by those taking part in the hearing and further clarification or investigation may then be necessary.

Appeals

If a decision has been made to include disciplinary action the employee has a right to appeal against such a decision.

Making an Appeal

Such an appeal must be made within 5 working days of the written decision of the Disciplinary Hearing. The details of whom the appeal should be made to will be included in the warning document, or letter of dismissal. The appeal must be in writing stating the specific grounds of the appeal.

All timeframes in this policy assume employees are attending work. If employees have had time out of work, the duration of the disciplinary steps may be extended.

Appeals Process

- The appeal will be dealt with as quickly as practicably possible
- It will be heard by a Representative of DVI, or a nominated officer, who has not been involved previously and who is appointed by the Chief Executive Officer
- The decision of the Appeal Hearing is notified to the employee in writing
- The decision of the Appeal Hearing is the final stage of the Appeals procedure of DVI.

Duration of Warnings

Warnings will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes following a period of satisfactory performance, conduct or attendance, as outlined in the written warning document.

- Stage 1 After 6 months
- Stage 2 After 12 months
- Stage 3 After 12 months
- Stage 4 12 months

Suspension with pay

In circumstances involving potential gross misconduct and some situations when relationships have broken down, where it is considered that there is a risk to company property, or the responsibilities of other parties, management may suspend an employee with pay whilst an unhindered investigation is conducted. The local supervisor/manager before referral to a Disciplinary Investigation and Hearing will investigate the facts of such a case. In such circumstances, the suspension is not part of the disciplinary procedure.

Grievance Procedure

DVI is committed to the fair and equal treatment of its employees. It is accepted that when people work together there may be issues or misunderstandings that need to be dealt with from time to time. Good communication, openness and a willingness to co-operate and listen, help to resolve those issues efficiently and effectively. It is the responsibility of all supervisors and managers to listen and respond to issues raised.

The policy is to be applied in order to assist and encourage employees to raise any issues of concern to them in order that DVI may take appropriate action to resolve these concerns.

This policy applies to the individual grievances of all employees. The policy is not appropriate for dealing with issues of harassment, sexual harassment or bullying, which should be addressed through the appropriate procedures set out by DVI. Further information may be sought from your manager.

Policy Overview

A grievance is a formal expression of dissatisfaction with workplace relationships, the work environment or a term or condition of employment. It is the policy of this company to recognise that situations of this nature may arise; therefore, this procedure is in place to assist employees to resolve such matters. It is acknowledged that grievances, which are not raised and addressed, may escalate and become serious distractions in the workplace. Therefore, all employees are encouraged to raise any concerns they may have through the procedure set out here.

Management is responsible for listening and responding to all employee concerns raised through this procedure. In all cases, matters will be dealt with in as confidential a manner as possible. Employees may utilise the procedure whenever they feel it is required. An employee will not be treated adversely for raising a grievance.

During the formal stages of the procedure, employees have the right to be accompanied at a meeting by a representative (colleague or trade union representative). The role of the employee's representative is to ensure that the employee is afforded a fair opportunity to raise their issue and afforded fair consideration.

General Principles

Normal work must continue while the alleged grievance is being examined. Employees are required to carry out all instructions that are appropriate to them provided they are not contrary to safety requirements and if aggrieved by such instructions to subsequently pursue

the grievance as set out below. The overall aim of this procedure is to settle grievances quickly and as near as possible to their point of origin. Application of the procedure must comply with the general principles of natural justice and fair procedures, which includes:

- That employee grievances are fairly and impartially examined and expressed
- That the employee is given the opportunity to avail of the right to be represented during the procedure
- That the employee concerned has the right to a fair and impartial determination of the issues concerned, taking into account any representations made by, or on behalf of, the employee and any other relevant or appropriate evidence, factors or circumstances
- That the employee concerned has the right to an appeal process if they feel the grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved and to be notified of the final decision

These principles require that the allegations, concerns or complaints be set out in writing at Stage 2 onwards as outlined below.

- Written records should be kept of all meetings and decisions

Detailed Procedures

Stage 1 Informal Procedure

- Employees are encouraged to approach their immediate supervisor when they first have a grievance in order to discuss issues and attempt to resolve them informally
- Should the employee feel uncomfortable approaching their Supervisor / Manager regarding a particular issue, they may approach another Supervisor / Manager to raise the issue.
- Every reasonable effort should be made to resolve the grievance at this informal stage
- The problem will be discussed, and the issues dealt with promptly
- If the decision fails to resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the employee, it may be progressed to Stage 2

Stage 2 Formal Procedure

- Should an employee(s) be dissatisfied with the response given to the informal procedure, or where it is deemed inappropriate, they should make a written approach to their superior/manager's immediate superior, or where this is deemed inappropriate, to any other Manager. If this person is the Chief Executive Officer of DVI, he/she may write to the Chairperson of the Board.

- A grievance hearing will be arranged within an agreed timeframe, to which the employee is entitled to bring a representative. Advance notification of this meeting will be provided in writing.
- The employee(s) may be accompanied to any grievance hearing by a Trade Union representative, or work colleague
- The employee will be invited to provide more information regarding their grievance at this meeting.
- The meeting will be adjourned to allow Management to explore the issue further and to identify possible solutions where appropriate. Employee(s) will be informed of their right to appeal, the time period applying, and to whom the appeal should be addressed. The specific grounds of appeal should be submitted in writing

Stage 3 *Appeal Process*

- If the response at Stage 2 does not resolve the issue to the satisfaction of the employee, then the employee may appeal. Details of the procedure to be followed in the event of an appeal will be outlined in the written decision on the grievance, as outlined above.
- The appeal hearing will be held promptly within an agreed timeframe
- A senior member of Management, and/or an appropriate third party will be present at the meeting to ensure that the grievance is given due consideration
- At the appeal hearing the employee(s) may be accompanied by their Trade Union representative or work colleague
- The grievance will be discussed with a view to exploring possible satisfactory outcomes and a prompt response given
- The decision after Stage 3 is binding on all parties to the dispute and is the final stage of DVI Grievance Procedure.

If the employee is dissatisfied with the response given to the grievance, he/she will have to accept that it cannot be resolved to his/her satisfaction, as the procedure has been exhausted.

Operation of Grievance Procedure

Time Limits:

It should be possible to resolve most grievances promptly through direct communication between the employee(s) and their immediate supervisor/manager.

Where it is necessary to have issues dealt with at a higher level in DVI commit to procedures operating as speedily and efficiently. To that end, grievances will be heard within 2 weeks of

receipt and decision conveyed/confirmed in writing within 2 weeks of the hearing. (These timescales may be altered by mutual agreement between the parties or with due regard for holidays and/or availability of the parties concerned).

Work Continuation

While aggrieved issues are under consideration, the employee is required to continue to carry out the duties assigned to them provided they are not contrary to safety requirements. A failure of the employee to abide by procedures or act outside the Grievance Procedure may be treated as misconduct and dealt with under the Disciplinary & Procedure. Non-compliance will result in the suspension of the procedure and the Disciplinary Procedure being instituted.

Malicious Concerns / Accusations

If following detailed consideration of all relevant facts of the case, it is considered that the complaint was malicious or vexatious; it may be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

Lodging a malicious or vexatious complaint is a serious disciplinary offence, and, depending on the seriousness of the issue, may be deemed gross misconduct by DVI and may result in summary dismissal.

Statutory Rights

Nothing in these procedures will interfere with an individual's statutory rights under employment legislation.

Equality and Diversity Policy

Policy Statement

Deaf Village Ireland (DVI) is an equal opportunities employer. As such it is committed to equality and dignity for all. In opportunities for employees or those applying for roles within the organisation. The purpose of this policy is to create a workplace which provides for equal opportunities for all staff and where their dignity is protected and respected at all times. We strive to ensure that no job applicant, employee, volunteer or service user is discriminated against, directly or indirectly regardless of Gender, Marital status, Family status, Race,

Religious beliefs, Sexual Orientation, Disability, Age or Member of the Travelling Community will be provided with equality of access to employment and also encouraged and assisted to achieve their full potential. We will continue to foster a genuine culture of equality.

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate DVI's commitment to equality of opportunity in line with the requirements of the Employment Equality Acts, 1998-2011. The policy also supports the rights of persons availing of goods or services under the Equal Status Acts, 2000-2011.

DVI also aims to go beyond our legal requirements and proactively create an environment that respects and embraces diversity, taking positive action where necessary to redress equality imbalances.

Policy

We promote a work environment free from unlawful discrimination. The Employment Equality Acts and the Equal Status Acts set out nine protected grounds in relation to which no discrimination should occur. These grounds are gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, religion and membership of the Traveller community.

DVI is committed to implementing and promoting measures to protect the dignity of employees and those of the Deaf Community, and to encourage respect for the culture and language of Deaf People and others. In doing so DVI is committed to equality of opportunity and operates non-discriminatory practices in relation to access to employment, conditions of employment, access to training and experience, promotion or re-grading of posts, and classification of posts. Employment decisions will not be made with reference to these grounds unless these are legitimate criteria given the particular situation, as permitted by legislation.

Direct discrimination occurs where a person is treated less favourably than another person is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation due to one of the nine grounds specified in this policy.

Indirect discrimination is taken to occur where an apparently neutral provision, requirement, policy or rule puts a person with one characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared with others without that characteristic.

Procedure

Access to Employment:

- All recruitment and selection competitions will be open to all suitably qualified applicants.
- Recruitment decisions will be made against specified criteria as required for the particular vacancy.
- DVI will seek to ensure that the recruitment process is free from any direct or indirect discrimination on any of the nine grounds.
- Every applicant, external or internal, will be assessed against fair and consistent criteria relating to the job.
- Where an applicant indicates that they have special needs, to facilitate their participation in the recruitment and selection process, reasonable accommodation will be provided, subject to this not imposing a disproportionate burden.

Access to Training and Experience:

- Training will be provided on the basis of individual needs and the requirements of the post held by the employee.
- Selection for training will not be based on any of the nine grounds. These are as follows:
 - Gender: this means man, woman or transgender
 - Civil status: includes single, married, separated, divorced, widowed people, civil partners and former civil partners
 - Family status: this refers to the parent of a person under 18 years or the resident primary carer or parent of a person with a disability
 - Sexual orientation: includes gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual
 - Religion: means religious belief, background, outlook or none
 - Age: this does not apply to a person aged under 16
 - Disability: includes people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions
 - Race: includes race, skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin
 - Membership of the Traveller community.
- Where an individual's disability impedes their ability to fully participate and engage in training activities, reasonable accommodation will be provided subject to this not imposing a disproportionate burden.
- Although every effort will be made to arrange training to facilitate attendance by part-time employees, there is an expectation that part-time employees will make

themselves available, from time to time, to attend training outside their normal hours of work.

Conditions of Employment:

- Terms and conditions of employment will be applied fairly to all employees, with no reference to any of the grounds in the Employment Equality Acts.
- DVI seeks to provide equal pay for like work.
- DVI endeavours to provide a work environment free from bullying, harassment or sexual harassment.

Promotion and Re-grading:

- There will be equality of opportunity at all stages of the promotions and/or re-grading process.
- Selection for promotion will be based on defined criteria related to the requirements of the post, and no reference will be made to the nine grounds in the selection process.

Classification of Posts:

- Gender-neutral job titles will be used, and no reference will be made to any of the other eight grounds in classifying positions.

Reasonable Accommodation:

- Reasonable accommodation shall be provided in order to facilitate a person with a disability to apply for positions with DVI, to attend for interview, to engage in employment and to participate in training activities as applicable.
- This commitment is subject to such reasonable accommodation not presenting a disproportionate burden on DVI, unless otherwise deemed appropriate.

Equal Status:

- No person will be discriminated against or treated adversely while availing of goods or services provided by DVI, except where this is legally permitted and undertaken with a legitimate aim. No person availing of goods or services should be subject to harassment or sexual harassment while availing of these.
- Any complaints in this respect should be brought to the attention of your manager.

Positive Action:

DVI will take practical measures to facilitate the integration of the following categories into employment:

- Gender.
- Persons over the Age of 50.
- Persons with a Disability.
- Membership of the Travelling Community.

Positive action measures, introduced as appropriate, will ensure that equality of opportunity for all is attained.

Review and Monitoring:

Progress in the areas of equal opportunities and diversity will be gauged through the continuous monitoring of the implementation of the equal opportunities and diversity strategy. All aspects of this Equality Policy will be monitored and reviewed by the manager.

Any employee who feels that there has been a breach of this policy or procedure may raise the matter through DVI grievance procedure. No employee will be subject to adverse treatment as a consequence of raising a complaint in relation to this policy. DVI will monitor the workplace for incidents of victimisation following a complaint.

DVI will take appropriate disciplinary action towards an employee who fails to follow this Equal Opportunities Policy.

General Terms and Conditions

Staff Personal Information

It is the employee's responsibility to provide accurate information to Deaf Village Ireland (DVI), so that their employment can be properly managed. To deal correctly with your career, work and pay, DVI needs to know of any changes in your personal circumstances.

Please tell your immediate manager of changes in:

- Home address and/or accommodation address, telephone number, post code
- Next of kin (Emergency Contact)
- Bank address and account number
- Qualifications

Personal data is normally obtained directly from the employee concerned. In certain circumstances, it will, however, be necessary to obtain data from third parties e.g. references from previous employers.

DVI will not disclose any personal information to anyone without your expressed permission.

Confidentiality

Every effort is taken by DVI to ensure that the affairs of our employees, the Deaf Community and any other relevant person/ group are treated with absolute confidentiality, and you should note the following provisions, in particular:

- You will be expected to keep all information concerning DVI, our employees and the Deaf Community with whom you are involved as an employee of DVI, absolutely confidential. Any breach of confidence will be regarded as a matter of serious concern. Any breach of confidence will be regarded as gross misconduct
- You will be expected to devote your entire working time and attention to DVI's affairs and therefore you may not, without the consent of the Manager be involved in any outside business or enterprise.
- You will deliver to DVI, on termination of your employment, or at any time it may so request, all memoranda, notes, records, manuals, programmes or electronic records, any other documents or property belonging to Deaf Village Ireland or relating to its employees and the Deaf Community, which you may then possess or have under your control. You may not, without DVI's consent, keep copies of same.
- You may not remove from the DVI's premises at any time, without proper advance authorization, any document or other property which belongs to DVI or contains or refers to any confidential information relating to DVI, its employees and the Deaf Community.

You will return to DVI, after termination of your employment any documents or other DVI property that subsequently comes into your possession or procurement in the future.

Drugs and Alcohol

It is recognised that DVI has a duty of care to the adults and children in our service and to the employees who work with these adults and children.

The purpose of this policy is to outline DVI approach to drugs and alcohol.

This policy applies to all employees, and Contractors of DVI.

Key Principles

Employees should not be adversely affected by alcohol or drug use during work hours and must at all times carry out their duties and responsibilities in a safe manner. Work premises are alcohol and drug free during work hours. Use of alcohol or drugs outside of work hours should not impair performance and behaviour at work.

Glossary of Terms and Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the term alcohol and drugs will be defined as mood altering substances, either legal or illegal. This includes alcohol, abuse of prescribed medication with or without a prescription as well as the use of illegal substances.

Policy

It is the policy of DVI to adhere to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 under which Employers are obliged to provide a safe workplace for all employees.

Employees are responsible for adhering to this policy as failure to do so may compromise the health, safety and welfare of themselves and their colleagues. For this reason, the use of non-prescribed illegal substances, the abuse of prescribed legal substances, or the use of alcohol is strictly forbidden, during working time or at work. The possession of such substances while on DVI premises or during working time is also prohibited.

Employees taking prescription drugs that are not recommended to be taken whilst driving a car notify their Supervisor / Manager where the role may necessitate driving.

Action where an Employee is suspected of being unfit for Work or in the possession of Alcohol or Drugs

In any instances of suspected intoxication in the workplace, the Manager or Supervisor will record the factors supporting this conclusion, for example: smell of alcohol on breath, dilated

pupils, impaired co-ordination or speech. The first step will be for the Manager or Supervisor to request an immediate meeting with the employee.

The factors leading to the concern will be outlined to the employee who is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The employee will be sent home immediately. Payment of wages may be deducted for that day.

Where an employee is removed from the site/the premises, DVI will use reasonable endeavours to ensure that individual travels home in a safe manner. An employee found in possession of illegal substances will be reported to An Garda Síochána.

An employee who is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while at work, or who is otherwise unsafe for work, or who is suspected of having alcohol or drugs in their possession may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Procedures regarding Identification of Alcohol or Drug use

An employee with an addiction problem should be assured that every assistance will be given to them if they are willing to try to overcome the problem and that the matter will be treated in strict confidence. Any employee who suspects he/she has an alcohol and / or drugs problem is encouraged to seek help voluntarily. This request should be made to the Supervisor or Manager on a personal basis. Time off work to obtain help may be offered if necessary.

Confidentiality

DVI aims to ensure that the confidentiality of all employees experiencing alcohol or drug problems is maintained. Information regarding individual cases will not be shared with third parties unless consent has been provided by the individual or the safety of the person concerned, or others is comprised.

Hygiene

High standards of hygiene must be maintained at all times. You must comply with the company's requirements and standards with regard to hygiene. You are required to conform to the highest standards of personal hygiene and appearance. You are responsible for keeping your work area and areas under your responsibility clean and tidy at all times.

Employee's Property

DVI will not accept responsibility for loss or damage to employee's property on their premises. You should be aware that the car parking within the DVI properties is not necessarily secure and that DVI will not accept responsibility for damage or losses to or from cars parked. You are advised to lock your car and not to leave any valuables in clear view from the outside.

Employees should report to their immediate Supervisor/Manager all lost or found property.

Loss of Earnings Claims

DVI makes payment to employees during authorised absences, as specified in Employment Policies and Procedures manual (e.g. Jury Service, sick pay, etc.,) on the clear understanding that, if it is possible, for the employee to claim for loss of earnings they must do so and make restitution to the DVI. If you have been absent as a result on an injury caused by the negligence of a third party and make a claim for compensation you should include in such claim an amount to recover any monies paid to you by DVI by way of sick pay. Any monies so recovered must be refunded to DVI.

Leaving Deaf Village Ireland

The following rules and regulations apply when an employee either terminates their employment or has their employment terminated.

Termination of Employment

Notice Periods required:

1) Resignation by the employee

An employee who has more than 13 weeks service and decides to leave Deaf Village Ireland must give one week's notice in writing, unless his/her contract states otherwise.

2) Termination by Deaf Village Ireland

If Deaf Village Ireland terminates an employee's Contract of Employment, it gives notice according to the continuous service as follows:

Length of Service Notice Period

13 weeks up to 2 years' service:	1 week
2 years less than 5 years' service:	2 weeks
5 years less than 10 years' service:	4 weeks
10 years less than 15 years' service:	6 weeks
15 years or more years' service:	8 weeks

Deaf Village Ireland reserves the right to pay salary for the relevant period in lieu of notice. During the period of notice, you may, at the discretion of DVI, continue to be paid in full, but be required to stay away from work. In these circumstances you may not be required to perform any duties, but you will not be entitled to work with another employer. In cases of gross misconduct or gross negligence which may warrant dismissal, DVI has a right to immediately suspend the employee with pay pending a full investigation, which may result in the employee's dismissal without notice or without payment in lieu of notice. Nothing in this contract shall prevent the giving of a lesser period of notice by either party where it is mutually agreed.

Reasons for Termination of Employment

DVI sincerely hopes that it will not be necessary to dismiss you. You may be dismissed from DVI, where you are considered not to meet the DVI's standards/requirements for:

- Capability
- Competence
- Qualifications
- Conduct
- Legal prevention, i.e. when a law of the land prevents your continued employment
- Retirement
- Redundancy or
- Other substantial reason which prevents the Institution retaining you in our employment

There are, however, certain breaches of DVI rules and of established custom and practice which may also render you liable to dismissal. These include but are not limited to those listed in the section on Gross Misconduct. All dismissals will be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the DVI's Disciplinary and Performance Improvement Procedure.

Retirement

The retirement age for paid workers is 66 years. The Board may, in exceptional circumstances and by agreement with the employee concerned, extend service beyond 66, by a maximum period of up to one year at a time.

Redundancy

If DVI finds itself in the difficult position of potentially having to let one or more staff members go due to financial cutbacks or restructuring, the Senior Management Team with the Board will firstly investigate all the alternatives to redundancy. Consultation with staff will be part of the process as appropriate.

Where redundancy is unavoidable, a minimum of two weeks' written notice or contractual notice arrangements will be given where they exceed two weeks, and notice to the individual will include the following information:

- The reasons why the employee's position has become redundant
- The method of selecting the redundant employee.

In cases of collective redundancy, DVI will inform and consult with staff 30 days prior to the implementation of any redundancy. Employees are entitled to statutory redundancy pay and reasonable time off work to look for alternative employment, or any other support or assistance deemed appropriate.

Pension

DVI will make a 5% contribution towards the individual Pension fund of any staff member once it is their own fund and they contribute monthly to the fund as well as the employer.

Exit interview

All staff leaving DVI (irrespective of the reason) will be offered an exit interview in the last week of their employment. This is an excellent opportunity for the organisation to receive constructive feedback from a member of staff of what it has been like to have been an employee of the organisation. The employee's experience, whether positive or negative, is valuable.

The Line Manager (as appropriate) will conduct the exit interview. The interview is structured around the exit interview form, a copy of which will be given to the employee in advance, for

consideration before the interview. Notes are recorded. Those at the exit interview will agree the level of confidentiality to be maintained.

The exit interview will also be used to discuss practical matters such as the return of keys/company property, confidential documents, P45, etc.

References

All employees leaving DVI may request a written or verbal reference from their line manager. DVI reserves the right not to supply references.

Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

DVI will discharge its responsibility to protect the dignity and welfare of children and vulnerable adults entrusted to its care and to support employees with responsibility for them through the following measures:

- Ensure insofar as is reasonably practical that sufficient resources are available to enable best practice standards of boarder/service user care to be delivered
- Provide safe systems of work to minimise the potential for abuse
- Provide information leaflets which set out how boarder, service users, relatives and members of the public can report concerns or complaints of abuse
- Rigorous application of recruitment and selection procedures to ensure that employees possess the required skills and attributes
- Provide induction for all new employees to ensure that they are aware of the standards of care expected from them
- Provide effective supervision, support and training for all employees so that they are aware of the standards of care expected from them and shortfalls in standards are dealt with promptly
- Communicate the Trust in Care Policy to all employees so that they are fully aware that the welfare of boarders, patients/clients is of paramount importance and know the action to be taken if abuse is suspected or alleged
- Manage allegations of abuse against an employee's promptly and with due regard for the right of an employee to fair procedures whilst safeguarding the welfare of service users/boarders

DVI has detailed policy documents which fulfils the above objectives, and which is distributed to employees.

Safety, Health and Welfare Policy

Policy Statement

The Board of Deaf Village Ireland (DVI) recognise their responsibility for the wellbeing including the safety, health and welfare of its entire staff where ever they work. The manager is responsible for the implementation of this policy through the existing supervisory structures. In so far as is reasonably practicable DVI will provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all staff and the public who are affected by its activities, as the Deaf community or users of their facilities. DVI ensures that each unit or activity has in place a safety statement specific to its activities and based on a risk assessment of its activities as required by the safety, health and welfare.

All its staff have the obligation to advise manager of any circumstance which might affect the safety, health or welfare of themselves, their colleagues, their students or the public. In so far as is reasonably practicable, facilities accessible to the public will be maintained so as to minimize the hazards to the public associated with them.

The manager reporting directly to the Board ensures that all aspects of the policy are in fact being implemented. This policy will be kept up to date. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed every year.

Whereas each site specific safety statement will address the risk associated with the hazards of its activities this policy provides the core policies applicable to all activities.

DVI is fully committed to complying with all applicable safety, health and welfare legislation. To that end it will ensure that it is kept abreast with all current legislation, and that all units are kept informed of their legal obligations.

DVI commits to ensuring that all work together to maintain a workplace environment that encourages and supports the right to dignity at work. All who work for DVI are expected to respect the right of each individual to dignity in their working life. All will be treated equally and respected for their individuality and diversity. Bullying or harassment in any form is not accepted and will not be tolerated. The policies and procedures agreed within DVI will

underpin the principles and objectives of this policy. All the activities of DVI will be carried out to the best standards of safety performance in accordance with the following principles:

- All activities can be carried out in a safe way without risk of injury to staff, and the public.
- Management at all levels is responsible and accountable for the safety performance of activities under their control
- The Board of DVI will endeavour to ensure that appropriate resources for the safety programme are available to each of its activities.
- All staff whether management, supervisory, or otherwise must have regard to safety performance in all their activities.
- All hazards which have the potential to cause injury or ill-health have to be assessed and the risks controlled. If a hazard cannot be eliminated effective safeguards and procedures must be provided and maintained.
- Staff must be provided with all necessary training to carry out their activities in a way that avoids injury to themselves or others.
- Safety training includes both skills on how to do their job safely and motivation to work safely.
- Safety in the workplace will be regularly audited.
- All deficiencies in the safety programme identified by the audit or otherwise are remedied promptly.
- All legal requirements are fulfilled to the full.

To ensure this, the Board of DVI will make arrangements that each place of work under its control has a safety statement to the requirements of Section 20 of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, based on the identification of the hazards and assessment of the risks as required by section 19 of the Act.

Each of these safety statements shall specify for the site or activity as required by the Act (extracts quoted below):

- The hazards identified and the risks assessed.
- The protective and preventative measures taken, and the resources provided for protecting safety, health and welfare at the place of work to which the safety statement relates.
- The plans and procedures to be followed and the measures to be taken in the event of an emergency or serious and imminent danger, in compliance with sections 8 and 11 of the Act.

- The duties of employees regarding safety, health and welfare at work, including cooperation with DVI and any persons who have responsibility under the relevant statutory provisions in matters relating to safety, health and welfare at work.
- The names and, where applicable, the job title or position held of each person responsible for performing tasks assigned to him or her pursuant to the safety statement, and
- The arrangements made regarding the appointment of safety representatives and consultation with, and participation by, employees and safety representatives, in compliance with sections 25 and 26 of the Act including the names of the safety representative and the members of the safety committee, if appointed.

The management of each and every area of activity shall bring the safety statement, in a form, manner and, as appropriate, language that is reasonably likely to be understood, to the attention of:

- His or her employees, at least annually and, at any other time, following its amendment in accordance with this section.
- Newly recruited employees upon commencement of employment, and
- Other persons at the place of work who may be exposed to any specific risk to which the safety statement applies.

Responsibilities of the Employee

It is the responsibility of all employees to co-operate with Management in the implementation of health and safety initiatives in DVI. Employees must be aware that they have a responsibility for the safety of their visitors while on site. Employees also have a specific responsibility for their own safety. Therefore, employees are expected to discharge their work in a safe manner, so as to avoid injury to themselves or other employees and customers, and to avoid damage to company equipment and property. Employees are required to report all accidents, dangerous occurrences, unsafe conditions and unsafe acts to their manager.

The duties of an employee under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 may be summarised as follows:

While at work an employee must:

- comply with the relevant statutory provisions and take reasonable care to protect his/her safety, health and welfare and that of any person who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions at work.

- ensure that he/she is not under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that he/she is in such a state as to endanger his/her own safety, health or welfare at work or that of any other person.
- co-operate with DVI in order to enable DVI to comply with the relevant statutory provisions as appropriate.
- not engage in improper conduct or behaviour that is likely to endanger his/her own safety, health and welfare at work or that of any other person.
- attend such training and assessment as may be reasonably required relating to safety, health and welfare at work, or relating to the work carried out by the employee
- make correct use of any article or substance provided for use at work or for the protection of his/her safety, health and welfare at work, including protective clothing or equipment.
- report to Management:
 - any work being carried on, or likely to be carried on, in a manner which may endanger the safety, health and welfare at work of any person,
 - any defect in the place of work, the systems of work, any article or substance which might endanger the safety, health or welfare at work of any person, or
 - any contravention of the relevant statutory provisions which may endanger the safety, health and welfare at work of the employee or that of any other person.
- Not misrepresent him/herself to DVI with regard to the level of training they have received in respect of their position.

Procedure for Raising Concerns

An employee who has any concerns with regard to this policy may raise the issue informally with their manager or any other Manager. Where they do not receive a satisfactory response to their concerns, they may raise the issue through the grievance procedure.

Smoke Free Facilities

Purpose

Second-hand smoke, also known as Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) or passive smoke is a cause of disease, including lung cancer and heart disease, in third parties. Neither the simple separation of smokers and non-smokers within the same air space, nor the provision of

ventilation, can eliminate exposure to second-hand smoke and the consequent health effects of such exposure. This policy has been developed to protect all employees, service users, customers and visitors from exposure to second-hand smoke, to ensure compliance with legal obligations and to ensure a safe working environment.

Policy

It is the policy of DVI that its facilities are smoke-free, with the exception of designated smoking areas, and that all employees and others who avail of the support and services of DVI have a right to enjoy a smoke-free environment. Smoking is prohibited throughout facilities, DVI except in designated smoking areas. This policy applies to all employees, public user's consultants, contractors, customers and visitors.

Implementation

Overall responsibility for policy implementation rests with the occupier, manager or other person, for the time being, in charge of the site. All staff and others who avail of the support and services of DVI have an obligation to adhere to and facilitate the implementation of this policy. The person in charge each site shall inform all existing employees and other staff in various organisations who avail of the support and services of DVI, consultants and contractors of the policy and their role in the implementation and monitoring of the policy. All new and prospective employees, and others who wish to avail of the support and services of DVI, consultants and contractors shall be given a copy of the policy on recruitment/induction by the person in charge.

Policy Regarding Infringements

Infringements by staff will be dealt with, in the first instance, under the Disciplinary and Performance Improvement Procedure. Recurring infringements by the Deaf Community and others who avail of the support and services are liable to result in expulsion. Employees, consultants, contractors, customers and visitors, who contravene the law prohibiting smoking in the workplace are also liable to prosecution.

Smoking Cessation

Information on how to obtain help quitting smoking is available from the National Smokers' Quit line through it's' website: www.quit.ie

Working Time Act

Deaf Village Ireland (DVI) fully complies with the Organisation of Working Time Act which sets out statutory rights for employees in respect of rest, maximum working time and holidays. The Policies and Procedures of DVI give details of the various employee entitlements. These include the following rest and maximum working time entitlements.

Maximum Weekly Working Time

The legislation limits the maximum average working week to 48 hours. Weekly working time can be averaged out over a four, six or up to 12 month reference period.

Rest Periods

Every employee has a general entitlement to:

- 11 hours daily rest per 24 hour period
- One period of 24 hours rest per week preceded by a daily rest period (11 hours)
- Rest breaks - 15 minutes where up to 4.5 hours have been worked, 30 minutes where up to 6 hours have been worked which may include the first break

Working Time:

Working Time is net- working time, i.e., exclusive of breaks, on call or stand-by time.

Exceptional or Unforeseeable Circumstances

The Act permits exemption from the rest provisions due to exceptional circumstances or an emergency (including an accident or the imminent risk of an accident) the consequences of which could not have been avoided despite the exercise of all due care, or, due to the occurrence of unusual and unforeseeable circumstances beyond DVI's control, it would not be practicable for DVI to comply with the provision concerned.

Compensatory Rest

All exemptions are subject to equivalent compensatory rest being made available to employees. In these circumstances rest may be postponed temporarily and taken within an adjacent timeframe. This ensures that although DVI may operate a flexible system of working, employees will not lose out on rest.

Holidays

Details of holiday entitlement which comply with Organisation of Working Time Act are contained in the policy relating to holidays under Section 10 of this manual.

Public Holidays

The Organisation of Working Time Act provides for provision of nine public holidays. These are specified under Section 10 of this manual.

In respect of each public holiday, an employee is entitled to either:

- a) A paid day off on the holiday or
- b) A paid day off within a month or
- c) An extra day's annual leave or
- d) An extra day's pay as Deaf Village Ireland may decide.

If the public holiday falls on a day on which the employee normally works, the employee is entitled to a paid day off for the day.

If the public holiday falls on a day on which the employee does not normally work, the employee is entitled to one fifth of his/her normal weekly wage for the day or to either (b) or (c) above as Deaf Village Ireland may decide.

If the employee is asked to work on the public holiday, the employee is entitled to (b) (c) or (d) above as Deaf Village Ireland may decide.

There is no service requirement in respect of public holidays for whole time employees. Part time employees qualify for public holidays entitlement provided they have worked at least 40 hours during the five weeks ending on the day before a public holiday.

Note this Act refers to public holiday, not bank holiday. Not every official bank holiday is a public holiday though in practice most of them coincide.

DVI Travel and Expenses Policy

Introduction

This Policy governs the reimbursement of any business expenses incurred during the conduct of Deaf Village Ireland's business as well as the issuance and use of credit cards. It is the company's policy to reimburse employees for ordinary necessary and reasonable expenses when directly related to the transaction of Deaf Village Business.

Employees are expected to exercise prudent business judgements regarding expenses covered by this policy. Reimbursement for expenses that are not in compliance with this policy requires the prior written approval of the Audit Committee of Deaf Village Ireland.

Requests for Reimbursements –

- Original receipts are required for all expenses submitted for Reimbursement.
- Employees must seek approval from the Manager before expenses can be approved.

The DVI Travel and Expenses policy applies to all DVI employees travelling on DVI business, regardless of the funding source. Employees engaged in authorised off site business will be paid travel and subsistence expenses necessarily incurred under the terms set out below.

Travel Guidelines

All travel should be via the shortest routes and by the cheapest practicable mode of conveyance, including public transport, and should be planned to reduce the total amount of travelling to the minimum, consistent with efficiency.

Domestic Travel

Public Transport: When travelling on behalf of DVI all employees should choose the most economical means of travel. Public Transport must be used where feasible.

Private Car: If no suitable public transport is available, or the time sacrificed to avail of public transport is too high, the use of your private car is allowed. Travel allowances will be paid under the following eligibility criteria:

- All travel will be calculated on the number of kilometres from normal location of work to the destination (return).
- Travelling expenses will not be paid in respect of any portion of a journey between an employee's home and normal place of work (and vice versa).
- Where an employee proceeds on a business journey directly from home to a temporary place of work or returns home directly, the business mileage should be calculated by reference to the lesser of:
 - The distance between home and the temporary place of work; or
 - The distance between the normal place of work and the temporary place of work.
- Travel allowances will be paid at the appropriate public sector rate per kilometre for the engine size / cc of your car (see tables below)
- No additional allowance is payable for passengers
- It is the responsibility of each employee who anticipates the need to use his/her vehicle on DVI business to ensure that his motor insurance cover is adequate to cover this class of driving as distinct from ordinary personal private use, a copy of which should be provided to the DVI Manager
- Persons travelling on the business of DVI who choose, for their own convenience, to use their own motor vehicles instead of public transport may do so on the understanding that they may only claim public transport rates for that journey. This pertains to journeys with public transport availability.

If two or more employees are attending the same meeting/conference etc., where feasible, they should travel together. The mileage and subsistence allowances are as follows.

Mileage allowance

Motor travel rates (from 1 September 2022)

Distance band	Engine capacity up to 1200cc	Engine capacity 1201cc - 1500cc	Engine capacity 1501cc and over
Up to 1,500 km	41.80 cent	43.40 cent	51.82 cent

(Band 1)			
1,501 - 5,500 km	72.64 cent	79.18 cent	90.63 cent
(Band 2)			
5,501 - 25,000 km	31.78 cent	31.79 cent	39.22 cent
(Band 3)			
25,001 km and over	20.56 cent	23.85 cent	25.87 cent
(Band 4)			

Mileage claims made in respect of journeys carried out in electric vehicles should use the rates applicable to engine capacity 1201cc-1500cc. Please see the above table.

Reduced Motor Travel Rates per kilometre

Engine Capacity up to 1200cc	Engine Capacity 1201cc to 1500cc	Engine Capacity 1501cc and over
21.23 cent	23.80 cent	25.96 cent

Reduced mileage rates apply for journeys associated with an official's job but not solely related to the performance of those duties. Examples include necessary travel in relation to:

- attendance at confirmed promotion competitions
- attendance at approved courses of education or conferences.

Motorcycles (rate per kilometre)

Motorcycle rates (from 5 March 2009)

Distance	Engine capacity up to 150cc	Engine capacity 151cc - 250 cc	Engine capacity 251 cc - 600 cc	Engine capacity 601cc and over
Up to 6,437 km	14.48 cent	20.10 cent	23.72 cent	28.59 cent
6,438 km and over	9.37 cent	13.31 cent	15.29 cent	17.60 cent

Bicycles

Bicycle rates (from 1 February 2007)

Rate per km	8 cent
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Subsistence allowance

Domestic Subsistence

DVI operates what is termed a “FLAT RATE ALLOWANCE SCHEME”. This is a scheme approved by the Revenue Commissioners and uses the prevailing civil service rates.

A subsistence allowance is only payable where the absence is in a place or places that individually are 8 kilometres or more from their normal place of work or their home.

If you are required to overnight, choose an “overnight base” that minimises, as far as practicable, the distances required to travel during the time you are away from normal location of work/home.

An overnight allowance can only be claimed when you are 100km or more away from your home or normal location of work.

Categories of Subsistence & Rates:

- a) **Overnight allowance** – Applicable to absences away from home overnight at a place in excess of 100 km from normal place of work. Where an overnight allowance is claimed, no additional subsistence allowance may be claimed until the last period of 24 hours is exceeded by 5 hours.
- b) **Day allowance** - A day allowance applies to a continuous absence from “base” of 5 hours or more, and there are two such allowances: a period of “5 hours up to 10 hours”, and “10 hours or more”. It is not payable for absences within 8 km of base or home.

See tables below for detail of rates payable.

Note: Revenue leaflet IT54 “Employees Subsistence Expenses” - para. Business Journeys (b)

“Where subsistence expenses are reimbursed by employers to employees on the basis of actual costs incurred, then the amount so reimbursed will generally not exceed the amount which should be payable in respect of the allowable business trips under the prevailing schedule of Civil Service Rates.”

Note: Where a hotel cannot be sourced at a reasonable rate and in line with the above rates, employees are advised to contact the DVI Manager to seek approval for alternative hotel accommodation costs. In this situation, the hotel is to invoice DVI directly. Employees are encouraged however to check online hotel rates which are often better value than telephone quoted or corporate rates.

The subsistence allowance rates depends upon the number of working hours incurred by the employee on a site other than the contracted place of employment these are as follows;

Overnight allowance

Domestic overnight subsistence rates (from 1 September 2022)

Rate category	Rate
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Normal rate	€167.00
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Reduced rate	€150.30
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Detention rate	€83.50
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Overnight allowance covers an overnight assignment of up to 24 hours. This must be at least 100km from the employee's home and their normal place of work.

The rate category depends on the period of an assignment:

- normal rate is for up to 14 nights
- reduced rate covers the next 14 nights
- detention rate covers each of the next 28 nights.

For assignments over 56 nights, you must make an application to Revenue to confirm subsistence is still available.

The period of subsistence at any one location is limited to six months.

Vouched Accommodation Rate (VA) Dublin Only

Vouched Accommodation (VA)	Accommodation	-	Meals
RATE	-	-	-
VA Rate	Vouched cost of accommodation up to €167.00	Plus	€39.08

Day allowances

Domestic day subsistence rates (from 1 December 2021)

Period of assignment	Rate
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Ten hours or more	€39.08
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Between five and ten hours	€16.29
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The assignment must be outside eight kilometres of the employee's home or normal place of work.

You can only claim both a day and overnight allowance if you work five hours or more the next day.

Foreign Travel

Expenditure on foreign travel and subsistence (whether recouped by a third party or not) should be strictly appraised and monitored. It is the duty of approvers to ensure that only essential travel is undertaken and that the number of employees travelling on official business is kept to a minimum consistent with the business needs of DVI.

Approvers should ensure as a general principle that the best value for money is obtained, in respect of each official trip undertaken, consistent with the requirements of official business.

Approvers must be prepared to use the services of all carriers operating out of Ireland

Class of Air Travel

The following principles should apply in relation to the class used:

- a. It is expected that employees will use economy class travel including internet (low-cost carriers') fares for short-haul flights.
- b. Cheaper restricted fares should be used where the travel abroad is regular and predictable and changes to travel are unlikely to occur. Approvers will be responsible for any additional charges which may be incurred by an internet/economy class ticket holder as a result of having to change flight times etc. for official business reasons, but the value should be assessed against the (usually low) risk of having to change the flight.
- c. There are a range of fully flexible economy fares, but these should be used only where it can be shown that the flexibility provided and the extra cost of the ticket are warranted compared to the potential cancellation cost of a restricted internet/economy ticket.
- d. Premium economy class travel may be used (where available) for long-haul flights where the additional flexibility afforded is considered necessary for the effective discharge of official business.

The subsistence allowance rate appropriate to any period of twenty-four hours is the overnight rate appropriate to the place where the night is spent or in the rare case where the person is travelling overland at night, the 'elsewhere' rate for the country in which the person is at midnight.

Personnel are not entitled to claim subsistence where the cost was not incurred or where the accommodation and/or meals are provided, free of charge.

The time occupied on a journey by air (or other mode of transport) for which the fare covers the cost of meals and an accommodation cost is not incurred will not reckon for the purposes of the payment of subsistence allowance.

Where the conference rate normally applies (or where an overnight limit is not specified) personnel should ensure that the standard of hotel used is not extravagant, unless the person is required to stay in a particular hotel for business reasons. In general, three or four star hotels should be used.

Out of Pocket Expenses

Claims for “out-of-pocket” expenses (e.g. parking fees, taxis, buses etc.) should be accompanied by the appropriate receipts; otherwise reimbursement of such expenses will not be made. In the case of payments made by credit/debit card, the statement/receipt from the credit card company is not sufficient when claiming reimbursement. The actual original (not copy) vendor invoice/Receipt is required.

Hospitality

Expenditure claims on hospitality will not arise regularly. However, it is accepted that there will be occasions when modest hospitality costs are required such as instances of providing meals for Visitors. Such expenditure should be proportional to the occasion.

Entertainment of visitors to DVI should only take place where there is a perceived benefit to the DVI from the visit.

Where entertaining and hospitality takes place the number of employees attending from DVI should be kept to an appropriate minimum.

Employees are expected wherever possible to use ‘in house’ catering services for hospitality and entertaining. All expenditure of this type must be pre-approved by the DVI Manager.

Necessary and reasonable costs will be reimbursed by DVI on production of receipts. The following information must be shown:

- Names of all attendees (internal and external)
- Purpose of the entertainment
- Date and location of the function

Other than in the case of DVI approved functions, under no circumstances can entertainment involve DVI employees only. As a general guide, no more than two DVI employees should be present when providing hospitality to visitors etc. Where it is

proposed to exceed this number, prior approval should be obtained from the finance committee.

Purchase of other items

The process for the reimbursement of expenses must not be used for the purchase of items, which should otherwise be sourced through the normal procurement process of DVI.

On occasion when working away from DVI, incidental items may have to be purchased for business purposes. These will be allowable on the basis that the item is minor, the cost is small and a receipt is submitted as part of the claim on which the item is detailed and the requirement noted.

Procedure - Reimbursement of Travel & Subsistence

All claims for reimbursement of travel & subsistence must be made on the appropriate expenses claim form in a typed format (not hand written). All fields must be completed using drop down boxes as appropriate.

The relevant sections of the form must be fully completed by the claimant with receipts. Incomplete forms will be returned and cannot be altered by Finance Office employees. The claimant is responsible for all details.

It is the responsibility of Managers to ensure that expenditure is appropriately incurred and approve a claim accordingly.

It is essential that expense claim forms are completed and submitted as soon as possible after the date of travel or of incurring the expenditure. Claims should normally be forwarded to the Finance manager within 30 days. Claims made outside of these time limits will not be approved for payment.

Claims will be met only to the extent of appropriate budgetary provision.

An expense form is available in Excel, which will look up the Revenue Rates to applicable to your claim based on the engine size of your car and your mileage year to date.

A copy of this file can be requested from the DVI manager.

Protected Disclosures (Whistleblowing) Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to outline the responsibilities under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 and subsequent amendments and to demonstrate our commitment to observing and maintaining the highest standards of honesty, openness and accountability in all of our practices. Our Protected Disclosures policy is intended to encourage and enable Workers to raise, rather than overlook, genuine concerns or disclose information related to potential wrongdoing as outlined within this policy, within our workplace without fear of penalisation or threat of less favourable treatment, discrimination or disadvantage.

All individuals are encouraged to be familiar with this policy and to feel confident to disclose any genuine concerns internally, at the earliest possible stage.

Any Worker who raises a concern in line with this policy is legally protected from penalisation and / or unfavourable treatment.

Scope

These procedures are in addition to the DVI complaints procedures and other statutory reporting procedures applying to some services e.g. residences. DVI is responsible for making service users aware of the existence of these procedures.

These may include:

The Protection for Person's Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to designated officers of health boards or any member of An Garda Síochána. It also provides significant protection for employees who report child abuse covering all forms of discrimination up to, and including, dismissal.

The Health Act, 2007 makes provision for protected disclosure of information by an employee of a relevant body. See Part 14 Section 103. This policy applies to all Workers within DVI, including Employees, Volunteers, Consultants, Contractors, Trainees, Agency Workers, Interns job applicants, former employees, supporters of the whistle-blower and those on work experience.

This policy is not appropriate for dealing with issues of harassment, sexual harassment, bullying or individual grievances which may relate to dissatisfaction with workplace relationships, the work environment or a term or condition of employment. Such matters should be addressed through the appropriate procedures as set out by DVI. In general where a Protected Disclosure is made during an investigation, disciplinary or other process, this should not affect these distinct processes, except where the investigation, disciplinary or other action represents, in essence, a form of penalisation for making a Protected Disclosure.

Policy

What is a “Protected Disclosure?”

A Protected Disclosure is the term used when a Worker raises a concern about a relevant wrongdoing such as possible fraud, crime, danger or failure to comply with any legal obligation which came to the Worker’s attention in connection with the Worker’s employment. ‘Relevant wrongdoings’ are broadly defined in the Act and include the following:

- That an offence has been, is being or is likely to be committed.
- That a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation, other than one arising under the individual's contract of employment or other contract whereby the individual undertakes to do or perform personally any work or services.
- That a miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.
- That the health and safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered.
- That the environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged.
- That an unlawful or otherwise improper use of funds or resources of a public body, or of other public money, has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.
- That an act or omission by or on behalf of a public body is oppressive, discriminatory or grossly negligent or constitutes gross mismanagement; or
- That information tending to show any matter falling within any of the points above has been, is being or is likely to be concealed or destroyed.

Any serious concerns that you have about any aspect of service provision or the conduct of employees, officers or members of DVI or others acting on behalf of DVI can be reported under the Whistleblowing Policy. This may be about something that:

- Makes you feel uncomfortable in terms of known standards, your experience or the standards you believe DVI subscribes too
- Is against DVI policies and procedures

- Falls below DVI policies and procedures
- Amounts to improper conduct

It is not regarded to be a relevant wrongdoing where a matter is a function of the Worker or the Workers Employer to detect, investigate, or prosecute and does not consist of or involve an act or omission on the part of the Employer.

What is meant by a Reasonable Belief?

Although a Worker is not expected to prove the truth of the facts in a disclosure, they must have a 'reasonable belief' that there are grounds for their concern when making a disclosure using the internal procedure. A reasonable belief means that the belief is based on reasonable grounds. This does not mean the belief has to be correct. The individual should also not have unlawful and / or unethical objectives in reporting a concern.

If an individual is uncertain as to whether a concern is a Protected Disclosure within the scope of this policy, he / she should seek guidance from their manager or the Chairperson of the Board as the Protected Disclosures Officer.

Procedure for Raising a Concern

Workers are not required or entitled to investigate matters themselves to find proof of their suspicion(s) and should not endeavour to do so. Workers should disclose the information that they have based on a reasonable belief that it discloses a wrongdoing.

This procedure enables all Workers to raise any genuine concern(s) relating to DVI in the correct way and at an early stage in the confidence that he / she will not be penalised or suffer detriment for having done so.

In situations where a Worker makes a disclosure not in compliance with the Act, the protection of the Act does not apply.

Raising a Concern Internally

In the first instance, a Worker is encouraged to raise any concern(s) to their manager. However, should the Worker feel that it is not appropriate or feel uncomfortable disclosing such information to their Manager, the Worker should raise any concern(s) to a more Senior Manager or the Protected Disclosure Officer and confirm that a Protected Disclosure is being made in accordance with this policy.

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. Should a Worker raise a concern verbally a written record of the conversation will be kept, and a copy provided to the Worker.

The disclosure should state:

- That the disclosure is being made under this procedure.
- The discloser's name, position in DVI, place of work, and confidential contact details.
- The name of the person(s), body or otherwise alleged involved.
- A description of the 'relevant wrongdoing'.
- Information in respect of the alleged wrongdoing – what is occurring / has occurred, and how including dates/times and locations so as to assist the investigation of the matters raised in the disclosure.
- Whether or not the alleged 'wrongdoing' is still ongoing.
- Whether the alleged wrongdoing has already been disclosed, and if so, to whom, when and what action was taken.
- Any other relevant information.

Confidentiality

DVI is committed to taking all reasonable steps to protect the identity of the Worker making a disclosure and to ensure that relevant disclosures are treated in confidence. Workers who are concerned that their identity is not being protected should notify the Protected Disclosures Officer. Such notifications will be assessed, and appropriate action taken as necessary. However, there are circumstances, as outlined in the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, where confidentiality cannot be maintained. This may include instances in which:

- The disclosure recipient shows that he / she took all reasonable steps to avoid such identity disclosure.
- The Worker has made it clear that he/she has no objection to his / her identity being disclosed.
- The identity of the person making the disclosure is critical to 1) an investigation of the matter raised, 2) to prevent serious risk to the security of the state, public health, public safety or the environment or 3) the prevention of crime or the prosecution of a criminal offence.
- Where the disclosure is otherwise in the public interest or otherwise required by law.

Should such a situation arise, DVI will make every effort to inform the Worker that his/her identity may be disclosed.

Where action is to be taken following a disclosure, except in exceptional cases, the disclosure recipient, should contact the discloser and where possible, gain the informed consent of the discloser, prior to any action being taken that could identify them. Where it is decided it is necessary to disclose information that may or will disclose the identity of the discloser, the discloser should be informed of this decision, except in exceptional cases. The discloser may request a review of this decision and a review should be carried out where applicable.

All Workers involved in the process must respect the need for confidentiality. A failure to do so may represent a serious disciplinary offence, up to and including dismissal or other action.

Where a Worker seeks advice from a trade union, solicitor or barrister, this discussion is treated as a Protected Disclosure, including at early stages in contemplation of making a disclosure or seeking information on the operation of the legislation.

Raising a Concern Anonymously

A concern(s) may be raised anonymously. However on a practical level it may be difficult to investigate such a concern(s). DVI encourages all Workers to put their names to allegations, with our assurance of confidentiality where possible, in order to facilitate appropriate follow-up. This will make it easier for DVI to assess the disclosure and take appropriate action, including an investigation if necessary.

How DVI will deal with a Concern

In the event of a concern being raised, DVI will confirm receipt of the complaint within 7 days, arrange a meeting with the Worker to discuss the matter on a strictly confidential basis. The meeting will be conducted by an independent member of Management or external assistance may be necessary in some circumstances so as to ensure impartiality, objectivity and fairness. A Worker is permitted to have a representative present (colleague or Trade Union representative). The Worker will be advised of any supports that may be available at this time.

DVI will clarify at this point if the concern is appropriate to this policy or is a matter more appropriate to our other policies, for example our Grievance or Dignity in the Workplace policies.

Having met with a Worker in regard to concerns raised and clarified that the matter is in fact appropriate to this policy, the concerns raised may be subject to an initial examination by a designated independent member of management or other appropriate person, with a view to determining an appropriate course of action. This may involve simply clarifying certain

matters, clearing up misunderstandings or resolving the matter by agreed action without the need for an investigation.

Should this approach be deemed inappropriate or inconclusive or where deemed appropriate, matters raised in the disclosure may:

- Be investigated internally by an appropriate independent member of management or other appropriate person.
- Be referred to an external enforcement agency or regulator.
- Be referred to An Garda Síochána.

Where an internal investigation takes place, this will be governed by the terms of reference which will detail the likely time frame for its completion (an indicative timeframe will be outlined) and the scope of the investigation.

Any Worker making a Protected Disclosure or any Worker against whom a concern has been made is entitled to be accompanied by a representative (colleague or trade union representative). The investigation will be conducted thoroughly, objectively and with sensitivity. Utmost confidentiality will be protected in so far as it is reasonably practicable.

Where possible or appropriate, DVI will keep the Worker who made the disclosure informed of actions/outcomes of the investigation within 3 months of receiving the complaint. Such information should be treated as confidential. Sometimes the need for confidentiality may prevent DVI however from giving specific details of any steps, including the outcome of any investigation or sanctions taken as a result.

Internal Investigation Outcomes

Every reported issue will be taken seriously. Appropriate action will be taken based on the outcome of any actions or investigation undertaken.

Measures will be taken against a Worker where an investigation finds sufficient evidence to conclude that the concern(s) raised by the discloser was justified. This may include formal disciplinary action, or other appropriate sanction or intervention deemed necessary to prevent a recurrence of the 'relevant wrongdoing'. Prior to any disciplinary action being taken, a fair disciplinary hearing will be held in line with DVI disciplinary procedure.

Where an investigation is inconclusive or the concern is not upheld, there will be no negative inference against any party to the concern raised. All parties to the disclosure(s) will be expected to continue working as normal, and to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at work.

A Worker is not expected to prove the truth of any concern raised. However, the Worker must have a reasonable belief that there are grounds for their concern. A deliberate false disclosure will not be protected and could leave him / her open to disciplinary action or other appropriate action in that regard. Prior to any disciplinary action being taken, a fair disciplinary hearing will be held in line with DVI disciplinary procedure.

Safeguards and Protection

Any penalisation of a Worker who makes a Protected Disclosure is in breach of the Act and will not be tolerated by DVI. DVI disciplinary procedure or other appropriate action will be invoked against any Worker who engages in penalisation or threatened penalisation of a Worker in line with this policy.

No Worker engaging in the procedures outlined here will be penalised or subject to unfavourable treatment for their role in the process, whether they are making a Protected Disclosure, supporting a disclosure, giving evidence in proceedings or giving notice of any intention to do any of the foregoing. Penalisation means any act or omission that affects a Worker to the individual's detriment and may include suspension, lay-off, dismissal, demotion, loss of opportunity for promotion, transfer of duties, change of location of place of work, reduction in wages, change in working hours, the imposition or administering of any discipline, reprimand or other penalty (including a financial penalty), unfair treatment, coercion, intimidation, harassment, discrimination, disadvantage, unfair treatment, injury, damage, loss or threat of reprisal.

Each Worker is also responsible for not causing detriment to another person because the other person or a third person has made a protected disclosure. A detriment in this context includes coercion, intimidation, harassment, discrimination, disadvantage, adverse treatment in relation to employment (or prospective employment), injury, damage, loss or threat of reprisal. This list is non-exhaustive.

Any such conduct may, depending on the seriousness of the issue, be deemed gross misconduct by DVI and may result in summary dismissal or other appropriate action.

A Worker who believes that they have suffered any such treatment should inform their Manager, Senior Manager or the Protected Disclosures Officer immediately. If the matter is not remedied a Worker should raise it formally using DVI Grievance Procedure.

Other Channels – Raising Concerns Outside of the Workplace

Raising Concerns Externally

The aim of this policy is to provide an internal avenue within the workplace in which a concern(s) or in regard to a 'relevant wrongdoing' can be raised. DVI is confident that such concerns can be dealt with internally in an appropriate and timely manner and strongly encourages all Workers to report such concerns internally.

However, it is recognised that in some limited circumstances it may not always be appropriate to report any genuine concerns internally and that it may be necessary to raise a concern(s) externally. The Protected Disclosures Act 2014 provides for a number of avenues in this regard. Please see section 'Disclosure outside of the Employer' for this detail.

It is important to note however, that the evidential criterion for making an external disclosure is set at a higher level than that applying to raising a concern(s) internally. While a Worker need only have a reasonable belief as to wrongdoing to make a disclosure internally, if a Worker is considering an external disclosure, different and potentially more onerous obligations apply, depending on to whom the disclosure is made.

Responsibilities

Overall responsibilities for Procedures should rest with the DVI Board.

Management will endeavour to ensure that this policy is communicated to all Workers and will ensure that the policy is reviewed periodically and maintained and updated in line with legislative changes and any amendments to the relevant Code of Practice. Where required, measures will be taken to ensure the accessibility of policies and procedures for all Workers. All Workers are expected to comply with this policy and to raise issues of concern through the procedures outlined in the policy.

Protected Disclosures Officer

Within DVI the Protected Disclosures Officer is the line Manager. Where this is felt inappropriate then the disclosure should be made to the Manager of DVI or again, if this is not appropriate then to the Chairperson of DVI.

Disclosure outside of the Employer

Workers are encouraged, enabled and supported to raise disclosures internally in the first instance.

The 2014 Act allows a Worker to make a Protected Disclosure to persons other than their Employer in certain circumstances. Different requirements need to be met in different cases, as set out below.

1. Other Responsible Person

Where the Worker reasonably believes that the ‘relevant wrongdoing’ relates solely or mainly to the conduct of a person other than the Worker’s Employer, or to something for which that other person has legal responsibility, then the Worker can make the disclosure to that other person.

2. A Prescribed Person

Certain external persons are prescribed by Statutory Instrument 339 of 2014 (“SI 339”) to receive Protected Disclosures (“prescribed persons”). This includes the heads or senior officials of a range of statutory bodies.

If you would like to see a list of external persons, please contact the DVI Manager.

A Protected Disclosure is made in the manner specified in this section if the Worker:

- (a) makes the disclosure to a person prescribed in the link provided above and,
- (b) reasonably believes that:
 - (i) that the relevant wrongdoing falls within the description of matters in respect of which the person is prescribed in the link provided for.
 - (ii) that the information disclosed, and any allegation contained in it, are substantially true.

3. A Minister of the Government

A disclosure is made in the manner specified in this section if

- (a) the Worker is or was employed in a public body, and.
- (b) the disclosure is made to a Minister on whom any function relating to the public body is conferred or imposed by or under any enactment.

4. A Legal Advisor

A disclosure is made in the manner specified in this section if it is made by the Worker in the course of obtaining legal advice (including advice relating to the operation of this Act) from a barrister, solicitor, trade union official or official of an excepted body (within the meaning of Section 6 of the Trade Union Act 1941).

Alternative External Disclosure (in very limited circumstances)

It is preferable in most circumstances for a Worker to disclose to their Employer, and, if that is not appropriate, to use one of the options at (1.) to (4.) above. It will rarely be appropriate to make alternative external disclosures where the disclosure could be dealt with through one of the other disclosure options above. There are stringent requirements for alternative external disclosures to qualify as Protected Disclosures under the 2014 Act.

The protections will only be available if the following conditions are met:

- The Worker must reasonably believe that the information disclosed, and any allegation contained in it, are substantially true,
- The disclosure is not made for personal gain,
- At least one of the following conditions at (i) to (iv) are met:
 - i. At the time the Worker makes the disclosure, the Worker reasonably believes that they he/she will be subjected to penalisation by the Workers Employer if he / she makes the disclosure to the Employer, other Responsible Person, a Prescribed Person, or a Minister; or
 - ii. In a case where no relevant Prescribed Person is prescribed in relation to the relevant wrongdoing, the Worker reasonably believes that it is likely that evidence relating to the relevant wrongdoing will be concealed or destroyed if the Worker makes the disclosure to the Employer, or responsible person; or
 - iii. The Worker has previously made a disclosure of substantially the same information to their Employer or other Responsible Person or a Prescribed Person or a Minister; or
 - iv. That the relevant wrongdoing is of an exceptionally serious nature.

AND

- In all the circumstances of the case, it is reasonable for the Worker to make the disclosure.

In determining whether it is reasonable for the Worker to make the disclosure regard shall be had, in particular, to:

- a) the identity of the person to whom the disclosure is made,
- b) the seriousness of the relevant wrongdoing,
- c) whether the relevant wrongdoing is continuing or is likely to occur in the future,
- d) whether any action had been taken in cases where a previous disclosure was made and whether the Worker complied with any procedures in place when making that previous disclosure.

CCTV

Introduction

Closed Circuit Television Systems (CCTV) are installed on the premises under the control of DVI (hereinafter 'The Company') to provide for the protection, safety & security of Service users, boarders, service users, employees and contractors of The Company and of all visitors to The Company's property. The images may then be recorded on video tape or DVD or other digital recording mechanism. The Company is a data controller with reference to the personal data, which it manages, processes and stores. The purpose of this document is to provide a concise policy regarding the CCTV Policy of The Company. Employees/Clients of The Company should refer to the guidance provided by the Data Protection Commission (www.dataprotection.ie) as well as seeking professional advice regarding best practice in this area. In addition, the Company may employ Data Processors on its behalf, in situations where it contracts out for such services. DVI expect all Data Processors to be bound relevant data protection legislation and will ensure that appropriate agreements are in place.

Personal Data is defined under Article 4 of the EU General Data Protection Regulation ('GDPR') as

"Any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'); an identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person".

Data is information in any format that can be processed. It includes automated or electronic data (any information on computer or information recorded with the intention of putting it on computer) and manual data (information that is recorded as part of a relevant filing system or with the intention that it should form part of a relevant filing system). For these purposes, The Company may be considered as a Data Controller i.e. an organisation which (either alone or with others) controls the content and use of Personal Data. The Company's CCTV system is password protected and is delivered and managed by a Third party company. Any request for information will be made inwriting to the manager of DVI who will then authorise the third party to provide the detail requested. In the absence of the DVI Manager the any requests must go to the Chairperson of the DVI Board. No other individual can be given access to the system or authorise the third party to release data.

In the event of a breakdown, or should servicing of equipment be required, a service engineer may also have access to the system.

Purpose of the policy

This policy relates directly to the location and use of CCTV and the monitoring, recording and subsequent use of such recorded material. The policy applies equally to personal data obtained by The Company via CCTV, which is subsequently held in manual and automated form.

CCTV systems are installed (both internally and externally) on The Company's premises ('the Premises') for the purpose of enhancing the security of the Premises and its associated equipment, as well as creating a mindfulness among the occupants of the Premises that a surveillance security system is in operation within and/or in the external environs of the Premises both during and after normal business hours each day.

CCTV surveillance at The Company's Premises is intended for the purposes (The Purpose) of:

- Protecting The Company buildings and assets, both during and after normal business hours, the Premises' perimeter, entrances and exits, lobbies and corridors, special storage areas.
- Promoting and protecting the health and safety of employees, and visitors at the Premises.
- Reducing the incidence of crime and anti-social behaviour (including theft and vandalism).
- Supporting the Gardaí in a bid to deter and detect crime.
- Providing assistance in criminal investigations (carried out by An Garda Síochána), including robbery, burglary and theft surveillance.
- Monitoring of access control systems: Monitor and record restricted access areas at entrances to the Premises and other areas.
- Verification of security alarms: Intrusion alarms, exit door controls, external alarms.
- Managing any health and safety risks and/or accidents in accordance with The Company's health and safety obligations and relevant insurance policies.
- Accurate logging and recording of any incidents that may give rise to health and safety issues, child safety issues or concerns in relation to inappropriate behaviour.

Scope

This policy relates directly to the location, use and purpose of CCTV at the Premises and the monitoring, recording and subsequent use of Recorded Data recorded by the CCTV. Where

work activities are carried out in premises other than the Premises and which are rented by The Company for that purpose ('Rented Premises'), The Company will, insofar as is within The Company's power to do so, ensure that CCTV systems, where installed at such Rented Premises, are operated only in a way that is compatible with the provisions of this policy.

General Principles

The Company has a statutory responsibility to protect its property, equipment and other plant as well as to provide a sense of security to employees, contractors and visitors to its Premises. The Company has a duty of care to such employees, contractors and visitors to its Premises under the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and associated legislation and utilises the CCTV systems and their associated monitoring and recording equipment as an added mode of security and surveillance to assist The Company to meet such duties. The Company's use of the CCTV system is conducted by The Company in a professional, ethical and legal manner and utilised for the Purpose only. Any deviation from this policy and the use of CCTV for other purposes is prohibited by this policy e.g. CCTV will not be used by The Company for monitoring employee performance. Furthermore, the Company acknowledges that the inappropriate use of CCTV can be especially intrusive on conversations between signed language users, in the same way that audio recording can be for spoken languages and as a result will limit the observation of such communication to instances specifically associated with an incident under investigation in line with the Purpose as outlined above and in Section 5 which outlines the justification by the Company for the use of CCTV. Recorded Data obtained by The Company through the CCTV system may only be released by The Company to any third party when such release is authorised by the DVI Manager with approval of the Chairperson. Any requests received by The Company from third parties including from An Garda Síochána for Recorded Data, recorded using The Company's CCTV system, will be appropriately logged by The Company and legal advice as to The Company's obligations to comply with such request and related matters may, at the discretion of the DVI manager be sought if any such request is made (See "Access" below). CCTV monitoring by The Company of public areas within or adjacent to the Premises for security purposes will be conducted by The Company in a manner consistent with all relevant policies adopted by The Company and in force at that time.

Justification for use of CCTV

Article 5 (b) of the GDPR states that Personal Data shall be "*collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes*".

The Company must be able to justify, the obtaining and use of Personal Data by means of CCTV. The use by The Company of CCTV to monitor the Premises for the Purpose has been deemed to be justified by The Company management. The CCTV system is intended to capture images of intruders or of individuals damaging property or removing goods without authorisation and for security and health and safety purposes (details of associated risks will be captured in the organisational risk register) and to accurately log and record any incidents that may give rise to health and safety issues, vulnerable adults and child safety issues or concerns in relation to inappropriate behaviour.

Location of cameras

Article 5 (a) of the GDPR states that Personal Data shall be *“processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject”*.

The location of the CCTV cameras at the Premises is a key consideration for The Company when operating CCTV. The Company does not seek to locate CCTV cameras to monitor areas of the Premises where individuals would have a reasonable expectation of privacy. The Company has endeavoured to select locations for the installation of CCTV cameras, which minimise such intrusion so as to protect the privacy of individuals at the Premises as far as is reasonable. Cameras placed by The Company so as to record external areas of the Premises are, so far as is reasonably possible, positioned to prevent or minimise recording of passers-by or of another person's private property.

Cameras are located in the following areas:

DVI:

- (List locations

Cameras have been installed in such a manner as not to overlook private areas inside or outside DVI (as applicable).

Covert surveillance

The Company does not engage in covert surveillance. Where An Garda Síochána requests The Company to carry out covert surveillance on any of The Company Premises, such covert surveillance must be requested by An Garda Síochána in writing and approved in advance by the manager & Chairperson. The Company may seek legal advice in relation to any such request(s) and act accordingly.

Notification – Signage

A copy of this CCTV Policy will be made available on request to The Company by employees, contractors and visitors to the Premises in accordance with their rights as data subjects under the legislation. This policy describes the purpose and location of CCTV monitoring and provides a contact number for those wishing to discuss The Company's use of CCTV monitoring and guidelines for its use with The Company.

Adequate signage will be placed at each location at the Premises in which a CCTV camera(s) is sited to indicate that CCTV is in operation. Adequate signage will also be prominently displayed at the entrance to the Premises. Signage shall include the name and contact details of the Data Controller of all Recorded Data and state the specific purpose(s) for which the CCTV camera is in place in each location at the Premises.

Appropriate locations for signage will include:

- At entrances to the Premises i.e. external doors.
- Reception area in the Premises.
- At or close to each internal camera.

Storage & Retention

Article 5 (e) of the GDPR states that Personal Data shall be *“kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed”*.

All Recorded Data captured by The Company CCTV system, will be retained by The Company for a maximum of one calendar month, except where The Company reasonably believes that an

image (or images) of such Recorded Data identifies an issue or potential issue and is retained by The Company specifically in the context of an investigation/prosecution of that issue or potential issue.

Article 5 (f) of the GDPR states that Personal Data shall be *“processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures”*.

All Recorded Data will be stored by The Company in a secure environment and The Company will maintain an access log recording all individuals accessing such Recorded Data. Access to Recorded Data will be restricted by The Company to personnel authorised by The Company to access such Recorded Data (‘Authorised Personnel’). Supervising the access and maintenance by The Company of CCTV is the responsibility of the Manager.

The Manager may delegate the administration of CCTV to another manager/ supervisor in certain circumstances, the Recorded Data may also be viewed by other individuals other than the Authorised Personnel for the Purpose, including the Gardaí, The Company’s insurance providers (‘Additional Authorised Individuals’).

When Recorded Data is being viewed, The Company will use its reasonable endeavours to limit access to such Additional Authorised Individuals, which The Company reasonably believes need access to such Recorded Data in accordance with the Purpose.

Access

The Company shall ensure that USB keys/DVDs/hard drives storing the Recorded Data and the monitoring equipment comprising the CCTV system and the system for storing such Recorded Data will be securely stored in a restricted area (the ‘Secure Area’).

The Company shall endeavour to prevent unauthorised access to the secure area at any time. The Secure Area will be locked when not occupied by the Authorised Personnel. The Company will maintain an access log recording appropriate details in relation to each access to the Secure Area and viewing of the Recorded Data whether by the Authorised Personnel or any Additional Authorised Individuals.

The Company shall restrict access to the CCTV system and Recorded Data to Authorised Personnel. Where The Company deems it necessary, CCTV footage and Recorded Data may be accessed by Additional Authorised Individuals as follows:

- By An Garda Síochána where The Company are required by law to make a report regarding the commission of a suspected crime; or
- Following a request by An Garda Síochána when a crime or suspected crime has taken place and/or when it is suspected that illegal/anti-social behaviour is taking place on or around the Premises or other Company property; or
- By individuals (or their legal representatives) subject to a court order being made obliging The Company to allow access; or
- By The Company's insurers where the insurers require same in order to pursue a claim for damage done to the Premises or in respect of any health and safety issue occurring or alleged to have occurred at the Premises.

Requests by An Garda Síochána

Information to include Recorded Data obtained by The Company through CCTV will only be released by The Company to An Garda Síochána when authorised by the manager. If a law enforcement authority, such as An Garda Síochána, is seeking Recorded Data for a specific investigation, The Company will seek that any such request is made in writing stating that An Garda Síochána is investigating a criminal matter.

The Company may again, at its discretion, seek legal advice on any such requests made by An Garda Síochána. The Data Protection Commission's guidance on the use of CCTV makes a distinction between a request by An Garda Síochána to view Recorded Data on the Premises and a request to take away or download a copy of the Recorded Data.

The Company will always seek confirmation in writing from An Garda Síochána in respect of a request to take away or download Recorded Data and seek that the written request is on An Garda Síochána headed paper and sets out the details of the Recorded Data required and the legal basis for such a request. In urgent matters, verbal requests from An Garda Síochána to view or access Recorded Data can be dealt with, The Company can then follow up by seeking a written request from An Garda Síochána.

Access requests

Upon written request, any individual who is the subject of Personal Data (Data Subject) and whose image has been recorded in the Recorded Data has a right to be given a copy of the Recorded Data which relates to him/her, retained at that time by The Company provided always that such Recorded Data exists at the time of the relevant request, i.e. has not been deleted or that an exemption/prohibition does not apply to the release of such Recorded Data.

Where the relevant Recorded Data identifies another individual, that Recorded Data may only be released by The Company to the Data Subject where the relevant image(s) in the relevant Recorded Data can reasonably be redacted/anonymised/pixelated, so that any other person(s) are not identified or identifiable or where the other person(s) have provided his/her/their explicit consent to the release of the Recorded Data to the Data Subject.

To exercise their right of access to Recorded Data relating to a Data Subject, that Data Subject must make an application in writing to the DPO (a 'Request').

A Data Subject delivering a Request to The Company should provide all information with their Request which The Company deems necessary in order to assist The Company in locating the requested Recorded Data: date, time and location of the relevant Recorded Data. If the relevant image(s) comprising the Recorded Data is of such poor quality as not to clearly identify an individual, that image may be deemed by The Company to not be Personal Data and The Company may inform the relevant Data Subject who has made the relevant Request of that finding and may decline to hand over the relevant Recorded Data on that basis.

Where such access requests occur and upon receipt. In compliance with its obligations under the relevant legislation, The Company must respond within one month of receipt of each such a Request. The CCTV system currently holds up to a rolling 30 days of footage. Where a Request is received that relates to CCTV footage, The Company will place a hold on the deletion of this footage to fulfil the Request.

In the event, that a Data Subject makes a request of any an employee, the manager must be notified and contact information for the Data Subject should be obtained and communicated. Failure to make such a notification places the Company at risk and may result in disciplinary action.

In circumstances where Recorded Data that is the subject of a Request, cannot be copied to another device, or in other exceptional circumstances, The Company will endeavour to provide stills of the relevant Recorded Data as alternative to video footage to the Data Subject.

Responsibilities

The Company through the DVI manager will:

- Ensure that The Company's use of its CCTV systems is implemented in accordance with the policy set down by The Company (as in force from time to time).
- Oversee and co-ordinate the use by The Company of CCTV monitoring for the Purpose at and within the Premises.

- Ensure that all The Company's existing CCTV monitoring systems will be evaluated for compliance with this policy.
- Ensure that The Company's use of CCTV monitoring at the Premises is consistent with guidance from the Data Protection Commission and complies with The Company's legal obligations.
- Review camera locations at the Premises and be responsible for the release of any Recorded Data created and stored in compliance with this policy.
- Maintain an access log recording access to the Secure Area and to the Recorded Data and of the release of Recorded Data and the medium upon which Recorded Data is stored.
- Ensure that disks containing Recorded Data are not duplicated for release otherwise than in compliance with this policy.
- Ensure that the perimeter of view from fixed location CCTV cameras installed and operated by The Company conforms to this policy both internally and externally.
- Approve the location of temporary cameras to be used by The Company during special events that have particular security requirements and ensure their withdrawal following such events. NOTE: Temporary cameras do not include mobile video equipment or hidden surveillance cameras used for authorised criminal investigations by An Garda Síochána;
- Give consideration to employees, contractor, and visitor feedback/complaints regarding possible invasion of privacy or confidentiality due to the location of a particular CCTV camera or associated equipment at the Premises.
- Co-operate with the Manager of The Company in reporting to any relevant persons on the CCTV system in operation in The Company.
- Ensure that adequate signage is maintained at appropriate and prominent locations in compliance with this policy.
- Ensure that external cameras forming part of the CCTV system are non-intrusive in terms of their positions and views of neighbouring residential housing and comply with an individual's reasonable expectation of privacy.
- Ensure that Recorded Data stored on USB keys/ DVDs/ digital recordings are stored for a period not longer than one calendar month and are then erased, unless required as part of a criminal investigation or court proceedings (criminal or civil) or other bona fide use as approved by the Manager.

- Ensure that cameras controlled by The Company are used solely to monitor suspicious behaviour, criminal damage etc. in accordance with the Purpose and not to monitor individual characteristics.
- Ensure that camera control by The Company is not infringing an individual's reasonable expectation of privacy in public areas; and
- Ensure that where An Garda Síochána request to set up mobile video equipment for criminal investigations, appropriate legal advice is, where deemed necessary, obtained and such activities have the approval of the manager prior to set-up.

Implementation & Review

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated at least annually by the manager. Ongoing review and evaluation will take cognisance of changing legislation, information or guidelines (e.g. from the Data Protection Commission, An Garda Síochána).

Adverse Weather Policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to formulate a formal written guidelines with respect to severe weather. The policy aims to define and clarify the procedure to be followed in the event of adverse weather.

Scope

This policy applies to all those employed by DVI, whether full-time, part-time, fixed term, specified purpose, temporary or permanent. This list is by no means exhaustive.

Policy

DVI understands that in times of adverse weather or similar circumstances, employees may be left in a position where they are unable to attend work due to transport difficulties. It is the organisation's policy to remain open during times of adverse weather or similar circumstances and employees are expected to make every reasonable effort to arrive to work. In the event of being unable to attend work due to circumstances outside of a person's control, this policy will apply.

In order to be included in the scope of this policy, the person must be unable to attend for work due to transport difficulties outside of their control where they have been left with no feasible mode of transport to attend work.

Procedure

Where a person is not able to attend to work due to circumstances of adverse weather, he/she must notify their direct Line Manager/ supervisor as soon as possible, ideally before or at the scheduled start time but no later than a half an hour after the start time, to advise of their absence from work, reason and expected duration.

The Line Manager/ supervisor must be contacted and directly spoken to on the phone or via video call. Voice messages, emails or text messages are not acceptable, nor is leaving a message with another member of employees.

In the case where a person fails to both attend for work and subsequently fails to notify their Line Manager that they are unable to attend for work in the appropriate manner as mentioned above, this will be dealt with under the attendance policy as unauthorised absence and payment for the day(s) will be deducted from salary.

Failure to cooperate with the organisation's rules regarding reporting of absence will result in the disciplinary procedure being applied.

Where weather conditions show signs of worsening, management will use publicly available reports on road conditions and public transport before deciding if affected persons are authorised to leave early.

If a person is not able to travel for work because of adverse weather e.g. snow days, the following situations will apply.

- Take annual leave
- TOIL (Time off in Lieu)– if using TOIL the person will be required to work the time back up at a later date prescribed by the organisation

- Unpaid leave
- Offering change of hours to facilitate changes required to avail/arrange alternative travel arrangements (as appropriate to the emergency)

These must be agreed on an individual basis with the Line Manager. Alternative transport may be organised by DVI to assist employees in attending work. The above does not apply in extreme situations where a warning has been issued to the public not to travel.

Where a person agrees to take on extra hours to cover for employees who cannot attend work, they will be paid at their normal hourly rate and given time in lieu in addition to normal pay for a hours worked

Where a person has the capacity to carry out his or her work from home for the duration of the disruption, this should be agreed with their Line Manager/ supervisor. This will not be feasible for a number of roles where employees presence is required.

Employees who are on leave (maternity, annual, sickness, not rostered to work the day, etc) will not be entitled to time off in lieu in the event that the organisation closes.

Should a person be on annual leave when a weather related event occurs and is unable to return to work due to travel restrictions, the Line Manager/ supervisor may use a pragmatic approach and allow the person to extend their annual leave or authorise unpaid leave during this time.

In the case of schools or crèches closing, an emergency leave situation may result for some employees. This may fall under the legal definition of *force majeure* leave for the first day of the weather event. After the first day where the person is unable to make alternative arrangements - annual leave, TOIL, making up the hours or unpaid leave could be considered on a case by case basis.

In extreme situations, where the organisation opts to close a service in the interests of safety, employees will not be required to take annual leave, TOIL etc.

However, if the closure/restricted operating times is likely to be protracted or in excess of a day then the organisation may call upon its contractual right to implement the contractual and statutory right to place employees on Lay Off/Short time working. If any of these options are required consultation and negotiation will occur with the relevant union as to what and how this may occur.

A maximum will be placed on the number of working hours to be returned in a year. The maximum hours will constitute 15 hours.

Remote Working Policy

Introduction

During the COVID 19 pandemic many employees were asked to work from home on a temporary basis. Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 DVI has a duty to ensure the safety health and welfare of our employees

After a review, DVI has now implemented a permanent policy on remote working.

Where deemed appropriate and with approval from the line manager an employee may work from home but is required to attend the office at a minimum of 40% of their working week. This is dependent on service needs. Any agreement around remote working needs must be approved by a line manager.

Purpose

This guideline has been developed to support managers and employees to comply with their legal obligations in relation to employees working from home.

Scope

This guideline applies to:

- All managers/ supervisors in DVI who have employees working from home
- All employees working from home during this pandemic where the following applies:
 - If the employees have no choice but to use a Visual Display Unit (VDU) to carry out her/his work
 - If the employees normally use the VDU for continuous periods of more than one hour
 - If the VDU is generally used by the employees on a daily basis

Roles and Responsibilities

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 places specific duties on both managers and employees. In the context of home working these duties are summarised below:

Managers Responsibilities include:

- managing and conducting all work activities to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees

- providing safe systems of work that are planned, organised, and maintained, assessing risks and implementing appropriate control measures
- providing information, instruction, training and supervision regarding safety and health to employees
- Having plans in place for emergencies.

Employees Responsibilities include:

- cooperating with their manager and following their instructions
- protecting themselves and others from harm during the course of their work, e.g. taking care of any work equipment provided and reporting any defects immediately to their manager
- reporting any injury arising from work activity to their manager in line with HSE Incident Management Framework, 2018
- Following procedures that have been put in place by their manager.

Risk Factors Associated with Home Working

The main risk factors which need to be considered when employees are working from home include:

- work environment
- work equipment
- employees wellbeing
- incident management
- security of data

Work Environment

As a minimum, there should be enough room for work to be carried out, including space for the workstation, other equipment (e.g. printers) and storage of materials. Ideally the employees should identify a dedicated area which keeps domestic interruptions to a minimum and reduces risks to other people at home (e.g. young children), has safe access, adequate lighting, is free from trailing leads/cables and good standards of housekeeping are maintained.

Where an appropriate working environment is not identified, managers should make arrangements the employee to return to the office environment.

Work Equipment (to include use of Display Screen Equipment)

Employees working from home must be provided with the necessary equipment to carry out work activities. This may include the use of laptops, monitors, keyboard, telephone headsets etc.

Employees working with display screen equipment (i.e. laptop / pc) must ensure they have completed the HSEland DSE User Awareness Module and be provided with information on how to set up their workstation safely at home.

The objective is to try to achieve a similar ergonomic set-up to that achieved at work. Ensuring the work desk/work station is set-up correctly will facilitate good posture and reduce the likelihood of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDS) and Work Related Upper Limb Disorders (WRULDs) and Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSIs).

Employees should be encouraged to stand up and stretch and take regular breaks away from their laptops / PCs and do other work related duties e.g. teleconferencing / standing up while taking phone calls.

Employees should be provided with details on how to access support in dealing with information technology systems failures, software problems and equipment failures.

Employees Wellbeing

Communication

It is important to have a formal, agreed and scheduled communication system in place e.g. use of scheduled teleconferences which encourages and allows employees to raise any concerns they may have.

Employees should also be encouraged to keep in regular contact with other colleagues and know that support is available for them.

Supervision

When employees are working from home, it is important that they have clear role clarification and know what is expected of them. Having an agreed check in with employees will provide an opportunity for updates on work related information and feedback.

Work life Balance

Taking regular breaks and exercise and practising good self-care can help with maintaining a healthy work life balance. Employees should be encouraged to set scheduled breaks and eat away from their workstation, exercise and eat healthily during this period.

Incident Management

In the event an incident or becoming unwell during remote working hours, it is the employees' obligation to report this to their line manager. All incidents must be reported and managed in line with DVI policies and procedures.

Data Security

In line with DVI policy all data must be processed and controlled in line with the principles of the GDPR and relevant Irish legislation, for further information please contact the Data Protection Officer.

Risk Assessment

Section 19, of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 requires the employer to identify the hazards at the place of work and to assess the risk presented by those hazards. The assessment needs to take account of the specific work environment and needs of each employee. To assist in assessing the home working arrangements the risk assessment must be completed in consultation with each employee over the telephone.

Communications Protocol

Purpose

The purpose of this protocol is to ensure effective communications both external¹ and internal by DVI.

This protocol:

- Provides a clear, consistent protocol for all board members to prevent any damage to stakeholders' confidence as a result of inaccurate or misleading information being released to resident members, staff, volunteers and to the public.
- Provides the Board with a system to ensure that when the organisation speaks publicly, it speaks with one voice.

Policy

External Communications

- The Board shall give authority to the Chairperson to be the official spokesperson for the organisation.
- The Chairperson may delegate this responsibility to a member of staff or a Board member for specific events.
- All press releases need to be approved in advance by the Chairperson.
- In circumstances where it is not appropriate for the Chairperson to be the spokesperson, for example, in a situation where there is an allegation of misconduct against the Chairperson, the Board will nominate another person to act as the spokesperson for the organisation.
- In the absence of such authority, board members shall refrain from communicating publicly, with the media or staff about any matters regarding the organisation and shall refer all such enquiries to the designated spokesperson(s).

Internal Communications

- The Board shall give authority to the manager to be the official spokesperson for the organisation in respect of formal communications to resident members and to DVI staff and volunteers.
- The Manager may delegate this responsibility to a member of staff or a Board member for specific events.
- Board members will not directly contact resident members, staff or volunteers in their official capacity as board members unless the contact has been deemed appropriate and has been approved by the Board.
- Members of the Audit & Finance Committee are permitted to directly contact Finance staff.

Staff and Volunteers may directly contact a board member to raise a concern under the Protected Disclosure Policy. Under the Protected Disclosure Policy, staff or volunteers who wish to raise a concern should raise it with one of the Designated Protection Officer.

If, under the circumstances, the staff member or volunteer does not feel comfortable about making a report directly to management, then they can report instead to the Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee

- In circumstances where it is not appropriate for the manager to issue a formal internal communication, for example, in a situation where there is an allegation of misconduct against the manager, the Board chairperson will act as the spokesperson for the organisation. If the chairperson is unavailable or it is not appropriate for the chairperson to act as a spokesperson for DVI, the board may give authority to another board member or management team member to act as DVI spokesperson.

Procedure

Formal Communications

- The Chairperson communicates on behalf of and represents the organisation.
- The Chairperson communicates on behalf of, and represents the Board of DVI.
- Individual board members refer all enquiries to the designated spokesperson. This applies to event invitations, media, public, management, staff and other stakeholder requests and communications.

Informal Communications

- Individual board members will inevitably and legitimately have informal communications with stakeholders, including staff members, of the organisation.
- In all these instances it is incumbent upon board members to be explicitly clear that they are communicating in a personal capacity.

Attendance at Events

The organisation may host events including those of a social, representational and business nature. At such events, board members are expected to exercise vigilance and tact, referring any sensitive matters to the designated spokesperson(s).

There may be instances when board members are requested to participate in other events by virtue of their association with the organisation, for example, a speaking engagement to a community or professional organisation. In these instances:

- The board member should advise the Chairperson of the request.
- The request will be considered and vetted jointly by the Chair of the Board and manager.
- The board member may be provided with generic speaking notes for the occasion.

- The board member will make it clear that he/she is not speaking on behalf of the organisation, rather in a personal capacity; and,
- The board member will provide the Chair of the Board a verbal debrief of the event.

Media Relations

The primary media spokesperson is the Chairperson.

In the interest of keeping board members abreast of issues involving the organisation, the Manager will ensure that they receive relevant media and other information on the organisation's activities and business.

In instances where the issues are high profile or contentious, the manager will ensure that board members receive appropriate questions and answers which provide the corporate position and key messages on an issue.

Board members will refer any requests for media interviews to the Chairperson or designated media spokesperson. In referring a media enquiry, board members should be mindful that:

- Media requests for information usually require a speedy response and should be handled on a priority basis.
- By referring the call to the Chairperson or designated spokesperson, board members provide a signal as to the limit of their authority; and,
- They should not talk "off the record".

Requests from the Public

Occasions may arise from whereby a board member is approached by an individual or organisation requesting a comment or communications response from the organisation. Under these circumstances, the request should be directed to the Chairperson.

Appendix I Application for Maternity Leave

Form for Employees taking Maternity & Additional Maternity Leave to Employees Taking Maternity Leave under the Maternity Protection Act, 1994 -2004
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Name of Employee: _____

e) Your maternity leave period will commence on _____ (date)

f) Your maternity leave period is due to end on _____ (date)

Taking Maternity Leave Only

g) If you do not plan to take additional maternity leave, you should notify in writing your intention to return to work after maternity leave either before taking leave or (4 weeks notification) not later than _____ (date)

Taking Additional Maternity Leave

h) If you intend taking additional maternity leave, as well as maternity leave, you are due to return to work on _____ (date)

i) You must notify in writing your intention to take additional maternity leave before taking maternity leave, or not later than _____ (date)

j) You must notify in writing your intention to return to work either before taking leave (4 weeks notification), or not later than _____ (date)

k) If for any reason as provided under the Maternity Protection Acts, 1994 and 2004 you will need to extend or shorten your maternity leave or additional maternity leave periods, you must notify in writing the new date of return to work and new dates will apply for the notifications agreed above. _____ (date)

If you are unable to make any of the written notifications yourself, you should make sure that someone else does so, on your behalf.

SIGNED: _____ (for DVI) DATE: _____

Appendix II Application for Force Majeure

Application for Force Majeure Leave

l) Name of Employee: _____

m) Address of Employee: _____

n) PPS Number: _____

Name and Address of Injured /member of the employee's family

Relationship to Employee: _____

Nature and details of injury / illness of family member involved:

Date(s) of Force Majeure Leave: _____

I confirm that I have taken Force Majeure Leave on the above-mentioned date(s) because of above urgent family reasons as shown above.

DECLARATION

I declare that the information given by me above is true, accurate and complete in all respects and I both understand and accept that if that is not the case, whether knowingly on my part or otherwise, following due investigation by Deaf Village Ireland, I may be denied Force Majeure Leave and/or liable to disciplinary action.

Signature of Employee: _____ Date: _____

Appendix III – Parental Leave application

To employees taking Parental Leave under the Parental Leave Act, 1998 as amended by the Parental Leave (Amendment) Act, 2006.

Name of Employee: _____

(a) Your parental leave period will commence on _____ (date)

(b) As the parent of _____ (name of child),

Born on _____ (date of birth) you are entitled to 14 weeks unpaid leave (parental leave) to enable you to take care

_____ (name of child).

(c) We have agreed that the leave will be taken as a continuous block of 14 weeks.

(d) Your paternal leave period is due to end on _____ (date)

SIGNED: _____ (for DVI) DATE: _____

SIGNED: _____ (employee) DATE: _____

(To be completed and signed in duplicate, a copy to be retained by DVI and a copy to be given to the employee)

Appendix IV - Carers Leave application

Confirmation of Carer's Leave

To be completed by Deaf Village Ireland and the employee, pursuant to Section 10(1) of the Act, not later than two weeks before the commencement of the Carer's leave concerned. The employee must give Deaf Village Ireland a copy of the decision of the deciding officer of the Department of Social and Family Affairs, that the care recipient is a relevant person for the purposes of Section 82A (1) (inserted by the Act of 2000) of Chapter 11A of Part II of the Social Welfare (Consolidation) Act, 1993, as soon as he/ she receives it. The applicant is not entitled to Carer's Leave until he/she has done so, under Section 6(2) (2) of the Act.

Name of Employee: _____

Address of Employee: _____

PPS Number: _____

Approved Date of Commencement of Carer's Leave: __/__/____ (Day/Month/Year)

Duration of Carer's Leave: _____ weeks

Manner in which leave is to be taken: _____

(Please provide a brief description)

Signed on behalf of Deaf Village Ireland: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Employee: _____ Date: _____