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Policy:	Stress Management Policy
Legal Requirements:	The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
Regulatory Standards:	<p>The Scottish Housing Regulator has set out Regulatory Standards for all Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to ensure that RSLs deliver good outcomes and services for its tenants and service users through good governance and financial management.</p> <p>This policy evidences that the following Regulatory Standards are being met:</p> <p>Standard 1. The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.</p> <p>Standard 2. The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.</p> <p>Standard 5. The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.</p>
Notifiable Events Guidance:	In compiling this policy, consideration has been given to the Notifiable Events Guidance issued by the Scottish Housing Regulator and the impact of that guidance on the policy.
Equality and Diversity:	<p>The Association is committed to Equal Opportunities and will endeavour to ensure that all services are carried out in an undiscriminating manner in line with the Association's Equality and Diversity Policy.</p> <p>In particular, the Association will not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment or sexual orientation.</p>
Human Rights:	<p>In compiling this policy, consideration has been given to "The Right to Adequate Housing" (Fact Sheet No. 21/Rev.1) published by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the impact of that guidance on the policy.</p> <p>In particular, the Association is satisfied that this policy promotes the key aspects of the right to adequate housing – that it contains freedoms; entitlements; provides more than four walls and a roof; and protects against forced evictions.</p>
Complaints:	Although the Association is committed to providing high levels of service, we accept that there may be occasions where customers may not be satisfied with the service they have received. The Association values all complaints and uses this information to improve the services that it provides. The Association's Complaints Policy describes our complaints handling procedure and how to make a complaint.
General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):	The Association will treat all customers' personal data in line with its obligations under the current data protection regulations and our Privacy Policy. Information regarding how data will be used and the basis for processing data is provided in the Association's Fair Processing Notice.
Policy Author:	Kevin Freeman



Policy Review:	In order to ensure that any change in circumstances is accommodated this policy will be subject to review every three years in the month of August.
Policy Approval:	This policy was last reviewed / approved by the Management Committee of Yoker Housing Association Limited at its meeting held on Thursday the 25th of August 2022.



Introduction

Yoker Housing Association Limited (the Association) is committed to reducing, and where possible, eliminating stress for its employees. Although stress in itself is not an illness, it can be a contributory factor in many conditions, and can cause both physical and mental illnesses.

Stress can result in the poor mental health of employees even if the effects are not severe enough to result in a medical diagnosis. The Association recognises the need to promote a culture of good mental and physical health in its duty of care under the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Background

Stress in the workplace is not new. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) introduced Stress Management Standards several years ago and implemented tools for managing stress in the workplace.

The Stress Management Standards cover six key areas:

- Demands
- Control
- Support
- Role
- Change
- Relationships

Full descriptions of the standards and typical behaviours which can be a sign of stress are available from the HSE website at www.hse.gov.uk. The Stress Management Standards are also detailed within the Association's Health & Safety Control Manual.

It is important to distinguish the difference between stress and pressure. In most work situations some pressure is healthy. However, stress is when a person experiences too much pressure and the effect of the pressure has a negative impact on the persons wellbeing.

Policy Aims

This aims of the Stress Management Policy are to:

- Promote a culture of mental and physical wellbeing;
- Increase the awareness of stress;
- Provide managers with a clear process to use should an employee report that they are experiencing symptoms of stress;
- Provide details of the proactive measures the Association will implement to help reduce and, where possible, eliminate stress and its causes.

Legal Framework

Although there is no specific legislation on stress the following are relevant through case law.

Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

Under section 2 (1) of the Act, employers have a duty to 'ensure, so far as is reasonably practical, the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees'.

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

The Regulations require employers to carry out a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the Health & Safety of its employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work.



Definitions

The following definitions will be applied in the context of this policy:

- **Stress:** The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure, or other types of demands placed on them.
- **Proactive measures:** These aim to prevent the harm caused by stress through taking appropriate preventative action before it occurs.
- **Reactive measures:** Actions which will respond to any stress related situation to minimise harm once it has occurred, and to assist in preventing such situations from re-occurring.

Confidentiality

The Association will ensure that employees experiencing stress are dealt with in the strictest of confidence. The organisation will treat your personal data in line with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and its own policy Privacy Policy. Information regarding how employee's data will be used, and the basis for processing their data, is provided within the Association's Employee Fair Processing Notice.

Line Manager Responsibilities

Line managers play a key role in managing stress within the workplace. To ensure that the Stress Management Policy works in practice, it is vital that line managers have a thorough understanding of:

- What stress is;
- The causes of stress; and
- How to recognise the early signs of stress.

Line manager's responsibilities include:

- Attending stress awareness training;
- Being aware of the signs of stress and intervene where necessary;
- Promoting the organisations culture of a physically and mentally healthy organisation;
- Managing staff effectively to minimise work related stress;
- Where issues of stress arise, intervening as early as possible;
- Ensuring staff contribute to the organisation's stress questionnaires when necessary; and
- Taking steps to assist employees maintain a state of good mental health (e.g. encourage rest breaks, fresh air, and holidays).

Employee Responsibilities

Employee responsibilities include:

- Raising any stress related concerns they may have at the earliest opportunity;
- Participating in the Association's measures to assist in reducing or eliminating stress;
- Be aware of the HSE Risk Management standards and the signs of stress; and
- Raising concerns they may have for their colleagues in regards to stress with a line manager.

Managing Stress

Proactive Measures

To support the organisation's commitment in reducing the risk of stress occurring, the Association will ensure that the following initiatives will be implemented and adopted:

- **Managers Training:** The Association will ensure that line managers undertake stress awareness training and subsequent refreshers at appropriate intervals.
- **Stress Risk Assessments:** The Association will commit to conducting a stress assessment amongst staff on a periodic basis. This will assist in identifying any 'at risk' areas within the organisation.



Managing Stress (continued)

Proactive Measures (continued)

- **Analysing Information:** The Association will review appropriate data (e.g. absence, employee concerns, employee questionnaires to identify areas where stress is or could be a risk).
- **Promoting the Wellbeing of Employees:** The Association is committed to facilitating a culture of promoting physical and mental health in the following ways:
 - Ensure that staff take any allocated breaks.
 - Manage staff holidays entitlement in order that leave is taken throughout the year at reasonable intervals.
 - Promote the benefits of physical activity for both physical and mental health.
 - Ensure that staff are not working excessive hours on a regular and prolonged basis.
 - Where possible, and appropriate, provide opportunities for employees to be active throughout their working day.

Reactive Measures

Stress is a very individualised condition and, as a result, it is unfortunate that even with the above measures being put in place, some employees may still find themselves experiencing a stressful period in their lives. This may be caused by work or personal circumstances, or a combination of both.

- **Managing Individual Stress Concerns:** The following details the process that will be adopted by the Association should an employee raise concerns of stress:
 - The line manager becomes aware that an employee is experiencing stress;
 - The line manager should arrange to meet with the staff member within three days to discuss the issues;
 - The line manager will issue the employee with a stress questionnaire (Appendix 1) to complete;
 - The employee will complete the questionnaire and return this to the line manager;
 - A second meeting will be arranged to discuss the questionnaire, ways of managing the issues and any support or interim arrangements that may assist in the employee's recovery;
 - If appropriate the employee may be referred to an occupational health specialist, counselling service or any other appropriate service.
 - During the meeting an action plan will be developed to summarise discussions and lay out what actions will be taken by the organisation, line manager and employee.
 - If the employee is absent as a result of stress, the absence will continue to be managed in line with the Association's absence management procedures. In addition, the employee will be issued with the stress questionnaire and asked to complete this.

If the employee's line manager is a contributing factor to the employee's stress, another appropriate manager (e.g. a manager at more senior level will conduct the meetings).

If it is identified that the stress is being caused by another employee, then appropriate investigations may be required.

If through discussions with an employee a line manager becomes aware of a stress risk, they will be required to raise this in the appropriate way to ensure it is addressed at an organisational level. This will be done while maintaining the employee's confidentiality.

Occupational Health

If it is considered appropriate an employee may be referred to an occupational health specialist to help identify any actions that could be taken to assist the employee.



Appendix 1 - Individual Employee Stress Questionnaire

You have been given this questionnaire to complete as it has been highlighted to your line manager that you are or may be feeling stressed. The purpose of this questionnaire is for you to identify what factors may be contributing to you feeling stressed, and for you to think about, and detail what you feel would help you manage your current situation. Once you have completed the form, please return it to your line manager who will then arrange a meeting with you to discuss your stressors and what support may be available. If, due to the circumstances it would be better to discuss your current situation with an alternative manager this can be arranged.

Section 1 - Stressors

Please list the factors that you feel are contributing to you feeling stressed, once you have done this, please rank them from 1-10 with 10 having the biggest impact on you and 1 the least. The factors detailed may be within or out with the workplace.

Stressor	Stress Factor Rating (1-10)
Workplace factors – e.g. Workload / working relationships / work / balance	
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5

10

15



Section 2 – Moving Forward

Moving forward taking each stressor in turn please complete the below section prior to the meeting. Section 3 & 4 will be completed at the meeting with your line manager.

5

Stressor 1 – Outline the background
How do you see the situation being resolved
Stressor 2 – Outline the background
How do you see the situation being resolved
Stressor 3 – Outline the background
How do you see the situation being resolved



Section 3 – Agreed Actions

Agreed Actions

Section 4 – Review Date

This section will be completed with your line manager.

Review Date

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Line Manager Signature: _____ Date: _____