



Employee Handbook - General

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1. Introduction

Welcome to Assured Optimal Care. We take great pride in our organisation and the dedicated team we've assembled to make a positive impact on the lives of our service users. Our staff play a crucial role, and we understand that they are one of our most valuable assets. We are committed to leveraging staff skill and compassion to ensure exceptional outcomes, not just for our organisation, but, more importantly, for the people using our services. Our mission is to contribute to the well-being of those we care for, fostering growth and lasting success through a focus on making a meaningful difference in people's lives and meeting their specific needs.

In order for us to continue providing our customers with the highest quality standards of service and best value for money, it is essential that we all share a common philosophy in the way we approach and perform our individual and collective duties and responsibilities.

We will ask nothing of you that we would not ask of any member of staff. Primarily, we would ask all of our employees for loyalty, honesty, commitment to delivering a high-quality service and hard work. Each of us has an important part to play and all of us are



reliant upon one another making a full contribution towards generating a harmonious and efficient working environment.

We set out in this handbook, the policies and procedures, by which we have attained our present status and with which we will seek to pursue our commitment to maximise and develop the potential of all our staff, whilst maintaining lasting and mutually beneficial working relationships.

We sincerely hope that you will enjoy a long and fruitful career with us. Please read this handbook carefully and address any queries that you might have to the Registered Manager.

Our Background

Assured Optimal Care has a specific aim of providing quality care services at competitive rates. We are committed to providing service users with qualified, experienced and reliable carers.

Our core values revolve around privacy and dignity, respect, teamwork, commitment and honesty. We prioritise consistent staffing and strong leadership to ensure the unique needs and preferences of our service users are met. Our commitment is to provide high-quality, safe, personalised and professionalised care that contributes to the overall positive well-being of a person using our services.

You, Your Contribution and Our Promise to You

As part of the Care team, you are a key member of our organisation. It is through your commitment and expertise that vulnerable people can continue their lives with maximum dignity and independence. We would like you to have the freedom to respond to the wishes of service users. However, it is important to always recognise that you have a professional relationship with service users and it is always best to check out unusual requests with your supervisor or manager.

In your capacity as **Care Worker** you have to negotiate a delicate balance between being a friend to the service user and the professional context in which you work. You should always be aware that you support your service user in a professional and paid capacity. This will mean that you should engage in activities with service users in a reflective manner. It will be important for you as an individual worker to be able to discern when you may be crossing the boundary of professional good practice. This is not easy. We recommend that you talk to your supervisor or manager in charge if you have any doubts in this area.



You should always act in such a way as to promote and safeguard the wellbeing and interests of service users. You should also avoid any action that might bring Assured Optimal Care into disrepute or diminish the public's confidence in Assured Optimal Care. More particularly, you must act with honesty, integrity and respect for a service user's property and residence.

Workers should at all times safeguard the wellbeing of the service user, themselves and their colleagues. When visiting new places or premises other than Assured Optimal Care, carrying out new procedures, or using new materials or equipment, a risk assessment must be carried out. If in doubt as to whether a risk assessment has been carried out, the worker must discuss the matter with the Registered Manager, **Mr. Kirby Castillon**. The Manager will, where an assessment has already been carried out, inform the worker of the identified risks and the methods of controlling those risks. Where a risk assessment has not been carried out, the Manager will either prohibit the un-assessed activity or carry out a risk assessment and inform the worker of the identified risks and the methods of controlling those risks.

When working within the team, employees should act professionally towards colleagues and other social care professionals and indeed all concerned with the service user's wellbeing. When care workers feel that another worker is acting in such a way as to threaten the wellbeing of a service user they should discuss the matter with the person in charge.

Under the Health and Social Care Act 2008, you are required to comply with the Code of Conduct for Healthcare Support Workers and Adult Social Care Workers, set out by Skills for Care. A copy of the Code has been issued to you on your employment.

In addition to the industry Code of Practice, the following rules must also be observed.

When you are out on a domiciliary assignment, you must remember that you are a guest in a service user's home. When visiting the service user, ensure you do the following:

- Always ask how they want to be addressed, i.e. first name, Mr/Mrs, etc
- Always knock or ring the doorbell and announce your arrival before entering the person's home
- Always respect service users' privacy and wishes and respond flexibly to their needs and preferences, where possible
- Arrive on time, consistently and reliably
- Never bring unauthorised persons into the service user's home (e.g. children, friends, pets)



- Never visit service users outside of their contracted working hours
- Never use a service user's telephone personal calls - they can only be used for logging in and out purposes
- Never give out your personal phone number, address or contact details.

When a carer receives a complaint from a service user, they should inform the service user of Assured Optimal Care's Complaints Procedure and notify the Registered Manager immediately.

Employees have a responsibility to report to their manager with regard to any marked change in the physical, behavioural or social condition of the service user; to any perceived lack of resources, help or advice; or to any action by persons or organisations which may be harmful to the service user.

Employees should not under any circumstances act as signatories to the wills, lasting powers of attorneys or similar legal documents of service users, or be beneficiaries of service users' wills, nor should they accept gifts of any kind, except with the expressed authority of the Registered Manager.

We are committed to providing you with training and regular supervision. In the context of regular supervision, we believe that you will grow in your understanding of how best to support your individual service users.

Your Role

Your job role is extremely valuable, and we acknowledge that it takes dedication and commitment. As someone working in care, you must remember that:

- Everyone is an individual with individual needs
- Everyone has led a life that is at least as full and interesting as your own
- Everyone has a right to privacy, dignity and informed choice
- Service users do and should expect to be treated respectfully and provided with good service.

Care is about using warmth, knowledge, understanding and skill to help and assist another person. The goals of a care service must relate to the activities of daily living. Therefore, our care aims are that we must:

- Provide assistance to service users, tailoring their care to the needs in their care



- plan, which will be dependent on differing abilities and strengths
- Assist an individual to acquire, maintain or restore maximum independence with respect to the activities of daily living
- Help the individual to undertake preventative activities in order to avoid ill health.

In your role as a **Care Worker**, you will be involved in numerous relationships with a wide range of people. These will include the service user, members of their family, colleagues, and other professionals. At times you may develop very close relationships with service users and their families. However, always remember that this is a purely professional relationship, and its purpose is to support and maintain the service user. The quality of your relationship with the service user impacts how effective you will be in caring for them.

Be aware of your own skills and capabilities, and do not carry out tasks if you do not feel sufficiently confident or competent to complete them.

2. Commencing Work

Confirmation of Employment

Before starting work, you will have been interviewed and received a formal offer of employment providing some basic details of your job, pay, hours etc. We cannot incorporate all employment conditions in this offer, and we shall therefore also issue you with a statement of Terms and Conditions within the first eight weeks of your employment. This document, together with your contract and other details within this handbook, covers all the conditions of employment applicable to you in this position. You have been provided with a job description of the role to which you have been appointed, but amendments may be made to your job description from time to time in relation to our changing needs and your own abilities.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS Checks)

Under the provisions of the Health and Social Care Act 2008, and because you will be working with vulnerable people, you have been asked to authorise us to check your status on the register of persons considered to be unsuitable for employment with vulnerable people (the “DBS” check) and to carry out a criminal record check on you. You have given us the authorisation on the application form, and your employment is conditional on satisfactory information being received. You may not be employed until and unless we receive a satisfactory response in respect of the DBS check. Should the information with regard to criminal records checks indicate that, in the opinion of the



Registered Provider, you should not be working with vulnerable people, your employment will be terminated with immediate effect. During the time before your criminal record check is received and judged to be satisfactory, you may not commence working with service users on your own.

Personal Details

Please keep us informed of any changes in your personal circumstances or details (e.g. new address, telephone number, next of kin). It is important that we keep such information up to date in order to make contact with you whenever appropriate.

Probationary Employment

You will join us on an initial probationary period of 6 **[six months]**. During this period, your work performance and general suitability will be assessed and if it is satisfactory, your employment will continue. However, if your work is not up to the required standard, and/or if you are considered to be generally unsuitable, we may either take remedial action or terminate your employment without recourse to the capability procedure or, in cases relating to a matter of conduct, the disciplinary procedure.

At the end of your probationary period, you will again be assessed and, if satisfactory, you will become a member of our regular staff. If you have not reached the required standard, we may either extend the probationary period in order that remedial action can be taken or terminate your employment without recourse to the capability or disciplinary procedure. Should you fail to improve even during the extended probationary period, your employment will be terminated without recourse to the capability or disciplinary procedure.

Job Description

Your job description will have been issued to you together with your job start forms. You are required to perform the duties listed in your job description to the best of your ability and with reasonable care and diligence. Where necessary, you should also be willing to take on additional responsibilities which are not explicitly listed in your job description, provided you are properly qualified and authorised to do so. To reflect the changing needs of the business, we may make official adjustments to your job description from time to time. You will be fully informed of any such changes.

Flexibility



It is an essential condition of your employment that you are prepared to adopt a flexible approach to your work pattern and, if it is deemed necessary, carry out alternative duties in other departments. We are dependent on this flexibility, not only to allow us to adapt to the changing nature and volume of work, but to protect the future of the business and its employees.

Providing you have worked with us for a continuous period of 26 weeks or more, you have a right to ask your Assured Optimal Care manager to consider proposals for flexible working hours. However, whilst we will consider any flexible working request properly, any such request will be considered against the needs of the business and, depending on those needs, we may have to decline any request you make.

Assured Optimal Care's Flexible Working Policy and procedure is available upon request.

Mobility

Your normal place of work is specified in your Terms and Conditions of employment. However, it is a condition of your employment that you will be willing, given reasonable notice, to transfer to any other site on which we operate (temporarily or permanently), if this is deemed necessary and within reasonable travelling distance. Worker mobility is essential to the efficient operation of our business, and you will be fully consulted prior to any such transfer.

Equal Opportunities

Assured Optimal Care recognises that discrimination of any form is unacceptable in the workplace and, in many cases, unlawful. We have therefore adopted an official Equality and Diversity Policy and procedure to prevent discriminatory treatment or behaviour. At the commencement of your employment, you will have completed the equal opportunities monitoring form which Assured Optimal Care requires to demonstrate our compliance with anti-discrimination legislation and ensure that all staff and applicants are treated fairly and without bias or prejudice. We are committed to applying this policy throughout all areas of employment including recruitment and selection, training, development and promotion. In all situations, people will be judged solely on merit. Any breach of our equality, diversity and anti-discrimination policies will lead to disciplinary action, which may include dismissal.

Assured Optimal Care's Equality and Diversity Policy is available from the office upon request.

Harassment



Similarly, Assured Optimal Care recognises that any form of harassment in the workplace is unacceptable and, in many cases, unlawful. We are committed to ensuring that we are able to provide a working environment that is harmonious and accepting of all individuals. See our *Harassment Policy*.

Private Work for Service Users (Moonlighting)

Assured Optimal Care employees conducting private work for service users is a serious and disciplinary matter and will in most cases be regarded as financial abuse. It should not happen in any circumstance and staff will not be insured. See our *Moonlighting Policy*.

3. During Your Employment

The previous section dealt with aspects of your early employment. We now wish to draw your attention to certain aspects that will apply during the course of your employment:

Working Standards

The management of Assured Optimal Care and many of our working practices are set out in our care quality management system. A copy of this system is made available to you at all times and will be shown to you during your induction. It is a fundamental part of your contract of employment that you familiarise yourself with this system as soon as is reasonably practicable, that you abide by the policies and procedures contained within it at all times, that you do not change, remove, or add to any of the documentation without the authorisation of the Registered Manager, and that you do not use unauthorised documentation (i.e. documentation which does not have the standard format used by the Assured Optimal Care system which denotes that the document is a part of the authorised system). Any existence or use of unauthorised documentation must be reported to the Registered Manager immediately.

Criminal Records

On appointment, you will have undergone a criminal record check and DBS check, as you were informed during your interview. You are reminded that it is a term of your contract of employment to confirm on your application form that you will immediately inform your employer if your criminal status changes in any way, including any new



warnings, cautions or convictions, or referral to a register of barred Care workers.

Training: Induction & Ongoing

All employees are entitled to a minimum of three paid days per year of training, the official description of which includes in-house training, staff meetings and supervision sessions.

All employees must undergo induction training. You will be expected to work through Assured Optimal Care's induction training programme at a reasonable speed, and within the standards laid down in the Health and Social Care Act 2008. This process will begin on your first day when you will be given more details on the training process. If you feel that you can progress faster than the material and experience which is being presented to you, please speak to your manager. Please see our *Induction Training Policy*.

As your employment progresses, your skills may be extended to encompass new job activities within the home and organisation. Notices will be displayed in your staff room indicating various training topics. Certain training events are compulsory; the notice identifies these and payment for attendance will be received. Other training programmes will be on a voluntary basis and the notice indicates these. For further details relating to booking training sessions, please see the Staff Training and Development Policy. Failure to attend mandatory training could result in disciplinary action.

You are reminded that, in order Assured Optimal Care to satisfy its obligations under the Health and Social Care Act 2008, you are employed subject to certain contractual requirements with regard to training and qualifications, which are detailed in your Statement of Terms and Conditions and the *Staff Training and Development Policy*.

Supervisions & Appraisals

We are committed to providing you with regular supervision and appraisal. In the context of regular supervision, we believe that you will grow in your understanding of how best to support your individual service users.

Supervision takes the form of regular contact between a supervisor and an employee or volunteer when the employee's performance and practices are monitored and reviewed, and at which the supervisor is able to provide guidance and support and identify areas of work that need development or improvement. Formal supervision is the regular, planned, private, one to one meetings, on an on- going basis between a member of staff and the supervisor. Informal supervision consists of informal discussions and decisions about work issues, challenges, or new information that arise, and may take place in group meetings or informal discussions.



Appraisal is the evaluation process that follows the monitoring of practice and performance. It allows job and individual development objectives and plans, with milestones, to be agreed for ongoing review through supervision.

4. Pay & Benefits

Wages & Salaries

Your Terms and Conditions of employment will indicate your rate of pay and the frequency and method of payment. You will be issued with a pay statement indicating how your gross pay has been calculated, and the deductions that have been made for National Insurance, Income Tax etc.

Your rate of pay will generally be on an **hourly** basis, payable **monthly** in arrears by BACS payment.

Please bear in mind that certain banks' and building societies' clearing systems may result in payments being delayed by a couple of days. It is your choice which bank or building society you choose to have payments sent to. Assured Optimal Care cannot be held responsible for a delay that is due to your personal banking arrangements.

If you encounter any issues with your pay (e.g. under/overpayment, incorrect deductions, etc.) you should first report the issue to your line manager. Please note that in the event of an overpayment, the excess payment will normally be deducted in full from your next payment. You will be given advance warning of any such deduction, and any individual hardship will be taken into account and may result in repayment over a longer period.

Hours of Work

Your Terms and Conditions of employment will also refer to your normal weekly hours.

It is a condition of your employment that you may be requested to work additional hours (up to a maximum of 48 hours per week) as authorised and as required by the needs of the business. Under the Working Time Regulations, you are not legally obligated to work more than an average of 48 hours per week, but you may volunteer to work in excess of this average if there is a need. Where we are likely to need you for more than your



normal weekly hours, we shall ask you if you wish to make a written declaration to waive your Working Time rights. This is your choice and you are under no obligation to do so.

For further guidance about your working hours, ask your manager.

Tax Year

The tax year changes over in the first week of April each year. Following the end of the tax year, we will issue a P60 Form indicating the total pay you have received over the previous tax year and the relevant deductions that have been made for National Insurance and Income Tax. The P60 Form is issued as a legal requirement for Assured Optimal Care, and we are unable to provide duplicate copies. Please ensure that you retain this document in a secure location.

HM Revenue and Customs will notify us (via a P6) automatically of any necessary Tax code changes which need to be applied to your pay. If you believe your Tax code is incorrect and you have received notification from HMRC to support this belief, please contact a member of the payroll team. You will also need to provide us with a scanned copy of your notification for us to follow up directly with HMRC to obtain confirmation from them that we are able to use the code that you have supplied to us. If you have any queries with regards to your tax please contact HMRC directly on 0300 200 3200.

Tax Returns

As appropriate to your individual contractual circumstances, Assured Optimal Care may have to complete a CT600 form to recover tax paid upon expenses incurred in the course of business. You must collate correctly all receipts which must then be submitted sufficiently early to Assured Optimal Care before the tax return becomes due to the Inland Revenue.

State Pension Scheme

As we do not operate a separate pension scheme, you will be automatically contracted into the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme unless you elect to contract out and take out a private personal pension plan. We do not hold a contracting-out certificate.

Stakeholder &/or Auto-Enrolment Pension Scheme



Where we have reached our staging date for pension auto-enrolment, eligible employees will be automatically enrolled into the pension scheme used by Assured Optimal Care for pension auto-enrolment. You have a right to opt out and full details of the pension scheme and/or your eligibility and rights will be provided to you upon commencement of your employment or during employment if later.

If you require information on the stakeholder or pension auto-enrolment scheme at any other time, please contact the administration.

Business Expenses

We will reimburse you for authorised and legitimate expenditures reasonably incurred by you during the proper performance of your duties (e.g. travel, accommodation and other pre-agreed out-of-pocket expenses). You will be required to complete an expenses claim form and support such a claim by submitting valid receipts.

5. Leave, Holiday & Absence

Holiday Entitlement

You are entitled to 5.6 weeks' paid annual leave according to the statutory minimum as provided by the Working Time Regulations from time to time. You must give us as much notice as possible for your requested leave dates and should not make any solid holiday plans or bookings until your request has been approved. Assured Optimal Care reserves the right to refuse requested leave on specific dates if your absence on those dates is deemed likely to significantly impact business operations. In these cases, we will work with you to arrange your leave at an alternative date that is suitable for both you and the company. Full information on your holiday entitlement can be found in our *Annual Holidays Policy*.

Additional Time Off Work

We recognise that there will be occasions when you will request time off for medical appointments or certain personal/domestic reasons. Every effort should be made to arrange these appointments outside your normal working hours in the first instance. If that is not possible, appointments should be arranged to minimise disruption to your working day and you should follow the procedures in the appropriate leave policy.

Notification of Absence



If you cannot attend work due to sickness, illness or injury, you must notify Assured Optimal Care by phone or email as soon as possible and on the morning of the day of absence at the latest.

Full information on taking sick days and sick pay can be found in our *Sickness and Absence Policy*. Please read this Policy carefully as failure to comply with the procedures could lead to disciplinary action.

Maternity/Paternity, Adoption & Parental Leave

Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Parental statutory regulations are somewhat complicated in relation to the calculation of individual benefits and leave, which are based on your length of service and average earnings. You will receive specific advice and guidance from us about your entitlements should you qualify for any of these conditions.

Recent legislation has extended the employment protection afforded to pregnant or expectant employees and care should be taken to distinguish the qualifications for Statutory Maternity/Paternity Pay (SMP/SPP) from those relating to Maternity or Paternity Leave.

Adoption Leave may be taken by an employee when a child under 18 is placed with them for adoption, providing they meet certain eligibility criteria. In most cases, the adopter will also qualify for Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP).

Shared Parental Leave allows a mother or adoptive parent to share their maternity or adoptive leave entitlement with their partner including any entitlement to statutory pay (e.g. SMP, SPP, SAP).

For more information on these types of leave, please refer to our Policies on Maternity, Paternity Leave, Adoption and Shared Parental Leave, available from the office upon request.

Retirement

An employee who decides to retire should provide written notice to their line manager in accordance with the terms of their contract of employment. Upon receipt of this notice the manager will arrange to meet with the employee to discuss preparation for retirement and, where relevant, occupational pension provision.

Employees may, however, notify the service up to three years before the time they



intend to retire of their intentions and are encouraged to do so. This early notification will allow the employer to offer the employee certain pre-retirement options and benefits (see *Retirement Policy*). Employees who indicate an intention to retire in the future will not be held to any such statement of intention until such time as they have given formal notice (as required by their contracts) to terminate their employment.

6. General Rules and Regulations

Accepting Work

Be aware that your attitude and behaviour will affect the people you are serving. If you accept a shift, you are expected to honour that shift. Last-minute cancellations, except where unavoidable (i.e. in emergencies), are not acceptable and can lead to disciplinary action.

If you are unable to attend a shift, you must give us as much notice as possible, and a minimum of **12 hours**, if you were looking to change a weekly rota, you may need to give a little more notice of this, 24 hours at least so that the coordinators can find appropriate cover. If you do not turn up for your shift and do not let us know, this is a disciplinary offence and will be dealt with via the disciplinary procedure. Your reliability is vital. Cancellations, poor reliability and regular late attendance all lead to disciplinary action and possibly dismissal.

In exceptional circumstances (e.g. a sudden emergency which prevented you from giving sufficient notice), you will subsequently be required to provide proof of or confirmation that the situation was unavoidable. If you fail to provide sufficient justification for the cancellation, you will be subject to disciplinary action.

Identification Badges

As an Assured Optimal Care employee, you must always wear an identification badge when representing the company. You should report lost or stolen identification badges immediately to the manager.

Car Insurance

You are not insured by Assured Optimal Care when using your own vehicle during working hours and Assured Optimal Care accepts no liability for any damage or accidents suffered by you when using your own vehicle. If a service user requests that



you take them somewhere in your own vehicle, you should refuse.

You are responsible for ensuring the vehicle you use to travel to, from or during work. The type of insurance you need differs depending on how you use your car.

Mobile Telephones and Driving

To ensure compliance with current legislation, all care workers should adhere to the following rules:

- Never make or receive calls when driving (except using a built-in handsfree mode)
- Never make or receive personal calls in the service user's home (unless in an emergency)
- Only check for messages or answer calls when you are safely parked, and the engine is off.

Personal Property, Loss & Damage

Please avoid bringing any valuable personal property to work and never leave any valuables unattended or overnight. We cannot accept liability for any losses or damage to employees' personal items on company premises or service users' property.

All items of lost property should immediately be reported to the manager. Similarly, any unidentified items should be handed to the same person whilst attempts are made to discover ownership.

The following provision is an express written term of your contract of employment:

- Any damage to vehicles, stock or property (including non-statutory safety equipment) that is the result of your carelessness, negligence or deliberate vandalism will render you liable to pay the full or part of the cost of repair or replacement
- Any loss to us that is the result of your failure to observe rules, procedures or instruction, or is as a result of your negligent behaviour or your unsatisfactory standards of work will render you liable to reimburse us the full or part of the cost of the loss



- In the event of failure to pay, we have the contractual right to deduct such costs from your pay.

Personal Correspondence

Such calls are only allowed in the case of emergency and with the prior permission of management. Please remember that Assured Optimal Care's telephones are provided solely for business use and abuse will not be tolerated. Personal mobile phones should be switched off during working hours.

Just as we ask you not to make personal calls while on duty, we discourage your friends and family from contacting you either remotely or in person while you are at work, except in the case of an emergency. Please inform your personal contacts of your working hours and ask them to refrain from calling or messaging you during those hours.

Employees' private mail should not be sent to any Assured Optimal Care or service users' address. No private mail may be posted at the company's expense, except in those cases where a formal recharge arrangement has been made.

Buying or Selling of Products

You are not allowed to buy or sell any goods or services on your own behalf on our premises or during working hours.

Political & Religious Activities

Although we have no political or religious bias, we are not prepared to allow you to arrange any political or religious events including campaigns, demonstrations or ceremonies on our premises without our express permission.

If your religion requires you to take part in certain practices (e.g. prayer) at specific times of day, Assured Optimal Care is obligated under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate this. You must notify Assured Optimal Care as soon as possible after your offer of employment of any workplace or hours adjustments you may reasonably require so that we have time to make suitable arrangements.

Uniforms & Appearance



We will provide you with a company uniform where needed. Uniforms should only be worn for work and not outside working hours or off authorised premises. All uniforms must be returned to us on leaving our employment. Where uniforms are not returned in reasonable condition, you may be charged to cover the cost of replacement.

Whether or not you wear a uniform, you must always keep your clothes clean and tidy and you should always appear presentable. Please make sure that your hair is clean and tidy. Long hair must be secured neatly so as not to pose an infection or safety hazard. You are advised to keep jewellery to a minimum, as overuse of jewellery can constitute a health hazard. The wearing of rings and watches increases the number of bacteria on hands and effective hand washing is difficult to achieve if watches and rings are not removed. We advise that wedding rings and small plain earrings should only be worn. Fob watches should be worn in preference to wristwatches. Avoid false/long nails as longer fingernails can harbour more dirt and bacteria than short nails, thus potentially contributing to the spread of infection. Please see our *Dress Code Policy*.

Smoking, Alcohol & Drugs

Assured Optimal Care is a no-smoking establishment. Any form of smoking, vaping or using e-cigarettes is NOT permitted on company premises.

Workers are also strictly prohibited from drinking alcohol or using any illicit drugs or recreational substances on company premises, during working hours, or before or after work when in company uniform. This is a zero-tolerance policy and any failure to comply will lead to disciplinary action and possibly dismissal. Please see Assured Optimal Care's *Alcohol and Drug Misuse Policy*.

Attendance & Timekeeping

Good timekeeping and punctuality on behalf of care workers are paramount in the lives of our service users. You must make every effort to stay organised and attend all your assignments on time. If you are running late to work you must inform your supervisor, line manager or Registered Manager as soon as possible. We also request that you notify us as far in advance as possible about any intended absence due to sickness. This is critical as it allows us to sensitively and proficiently replace you if you give us the maximum amount of notice.

Staff that are absent or late without notifying the person in charge/Registered Manager or who have frequently poor attendance may be subject to disciplinary action.

Record of Attendance



We operate a signing-in/signing-out system for staff. This enables us to confirm staff attendance and working times. We rely on our attendance records for calculating wages and invoicing. It is therefore important for both you and the company that you sign in and out properly every day. Failure to do so may result in non-payment of money due to you. Promptly fill up the timesheets and send photocopy to timesheets@aoc-ltd.co.uk.

Handling Service User's Money

Assured Optimal Care operates strict rules in relation to the handling of service users' money, all transactions involving people's money are transparent and clearly recorded. If, during the course of your work, you are required to handle a service user's money in any way, you must follow Assured Optimal Care's *Handling The Money Of Service Users Policy* and the specific instructions laid down in the service user's care plan.

Gifts & Service Users' Wills

Employees should not under any circumstances act as signatories to the wills, lasting powers of attorneys or similar legal documents of service users, or be beneficiaries of service users' wills, nor should they accept gifts of any kind except with the expressed authority of the Registered Manager.

Information about Service Users

Information about each service user is recorded in their care plan. If you are attending a service user for the first time, please make yourself familiar with their needs by reading their care plan in advance. If you have any doubts, contact the person in charge or Registered Manager. All information about service users must be kept within the company and treated with the utmost confidentiality in accordance with our Confidentiality Policy.

On each occasion when you attend to the service user, you should record brief details of duties carried out and general information regarding the service user's situation on the daily living sheets. Please also use the daily living sheet to leave useful notes or information for the next carer on duty with that service user, or as a reminder for your future self. You will need to know if the service user has completed a Priority of Care document with any other professional (e.g. district nurse or GP) to enable you to meet the service user's needs.

Our Confidentiality of Service Users' Information Policy is available upon request.

Record-keeping



Record keeping is a professional requirement of all Workers. Failure to maintain a record would cause considerable difficulties in respect of any legal proceedings, e.g. allegations of negligence. Information is essential to the delivery of high quality evidence-based care on a day-to-day basis. Records are a valuable resource and can facilitate decision making, improved care and clear communication.

However, a record is only of use if it is correctly recorded in the first place, regularly updated, and easily accessible when it is needed. Everyone working in care that records, handles, stores, or otherwise comes across information, has a personal common law duty of confidence to comply with this. All records should be kept confidential in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Under the Data Protection Act 2018, individuals have a right to access personal data that relates to them. This right of access may include a right to request access to records (in whole or in part) relating to suspicions or allegations of abuse involving the person making the request. All such requests will be handled according to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Parking

Private vehicles parked on or around our premises are left there at the owner's risk and we accept no liability for any damage caused to such vehicles. Employees' cars must be parked in the furthest available spaces from the main entrance to allow visitors to use the nearer spaces.

Housekeeping

For health & safety reasons and to maximise efficiency, employees must keep their individual work areas clean and tidy at all times. It is your responsibility to manage your space and clean up after yourself.

Protective Clothing or Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Wherever protective clothing or equipment is issued to you, this is for your own protection, and you are required to wear/use the items provided at the appropriate times.

Remember that you have a responsibility for your own health & safety as well as that of others, and you must exercise this responsibility carefully, both through your conduct and in the proper maintenance and care of such clothing or equipment. Please see our *Health & Safety and Personal Protective Equipment Policies*.



Infection Control and Contagious Illness

To avoid the spread of infections and protect the health and safety of all our staff and service users, you are required to follow Assured Optimal Care's hygiene and infection control procedures at all times. This includes proper hand washing and disinfecting procedures.

As a care service, we often work with individuals who may be especially vulnerable or susceptible to infections or illness. If you are suffering from any contagious illness, however minor, you must not report for work without written clearance from your GP. All sickness absences must be reported to Assured Optimal Care in advance as outlined in the Sickness and Absence Policy. If in any doubt, please play it safe, notify us and consult your doctor.

Our Infection Control, Hand Washing and related Policies are available upon request.

Protecting Staff from Disrespectful and Abusive Behaviour

Assured Optimal Care's default position is that its staff should always be treated courteously and with respect for the work they are doing. They should not be subject to abusive behaviour in any form, which includes:

- rude, disrespectful and offensive behaviour, including derogatory remarks and disruptive acts amounting to verbal and emotional abuse
- sexually inappropriate comments and behaviour
- racist and discriminatory abuse
- threats of physical violence
- aggressive and violent behaviour.

Staff should be safe at work and should not be exposed to undue or unreasonable risk. We believe that staff must work safely, free from the threat of injury or distress from the abusive behaviour of others. We will not tolerate abuse in any shape or form and will investigate all reported or observed incidents of staff being subject to disrespectful behaviour or abuse.



Physical attacks on staff at work are, fortunately, very rare and Assured Optimal Care does all it can to minimise this risk to ensure that staff are as safe as possible. Verbal abuse is more common and can cause considerable emotional distress. The service recognises that its staff could be subject to some form of abuse at any time and recognises its duty to ensure that staff are properly trained and supported to deal with any incident. Please see our *Disrespectful Behaviour And Abuse Staff Policy*.

7. Security

Confidentiality

This section on Confidentiality is an express term and condition of your employment with us.

- You must not disclose to any third party, during or after your employment, any information of a confidential nature relating to Assured Optimal Care or any of its associated companies, their business or service users and employees in respect of which Assured Optimal Care owes an obligation of confidence. This is a legal requirement.
- You must not remove any documents or tangible items which belong to Assured Optimal Care or which contain any confidential information from Assured Optimal Care premises at any time without proper advance authorisation.
- You must return to Assured Optimal Care upon request and, in any event, upon the termination of your employment, all documents and tangible items which belong to Assured Optimal Care or which contain or refer to any confidential information and which are in your possession or under your control.
- You must, if requested by Assured Optimal Care delete all confidential information from any reusable material and destroy all other documents and tangible items which contain or refer to any confidential information and which are in your possession or under your control.

Please see our *Confidentiality Policy* for more information.

Personal Safety Whilst Travelling in the Community



To ensure your own safety travelling between assignments, please always follow the procedures in Assured Optimal Care's *Lone Working Policy* (available on request). Make sure you attend each care assignment on the designated day and time. This ensures that the office staff and coordinators always know where you are and your estimated times of arrival and departure so we can reach you in an emergency.

Always remember to sign in and out for every assignment you attend, for your own safety and so we can confirm the work has been completed. Evening carers especially must remember to sign out on their last call so that the coordinator knows they are safe.

Inform your manager of any changes to your timetable. Never "swap assignments" with another care worker unless you have been authorised to do so by your care coordinator.

Always:

- Ensure that you know your route before you travel and avoid getting lost in unfamiliar areas.
- If travelling by public transport, ensure that you have enough money for the fare or that your travel pass is up to date.
- If travelling by foot, always stick to the main roads. Never take shortcuts through unpopulated or dark areas. Vary your route if possible.
- If travelling by car, ensure that you keep all doors locked, especially in a standing queue of traffic or at lights. Park as close to the service user's home and as near to street lights as possible.
- If visiting a service user in high-rise flats, be especially cautious when using lifts, stairways, corridors and landings. When working after dark, travel in pairs if at all possible.
- If you feel you may be in danger, do not proceed with the assignment. Get to safety and report immediately to your coordinator.

Access Codes and Holding Service Users' House Keys

Some service users have mobility problems or other disabilities meaning they are not able to answer their front door. If you need to hold a set of keys or require an access code to gain entry, the service user or their family/representative must give permission to Assured Optimal Care, and a key-holding record needs to be completed and returned to the office. The keys may then be collected and signed for at the office, or you will be given the key code by your coordinator.



For security reasons, you must never give your keys to anyone other than your coordinator. Similarly, key codes are confidential and must never be disclosed to anyone. Keys or codes are changed randomly for security purposes and whenever there is a change of carer. You will be notified if your key or code is being changed randomly and a new key will be provided.

Do not take keys directly from a service user without your coordinator's knowledge and permission. Keys must never be labelled with a home address or telephone number; this is for the safety of our service users. If you lose your key, you must report this to your coordinator immediately. For more information, see our *Key Holding Policy*.

No Access

There may be situations where you are unable to gain entry into a service user's home. In such situations the care worker is advised to remain calm and not jump to conclusions. There may be a number of different reasons for this situation occurring, and a process of elimination of the obvious reasons will eventually determine whether a more serious situation exists. The thought/action processes to be adopted by the care worker will, to a degree, reflect the agreed method of entry, but:

- If the care worker has been provided with keys, and they have been disabled, for example, from the inside, then this indicates, almost conclusively, that someone is in.
- If the care worker is unable to gain the attention of the Service user, and suspects that something may be wrong, then the care worker is advised to contact the Registered Manager immediately for guidance.

The Registered Manager will provide further instructions (see our *Security And Access To Service Users Homes Policy*).

Using Computers

For security reasons, the use of computers and similar electronic devices and equipment within Assured Optimal Care, including the use of email and the internet, are heavily controlled. For more guidance on how we control computer use, please read the *Computer Security, Internet and Email and Internet Use Staff Policies*, available upon request.

Competition Agreement



It is a condition of your employment by Assured Optimal Care that, for a period of 12 months after the termination of your employment, you may not solicit services which could otherwise have been offered by Assured Optimal Care to any individual or organisation who has, during the period of your employment with us, been a customer, client or service user of Assured Optimal Care. Doing so constitutes a breach of contract and could lead to legal action.

You must not enter into any other form of work or activity whilst in our employment which could be construed as being in direct competition with us or present a conflict of interest with our business.

Rights of Search

Assured Optimal Care has the contractual right to conduct security searches of our employees and their property (including vehicles) whilst they are on our premises or conducting business on our behalf. These searches are random and do not imply suspicion in relation to any individual.

Should you be asked to submit to a search, if practicable, you will be entitled to be accompanied by a third party selected by you only from those who are on the premises while a search is taking place. This entitlement also applies at the time that any further questioning takes place resulting from the search.

During a search, you may be asked to remove the contents of your pockets, bag, vehicle, etc.

While you are not legally obligated to submit to a search, refusing to be searched constitutes a breach of your contract of employment and could result in your dismissal.

We reserve the right to call in the Police at any stage if we deem it necessary (see our *Searching Employees Policy*).

Public Communications and Statements

Only the Registered Provider is authorised to make any communication or statement to the press or public media in matters relating to the business. Any other employee who discloses company or service user information to the media risks disciplinary action which may include dismissal or in some cases prosecution.



8. Standards of Conduct & Performance

This section outlines our required standards of conduct and performance expected from all of Assured Optimal Care employees. Assured Optimal Care acknowledges that any judgement of whether or not a standard has been followed highly depends on the context and circumstances of each case. However, it is nonetheless important to set out general standards for the guidance of all employees. Failure to work to these standards may result in disciplinary action on the grounds of misconduct or poor performance. The following subsections are examples only and must under no circumstances be considered as an exhaustive statement of all potential misdemeanours.

Code of Conduct

- *Discrimination*: Staff should not discriminate against any person on the basis of race/ethnicity, religion, age, gender/sex, sexuality, disability, or any other protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010.
- *Reputation*: Whilst we have no intention or wish to intrude upon your activities or interests outside work, we expect that none of our employees should engage in any activity in or out of work that could result in adverse publicity to Assured Optimal Care or damage Assured Optimal Care's reputation or that would cause us to question their integrity.
- *Own duties*: Staff must never attempt to perform any duties of care or otherwise that fall outside their expertise, qualifications or job description. Specifically, care staff must not attempt to perform the duties of nursing staff.
- *Confidentiality*: Staff will at times become privy to information concerning a service user; this information must be treated with respect and remain confidential at all times. The only exceptions to this requirement are cases where the law dictates otherwise or if silence may negatively affect a service user's wellbeing.
- *Dignity*: Staff must not do or say anything that may put the dignity or health of their service users at risk.
- *Professionalism*: Staff must at all times remain professional whilst working, even if regular contact with service users or other workers may engender personal relationships. Staff must take specific care to keep the professional nature of the relationships intact in the working environment.



- *Keep updated:* Staff must at all times keep up to date with policies and procedures and changes to legislation that may affect them. Assured Optimal Care will aid staff with staying updated.
- *Respect:* Staff must always respect the working practices and demands of service users unless unreasonable or if a working practice may breach health & safety standards.
- *Keep to plan:* Staff must always, whenever applicable, keep to the requirements of a care plan and/or any other agreed role requirement.
- *Best interests:* Staff must always act with the best interests of the service user in mind.
- *Notifications:* Staff should always in the first instance notify the Registered Manager or supervisor of any concerns they come across during their work.
- *Empowerment:* Staff must always allow the service user to make the decisions about what is best for them, unless their capacity for making decisions is limited, in which case their care plan should be consulted. This includes decisions about treatment and personal affairs.
- *Complaints:* Assured Optimal Care has a detailed policy on how to report complaints. In the event of a complaint that may affect your duties and obligations, please refer to our policy and notify us immediately.

General Attendance (Absence and Lateness)

Ensure that you arrive at work sufficiently early to be ready to commence work at your official starting time.

You must comply with any time-recording procedures relating to your job. If you need to leave work during normal working hours, you must first get permission from your immediate supervisor. If you do not, your absence will be treated as an unauthorised absence.

All instances of lateness and absence will be recorded. Unacceptable attendance records may render you subject to disciplinary action.

Social Media and Internet Use

In line with our expectations that you will not engage in any irresponsible or disreputable



activity outside of working hours, Assured Optimal Care requires all our staff to refrain from posting anything online (including on social media, e.g. Facebook, Twitter), either during or outside working hours, which:

- damages the company's reputation
- is derogatory, critical or defamatory of the business
- results in adverse publicity
- could constitute any form of bullying or harassment of a colleague or service user
- breaches our Equality and Diversity Policy
- calls into question your suitability to be working with our service users.

The above list is non-exhaustive and employees should exercise caution in all their online activities to avoid any inappropriate or adverse references to the business or associates.

Company Property & Stock

Assured Optimal Care's property and that of our service users must only be used for their intended purpose, and must not be removed from the premises without prior approval.

All employees have a duty to report any damage to, or loss of stock or property to Assured Optimal Care management. Any loss or damage to Assured Optimal Care's or service users' property (including vehicles) resulting from an employee's negligence or misuse will be treated as a serious breach of company rules. Where the damage is particularly serious, the employee responsible may be liable to pay the full or part of the cost of repair or replacement, or insurance excess if appropriate. If you fail to cover these costs, we reserve the right to deduct them from your pay.

Health & Safety

Assured Optimal Care ensures, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees and the health and safety of other persons who may be affected by its activities. Both the staff and management of the home will work in partnership to ensure that its statutory duties with regard to safety are met at all times. Assured Optimal Care will comply with all applicable legal and regulatory requirements and guidance relating to the safety of staff, service users and visitors.

All employees of Assured Optimal Care must read the full Health and Safety Policies and procedures (including Accident, Infection Control, Food Hygiene, Fire Safety, First



Aid At Work and Control Of Substances Hazardous To Health) carefully and follow them at all times during working hours.

Night shifts

The care of service users at night is just as essential a part as any other part of the service it provides and is of a standard that enables it to provide consistent person-centred care around the clock.

- Service users are assisted and supported to ensure they have a good night's rest and sleep. The needs of any service users who are awake during the night will be appropriately met.
- Any care and support provided to a service user including monitoring is based on their assessed needs as agreed and recorded in their Care Plan.
- The promotion of a sleep Care Plan aims to ensure the person using services has the minimum disturbance possible whilst also making sure that they are comfortable and safe.
- The service user's safety and welfare at night is of paramount importance and any risk to that will be assessed and managed.
- Consent will be obtained from the person or where appropriate their relative if it becomes necessary to wake them during the night for the purpose of monitoring their condition or to provide medication.
- Assured Optimal Care employs night care staff in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of people using services.
- Assured Optimal Care offers the same opportunities for training, supervision and support to all staff, whether night or day workers.

Out of Hours and Emergency Service

The out-of-hours service is available between the hours of 5.30 pm – 9:00 AM on weekdays and weekends. Out-of-hours number: 0750 798 6286

The service is available for all staff, service users, the service user's representative and professionals. The Service is only to be used in emergency situations or for issues that cannot wait until office hours.

The out of hours service will be staffed by a member of the care and support team on a



rota basis. The member of staff must ensure they are available to react in emergency situations, and where necessary undertake care/support work themselves. Staff must record and where necessary report all telephone calls in the out of hours' folder. At all times staff must be aware of the confidentiality policy and information sharing policy.

Bullying and Harassment

Assured Optimal Care operates a zero-tolerance policy on all forms of bullying and harassment in the workplace, whether involving employees, management staff, service users or their family/representatives, or any other associates. This includes verbal, physical, or sexual harassment or abuse and any form of intimidation, victimisation or discrimination. More examples of bullying and harassment are provided in our Bullying and Harassment Policy, available upon request. Please ensure you read this Policy and understand its terms.

As a Assured Optimal Care employee, you have a responsibility to treat all colleagues and service users with dignity and respect, and also to report any suspicions or instances of misconduct to a senior staff member. Any employee accused or suspected of bullying or harassing others may be suspended from duty pending a full investigation. Employees deemed to have breached our Bullying and Harassment Policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal, and possible involvement of law enforcement if unlawful conduct is suspected.

Termination of Employment

Your Terms and Conditions of employment outline your obligations with regard to termination, resignation and notice period.

If you wish to voluntarily terminate your employment, you are required to write a formal letter of resignation. Resignation letters should be submitted to your Registered Manager, in accordance with the notice periods set down in your Terms and Conditions of employment.

Assured Optimal Care is entitled to rely on you to work cooperatively and to full capacity throughout your notice period, unless you are requested or permitted to cease work before your notice expires (garden leave).

If you terminate your employment without giving or working the required period of notice, you will have an amount equal to any additional cost of covering your duties during the notice period not worked deducted from any termination pay due to you. This is an express written term of your contract of employment. You will also forfeit any contractually accrued holiday pay due to you over and above your statutory holiday pay,



if you fail to give or work the required period of notice.

Due to the nature of your position, Assured Optimal Care may, at its absolute discretion, require you to refrain from certain duties during your notice period. Furthermore, you may be required to serve your notice from home but to remain "on call" and available for work during the day.

If your conduct while employed by Assured Optimal Care is such as to suggest that you should not be employed in a position with access to vulnerable people, Assured Optimal Care may report your conduct to the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the General Social Care Council, and/or the DBS Barred Workers Register. Depending on the outcome of the report, this may lead to your dismissal and potential debarment from future work with vulnerable people.

Redundancy

While Assured Optimal Care strives to always develop and expand our business activities and thus provide a stable work environment and reasonable security of employment for our employees, we must ensure the economic viability of our service in an increasingly competitive business environment.

In this respect, circumstances may arise where changes in the market, technology, organisational requirements and other factors necessitate the need for redundancies. Where this happens, we will always give reasonable notice and take steps to minimise the impact on all parties.

For more information, see Assured Optimal Care's Redundancy Policy, available from the office upon request.

Returning Assured Optimal Care Property

When you leave Assured Optimal Care, you must return any company equipment or property (including uniforms, documents, electronic devices, keys/access codes, protective equipment, etc.) entrusted to you during your employment, at least **1(one)** working day/s before your official termination date.

In the case of summary dismissal, company property must be surrendered immediately.

If, for whatever reason, you fail to return company property before your termination date, an amount equal to the cost of the property/equipment will be deducted from any final monies due to you.

9. Good Practice Statement

Mental Disorders

It is essential for all care workers to be familiar with the Mental Capacity Act guidance and to recognise that diminished or fluctuating capacity (confusion, memory loss, aggression, changes in personality or behaviour, etc.) can be caused by some prescribed medications, other treatable causes (e.g. urinary tract or chest infection), dementia, or other neurological/mental disorders. Where diminished capacity is a possibility, medical advice should be sought. Reduced capacity may be permanent and progressive or result from temporary or treatable causes. People with mental incapacity should be treated with the same care and respect as any other service user and given the opportunity to make decisions about their own lives to the fullest extent of their abilities. Patience and sensitivity are essential for carers to be a grounding force in the service user's life.

Progressive & Multiple Conditions

Elderly and disabled people's care needs may not be stable and consistent. Some illnesses or disabling conditions (e.g. dementia, motor neuron disease) may fluctuate or progress rapidly. Service users will be confident that their care workers will respond quickly and appropriately when their condition is especially debilitating, e.g. by reporting changes to the Registered Manager. Many disabilities and chronic illnesses (e.g. stroke, osteoarthritis), are common among older people, and high-quality care services can prevent the need for long-term domiciliary, residential, nursing or hospital care for service users if that is their wish.

Terminal Illness

Our care workers will enable people who are terminally ill to maintain independence and be as comfortable as possible and support their decisions of where they choose to be at the end of their life. The service user will be supported to complete the Preferred Priorities of Care document in line with the National End Of Life Care Guidance. Not all relatives and friends feel able to care for a loved one who is dying by themselves, and this should be respected. The support worker will play an important role in supporting relatives and friends.

Isolation and Loss



Older and disabled people may experience loneliness or grief due to changes in lifestyle or location, loss of mobility, or death of a close friend or relative. People may need to spend some time alone through personal choice, and this will be respected. Care workers are trained to recognise the signs of loneliness such as depression, lethargy, or problems with eating or sleeping. Care workers will be able to listen and talk to service users and offer moral support as well as practical care. Care workers can also help the service user seek appropriate advice and counselling by liaising with the Registered Manager or person in charge.

Assisting Service Users with Personal Hygiene

Assisting a service user to maintain personal hygiene requires a great deal of tact and skill on behalf of the carer. Maintaining personal hygiene is more than making sure a person has washed or has clean clothing. It is also about choice, communication and independence.

How we present ourselves is a direct expression of our personality, background, culture and beliefs.

We all like to look and feel good, and age should not be a barrier to this. All service users have the

right to choose what they want to wear, but we have to ensure that what they wear is safe and

suitable for the physical environment and weather conditions on that particular day.

Care workers

must take initiative at all times to ensure that service users are safe and content and have enough of what they need.

Racial, Cultural & Sex Differences

Assured Optimal Care adopts a proactive anti-discrimination policy and takes into account any racial and cultural factors that may affect care needs or delivery in full compliance with the Race Relations Act 1976. Similarly, the care team will be sensitive to the needs of service users with regard to their sex, particularly where personal care is involved, in accordance with the Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 and 1986.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Some older or disabled people may be vulnerable to abuse by their relatives or other visitors. Abuse may be described as physical, verbal, emotional, psychological, sexual, or financial. Care workers will be in a position to identify the possibility of abuse which



may not be the result of an acute situation but of concern over a period. All care workers are trained to recognise the indicators of abuse and will report any suspicions to the Registered Manager or person in charge. All staff members are required to read our Safeguarding Policies during their induction and will receive additional training relating to safeguarding vulnerable adults.

10. Disciplinary Procedures

Discipline and Disciplinary Appeals

If you are found to be in breach of any company rules or regulations, you will likely be subject to our disciplinary procedures. Depending on the nature of the issue, this may involve a meeting to discuss your conduct/behaviour, an investigation during which you may be temporarily suspended, a disciplinary hearing, written warnings, sanctions such as demotion, and, in cases of gross misconduct that is sufficiently severe, frequent or worsening, summary dismissal.

You have a right to appeal any disciplinary decision made against you by following our formal appeals process. You also have a right to an advocate (either a coworker or trade union representative) and to consult a third-party ombudsman during this process. The outcome of an appeal hearing is final.

Please see the *Disciplinary and Grievance Policy* for more information.

Grievance Procedure

If you wish to raise any grievances about matters relating to your employment, you should first arrange a meeting with your manager to discuss your concerns informally. Only if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of this discussion after 5 working days should you follow our formal grievance procedure. This requires you to submit a written grievance letter to your manager.

Please see the *Disciplinary and Grievance Policy* for more information.

Whistleblowing

Given the nature of the industry, we encourage all staff to disclose any concerns they may have about any conduct or behaviour of other workers that they feel is wrong, unsafe, dangerous, illegal or a breach of any company Policies, regulations or obligations. Our only request is that such disclosures are made in response to a



genuine concern and in good faith. Your confidentiality will be protected.

Please see the *Whistleblowing Policy* for more information.

Note: All Assured Optimal Care policies are reviewed annually, more frequently, or as necessary.

Assured Optimal Care reserves the right to make reasonable alterations to this Handbook and any other terms and conditions of service. Minor changes of detail, such as to procedures, may be made with a general notice being provided to you. Significant alterations will only be implemented following full consultation with all affected employees. Such changes will be implemented at the end of that notice period subject to any written objections.