Standards of Behaviour

Category: staff and volunteers

Introduction

SoLO has an expectation that staff and volunteers will behave in a way that evidences the values that are the foundation of the organisation. These values can be seen in the SoLO Values Statement and are issued to all staff and volunteers upon joining the organisation, reinforced within Induction Training.

Our staff and volunteers are the face of the organisation and, as such, their behaviour will have a huge impact on the quality of the service delivered and the way in which the SoLO services are perceived by the wider public.

Policy Statement

SoLO will deliver training to staff and volunteers around appropriate behaviours. However, the organisation expects them to take personal responsibility to familiarise themselves with the policies which set out the framework and expectations regarding conduct, responsibilities and procedures. The consequence of failing to comply can have serious implications for SoLO and its members and, subsequently, could attract various penalties including dismissal. If anyone feels that they are being asked to do something which contravenes a policy they should raise the matter with a Senior Manager. If staff witness behaviour of other staff or volunteers that falls short of SoLO’s values, they would be encouraged to alert a Senior Manager to this as soon as possible.

Procedures

Working with members and their families
SoLO’s reputation depends on the quality of the service provided and how staff conduct themselves. Respect is paramount when supporting our members and their wishes should always be central to what SoLO does. Staff should act in a professional and caring manner and comply at all times with the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy.
Staff administering personal care, medication, or physical intervention or hoisting must have received the recognised training before doing so and follow the guidelines laid out in the relevant procedures. (See links with other policies)
SoLO will involve families in creating the personal profile for each member which should be regularly reviewed and tailored to the needs of the individual.

Staff, with the exception of the Project Leader, should have their mobile phones switched off during project hours unless express permission has been given by a manager. Under no circumstances can photographs of members be taken on personal cameras or ‘phones. Only the office camera can be used and the photographs can be downloaded only in the SoLO office.

**Working with fellow employees**
To achieve a quality service, employees must co-operate and work together effectively. All staff are expected to work conscientiously, as directed by the Project Leader/Manager, and carry out duties in accordance with current policies and procedures.

SoLO expects staff to respect each other and be tolerant to differences. Where differences and relationships have a detrimental effect on the quality of services, it is expected that these will be raised in an appropriate way. Gossiping, discussions behind people’s backs and other methods of communication will be actively discouraged and may result in disciplinary action.

Discrimination or bullying will not be tolerated and perpetrators will be disciplined. All staff have the right to raise a formal grievance or submit a complaint about another member of staff (managing bad behaviour) where informal action has not resolved an issue.

**Data Protection**
All information gathered through working with SoLO should be treated sensitively and only shared on a “need to know” basis in accordance with Data Protection law. Clerical records must be retained securely both in the office, and out on project, and must be disposed of correctly by shredding.

Electronic records must be password protected, and care should be taken when emailing or texting information.

Staff should be particularly wary of speaking about personal information in a public place where their conversation can be overheard, and should ensure that any sharing of information uses professional tone and content.

**Social Networking & other media**
SoLO employees are expected to act with integrity and not bring the name of SoLO into disrepute. Any postings which are disrespectful or offensive to SoLO, including derogatory remarks about fellow staff members will not be tolerated.

SoLO requires staff members to gain their Line Manager’s permission to have members as ‘friends’ on their social networking sites and consideration should be exercised when accepting members as friends due to the content of other material on individual’s pages.
which may not be appropriate for SoLO members to view. Further details are contained within the Media and Social Networking Policy.

**Computer Systems**
Within the office Internet and emails can be accessed in personal time providing it does not interfere with an individual’s work. Staff must not access any information on the internet that is offensive, pornographic or could cause embarrassment to SoLO.

All memory sticks must be checked for viruses before using with SoLO equipment and passwords for PCs/Laptops should be kept confidential.

**Health and Safety**
All staff are expected to follow health and safety rules as outlined in the specific Health and Safety Policies to protect themselves, colleagues and members. Any potential danger should be reported to a manager and all incidents should be recorded. During off site visits staff should carry their ID card which should be retained securely at all times.

**Dress Code**
Staff should dress appropriately for their duties, for instance, avoiding high heels or open toe shoes, tying long hair back, and in the case of females ensuring modesty by not wearing low tops or short skirts. On the majority of projects SoLO T shirts should be worn, but where this is inappropriate due to the nature of the scheme, for instance Icebreakers, clothing should be clean and not contain unsuitable logos.

**Drugs & Alcohol**
Any employee or volunteer suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol whilst on project will be asked to leave and disciplinary action will commence. Generally the consumption of alcohol is only permitted on projects such as Icebreakers where the group are having a social night out in a drinking venue, and even then it must be in moderation so that responsibility and judgement is not impaired. (This does not apply if the volunteer or staff member is driving, in which case, no alcohol is to be consumed)

**Language**
SoLO expects staff and volunteers to use appropriate language when working or volunteering on project. This includes the use of terminology which should be acceptable in relation to learning disability. It is recognised that terminology changes over the years and SoLO will seek to educate staff and volunteers accordingly.

**Safeguarding**
All employees and volunteers will undergo Safeguarding/Vulnerable adults training within 13 weeks of commencing work or as soon as is reasonably possible within, and adhere to the procedures detailed within those policies. Confidentiality must be maintained at all times, only sharing information with those individuals who need to be involved.

**Relationships**

Relationships between staff and members or volunteers and members are not acceptable and will be deemed as gross misconduct. Relationships between staff and volunteers
should be declared and, where there is a conflict of interest, this might result in staff or volunteers being re-deployed to other projects.

**Property of SoLO**
All equipment should only be used for its designated purpose and should be handled with care. Any loss or damage should be reported to a manager straight away.

Purchases made on behalf of SoLO must be agreed in advance and will be re-imbursed on submission of a genuine receipt and completed expense form.

**Attendance**
All employees are expected to make reasonable effort to report for duty on time and failure to do so without authorisation could result in disciplinary action. If, for any reason an employee cannot attend work they should notify their manager at the earliest opportunity. Volunteers are also expected to make reasonable effort to be on time and be reliable. Where volunteers are consistently late or unreliable, SoLO reserves the right to terminate their role within the organisation. Absences will be recorded and monitored, and action taken in accordance with the relevant policy. If a member of staff is suffering from sickness and diarrhoea they should refrain from work for at least 48 hours.

**Criminal Convictions**
If an employee is charged with, or convicted of a criminal offence they must report it immediately to their line manager.

**Acceptance of gifts**
It is inevitable that members and families will want to give gifts from time to time. As detailed in the relevant policy, such gifts can be accepted but if the value is over £20, they should be discouraged. In no way should the acceptance of a gift be perceived as putting an obligation on SoLO.

**Outside interests**
The majority of SoLO employees have other jobs outside of their role for SoLO which is acceptable so long as that other role does not pose a conflict of interest, or bring SoLO into disrepute. When staff are considering other paid employment they are required to discuss the role with their line manager.

**Transport**
It is inappropriate for SoLO employees/volunteers to offer lifts to a member outside of their normal working duties, unless this has been brought to the attention of their line manager and has been agreed with the parents / carers.

If transporting members as part of their official duties the employee/volunteer must have Business Insurance.
Linked with the following policies:

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