



Your
Staff Handbook



Using this handbook

Sanctuary's Staff Handbook introduces you to our organisation and sets out the terms and conditions of employment, our standards of conduct, and the benefits which may be available to you.

Within this handbook are references to the Group's policies where you can find further information and guidance. All of our policies can be found on our intranet site known as Solis.

Additional information can also be obtained from relevant teams within the HR department. These teams are referenced within the handbook and written in bold text to indicate their details can be found on Solis.

This handbook is available to read online (Solis) and printed copies are within all of our care homes, supported schemes and key regional offices.

If you do not have regular access to Solis and require further information please discuss with your line manager.

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1

Welcome

1 About Sanctuary Group

1.1 Our mission and values

1.2 Staff Council

About Sanctuary Group

Sanctuary was established in 1969. Since then it has grown into a successful provider of housing, care and community services and now manages over 100,000 units of accommodation throughout England and Scotland.

Sanctuary Group is structured into a number of operations, all supported by our Corporate Shared Service Centre. We have structured our business in this way to ensure the operating efficiency of each operation is clearly visible and transparent to our customers, stakeholders and funders.



Affordable housing and supported living

We believe everyone should be able to live in a decent home, where they feel safe and secure. We provide a range of high quality affordable homes and support services across England and Scotland, reflecting the needs and aspirations of our customers and delivering services at a competitive cost. We also provide in-house maintenance and reinvestment services across our portfolio of properties.

We provide a range of housing where specialist, tailored support is offered alongside accommodation. This includes support for people with learning and physical disabilities, young people, the homeless and people with mental health problems. We also provide care in people's homes in our extra care schemes.

Development

We take our role in meeting the UK's housing shortage seriously and we are building more homes than ever before. Our ambitious development programme will include homes built by our own in-house construction arm. Ultimately, we want to build the majority of our new homes, creating training and employment opportunities for our customers along the way.

Care

We are a leading provider of care for older people, with over 100 welcoming homes operated by highly trained staff. We are committed to keeping kindness at the heart of our care. We help our residents live dignified and fulfilling lives in places where they can explore their passions, learn new things and build lasting friendships. Our well-equipped care homes provide a range of long and short-term care and support, including residential, nursing, intermediate, respite, end-of-life, and specialist dementia care.

Student and market rented

We provide a range of commercial services. These include working with universities and NHS trusts to provide accommodation and facilities management services for students and key workers, managing a portfolio of direct-let student accommodation, as well as overseeing a diverse portfolio of commercial and market rent properties.



1.1

Our mission and corporate priorities



Our mission is to remain a market leader in the provision of high quality housing, nursing and residential care, and community services for people in need. Through careful stewardship of resources, we will maximise the benefits of our ethically-based operations providing good quality and value to our customers and stakeholders.

What makes us different

One of the things that makes Sanctuary different is the fact we're a non-profit distributing organisation. This doesn't mean we don't want to make a profit.

It's just that we reinvest our surplus income into our services and business growth rather than distribute it to shareholders. This enables Sanctuary to maintain high standards, develop our services and invest in people and communities. In fact, because the money we make is used to support a variety of people, from the homeless to the elderly, we think it's even more important that we operate commercially.

Our values

At the core of our business are Sanctuary’s values: ambition, diversity, integrity, quality and sustainability. These set the way we conduct ourselves and how we do business.



1.2

Staff Council

It is vital that you clearly understand the future goals of the business and the part you can play towards its success. We are committed to involving and engaging staff on matters that affect the organisation. The way we do this is to consult with you on important policies and business decisions through our Staff Council representatives.

Through Staff Council you will be encouraged to:

- ▶ give your views about matters that affect how we operate now and in the future;
- ▶ influence consultation documents on policies; and
- ▶ tell us what you think about decisions we are making that may affect you, your work and your working conditions.

We recognise that it is only through the effective involvement and engagement of staff that we can achieve better performance. This is why Staff Council is so important as it is our primary method of communicating with all staff in the running of the business.



Staff Council representatives are elected by you, if you become a representative you will be provided with training and you will be paid for the time you give to carry out the role effectively. You can find out more by Solis.



2

Working at Sanctuary

2.1 Terms of employment
2.2 Pay and pay reviews
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2.5 Other types of leave

2.6 Public duties and jury service
2.7 Pension
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employee benefits

2.1

Terms of employment

You will have received a document called 'Statement of Main Terms and Conditions of Employment' which is your contract of employment with us. Your contract highlights the key terms and conditions of your employment which includes pay, hours, location of work, annual leave and pension. You should check this document to make sure the details are accurate and keep your copy in a safe place.

2.1.1

Trade unions

Sanctuary Group does not recognise a trade union, however, you are free to join a trade union if you wish. Sanctuary can pay your union subscriptions on your behalf through payroll or you can choose to pay these independently. If you would like more information on how Sanctuary informs and consults with staff please refer to your Staff Council representative, line manager or HR Business Partner.

2.2

Pay and pay reviews

We will pay your salary into your chosen bank or building society account, using the details you have provided. Pay dates are in accordance with your Terms and Conditions of Employment. It is important that you update us of any changes to your bank or building society details. If you have access to a computer, you can do this in **OneSanctuary HR**. Alternatively please call the **Corporate Shared Service Centre** on **0800 0224 200**.



We calculate rates of pay by using our job evaluation system and comparing rates of pay with similar jobs in the market. We use our job evaluation scheme to grade each job we offer, based on the knowledge, skills and experience required. Each grade has a salary linked to it. We review the rates of pay each year and make any adjustments that are required. In some parts of the business your pay review is also based on performance, which we will assess as follows:

- ▶ through appraisal;
- ▶ through discussions with your manager; and
- ▶ by assessing your work.

Our policy is to ensure that pay rates within Sanctuary remain competitive in the marketplace so that we are able to recruit and retain staff who are best able to deliver our services.

For staff who work in Care, salaries are paid on a four-weekly cycle into your chosen bank or building society account. Information on pay periods and pay dates are available from your manager and also on Solis. Salaries are reviewed in April (pay period one).

2.3

Hours of work

Your Terms and Conditions of Employment will confirm your standard working hours.

The nature of our business may require staff to be flexible about the times you start and finish. You may sometimes work extra hours due to the needs of the business. Arrangements for paying you for any extra hours, or giving you time off equivalent to the extra hours you have worked, can be found in your Terms and Conditions of Employment.

2.3.1

Regulations on working hours

We adhere to the Working Time Regulations (1998) which limits working hours to an average of 48 hours a week, and provides for breaks and annual leave. In some areas of the business you may be entitled to 'opt out' of the working time regulations if you request this in writing. If you have any questions about what you are entitled to under these regulations, (for example, your hours, rest breaks or annual leave) please contact your manager. **The Corporate Shared Service Centre** is available to help if your manager cannot answer all your questions. You must also let your manager know if you have any other jobs outside of Sanctuary so we can make sure you are not working too many hours.

Due to the nature of our care and support businesses, a Workforce Agreement is in place which provides details of arrangements, in relation to the above, for staff who work in these areas. Please contact your line manager for further details.

Before you take on any other work, you must ask your line manager for their permission. They will help to ensure:

- ▶ there are no health and safety issues;
- ▶ the work you want to do does not involve working with the same people and organisations you work with in your job for us; and
- ▶ the work you want to do is not in conflict with the job you do for us.



2.4

Holidays



This section includes details about your annual leave entitlement and public holidays.

2.4.1

Annual leave

Your annual leave entitlement is set out in your Terms and Conditions of Employment.

When you want to take your annual leave, you must give as much notice as possible.

The notice you must provide should be at least twice the period of leave you want to take. For example, if you want to take one week off, you must give at least two weeks' notice. You should not usually take more than two weeks off at one time and if you want to take a longer holiday it is important that you first speak with your line manager. Specific operational requirements mean that you may be required to give more notice than usual. Should this be the case your manager will make you aware of these requirements.

Sometimes your manager may refuse your request if not enough staff are available to provide cover, and the annual leave would cause a detrimental effect to operational requirements. It is important to give as much notice as possible so that your manager can consider the impact on the business, before accepting or rejecting the annual leave request.

You must book your annual leave through **OneSanctuary HR**, or if you do not have access to a computer, by using your annual leave form available from your manager.

If you are not able to return to work at the end of your agreed period of leave, or you become sick during your leave, you must tell your manager immediately so it can be recorded as sick leave. We may ask you to provide a medical certificate proving your illness.

For the majority of our staff, the annual leave year runs from 1 January to 31 December. You should try to take each year's full leave entitlement. However, if you have difficulty with this, you should speak to your manager.

Depending on your terms and conditions, and if a senior manager agrees, your manager may give you permission to carry over up to five days leave (or, if you work part-time, an equal percentage of days based on the hours you work) to the following year. You must use this leave by the end of April. Please note that only full or half days (or the equivalent in hours to a full or half working day) can be carried over. You must use this leave by the end of April.

Annual leave in hours

If you work part-time or non-standard work patterns, you are also entitled to a bank holiday allowance which you must use to book off any bank holidays that fall on your working days.

In such cases, you must book off your normal working hours for that day (for example if you work six and a half hours on a Monday, you must book six and a half hours off for any bank holidays that fall on a Monday). In the event that you have a shortfall in booking off any bank holidays, you will need to use your remaining annual leave entitlement to meet this.

These calculations comply with the Part-Time Workers Regulations 2000 and have been agreed by Staff Council.

2.5

Other types of leave

This section covers other types of leave that do not fall under annual leave, including leave for hospital, dental and GP appointments, unpaid leave, compassionate leave, special leave, public duties, reservist leave and enforced leave.

If you take any other type of leave, it should be recorded in **OneSanctuary HR** either by yourself or by your manager on your behalf.

2.5.1

Leave for hospital, dental and GP appointments

We understand that you may need to attend GP, dental or hospital appointments sometimes at short notice.

Unless your appointments are

covered by a medical certificate, you should whenever possible, make these appointments outside your normal working hours. If this is not possible, you should discuss with your line manager whether your working hours can be changed so you can attend the appointment. Documented evidence of such appointments may be requested by your manager. In certain circumstances, for example longer periods of treatment, your manager can decide to grant you special leave with pay. Your manager may allow you to attend hospital appointments during working hours. If you have antenatal appointments we will provide special leave with pay.

2.5.2

Compassionate leave

If you have a family bereavement your manager may grant you paid compassionate leave to allow you to make necessary arrangements.



2.5.3

Unpaid leave

We understand that situations of an urgent nature may arise on occasion (for example, if your house is flooded), and you may need to take unpaid leave that is not covered by any other leave. In these circumstances, you should speak to your manager, who will decide whether to approve your request.

2.5.4

Special leave

Special leave may be available if other categories of leave are not appropriate. Depending on your circumstances, your manager may grant special leave. This may be paid or unpaid, depending on your circumstances.

In all the above circumstances you must contact your manager to advise them of the situation and seek your manager's authorisation prior to taking the time off.

2.5.5

Reservist leave

If you are a member of the Reserve Forces and you are asked to attend an official activity you

will be granted one week of paid special leave for you to attend. We will ask to see a supporting letter from a senior officer within your Reservist unit in order to authorise the leave. You may take any additional leave for Reservist training either as part of your annual leave entitlement or as unpaid special leave.

The Reserve Forces Act 1996 directs that reservists may be called out for service in times of national danger or great emergency. While Sanctuary works to ensure you are able to meet your responsibilities, we reserve the right to request exemptions or deferment of call outs where to do otherwise may result in the business being impacted upon.

2.5.6

Enforced leave

There may be an occasion where your manager decides they need to send you home. Examples of this include:

- ▶ you are ill;
- ▶ you are not able to carry out your job for other reasons (for example, if you have been drinking alcohol);

- ▶ they need to for health and safety reasons;
- ▶ you have (or have been in contact with someone who has) a contagious disease; or
- ▶ as a precautionary measure due to conduct, pending an investigation.

2.6

Public duties

You may be eligible to request a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work if you hold a public office or public position. This includes magistrate and local councillor duties. To request time off for public duties, you will need to provide written notification to your line manager of any dates on which you wish to take time off, stating the expected length of your absence. This notification should be provided as far in advance as possible.

Time off for public duties will normally be unpaid but you may also request up to a maximum of five days paid leave in any single twelve month period. The number of days permitted, will be calculated on a pro-rotta basis and will be paid at your normal rate of pay subject to the deduction

of any monies received from the relevant authority in respect of the duties performed, which you must declare.

The approval of any leave (paid or unpaid) is at the discretion of the appropriate manager and will be assessed on business need.

For further details regarding this, please contact your manager or the **Corporate Shared Service Centre**.

2.6.1

Jury service

If you receive a summons to serve on a jury you must tell your manager. You must claim the maximum allowance from the Courts Service for loss of earnings that you are entitled to and we will then deduct this amount from your pay.

When you have completed your jury service and you have been paid for your duties, you must tell HR Direct how much you have been paid. If the earnings you have lost are higher than the court's payments, we will pay the difference for the length of your jury service so you are not financially disadvantaged.

2.7

Pension

The Group provides access to pension schemes, details of which can be found in your Terms and Conditions of Employment. To find out more, please contact the **Corporate Shared Service Centre**.

2.8

Company vehicles

2.8.1

Company cars

We may provide you with a company car should you undertake a certain amount of business miles each year, so that you can carry out your duties. If we provide a company car, you must adhere to the conditions and terms of this provision and in accordance with the Group's **Driving at Work Policy and Procedure**.

If you have a company car or commercial vehicle, you must read the **Driving at Work Policy and Procedure** and the the relevant drivers handbook for either commercial or company cars.

For both company cars and commercial vehicles, you must complete the relevant forms and provide the appropriate driving documents to the **Fleet Services team**.

2.8.2

Expenses and travel allowances

If you travel away from your normal place of work on our business, you can claim expenses in accordance with the **Travel and Subsistence Policy and Procedure**.



2.9

Sanctuary Group employee benefits

We provide a comprehensive rewards and benefits package addressing your health and welfare, income security and retirement needs.

Benefits which you may be eligible for include:

- ▶ Shopping discounts
- ▶ Cycle to work scheme
- ▶ Health insurance
- ▶ Charitable donations
- ▶ Company offers

View Solis, speak with your manager or contact the **Corporate Shared Service Centre** for further details.



3

Family focus

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- 3.2 Paternity leave
- 3.3 Adoption leave
- 3.4 Parental leave
- 3.5 Shared parental leave
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- 3.7 Flexible working

3.1

Maternity leave

Our **Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy and Procedure** sets out the leave, pay and benefits we provide, and your right to return to work. If you are pregnant, please give us as much notice as possible of the date the baby is due, the date you plan to stop work and whether you are considering returning to work. Your manager will ask you to provide the required documentation and ensure that the necessary health and safety checks are carried out within your working environment.

Further information can be found in the policy and procedure.

3.2

Paternity leave

The **Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy and Procedure** also sets out your rights with regard to paternity leave, the pay and benefits we provide, and arrangements for returning to work. The policy also provides details if you want to take adoption leave.

3.3

Adoption leave

Our **Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy and Procedure** covers the leave, pay and other benefits we provide, and your right to return to work. If you are planning to adopt, please give us as much notice as possible of the date you expect to adopt the child, when you want your adoption leave to begin and whether you are considering returning to work. If your partner is taking adoption leave, you are entitled to take paternity leave (see '3.2 Paternity leave').

3.4

Parental leave

As a parent, you are entitled to take up to 18 weeks unpaid leave up to your child's eighteenth birthday, depending on certain conditions.

Please refer to the **Family Responsibilities Policy and Procedure** for further details.

3.5

Shared parental leave

As a parent or adopter, you may choose to share your child-caring responsibilities with your partner within your child's first year of birth or adoption, depending on certain conditions. Our **Family Responsibilities Policy and Procedure** sets out your rights with regards to shared parental leave.

3.6

Dependency leave

By law, you are entitled to reasonable unpaid leave to deal with family and domestic

emergencies (for example, if your child has an accident). A dependant is defined as an employee's spouse, parent, partner, child, or person living in the same household. You should contact your manager as soon as is practicable to explain the need for the absence and the expected duration.

For further details, please read the **Family Responsibilities Policy and Procedure**.

3.7

Flexible working

As an employee you have the right to request flexible working, provided you meet the eligibility criteria. It is the Group's aim, where possible, to be flexible on the working arrangements for all employees.

If you would like to request a flexible working arrangement, you should submit a formal application. Details of this process are within the **Flexible Working Policy and Procedure**.

4

While you're here

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bullying and harassment,
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4.9 Use of telephones, email,
internet and social media

4.1

Absence from work

You must wherever possible speak to your line manager before being absent from work, explaining why you will be absent.

If you are unable to attend work for any reason without prior agreement, you must telephone your line manager as soon as possible to explain why you are absent and how long you expect to be absent for.

If you are unwell or injured, you must follow the procedure outlined below.

4.2

Sickness absence

We understand that everyone may be ill from time to time and the organisation strives to support unwell staff and encourage them to return to work as soon as they are fit and able to do so.

If you cannot attend work because you are unwell, you must follow our procedures to receive any sick pay you are entitled to.

4.2.1

Self certification and medical certificates

If you are unwell for seven calendar days in a row or less (including weekends and public holidays), you must fill in a **Self-certification Form** on your return to work.

If you are unwell for more than seven days in a row, you will need to give your manager a medical certificate (fit note) or a doctor's statement (from your GP or a hospital as appropriate), to cover the length of time you were (or are) off work.

Any sickness absence should be recorded in **OneSanctuaryHR** either by yourself, or by your manager on your behalf.

4.2.2

Long-term illness

If you are unwell for more than four weeks we may request that you attend an independent medical examination or we may ask if we can approach your GP or other medical practitioner for a report on your health (or both). Your manager will discuss this with you if they think this is necessary.

Your manager may also arrange for an occupational health practitioner to meet with you.

It is important that you maintain contact with your line manager while you are absent from work and that you keep them up to date on your health and the date you expect to return (if you know this). Only in exceptional circumstances should someone act on your behalf to keep us up to date on your health.

Should you be absent from work on a long-term basis you may be eligible for permanent health insurance. Please read your Terms and Conditions of Employment to find out if you are eligible, or contact the **Corporate Shared Service Centre**.

4.2.4

Failure to follow the sickness reporting procedure

If you fail to follow the procedures for reporting sickness absence, you may lose your entitlement to sick pay or sickness benefit, or we may take disciplinary action against you (or both). If you are absent for a significant amount of time and we think you may not be able to carry out your job

because of this, we may consider implementing the Group's **Capability and Performance Policy and Procedure**, or our **Disciplinary Policy and Procedure**.

4.2.4

Sick pay

For details about your sick pay entitlement, please read your Terms and Conditions of Employment.

The level of occupational sick pay you are entitled to is based on your length of service at the first day of absence. It is paid in line with your Terms and Conditions.

Eligibility for sick pay is calculated on a rolling 12 month basis. As such, any sickness absence during the rolling 12 month period determines the employee's remaining entitlement.

Should you fall unwell during a period of authorised annual leave, further details can be found within the **Absence Management Policy and Procedure**.

4.3

Grievance, disciplinary, bullying and harassment

4.3.1

Grievances

We encourage communication between staff at all levels within the organisation so that any queries can be resolved quickly.

From time to time however, disputes may arise between staff, or between staff and managers. We accept that it is good practice to resolve any matters as quickly as possible, and encourage you to raise these first informally with your line manager. If you feel that you cannot approach your line manager, please contact the **Corporate Shared Service Centre** for advice and guidance.

If your grievance cannot be resolved by discussion with your manager, you should state it in writing. Your letter should outline the issues you are experiencing and, if possible, how you would like the grievance to be resolved.

You can find more details about the grievance process by referring to our **Grievance Policy and Procedure**.

4.3.2

Disciplinary

Most incidents of a disciplinary nature arising at work can be resolved informally by helping the individual identify the area of concern and the opportunities for improvement.

From time to time matters may become more serious and the disciplinary procedure will need to be invoked. For further information please refer to the **Disciplinary Policy and Procedure**.

4.3.3

Bullying and harassment

We support managers and employees to provide:

- ▶ a working environment free from discrimination and harassment; and
- ▶ a fair process for dealing with any complaints quickly.

Please refer to our **Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure** for more details.

4.3.4

Whistleblowing

The **Whistleblowing policy** is for reporting serious, bad practice. If possible, you should raise your concerns under our other policies and procedures, such as our **Grievance Policy and Procedure**, **Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure** and **Safeguarding Adults and Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure**. If you are unsure however, for more information:

- ▶ refer to the **HR policy pages on Solis**;
- ▶ speak to your manager; or
- ▶ ask the **Corporate Shared Service Centre** for copies of HR policies.

4.4

Data protection

As part of our everyday business we regularly, process and transfer personal information relating to customers, contractors, colleagues and suppliers.

If your job involves collecting, storing and using personal information about residents, other

staff members and/or contractors you will need to know how the law affects this. All employees are required to complete a 'Data Protection Basics' course. Your line manager will provide further details. If you work in HR, you will also be required to complete a 'Data Protection Human Resources' course.

The General Data Protection Regulation covers records held on computer systems and on paper. This act controls:

- ▶ how we use personal information;
- ▶ who can see it; and
- ▶ how we store it.

We hold information about you that relates to your job. You have the right to ask us to destroy or remove any information which is inaccurate, incorrect or misleading, and also to 'be forgotten' when you leave Sanctuary and ask for you data to be destroyed. If your personal circumstances change, please let your manager know so the information can be recorded in your personnel file held by the **Corporate Shared Service Centre**.

Please read the **Data Protection Policy and Procedure**.

4.5

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct sets out guidelines which will help you to maintain our values and mission and helps us to deliver higher standards for our customers and staff.

As an employee, we expect you to act in line with the following:

▶ 4.5.1

General behaviour

Putting us first - we expect you to make decisions in line with your commitments to Sanctuary and not make a decision to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, or your friends.

- ▶ **Honesty** - you must tell us about any private interests you have that may affect your work.
- ▶ **Fairness** - it is important that you make any decisions fairly and based on circumstances alone.
- ▶ **Openness** - you must be as open as possible about all the

decisions and actions that you take.

- ▶ **Responsibility** - we also expect you to accept responsibility for your decisions and actions.
- ▶ **Financial conduct** - you must ensure you use funds and resources given to you for the purpose they are intended for, and in a responsible way that complies with legal requirements.

We expect high standards of personal behaviour at work and we expect you to carry out your work in line with our policies and procedures. You are expected to be polite, efficient, reliable and punctual as part of your role.

If you work within the care or home care businesses, you should read the Code of Conduct for Social Workers and the Working Nights Code of Conduct. Copies of these codes of conduct can be found within the HR Policy Handbook located within each home.

4.5.2

Relationships

Our customers, service users, board members and colleagues are key to making our business successful.

- ▶ Board members - employees are responsible to our Group board, line managers and the Group Chief Executive. If your work brings you into contact with the board or any board members, it is essential that you respect each other. Should you wish to raise your views on committee matters, you must use formal procedures.
- ▶ We expect you to behave in a professional manner towards your colleagues and team members. If you have a personal friendship or relationship with someone in your team this must not impact on the delivery of your role.
- ▶ Service users and other customers - if you are involved in delivering services, you should make sure you provide an efficient and unbiased service to all groups and people.
- ▶ We expect you to behave in a professional manner and you should never allow any personal relationship with a service user to affect your work or the best interests of any service user. It is very important that you never allow yourself to be influenced by, or take advantage of, your relationship with a services user.
- ▶ You must not ask or influence any service user to make a will or trust under which you are named as executor, trustee or beneficiary. If you are handling a resident's money or valuables, you must be extremely careful and provide a receipt each time you buy or sell something for them.
- ▶ If you are named as a beneficiary in a service user's will, you must refuse the gift or donate it to charity. You may not receive loans from service users, and may not give loans from your personal money.
- ▶ Contractors - you should tell your manager about all current or past relationships (business or private) with our contractors or possible contractors. For a more detailed guide to appointing contractors, please see the Procurement Policy and Procedure and the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure.

4.5.3

Confidentiality and data protection

Openness

By law, certain types of information must be available to:

- ▶ board members;
- ▶ Homes England;
- ▶ Care Quality Commission (CQC);
- ▶ social services;
- ▶ other healthcare providers;
- ▶ residents; and
- ▶ the public.

You need to know what information we make available. If you are not sure whether information is confidential or not, please speak to your manager.

Confidentiality and data protection

As we work with residents, service users and other staff, you need to know which information you must keep confidential. You must keep all personal information, including information about our service users and staff, strictly confidential. You may only release this information outside our organisation if you have

permission in writing from the person the information is about and you have the authority to do so. We will only make exceptions to this if it is necessary to provide the information for legal reasons and your manager must give you permission in writing to do so.

If you have access to confidential information about contracts or other sensitive business information, you must not reveal that information to any person or organisation not authorised to see it.

You should not use any of the information you receive as part of your work for personal gain, nor should you pass it on to others who might use it in that way. If you breach our code of confidentiality, we may take action against you under our disciplinary policy.

4.5.4

Activities outside of work

Paid work

To avoid a conflict of interests, you should discuss with your line manager if you decide to take on any other paid work as referenced in section 2.3.1.

Using facilities

You should not do paid work for anyone else in our offices or use our facilities (such as phones, stamps or administrative support) for that work. This includes receiving letters, e-mails and phone calls. The same applies to unpaid or voluntary work, unless you have permission in writing from your manager. If you do not act in line with this part of the code, we may take disciplinary action against you.

Political, campaigning and public activities

You must avoid any public activity which could damage our reputation. This includes publishing any defamatory statements which concern or relate to Sanctuary Group, its customers or staff.

While we appreciate everyone has their own personal or political opinions, these should not interfere with your work.

Using our suppliers/contractors for private use

You should not use our suppliers, contractors, consultants or other

organisations for private purposes using the Group's terms. Where this is not possible or practical, and there are no alternatives available to you, you must get permission in writing first. To do this you must discuss the issue with your line manager as they will need to arrange for written permission from a relevant Director. The request will be recorded in a register held by the Group's Legal Services team.

If the request is approved and you do use our suppliers or contractors for personal services, you must:

- ▶ keep your personal decisions to use them separate from ours; and
- ▶ not treat them favourably or allow them to treat us favourably.

4.5.5

Gifts, hospitality and bribes

We appreciate that from time to time, residents or customers may want to give you a gift to show their appreciation for your hard work. While we understand why they may want to do this, we have guidelines regarding accepting/

receiving gifts and hospitality that you need to adhere to. In order to prevent the perception of bribery, it is very important that you adhere to these guidelines, they are located in the **Gifts, Hospitality & Other Benefits Policy and Procedure**. Should you fail to comply with this procedure, we may consider disciplinary action against you.

For more information about the Prevention of Bribery, please refer to the **Prevention of Bribery Policy and Procedure**.

4.5.6 **Declaring interests**

If you have any interests which may go against our principles (as detailed in 4.5.1), you should discuss these with your line manager and complete the **Code of Conduct Declaration Form** which can be requested from the Corporate Shared Service Centre.

Failure to follow this code of conduct may harm the reputation of the Group and our work, and could result in disciplinary action being taken against you.

4.6 **Smoking in the workplace**

Sanctuary Group operates a smoke-free policy across all sites.

You must never smoke in the home of service users. For further information and guidance please refer to the **Smoke Free Procedure**.

4.7 **Alcohol and drugs**

Using alcohol and/or drugs is strictly prohibited while at work. You must not drink alcohol or take un-prescribed drugs before you come to work or while you are at work. Exceptions to this apply only to prescribed drugs by a General Practitioner (GP) or other medical professional or over-the-counter medicines used for their intended purpose only. You must not store drugs or alcohol anywhere on work premises, or attempt to sell or give drugs or alcohol to any other staff or person on the company premises. The Group has an **Intoxicating Substances Policy and Procedure** which provides further information. Breaches of the **Intoxicating Substances Policy**

and Procedure, may be treated as a disciplinary matter which could result in dismissal.

4.8

Clothing and equipment

Sanctuary requires that staff present a smart image, dressing appropriately for the work they are doing and levels and types of internal and external contacts encountered in the normal course of their duties.

Smart casual workwear is acceptable, however jeans and trainers are not acceptable everyday workwear unless we're holding a charitable event and have communicated that it's ok to 'dress down'.

Staff should be prepared to add or remove layers of clothing to ensure their comfort while working in the office environment.

Staff may follow the traditions of their ethnic/cultural/religious background provided they are safe and appropriate to their job.

As part of your conditions of work, we may provide appropriate

corporate clothing or name badges (or both) and we expect you to wear these while you are on duty. Staff must wear their name badge whilst at work.

Staff must be aware of the health and safety implications of their work and take appropriate precautions to avoid accidents.

We will provide appropriate corporate clothing free of charge and replace it when appropriate. We expect you to keep the items clean and in good condition, and not wear them outside work other than to travel to and from work.

Please speak with the **Group's Procurement team** for more details of clothing and equipment.

You must return any corporate clothing, name badges and/or photo identification to your line manager if leaving your employment with us.

4.9

Use of personal mobiles, email, internet and social media

4.9.1

Use of personal mobiles

We understand that personal mobile phones are part of everyday life. Personal mobiles should not be used during working hours unless for agreed work purposes in line with the acceptable usage procedure or emergencies, please restrict their use to breacktimes where possible. You must also not record any conversations or meetings with service users, staff or colleagues with your mobile phone or any other device.

4.9.2

Use of email and internet

Some roles may require you to use email and the internet. If this applies to you it is important that you use the system appropriately and for business purposes only. You must adhere to the **Acceptable Usage Policy and Procedure**. If you cannot access this, ask your line manager for more details. Breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

4.9.3

Social media

Social media offers Sanctuary significant business opportunities but it also poses a risk to our reputation. To mitigate risks, staff use of social media, inside and outside of work, is governed by the **Social Media Policy and Procedure**.

Staff may choose to say where they work online, but regardless of whether you explicitly state that you are a Sanctuary employee or not, you are required to uphold the standards that Sanctuary expects. This means everyone must take responsibility for the content they post. If a customer contacts you on social media, please do not reply, but instead contact the Social Media team on social.media@sanctuary-housing.co.uk or 01905 335358 for advice.

If you use social media, please make sure you have read and understood the policy and procedure.

Some staff may be invited to post on social media for the business and will have prior permission from their line manager, Group Head of PR and Communications, and Head of HR Services.

5

Our commitment to you

- 5.1 Communicating with you
- 5.2 Induction
- 5.3 Health and safety
- 5.4 Retirement

- 5.5 Health and wellbeing
- 5.6 Equality and diversity
- 5.7 Learning and development
- 5.8 Ending your contract
- 5.9 Help and support

5.1

Communicating with you



We believe that good communication between staff at all levels is essential to ensure we achieve our business aims.

Some of the ways we will communicate with you about the business include a monthly Core Brief, team meetings, one-to-ones, our intranet 'Solis', notice boards and this employee staff handbook.

OneSanctuary HR

If you can access **OneSanctuary HR**, you can view your personal information.

You can use **OneSanctuary HR** to:

- ▶ update your personal details;
- ▶ book holidays;
- ▶ complete expense claims; and
- ▶ record sick leave and other leave.

You can also review your current employment details and salary details. Your payslips are also accessed from **OneSanctuary HR**.

If you do not have access to **OneSanctuary HR**, please speak to your manager who can access information for you.

5.2

Induction

We are committed to welcoming all new employees into the organisation and ensuring that you are properly equipped with the initial information you need to make a positive start to your career with us.

We will require you to undertake compulsory courses and you may also be asked to attend specific courses that are relevant to your role. We hope you will find your induction useful and that you enjoy working with us.

Please refer to the **Learning and Development Policy and Procedure**.

5.3

Health and safety

Employee responsibility

Staff members at various levels within the organisation may have specific functions to fulfil in relation to health and safety management systems.

Health and safety legislation places legal duties on all staff to take care of their own safety and that of others, to co-operate with the organisation in matters relating to health and safety, not to interfere with or misuse anything provided for health and safety and to resolve or otherwise report all problems which staff feel is unsafe.

In order to comply with these general duties all employees must:

- ▶ observe the **Group Health and Safety Policy and Procedure** and the associated **Group procedures**;
- ▶ co-operate and assist in the effective completion of risk assessments and the carrying out of any subsequent actions;
- ▶ report to their manager any shortcomings, defects or hazards in working practices, equipment or processes that may be a risk to the health and safety of themselves or others in the course of their duties;
- ▶ maintain good housekeeping standards within the workplace at all times;



- ▶ use protective clothing and safety equipment provided for their particular work in the correct manner; and
- ▶ report any incident or accident, including near misses, by calling the **Group's Accident Reporting Line on 0800 916 1466**, or by **accessing the online reporting form on Solis** and notify to their manager immediately to enable action to be taken.

Emergency procedures

Within all our workplaces we clearly state what to do when:

- ▶ Fire is discovered

- ▶ You need to evacuate

You must ensure that you are familiar with these emergency procedures, and also with the procedures in your work area for first aid and the reporting of accidents.

You can find more information on manager's health and safety responsibilities and general guidance by contacting the **Group Health and Safety team** located at Sanctuary's Worcester office.

5.4

Retirement

If you are considering retirement, we would appreciate you giving us as much notice as possible, so we can support you as best we can for your future retirement plans.

As a minimum, you must give us notice in writing as set out in your Terms and Conditions of Employment. Once we are aware of your intentions to retire, you will receive a letter from HR Direct with useful information for your upcoming retirement.

Please refer to the **Retirement Policy and Procedure** for further details.

5.5

Health and wellbeing

All Sanctuary staff have the opportunity to access the following voluntary schemes and discounts which enable you to benefit from preferential rates while employed here:

- ▶ Voluntary health cash plan
- ▶ Voluntary private medical insurance scheme

- ▶ Discounted health club membership

- ▶ Free health assessments

For further information please refer to the Reward team by contacting the **Corporate Shared Service Centre..**

Group life assurance

We provide life assurance to some of our staff. Your Terms and Conditions of Employment provides details of whether you are eligible for this benefit. If you require any further information, please contact **HR Direct**.

Mental health support

Sanctuary is a signatory of Time to Change, marking its continued commitment to supporting staff who may be experiencing mental health issues and ending mental health discrimination. A number of staff are trained in Mental Health First Aid to help people with mental health issues who may be experiencing a crisis. To find out more please speak with your HR Business Partner or manager.

5.6

Equality and diversity

All staff should ensure they follow our policies and principles on equality and diversity. Equality and diversity issues affect every area of our work – providing services, making decisions on buying goods and services, and as an employer. All members of the local community, residents, other customers, suppliers and staff have a right to be treated with fairness and equality. We have an equality and diversity strategy called **'Fairness for All'** which we expect you to follow.

The law gives you protection against discrimination based on your race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, age, religion or belief, class, appearance, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, illness, or any other matter which may cause a person to be treated with prejudice.

We are committed to protecting our staff and customers from discrimination. When providing

care and housing services, and employing staff to provide these services, we will ensure we provide equal opportunities and treat everybody fairly. We have the following principles:

- ▶ We will not treat any person or group of people applying for care services, housing, jobs or contracts less favourably than any other, for any reason.
- ▶ We will actively support all groups so that they benefit from our care and housing services.

We will identify the needs of groups who are affected by discrimination.
- ▶ As an employer, we will work to employ staff from all groups. If necessary, we will provide special training so that people from those groups can compete or qualify for positions within our organisation.
- ▶ To help fulfil our commitment to equal opportunities and diversity, we will collect and monitor records on the backgrounds of people who apply for services and jobs.
- ▶ When hiring contractors and other agencies, we will act in line with our commitment to equality and diversity.

5.7

Learning and development



Sanctuary Learning Academy

The **Learning Academy** (our internal learning and development team) offers a wide range of courses, workshops and programmes to support the learning needs of staff and the Group.

Whenever possible, we want to encourage you to take part in learning and development activities that are beneficial to you and the Group.

As a Sanctuary member of staff, learning and development is available to you in a variety of ways:

Identifying your learning needs

Your current and future learning needs will be identified with your manager during one-to-ones or during your appraisal.

Required training

To carry out your job and to ensure the required standards are met, you will be invited to attend training opportunities depending on the nature of your role. We will always try to organise this at a time that is convenient for you. If this needs to take place outside of your normal working hours, your manager will discuss this with you.

Career progression

We recognise that you may want to change careers while working for Sanctuary. If this is something you wish to do, we have development opportunities designed to support you.

For more information, please discuss with your manager.

Standing in for senior staff

You may be asked to stand in for a more senior employee, which would be an excellent opportunity to develop your knowledge and career. If you fully or partially undertake the duties of a more senior post (for a period of longer than six weeks) to cover a significant or unexpected staff shortage, or where cover is required to meet regulatory

requirements, for example CQC staffing ratios, you will receive an allowance equivalent to the difference in salary (or a pro-rated proportion if part-time) of the senior post. The payment is made in accordance with the percentage of duties being performed. For further information please refer to the **Recognition Awards Policy and Procedure**.

Training for managers

We are committed to developing our managers so they have the skills they need to perform their roles effectively. As well as our own leadership and management development programmes, we also offer a range of leadership and management courses and qualifications. Please contact the **Learning Academy** for further details.

Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF)

QCF qualifications are nationally recognised qualifications based on learning and assessment in the workplace. We are an accredited assessment centre for QCF qualifications with the Institute

of Leadership and Management (ILM) and City & Guilds and you can train with us to achieve one of these qualifications. Contact the **Learning Academy** for further details.

Booking training

You must speak to your manager about any training you think would be of benefit to you and obtain their authorisation before you can put your name forward. Your manager must give priority for training in line with:

- ▶ your current role; and
- ▶ the skills Sanctuary requires.



Training costs

If appropriate, and following your manager's approval, we will pay for the following items when you undertake training:

- ▶ Travel
- ▶ Meals
- ▶ Accommodation
- ▶ Business phone calls

Please refer to the **Learning and Development Policy and Procedure**.

Claiming costs back from you

If you leave within two years of receiving payments from us for training expenses, you may be required to pay back some or all of these costs. Generally, you will have to pay back the full amount, less 1/24 for each complete month you have worked since you attended the training.

If you complete a QCF or other professional qualification with us, you may be required to pay back some or all of the costs if you leave before finishing the course or within two years of finishing it.

Please speak to your manager to find out if this applies to you.

Further education and professional qualifications

Please contact your manager or **the Learning Academy** to find out:

- ▶ how to apply for further education and other professional qualifications;
- ▶ which of these you are eligible for; and
- ▶ what we will pay towards the cost.

5.8

Ending your contract

If you want to resign from your job, you must inform your manager in writing providing the appropriate period of notice, as set out in your Terms and Conditions of Employment. We will calculate any outstanding annual leave we owe you and we will pay you for this unless you arrange to take the time off. Tax and other deductions will apply to this payment.

If you have taken more annual leave than you were entitled to, we will take holiday pay from your final salary to cover this.



5.9

Help and support

5.9.1

Employee Advice Service

All employees have access to the **Employee Advice Service (EAS)**. This free service enables you to get confidential advice designed to help you deal with a range of life events or circumstances. The service, which includes telephone counselling and information services, is available to access 24 hours a day, 365 days per year via a free phone number and is completely independent from Sanctuary. You can use the service for a wide range of support, including the following:

- ▶ Emotional and personal problems such as stress, anxiety, depression, dealing with death, anger and sexual identity.
- ▶ Legal advice on most matters including advice about benefits you may be entitled to.
- ▶ Financial support, such as guidance on dealing with debt and budgeting, and expert advice on any UK tax problem.
- ▶ Family matters such as relationship issues and childcare.

- ▶ Issues at work, including relationships, stress, career and other difficulties.
- ▶ Drugs and alcohol related matters, including prescribed and non-prescribed drugs.
- ▶ Other issues, including consumer rights, diets, smoking, health, support groups, and advice on travel vaccinations.

The experienced EAS professionals are qualified, experienced counsellors who will offer help and support in a professional, friendly and non-judgemental manner. The service is confidential and your information will not be shared with us or any other organisation.

The EAS leaflet that was enclosed with your contract explains more about this service and the various options to access it. You can also find details on Solis, from the **Corporate Shared Service Centre** or your line manager.

We hope you will find this service helpful.



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Sanctuary Group is a trading name of Sanctuary Housing Association, an exempt charity.

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