COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

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1. Purpose

This policy is to be accepted and observed by all members, staff and volunteers within Four Pillars. Breaches of the policy may be regarded as gross misconduct.

2. Ownership

This is the Compassionate Leave Policy of Four Pillars. The ownership of this policy is to that of the Four Pillars board of trustees, who discharges its implementation to the management of Four Pillars. The management may discharge duties to a nominated member of staff or volunteer.

3. Statement of policy

Our policy is to provide guidance on compassionate Leave to employees, volunteers and service users. We also accept responsibility for all other people who may be affected by our activities.

4. Principles of policy

4.1 We understand that sadly employees will experience upsetting and difficult situations in their lives from time to time, such as a close family member falling seriously ill.
4.2 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that employees who are going through any such situations know how to request time off if they need it and access the support available.
4.3 We aim to create an open and supportive workplace where managers and employees can discuss any issues associated with compassionate leave.
4.4 This policy sets out the support the Company will offer employees in this situation and the process to request time off.

5. Events covered by this policy

5.1 This policy applies in circumstances where employees are going through difficult and upsetting situations in their personal life where they may need support from Four Pillars
5.2 This includes, but is not limited to, events such as;
5.2.1 A close family member being seriously ill or injured
5.2.2 Witnessing a traumatic incident i.e. a car accident or an accident at work
5.2.3 Witnessing a criminal act i.e. an assault, or
5.2.4 Experiencing damage to their home in the event of a flood or fire

5.3 This policy does not cover bereavement as we have separate policies that apply to this.
5.4 Please read our bereavement leave policy if you are going through bereavement or
5.5 our parental bereavement leave policy for information on time off and the support available if you are going through the loss of a child under the age of 18.

6. Entitlement

6.1Employees are entitled to compassionate leave under this policy in relation to a:
6.1.1 Spouse or civil partner
6.1.2 Parent
6.1.3 Child
6.1.4 Grandparent
6.1.5 Sibling
6.1.6 Stepchild/parent

6.2 We recognise that employees may need compassionate leave in relation to someone other than those set out above.
6.3 In this situation, we encourage you to talk to your manager if you need support or time off.

6.4 We cannot guarantee that requests for time off will be authorised in these circumstances, but your manager will use their discretion when considering your request and discuss the options available with you.

7. Our responsibilities

7.1 Managers will maintain an open-door policy so that employees experiencing upsetting or difficult situations feel comfortable approaching them if they need support or time off.
7.2 They will support you to talk about your current situation and will not make presumptions about how it is affecting you.
7.3 If you need additional support at any time, we encourage you to speak to a mental health first aider or third sector organisation.

8. Your responsibilities

8.1 So that your manager can fully support you if you are going through an upsetting or difficult situation, we encourage you to speak to your manager as soon as possible, who will treat the matter with complete confidence.
8.2 Any requests for time off should be agreed in advance with your manager.
8.3 For your manager to implement the most beneficial support for you, we encourage you to be as open and forthcoming as possible.
8.4 We understand that these discussions may be difficult and upsetting but would like to assure you that they will be met with sensitivity, empathy and care.
8.5 However, we recognise that this is a sensitive issue so if you don't feel comfortable discussing your situation with your manager, you are encouraged to speak with another senior member of staff, HR or member of the Board of Trustees.

9. Time off

9.1 We recognise that employees' needs will vary depending on their situation, therefore we feel that it is not appropriate to have fixed rules for time off.
9.2 If you need time off, you should speak to your line Manager, who may agree this with you, taking into account your personal circumstances and the needs of the business.
9.3 Options for time off may include taking paid/unpaid leave, booking annual leave (which will be considered in accordance with our usual annual leave procedures) or taking banked time off in lieu.

10. Return to work

10.1 On your return to work, your manager will talk to you to discuss what adjustments can be implemented to support you.
10.2 This might include
10.2.1 phased return
10.2.2 amended duties
10.2.3 amended working hours
10.2.4 flexible working arrangements
10.2.5 agreeing non-client facing duties
10.3 Please rest assured that we will do everything reasonably possible to support you and ease your transition back to work.

11. Training

11.1 We provide training to all our staff on compassionate leave and how they can ask for help or support their colleagues.
11.2 We ensure that all levels of management are trained on the types of situations where compassionate leave may apply, how to hold discussions with employees in these situations and adjustments that can be made to an employee's role to remove or lessen any effects the employee is experiencing.

12. Bullying and harassment

12.1 There is an expectation on all employees to conduct themselves in a supportive, sensitive and open-minded manner towards colleagues.

12.2 We maintain a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment and will treat any and all complaints seriously.

12.3 If you feel that you have been mistreated in any way by a colleague, customer, client or supplier because of matters related to compassionate leave, please speak to the Chief Executive

13. Responsibilities

Overall and final responsibility for Compassionate Leave Policy is shared collectively by the trustees.

The trustees delegate the responsibility of following this policy to the management team.

The management will:

- Arrange for the implementation of this policy in consultation with staff and volunteers
- Arrange for the adequate instruction and training of staff and volunteers in all matters related to this policy
- Arrange for the contents of this policy to be known to all staff and volunteers

The staff and volunteers of Four Pillars have a duty to:

- Follow this policy
- Co-operate with the management to ensure that the requirements of relevant statutory provisions are complied with
- Report potential or actual hazards as soon as possible

14. Risk Assessment

The trustees will ensure that all risk assessments are undertaken for any part of the charity's activities to which they are applicable, copies of these risk assessments are available upon written request.

15. Premises

The management team will ensure that all premises used by Four Pillars whether owned, leased or rented are:

- Health and safety compliant
- A full risk assessment has been completed
- Insurances are in place and displayed
- Fences are erect and secure at all times, if applicable
- Gates are manned at all times, if applicable
- Any potential danger is reported to the management

16. Reports

The delegated manager/person in charge at each event shall be responsible for making any necessary reports relating to this policy or ensuring that others make such reports.

17. Policy Development

The trustees shall endeavour to progressively develop the charity's policy on Compassionate Leave Policy in response to risks and hazards identified. Specific procedures and policies so

developed shall be appended to this document and form part of the charity's statement on compassionate Leave.

18. Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed annually by a member of the Four Pillars board of trustees. If appropriate, action will be taken as necessary to update this policy to ensure effective delivery on the objectives laid out at the start of this document.