LIFE EVENTS

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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 Life Events 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 during life events 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 Although changes often happen in everyday life, we recognise that sometimes these 'life events' can have a significant detrimental impact on individuals, both at home and work.
4.2 In this policy, 'life event' means a very important event in your life or change in your circumstances, this could include, but is not limited to;
4.2.1 Divorce or separation
4.2.2 Family breakdown
4.2.3 Changes in your personal finances
4.2.4 Changes in your personal wellbeing
4.2.5 Or moving house.

4.3 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that employees who are going through a life event know how to access help if they need it.
4.4 We aim to create an open and supportive workplace where managers and employees can discuss any issues associated with life events.

5. Employee responsibilities

5.1 It is important that, as an employee, you prioritise your personal wellbeing.
5.2 If you are experiencing problems with any aspect of your role because of a life event, please speak to your manager, who will treat the matter with complete confidence.
5.3 So that we can provide you with the best support possible, we encourage you to be open in these conversations.
5.4 However, we recognise that this may be 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 a member of the Board of Trustees.

6. Employer responsibilities

6.1 Managers will maintain an open door policy so that employees feel comfortable in approaching them.
6.2 They will support you to talk openly about your current situation and will not make presumptions about how it is affecting you.
6.3 Your individual needs will be addressed sensitively and confidentiality will be maintained.
6.4 If you need additional support, we would encourage you to speak to our mental health first aiders, or third sector organisation that can offer guidance and support
6.5 Where possible, your manager will also signpost you to any relevant external information and support that is available.

7. Requests for time off

7.1 We recognise that life events can affect individuals in different ways so if you need time off work, you should speak to your manager who will carefully consider your individual situation and, where possible, agree appropriate time off.
7.2 This could include taking annual leave, banked time off in lieu or unpaid leave.
7.3 In some circumstances, you will have a legal right to time off (i.e. time off for dependants) or you may be entitled to time off under a different organisation policy.
7.4 Your manager will tell you if this is the case and explain your entitlements.
7.5 Employees who are going through a life event are entitled to 4 days paid life event leave during their employment with us.
7.6 If you want to take this leave, you must agree the time off in advance with your manager.

8. Flexible working

8.1 If you need to request changes to your hours or working pattern, home working or hybrid working (where you work some hours from your workplace and some hours from home or another location), please speak to your manager who will explain the process you need to follow to make a flexible working request.

9. Bullying and harassment

9.1 There is an expectation on all employees to conduct themselves in a supportive, sensitive and open-minded manner towards colleagues.
9.2 We maintain a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment and will treat any and all complaints seriously.
9.3 If you feel that you have been mistreated in any way by a colleague, customer, client or supplier because of matters related to a life event, please speak to the Chief Executive

10. Responsibilities

Overall and final responsibility for Life Events 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

11. 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.

12. 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

13. 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.

14. Policy Development

The trustees shall endeavour to progressively develop the charity's policy on Life Events 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 during life events.

15. 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.