



Dudley Mind Code of Conduct Policy

Introduction

1.1 The reputation of Dudley Mind is as an open, fair and professional organisation a high standard of integrity and commitment to services is dependent upon the conduct and behaviour of its staff.

1.2 The words "staff" & "employees" are used interchangeably in this code. By those words we mean permanent, full time, part time and temporary staff working for Dudley Mind, Board of Management, sessional workers, volunteers, secondees and placements.

1.3 The Code of Conduct forms part of the contract of employment and staff are required to abide by it at all times. Breaches of the Code of Conduct could lead to Disciplinary action.

Principles

Staff are expected to put the needs of service users as the first priority of their work. They must maintain professionalism and objectivity at all times. Behaviour is expected to be at all times above reproach, without regard to circumstances. Staff should base their conduct on the following principles:

2.1 All staff are responsible and accountable for their decisions and actions. Staff are directly and fully accountable to their line manager and the Chief Executive Officer and have a wider responsibility to the Board of Management, users and funders, and must at all times act in the best interests of Dudley Mind.

2.2 Staff must ensure impartiality, efficiency and courtesy in their delivery of services and impartiality in their appointment of employees or the awarding of contracts.

2.3 All decisions must be made in line with the aims, objectives and philosophy of Dudley Mind.

2.4 Any conflicts of interests between staff duties of employment and external interests must be declared to the appropriate line manager or Chief Executive Officer in writing.

2.5 Staff must not place themselves under any financial or other obligations to other persons or organisations, which might influence or try to exert influence on their work for Dudley Mind.

3 Responsibility of Dudley Mind as an employer

Managers are responsible for ensuring:

3.1 That staff reporting to them are aware of this Code of Conduct.

3.2 That staff understand Dudley Mind governance arrangements and particularly the role of the board

4 General Standards

4.1 Staff are required to treat everyone with courtesy and respect at all times.

4.2 Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity.

4.3 From time to time staff will have to deal with difficult people. In such circumstances they should maintain high standards of professionalism and fairness. Rudeness, offensiveness, threatening violent or abusive behaviour is not acceptable in any circumstances. If you are subject to unacceptable behaviour, advise your line manager.

4.4 Racist, sexist or homophobic behaviour or behaviour which discriminates against or demeans others because of their age, disability or religious beliefs, is not acceptable in any circumstances.

4.5 Staff should be reliable and punctual and be able to demonstrate honesty, integrity and fairness. Staff should avoid doing things which might imply an uncaring attitude.

4.6 Staff are expected to dress appropriately, safely and not in a way that could be taken to show disrespect for those they are working with. (See Dress Code Attached).

4.7 Staff should be aware of and work to any service standards which apply to their department.

4.8 Alcohol, drugs or substance misuse impairs judgement and staff can put themselves, their work colleagues and members of the public at risk if they undertake their duties whilst under the influence of drink, drugs and dangerous substances. Misuse of any such substance whilst staff are at work, or that affects their work will be treated as gross misconduct. Staff should seek prior authorisation from Chief Executive before consuming alcohol during work time. Staff who have been prescribed drugs which may effect their work must declare this to their Line Manager or HR Officer.

4.9 Staff should abide by Dudley Mind Health and Safety procedures at all times. Staff have a responsibility to ensure that their conduct does not endanger the health or safety of themselves or other employees, visitors, service users and customers.

5 Financial Conduct

- 5.1 Staff should ensure that current policies, procedures, financial standing orders, internal controls and other regulations are followed at all times. Suggestions for improvement may be discussed with their line manager. No changes to financial procedures etc may be made without Board approval.
- 5.2 Staff are expected to take reasonable measures to protect the charity's property and assets from theft, damage, waste or misuse. Staff must ensure that they use funds & resources entrusted to them for the purpose intended, and in a responsible manner.
- 5.3 Staff should only use the Charity's monies and assets for their intended and lawful purpose. Staff should strive to ensure value for money for the Charity, its residents, trainees and other service users.
- 5.4 Staff should be aware that it is a serious criminal and disciplinary offence to corruptly receive or give any monetary gift, loan, fee, reward or other advantage in return for doing (or not doing) anything or showing favour to any person or organisation. All gifts received or given must be declared in the Gifts Register.
- 5.5 If staff are aware of potentially corrupt or fraudulent activities by other employees they have a duty to report this to their Manager or follow the Whistleblowing Procedure. (To do something corruptly, in this context, means to do it dishonestly).
- 5.6 Staff should not do anything which would risk the integrity of the Charity's Information Technology systems. This would include the use of unauthorised or unlicensed software on the Charity's system. All software or disks incorporated onto the Charity's system must be virus checked and approved by the IT Officer. Staff must not copy software products licensed to Dudley Mind. (See IT policy)

Staff who have concerns over the misuse of Finance can follow the Whistleblowing Procedure

6 Relationships

- 6.1 Staff are responsible to the trustees through the line management structure leading to the management Board and the Chief Executive Officer. If their work brings staff into contact with trustees, mutual respect between them is essential to the good running of the organisation.
- 6.2 If staff are involved in the delivery of services, they should always remember their responsibilities to service users, the community and ensure courteous, efficient and impartial service delivery to all groups & individuals. Everyone must be treated with respect.
- 6.3 Staff must never allow any personal relationship to conflict with the duties of their employment, or with the best interests of a service user. They must never allow themselves to be compromised by or take advantage of their relationship with a service user.

6.4 Many of our service users are vulnerable and staff can be in a position of power over them, even when they are over the age of consent. Any form of sexual relationship between a current member of staff and a current service user is strictly prohibited and will be regarded as gross misconduct.

For example:

Sexual advances or sexual innuendo are unacceptable in relationships between staff & service users. All staff should give due attention to decency and privacy.

Other examples of relationships with service users that should be avoided are:

- Sexual relationships between a member of staff and a service user.
- The making of personal loans to or borrowing goods or money from a service user
- gambling
- receiving money without authority
- asking them to carry out paid or unpaid private work or services
- purchasing or selling from or to them
- conducting private correspondence or giving them home addresses or contact numbers

6.5 Any member of staff who feels compromised in the course of their dealings with a service user must inform their line manager without delay.

6.6 Staff must not invite or influence a service user to make a will or trust under which they are named as executor, trustee or beneficiary. If handling service users' money or valuables they must take great care, including the receipting of every transaction.

6.7 If staff are involved in the award of tenancies or grants, or the allocation of housing or the appointment of jobs for trainees or other service users they must ensure absolute impartiality in the decisions made & avoid any conflict of interest.

Relationships with the Press and Media

6.8 Staff must not, other than in accordance with Chief Executive's agreement, pass or distribute to the press or media any information or materials relating to Dudley Mind. Staff will be informed any press releases that may effect their employment with Dudley Mind

All enquiries must be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer.

6.9 Similarly, staff should not write letters to the press or write media articles about Dudley Mind and its activities, or write letters or articles in their capacity as a Dudley Mind's employee without consultation with the Chief Executive Officer.

6.10 Staff must not make comments or statements to the press unless they have been specifically authorised to make such statements. In other circumstances, if approached by the media staff should take details about the enquiry and contact the Chief Executive.

6.11 inappropriate contact with the media will be deemed as gross misconduct and may lead to disciplinary action including dismissal.

7 Tendering and Purchasing

7.1 Staff involved in buying goods or services on behalf of the Charity should ensure that:

- Decisions provide the best value for money;
- Decisions are taken objectively and without favour to one supplier or contractor; competition between contractors/suppliers is fair and open;
- Appropriate procedures are followed, e.g., using an approved suppliers' list or following tendering procedures.

7.2 Staff should avoid using Dudley Mind's contractors and suppliers for private purposes. Where this is unavoidable they should not get a preferential service as a result of their employment with the Charity. Consent should be sought, via their line manager, or their CEO before using a supplier or contractor in any circumstances where there could be a possibility of undue influence or preferential treatment.

8 Employment Matters

8.1 In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, staff should not be involved in an appointment (see Recruitment and Selection Policy) where they are related to an applicant, or have a close personal relationship with them outside work. Any such relationship should be declared to their line manager, whether or not they are involved in the appointment process.

8.2 Staff should not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion or pay adjustments for any employee who is a relative, partner or close personal friend.

8.3 Staff must not canvass the support of colleagues or trustees for any candidate applying for employment. They should resist & report any attempt by others to do so.

8.4 If an employee or a member of their family is a resident, trainee or other service user, they must not use their position as an employee to gain any advantage or preferential treatment.

8.5 Staff should not line manage, either directly or via a chain of management, a spouse or partner or member of their immediate family (child, grandchild, brother, sister or parent or grandparent of themselves or their spouse or partner). Where such relationships exist at the time of the introduction of this policy or arise subsequently as a result of a change in family or other circumstances all staff involved must inform their line manager immediately. The line managers should then consult both HR and the relevant CEO with the objective of removing all possible conflicts of interest as soon as practicable.

9 Outside Activities

9.1 Dudley Mind has no desire to place restrictions on, or interfere with an employee's private life. However there may be circumstances when an employee's external interests affect their employment.

9.2 All staff must obtain written consent from their Line Manager/CEO before taking outside paid employment or setting up their own business which may have an impact of Dudley Minds work. Consent must not be unreasonably refused. Outside employment or business interests must not interfere in any way with their existing job and should not conflict with the interests of their job or the Charity.

9.3 If a member of staff is invited to deliver a paper at a conference or to write an article by virtue of their connection with Dudley Mind they should seek line management approval.

9.4 Staff should obtain written permission from their CEO before undertaking voluntary activities if those activities or organisations are in some way related to the activities of the Charity, (e.g., membership of the Committee of a local voluntary agency with whom the Charity has contact, or of the Committee/Board of a housing organisation). Staff should take particular care when involved with any organization that might be in competition with the Charity.

9.5 There may be circumstances in which conduct outside work, while not directly related to employment, might seriously contradict Dudley Mind values and/or adversely affect the reputation and perceived integrity of Dudley Mind. There may be circumstances when conduct outside work, may result in disciplinary action being taken against an employee. Employees should, in particular, be aware that they are expected to uphold Dudley Mind equality and diversity and child/adult protection policies at all times.

Use of Facilities

9.6 No paid outside work of any sort should be undertaken at an employee's Dudley Mind place of work, and no use should be made of office, workshop, or other facilities (such as telephone, postage, or access to secretarial support) in connection with such work. This prohibition includes the receipt of correspondence and the use of a Dudley Mind e-mail address. Incoming telephone calls and e-mails which are in connection with matters outside work must be discouraged. The prohibition extends to unpaid or voluntary activity unless staff have the written permission of their line manager and the use of facilities is minimal. The prohibition does not extend to work in connection with the trade union agreement.

Political Activity

9.7 It is important that the Charity is seen to be politically neutral and not linked, directly or indirectly to any political organisation. Staff are free to join political groups, apart from those referred to in the Staff Guidance Note: Racist Political Organisations (and work and campaign on their behalf). However, such political activity must not compromise the Charity's neutrality.

9.8 Staff should discuss with their Line Manager any intentions to stand for political office. There may be circumstances in which holding office may conflict with the Charity's interests.

10 Convictions

10.1 Dudley Mind policy is that staff convicted of an offence in a work setting will normally be subject to disciplinary action. This could mean dismissal where the offence involves violence, sexual offending, murder, theft, fraud, serious criminal damage, use of illegal drugs or serious driving offences, (for example dangerous driving) that might bring the organisation in disrepute. Staff must disclose any new, pending or past convictions to their line Manger or HR officer immediately.

11 Gifts and Hospitality

11.1 Employees who receive gifts and/or hospitality should not place themselves under an obligation that might influence or be perceived to influence their future decisions or conduct. All offers of gifts should be recorded in the Gift Register. The Register should record whether the gift was accepted or declined and if accepted, why.

11.2 Staff should not accept cash or personal gifts with a significant monetary value under any circumstances. Gifts of nominal value, i.e., pens and similar items can be accepted

11.3 Staff should be cautious when accepting hospitality, ensuring that it is appropriate and not too lavish. Staff should be careful that the receipt of hospitality could not be construed as a way of exerting improper influence over them or Dudley Mind. As a general rule they should not accept hospitality which Dudley Mind would not reciprocate in similar circumstances. For example it would be acceptable for staff to attend a drinks reception given by a sponsor or funder or potential

11.4 Offers of hospitality should be recorded in the Hospitality Register. The Register should record whether the hospitality was accepted or declined and if accepted, why. Hospitality given on behalf of Dudley Mind should also be recorded in the Register (see 11.7).

11.5 If staff have any doubt about hospitality offered to them, they should either decline or seek advice from their line manager.

11.6 When declining hospitality staff should be courteous, but draw the attention of the person making the offer to the existence of this Code.

The Hospitality Register

11.7 The register is maintained by the Finance Officer. Entries may be made writing.

12 Declarations of Interests

12.1 Employees, including volunteers and placements will be required to make a written disclosure to the CEO indicating any connections which they have with external organisations, contractors/suppliers and any outside employment declaring such interest they must consider any connections of their family or

close friends which might conflict with those of the Charity. Staff considering taking on any outside activity should also refer to the requirements of section 9.

12.2 Employees should declare any conflict of interest as and when it arises during the course of the Charity's business or other activities. Declarations should include connections or interests relating to the housing of tenants/applicants, letting of contracts, employment of staff, the sale or acquisition of property etc.

12.3 Staff should declare to their manager if they are a member of any organisation not open to the public which has secrecy about its rules or membership or conduct.

12.4 Staff will be asked annually to declare any outside interests and to sign if they do not have any.

Appendix 1: Staff Guidance Note: Discriminatory Political Organisations

This guidance note has been produced to assist staff where organisations known for expressing racist views are active in the forums where Dudley Mind works. It must be read along side Dudley Mind Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discriminatory Practice Policy. Dudley Mind will not in any circumstances work with or for representatives of discriminatory political organisations and takes the view that any member of Dudley Mind staff found to be in membership of the BNP, Combat 18, or National Front or any other discriminatory organisation will be dismissed under the Disciplinary Procedure. However, we recognise that while working with and for local authorities and some community groups we may find ourselves in forums where these organisations are represented (e.g. where a BNP councillor is a member of a council committee with which Dudley Mind is working). In these circumstances it might be appropriate to continue, or enter into new work, in the interests of the communities, groups and individuals our services are aimed at. Care must be taken however to ensure that Dudley Mind is not seen to be condoning in any way the views of discriminatory political organisations.

Appendix 2: Dudley Mind's Equality Statement:

Dudley Mind is committed to promoting equality and diversity in all our services and to give equality of opportunity to our diverse service user and employee group. Equal opportunities does not mean treating everyone the same – it means recognising people's differences and adapting the way we work in order to ensure that everyone is given a fair and equal chance.

The organisation will not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination against any person on grounds of race, colour, cultural or ethnic origin, nationality, religion, belief, political opinion or affiliation, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, disability, or any other criterion not relevant to the point at issue.

November 2008

It is also the responsibility of all staff in their daily actions, decisions and behaviour to endeavour to promote these concepts, to comply with all relevant legislation and to ensure that they do not discriminate against colleagues, service users, volunteers or any other person associated with the Company.

We will:

- Not discriminate on these grounds in the terms and conditions offered to workers or job applicants. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability.
- Give all staff equal opportunities training.
- Keep a confidential record of the ethnic origin, sex, disability and age of everyone who applies to us for employment or support.
- Make sure everyone we work with or who works for us knows about our policy and adheres to it.
- Not tolerate acts that breach the Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Policy and all such breaches or alleged breaches will be taken seriously and will be subject to disciplinary action where appropriate.
- Take into account good practice in equal opportunities when we update our policies and procedures.

Dudley Mind is committed to a continuing programme of action to make this policy effective and bring it to the attention of all employees.

A full copy of the equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice policy will be made available to all staff, service users, volunteers, contractors, stakeholders and anyone else we work with.

Appendix 3:Dudley Mind Dress Code

Dudley Mind believes that we should have a clear dress code to present a positive and professional image of the Charity. The Code applies to all staff whether or not they are working in direct contact with the public, and whether they are male/female. The code is intended to help manage the 'impression' we give to members of the public, staff and clients. The code should help staff to think about the way they appear to service users, partners and funders. Line managers will have the discretion to determine the appropriate standards of dress for staff reporting to them. Staff who wear clothing or jewellery, which causes offence or is inappropriate in any way, will be asked to go home to change or remove the item(s). The following guidelines must be observed by all staff subject to any exceptions, e.g. medical or health & safety reasons:

- We value cultural diversity and recognise that this is reflected in different styles of dress.
- Dudley Mind staff should dress neatly, modestly and appropriately.
- Staff may wear shorts and sleeveless tops but are reminded that such clothing may be contrary to guidelines for staff working in prisons (see below) and may offend some cultural groups.
- Staff are further reminded that they are responsible for protecting themselves from the sun and that Dudley Mind will not accept responsibility for their failure to do so.
- T-shirts or other clothing or accessories with slogans, which may be offensive or which are overtly political or against the aims and objectives of Dudley Mind must not be worn.
- Baseball caps and other headgear may be worn where the manager considers it appropriate.
- If staff listen to music or non-work related audio during their working hours they must ensure that it does not create a poor impression or adversely affect their or their colleagues work.
- Staff will be expected to dress appropriately (smartly) on formal occasions when representing/appearing on behalf of Dudley Mind for example when meeting funders, at legal establishments or public meetings.
- Protective Clothing must be worn, if after a sufficient risk assessment has been conducted, the results deem it necessary (protective clothing will be provided by Dudley Mind).
- Staff should maintain a good standard of Personal Hygiene at all times
- Failure to comply with the code may be regarded as a disciplinary offence if staff do not comply with their manager's reasonable requests to modify their clothing. The Dress Code may be amended from time to time, and staff will be notified of any changes.

Related policies

- Confidentiality
- Bullying and Harassment
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Disclosures
- Data Protection
- E-mail and Internet
- Equality & Diversity
- Grievance Procedures
- Health & Safety
- Information Technology
- Whistleblowing Policy & Procedure
- Gross Misconduct List

Changes

Dudley Mind reserves the right to change the provision of the Code of Conduct Policy by amendment, addition or deletion or substitution of new procedures from time to time at its discretion. Employees will be consulted and notified of any changes by appropriate means.