

## **PEACE CHILDCARE Ltd.**

### **Blog and Social Networking Policy for Staff and Service Users**

PEACE Childcare Limited recognises and accepts that Staff and Service Users may keep personal blogs on the Internet and that social networking sites are a useful way of interacting socially with colleagues, family and friends.

While the organisation does not wish to discourage Staff or Service Users from accessing these sites, it expects certain standards of conduct to be observed to protect both its legitimate business interests and Staff and Service Users from the dangers of inappropriate use.

Staff and Service Users may have your membership on such sites set to friends and family, you are reminded that they can forward the content of your blogs on to others and because you have no control over this process, you are reminded that none of your postings are truly private.

This policy applies both inside and outside the workplace.

#### **PROCEDURE FOR STAFF**

Staff must not access their blogs or social networking sites during working hours.

Access using the organisation's IT systems is restricted to official breaks, unless specific permission is granted.

Staff must not post information on a blog or social networking site which is commercially sensitive and/or is confidential to the organisation, its suppliers or customers.

Staff must not make reference on a social networking site to the Organisation, its employees, its customers, partners and suppliers.

Any of the aforementioned parties must not be identifiable from any comments posted on an employee's personal blog.

Staff must not post entries on a blog or social networking site which are derogatory, defamatory, discriminatory or offensive in any way, or which could bring the organisation, its employees, its customers, partners and suppliers into disrepute or is likely to have a negative impact on the reputation of any of these parties.

Where you are a member of social networking sites, you are advised that you must not invite customers to be a friend on such a site or to visit their blog.

You should be aware that blogs and social networking posts may create documents which the courts can order to be disclosed for use in litigation.

Consequently, you will be assumed to have written any contentious items unless you can prove definitively that you have not done so.

The organisation will monitor its IT systems as is deemed necessary in order to prevent inappropriate usage.

Hard copy of blog entries which could include screen shots will be used in any disciplinary proceedings.

**DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Employees whose conduct breaches this policy in any way will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the organisation’s disciplinary procedure up to, and including, dismissal.

Any blog entries or comments on social networking sites made inside or outside the workplace that are defamatory, derogatory, or discriminatory about the organisation, its customers, suppliers or employees will be investigated as gross misconduct.

If substantiated, such conduct may lead to summary dismissal after the due process of the organisation’s disciplinary procedure has been followed.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Equal Opportunity Statement and Positive Work Environment Policy.

**PROCEDURE AND POINTS TO NOTE FOR SERVICE USERS**

If Service Users have an issue or complaint they will actively be encouraged to follow PEACE Childcare’s Complaints Procedure.

- Service Users must not post information on a blog or social networking site which is commercially sensitive and/or is confidential to the organisation, its suppliers or customers.
- Service Users must not make reference on a social networking site to the Organisation, its employees, its customers, partners and suppliers.
- Service Users must not post entries on a blog or social networking site which are derogatory, defamatory, discriminatory or offensive in any way, or which could bring the organisation, its employees, its customers, partners and suppliers into disrepute or is likely to have a negative impact on the reputation of any of these parties.

Service Users should be aware that blogs and social networking posts may create documents which the courts can order to be disclosed for use in litigation.

Consequently, you will be assumed to have written any contentious items unless you can prove definitively that you have not done so.

PEACE Childcare will monitor its IT systems as is deemed necessary in order to prevent inappropriate usage.

Hard copy of blog entries which could include screen shots will be used in any disciplinary proceedings.

**Reviewed Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

**Signed: ..... (Chairperson) ..... (Date)**