



# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

BUTLERSLAND INDUSTRIAL ESTATE  
NEW ROSS, CO WEXFORD

TELEPHONE 051-448063 | FAX 0541-448065  
WEBSITE [WWW.CUMAS.IE](http://WWW.CUMAS.IE) | EMAIL [INFO@CUMAS.IE](mailto:INFO@CUMAS.IE)

# WELCOME

At Cumas New Ross we are open and honest in all aspects of our daily tasks. Consistent and constant communication in any organisation, especially where changes occur regularly, are essential to ensure that everyone knows what is going on and how it affects them; hence the original introduction of this Employee Handbook back in 2008 written in full consultation with staff and Board members.

The Board of Directors feel that a Handbook for employees is an essential aid to facilitate easy reference and guidance to know exactly where an employee stands on the majority of matters. The Handbook is for information purposes only; it is not a legal interpretation of policies, agreements or acts of law that might affect the employer/employee relationship and should not be viewed as such.

This is the first version of the Handbook with the changed business name of Cumas New Ross. Changes are normally made in consultation and agreement with current employees and the Board of Directors, unless there is a statutory requirement that is mandatory. Further suggested additions and/or changes are welcome in order to maintain accuracy and for ease of reference.

Robert Smith  
General Manager

February 2014

## TRAVEL EXPENSES AND SUBSISTENCE

All approved business expenses will be reimbursed on the completion of a claim form and provision of receipts for meals and accommodation. A set rate for mileage is used for general travel in the region, with a standard amount paid for longer return journeys. The General Manager will normally approve in advance any travel involving subsistence costs and overnight stays. Payments will be made through the payroll system.

When approval is given for employees to regularly use their own vehicle for work purposes, they must ensure that the company is indemnified under their insurance cover. If an acceptable additional premium is applied and approved by the General Manager the employee will be reimbursed as appropriate.

## FOOTNOTE

Finally, as a reminder, this is an Employee Handbook and by no means comprehensive. There are many policies and procedures pertaining to employment with the company that are available in the workplace and to which you must make yourself familiar. Your comments and suggestions about this Handbook or any company policies are invited and welcomed to improve the support provided to everyone.

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## VISION & MISSION STATEMENTS

### Vision

It is our vision that all Individuals and staff will achieve the highest possible levels of participation and involvement at work, in the community and society in general by the enhancement of and commitment to their rights, wants and needs, opportunities and future aspirations.

In simple terms this is encapsulated by the phrase:

“Individualisation Towards A Better Life”

### Mission

Our mission and purpose is to promote the full integration of people with disabilities into their communities based on the concepts of equal rights and opportunities, dignity and choice. This is achieved through the provision of a quality set of services tailored, in a person centred approach, to the needs and wants of individuals in order that they achieve their maximum potential and lead supported self-directed lives.

## TELEPHONE CONTACT NUMBERS

Our current telephone numbers (051) are:

|                              |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Cumas Activation             | 420536 / 087-6435057 |
| Ard Alainn Residential Home  | 425316 / 087-3444972 |
| Holly Lodge Residential Home | 426922 / 087-1522885 |
| Cumas Design                 | 448063               |
| Cumas Learning               | 448088               |
| Cumas New Ross               | 448063 (Fax 448065)  |
| Pre-School                   | 440040               |

NB: The mobile numbers are normally for use during trips out.

## TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Depending on the work you carry out there may be a requirement for mandatory training such as Medication Management, Occupational First Aid and Manual Handling, or for updated training because of changes in methods or the introduction of new standards or legislation. The company will consider any training and development for self-improvement in a particular position and pay or contribute towards the costs as agreed. In addition, support for other developmental training or education that may indirectly benefit the organisation will be considered. From time to time individuals will also be asked to attend seminars, workshops and conferences relating to their work.

With the introduction of the Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations (PQASSO), a team-based performance and development review will be included along with any necessary training in new statutory standards.

## Hours of Work

The standard working hours are normally a 35 hour week or 70 hour fortnight. Overtime is not generally paid, but approved additional work attracts time off in-lieu to be taken in agreement with management using the appropriate form.

The working day normally includes a 20-minute morning break and an hour for lunch (both paid), with staff remaining on the premises to supervise individuals as required. This will vary for activation and residential employees because of the nature of their work. You will be required to sign a Form OWT1 detailing your working arrangements, which is a statutory requirement.

## Holidays

Full annual leave entitlement is 28 days plus 10 days public holidays; please see the Leave Entitlements section for more details. The entitlement is pro-rated for employees working less than a 35-hour week. Relief staff accrue holiday pay based on 8% of the hours worked and are paid separately for this.

## Notice

Minimum periods of written notice to terminate employment are covered by the relevant legislation.

## Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

You must not disclose any confidential or sensitive information about any person, the company or its business to any third party during or after your employment, except in the course of your employment or as required by law. During or outside of working hours you must not undertake any duties that may cause a conflict of interest with your performance and position within the company.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Cumas New Ross is the business name of Co Wexford Community Workshop (New Ross) Ltd, which was incorporated in September 1975, with service commencing on 26th July 1976 in the Legion of Mary Hall, New Ross.

The company is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors comprising local residents and parents of people with disability. The Board is supported by a General Manager and a Services and Quality Manager with a multi-skilled team of over 30 employees supporting 90+ individuals in relaxed and friendly environments. The service primarily caters for pre-school children and adults with a mild to moderate intellectual disability, with a minimal severe/profound service subject to resources. Some of the individuals may also be on the autistic spectrum, have secondary physical and sensory disabilities or have mental health issues.

The services provided are Pre-School, Learning, Retail Enterprise, Activation, Residential Homes and Supported Independent Living.

The Department of Health through the Health Service Executive (HSE) are the statutory body responsible for disability services nationally and provides the main grant-aid funding to operate the Service, plus ongoing professional support. Having charity status (CHY 5932) funds are also raised through organised events, collection boxes and donations, that are used to enhance the quality of life of the individuals that we support.

The HSE usually refers individuals to the service, with other referrals received from individuals, families and other service providers or agencies. An HSE Occupational Guidance Advisor and/or Liaison Nurse Counsellor must assess each individual with our Services and Quality Manager and agree acceptance with the General Manager.

Development of Cumas New Ross and enhancements to the various current services is a continuous objective, often subject to prior acquisition of additional funding. The service works in close partnership with the HSE, the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies and various other local and national organisations for the greater benefit of individuals, current and future.

## **Date of Commencement and Probationary Period**

The start of work date and length of probation period are both specified. The latter is dependent on the specific post and provides an opportunity for both parties to ensure that they are compatible. An end of probation interview is carried out with a decision on the outcome agreed. Confirmation of acceptance by the company is provided in writing.

## **Duration of Employment**

This part clarifies if the employment is full-time or part-time, permanent or fixed-term, the latter being for a specified period.

## **Remuneration**

Salaries are paid fortnightly on a Friday directly to your bank account, and are subject to Income Tax, PRSI and Universal Charge, plus other agreed deductions e.g. pension contributions and Trades Union fees. Salary levels are applied from the Department of Health Consolidated Salary Scales, with annual increments normally paid in January each year if appropriate. National pay awards are normally implemented on the due date, with ALL awards subject to the receipt of additional funding from the HSE. Some positions currently attract supplementary payments for Saturday or Sunday working and overnight sleep-in duties.

## **Pension**

For permanent contract employees joining the company pension scheme is mandatory.

## Medical

New employees must provide a fitness certificate from their GP, the cost for which (if charged) will be reimbursed.

## Garda Clearance

All employees must complete a Garda Clearance form, the results of which may affect continued employment. It may also be deemed appropriate to seek updated clearances for all employees in future years. Clearances from other countries will also be required.

In the event that information comes to light which was not disclosed prior to employment and which affects your ongoing suitability, this could result in the termination of your employment/rendering of your contract null and void. If new events arise you are obliged to inform your Manager and your employment status will be reviewed in light of this development. Similarly, future legislated changes in job requirements may enforce that some prior misdemeanors are no longer acceptable and will affect continued employment in specific instances.

## Contract of Employment

Everyone is required to sign a Contract of Employment that sets out the main conditions of employment. Agreed and accepted changes to the conditions from time to time will not necessarily require that revised contracts will be issued.

## Job Title and Job Description

The Job Title and purpose of the job are included in the contract and complimented by a specific or generic Job Description. The latter is not all-encompassing and is subject to change at any time in consultation with those employees affected and any comments and suggestions are welcomed.

## DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES

- 1975** Co Wexford Community Workshop (New Ross) Ltd formed.
- 1976** Commenced Sheltered Work activities in the Legion of Mary Hall, New Ross.
- 1978** Moved to Marshmeadows premises in February 1978.
- 1979** Premises formally opened by Mr Charles Haughey, Minister of Health & Social Welfare.
- 1992** Ard Alainn residential home purchased.
- 1994** Day Activation service commenced at Marshmeadows.
- 1995** House in Priory Street, New Ross rented for up to nine residents to live semi-independently (closed in 2006).
- 1999** Day Activation service moved to purpose built property.
- 2001** Formed Sliua Housing Association Ltd as a sister company to provide properties for residential services.
- 2002** Holly Lodge residential home opened.
- 2004** Cunamh Mhuire Pre-School acquired.
- 2006** Cross Street supported living units opened.
- 2010** Pre-School rebuilt on Hospital Grounds.
- 2012** Dun Mhuire supported independent living house opened.
- 2013** Moved from Marshmeadows to Butlersland.
- 2014** Rebranded as Cumas New Ross.

## **ORGANISATION MANAGEMENT & RESPONSIBILITIES**

| <b>Name and Appointment</b>                  | <b>Responsibilities</b>  |
|--|--|
| Robert Smith<br>General Manager              | Overall Company Management<br>Cumas Design<br>Strategic Policy<br>Human Resources<br>Health and Safety<br>Finance and Administration<br>Buildings Maintenance<br>Vehicles and Transport<br>Slinua Housing Association Ltd  |
| Anne Keenan<br>Services & Quality<br>Manager | Cunamh Mhuire Pre-School<br>Cumas Activation<br>Cumas Learning<br>Cumas New Ross Drop-in<br>Ard Alainn and Holly Lodge<br>Cross Street and Dun Mhuire<br>Staff Learning & Qualifications<br>Quality Policies & Processes<br>Designated Investigations Officer<br>Child Protection Officer<br>Family Liaison<br>Gardens Maintenance |

## **RETIREMENT**

Normal retirement age from the company is 65 years, coinciding with the current pension scheme. Applications to extend beyond 65 must be submitted in writing to the General Manager at least three months prior to the 65<sup>th</sup> birthday and annually thereafter for subsequent requests. Final approval, or not, will be made by the Board of Directors .

## **SALARY PROTECTION SCHEME**

Permanent employees can avail of a Salary Protection Scheme with details available in booklet format from the General Manager. Employee contributions are 1.6% of gross salary paid directly from payroll, with tax reduction applying subject to statutory change.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

As an organisation we want to recruit the most suitable people to work with the individuals we support and current teams. Our commitment will be to make the work as interesting, rewarding and stimulating as possible in a safe and enjoyable environment.

Most employees are recruited on a permanent basis, although it is necessary to employ others on a fixed term or as required basis to cover absences or additional needs. Everyone employed by the company is treated equitably as a full member of the team.

Our fundamental terms and conditions are:

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

### **Media**

Requests from any of the media to provide interviews, statements or other information connected with the services provided by the company must be referred to the General Manager immediately.

### **Acceptance of Gifts**

Employees must not solicit or accept, directly or indirectly from any person, company or association anything of economic value as a gift, gratuity or favour that might reasonably be interpreted as affecting their impartiality in dealing with the donor. Similarly, the acceptance of special facilities or discounts on private purchases from company suppliers with whom staff have official business is prohibited.

Gifts from individuals should be actively discouraged with money and/or gift vouchers being refused or returned.

### **Telephone Calls, Personal Mail and Internet**

The telephone system is provided for the business of the company and best use of this resource should be maintained. Mobile telephones should be used for personal calls that must be kept to a minimum, with exceptions being made in an emergency. Similarly, the use of the mail, email and internet systems are for official purposes only and any abuse will result in the disciplinary process being applied.

## **DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE**

A Discipline Procedure is a positive and accepted way of helping an individual whose performance or conduct falls below the company's standards, and an established method of dealing with minor or serious breaches of discipline. It is a fair and effective procedure that provides, under normal circumstances, for a full and speedy consideration of all relevant factors and it ensures that employees are aware of their rights.

### **PROCEDURE**

#### **Stage 1 - Counselling/Verbal Warning**

When an employee's performance or conduct is deemed unsatisfactory or below standard, the immediate Manager will normally counsel her/him and agree what improvements are expected. If appropriate a Verbal Warning will also be given, stating a period of time in which improvement is required and a statement will be recorded on the employee's personnel file.

From Stage 2 onwards an employee may be accompanied by a person of her/his choice, but that person attends for their moral support and does not play any other part in the process.

#### **Stage 2 - Formal Verbal Warning**

In the event of a further breach of the event at Stage 1 or separate occurrence when considered appropriate, the Manager will issue a Formal Verbal Warning and record it on the individual's personnel file. A Formal Verbal Warning, stating the performance improvements required, will normally remain valid for 3 months and be deemed cancelled unless a further breach of discipline occurs within the period.

### **Stage 3 - Formal Written Warning**

For further breaches or more serious occurrences, the Manager will issue a Formal Written Warning that will include the performance improvements required and will normally be valid for six months; a copy will be given to the employee and recorded on their personnel file.

### **Stage 4 - Final Written Warning**

In the event of yet another breach or unacceptable misconduct, the Manager will issue a Final Written Warning stating the performance improvements required and will normally be valid for 12 months; a copy will be given to the employee and a copy placed on the personnel file. At this stage it may also have been necessary to suspend the employee pending a full investigation of the incident(s) prior to the interview process.

### **Stage 5 - Dismissal**

Should there be further breaches of discipline whilst a Final Warning is in effect or for behaviour considered to be Gross Misconduct (see below), an employee may be dismissed by the General Manager.

### **GROSS MISCONDUCT**

Should an employee's behaviour be deemed as Gross Misconduct, she/he will be suspended on full salary pending investigation and will be given full opportunity to present her/his case at interviews during the investigation process and any subsequent disciplinary interview.

## **PENSION SCHEME**

Joining the contributory pension scheme is mandatory for all new permanent employees eligible under the scheme rules. A booklet detailing the rules and benefits of the scheme will be provided at commencement of employment. Staff contributions are 5% of gross salary (less tax deduction) and the company pays 6.15% towards the employee's account, with a further 0.85% for death in service cover and administration costs. Additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) may also be paid with tax deduction but do not attract the company contribution. The company will support employees using other personal pension schemes for payments to be deducted from salary, but as for AVCs company contributions will not apply.

## **POLICIES, CODES & GUIDELINES**

All work areas are provided with a folder containing Policies, Codes and Guidelines that are reviewed, updated and amended; separate policies also apply specifically to the Pre-School. Employees must familiarise themselves with these documents as they are there to assist them in carrying out their day-to-day duties. Comments and suggestions as to their contents or possible omissions are always welcome and should be submitted in writing to the General Manager.

## **Seminar Leave**

Leave with pay may be granted to employees nominated by their Trade Union to attend seminars or special courses, but must be authorised in advance by the General Manager.

## **Special Leave**

Special leave with pay, not exceeding one working day, may be granted to an employee to attend:

- The wedding of a son, daughter, brother or sister.
- The ordination, religious reception or profession of a husband, wife, son, daughter, brother or sister.
- A University Graduation, Army Commissioning or passing-out ceremony involving a husband, wife, son, daughter, brother or sister.
- Court as a Plaintiff, Defendant or Witness under subpoena for such duration as the court actually requires.

## **Sports Leave**

An employee chosen to participate for his/her country in an international sports event must use days from his/her annual leave entitlement to do so. When the annual leave entitlement has been exhausted, special leave with pay may be granted at the discretion of management.

The following list whilst not comprehensive contains examples of behaviour that will be considered as Gross Misconduct:

- Failure or refusal to perform work assigned, to attend essential training and/or refusal to carry out instructions by authorised personnel.
- Failure to observe safety rules and proper procedures (after training), or engaging in an activity that is dangerous to self or others.
- Actions considered to be sexual harassment.
- Reports of bullying.
- Drinking alcohol or smelling of alcohol whilst on company property/activities, or reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs (unless prescribed).
- Fighting, provoking or instigation of a fight during company activities.
- Deliberately falsifying any company records including but not limited to personnel or other records produced or rendered by the employee.
- Giving false or misleading information on recruitment, including past criminal records.
- Theft of company or others' money or property and fraud.
- Deliberate damage, sabotage or destruction of company property or others' property.
- Carrying or having possession of weapons.
- Unsatisfactory work including interference with the performance or work of others.

- Abuse of the Sick Pay Scheme.
- Participation in unlawful or unofficial action.
- The ill treatment or deliberate neglect of persons using the service
- Conduct that brings the company's name into disrepute.

## **APPEALS PROCEDURE**

An employee has the right of appeal to the General Manager for decisions in Stages 1 to 4, or to the Board of Directors at Stage 5. The appeal must be made in writing within 7 consecutive days of the date of the warning or dismissal, stating the reasons or circumstances why the decision is considered unfair or unwarranted, e.g.:

- Unfair/inappropriate level of warning or outcome, e.g. dismissal.
- Biased decision of the Manager or General Manager.
- Introduction of new and relevant evidence.

The General Manager or Board of Directors will consider the appeal, interview the employee and advise her/him of their decision. In the appeal process a warning or dismissal can be reduced or cancelled but not increased.

## **Jury Leave**

Leave of absence is granted to employees summoned to serve on a jury. The company will require proof of such summons order and employees that discover they are not required on a particular day will be expected to return to work.

## **Marriage Leave**

A permanent employee will be permitted three days leave with pay on the occasion of her/his marriage.

## **Maternity Leave**

The company is not able to pay for Maternity Leave as provided in current legislation. Employees should claim Social Welfare Benefit for the duration of the leave.

## **Parental Leave**

Parental Leave (unpaid) will be granted for permanent employees (male or female) in accordance with current legislation for up to 14 weeks. An employee should inform the General Manager in writing (through their Manager) of their intention to take Parental Leave at least six weeks in advance of the start.

## **Paternity Leave**

A male employee is granted three days paid leave on the birth or adoption of a child. This leave may be taken at the time of birth or up to four weeks after the birth or date of adoption placement.

## Force Majeure Leave

The Parental Leave Act makes provision for force majeure leave, which allows an employee to take immediate time off from work in the event of an unforeseen injury or illness of a close family member *where the presence of the employee is indispensable*.

The maximum force majeure leave that may be availed of is 3 working days in 12 consecutive months or 5 working days in 36 consecutive months. Force majeure leave may be granted to an employee in respect of their natural and adopted child or if acting in loco parentis, spouse if living as husband and wife, brother or sister and parent or grandparent.

There is no minimum service requirement for entitlement and force majeure leave may consist of one or more working days. Where an employee is absent from work for only part of the day, this will still be counted as one day of force majeure leave, which is based on the length of the day that the employee normally works.

An employee on force majeure leave is entitled to be treated as if she/he had not been absent so that all her/his employment rights will be unaffected during the leave, and the employee receives the pay that would have applied on that day. Absence from work on force majeure leave must not be combined as part of any other leave to which the employee is entitled, e.g. annual leave, sick leave and parental leave.

## Fragment Leave

Fragment leave of absence may be granted to employees for the purpose of conducting private or personal business. Unless otherwise agreed by management, this leave must be taken as part of annual leave entitlements.

## DIGNITY AT WORK

Embodied in our Vision and Mission Statements is a policy that every employee and individual is treated in a fair and respectful manner in an environment that supports dignity, development and self esteem and is free from any form of bullying or harassment. Through good practices we are committed to ensuring that an atmosphere exists where everyone is able and happy to work to achieve their full potential without any barriers placed in their way.

The following Code of Practice applies throughout the service:

- We commit ourselves to working together to maintain a workplace environment that encourages and supports the right to dignity at work.
- All who work or attend here are expected to respect the right of each individual to dignity in their working life.
- Everyone will be treated equally and respected for their individuality and uniqueness.
- Bullying or harassment in any form is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

Our policies and procedures will underpin the principles and objectives of this Code.

- Everyone, whether individuals, employees, contractors or visitors have a duty of responsibility to uphold this Code.
- All employees have a specific responsibility to promote all the provisions above.

# EMPLOYEE PERSONNEL FILES

The Company maintains a personnel file on each employee that includes such information as the employee's job application, CV, training undertaken and other employment records. Personnel files are the property of the company and access to the information they contain is restricted. Generally only Managers and authorised staff who have a legitimate reason to view information in a file as part of their work are allowed to do so.

With reasonable advance written notice to the General Manager, employees may view their own personnel files in a company office and in the presence of an individual appointed by the company

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The company must always maintain the sole and exclusive right to manage its business in such a manner as it shall determine. The right to manage shall include, but not be limited to:

- Determine the methods and means by which its operations and services are to be carried out.
- Take all steps necessary to achieve an efficient and effective quality service.
- Assign work, relocate, discontinue any part of or full service, establish new job grades, specify work and schedule hours of work including overtime.
- Establish the size, composition and qualifications of its work force.

## Uncertified Sickness

A maximum of seven days uncertified sickness will be paid on a 2-year rolling basis. Absences must be recorded on a Holiday and Absence application form and forwarded through your manager.

## OTHER LEAVE TYPES

Requests for other types of leave under the following headings must be approved in advance and documented as for Annual Leave:

### Adoptive Leave

The company is not able to pay for Adoptive Leave as provided in current legislation. Female employees should claim Social Welfare Benefit for the duration of the leave.

### Compassionate Leave

Compassionate leave with pay not exceeding three consecutive days may be granted to an employee on the occasion of the death or serious illness of a near relative or in-law. In the case of the death of a father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, wife or husband, immediate leave of absence will be granted.

### Examination Leave

Leave with pay may be granted to an employee for the purpose of attending examinations held by recognised institutions. The period shall be limited in each case to the actual examination day or days plus any travelling days as agreed by management.

The Company retains the right to request employees to undertake an independent medical examination in cases of regular uncertified sickness and serious/prolonged illness.

## Sick Pay Scheme

The Sick Pay Scheme applies to all permanent and fixed term employees, who must claim State Sickness Benefit (SSB) for absences of more than six days and inform the company of such payments for deduction from salary as SSB is a taxable source of income.

Maximum duration of the scheme for any single period of sickness is three months on full pay, followed by three months on half pay; during any period on half pay annual leave accrual is also reduced by half. When an employee remains sick beyond a six month absence they continue in employment, but salary payments will cease and fitness for continued employment monitored; on return to work the entitlement reduces to four weeks maximum sick pay for the subsequent two years.

Any proven abuse of the scheme will result in an employee being removed from it permanently.

Should the Government introduce legislation whereby sickness benefit is not paid to employees for an extended initial period of sickness, the company will only be able to pay salary less the standard weekly Statutory Sickness Benefit for that period.

It is strongly advised that some form of Salary Protection Insurance is taken out by employees to ensure a reasonable income should they remain absent from work beyond six months. A self-contributory scheme can be utilised through the company with a booklet available on request.

- Lay off employees in accordance with statutory requirements and to establish and administer employee benefits.
- Maintain safety, efficiency, effectiveness and order at places of work and to communicate with employees on work matters.

The employees for their part must understand the particular circumstances of the company being a non-profit making voluntary and charitable status organisation, registered as a Limited Company, and bound by the various acts whilst not being a statutory body or Public Sector employer. ***All employees are expected to promote the welfare and development of people with disabilities in the service and to enhance, at all times, the good name and intentions of the company.***

In any organisation, grievances concerning a wide range of issues will inevitably arise. A proper procedure for dealing with such grievances is essential for good staff management and morale, and will demonstrate to staff and promote:

- Consistency in handling issues
- Reduction in possible conflicts
- A fair approach to all staff
- Time and control factors in dealing with grievances

The absence of a proper grievance procedure can make a relatively minor complaint or difficulty become major, with individual grievances turning into group grievances.

Grievances regarding Conditions of Employment should be referred immediately to the appropriate Manager for initial action and will usually involve:

- Salaries
- Holidays
- Hours of Work
- Job Descriptions
- Probation

During the period in which the following procedure is in operation, no strike, walkout, sit in, go slow or any other form of industrial action designed to bring pressure to bear on either party will take place, until all avenues as prescribed have been taken.

### **Stage 1**

If an employee has a difficulty, concern or grievance they should, in the first instance, raise the matter informally with their immediate Manager.

### **Stage 2**

If within three working days the matter is not resolved, it will be discussed between the employee, Manager and the employee's representative e.g. colleague or union representative. A decision will then be given within three working days.

### **Stage 3**

Should the parties fail to agree, the matter will be referred to the General Manager for a meeting to be arranged within seven

## **LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS**

### **Annual Leave**

Annual Leave runs from January to December and each permanent full-time employee is entitled to 28 days plus 10 days Public Holiday; entitlement for part-time employees is pro-rated against the reduced hours worked, as is any period whereby an employee is on half pay due to sickness absence. Annual Leave days must be used in the year accrued; applications to carry over any entitlement must be made in writing to the General Manager.

Except for annually agreed breaks during the Easter and Christmas/New Year periods, the remaining days' entitlement is taken in agreement with the relevant Managers, giving a minimum two weeks notice under normal circumstances. Approval of leave absences will depend on adequate cover being available to maintain an acceptable level of service provision. All requests for leave must be on the correct form and signed by the employee and Manager prior to the commencement of leave.

### **Sick Leave**

In the case of absence from work due to illness, you or another person acting on your behalf must inform your Manager as early as possible *prior* to normal start work time.

A Medical Certificate must be submitted for illness in excess of 3 days duration and on an ongoing basis for as long as the absence continues. Rest days (Saturday and Sundays) or Public Holidays falling within a period of sick leave count as sick leave, for which a medical certificate must be produced.

## **INSURANCE**

Full insurance cover is maintained in respect of Employers Liability, Public Liability, Properties and Contents, Vehicles, Engineering and Directors & Officers. Should staff be permitted to transport individuals in their own private vehicle they (staff) will be required to have the appropriate insurance in place that indemnifies the company.

working days with the employee, her/his representative and the Manager to discuss the issue further.

### **Stage 4**

Should the matter remain unresolved, it will be referred to the appropriate conciliation body, e.g. a Union office, the Human Rights Commission or Labour Relations Commission.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of all individuals, employees and visitors is of paramount importance to the Board of Directors. There is a Safety Statement that recognises the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts of 1989 and 2005, and contains many provisions for the protection of individuals and procedures for identifying and resolving possible risks of injury. Individual properties not located at the Butlersland Industrial Estate, New Ross also have their own specific Ancillary Safety Statement that compliments and works in conjunction with the main Statement. All employees are required to make themselves fully aware of the documents relating to their area of work.

Responsibility for the enforcement of day-to-day health and safety falls to the General Manager, who also acts as the Health & Safety Co-ordinator. However, it is the company's belief that safety is the responsibility of all employees and this is reflected in all Job Descriptions. Safety Committees in place comprise of individuals and staff, meeting regularly to discuss a set format of day-to-day safety issues that have or may arise. Regular fire evacuation drills are carried out and recorded to ensure improvements are implemented when necessary.

In the event of a medical emergency there is always a member of staff in attendance who is trained in Occupational First Aid, with first aid boxes and defibrillators positioned in all key areas. Should it be necessary our Staff Nurse, local doctors and/or hospitals will be used and parents/guardians informed immediately of the occurrence and actions taken.

### HEALTH AND SAFETY IS EVERYONES' RESPONSIBILITY

## HARASSMENT AND BULLYING POLICY

Harassment and bullying is not only harmful to individuals it can affect performance and the quality of services provided, and also damage the reputation of the organisation, which depends on healthy, happy and productive employees to offer the best service possible to individuals and customers, while ensuring a safe environment for everyone.

The approach taken in this respect is:

- Harassment or bullying in any form will not be tolerated. Instances will be treated as gross misconduct under the Disciplinary Procedure and may result in dismissal for staff or exclusion from the service for individuals.
- The organisation will deal seriously, sensitively and confidentially with allegations of harassment or bullying. If anyone feels that they are being harassed or bullied they should immediately tell the harasser or bully that their behaviour is unwanted and that it must stop immediately. The matter should then be reported to a Manager or, if that is inappropriate, the General Manager or a member of the Board of Directors.
- Where it is established that there is a case to be answered a full and fair investigation will be carried out in accordance with the Grievance or Complaints Procedures.
- Each individual and employee will be held responsible for her/his behaviour and conduct under this policy.
- If anyone sees or hears anything that they believe constitutes any form of harassment or bullying against an individual or employee, they should report it immediately.
- If on completion of an investigation an allegation is proven, disciplinary action will be taken.