

COMMUNITIES 1ST

Professional Boundaries Policy

PURPOSE

This policy aims to clearly set out the expectations Communities 1st has of its staff and volunteers in relation to professional boundaries whilst on and off duty.

EXPECTATIONS

Communities 1st expects members of its staff and volunteers to bring a wide variety of experience from their own lives to the job. We want people to be friendly, open and relaxed in the way that they work and in their working relationships with people.

At the same time, it is important that we remain professional to prevent unwanted incidents and to safeguard people from abuse. We have to make careful enquiries before employing members of staff and require them to follow a code of conduct. The way we behave has to be consistent with Communities 1st's Code of Conduct, Safeguarding Policy, and Health and Safety requirements for example.

The relationships staff develop with users of our services are of a professional nature: the development of personal/social relationships with participants is not permitted.

If the situation arises where a 'friend' of a member of staff requires the support of Communities 1st, the member of staff has a responsibility to inform his/her manager immediately, in order for an appropriate strategy to be put in place. This will reduce the likelihood of a breach of professional boundaries to safeguard both member of staff and the participant.

So the golden rules for employees are:

- Establish clear boundaries at the onset of a working relationship with a participant
- Think carefully about your actions and their likely impact
- Talk to people about what you propose to do

Communities 1st expects its managers to:

- Monitor the relationships that develop between the people support and employees
- Think carefully about your actions and their likely impact
- Talk to people about what you propose to do

Things you should never do:

- Give participants personal information including where you live or your phone number.
- Divulge or discuss your religious or political persuasion with participants
- Invite participants to your home
- Arrange to meet socially
- Enter into any kind of sexual relationship with a participant
- Borrow money from a participant
- Accept gifts or free service from a participant or their relatives*

- Buy any goods from, or sell goods, to a participant
- Be the beneficiary or executor of the Will of a participant
- Abuse people, physically, sexually, financially verbally or in any other way
- Allow your own personal circumstances or friendships with other staff detract your own or the staff teams focus from that of our participants and service delivery.
- Allow your relationships with staff from partner/external agencies to detract your focus from that of our participants and service delivery, or lead to a breach of confidentiality.
- Bring Communities 1st into disrepute or damage its reputation through your behavior.
- Have participants on your personal facebook account
- Tweet to participants
- Put any information about Communities 1st on any social media platform (with the exception of Communities 1st own facebook account
- Put images on facebook sites that are unsuitable when your privacy is open that could bring Communities 1st into disrepute

(* Please note that small gifts with a nominal value of less than £5.00 can be accepted, if refusal would be likely to cause offence. If this happens tell your manager about it as soon as you can and s/he will keep a record)

Equality and Diversity

We aim to be an organisation that values, recognises and responds to the diverse needs of members and those we serve. We will not discriminate against any person or other organisation on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.

Monitoring and Review

The Management Team, with adequate consultation of the Board of Trustees, will regularly review the operation of this policy.

Approved: 22 February 2019

Date for Review: January 2022