

STRESS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Purpose:	To establish DPHA's policy on stress management and set out our commitment to reducing and where possible eliminating stress for our employees.
Next Review Date:	October 2026
Guidance:	EVH Model Stress Management Policy
Regulatory Standards:	<p>Standard 2: The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.</p> <p>Standard 4: The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose.</p> <p>Standard 5: The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.</p>
Other Connected Policies	Privacy Policy Grievance Policy Equality & HR Policy
Date reviewed by Policy Review Working Group (PRWG):	3 October 2023
Date approved by the Board of Management (or PRWG if delegated):	3 October 2023
Publish on the Website	No

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Dalmuir Park Housing Association (DPHA) is committed to reducing and where possible eliminating stress for its employees. Although stress in itself is not an illness, it can be a contributory factor in many conditions and can cause both physical and mental illnesses.

Stress on its own can also result in poor mental health of employees even if the effects are not severe enough to result in a medical diagnosis. DPHA recognises the need to promote a culture of good mental and physical health in its duty of care under the requirement of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Stress in the workplace is not new. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) introduced Stress Management Standards several years ago and implemented tools to accompany them which have developed over the years. The management standards cover six key areas:

• Demands	• Control
• Support	• Role
• Change	• Relationships

Full descriptions of the standards and typical behaviours which can be a sign of stress are available from the HSE website [www.hse.gov.uk].

2.2 It is important to distinguish the difference between stress and pressure. In most work situations some pressure is healthy, but, stress is when a person experiences too much pressure and the effect of the pressure becomes negative.

3.0 POLICY AIMS

This policy aims to:

- Promote a culture of mental and physical wellbeing
- Increase awareness of stress
- Provide managers with a clear process to use should an employee report that they are experiencing symptoms of stress
- Provide details of the proactive measures DPHA will implement to help reduce and, where possible, eliminate stress and its causes

4.0 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Although there is no specific legislation on stress the following are relevant through case law.

4.1 Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

Under section 2 (1), employers have a duty to 'ensure, so far as is reasonably practical, the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees'

4.2 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Requires that employers make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of its employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work and this includes stress.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

The following are definitions which will be applied in the context of this policy:

Stress: the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them

Proactive measures: aims to prevent the harm caused by stress by taking action before it occurs

Reactive measures: actions which will respond to any stress related situation to minimise harm once it has occurred and assist in preventing it occurring again.

6.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

6.1 DPHA will ensure that employees experiencing stress are dealt with in the strictest of confidence.

6.2 The organisation will treat your personal data in line with our obligations under the current data protection regulations and our own Privacy Policy. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in DPHA's employee privacy notice.

7.0 LINE MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

Line managers play a key role in managing stress within the workplace. It is vital to the success of a stress policy that managers have a thorough understanding of what stress is, what the causes and early signs are. The line manager's responsibilities include:

- Attending stress awareness training
- To be aware of the signs of stress and intervene where necessary

- Promote the organisation's culture of a physically and mentally healthy organisation
- To manage staff effectively to minimise them experiencing stress
- Where issues of stress arise, intervene as early as possible
- To ensure that a stress risk assessment is conducted with their staff on a routine basis
- Ensure staff contribute to the organisation's stress questionnaires when necessary
- To take steps to assist employees maintain a state of good mental health e.g. encourage rest breaks, fresh air, and holidays.

8.0 EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- To raise any concerns they may have regarding stress at the earliest opportunity
- To participate in DPHA's measures to assist in reducing or eliminating stress
- To be aware of the HSE Risk Management standards and the signs of stress
- To raise any concerns they may have for their colleagues in regards to stress with a manager

9.0 MANAGING STRESS

9.1 Proactive Measures

To support the organisation's commitment in reducing the risk of stress occurring, DPHA will ensure that the following initiatives will be implemented and adopted.

- **Managers training**
DPHA will ensure that all line managers attend stress awareness training and subsequent refreshers at appropriate intervals.
- **Stress Risk Assessments**
DPHA will commit to conducting a stress risk assessment among staff on a periodic basis to help inform the team/department risk assessment. This will assist in identifying any 'at risk' areas within the organisation.
- **Analysing Information**
Commitment will be given that DPHA will review appropriate data e.g. absence, employee concerns, employee questionnaires to identify areas where stress is or could be a risk.

- Risk Assessments
Stress risk assessments will be conducted on a periodic basis (whether these are carried out organisation wide or at department level will depend on the size of the organisation).
- Promoting the Mental Health & Wellbeing of Employees
DPHA is committed to facilitating a culture of promoting physical and mental health in the following ways:
 - Provide stress awareness sessions for staff.
 - Ensure that staff take any allocated breaks.
 - Manage staff holiday entitlement in order that leave is taken throughout the year at reasonable intervals.
 - Ensure that staff are not working excessive hours on a regular and prolonged basis.
 - Provide opportunities for employees to be active throughout their working day where possible and appropriate.
 - Line Managers to be trained as Mental Health First Aiders

9.2 Reactive Measures

9.2.1 Stress is a very individualised condition and, as a result, it is unfortunate that even with the above measures being put in place some employees may nonetheless find themselves experiencing a stressful period in their lives. This may be caused by work or personal circumstances, or a combination of both.

9.2.2 Managing Individual Stress Concerns

The following details the process that will be used by DPHA should an employee raise concerns of stress.

- Manager becomes aware that an employee is experiencing stress
- The manager should arrange to meet with the staff member within 3 days to discuss the issues
- The line manager will give the employee a stress questionnaire to complete and agree when the employee should return the questionnaire by **(Appendix 1)**
- The employee completes the questionnaire and returns this to the line manager
- A second meeting is arranged to discuss the questionnaire, identify ways of managing the issues, and any support or interim arrangements that may assist the employee's recovery
- If appropriate the employee may be referred to an occupational health specialist, counselling or any other appropriate service

- By the end of the meeting an action plan will be completed to summarise discussions and what actions will be taken by the organisation, line manager and employee
- If the employee is absent as a result of stress the absence will continue to be managed in line with DPHA's absence management procedures, as well as providing the employee with the questionnaire to complete

NB: If the employee's line manager is a contributing factor to the employee's stress, another appropriate manager e.g. a manager one level above will conduct the meetings.

Where the line manager contributing to the employee's stress is the Chief Executive, an employee can contact the Chair of either Board of Management, Audit and Risk Committee or Staffing Committee.

If it is identified that the stress is being caused by another employee then appropriate investigations may be required in line with DPHA's Grievance Policy.

If through discussions with an employee a line manager becomes aware of a stress risk they will raise this in the appropriate way to ensure it is addressed at an organisational level. This will be done while maintaining the employee's confidentiality.

9.2.3 Occupational Health

If deemed appropriate an employee may be referred to an occupational health specialist to help identify any actions that could be taken to assist in the employee's recovery.

9.2.4 Counselling Service

The details of this are displayed on the staff notice boards or can be sought from the employee's line manager.

10.0 **ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

HSE

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/>

11.0 **DATA PROTECTION**

11.1 We will treat personal data in line with our obligations under the current data protection regulations and our Privacy Policy. Information regarding how data will be used and the basis for processing data is provided in our Customer Fair Processing Notice.

12.0 EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

12.1 We are committed to promoting an environment of respect, understanding, encouraging diversity and eliminating discrimination by providing equality of opportunity for all. This is reflected in our Equality and Human Rights Policy.

13.0 DISSATISFACTION

13.1 Any employee not satisfied with the implementation of this Policy can in the first instance raise their concerns with their manager or the senior officer dealing with the situation. If the employee remains dissatisfied, they should refer to the Association's Grievance Policy and procedures.

14.0 REVIEW

14.1 This Policy will be reviewed by the Board every 3-years or earlier if required.



Individual Employee Stress Questionnaire

You have been given this questionnaire to complete as it has been highlighted to your line manager that you are or may be feeling stressed. The purpose of this questionnaire is for you to identify what factors may be contributing to you feeling stressed, and for you to think about, and detail what you feel would help you manage your current situation. Once you have completed the form, please return it to your line manager who will then arrange a meeting with you to discuss your stressors and what support may be available. If, due to the circumstances it would be better to discuss your current situation with an alternative manager this can be arranged.

STRESSORS

Please list the factors that you feel are contributing to you feeling stressed, once you have done this, please rank them from 1-10 with 10 having the biggest impact on you and 1 the least. The factors detailed may be within or out with the workplace.

STRESSOR	Stress Factor Rating (1-10)
<i>Workplace factors – e.g. Workload/working relationships/work/life balance</i>	
<i>External factors – e.g. Home life/family/financial</i>	

MOVING FORWARD

Taking each stressor in turn please complete the below section prior to the meeting. Section 3 & 4 will be completed at the meeting with your line manager.

Stressor 1 – Outline the background

How do you see the situation being resolved

Stressor 2 – Outline the background

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How do you see the situation being resolved

Stressor 3 – Outline the background

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How do you see the situation being resolved

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This section below will be completed with your line manager at the meeting

Section 3 - Agreed Actions

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Section 4 – Review Date

Employee Signature

Date

Line Manager Signature

Date

Appendix 2 - Useful Contacts

Employee Counselling

<https://rowan-consultancy.co.uk/>

Telephone: 01738 562005

Opening Hours:

9am-4pm Weekdays

Stepping Stones

<https://www.stepstones.org.uk/>

Telephone: [0141 941 2929](tel:01419412929) (24 hour answer machine facility)

Text Message: [07848042521](sms:07848042521)

Email: admin@stepstones.org.uk

Breathing Space

<https://breathingspace.scot/>

Telephone: 0800 83 85 87

Opening hours:

Weekdays: Monday-Thursday 6pm to 2am

Weekend: Friday 6pm-Monday 6am

Samaritans

<https://www.samaritans.org/samaritans-in-scotland/>

Telephone: 116 123

Email: jo@samaritan.org