



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

WELCOMEHOME CLEANING LIMITED

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SECTION 1:INTRODUCTION

This Staff Handbook has been produced for the benefit of Employees of Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd and is provided as a source of information on all aspects of employment, as well as to provide answers to any questions or concerns that Employees may have whilst employed by Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd.

Managers of Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd are always available to answer any urgent or complex issues and Employees should not hesitate to speak to them should they feel it appropriate. However this Staff Handbook is intended to deal with any routine questions and queries that may arise.

The purpose of the Staff Handbook is to try and be as broad and wide ranging as possible, covering all aspects of an Employee's employment that are not already covered in the contract of employment, from popular issues such as leave entitlements and general conduct in the work place, to the grievance and disciplinary procedures and protocol. Where an Employee has any questions that cannot be answered by this document, they should raise the matter with their Manager.

This Handbook supersedes any other handbook, internal works rules or other documentation previously issued. The Company reserves the right to alter or amend this Handbook at any time, and you will be informed of the changes. This Handbook remains the property of the Company and should be returned in good condition upon your leaving our employ.

SECTION 2:GENERAL WORKPLACE POLICIES

2.1 Health and Safety

All Employees are provided with training in Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd health and safety policies and procedures at their induction. Employees must ensure that they are fully aware of these policies and procedures. Failure to comply with any of these policies and procedures will result in a disciplinary investigation and may be deemed to constitute gross misconduct.

In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 all Employees are responsible for taking reasonable care to avoid hurting themselves and others by their work activities, and reporting anything untoward to the nearest available Manager.

A copy of the health and safety policies can be obtained from the Main Office.

Individual members of staff :

will take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself/herself and of other persons who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions at work;

will co-operate with the Company and their colleagues to achieve a safe and healthy environment by following adopted policies, procedures, codes of practice, guidelines and instructions;

will make themselves familiar with the health and safety policies, procedures codes of practice, guidelines and instructions, and observe these at all times;

will report all accidents, incidents, near misses or hazards found in the workplace by completing the appropriate incident form. If an urgent action is required the situation must be reported and the information forwarded to the appropriate department of the Company as soon as possible;

will make themselves aware of the provisions for First Aid treatment and emergency and major incident management procedures. (Only trained and qualified personnel may administer First Aid or manage emergency and major incidents.)

will not interfere with or misuse intentionally or recklessly anything provided in the interests of Health and Safety;

who receive visitors and contractors, will ensure that they comply with the health and safety requirements of the Company whilst on site.

2.2 General Appearance and Conduct in the Workplace

Employees may be provided with polo shirts, sweatshirts, tabards which must be worn at all times during working hours. The uniform must be kept in a clean and presentable condition. The Company will issue employees with protective clothing should it be required.

All employees should behave with civility towards fellow employees and no rudeness will be permitted towards customers or members of the public. Objectionable or insulting behaviour or bad language will render an employee liable to disciplinary action.

All employees shall use their best endeavours to promote the interest of the Company and shall, during their normal working hours, devote the whole of their time, attention and abilities to its business and affairs.

Any involvement in activities which could be construed as being in competition with the Company is forbidden.

An employee shall not, during or after the termination of his/her employment, disclose to any person whomsoever any confidential information, including financial, regarding the Company, its business or trade secrets.

All reasonable instructions from an employee's superior are to be obeyed.

2.3 Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd aims to be an Equal Opportunity Employer. We are fully committed to improving and furthering opportunities for all, irrespective of gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, marital status, disability, age, religion or sexual orientation. All Employees and job applicants are assessed on their merits, capabilities and suitability only, to ensure that all are treated equally. Our recruitment, training, development and promotion policies and procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure that all Employees and potential employees are selected, promoted and treated in accordance with our policy.

Employees are required to give their full support to these principles and commitments. Any breaches will be considered very seriously and will result in disciplinary action. Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd will not accept any discrimination in the workplace and is committed to the principle that Employees should be able to work in an environment that is free from intimidation, bullying and harassment.

2.4 Employer Property

Employees should take all reasonable steps to protect Employer property and to avoid misuse or waste of resources. Employer property may not be removed from the workplace without prior permission from a Manager. Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd reserves the right to search the contents of Employee's bags, brief cases, parcels, containers, and other personal effects, as well as vehicles that are on the workplace premises in order to ensure protection of such Employer property. Such searches are to be carried out by a Senior Manager and Employees may request another Employee to act as witness. Any refusal to accept such a search may lead to disciplinary action.

Telephones

The Company supplies a mobile telephone to some employees. This facility is for business use only and any personal calls will be charged for. It is the duty of the mobile holder to ensure that the 'Air Time Service Provider Answering Service' is in operation at all times, failure to do so will be classed as misconduct.

Under no circumstances should client's phones be used except in the event of an emergency or to telephone the office. Any employee found making personal phone calls or using premium number lines will be subject to disciplinary action which may result in dismissal. In addition if it is possible to determine the cost of the phone calls this amount will be deducted from wages. This is an express term of your contract of employment allowing deductions to be made in line with the Employment Rights Act 1996. Your signed receipt for the employee handbook indicates your acceptance of this condition.

2.5 Personal Property

No liability is accepted for any loss of, or damage to, employees' property brought on to the premises.

Employees are requested not to bring personal items of value onto the premises and, in particular, not to leave any items overnight.

Any item of lost property which is recovered should be handed to your Manager, who will give it to a Director so it can be retained while attempts are made to discover the owner.

If you find any goods or money on client's premises in the course of your normal cleaning duties this should be handed to your supervisor who will give you a receipt for it.

If you work alone and the lost property has significant value e.g. a watch, telephone the office to report the find. Otherwise inform the most Superior person on site.

2.6 Smoking at Work

Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd operates STRICT a non-smoking policy in the workplace this includes company vehicles. This policy is to be observed by all Employees.

2.7 Use of Company Vehicles

Use of vehicles by employees requires express approval by a Director. The private use of a Company vehicles is prohibited.

On approval of use of a vehicle, the employee must ensure that vehicle inspections are carried out. In particular before any journey you should check:

- a Lights, horn, indicators and stop lights
- b Brakes
- c Windscreen Washers and wipers
- d. Tyre pressures and tyre condition
- e Reflectors
- f Vehicle body work for protrusions etc. likely to cause injury
- g Oil & Water/Fluid Levels

You should report any defects to a Director. Note that in the event of a prosecution with respect to any of the items listed a - g above the driver would be held personally responsible and it would not be a sufficient defence to blame someone else for failure to carry out these checks.

Any type of driving conviction or summons which may lead to a conviction, is to be reported immediately to a Manager.

Unauthorised passengers must not be carried in vehicles, nor may vehicles be used for personal use.

On the occasion of an incident involving a vehicle, the employee concerned must make a full, honest and written report of the incident, whether or not personal injury or vehicle damage occurs. In no circumstance should you admit liability for an accident.

All driving accidents will be investigated, and where an investigation shows an employee to be at fault, the employee concerned may be subject to disciplinary action. An excessive number of accidents for which the Company driver is responsible may result, at the Company's discretion, in a deduction from the employee's pay equal to the cost of the insurance excess or the cost of repair whichever is the less. This is an express term allowing deductions from wages in accordance with the Employment Rights Act 1996.

You may be asked to produce your driving licence for inspection at any time during your employment.

It is the responsibility of the vehicle crew to ensure they have all the required products and equipment for the day prior to starting work each morning. You will not be paid for any time lost due to not having the required equipment or products.

2.8 Use of Private Vehicles

Employees that use their own vehicles for work-related business should ensure that these vehicles are insured for such use. Cleaning Ltd. Where an Employee has obtained permission from their Manager to use their vehicle for business purposes, they will be reimbursed by Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd.

2.9 Use of Employer / Client Premises and Facilities

Employees are not to use Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd or our clients premises, facilities, equipment and services for personal use. This includes Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd address and stationary, as well as telephone calls, internet and email.

Use of the Company's property for any purpose other than normally defined duties is not permitted. Property of any type belonging to the Company is not to be taken away from the premises. Employees must immediately notify a Director of any damage to property or premises. Company property must be looked after and respected.

Any damage to customer or company property you are responsible for causing may result, at the Company's discretion, in a deduction from the employee's pay equal to the cost of the insurance excess or the cost of replacement / repair whichever is the less. This is an express term allowing deductions from wages in accordance with the Employment Rights Act 1996.

2.10 Business Expenses

Employees will be reimbursed for any business related expenses that are reasonable and wholly necessary in the course of any approved Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd business. Employees must have prior approval for expenses incurred by them and must obtain a receipt. Payment will only be made on submission of the receipt.

2.11 Email and Internet Policy

The Company makes use of the Internet and of computers and stores information on these which it regards as confidential.

Access to computers and to the Internet in connection with your work activity is on the basis of authorisation by a Director. You should not use the Company computers to store documents of your own including C.V.'s etc.

Unauthorised access to a computer record is regarded as an act of gross misconduct.

Employees are asked not to load or use personal software on to the Company's computer systems. Only work related material from approved web sites is to be downloaded from the Internet. The internet is for business use only.

Employees may not send any emails of a defamatory, pornographic or abusive nature, or which constitute sexual, racial or disability discrimination or any other form of harassment. Employees are furthermore not permitted to download any pornographic or other offensive material. Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd reserves the right to monitor all email and/or internet activity by Employees. Any breach of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

2.12 Confidentiality

In the course of your employment you may have access to and be entrusted with information about our Company which is confidential.

All information which :

1. is or has been acquired by you during the course of your employment, or has otherwise been acquired by you; and

2. relates particularly to the business of the Company; including details of suppliers, customers, prices; and

3. has not been made public by, or with the authority of the Company, shall be confidential, and save in the course of the business of the Company or as required by law you shall not at any time, whether before or after the termination of the employment, disclose such information to any person without the written consent of the Company and you will use your best endeavours to prevent publication or disclosure of any confidential information.

2.13 Medical Appointments

Employees should arrange routine medical and dental appointments outside working hours and with minimum disruption to their work. Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd reserves the right to request that you make up any lost time as a result of such routine appointments.

2.14 Religious Days

Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd respects the rights of Employees to observe their religion. However, where religious holidays fall on a normal working day, this must be taken from your annual holiday entitlement. Reasonable notice is required should you wish such leave to be taken.

2.15 Personal Details

Employees are requested to ensure that Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd has up-to-date personal details, such as Employee's address, telephone number and next-of-kin. This information will be strictly confidential.

2.16 Notices and Instructions

Employees should familiarize themselves with all Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd notices and instructions as displayed on notice boards or delivered by letter, memorandum, newsletter or email. Particular attention should be paid where the content deals with aspects of health and safety, security and standards and procedure associated with the Employee's work.

2.17 Security

Whilst working all employees must follow the client's security rules.

Keys for clients premises must be kept safe and the alarm procedure must be adhered to.

You should not in any circumstances divulge to any person whomsoever that:

- (a) you hold keys for a particular building
- (b) you are aware of the alarm codes.

2.18 Assistance

Where an Employee is concerned or worried about any aspect of their employment, they should speak to a Manager, who will try and resolve the problem in a discreet and prompt manner.

2.19 Ordering of Materials

Cleaning materials should be ordered on Mondays before 4pm, orders are to be placed by telephone, email or fax. All materials requested must be specific for the site and you must ensure you have the correct COSHH sheets available. It is your responsibility for the materials on your site and to ensure that they are correctly and safely stored and in an adequate supply as to meet the cleaning specification needs for the forthcoming week

SECTION 3:GENERAL EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

3.1 Holiday Entitlement and Conditions

The holiday year runs from 1st April to March 31st and your entitlement is as follows:-

CONDITIONS APPLYING TO YOUR ANNUAL HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENT

1. Upon commencement of employment there is an initial period of 13 weeks where no holidays are accrued or allowed to be taken.
2. Holiday pay will be at the basic rate.
3. We should like you to give as long a notice as possible of your intention to take holidays but a minimum of four weeks' is required. If you do not give us sufficient time to make arrangements then your risk having your request refused. We shall similarly give you four weeks' notice if we wish you to take holiday except in the event of clause 7 below obtaining. The Company's policy on holiday notice contained in this handbook disappplies Regulation 15 of the Working Time Regulations 1998.
4. Holidays are granted on a first come first served basis and not more than one employee should be on holiday at the same time without permission from a director.
5. The Company prefers that all holiday entitlement be used in the holiday year, if this is not possible then with permission from a Director holiday may be carried over into the next year.
6. Where a period of continuous sickness or absence for any reason other than basic maternity leave exceeds one month, employees will cease to accrue contractual holiday entitlement.
7. In the event of termination of your employment any holidays earned but not taken in that year will be paid for or you will be asked to take outstanding holidays in your notice period. Therefore holiday entitlement does not accrue in any notice period. The Company's policy on holiday notice contained in this handbook disappplies Regulation 15 of the Working Time Regulations 1998 insofar as notice to terminate employment with the Company is deemed to consitute notice is to take holidays. However, in the event of your having taken holidays which have not been earned pro-rata in the holiday year, then the appropriate payments will be deducted from your final wages/salary.
8. If you leave without giving or working your correct notice, any accrued contractual holiday pay equal to the number of days by which notice is short will be retained by the Company.
9. You shall not be entitled to any contractual holiday payment if you are dismissed for dishonesty or gross misconduct, and will be so informed at the time of dismissal.

STATUTORY/PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

The Statutory/Public Holidays recognised by the Company each year are:-

New Year's Day
Good Friday
Easter Monday
The first Monday in May
The last Monday in May
The last Monday in August
Christmas Day
Boxing Day

3.2 Flexible Working Time Requests for Parents

Employees with caring responsibilities for immediate members of their family and who have more than six months continuous employment with Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd are able to request changes to their working hours to assist them to address these commitments.

Although Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd will not be obliged to accept this request, any refusal of such request will be based on one or more of the following:

- The additional cost to the business;
- Reduced ability to meet the needs of customers;
- Inability to share the Employee's workload amongst other staff;
- Potentially damaging effects upon the quality of work produced;
- Potentially damaging effects upon performance;
- Inability to recruit extra staff to provide cover.

Requests to change working hours must be made in writing to a Manager. The process will involve holding a meeting with the Employee, who will thereafter be provided with a response in writing. This process should take no longer than 28 days.

Should the Employee who made the request be unhappy with the decision made by Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd, they must address the issue through Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd grievance procedure.

3.3 Parental Leave

Employees with more than 12 months continuous employment with Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd and who are parents of children aged six years old or under are entitled to 13 weeks unpaid leave. This leave shall be pro-rated for part time staff.

This entitlement may be taken as a minimum of one week per annum, up to a maximum of four weeks per annum.

When taking Parental Leave, the Employee must provide Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd with reasonable written notice and state that the leave being taken is specifically Parental Leave.

3.4 Time Off for Dependants

Employees are entitled to reasonable unpaid time off where:

- 1 A dependant is ill;
- 2 Death of a dependant;
- 3 Disruption occurs to the care of a dependant;
- 4 Unexpected occurrences to an Employee's child.

Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd recognises a dependant as: an Employee's children, partner, parent, or other member of their immediate family. Should an Employee care for other dependants who do not fall within Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd recognises that a majority of these events can occur without much warning, however, it is requested that Employees provide as much notice as possible in the event of taking time off for dependants.

3.5 Maternity Leave

All female Employees are entitled to 52 weeks Maternity Leave. This consists of 6 months ordinary paid leave (if eligible) and an optional 6 months additional unpaid leave.

All female Employees are entitled to 9 months paid Maternity Leave and will receive Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) if their average weekly wage exceeds the National Insurance lower earnings limit and they have been employed for a period of at least 6 months at the 15th week prior to the birth of their child. Employees need to discuss all arrangements with their Manager prior to beginning this leave.

Employees will need to give Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd 8 weeks prior notice if they wish to return to work early from Maternity Leave.

Employees are required to give their Manager 28 days notice prior to their intended return date from ordinary Maternity Leave. No notice is required from Employees who have taken 12 months Maternity Leave.

Employees on Maternity Leave will be able to arrange up to 10 'Keep in Touch Days' with management to return to work for short periods during their leave and receive their normal rate of pay on these working days without damaging their entitlement to Maternity Pay.

3.6 Paternity Pay

New fathers with more than 6 months continuous employment with Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd are entitled to 2 weeks paid paternity leave. This will be paid at the same rate as SMP.

Paternity Leave must be taken within the first 8 weeks of the child's birth.

Employees are required to show their Manager a relevant MAT B1 when making a request to take this leave.

3.7 Redundancy

It is the aim of Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd to avoid making Employees redundant wherever possible. Ideally this will be achieved through finding an alternative position within the organisation.

Should redundancy be unavoidable, Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd will follow the procedure of:

1. Issue a Notice of Threat of Redundancy - This will include notice of a period of consultation and the date that consultation will begin.
2. Provide the affected Employees with a consultation period of 30 days. During this period the Employer will discuss the following with the affected Employees:
 - a. Finding alternative work within the organisation.
 - b. Reasons for the redundancy.
 - c. Calculating the amount of redundancy compensation Employees with two or more years continuous employment are entitled to, based on the Statutory Formula.

Statutory Formula:	½ weeks pay for every year employed
Employees aged 18 - 21 years old	1 weeks pay for every year employed
Employees aged 22 - 40 years old	1 ½ weeks pay for every year employed
Employees aged 41 + years old	Up to a maximum of thirty years
Maximum weekly wage limit - £350	

3. During the consultation period, affected Employees are entitled to paid time off to attend job interviews and/or for retraining purposes.
4. After the period of consultation a Formal Meeting will be arranged to discuss the outcome of the consultation. Employees will be notified in writing to this meeting and informed of their right to be accompanied.
5. Conduct an Appeal against the Formal Decision, should the affected Employee wish to do so. Appeals must be submitted in writing within 7 days of the Formal Meeting.

3.8 Sickness/Injury Payments and Conditions

1. You are entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) during authorised absence as a result of sickness, provided you meet the criteria laid down by the Government SSP regulations. Although the Company has no contractual sickness/injury payments scheme discretionary payments may be made.
2. You are required to follow the regulations and complete fully the requisite forms in relation to absence, as contained in this handbook. Failure to adhere to such conditions may mean that your entitlement will be invalidated in part or in full.
3. If the Company considers it necessary, arrangements will be made for you to be medically examined. It is a condition of employment that you comply with this request.
4. The Company will take disciplinary action against any employee who takes sickness leave which is not genuine.

USE OF A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE and EVIDENCE OF INCAPACITY FOR WORK

Medical certificates are no longer issued for short term illness. You must in the case of illness under 7 days sign a Self Certificate Absence Form shown on page 33.

If sickness absence continues for more than 7 days (five working days), you should see your doctor and make sure he/she gives you a medical certificate and forward this without delay to your wages department. Further notification is required for each further period of absence. Although it is understandable if you are ill and may need time off, continual and repeated absence through sickness may not be acceptable. Therefore although submission of a medical certificate gives the reason for your absence, we may decide that repeated absence for these reasons is not acceptable.

In deciding whether your absence is acceptable or not, your manager will take into account the reasons and extent of your absence, including any absences caused by sickness. The Company cannot operate with an absence level above a certain figure as all absences for whatever reason reduce the efficiency of the business.

3.9 Timekeeping and Absence from Work

1. Employees must attend work punctually at the specified time and lateness in attending work on more than one occasion in a week or more than three occasions in a month will render an employee liable to disciplinary action. Employees are required strictly to comply with any time recording procedures relating to their area of work.
2. If you have to be away from work unexpectedly you must contact the office or Operations Manager by telephone by 08.00 on the day of absence. Please give the reason for your absence and if possible the date on which you expect to return to work. You must speak to your Manager of office yourself. If during your sickness absence you will not be at your usual address, your Manager should be informed of this.
3. The Company needs to know about your absence so that prompt attention can be given to temporary re-organisation of your duties. You should, therefore, inform your Manager of any jobs that would have required completing on the days of absence to progress a project.
4. There is no payment for unauthorised absence. If you are absent without good cause, you may render yourself liable to disciplinary action. You should also advise the Company the day before your return that you will be returning. If you intend to return to work on a Monday then you should inform the Company on Friday that you will be returning. Failure to follow these procedures will render the employees liable to disciplinary action.
5. All other absences from work, including leaving before normal finishing time, will be treated as unauthorised and will render an employee liable to disciplinary action, unless express permission for the absence has been given.

3.10 Retirement

Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd normal retirement age for all Employees is 65 years of age.

All Employees approaching their 65th birthday will be given between 6 and 12 months notice of their impending retirement by management. Once this notice has been provided the affected Employee is entitled to request a Formal Consultation with Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd management to discuss arrangements for their retirement.

Employees wanting to work beyond their 65th Birthday may make a formal request to Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd management during the notice period. As a consequence, a Formal Meeting will be arranged with the Employee to discuss their request.

Should a decision be made to reject the request to extend employment beyond the 65th Birthday, Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd will provide a full and written explanation, based solely upon the effects the request would have upon efficiency and smooth running of the organisation.

SECTION 4: GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

4.1 Gross Misconduct

Any acts of Gross Misconduct, if proven after an appropriate investigation and a Disciplinary Hearing, *including searches of bags, coats and other personal effects*, will result in immediate dismissal.

Employees accused of Gross Misconduct will receive written notification to attend a Formal Disciplinary Hearing. They will be provided with details of the allegation(s) against them, as well as the date, time and venue of the meeting. They will also be informed of their right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative. The notification will provide a minimum of 2 working days prior notice of the meeting.

Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd recognises the following as acts of Gross Misconduct:

- Theft;
- Abusive or threatening behaviour of any nature;
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- Dishonesty in dealings with management;
- Sexist, racist or any other behaviour against an individual, which could be classed as creating a hostile, intimidating or threatening environment;
- Breach of Client/Employer confidentiality;
- Failing to carry out reasonable management instructions;
- Fighting and acts of aggression;
- Deliberately damaging the Client's/Employer's property;
- Deliberate breaches of the Employer's Health and Safety procedures;
- Unauthorised access to the Client's/Employer's computer files, software or any other such breach of confidentiality.

These are examples only. This list is not exhaustive

Employees who have been dismissed for acts of Gross Misconduct do have a right to appeal against their dismissal.

Appeals should be submitted within a reasonable time following the dismissal, and addressed to a Senior Manager. A reasonable time would normally be no longer than a week following the dismissal.

Employees submitting an appeal must make it clear that they are appealing against the decision to dismiss them, and set out the reasons for their appeal.

Once Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd has received notice of the Employee's decision to Appeal, the Appeal Procedure detailed below will be followed.

4.2 Informal Grievances and Discipline

Where an Employee feels that they have a grievance with Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd they should initially discuss the matter with their Manager on an informal basis.

In the event of Employee conduct which causes concern to management but is not considered to be Gross Misconduct, Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd will take all necessary informal steps to guide and encourage the Employee concerned in order to rectify the problem.

4.3 Employee Conduct / Performance

Where a Manager is unhappy with either the conduct or the performance of an Employee, they will initially discuss their concerns with the Employee on an informal basis.

A meeting will be held with the Employee to guide and support the Employee, as well as to help them address the problem and perform to a standard acceptable to management. For this reason the Manager will take notes during the meeting and then decide what action should result from the meeting. The Employee will be requested to sign the notes. Only the Manager and Employee should attend this meeting. There will be no entitlement to be accompanied.

4.4 Mediation

In the event that an Employee is unhappy with the outcome of the Informal Grievance Procedure, or either party do not feel that the performance and/or conduct issues have been addressed effectively, either the Employee or the Manager may request that the matter be subjected to mediation.

Mediation will involve the use of a third party to act as Mediator. The Mediator will initially speak with both parties separately. He will then arrange a meeting with all parties will be present. The Mediator will set out his assessment of the issues in dispute and invite both parties to reach their own resolution.

The resultant action plan should have the agreement and support of both parties, be set out in writing and be signed by all involved in the Mediation process.

4.5 Formal Grievance

Where grievances have not being fully resolved at the initial informal stage, a formal approach is required. This will involve initially a written request by the Employee to management. As a consequence a formal meeting will be held to address the matter, within 7 days of receiving the Employee's letter.

At this meeting Employees are entitled - and encouraged - to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative. Employees will be informed in writing of the outcome of the meeting within 7 days.

Where the Employee making the grievance is unhappy with the outcome of the meeting, they may issue an appeal, in writing. This Appeal must be submitted within 7 days of receiving the response to the original grievance meeting.

4.6 Formal Discipline

Where an issue regarding an Employee's conduct, behaviour or performance isn't fully addressed by informal discussions, Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd will pursue the matter through its formal Disciplinary Procedures. Typical examples of areas of concern may be poor work performance, unacceptable and unexplained absenteeism, poor conduct and behaviour at work, and lack of capability by an Employee to carry out their work.

This is a four stage procedure which increases in the severity of its outcome if the issue isn't resolved at the previous stage. Each stage involves a formal meeting between the affected Employee and their Manager, at which the Employee will be given every opportunity to address their side of the issue. Meetings will be conducted as soon as reasonably possible after the incident(s) which are being investigated have occurred, to ensure that facts and witness statements are clear and up to date. At this meeting Employees are entitled - and encouraged - to be accompanied by a work colleague from Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd.

Where the allegation of misconduct is proven, the meeting may result in the following action being taken by Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd against the Employee:

Disciplinary action taken against you will be based on the following procedure;

Offence	First Occasion	Second Occasion	Third Occasion	
Unsatisfactory Conduct	Formal Oral Warning	Formal Written Warning	Termination of Contract of Employment	
Misconduct	Formal Written Warning	Final Written Warning	Termination of Contract of Employment	
Serious Misconduct	Final Written Warning	Termination of Contract of Employment	Termination of Contract of Employment	
Gross Misconduct	Termination of Contract of Employment			

STAGE No.	ACTION TAKEN	LIVE PERIOD	MANAGER RESPONSIBLE
1	Formal Oral Warning	Six months	
2	Formal Written Warning	Twelve months	
3	Termination of Contract of Employment	Twelve months	

Stage 1

In the first instance of a breach, you will be given an VERBAL WARNING outlining nature of the complaint and the corrective action required. A note of the action will be recorded on your personnel file for a period of 12 months, after which time it will be disregarded subject to continual satisfactory conduct and performance.

Stage 2

In the event of further discipline being necessary OR if the misconduct is sufficiently serious to warrant one written warning, but not sufficiently serious to justify dismissal a FINAL WRITTEN WARNING will be given, which as well as listing the nature of the complaint, will advise you that dismissal will result if there is a further occurrence or there is no satisfactory improvement. A copy of this letter, which you will be asked to sign, will be retained on your personnel file for a period of 12 months, after which it will be disregarded subject to continued satisfactory conduct.

Stage 3

Should the same or similar offence be reported or if conduct or performance remains unsatisfactory, within the period of the final written warning, you will be dismissed with appropriate notice.

These stages are represented diagrammatically on the following page.

Particularly severe acts of indiscipline may result in Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd bypassing Stage 1 and proceeding straight to Stage 2.

Employees will receive written notification to attend a Formal Disciplinary Hearing. They will be provided with details of the allegation(s) against them, as well as the date, time and venue of the meeting. They will also be informed of their right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative. The notification will provide a minimum of 2 working days prior notice of the meeting.

4.7 Appeal Procedure

Employees have the right to appeal against a decision made at any stage of the Formal Disciplinary Procedure, the outcome of a Grievance Hearing, or any dismissal caused by redundancy or sickness.

Appeals should be made in writing to a Senior Manager within a reasonable time following the action the Employee is appealing against. A reasonable time would normally be no longer than a week. Appeals made after one week will be considered only where the Employee has a reasonable explanation for having taken so long to appeal.

Employees submitting an appeal must make it clear to Senior Management that they are appealing against the decision affecting them, and set out the reasons for their appeal.

A Formal Appeal Hearing, involving the Employee and the Managing Director of Welcomehome Cleaning Ltd will be held within 14 days of receipt of the appeal request. At this meeting Employees are entitled and encouraged - to be accompanied by a work colleague.

The decision of the Managing Director will be final.