



## Inclusion Policy

## Policy Control

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1	Inclusion Policy	13-1-21
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Faversham Foodbank values diversity and seeks to provide all staff with the opportunity for employment, rewarding work, and personal development based on ability, qualifications, and suitability for the work as well as their potential to be developed into the job. It also values diversity and equal opportunities for volunteers and affiliates to the foodbank.

We believe that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas, thinking and approaches which makes the way work is undertaken more effectively and efficiently.

Faversham foodbank will not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination against any person on grounds of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation whether in the field of recruitment, terms and conditions of employment, career progression, training, transfer, or contract termination.

It is also the responsibility of all staff and volunteers in their daily actions, decisions, and behaviour to promote these concepts, to comply with all relevant legislation, and to ensure that they do not discriminate against colleagues, clients, partners, or any other person associated with Faversham foodbank.

In adopting these principles Faversham foodbank:

1. Will not tolerate acts that breach this policy. All such breaches or alleged breaches will be taken seriously, will be fully investigated, and may instigate disciplinary action where appropriate.
2. Fully recognises its legal obligations under all relevant legislation and codes of practice.
3. Will allow staff and volunteers to pursue any matter through the grievance procedure.
4. Will ensure that all staff and volunteers understand and maintain their responsibilities and those of their team under this policy.
5. Will offer opportunities for flexible working patterns, wherever operationally feasible, to help employees to combine a career with any other responsibilities.
6. Will provide equal opportunity to all who apply for vacancies through open competition.
7. Will recruit candidates only based on their ability to carry out the job, using a clear and open process.
8. Will provide all employees and volunteers with the training and development that they need to carry out their job effectively.
9. Will ensure that no job applicant or employee is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
10. Will distribute and publicise this policy statement throughout Faversham foodbank.

## a. Dignity at Work

### i) Statement

Faversham foodbank believes that the working environment should always be supportive of the dignity and respect of individuals. If a complaint of bullying or harassment is brought to the attention of managers or the board of trustees, it will be investigated promptly, and appropriate action will be taken.

### ii) What and How of Bullying

Bullying is a gradual wearing down process comprising a sustained form of psychological abuse that makes victims feel demeaned and inadequate. Bullying is defined as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or an abuse or misuse of power, which has the purpose, or effect of, intimidating, belittling, and humiliating the recipient, leading to loss of self-esteem for the victim and ultimately self-questioning their worth in the workplace, and possibly society as a whole.

Workplace bullying can range from extreme forms such as violence and intimidation to less obvious actions, like deliberately ignoring someone at work. These tend to be split into two categories:

More obvious:

- shouting or swearing at people in public and private
- persistent criticism
- ignoring or deliberately excluding people
- persecution through threats and instilling fear
- spreading malicious rumours
- constantly undervaluing effort
- dispensing disciplinary action that is totally unjustified
- spontaneous rages, often over trivial matters.

Less obvious:

- withholding information or supplying incorrect information
- deliberately sabotaging or impeding work performance
- constantly changing targets
- setting individuals up to fail by imposing impossible deadlines
- removing areas of responsibility and imposing menial tasks
- levelling unfair criticism about performance the night before an employee goes on holiday
- blocking applications for holiday, promotions, or training.

In every event, actions such as those listed above must be viewed in terms of the distress, they cause the individual. It is the perceptions of the recipient that determine whether any action or statement can be viewed as bullying.

### iii) What and How of Harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. It may be related to any personal

characteristic of the individual (whether perceived or real), or by association (i.e., related to the individual's relationship or dealings with others who have that personal characteristic).

Harassment is normally characterised by more than one incident of unacceptable behaviour, particularly if it recurs, once it has been made clear by the victim that they consider it offensive. One incident may also constitute harassment however, if it is sufficiently serious. Conduct may be harassment whether the person intended to offend.

Failure to prevent harassment or investigate complaints may make Faversham foodbank and the relevant manager liable for their unlawful actions and required to pay damages to the victim. The perpetrator may also be found liable for unlawful actions.

#### iv) What to do if subject to bullying or harassment

If you believe you are being bullied or harassed, you are strongly encouraged to seek early advice/support from your Line Manager / Project Manager. If you feel your Line Manager is harassing you, then you should contact the chair or Trustees ([chair@faversham.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:chair@faversham.foodbank.org.uk))

You should also keep a written record detailing the incidents of harassment and any requests made to the harasser to stop. This written record should be made as soon as possible after the events giving rise to concern and should include dates, times, places, and the circumstances of what happened.

Faversham Foodbank will respond to accusations of bullying and harassment in accordance with grievance and disciplinary procedures.

If you decide not to take any action to deal with the problem and the circumstances described are very serious, Faversham Foodbank reserves the right to investigate the situation as we have an overall duty of care to ensure the safety of all employees who may be adversely affected by the alleged perpetrator's behaviour.

Employees or volunteers who have witnessed any individual being bullied or harassed are strongly encouraged to discuss their concerns with their Line Manager or the chair of trustees.

#### **a. Maternity, Adoption, Paternity and Shared Parental Leave**

Maternity, adoption, paternity, and shared parental leave and pay are in accordance with statutory guidelines.

If you or your partner become pregnant or seek to adopt a child, you should notify your Line Manager at an early stage so that your entitlements and obligations can be explained to you.

Pregnant employees are entitled to take reasonable time off with full pay during working hours to receive ante-natal care, although where possible, appointments should be arranged at the start or end of the working day. Antenatal care includes appointments with the GP, hospital clinics, parent-craft classes, and relaxation classes. Employees who wish to take time off for this purpose are asked to provide medical certification of the pregnancy, and an appointment card, except for the first appointment. If you have concerns about your health and safety, or that of your unborn child's, you should discuss with your Line Manager immediately.

Employees who intend to adopt a child are entitled to take time off to attend adoption appointments after they have been notified that a child has been placed with them for adoption and before the placement occurs. The main adopter is entitled to paid time off to attend up to five adoption appointments; the maximum amount of time off which can be taken on each occasion is six and a half hours. Employees who wish to take time off for this purpose are asked to provide written notice for each appointment.

Employees who have a “qualifying relationship” with a pregnant woman or her expected child (or, in the case of adoption, the partner of the main adopter) may also request to take unpaid time off work to attend two ante-natal (or adoption) appointments of up to 6.5 hours each (including travelling and waiting time), to accompany the mother/partner/main adopter when attending an ante-natal (or adoption) appointment. The employee will need to provide us with a signed declaration (this can be via email) confirming that they have a qualifying relationship, that the purpose of the time off is to accompany the mother/partner/main adopter to an ante-natal (or adoption) appointment and the date and time of the appointment. We ask that employees notify us of any proposed absence as soon as possible; time off will only be refused for good organisational reasons. Requests for time off on more than two occasions will be considered at the manager’s discretion; annual leave or TOIL may be utilised for this purpose.

If you wish to take shared parental leave, please discuss this with your Line Manager at the earliest opportunity. The notification requirements for shared parental leave and/or pay are very specific and detailed and we encourage you to refer to <https://www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay/overview> in the first instance for further information.

## **b. Ordinary Parental Leave**

- Employees who meet the statutory conditions will be eligible for parental leave. Up to 18 weeks’ parental leave may be available for each child, up to the age of 18. Up to four weeks parental leave can be taken in any 12-month period, in blocks of one week or more (or, if the child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, in blocks of one day or more). Requests for parental leave (which is unpaid) should be discussed with your Line Manager, who will identify your entitlement and look at the proposed leave periods dependent upon your and your child's/children's particular circumstances and the needs of Faversham Foodbank.

## **c. Carers leave**

The board of trustees are aware of the current Government’s (as of January 2022) commitment to implementing guidance and legislation for *carers leave*. As such the policy will be updated as soon as possible if and or when legislation is drafted. In the meantime, if an employee needs to discuss specific personal circumstances that line managers would engage with the board of trustees to support the employee on such matters.

#### **d. Emergency Time off for Dependents**

All employees are entitled to reasonable unpaid time off to attend to an emergency relating to a dependant, for example if a dependant falls ill or is injured, if care arrangements break down, or to arrange or attend a dependant's funeral. A dependent is your child (including an adopted child and stepchild), spouse, civil partner, partner, or parent. It may also include someone who lives in your household, and/or someone who reasonably relies on you, such as an elderly relative.

If you need to take time off for dependents you should inform your Line Manager as soon as possible of your unavailability for work, the reason for it and how long you expect to be away from work. Any time taken off must be necessary and reasonable in the circumstances. What is considered reasonable will depend on individual circumstances, however, as a general guide it is anticipated that in most cases a few hours may be required, and in exceptional circumstances a day or two may be necessary.

This right applies to all employees, irrespective of their length of service or hours worked.

Unpaid leave may be required for incident such as:

- A dependant falling ill or being injured or assaulted. Injury may be physical or mental.
- When a dependant is having a baby (this does not include time off after the birth to care for the child. Parental or paternity leave may apply here).
- To make longer term care arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured.
- To deal with the death of a dependant (Compassionate leave may apply here).
- To deal with an unexpected disruption or breakdown of care arrangements for a dependent
- To deal with an unexpected incident involving the employee's child during school hours.

Planned hospital admissions, school closure days, child-minder holidays etc. should normally be covered by annual holiday entitlement or, if the manager agrees and this meets the needs of Faversham Foodbank, such incidents may be taken as unpaid leave, or the lost time made up outside of normal working hours. Employees should engage with their line manager regarding any change to working hours and all line managers must engage to work for the best outcome for the employee and foodbank service.

Abuse of this provision, and/or failure to inform us as soon as reasonably practicable that time off is required may result in us taking formal action in accordance with our disciplinary procedure.

#### **e. Compassionate Leave**

If you suffer bereavement within your family, we will do our utmost to support you in every way.

Faversham Foodbank recognises that different cultures respond to death in significantly different ways. Line managers will check whether the employee's religion or culture requires them to observe any particular practices or make special arrangements which would necessitate them being off work at a particular time. Employees should not assume that their

line manager is aware of any such requirements and should draw this to their line manager's attention as soon as possible.”

Your Line Manager will need to be informed of your circumstances and will agree the leave on an individual basis. Normally up to 4 days' paid leave will be granted; any additional time off will be authorised as holiday or will be unpaid.

#### **f. Time off for Religious Observance**

If you wish to be absent from work to observe your faith on days other than public and bank holidays, such time off should be taken, where possible, from your normal holiday entitlement and by prior agreement with your Line Manager. There is no automatic right to time off for religious holidays, however we will try to ensure that religious groups are not disadvantaged when requesting holiday at a time which is important to them. As with any other form of time off, please give as much notice of your request as you can.

If you require a period of unpaid extended leave for religious reasons, please discuss this with your Line Manager, giving as much notice as possible. Such requests will be given full consideration but are subject to the needs of the organisation.

#### **Implementation, monitoring and review of this policy**

This policy will take effect from 5/5/22 The *Project Manager* has overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy, which will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Board of Trustees following its implementation and may be changed from time to time.

Any queries or comments about this policy should be addressed to the Board of Trustees.