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staff management

model policies & procedures

introduction

- These policies and procedures are for co-ops directly employing staff and managed by either general meeting or management committee



01:04:02

staff training + development policy

1. introduction

1.1 THE CO-OP'S COMMITMENT TO STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The co-op is committed to the delivery of quality services to its members (tenants) and partner landlords. The organisation believes this aim can best be achieved through the training and development of its staff.

The co-op has agreed that all staff will have access to appropriate training and development, in accordance with the Co-operative's strategic aims and objectives and the main purpose and objectives of the particular employee's post.

1.2 AIM OF THIS POLICY

The aim of this policy is to provide a framework for decision making about staff training and development. This is to ensure that all staff and their line managers are aware of the criteria for making decisions and that they are clear about what training and development opportunities are offered by the co-op. It is important for decisions about training and development to be applied consistently across the organisation. Staff should seek further clarification on any aspect of the policy from their line manager.

Development, on the other hand, is any activity that will enhance an employee's ability to contribute to the Co-operative's strategic aims and objectives and enable the employee to fulfill a new or expanding role or potential role. For example, to enable an employee to take on more or different responsibilities perhaps at a more senior level, or to achieve a higher standard of performance in the current role. In practice, this will generally mean activities that lead to vocational or professional qualifications, or that engage the employee in a process of deep learning and change.

It is essential that development activities are aligned to the Co-operative's strategic direction and the individual employee's learning plan. They should also reflect the values and ethos of the Co-operative. Staff development is a continuous process rather than a one-off activity.

All training and development undertaken in work time and/or resourced by the co-op must contribute to the fulfillment of the co-op's aims and objectives.

2.2 CATEGORIES OF TRAINING + DEVELOPMENT

In the following order of priority, the co-op will resource:

1. training required as a result of new or changed legislation, or required of the Co-operative by legislation;
2. training required as a result of a change in job description or a length of time away from work;
3. training that increases an employee's ability to carry out the duties and responsibilities of their existing post;
4. in-house development programmes designed to create a consistency of approach to the Co-operative's service delivery and/or to create "internal potential" for the Co-operative's future;
5. development activities that enable an employee to fulfill a new or expanding role

2. definitions

2.1 DEFINITION + PURPOSE OF TRAINING + DEVELOPMENT

The co-op defines training as any activity enhancing an employee's ability to fulfill the main purpose and objectives of their job description and carry out the duties and responsibilities of their post to the standard expected by the organisation. In practice, this will generally mean activities such as short courses that improve interpersonal or technical skills; update knowledge in a particular area; computer training; on-the-job training; first aid training; attendance at conferences and seminars.

and the individual's responsibility for their own learning;

6. development activities, such as, courses that lead to professional or vocational qualifications that the individual believes would help their long-term career prospects and are relevant to the work of the co-op.

The co-op will not resource training or development which is not related to the work of the Co-operative (that is, in the Strategic Plan).

Within the context of the training and development priorities above, line managers are expected to take account of the Co-operative's Equal Opportunities Policy.

3. access to training + development

3.1 CRITERIA

Managers are expected to ensure that training and development approved meets the following criteria:

1. the identified training or development need must fall into at least one of the categories listed in 2.2;
2. the training or development need must be a priority in the context of the individual's training plan and overall job priorities;
3. adequate financial and staff resources must be available;
4. the training or development approved must take in to consideration the employment status of the individual.

3.2 EMPLOYMENT STATUS

1. Staff employed on permanent contracts

All permanent staff will have access to all categories of training and development as listed in 2.2, subject to the criteria set out in this policy.

2. Staff employed on a one year or more fixed term contract

All staff employed on a one year or more contract will have access to training and development in categories 1, 2, 3 and 4. In exceptional circumstances they may have access to category 5 development activities.

3. Staff employed on fixed term contracts of one year or less

Staff employed on a contract of one year or less will only be offered access to category 1, 2 and 3 training. They do not have access to development opportunities.

4. Temporary employees

Temporary employees on contracts of six months or less will normally not have access to training or development, unless their line manager identifies the need for training in a specific job or task related activity. For example, training in the use of specific computer programs used by the Co-operative.

3.3 PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Staff employed on contracts which specify a probationary period will only have access to category 1 and 3 training during their probationary period. However, the training provided will be limited to that which is essential for them to perform the job to the standard expected. The line manager may identify the need for training to improve their performance in a particular aspect of the post, where their performance is otherwise mostly satisfactory.

3.4 NEW STAFF

All new staff undertake an induction programme which includes on-the-job training and may include external training. The training provided will depend on the individual's employment status.

The Co-operative has no obligation to support new staff to continue with any training or development activities they are already undertaking prior to their acceptance of employment with the co-op.

3.5 STAFF LEAVING

Staff leaving the Co-operative's employment shall not book further training or development courses once they have handed in their notice. Where a course is due to take place after the staff member has left, it is the line manager's responsibility to make a decision about the appropriate course of action. The manager shall take into consideration the interests of the Co-operative in deciding whether it would be appropriate to substitute another member of staff or cancel the place.

4. assessment of training and development needs

4.1 ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Individual training and development needs will be assessed annually as part of the annual appraisal process carried out in February/March. Managers will also identify team training and development needs. The Director, in consultation with line managers, will identify any organisational training and development needs in order for the Co-operative to achieve its Strategic Plan and fulfil its aims and objectives.

The Director will formulate an annual training and development plan for recommendation to the MC. Once agreed, the training and development plan will be used, together with individual/team analyses, to formulate training plans for each individual.

4.2 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

The resource allocation to the training and development budget will take into account the annual training and development plan and the previous year's performance against budget. A proportion of the total training budget will be allocated to meet organisational or specifically identified training needs.

The Director is responsible for managing the training and development budget.

4.3 REVIEW OF TRAINING PLANS

Training and development will be a regular item on the agenda of supervision sessions and appropriate team meetings.

5. development activities

5.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Co-op acknowledges that for the Co-operative to achieve its aims and objectives it needs to invest in the development of its staff in addition to providing training opportunities. Development is any activity that will enhance an employee's ability to contribute to the Co-operative's strategic aims and objectives and enable the employee to fulfill a new or expanding role or potential role.

Development activities may include in-house or external development programmes that provide individuals and/or teams the opportunity to reflect on and improve their own practice and to thereby contribute to improvement and innovation in service delivery. For example, extended in-house courses for whole teams designed to create a consistency of approach to service delivery. External development programmes may include action learning sets, extended courses and professional/vocational studies.

5.2 PROFESSIONAL OR VOCATIONAL STUDIES

The Co-op will strive to support staff in their endeavours to gain professional or vocational qualifications. However, the Co-operative has limited resources and these must always be used effectively and efficiently for the benefit of members (tenants).

Professional or Vocational studies are usually extended courses that lead to a qualification, such as, a degree, diploma or NVQ. Any member of staff on a permanent contract may request support from the co-op to undertake such a course. In order to be considered for support the course must meet the criteria detailed in section 3.1 of this policy.

Due to limited resources and the need to ensure adequate cover the co-op can only support a small number of requests at any one time. Only one member of staff can be on day release at any one time. Length of service will be a factor in considering competing requests for support.

The level of support may vary, but will not exceed, in any one year and up to a maximum of three years:

- one full day release per week (maximum 30 days per year);
- £800 contribution towards course fees per year;
- £40 book allowance;
- one day's study leave for each exam, up to a maximum of 5 days in any academic year.

For those undertaking study by correspondence, an amount of time off may be allowed for course work up to a maximum of one day per week and 30 days per year.

It is emphasised that this is the maximum level of support available. The actual level of support agreed will not necessarily be the maximum and will usually include a combination of paid and unpaid leave to attend the course and some financial support. The financial support may be in the form of a loan to enable the employee to pay the course fees. Any loan made will be limited to no more than £1,200 per year and must be repaid within 12 months. Repayments will be deducted from the employee's salary.

Staff undertaking professional or vocational studies supported by the co-op will have access to other training and development restricted to that which is considered essential by their line manager. Funding for professional or vocational studies will not take priority over funding for training considered essential by the line manager.

6. approval of external courses

When giving approval for external courses and attendance at conferences and seminars, line managers must take into account the criteria detailed in section 3.1, the priorities in the individual's training plan, organisational and team training priorities and budgetary constraints.

6.1 SHORT COURSES

Short courses are defined as courses of up to three days duration (21 hours). Line managers can approve attendance at external short courses provided that:

1. it relates to the work of the team or the co-op as a whole and it addresses a training need identified in the training plan;
2. adequate cover can be provided for the absent employee.

6.2 EXTENDED COURSES + PROFESSIONAL OR VOCATIONAL STUDIES

The line manager can recommend to the Director that an individual should attend an extended course or be supported to undertake professional or vocational studies. Final approval and the level of support to be provided can only be given by the Director.

7. expectations

7.1 COMMITMENT TO LEARNING AND SHARED LEARNING

The co-op expects every individual undertaking a training or development activity supported by the co-op to strive to learn to their fullest potential, to take the activity seriously and to consider all ways of applying the skills and knowledge gained to their work for the Co-operative.

7.2 COURSE ATTENDANCE

Failure to attend a course that has been arranged for the employee is not acceptable. Only cases of emergency or sickness will be accepted as reasons for non-attendance and evidence such as a medical certificate may be required. The employee should make every effort to contact their line manager so that a substitute can be sent, if possible. Where non-attendance has occurred without a justifiable reason the matter may be addressed under the disciplinary procedure.

7.3 COURSE MATERIALS

All materials from courses, seminars and conferences resourced by the co-op are the property of the Co-operative and should be made available to other members of staff if requested.

7.4 POST-TRAINING LENGTH OF STAY

Where a member of staff has undertaken training which has cost in excess of £600 there is an expectation that they remain with the organisation for a period of time after finishing the course. A sliding scale of expectation is outlined below:

Cost	Expected Length of Stay
£600 +	1 year
£1,200 +	2 years

If an employee wishes to leave before the end of the expected length of stay they will be required to repay a proportion of the costs incurred. The proportion to be repaid will be *pro rata* the length of service which the employee fails to complete. For example, if the total cost of the course was £1,200 and the employee resigns six months after completing the course, the amount owed to the co-op will be £900.

'toil' or annual leave procedures

This procedure applies to staff requests for annual leave and time off in lieu of overtime worked (TOIL).

The co-op is a not-for-profit organisation. The day to day work of the organisation is carried out by a small staff team. The following procedure seeks to clarify management expectations of staff and has been prepared in the interests of both staff and tenant members. It is the responsibility of management to ensure the provision of a quality service to the members of the co-op **and** to ensure that employees do not experience unnecessary stress due to inadequate staff cover.

Consequently, approval of leave is at the discretion of the line manager and staff are advised not to make arrangements until their leave has been approved. The co-op also reserves the right to cancel leave in exceptional circumstances in order to ensure minimum staff cover and/or in case of emergencies.

The procedure forms part of staff terms and conditions of employment. Staff should note that failure to comply with these procedures and the decisions of their line manager may be grounds for disciplinary action.

1. Hours of Work

All employees are notified of their minimum contractual hours in their statement of terms and conditions. All employees will have a normal pattern of attendance as agreed with their line manager.

Normal office hours are 9.00 am to 5.00 pm, Monday to Friday. Full-time employees will attend work during these hours and take an unpaid lunch break between 1.00 and 2.00 pm only. Part-time employees will also attend during these hours, with their actual hours specified in their letter of appointment and/or statement of terms and conditions of employment.

Any changes to the normal pattern of attendance and/or hours of work must be by **prior** agreement with the line manager.

Staff must submit a weekly time sheet by 5.00 pm on the Monday immediately following the week end. Time sheets must accurately record actual start and finish times and lunch breaks taken. Full-time staff must take a minimum half hour lunch break. Part-time staff must take a break of at least a half hour if they work more than 7 hours in any one day.

2. Time off in lieu (TOIL)

The co-op acknowledges that, due to the nature of the co-operative's business, staff are required to work outside of normal working hours. Unfortunately, the co-operative is not in a financial position to either pay overtime for extra hours worked or offer staff an unsociable hours allowance.

Time off is allowed in lieu of work done on weekday evenings and at weekends. The extra hours worked must be agreed with the line manager and should normally be taken soon after the weekend or evening worked.

This is not a flexi-time system. That is, staff are expected to work their normal pattern of attendance everyday of the week they are contracted to attend work. This can only be varied by seeking approval for leave from the line manager.

Staff may carry forward no more than the equivalent of their normal weekly hours. Any hours carried forward in excess of your normal weekly hours will be lost. The line manager may waive this requirement in exceptional circumstances and allow excess hours to be carried forward for up to four weeks. However, under no circumstances will TOIL in excess of the normal weekly hours be carried forward from one month to the next.

Time sheets are not accepted as true and accurate until they are checked and signed by the line manager. The Chairperson shall approve the Director's time sheet.

Time off must not be taken without approval of the line manager, or in their absence an appointed deputy. All time off in excess of **three hours** must be requested in writing, giving at least one week's notice, using the *Request for Leave* form.

Any leave taken without the approval of a line

manager will be regarded as unauthorised leave and may result in disciplinary action.

3. Annual Leave

The Co-operative's leave year runs from 1 April to 31 March. The normal annual holiday with pay is 25 working days in each leave year, plus statutory holidays. Part-time employees are entitled to annual and statutory leave on a pro rata basis and leave entitlement will be stated in their letter of appointment and/or statement of terms and conditions.

Up to 5 days not taken within the leave year may be taken within three months of the end of the leave year. Carry forward leave in excess of 5 days may be approved by the Director. Payment in lieu of annual leave not taken will not be made except on termination of employment.

Annual leave must not be taken without approval of the line manager, or in their absence an appointed deputy. All annual leave must be requested in writing, giving at least two week's notice, using the *Request for Leave* form.

Any annual leave taken without the approval of a line manager will be regarded as unauthorised leave and may result in disciplinary action.

4. General Comments

Staff are advised not to make holiday or other arrangements before approval of their leave request. Leave may be approved outside of these procedures, but only in exceptional circumstances. In such cases the employee should attach a confidential memo to the request form.

These procedures do not apply to compassionate leave.

5. Minimum staff cover

The minimum number of staff on duty on any normal working day, given the current size of the staff team, is considered to be four paid employees of the co-op. In addition, the following staff shall not be on leave at the same time:

- the two housing officers;
- maintenance officer and administrator; and
- housing manager and director.

6. Attachments

- (a) *Request for Leave* application form

grievance procedure

An employee who has a grievance about employment should follow the procedure outlined below. Pending the outcome of an appeal the status quo will be maintained.

Stage 1

The employee raises the matter with the director who will respond in writing, normally within 5 working days.

Stage 2

If not resolved, the employee may raise the matter in writing with the management committee. The chair of the Management Committee will respond in writing, normally within ten working days.

Stage 3

If not resolved, the employee may raise the matter at the next Management Committee meeting. The committee's decision will be final.

At these stages, the employee may be represented by a colleague or if appropriate a staff association/ trade union representative. It is the responsibility of the employee to keep their representative informed and to arrange their attendance at meetings.

In the absence of the director or the chairperson, the procedure will commence at stage 3.

staff management

disciplinary procedure

Purpose and Scope

The aim of this disciplinary procedure is to encourage improvement in individual conduct. This procedure sets out the action which will be taken when disciplinary rules are breached.

Principles

- The procedure is designed to establish the facts quickly and to deal consistently with disciplinary issues.
- At every stage employees will have the opportunity to state their case and be represented, if they wish, by a colleague or, if appropriate, a staff association/trade union representative. It is the responsibility of the employee to keep their representative informed and to arrange their attendance at meetings.
- An employee has the right to appeal against any disciplinary penalty.

the procedure

Stage 1 Oral warning

If conduct or performance is unsatisfactory, the employee will be given a formal oral warning by the director which will be recorded in writing and a copy placed on the employee's personal file. The employee will be informed of the consequences if further misconduct occurs or if performance does not improve. The warning will be disregarded after six month's satisfactory service. Further disciplinary action need not be for the same or similar offence to that contained in the oral warning.

Stage 2 Written warning

If conduct or performance continues to be unsatisfactory or if the offence is serious, a written warning will be given by the director, which will include reasons for the warning and a note that if there is no improvement after a specified period a

final written warning will be given. A copy will be given to the employee and a copy placed on the employee's personal file. The Finance & General Purposes and Staff Sub-Committee may be informed by the director at this stage.

Stage 3 Final written warning

If misconduct is more serious or performance is still unsatisfactory the director will inform the Chairperson. The Chairperson will convene a panel of three members of the Management Committee. The panel will hear all the available facts before making a decision. The outcome of this hearing may be a final written warning from the Chairperson, making it clear that any recurrence of the offence or other serious misconduct within a specified period will result in dismissal. A copy will be given to the employee and a copy placed on the employee's personal file for a period of a year.

Stage 4 Dismissal

In cases of gross misconduct or stage 3 written warnings where there is no satisfactory improvement or if further serious misconduct occurs, the director will inform the Chairperson. The employee will be dismissed by the Chairperson.

It should be noted throughout the above procedure that:

- General misconduct need not necessarily be of the same nature as any previous misconduct.
- The procedure may be initiated at the second or a later stage, depending on the gravity of the offences. If so, the Management Committee must be informed.
- The employee will at all times be informed by the director of what constitutes acceptable standards of performance and behaviour and offered whatever help may be considered appropriate in meeting those standards. This could include appropriate training.
- In the event of the absence of the Director or Chairperson, deputies may be appointed to take their place.

gross misconduct

The following matters are examples of what is considered to be gross misconduct:

- theft or unauthorised possession of the co-operative's or other employee's property, or property belonging to members of the co-operative;
- assault of employees or other third parties during the course of employment;
- being under the influence of alcohol or unprescribed drugs during employment;
- refusal to carry out management instructions within the terms of the contract of employment;
- endangering the health or safety of others;
- wilful damage to the property or possessions of the co-operative, other employees or those belonging to members of the co-operative;
- acts of indecent or immoral behaviour during employment;
- any act of deceit or dishonesty relating to your employment, co-operative business or affairs;
- disclosure of any confidential information or trade secrets of the co-operative to any third party, without prior authority or consent;
- racial or sexual discrimination/harassment/victimisation;
- a breach of the co-operative's equal opportunities procedures.

This list is not exhaustive.

Employees should, however, be quite clear that by committing any one of the acts of gross misconduct listed above they put themselves at risk of immediate dismissal from the co-operative's employment.

appeals

An employee who wishes to appeal against any disciplinary decision must do so in writing to the director within five working days giving reasons for the appeal.

the procedure

STAGE 1

A panel appointed by the Chair will be established to hear the appeal and decide the case as impartially as possible.

Stage 2

If the matter is not resolved within ten working days, the employee may refer the matter to the next available meeting of the Management Committee. The Management Committee's decision will be final.

At both these stages, the employee may be represented by a colleague or if appropriate a staff association/trade union representative. It is the responsibility of the employee to keep their representative informed and to arrange their attendance at meetings.

Unless specifically agreed otherwise by the parties concerned, the time limits will be adhered to by all parties concerned.

staff management