



RETAS LEEDS

Code of Conduct – July 2022

RETAS Leeds is a very diverse organization and committed to creating a working environment where all staff, clients and volunteers are treated with respect and dignity irrespective of their identity. RETAS Leeds has a duty to provide a professional, safe and confidential service for all our service users. This can only be achieved if staff, volunteers, Trustees, and service users accept the rights and responsibilities they have to themselves and each other.

The aim of this policy is to give clarity, support and guidance on what RETAS wants and expects of staff, clients, volunteers, Trustees, and other service partners with regard to the standard of professional conduct and behaviour in the workplace.

This policy is not intended to be prescriptive and is not exhaustive. Therefore, RETAS expect that everyone (staff, clients, volunteers, Trustees, service partners, etc.) should be responsible for their own behaviour and actions and work in accordance with our values, policies and practices.

Failure to comply with this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

To ensure a professional, safe and confidential service therefore, it is expected that staff, volunteers, Trustees and service users abide by the following working principles.

Do:

- Respect service users, staff, volunteers and Trustees regardless of their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability or immigration status;
- Respect cultural differences
- Be responsible for your own behaviour
- Respect people's right to privacy
- Remember and ensure the environment remains a safe, confidential place
- RETAS has a smart but casual dress code. Within this, you are free to express your own cultural identity and individuality

Don't:

- Abuse, bully, intimidate or cause harassment to any other service user, member of staff, volunteer or Trustee. This includes:
 - making statements or jokes that are ageist, racist, homophobic and disablist or discriminate on the grounds of religious belief;
 - assaulting or attempting to assault anyone on the premises, or any other venue where you may come into contact with staff, volunteers, service users or Trustees of RETAS Leeds;
 - behaving in an aggressive or disruptive manner, such as swearing, shouting and/or using offensive language;
 - viewing or distributing offensive material, including the use of internet and email facilities;
 - vandalizing or causing willful damage to any property belonging to RETAS Leeds;



- endangering the health and/or safety of yourself or others;
- engage in talking about others in a derogatory manner
- Engage –(directly or indirectly) in any form of exploitative behaviours and practices.
- consume, buy or sell illegal substances, or alcohol, on RETAS Leeds premises (if you are under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs, RETAS Leeds has the right to ask you to leave)
- No smoking on the premises

- **Language:** The language for communication while working at RETAS is clear, plain English avoiding jargon, buzz words and unnecessarily complicated language. Shouting or aggressive speech intended to be combative is likely to cause offence and is unprofessional. Cultural differences, especially in tone, may however prevail and you should be sensitive to modify your behaviour appropriately. Being a very diverse organisation (staff, volunteers and clients), we take pride in the many languages spoken at RETAS and do not want to stop you from speaking your own language, but please be careful not to exclude colleagues.

- **Gifts:** The aim of this section is to ensure RETAS remains independent and transparent and is seen as independent and transparent in all its dealings with clients, external service providers and funders. It is important that our clients understand that RETAS provide a free independent service and that they should not feel obliged to repay our services by way of gifts or that the receipt of gifts will result in preferential or more favourable treatment.

- **Accepting gifts:** Cash gifts should not be accepted under any circumstances with the exception of fundraising purposes for the organisation. (See fundraising policy). RETAS does not encourage gifts- in kind, from and to staff, volunteers, Trustees, clients etc. e (See fundraising policy). However, RETAS recognises that it is not possible in all cases not to accept gifts 'in-kind' made as a gesture of appreciation especially with clients, and that refusing the gift may be perceived to cause offence. Therefore, in these instances staff members may accept the gift in accordance with these guidelines.
 - Be transparent about the gift received and share with the team where possible e.g box of chocolates, sweets, etc.
 - Inform the person who has given the gift that it will be shared with the rest of team
 - If the gift cannot be shared with the team, please declare with line manager
 - If the gift is of very high value such as jewelry and other prestige goods, explore the offer with line manager and determine if it is appropriate to accept or refuse

This list is not exhaustive and there are other behaviours which could bring RETAS Leeds into disrepute which may be considered for disciplinary.



Conflict of interests

RETAS recognises that staff, volunteers and trustees are involved with other organisations and individuals outside RETAS which could cause a conflict of interest. This section of the policy is to ensure that RETAS deals with conflicts of interest and potential conflicts of interest effectively so that we uphold the integrity and reputation of our organization as a trustworthy and independent organisation.

Staff must tell their line manager about their involvement with any organisation or individual that could potentially result in a conflict of interest. If they are unsure of conflict of interest, it is worth raising with line manager for clarity. Staff should avoid activities that might advance personal gain and bring the organization into disrepute.

Trustees

Trustees complete a declaration of interests form annually either stating that they are not aware of any conflicts or detailing any potential conflicts. These are recorded by the board's secretary.

Bribery

Bribery means offering, promising or giving someone a financial or other advantage to encourage them to perform their functions or activities improperly, and includes where it is known or believed that the acceptance of the advantage in itself constitutes improper performance. Bribery also means asking for or agreeing to accept a bribe.

You must not:

- bribe another person
- accept a bribe

If you are asked to take a bribe or become aware that another member of staff, volunteer, partner, third party connected to RETAS or client is asked to take a bribe or offers a bribe, please inform the Chief Executive.

This policy does not claim to be exhaustive in terms of dealing with behaviours at the workplace but offers a good baseline for what RETAS expects in the workplace.



REVIEW

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees under the direct supervision of the RETAS Chief of Executive.

Review Date: September 2025