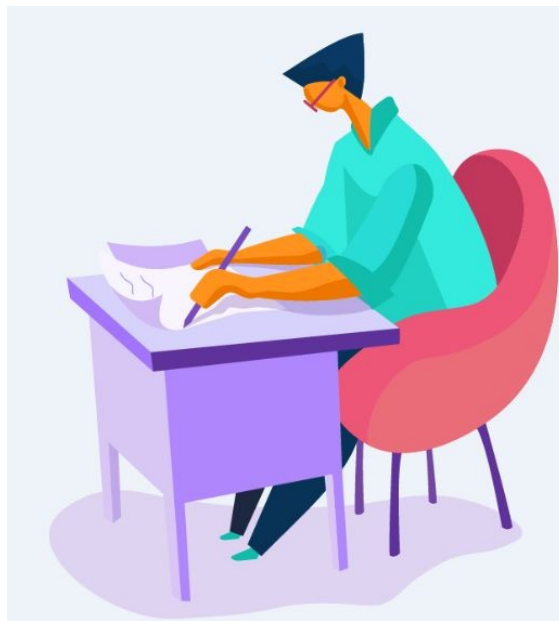




AGENCY WORKER HANDBOOK



February 2021

Introduction to Karo

Thank you for choosing to work with Karo. This handbook is for you, our amazing workers! We help find temporary assignments for nurses and healthcare assistants (carers) in a wide range of health settings including, healthcare organisations, care homes, private and public hospitals and supporting registered providers to provide care on a person's own homes.

This handbook is primarily for PAYE Workers. Karo also supports some via workers who operate through a Personal Services Company and while this handbook is not designed for these workers, it can still be used a reference and guidance document by them.

This handbook has been designed to support your induction and provide guidance about what to expect whilst working through us.

It is imperative that you read through it and familiarise yourself with the information contained here including the guidelines and instructions about the standards required when working for our clients.

It is important that you fully understand everything covered in the handbook. If there are any points which you do not fully understand or if you have any feedback on how we can improve the handbook for the next edition, please contact us at support@Karo.ie.

Occasionally we will need to update the Agency Worker Handbook handbook. The most up to date version will always be available to you at Karo.ie. It is important you agree to familiarise yourself with these changes before undertaking any further shifts through Karo.

You are responsible for reviewing the handbook and ensuring you comply with any of the changes held within it.

This handbook outlines Karo's policies and standards, however you will also be expected to abide by the standards and policies of the regulatory body that you are registered with and any local policies and procedures within the clients that you work for.

CONTENTS

	Page
GENERAL OBLIGATIONS	6
Changes to Health Status	7
Garda Clearance	8
Disclosing Convictions	8
Maintaining Compliance	9
ID Badges	9
Professional Indemnity Cover	9
Mobile Phones & Computers	10
Timekeeping, Hours & Absence Reporting	10
Uniform & Jewellery	11
Client Policies & Procedures	12
Patient/Resident Record Keeping	12
Security	13
The Ratings System	13

PAY & BENEFITS	13
Pay Rates	13
Timesheets	13
PAYE Workers	14
Holiday Pay for PAYE Workers	14
Maternity / Paternity / Adoption Pay for PAYE Workers	14
Personal Service Companies	15
Agency Workers Regulations	15
CODES OF CONDUCT & POLICIES	17
Professional Conduct	17
Substance Abuse	18
Gifts & Gratuities	18
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	18
Harassment & Bullying	19
Fraud Awareness	20
Whistleblowing	21
Guidance on Adult Support and Protection (Safeguarding)	22
Health & Safety	23
Data Protection / Access to Records	25

Complaints	26
Training & Development	27
Safety Alerts	31
Grievance & Disciplinary	31
AGENCY WORKERS HANDBOOK DECLARATIONS	34

GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

While engaged as an Agency Worker, you will be working on the Client's premises. Whilst on the Client's site you must adhere to the following instructions.

At all times you must:

- Follow the instructions and all reasonable requests from the Client.
- Familiarise yourself with and follow the Client's documented policies and procedures.
- Undertake tasks assigned to you promptly and diligently.
- Conduct yourself in an appropriate and professional manner and act with honesty and integrity.
- Comply with all legislation, regulation and good practice standards as detailed within this Handbook.

Prior to assignment you must:

- Keep Karo informed of your availability.
- Inform Karo if you have booked a shift directly with the Client immediately.
- Advise Karo immediately if you are unfit to work (e.g. if you are suffering from any medical condition that would prevent you carrying out your duties safely such as sickness, diarrhoea, skin rash etc).
- Keep your statutory and mandatory training up to date.

On arrival at your assignment you must:

- Be prompt and punctual and arrive in time for a handover
- Identify who you need to report to on arrival and establish what your duties will be whilst on assignment.
- Provide your proof of original ID to your supervisor at the beginning of your first shift and wear your photo ID badge.
- Wear freshly laundered relevant uniform or dress in line with the Client's policy.
- Orientate yourself with the environment and ensure you comply with relevant health and safety instructions and requirements and other client policies and procedures.
- Obtain information regarding items such as fire procedures, onsite security, information security, emergency call procedures, management of challenging behaviours policies prior to starting to deliver the service.
- Familiarise yourself with the patients and residents you will be caring for.

Whilst on assignment you must:

- Have the care, wellbeing and safety of the patients, residents and the Client as your first concern and treat patients, residents, visitors and colleagues with dignity, courtesy and respect with due regard to their age, gender, race, religion and physical/mental condition.
- Work as required by the Client and follow all requests, instructions, policies, procedures, standards and rules of the Client.
- Work collaboratively and communicate effectively with the Client's clinical staff and departments.
- Only undertake work and duties that you are competent and trained to do. Where you are being asked to do something that you are not competent to do, you must inform the senior management in the location where you are working
- Observe the highest standards of hygiene and infection control in line with Client policies and procedures and use protective clothing and PPE (Personal protective equipment) as appropriate to the duties being performed.
- Not smoke on Client premises unless in an area expressly identified for smoking.

At the end of the assignment you must:

- Hand over work to your Client or the person taking over from you and report any adverse incidents that have occurred.
- Return any property or other resources obtained from the Client during the assignment
- Ensure that all identifiable documentation is left within the work location.

Changes to Health Status

You should inform the Client, and Karo, if you become injured or diagnosed with any medical condition.

You MUST also let us know if you are pregnant. If you are concerned that your assignment involves unnecessary risks to your health or fitness, or that of your unborn child, please do not hesitate to contact us.

The Client may conduct a risk assessment and request further medical information. The Client will advise of the circumstances and reasons for the medical examination and is entitled to refuse to allow you to be involved in the provision of the services unless the medical examination demonstrates that it is safe for you to work. The Client shall also be entitled to refuse to allow you to be involved in the provision of the services if you decline to be examined.

You are entitled to a Night Worker Assessment - this is entirely offered on a voluntary basis, please inform your account manager if you would like additional information regarding this process.

Garda Clearance Certificates

The nature of the work that you have applied to undertake is likely to have regular contact with vulnerable adults and young people and for this reason it is necessary for us to obtain a Garda Clearance Certificate on your behalf, including checks of the Adults and Children's barred lists.

We will comply with all codes of practice together with the Data Protection Act 2018 / GDPR to ensure the correct processing, use, storage, retention and disposal of this information.

We will renew your Garda Clearance Certificate on your behalf at least annually.

Disclosing Convictions and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)

For nurses and carers, under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975, no conviction or caution can be considered spent and should be declared to Karo. This requirement includes convictions, cautions etc, which occur during the Agency Workers registration with Karo, including between annual disclosure checks.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily debar you from working with the company. Denial or nondisclosure of any conviction or caution, which is subsequently shown to exist, will, however, lead to your immediate removal from Karo's platform. Any Agency Worker with convictions/cautions will be asked to prepare a Statement of Events surrounding each conviction/caution. Positive Disclosures are reviewed by the Chief Nurse. Due consideration is given to the nature of the role, together with the circumstances and background of any offence and overriding consideration is to the care, safety, and protection of patients / residents and Clients. Karo is bound by the Disclosure Body's Code of Practice and we guarantee that the information will be treated confidentially.

Maintaining Compliance

The process of reaching and maintaining compliance with government legislation and Client requirements are managed for you by our Customer Success Team. This will ensure that you never find that you are unable to work in a particular area because an item in your file is missing or has lapsed.

Once your recruitment file, including qualifications, references, health status and training history has been established, you may be offered work. We will alert you if any of your documentation requires updating, and you should immediately take steps to ensure that these items are updated. Once a document has expired, you will be unable to access shifts on the Karo Platform. In the case of annual training, a refresher course should be booked in good time to ensure no gaps in your workofferings.

Please contact your Account Manager if you require any assistance with this.

Karo ID Badge

A Karo ID Badge will be issued to you once you have cleared our compliance process and prior to your first assignment. If you lose your current badge, you should request a replacement one by

contacting your Account Manager.

Please be aware that should you arrive at any assignment without the proper identification you may be refused access and will have no recourse to claim any expenses or loss of earnings from Karo or from the Client.

Badges must be returned to us on termination of your contract with Karo.

Professional Indemnity (PI) Cover

Karo has professional indemnity insurance in place for PAYE workers. Limited company workers must provide evidence of their own indemnity insurance arrangements. cover.

Individuals who access the platform, who also have a permanent position with another organisation may have indemnity insurance in place and are advised to check.

Mobile Phones & Computer Use

Mobile phones, unless working in the Community, should be switched off for the duration of your assignment.

The Client may authorise you to gain access to certain computer systems, programs and data within those systems. You shall not attempt to gain access to data or programs for which authorisation has not been given.

When on assignment you must:

- not breach the confidentiality of Karo or the client or other individuals through the use of IT equipment / social media
- understand your responsibility not to bring Karo into disrepute through the use of IT equipment, email or other internet based-communication
- not distribute any offensive obscene or indecent material on any computer network
- keep all passwords confidential
- ensure that any equipment logged onto the network is protected if left unattended
- not have any work-related conversations about a client or resident or post defamatory information about peers on blogging or social networking sites
- ensure removable equipment is kept secure at all times

Timekeeping, Hours & Absence Reporting / Cancellations

Please make every effort to ensure you arrive at and leave bookings at the agreed time. You may on occasion be asked by a Client to change your working hours due to their requirements, in the event of a reduction in hours occurring then the Client's decision is final, and you will only be entitled to be paid for the hours you have worked.

If you are requested to work extra hours (that do not contravene the maximum safe working hours for your occupation), you may choose to do so and should ensure the timesheet is completed accordingly. If you are unable to work these extra hours, then you should inform the Client immediately so they can arrange alternative cover.

You are not required to work any hours over and above the maximum set by the Working Time Directive, however you do have the option to opt out of this. If you choose to do this please ensure that you sign the Working Time Directive Opt out form and return this to your account manager who will ensure that this is uploaded to your profile.

If, for any reason, you are unable to attend a booking you must contact Karo a minimum of one hour before the start of your assignment to allow the maximum time to arrange suitable cover. You should cancel your booking on the Karo platform and also inform the Client via phone as directed by the platform. If you do not inform Karo and the Client that you are unable to attend a booking, you will be temporarily suspended from booking shifts, and any booked shifts may be cancelled. This allows us to have a conversation with you to understand the reasons and to identify if there are any adjustments we can make to support you.

Please note that the Karo system will record your cancellations and make these transparent to clients. If you consistently cancel booked shifts you will be temporarily suspended from booking shifts and any booked shifts may be cancelled. This allows us to have a conversation with you to understand the reasons and to identify if there are any adjustments we can make to support you. Further information about the cancellation policy can be obtained from your Account Manager.

Organisational processes around being paid during a break can vary. Where organisations do not pay for breaks and you have been unable to take a break Karo encourages you to complete the 'Taking a Break Exemption Form' to enable evidence to be provided as to the reason why this occurred. Completed forms should be emailed to your account manager and this will be submitted as evidence with your timesheet.

Uniform & Jewellery

You are required to report for work neatly and appropriately dressed. Where applicable, always start work in a clean uniform. If not in uniform, you must always abide by the dress code advised with the Karo platform or from your Account Manager. All Healthcare services require you to be 'bare below the elbows' with short, varnish free finger nails for infection prevention and control reasons.

Karo follows the HSE's Professional Standards of Dress Policy, available [here](#), which should be followed at all times in the interests of infection prevention.

Client Policies and Procedures

You are required to adhere to the policies and procedures issued by the Client. Please ensure that you are informed of where these may be located when you arrive at the assignment.

Karo has a range of key policies and procedures, in addition to those outlined in this Handbook. If you have any questions or would like access to these

documents, please contact your Account Manager, who will be happy to provide you with access where appropriate.

Should any conflict or confusion arise during your working assignment with regard to the interpretation of policies and procedures you must seek advice from a senior member of staff in the Home or contact us at the time the conflict is occurring. If at any time you believe you are being compelled to compromise your integrity and are instructed to breach your Code of Professional Conduct, then you should seek guidance immediately. Always remember that you are personally and professionally accountable for your practice. This means that you are answerable for your actions and omissions, regardless of advice or direction from another professional.

Patient/Resident Record Keeping

Record keeping is a professional requirement of your role. A failure to maintain accurate records could cause considerable challenges if you are required to provide evidence for the care you have provided (e.g. if there were allegations of negligence).

Information is essential to the delivery of high quality evidence-based health care and is critical to the process of clinical decision making. It is essential that you follow the expected guidance for good record keeping, namely

- Recorded at the time or as soon after the event
- Legible and factual
- Recorded in black ink
- Dated, timed and signed

All patient/resident attendance, non-attendance, and refusal of treatment and advice must be recorded. It is advisable to note when telephone contacts are made. It is imperative that the Agency Worker providing care to a particular patient or resident on a specific day can be identified.

All patient / resident records should be kept confidential in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 / GDPR.

Security

Whilst on the Client's premises, you must comply with all security measures of the Client. The Client shall have the right to carry out any physical searches, of your possessions or of vehicles used by you at their premises.

You should also ensure that all personal data is protected from unauthorised access, for example, by ensuring that care plans are not left unattended. Personal data should not be disclosed to anyone outside of the immediate care team without the resident / patient's consent, and in particular over the telephone without first establishing the identity of the caller.

In addition you should ensure that you follow all local policies within the work area to protect the safety and security of residents, for example by ensuring that all secure doors remain locked in accordance with resident need on dementia suites.

You should also ensure that you familiarise yourself with local fire safety procedures.

The Ratings System

At the end of every assignment Karo will request feedback from the Client on the service they have received from us and they will also provide an evaluation of the service they received from the Agency Worker. This will be shared with you to support your appraisal where appropriate, and revalidation if relevant to you. You will also have the opportunity to provide additional feedback to the Client via the platform or your Account Manager.

PAY AND BENEFITS

Pay Rates

Pay rates may differ depending upon the role and position you have applied for. You will be provided with the details of the pay rate on the Karo Platform, prior to your accepting any assignments.

Timesheets

Please email support@karo.ie if you have any queries about timesheets or payment.

Unless otherwise advised, we only offer electronic timesheets. These are more secure and easier for you to use. If you are required by the Client to use paper timesheets you will be notified of this requirement beforehand.

Online Process

At the end of your Assignment you will be able to submit your timesheet through the Karo Platform. Electronic timesheets are submitted by the Agency Worker and approved by the client. Approved timesheets should be received no later than 3pm each Thursday to enable payment to be made on the following Friday. Any approved timesheets received after the cut off time will be paid in the following corresponding weekly cycle. In these circumstances, the hours are then loaded onto our system to create payment to the Agency Worker and an individual or consolidated invoice will be sent to the client.

Once you have submitted your hours, the authorised Client signatory will receive a notification that your online timesheet is awaiting approval. If the hours are rejected for any reason, we will investigate with both you and the Client and make amendments accordingly.

Once the online timesheet is approved, the authorised hours will be sent to us automatically to underpin the payroll process and you will receive payment accordingly.

PAYE Workers

If you are a PAYE Agency Worker, you will have a worker contract with Karo and tax, national insurance and pension contributions will be deducted at source. A contract of engagement will have been forwarded to you, which you should have signed.

For each week that you submit a timesheet, you will receive a payslip with a full breakdown of all of the elements of your pay and deductions. Holiday pay will be accrued according to the hours you have worked as detailed below.

Holiday Pay for PAYE Workers

As a PAYE Agency Worker you will start accruing holiday pay as soon as you begin work through Karo. Details on Holiday entitlement paid leave per year can be found here <https://inmo.ie/Home/Index/39/191>. Entitlement to payment for leave accrues in proportion to the amount of time worked during the leave year and will be paid to you within each pay slip.

It is important for your health that you take holiday leave. It is simple – holiday is a necessary rest period for all of us.

Maternity / Paternity / Adoption Pay for PAYE Workers

If you are a PAYE worker and have worked the requisite number of hours and weeks to be entitled to statutory maternity / paternity or adoption pay this will be facilitated through the support of the finance team and your account manager.

Please contact your account manager directly if you would like specific advice regarding these statutory entitlements.

Personal Service Companies

If you are being paid via a Personal Services Company then you will be paid a gross amount and be responsible for your own deductions. You will also not be eligible for the same benefits as PAYE Workers.

Temporary Agency Work Regulations

The EU Directive on [Temporary Agency Work 2008/104/EC \(pdf\)](#) came into effect on 5 December 2011., and was designed to ensure that Agency Workers receive, usually after a qualifying period, treatment no less favourable than their full-time employed equivalents.

It provides that all temporary agency workers must have equal treatment with regular workers from their first day at work in respect of:

- The duration of working time, rest periods, night work, annual leave and public holidays
- Pay
- Work done by pregnant women and nursing mothers, children and young people
- Action taken to combat discrimination on the grounds of sex, race or ethnic origin, religion or beliefs, disabilities, age or sexual orientation.

- Temporary agency workers must also have equal access to facilities such as childcare and must be informed of permanent employment opportunities.

Additional information can be found on The Citizens Information website [here](#)

CODES OF CONDUCT & POLICIES

Professional Conduct

All registered healthcare staff working with Karo will be required to adhere to the regulatory body's respective Code of Professional Conduct. You will have been provided with this information directly by your regulatory body. Additional copies can be downloaded from your regulatory body's website.

We expect you to behave in a manner that upholds the reputation of your profession. Behaviour that compromises this reputation may call your registration into question even if it is not directly connected to your professional practice.

Substance Abuse

You must not arrive on duty intoxicated by either alcohol or drugs prior to a shift. Clients may request that you undertake an alcohol breath test if they suspect that your performance may be affected. Each client will have a local alcohol and drugs policy. Any Agency Worker arriving for or suspected of arriving for duty intoxicated who is sent home will not be refunded travelling or time expenses and may have their assignment terminated with immediate effect.

Drugs and alcohol (whether prescribed, over the counter or illegal) can impair judgment and decision making leading to potential health and safety implications for both the individual themselves and the resident / patient.

Karo appreciates that, on occasion, an individual may be required to take medication to treat an illness or condition. Such medication is permitted so long as it has been prescribed or pharmacist advice sought where the medication may have side effects that affects an individual's ability to perform their role in a safe way, or affect the safety of any colleague, patient or resident. If you have concerns about the side effects of any medication you are required to disclose this to the most senior person in the work area immediately

Gifts and Gratuities

Under no circumstances should you seek money, gifts, favours, or rewards for services rendered, either for yourself or for any third party. It is not uncommon for a patient, resident, their friend or relative, to offer a voluntary gift as a mark of appreciation for care you have given. Any offer of a gift should be politely refused with an explanation that acceptance would be against Karo's and indeed the Client's policy.

Karo follows Government guidelines on Anti-Bribery and Corruption where it relates to the business as a whole. The guidelines can be accessed [here](#)

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Karo is committed to supporting the principle of equality, diversity and inclusion, and opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of any Protected Characteristic (PC) including sex; race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin); religion or belief; age; disability; marital status and civil partnership; sexual orientation; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity. We also oppose discrimination based on other characteristics that are not protected (e.g. class, weight, regional accent etc).

In all aspects of work, Karo operates a policy of equality, diversity and inclusion. Information may be requested from staff, applicants and Agency Workers, enabling us to monitor the success of this policy. The giving of such information will be voluntary, and it will be used solely for monitoring purposes. Individual details will be kept confidential; however, group statistics may be released to relevant authorities.

Equality of opportunity extends to all aspects of Karo's work, including recruitment and selection, assignment of work, pay rates, assessment of performance, and action in response to complaints.

Agency Workers are encouraged to make known all special skills and/or knowledge, which may make you particularly suited to care for patients/residents from specific ethnic or cultural groups. Agency Workers have the right to accept or refuse individual assignments but any indication that an Agency Worker has not acted, or will not act, in accordance with this policy will be investigated and this may result in removal from our register.

Harassment / Bullying

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Individuals can complain of 3rd party harassment also which is behaviour they find offensive, humiliating etc., even if:

- It is not directed at them.
- The behaviour is perpetrated by a third party who is not an employee of the company.
- The behaviour is based on perception or association.

Initially you may feel it possible to address the situation informally with the perpetrator with a view to resolving matters. Sometimes it may be the case that the perpetrator is unaware that their conduct is having such an effect and may be genuinely upset that they have caused offence. You may wish to try to explain to the perpetrator that their conduct is unwelcome, makes you feel uncomfortable and ask that they avoid such behaviour in the future. Notes should be taken of any conversation.

In the event that addressing the issue informally does not resolve it or you consider the actions to be too serious to try to resolve informally, you should raise these concerns formally by contacting your account manager.

Karo will investigate any concerns alongside the client and ensure that appropriate actions are implemented to ensure a positive working environment for its workers.

Bullying or harassment of a resident or patient is a safeguarding concern and should be dealt with firstly by following the safeguarding procedures outlined below.

Karo is committed to creating a working environment where every Agency Worker is treated with dignity and respect and where each person's individuality and sense of self-worth within the workplace is maintained. All Agency Workers have a duty to treat colleagues with respect and dignity and to take all steps necessary to ensure that harassment does not occur. Whatever the form of harassment (whether by direct contact, written correspondence, the spoken word or by use of email/intranet), behaviour of this nature can be objectionable and will not be tolerated by Karo or any of the institutions we service. Any Agency Worker, who is considered, after proper investigation, to have subjected a patient/resident, another Agency Worker or anyone else that they work with to any form of harassment or bullying will have access to the Karo platform removed and any assignment ended immediately.

Fraud Awareness

In 2001 the CRIMINAL JUSTICE (THEFT AND FRAUD OFFENCES) ACT, 2001 came into effect, which recognises fraud as a criminal offence. A person is guilty of fraud if they are in breach of the following:

- Fraud by false representation.
- Fraud by failing to disclose information.
- Fraud by abuse of position.

Types of Fraud

Payroll Fraud - payments made to fictitious entries or fraudulent manipulation of payment. False or inflated travel, expense claims, overtime or unsocial hours claims, timesheet fraud claiming for hours that have not been worked or putting in duplicate timesheets.

Requisition and Ordering Fraud - accepting inducements from suppliers, ordering goods and services for personal use and collusion with suppliers to falsify deliveries or order supplies not needed.

Overseas Patients Fraud - People not resident in the Republic of Ireland who come to Ireland for treatment must pay for their treatment before they leave the Country.

What to Do

If you suspect fraud, you should follow these guidelines:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DO make an immediate note of your concerns. ● DO report your suspicions confidentially to someone with the appropriate authority and experience. ● DO deal with the matter promptly if you feel your concerns are warranted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DON'T do nothing. ● DON'T be afraid to raise your concerns. ● DON'T approach or accuse individuals directly. ● DON'T try to investigate the matter yourself. ● DON'T convey your suspicions to anyone other than those with the proper authority.
---	--

Whistleblowing

Karo is committed to ensuring employees, contractors and Agency Workers are able to raise matters of concern without suffering any discrimination, victimisation, disadvantage or detriment for doing so.

If you have concerns to raise about a Healthcare Organisation please contact the incident team via the incident email address (support@Karo.ie)

Any users of the Karo platform who may have concerns about the care delivered within a Healthcare Organisation, or concerns about actions, omissions or decisions of Karo - have a responsibility to make their concerns known via support@karo.ie, or with their account manager.

Guidance on Adult Support and Protection (Safeguarding)

Karo has a zero tolerance approach to abuse and/or neglect and all Agency Workers are required to understand and comply with training received as well as the HSE Safe Guarding Guidance available [here](#). Where the services are provided on client premises (e.g. a care home), we will operate according to the policies and procedures of that institution / organisation and it is expected that the child / vulnerable person / adult at risk of harm will have been informed of their rights by that institution / organisation and that the institution / organisation will provide independent support and advice to the person concerned.

An adult at risk is anyone who (a) has need for care and support (b) is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect and (c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect him or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it

There are many types of abuse. These often co-exist and include; physical, sexual, psychological, neglect, financial, discriminatory, domestic violence, poor practice, organisational, stranger abuse and harm

All individuals who work with Karo have a responsibility to update their knowledge relating to adult protection

In all cases of concern, an individual should inform the most appropriate senior person of any cases causing concern relating to adult protection and safeguarding

All individuals who work with Karo work in partnership with all agencies whose responsibility is primarily to safeguard adults at risk of abuse

In respect of a safeguarding adults review or conference where a user of the Karo platform is requested to attend, a member of the Karo Central Team will make every effort to attend to support you and provide information as required

All cases of reported abuse should be appropriately recorded on the incident management system

In the event that you have been reported to safeguarding as part of an investigatory process, the Incident Support Manager will in most cases request a statement from both you and the reporter as part of the investigation.

In respect of safeguarding children; you should familiarise yourself with both our policy and the local policy and practice within the work area, and practice within the confines of this policy at all times

You are responsible for completing and updating your training as per the Karo Training schedule in regards to child protection.

You should ensure that you report abuse or raise concerns relating to safeguarding children; through the Chief Nurse or Chief Operating Officer in the first instance.

Karo also follows guidelines on the Charter of Fundamental Rights available [here](#)

Health and Safety

It is Karo's policy to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all our Employees, Agency Workers, contractors as well as patients, residents and members of the public. This involves working in partnership with clients on whose site you may be working.

Karo acknowledges and accepts the responsibilities placed on it by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other relevant legislation. Karo considers that a safe and healthy working environment is a prerequisite to achieving the safe, high-quality care and a safe working environment for those who work on its behalf.

The Chief Medical Officer seeks the full support of Karo to ensure that the Health and Safety Policy and the arrangements that are put in place to support the objectives of the policy are implemented effectively

Injuries sustained at work may result in a RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries Disease and Dangerous Occurrences) Report being submitted. All such incidents will be fully investigated in line with HSE expectations and as such Karo should be notified of any work-related injuries or diseases immediately at support@karo.ie

You have a responsibility to do everything you can to prevent injury to yourself and other individuals affected by your actions or omissions at work, You should ensure that you follow Karo procedures, in particular to report any incidents which have or may have led to injury or damage.

You should inform a senior manager of any work situation where there is a danger to individuals and identify any shortcomings in the health and safety arrangements for protecting individuals to ensure action can be taken to rectify this

You should ensure that you check work areas and equipment are safe prior to use, and use any work equipment in accordance with the training and instructions provided.

You should ensure that you report incidents relating to Health and Safety to the Incident Support Manager as soon as possible.

COSHH

COSHH is the main piece of legislation covering control of the risks to people from exposure to harmful substances generated out of or in connection with any work activity. As with all other regulations affecting Health and Safety at work, legal duties under COSHH are laid primarily on the establishment in which you are working, and it is their duty to see that proper systems of work and management are in place.

Duties on Agency Workers include:

- Making proper use of any control measures.
- Following safe systems of work.
- Abiding by local rules and policies.
- Reporting defects in safety equipment as appropriate.

Health surveillance must be carried out, where assessment has shown that a substance is known to cause occupational asthma or severe dermatitis and COSHH requires that employer provide suitable information, instruction and training about:

- The nature of the substances you work with or are exposed to and the risks created by exposure to those substances and the precautions workers should take.
- Control measures and how to use them.
- The use of any personal protective equipment and clothing.
- Results of any exposure monitoring or health surveillance and emergency procedures.

If you suffer illness or injury as a result of a work related issue, Karo should be notified immediately.

Data Protection / Access to Records

To deliver the service, Karo needs to process data, including your records. Additional information can be found within our privacy notice. The information contained in your records is taken from your application form, as well as other elements of your application including but not limited to PVG Scheme / DBS, professional registration, right to work in the Republic of Ireland, references and Terms and Conditions. There may be occasions when your records are disclosed to Regulators, Inspectors and clients.

In line with the Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations 2003, we will obtain and store the following information from all work seekers:

- Date the application was received.
- Your name, address and, if under 22 years of age, date of birth.
- Any terms which apply or will apply between you and Karo and any document recording any variation thereto.
- Details of your training, experience, qualifications, and any authorisation to undertake particular work (and copies of any documentary evidence of the same).
- The names of any Client to whom you are introduced or supplied.
- Details of any resulting engagement and the date from which it takes effect (including all assignment start and end dates).
- Details of any requirements specified by you in relation to taking up employment.
- A copy of any contract between Karo and you.
- Dates of requests of fees from you and receipts for such fees with copy statements or invoices, numbers and amounts (please note we do not charge fees to work-seekers for our services).
- Details about you and the position concerned with copies of all relevant documents and dates they were received or sent as the case may be. These include:
 - Your proof of ID.
 - Your experience, training, qualifications and professional registrations.
 - Your references.
 - Confirmation that you are willing to work in the position that you are being submitted for.
 - All relevant pre-employment checks.
 - Health & safety risks.
 - Any information received by us to indicate that you are unsuitable for the work being provided.

We are not required to retain details of any work-seeker that we do not provide services to.

All new workers will not be able to commence work unless evidence is received of information governance training within the previous 12 months

Any breach or suspected breach of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) must be reported immediately to the Data Protection Officer on support@karo.ie providing as much information as possible. A breach can be broadly defined as a security incident that has affected the confidentiality, integrity or availability or personal data. There will be a personal data breach whenever personal data is lost, destroyed, corrupted or disclosed; if someone accesses the data or passes it on without proper authorisation; or if the data is made unavailable, for example when it has been encrypted by ransomware or accidentally lost or destroyed.

You should ensure that you practice within the Caldicott Principles at all times.

Complaints

Complaints and concerns should be submitted via the incidents email address (support@karo.ie) This is to ensure clarity of the full and specific details of the complaint. Where the complainant is unable to submit a complaint in writing, they should raise the complaint with the Karo central team who will then record the complaint and advise the Incident Support Manager of the details.

Comments made on internal Karo social media sites may be considered and dealt with as complaints, unless they are a part of a group of complaints of a similar pattern, whereby they may be considered as whistleblowing scenarios.

Once recorded on the Incident Management System; the complaint / incident will be fully investigated and the outcome recorded

The Incident Support Manager (ISM) will aim to resolve the complaint within 4 weeks of initial referral. The Incident Support Manager will keep the complainant informed, as far as reasonably practicable, as to the progress of the investigation. They will also update the complainant around the progress of the investigation if it extends beyond the 4 week timescale. Where required, the ISM will formally respond in writing to the complainant outlining:

- How the complaint has been considered;
- The conclusions reached in relation to the complaint, and whether it was upheld or not.
- How any action needed as a result of the complaint is being taken, or is proposed to be taken; and
- The possibility of an internal appeal if the complainant does not agree with the investigation findings

Any appeal to the outcome of a complaint will be heard by the CEO.

Training and Development

Appraisals

In line with best practice, you are required to be annually appraised. The requirements are as follows:

- The appraisal must be carried out by an individual who has been trained to carry out appraisals
- The Appraiser may be required to supply documentary evidence to demonstrate that they have been appropriately trained in the conduct of appraisals and have been regularly re-trained as appropriate.

In addition to the above Karo may request feedback from our Clients. This feedback will cover the following areas:

- General levels of service including punctuality, attitude and ability to carry out practical tasks.
- Clinical performance.
- Training needs.
- Any other issues, including progress since the last appraisal.

Information about the feedback will be available within the Karo platform. You are welcome to discuss these further with your Account Manager.

You should ensure that you maintain a written portfolio of your professional experience and attendance at professional development courses, which should also include a written and agreed 'Personal Development Plan' as agreed at your appraisal.

Statutory and Mandatory Training

For all Agency Workers that work with Karo the following training is mandatory. All of the below training must be evidenced on recruitment. Thereafter refresher training will be provided at the frequency shown below unless a risk assessment has shown that additional training is required for a particular candidate or job:

NMBI Pin (Nurses & Midwives only)

If you're a nurse we require your NMBI PIN so we can check your registration with the NMBI database.

Minimum Two references

We need to collect at least two professional references for your application, so make sure you have at least 2 people that could act as your referee.

We accept references from:

- Any previous healthcare employer
- Up to one agency

Passport or ID Card

To confirm your right to work in Ireland we'll need a copy of your passport, your nationality and if applicable a copy of your work permit - stamp type 0 - 5

Garda Clearance Certificate

To confirm your right to work for Health Care Organisations on behalf of Karo, Garda Vetting is conducted in respect of any person who has access to, or contact with, children or vulnerable persons. As part of our onboarding we will process Garda vetting on your behalf.

Up to Date Documentation

- NMBI
- Passport
- GNIB Card & Visa (if applicable)
- Recent proof of address (3 - 6 months)
- Copy of CV
- 2/3 names & contact details of referees
- Manual Handling and People Lifting
- CPR/BLS
- Infection Control
- Hand Hygiene
- Medication Management
- Safeguarding Certificates (Adult & Child) MAPA (Optional - done as a 2nd stage after account setup)
- EWS & Sepsis

- Fitness to Work Certificate
- Hep B titre level, Hep C (blood screening) proof of immunity for MMR & Varicella + BCG scar (if not visible mantoux or quantiferon test), Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Copy of any additional Nursing Certificates i.e. ICU, A & E, IV Policy

Safety Alerts

A number of bodies release safety alert documents to inform healthcare providers of potential risks with products or services. These are distributed through a variety of centralised systems, including the The Health & Safety Authority, and from individual suppliers such as equipment or medication manufacturers.

Karo has a responsibility to ensure the safety of residents / patients, agency workers, contractors and visitors. Acting upon safety alerts provides one way in which this can be assured.

As a nursing agency for health and social care Karo is not bound or able to report compliance to the The Health & Safety Authority. However, their protocols – and associated deadlines – are seen as best practice and have therefore been adopted by Karo. As a result released safety alerts will be shared on the Karo community for your ease of reference. You should ensure that you keep yourself up to date with the most recent alerts.

Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures

These procedures do not form part of your contract with us. They may be amended at any time and we may use alternative procedures depending on the circumstances of the particular case.

Grievance Procedure

Grievances are concerns, problems or complaints that you may raise with us. Our aim is to facilitate a positive environment for all our workers, and we will take every complaint seriously.

Where appropriate, you should seek to resolve any grievance informally with the person to whom you immediately report. If this does not resolve the problem, you should raise your grievance formally as set out below.

If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, or it is inappropriate to do so, you should raise the matter formally, without unreasonable delay, by setting out your grievance in writing and sending it to your Account Manager. If the matter concerns your Account Manager, you should send your grievance to the CEO.

Your written grievance letter should set out the nature of your complaint and include relevant facts, dates and the names of the individuals involved so that we can investigate it.

Your written grievance will commence the formal grievance procedure and we will endeavour to resolve your issue promptly and without unnecessary delay.

We may invite you to attend meetings for discussion or endeavour to resolve the issue by reliance on documentary evidence only depending on the nature of the grievance, but in any event we will confirm our decision to you promptly in writing. Our letter will explain any further action we intend to take to resolve your grievance.

Disciplinary Procedure

The disciplinary procedure will be used where there are possible issues of misconduct or unacceptably poor performance. It does not apply to less serious cases where you fail to perform to the required standard as a result of genuine lack of skill, capability or training or have genuine sickness absence. In these minor cases, we will first try to resolve the issue with additional training and support if this is appropriate in the circumstances.

If any complaint of misconduct or unacceptably poor performance is made against you by any colleague, client or other third party, an investigation into the allegations will be commenced.

We shall decide if there is a disciplinary case to answer and, if so, aim to establish the facts of the case and conduct and complete the investigation without delay. You will be expected to cooperate fully with any investigation, including attendance at any disciplinary meetings, in order to enable us to deal with the matter promptly.

We reserve the right to suspend you from providing services to our Clients during any investigation and if we exercise this right you will not receive any compensation or remuneration from us, although you will be paid for any shifts that you have completed up to the date of your suspension.

If you are guilty of an act of sufficiently gross (serious) misconduct or some other fundamental breach of our rules, the rules of our clients, or of your contract, you may be summarily dismissed and removed from the platform without investigation.

On completion of any investigation you will be notified promptly in writing about what steps we have decided to take in relation to the situation, which could include your permanent or temporary removal from the Karo platform.

Agency Worker Handbook

Declaration

I have read a copy of the Agency Worker’s Handbook which outlines the goals, policies, benefits and expectations of Karo and its Clients as well as my responsibilities as an Agency Worker.

By signing each section of this document I acknowledge that I have read and understood the requirements of Karo in relation to my role. By my signature below, I acknowledge, understand, accept and agree to comply with the information contained in the Agency Worker Handbook provided to me by Karo. I understand this handbook is not intended to cover every situation which may arise whilst on assignment, but is simply a general guide to the goals, policies, practices, benefits and expectations of Karo.

Updates to this manual will happen from time to time. Whenever this happens Karo will notify me of this where possible. I agree to familiarise myself with these changes before undertaking any further shifts through Karo. I also acknowledge that the most up to date version will be available on the Karo website and undertake to review regularly.

I understand that the Agency Worker Handbook 2021 is not a contract of employment and should not be deemed as such.

Print Name: _____

Role: _____

PIN Number: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

I hereby give permission for Karo to allow access, as a minimum, to my personnel files as part of any official audit, or Client compliance purposes carried out by, any client.. These personnel files will be viewed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation.

Signed:

Date:

	Signature	Date	Page
GENERAL OBLIGATIONS			6
Changes to Health Status			7
Enhanced Criminal Record Checks (DBS / PVG)			8
Disclosing Convictions			8
Maintaining Compliance			9
ID Badges			9
Professional Indemnity Cover			9
Mobile Phones & Computers			10
Timekeeping, Hours & Absence Reporting			10
Uniform & Jewellery			11
Client Policies & Procedures			12
Patient/Resident Record Keeping			12
Security			13
The Ratings System			13
PAY & BENEFITS			13
Pay Rates			13

Timesheets			13
PAYE Workers			14
Holiday Pay for PAYE Workers			14
Maternity / Paternity / Adoption Pay for PAYE Workers			14
Personal Service Companies			15
Agency Workers Regulations			15
CODES OF CONDUCT & POLICIES			17
Professional Conduct			17
Substance Abuse			18
Gifts & Gratuities			18
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion			18
Harassment & Bullying			19
Fraud Awareness			20
Whistleblowing			21
Guidance on Adult Support and Protection (Safeguarding)			22
Health & Safety			23

Data Protection / Access to Records			25
Complaints			26
Training & Development			27
Safety Alerts			31
Grievance & Disciplinary			31