



Approver	Executive Team, Leadership Team, Care Home Managers, Joint Consultative Committee (JCC)
Pre Board Committee Scrutiny	Executive Team, Leadership Team, Care Home Managers, Joint Consultative Committee (JCC)
Date Approved	Oct 2025
Classification	Policy
Title	Disciplinary Policy
Revision Date	Oct 2025
Revised by	HR Manager
Next Revision Date	Aug 2028
Related Documents	Disciplinary Procedures Code of Conduct Grievance Policy and Procedure Dignity at Work Policy Attendance Policy Health & Safety Policy Whistleblowing Policy
Location of Electronic Copy	F:\Live Policies\HR

## **1. VIEWPOINT'S VALUES**

1.1 Viewpoint is here to help people enjoy their later years. Everything we do is about realising this vision, which is supported by the following straightforward set of values:

- Inspire with positive smiles and words;
- Say 'yes I can, and I will;'
- Celebrate age, experience, and wisdom;
- Do according to our customers' wishes and ambitions;
- Treat people (everyone is a VIP) as we would a "loved one;"
- Work hard, have fun and laugh;
- Stay courageous, creative, and ahead of the game; and
- Work with those that share our values.

1.2 These promises shape us. They are a commitment to our tenants, residents, staff, and suppliers. They are fundamental to every single plan, decision, and project we embark on.

1.3 Ensuring that we have systems and processes in place will support us to deliver those plans, decisions, and projects, in accordance with our vision and values.

## **2 Policy Statement**

2.1 The purpose of the Policy is to encourage and help all employees to achieve and maintain acceptable standards of conduct, performance and attendance and to ensure that fair, consistent and effective arrangements operate on every occasion where disciplinary action is considered when an employee does not achieve the standards expected.

2.2 This Policy recognises that the application of disciplinary action is meant to be corrective and has discretion to determine the appropriate disciplinary sanction to apply to an employee who it concluded has committed an act of misconduct.

2.3 Where appropriate, informal action will be considered before recourse to the formal procedure.

2.4 It is paramount that managers involve the HR Team prior to initiating formal disciplinary action, as failure to comply with this policy could invalidate the process and breach employment legislation.

### 3.0 Aim

- 3.1 Disciplinary action is normally only used where other interventions i.e. counselling/reflective accounts and feedback, have failed to produce the required improvement or when the conduct matter is sufficiently serious to require immediate formal action.
- 3.2 The counselling/reflective accounts and feedback should attempt to deal with the matter informally and give the employee an opportunity to improve before any formal action is taken.
- 3.3 It is anticipated that isolated cases of minor misconduct will be dealt with by the immediate Line Manager in an informal manner. If, after counselling/one reflective account and feedback, the employee's conduct or performance does not improve and meet acceptable standards, notification will be given in writing that formal disciplinary action will be considered.
- 3.4 Where an employee is incapable of performing to a satisfactory standard, help will be given by the Association to enable improvement. This will be dealt with under the Capability Policy.
- 3.5 While it is not the intention of this Policy to be prescriptive in relation to examples of less serious or more serious misconduct, **Appendix A** gives examples of some incidents which the Association regards as falling into formal disciplinary action. It is emphasised that Line Managers at all levels will be required to exercise judgement in relation to breaches of disciplinary rules, taking account reasonableness and consistency of application across the Association.
- 3.6 Advice from the Human Resources Team must be sought at all stages of the procedure and prior to any action, including suspension being taken.

### 4.0 Legislation/related policies

- 4.1 This disciplinary policy has been developed in accordance with relevant UK legislation, ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures and its accompanying guidance and organisational policies to ensure fair, transparent, and consistent handling of disciplinary matters
- 4.2 **Legislation**  
The following UK laws form the legal framework underpinning disciplinary procedures:
  - **Employment Rights Act 1996 (ERA)** – Establishes employee protections, including the right not to be unfairly dismissed.
  - **ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures (2015)** – While not law, this statutory guidance is considered by employment tribunals when assessing fairness.

- **Equality Act 2010** – Ensures disciplinary procedures do not discriminate against employees based on protected characteristics (age, sex, disability, race, religion, etc.).
- **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974** – Relevant where disciplinary issues involve safety breaches.
- **Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR** – Governs handling of personal data during disciplinary investigations.
- **Employment Act 2002** – Covers employment tribunal procedures and statutory employment rights.

#### 4.3 Organisational Policies and Procedures

Disciplinary action will also take account of the organisation's internal policies, including:

- **Code of Conduct** - Defines acceptable behaviour and standards at work.
- **Attendance Policy** – Relevant if disciplinary action relates to absenteeism or lateness.
- **Dignity at Work Policy** - – Ensures disciplinary action is consistent with protecting employees from harassment.
- **Health & Safety Policy** – Relevant where disciplinary issues relate to breaches of health and safety rules.
- **Whistleblowing Policy** – Ensures employees are protected when raising concerns in good faith.

#### 5.0 Scope

- 5.1 This Policy and related procedure applies to everyone in the employment of Viewpoint Housing Association.

#### 6.0 Compliance & Support

##### Responsibilities

- 6.1 Normally the possible need for disciplinary action will come first to the attention of an employee's immediate Line Manager who is responsible for initiating the investigation of the matter and taking informal action (after liaising with HR) or bringing the matter to the attention of the appropriate more senior manager.

- 6.2 **Responsibilities of Line Managers:** Each Line Manager has a responsibility to:

- Ensure that they are familiar with VHA's Disciplinary Policy (and Procedures) and apply them equitably;
- Actively consult with the HR Team at all stages of the process;
- Ensure that employees are treated fairly and consistently;
- Respect and work in line with VHA's Employee Code of Conduct.
- Take responsibility for fully investigating possible breaches of the Disciplinary Policy, and decision making as applicable; and

- Adhere to timescales set in the Procedure.

Ensure employees follow data protection, confidentiality and AI-use requirements.

**6.3 Responsibilities of Employees:** Each employee has a responsibility to:

- Take full accountability of their actions and inactions;
- Maintain expected and reasonable levels of attendance and performance at work;
- Respect and work in line with VHA's Employee Code of Conduct;
- To participate and fully co-operate in investigations;
- Comply with all of VHA's Policies & Procedures; and
- Adhere to any VHA or statutory rules or agreements applicable to their role.
- Comply with data protection, confidentiality and cybersecurity procedures.

**6.4 Responsibility of Human Resources:** Human Resources have a responsibility to:

- Proactively advise, support and guide all employees in the application of the Policy (and Procedure);
- Ensure fairness and consistency throughout the Association;
- Be present at all formal Disciplinary Hearings;
- Adhere to the timescales given within this Policy (and Procedure) wherever possible;
- Ensure that hearings are convened and conducted in accordance with the provisions contained within the Procedure;
- Retain any records relating to Disciplinary action in accordance with GDPR;
- Develop the skills of line managers and employee representatives to allow this Policy (and Procedure) to be put into practice effectively; and
- Monitor and review the use of the Policy (and Procedure).

**6.5 Responsibility of Joint Consultative committee (JCC) Representatives:** Each Employee representative has the responsibility to:

- Make themselves familiar with the Policy (and Procedure);
- Represent employees fairly and in line with the Policy (and Procedure);
- Respect and work in-line with VHA's Employee Code of Conduct;
- To participate and co-operate in investigations; and
- Act at all times in line with their responsibilities under the JCC Terms of Reference.

**6.6 Responsibility of Viewpoints Board:** The Board holds ultimate accountability for ensuring that Viewpoint's Disciplinary Policy is implemented fairly, consistently, and in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. The Board's role is one of oversight, governance, and assurance rather than operational involvement in individual cases. Specifically, the Board is responsible for:

- Approving the Disciplinary Policy and ensuring it aligns with organisational values, employment legislation, and best practice.
- Providing strategic oversight to ensure disciplinary procedures are applied consistently and transparently across the organisation.
- Receiving periodic reports from management or HR on the operation of the policy, including trends, outcomes, and any identified risks. Ensuring that the policy supports a culture of fairness, accountability, and continuous improvement.
- Monitoring compliance with statutory obligations such as the Employment Rights Act 1996 and the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.
- Overseeing that appropriate training and resources are provided to managers to support the fair and lawful application of the disciplinary process.
- Reviewing and approving any significant amendments to the policy following changes in legislation, best practice, or organisational structure.

## **7.0 Monitoring & Evaluation**

**7.1** This Policy will be reviewed 3 years after implementation, or earlier if legislative or other changes necessitate this.

## **1.0 DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

1.1 The following illustrate misconduct which could lead to disciplinary action. They do not constitute an exhaustive list and each case must be judged on its merits rather than trying to make an alleged offence fit one of these headings:

- negligence (i.e.) lack of proper care or omission of duty;
- consistently sub-standard and/or careless work or inefficiency;
- failure or refusal to adhere to proper and reasonable rules, regulations, Policies/Procedures and instructions;
- carrying out business unrelated to the Association or taking part in activities unrelated to that of the Association during working hours or on Association premises (unless express permission has been granted for such activities);
- using VHA resources for activities unrelated to the Association;
- time off work without justifiable cause or explanation;
- poor attendance or timekeeping;
- failure to take reasonable care of equipment/materials provided by the Association or premises occupied by the Association;
- misuse of the Association's computer network or other assets;
- Failure to follow data protection procedures, including insecure handling, storage, or transmission of personal data where no actual breach occurred but risk was created.
- Inappropriate or unauthorised access to personal data, records, or systems without a legitimate business reason.
- Failure to follow cybersecurity guidance, including password management, phishing awareness, and device security.
- Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, where doing so does not cause actual harm but breaches internal policy.
- Entering confidential, personal, or sensitive organisational data into an AI tool contrary to company policy, *where no breach occurred* but risk was created.
- Where lack of or loss of qualifications affects work performance, action will be taken in the light of the circumstances of each case. This also applies where an employee unreasonably fails to follow CPD requirements. This may or may not include disciplinary action.
- Alleged or proven criminal offences, and/or behaviour out-with the work situation, including those which may bring VHA into disrepute, could be dealt with under this Policy if they affect an employee's ability to carry out the requirements of his/her post or fulfil the

terms of his/her Terms & Conditions of their contract. Action will be taken in the light of the circumstances of each case.

- 1.2 Normally such offences will be dealt with by the use of warning(s) which will give the employee the opportunity to improve their performance or behaviour. Dismissal will not normally be appropriate for a first offence.

## **2.0 GROSS MISCONDUCT**

- 2.1 The following are regarded by the Association as examples of gross misconduct which may lead to dismissal, regardless of whether or not previous warnings have been issued. They do not constitute an exhaustive list and each case must be judged on its merits. Dismissal may be without notice if the circumstances of the case so justify:

- theft of Association property or property of a colleague or other persons within the Association;
- gross insubordination;
- breaches of Health and Safety rules or omission of duty where contravention of regulations or requirements results in or could result in harm or risk to other persons;
- wilful damage to Association property or premises;
- fraud or attempted fraud e.g. falsifying time sheets, falsifying mileage sheets;
- Bullying or harassment of any type, including unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation which contravenes VHA's equality and dignity at work commitments and policies.
- viewing or downloading material on the Internet which could cause offence to other employees or Association service users;
- Defamatory and/or abusive comments regarding VHA or its people through the inappropriate use of any medium including social media or other internet sites;
- attending work and/or carrying out their duties under the influence of any substance to an extent that the employee is unable to carry out their duties satisfactorily;
- consumption of alcohol / drugs whilst on duty (other than where approval has been given to drink Alcohol);
- breach of requirements regarding confidentiality;
- non-disclosure of criminal convictions;
- bringing the Association's name into disrepute;
- wilful breach/disregard of the Association's Financial Policies or Standing Orders and Entitlements, Payments and Benefits Policy.
- Unauthorised disclosure of personal data in breach of Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR obligations.



- Actions leading to a reportable data breach, including deliberate or reckless mishandling of personal, resident, tenant, or staff information.
- Deliberate bypassing, disabling, or interfering with cybersecurity controls, resulting in or risking unauthorised access, malware infection, or system compromise.
- Knowingly sharing confidential information, whether digitally, verbally or through social media.
- Entering confidential or personal data into unauthorised AI tools, resulting in actual or potential data breach.
- Using AI to fabricate, falsify, or manipulate records, reports, notes, or evidence.
- Using AI to impersonate another employee, resident, or stakeholder (e.g., voice cloning, email generation).
- Using AI to produce abusive, discriminatory, or defamatory content related to staff, residents, tenants, or the organisation.

**3.2** The organisation expects all employees to comply with data protection, confidentiality and cybersecurity requirements. Misuse of personal data, technology, Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems, or digital tools may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.