

**Community First Responder Volunteer Guidance**

**First Responder Schemes**

First Responder Schemes are made up from volunteers, who live or work within a community or village, and have been trained to attend certain emergency 999 calls, providing life saving treatment to those people within the local community in the first few minutes before the arrival of an emergency ambulance.

* The first link is early access – telephoning for help, dialling 999. Once the ambulance service receives the call they will dispatch an ambulance and will at the same time alert local first responders.
* It is likely that the first responders will arrive before the ambulance and if needed, can initiate the next two links – early CPR and early defibrillation.
* Once the ambulance arrives, the forth link can be activated.

If the First Responder can get to the victim within 5 minutes, we can hopefully greatly increase survival rates from cardiac arrest in our community. It is with this in mind that the Mid-Glens First Responder Scheme has been set up.

**WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A FIRST RESPONDER?**

First Responder Schemes are made up from volunteers who live or work within a community or village and have been trained to attend certain 999 calls in support of the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS). Their purpose is to assess the patient and provide appropriate treatment including CPR and Cardiac defibrillation if required, until an ambulance arrives. First Responders are not deployed to attend trauma calls e.g. road traffic collisions or any known violent or other dangerous situations.

Even though an ambulance is already on its way, First Responders can make a potentially life-saving contribution. First Responders actions can result in improvement and reassurance for patients as well as providing valuable assistance and information for attending ambulance crews

**WHO CAN BE A FIRST RESPONDER?**

Anyone can be a first responder. Typically members of a scheme could be:-Lay members of the public; Ambulance staff (off-duty); other emergency services staff; Nurses; Doctors. Previous experience of first aid training or medical knowledge is not essential, as standardised training is undertaken prior to any group of First Responders being utilised by the NIAS.

However**,** First Responder Schemes require a significant commitment on the part of the volunteers and this should not be underestimated. Anyone wishing to become a volunteer must go through a formal application and vetting process before being selected for training. Only on satisfactory completion of training would someone be approved for inclusion on a callout list.

The following selection criteria apply: Applicants must:

* Be aged between 18 and 70
* Have a current clean driving licence
* Have a mobile phone
* Undertake an Access NI Enhanced Disclosure check
* Be physically fit, with a mature outlook on life and have a sympathetic and caring approach to people.
* Volunteers over 65 years of age will be required to undergo an annual health check.
* Although not a requirement, volunteers with a basic understanding of first aid, or members of a voluntary aid society, emergency service or health profession are particularly welcome as would those with an existing community service background.
* Have the flexibility to respond on a call-out basis to meet the needs of the scheme and the local community.
* Be able to commit to an induction training period and to 2 monthly retraining as required.
* Be reliable, honest and trustworthy
* Be able to work on their own initiative and as part of a team

**WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A FIRST RESPONDER?**

It should be remembered that First Responders are volunteers. There will be times that you are unable to respond to a call and you are under no legal obligation to respond at any time. However, having applied as a volunteer, you do accept certain responsibilities:

**A First Responder must:**

* Undertake induction training
* Commit to six monthly refresher training and other training as required
* Have the flexibility to respond on a call-out basis to meet the needs of the scheme and the local community.
* First Responders whilst attending to medical emergencies must adhere to Road Traffic Regulations.
* Follow operational procedures at all times
* Complete all required paperwork re. emergency callouts attended; this paperwork is returned to Dalriada Urgent Care.
* Participate in debriefing and good practice sessions as required
* Work at all times in a safe manner, ensuring your own safety and that of your patient.
* Ensure all Scheme and personal equipment is maintained in good working order.

**VOLUNTEERS CODE OF CONDUCT**

Volunteer First Responders are crucial to the success of the scheme. Ideally volunteers should come from a background such as doctors, nurses, statutory ambulance personnel, voluntary ambulance and aid societies, local pharmacists, part-time fire brigade personnel, coast guards, life boat personnel. However volunteers’ may also be lay people with no previous first aid type experience.

It is vital however that the volunteer First responder is highly motivated and is prepared to adhere to a Code of Conduct.

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

* Do not perform any procedure which is outside your training unless you have a licence to practice and are willing to take individual responsibility for your own actions
* As a First Responder you must have high personal standards including reliability and integrity
* You must be able to conduct yourself appropriately to patients and others including other members of the scheme
* You must have a sense of responsibility
* You must be honest at all times
* You must have self discipline
* You must not pass on any patient information – Patient Confidentiality must be respected at all times
* You must have a high level of personal hygiene and cleanliness
* You must be in good health
* You must not break any roadtraffic laws

**SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY**

Volunteers must at all times be tactful, patient, understanding and sympathetic to patients, relatives and friends and must never:

* Be officious, bad-tempered or impatient
* Be drawn into arguments
* Argue in front of patients, their relatives, friends or members of the public
* Must avoid over familiarity

Volunteers should always:

* Show respect for other people’s cultures, values and beliefs.
* Fully co-operate with ambulance staff
* Address patients and their relatives and friends as sir or madam unless you know their names
* Give a clear explanation for any treatment given to family or friends.

**PERSONAL HYGIENE**

It is crucial that volunteers when on duty and responding to a call pay close attention to their own personal hygiene and cleanliness.

First Responders may come into contact with patients who have open wounds and therefore must wear clean, unsoiled clothes when attending a call. Patients may also be feeling nauseous and strong body odour and perfumes should be avoided. The First Responder should always portray a professional appearance which will inspire confidence.

**MEDIA**

A First Responder should not give any statement. At the scene of an incident any media should be referred to the senior ambulance officer on the scene.

**RECORDING**

Under no circumstances should a First Responder take any photographs, video or audio recordings when attending a call

**ALCOHOL**

Under no circumstances should a First Responder attend or attempt to respond if under the influence of alcohol.

**VIOLENT SITUATIONS.**

A First Responder will not be tasked to any call which the ambulance service believes to have the potential for violence. If however a situation becomes or has the potential to become violent, the First Responder should withdraw immediately and notify ambulance control.

**ON CALL**

First Responders are first and foremost volunteers. You are under no legal obligation to respond to any call. If you are available for call you should however ensure that your bleep and mobile phone are in working order and nearby so that you are able to receive the emergency pager message. You should ensure that your car is fuelled and road worthy and that your High Viz Vest and identification badge are easily accessible i.e. next to your door or in the car. On receipt of an emergency pager message and if you decide to respond – you are now ‘ON DUTY’. Whilst ON DUTY you must at all times adhere to the Code of Conduct and driving regulations.

**IMPORTANT:**

If you are asked to attend an incident by anyone other than ambulance control, you must get authorisation from control **PRIOR** to responding to the incident.

**DRIVING and TRANSPORTATION**

In responding to a call, First Responders are at a heightened level of stress and anxiety. This is a natural response and it is vital that the volunteer recognises this and remains calm and in control. In this state there may be a temptation to drive faster than normal or perhaps take unnecessary risks.

**A FIRST RESPONDER MUST NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES BREAK ANY TRAFFIC LAWS.**

**Dalriada Urgent Care will not accept any responsibility for any reckless actions.**

* A First Responder does not have any priority over any other road user. Do not flash your lights at other road users to gain priority over them
* Under no circumstances should you fit any permanent emergency warning lights , sirens or headlamp flash units to your car as part of this scheme
* You must comply with the highway code at all times
* You must maintain your vehicle in a road worthy condition at all times
* You must supply a copy of your driving licence to the scheme administrator.
* If you receive a driving endorsement you must notify the scheme administrator immediately
* If you have any previous driving convictions you must notify the scheme administrator
* You must **NEVER** transport a patient in your own vehicle
* Do not use your mobile phone, or read a map whilst driving
* On arrival at the scene take care not to block access. The ambulance will need to park nearer the entrance or patient than you do.
* If you are involved in an accident on route to an incident, you must stop in accordance with the Highway Code. You must notify ambulance control of the incident. It is unlikely in such circumstances that you will be able to proceed to the call.
* If you arrive at the scene and perceive any threat to your personal safety **DO NOT** get out of your car and drive away. Once you are at a safe distance, notify ambulance control ofthe situation**.**

**DALRIADA URGENT CARE**

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|  | **INTRODUCTION** |

Once appointed, Dalriada Urgent Care will provide each first responder with an honorary contract. Two copies will be signed and issued. One should be retained by the first responder and the other returned. We ask that you study carefully the contents listed below, in addition to setting out our rules and regulations, it also contains a great deal of helpful information.

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|  | **TELEPHONE INDEX** |

Dalriada Urgent Care - 028 2566 3500

Dalriada Urgent Care (fax number) 028 2566 3509

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| **JOINING OUR ORGANISATION** |

**RECRUITMENT and SELECTION**

Each first responder will complete an application and vetting form. Following interview and satisfactory outcome to the vetting process, Dalriada will obtain 2 references, a copy of your driving licence, a copy of your insurance and a signed copy of a health statement.

**VETTING/SCREENING – ACCESSNI**

It is a condition of your duties that you submit to a Criminal Records check. The disclosure will be carried out by AccessNI. Dalriada Urgent Care adheres to the AccessNI Code of Practice, which is available **at:-** [**AccessNI Code of Practice (nidirect.gov.uk)**](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-11/accessni-code-of-practice.pdf)

You will receive a form to gain permission to carry out the check, which should be returned with your contract. Identity checks will be carried out by authorized personnel of Dalriada Urgent Care.

We handle any information provided as part of the check in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Failure to disclose a criminal offence on your application may disqualify you from appointment. It is important to note, however, that disclosure of conviction does not necessarily debar any applicant from obtaining a role within the First Responder Scheme. The nature of the conviction/action, how long ago it took place and any other factors, which may be relevant, will be considered.

**POLICY ON THE SECURE HANDLING, USE, STORAGE AND RETENTION OF DISCLOSURE INFORMATION**

**DALRIADA URGENT CARE**

**General Principles**

As an organisation using AccessNI to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, **Dalriada Urgent Care** complies fully with AccessNI’s Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage retention and disposal of Disclosure Applications and Disclosure information. We also comply fully with obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislative requirements with regards to the safe handling, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure Information.

**Consent** As we no longer receive a copy certificate from AccessNI, written consent will be obtained from the applicant when requesting and retaining a (copy of a) Disclosure certificate.

**Storage and Access** Disclosure information is be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

**Handling** In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed. We recognise it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

**Usage** Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant’s full consent has been given.

**Retention** Once a recruitment (or other relevant appointment, regulatory or licensing) decision has been taken,we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is necessary. We comply with AccessNI’s Code of Practice requirement to ensure that it is not retained longer than is required for the specific purpose of taking a decision on the applicant’s suitability. Disclosure certificates will be returned to the applicant once a decision, recruitment or otherwise has been made and will be be retained no longer than the agreed period.

**Disposal** Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure means ie by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in any unsecured receptacle (eg waste-bin or confidential sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure or any other relevant non-conviction information supplied by police. However, despite the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the AccessNI unique reference number of the Disclosure Certificate and the details of the recruitment decision.

**POLICY ON THE RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS**

**DALRIADA URGENT CARE**

**Policy Statement**

1. DALRIADA URGENT CARE complies fully with the Code of Practice, issued by the Department of Justice, in connection with the use of information provided to registered persons, their nominees and other recipients of information by AccessNI under Part V of the Police Act 1997, for the purposes of assessing Applicant’s suitability for employment purposes, voluntary positions, licensing and other relevant purposes. We undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly and not to discriminate unfairly or unlawfully against the subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

2. This policy is made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

3. DALRIADA URGENT CARE are committed to equality of opportunity (see separate Equal Opportunities Policy) to following practices, and to providing a service which is free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. We ensure that no applicant or member of staff is subject to less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, marital status, race colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, age, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, physical or mental disability political opinion or offending background, or is disadvantaged by any condition which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance.

4. DALRIADA URGENT CARE actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. The selection of candidates for interview will be based on those who meet the required standard of skills, qualifications and experience as outlined in the essential and desirable criteria.

5. We will request an AccessNI Disclosure only where this is considered proportionate and relevant to the particular position. This will be based on a thorough risk assessment of that position and having considered the relevant legislation which determines whether or not a Standard or Enhanced Disclosure is available to the position in question. Where an AccessNI Disclosure is deemed necessary for a post or position, all applicants will be made aware at the initial recruitment stage that the position will be subject to a Disclosure and that DALRIADA URGENT CARE will request the individual being offered the position to undergo an appropriate AccessNI Disclosure check

6. In line with the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions)(Northern Ireland) Order 1979 (as amended in 2014), DALRIADA URGENT CARE will only ask about convictions which are defined as “not protected” for the purposes of obtaining a Standard or Enhanced disclosure.

7. We undertake to ensure an open and measured and recorded discussion on the subject of any offences or other matters that might be considered relevant for the position concerned eg the individual is applying for a driving job but has a criminal history of driving offences. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of the conditional offer of employment.

8. DALRIADA URGENT CARE may consider discussing any matter revealed in a Disclosure Certificate.

9. We ensure that all those in DALRIADA URGENT CARE who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of Disclosure information. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to employment of ex-offenders (e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978).

10. We undertake to make every subject of an AccessNI Disclosure aware of the existence of the Code of Practice, and to make a copy available on request.

**HAVING A CRIMINAL RECORD WILL NOT NECESSARILY DEBAR YOU FROM WORKING WITH DALRIADA URGENT CARE. THIS WILL DEPEND ON THE NATURE OF THE POSITION, TOGETHER WITH THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND BACKGROUND OF YOUR OFFENCES OR OTHER INFORMATION CONTAINED ON A DISCLOSURE CERTIFICATE.**

**PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

You join us on an initial probationary period of six months. During this period, your performance and general suitability will be assessed and, if it is satisfactory, your duties will continue.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

You have been provided with a description of the position to which you have been appointed but amendments may be made from time to time in relation to our changing needs and your own ability.

**INDUCTION**

Dalriada will be involved in the initial induction program for volunteers

**INSURANCE**

A copy of your insurance will be obtained and must include cover for use of your car as part of the scheme.

**PERSONAL EQUIPMENT**

Each first responder will be issued with photographic identification, a car sticker, luminous vest and masks. First responders will also be provided with a pager. (These may need to be shared across a locality).

**REPORT FORMS**

After you have responded to an event, we need you to complete an Event Report Form. You will find these forms in you first responders pack. After completion, these should be returned to Dalriada Urgent Care.

If you are paged and do not respond, you do not need to tell us.

**COUNSELLING**

If you feel that you would like to talk to someone following attendance at a call, please contact the personnel department at Dalriada and counselling will be arranged.

**TRAINING**

Training will be carried out by the Northern Trust/NIAS. A training update will take place every 6 months; it is **compulsory** for each first responder to attend this training session.

**EQUIPMENT MONITORING**

A volunteer from each area will take responsibility for weekly checks of the AED and contents of the bags. This will be organised at the induction session.

**ADMINISTRATION**

**Payments**

In exceptional circumstances where mileage to and from calls exceeds 10miles costs will be reimbursed at the rate of £0.35p per mile.

All first responders are paid four weekly directly into your chosen bank account.

You will receive a slip showing the total amount of your expenses.

Any queries, which you may have, should be raised with DUC Payroll Officer.

**Overpayments**

If you are overpaid for any reason, the total amount of the overpayment will normally be deducted from your next payment.

**SICKNESS**

You must notify us by telephone at the earliest possible opportunity. Notification should be made personally (or if you are unable to do so, then by a relative, neighbour or friend), to the Personnel Department at DUC. You should try to give some indication when you will be available and notify us as soon as possible if this date changes.

You should notify the Personnel Department at DUC as soon as you know on which day you will be available

If you have been suffering from an infectious or contagious disease or illness such as rubella or hepatitis you must not respond to calls without clearance from your own doctor.

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| **SAFEGUARDS** |

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

In the course of your duties, you shall not at any time, whether before or after the termination of your duties, disclose such information to any person without our written consent.

You are to exercise reasonable care to keep safe all documentary or other material containing confidential information, and shall at the time of termination of your duties with us, or at any other time upon demand, return to us any such material in your possession.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Time outside office hours are an first responder’s personal concern but he/she should not take up membership or associate with other groups, that might entail conflict with or affect confidentiality, or consequently be detrimental to the patient’s interest.

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| **STANDARDS** |

**WASTAGE**

We maintain a policy of "minimum waste" which is essential to the cost-effective and efficient running of all our operations. You are able to promote this policy by taking care of equipment and stock.

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| **HEALTH, SAFETY, WELFARE AND HYGIENE** |

**SAFETY**

You should report all accidents to the personnel department.

**SMOKING POLICY**

A no smoking must be observed whilst responding to calls...

**ALCOHOL and DRUGS POLICY**

The use of alcohol and drugs is totally prohibited.

**LUMINOUS YELLOW BIB**

A luminous yellow bib/tabard will be supplied to each first responder. Please ensure that you wear this at the scene of each call you attend.

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| **GENERAL TERMS OF DUTIES, INFORMATION AND PROC**EDURES |

**CHANGES IN PERSONAL DETAILS**

You must notify the personnel department of any change of name, address, telephone number, etc., in order that we can maintain accurate information on our records, and make contact with you in an emergency, if necessary, outside normal working hours.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

We will try to keep you informed about items of interest by means of our newsletter either by post or e-mail

**FIRST RESPONDERS' PROPERTY**

We do not accept liability for any loss of, or damage to property which you bring with you.

**LOST PROPERTY**

Articles of lost property should be returned to the Personnel Department at DUC who will retain them whilst attempts are made to discover the owner.

**COLLECTIONS FROM FIRST RESPONDERS**

Unless specific authorisation is given by the personnel department, no collections of any kind are allowed

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| **CAPABILITY** |

**INTRODUCTION**

We recognise that your capability to carry out your duties may deteriorate. This can be for a number of reasons, the most common ones being that either the job changes over a period of time or you fail to keep pace with the changes or health reasons.

If the nature of your job changes and we have concerns regarding your capability, we will make every effort to ensure that you understand the level of performance expected of you and that you receive adequate training.

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| **DISCIPLINARY RULES AND PROCEDURES** |

**INTRODUCTION**

It is necessary to have a minimum number of rules in the interests of the whole organisation.

The rules set standards of performance and behaviour whilst the procedures are designed to help promote fairness and order in the treatment of individuals. . Every effort will be made to ensure that any action taken under this procedure is fair, with you being given the opportunity to state your case and appeal against any decision that you consider to be unjust.

**DISCIPLINARY RULES**

(see appendix 2)

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

It is important that if you feel dissatisfied with any matter relating to your role you should have an immediate means by which such a grievance can be aired and resolved. If the problem has not been resolved within ten working days you should bring the matter to the attention of the steering group. This is the final stage of the grievance procedure.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITES**

The aim of the policy is to ensure no applicant, or member of the team is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religious belief, political opinion or affiliation, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age or disability.

We will maintain a neutral working environment in which no first responder feels under threat or intimidated. This means that the display of flags, emblems, posters, graffiti or the circulation of materials or the articulation of slogans and songs which are likely to give offence or cause apprehension amongst particular groups of first responders is prohibited.

The results of any monitoring procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants and first responders.

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| **TERMINATION OF DUTIES** |

**RETIREMENT**

The normal age for retirement is 70, and it is our policy for first responders to retire at the end of the week in which their 70th birthday falls. In certain circumstances consideration may be given to fresh duties being offered to you after retirement. Such offers will be totally at the discretion of the Steering Committee.

**RETURN OF OUR PROPERTY**

On the termination of your duties you must return all our property which is in your possession or for which you have responsibility. Failure to return such items will result in the cost of the items being deducted from any monies outstanding to you. This is an express written term of your contract of duties.

**Appendix 2**

**DISCIPLINARY RULES AND PROCEDURES**

**RULES COVERING MINOR MISCONDUCT**

(these are examples only and not an exhaustive list)

You will be liable to disciplinary action if you are found to have acted in any of the following ways:-

a. failure to abide by the general health and safety rules and procedures

b. unsatisfactory standards.

c. unauthorised use or negligent damage or loss of our property

d. failure to report immediately any damage to property or premises caused by you

**RULES COVERING MAJOR MISCONDUCT**

(these are examples only and not an exhaustive list)

a. smoking whilst responding to calls.

b. rudeness towards patients, members of the public or other first responders, objectionable or insulting behaviour or bad language

c) Failure to report immediately any type of driving conviction or summons which may lead to your conviction

**RULES COVERING GROSS MISCONDUCT**

(these are examples only and not an exhaustive list)

You will be liable to summary dismissal if you are found to have acted in any of the following ways:-

a. grossly indecent or immoral behaviour, deliberate acts of unlawful discrimination or serious acts of harassment

b. dangerous behaviour, fighting or physical assault

c. incapacity at work or poor performance caused by intoxicants or drugs

d. possession, supplying or use of illicit drugs

e. deliberate falsification of any records

f. taking part in activities which result in adverse publicity to ourselves, or which cause us to lose faith in your integrity

g. theft or unauthorised possession of property, whether belonging to us, or a third party

h. destruction/sabotage of our property, or any property.

i. serious breaches of the health and safety rules which endanger the lives of first responders, or any other person

j. gross insubordination and/or continuing refusal to carry out legitimate instructions

k. abuse of the personal harassment policy

n. abuse of the protected disclosure policy.

**PERIOD OF WARNINGS**

Formal verbal warning

A formal verbal warning will normally be disregarded after a six month period.

A written warning will normally be disregarded after a 12 month period.

A final written warning will normally be disregarded after a 12 month period.

**GENERAL NOTES**

1. Gross misconduct offences will result in dismissal without notice.

2. You have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action.

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| **DISCIPLINARY APPEAL PROCEDURE** |

The disciplinary rules and procedures which form part of your honorary contract of duties incorporate the right to lodge an appeal in respect of any disciplinary action taken against you.