

Performance Improvement Policy & Procedure

Statement and Purpose of the Policy

Serenta Homecare are committed to ensuring that all employees are given the opportunity and support to deliver and maintain high levels of performance at work. Any reference made to performance within this policy includes both work performance and behaviour.

It is recognised that there may be times when high performance is not achieved and, wherever possible, Serenta Homecare will seek to support employees to return to high performance.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for managing underperformance in a constructive, fair, and consistent manner. The Performance Improvement Policy differs from the Disciplinary, Sickness and Attendance and other similar policies as its primary focus is that of improving performance to the standard required. The policy establishes guidelines for managers and employees when work performance falls below the standard appropriate for the role due to underperformance. As a last resort, the procedure associated with this policy specifies the circumstances in which the employee may be redeployed to more suitable work or dismissed on the grounds of capability.

Where underperformance is believed to be the result of deliberate action or inaction, or where serious errors have been made that lead to the detriment of Serenta Homecare, it may be more appropriate to refer to the Disciplinary and Conduct Policy instead

This policy applies to all Serenta Homecare employees, except for those still within their probationary periods.

Policy Statement

All employees should be made fully aware of the performance standards they are expected to deliver and should meet regularly with their manager to review their work and performance.

It is the responsibility of managers to ensure that any performance issues are addressed at an early stage and where possible resolved on an informal basis without recourse to the formal procedure.

Where any instances of underperformance are identified, the Performance Improvement Procedure provides a framework for managing concerns in a constructive, fair and consistent manner.

The focus of the Performance Improvement Policy and Procedure is to resolve performance issues by providing appropriate support to enable the employee to perform to the standard required.

Serenta Homecare recognises that underperformance may result from underlying work problems or personal issues that may be outside the employee's direct control. Consequently, there is a need to treat all underperformance with care and sensitivity and to identify and (where appropriate) address the underlying causes.

Responsibilities, Accountabilities and Duties

Registered Manager

The Registered Manager has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is applied fairly, consistently and in a non-discriminatory manner.

Managers and Supervisors

Individual Line Managers/Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that this policy is applied within their own teams, departments and directorates. Any performance issues should be identified early and measures put in place to bring standards of performance back in line with what is expected.

Employees

Each employee has a distinct responsibility for their own performance and behaviours. Where extra training or general support is required, employees should ensure they ask for it in a timely manner.

Performance Improvement Procedure

Informal Discussions

The employee's line manager/supervisor will hold an informal meeting with the employee to discuss the nature of their concerns and consider potential solutions. The key points discussed should be noted and the outcome of the meeting confirmed in writing to the employee as soon as is practicable after the meeting, or within 5 business days, by the manager conducting the meeting.

Following this discussion, the line manager/supervisor may choose to:

- take no further action;
- issue clear guidance to the employee on what needs to be done to improve performance and agree a suitable review date usually within 1 month, and each following month. This review period should not extend past three months from the initial meeting.

Stage 1 – Performance Review Meeting (Formal)

Where informal discussions do not lead to a satisfactory and sustained improvement in performance, the employee will be invited to a formal stage 1 performance review meeting.

The purpose of a performance review meeting is to discuss the employee's performance and decide what measures should be taken, with a view to securing the required improvement in the employee's performance. The meeting will normally be conducted by the employee's manager.

During the performance review meeting, the employee will be given an opportunity to respond to any concerns about performance and to put forward an explanation for the concerns identified by the manager.

The outcome of the performance review meeting may be:

- a decision to take no further action;
- the implementation of a Performance Improvement Programme, designed to bring the employee's performance up to an acceptable level. Regular reviews should be held to monitor any progress or need for support (see section 7 around Timeframes)
- a decision to progress the employee through to Stage 2 of the Performance Improvement Policy.

Performance Improvement Plan

A performance improvement plan is a series of measures designed to help improve the employee's performance. Each measure will ideally be agreed with the employee, although Serenta Homecare reserve the right to insist on any aspect of the performance improvement plan in the absence of such agreement.

Each plan will be tailored to the particular situation, but will contain the following elements:

- **Timescale:** The overall timescale in which the necessary improvement must be achieved will be set out, together with the timescale for reaching individual milestones where appropriate.
- **Targets:** The performance improvement plan will specify the particular areas in which improved performance is needed and set out how, and on what criteria, the employee's performance will be assessed. Where appropriate, specific targets will be set that will need to be achieved either by the end of the programme or at identifiable stages within it.
- **Measures:** The performance improvement plan will specify what measures will be taken by the organisation to support the employee in improving his/her performance. Such measures may include: training; additional supervision; the reallocation of other duties; or the provision of additional support from colleagues.
- **Feedback:** As part of the performance improvement plan, the employee will be given regular feedback from their line manager indicating the extent to which

the employee is on track to deliver the improvements set out in the programme. If, at any stage, the manager feels that the performance improvement plan is not progressing in a satisfactory way, a further meeting may be held to discuss the issue. As a result of such a meeting, the manager may amend or extend any part of the programme.

- **Review:** At the end of the performance improvement plan, the employee's performance will be reviewed. If satisfactory progress has been made, the employee will be notified of this fact in writing. However, if the manager feels that progress has been insufficient, they may decide to extend and/or amend the performance improvement plan to such extent as they consider appropriate. Alternatively, the matter may be referred to a meeting under stage 2 of this procedure.
- **Ongoing review:** Following the successful completion of a performance improvement plan, the employee's performance will continue to be monitored. If, at any stage during the following 12 months, the employee's performance again starts to fall short of an acceptable standard, the line manager may decide to initiate stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2 – Formal Performance Management Hearing

If the performance improvement plan has not led to sufficient improvement in performance, the employee will be invited to attend a formal stage 2 performance management hearing. The invitation will set out the respects in which the employee's manager believes that the employee's performance still falls short of acceptable standards.

- The hearing will be conducted by the Registered Manager.
- The employee will be entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or a trade union official.
- At the hearing, the employee will be given an opportunity to respond to any concerns about their performance and to make representations about any aspect of the way in which the process has been managed.

The outcome of the meeting may be a decision to:

- take no further action;
 - implement another performance improvement plan; or
 - progress to Stage 3 of the Performance Improvement Policy and inform the employee that a possible outcome may be dismissal
- An outcome letter will be issued detailing any action being taken and any other details relating to what was discussed at the meeting. Any relevant timescales should be clearly outlined.

Stage 3 – Final Resolution Hearing

- If an employee's performance still falls short of the standards that are expected of them at the end of a stage 2 review, the matter may be referred to a stage 3 final resolution hearing.
- The employee will be informed in writing of the grounds on which the hearing is being convened. In particular, they will be told of the respects in which performance remains below an acceptable level. They will also be advised that a potential outcome of the hearing could be their dismissal.
- The hearing will be conducted by the Head of Operations. The employee will be entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or trade union official.
- At the meeting, the employee will have the opportunity to respond to any criticisms made about their performance and make representations about how the situation should be treated.

The outcome of the meeting may be:

- a decision to take no further action;
- a decision to extend Stage 3 where this is deemed reasonable by Serenta Homecare;
- an offer to redeploy the employee to alternative work; or
- a decision to dismiss the employee.
- Any offer to redeploy the employee will depend on the availability of a suitable alternative role and will be entirely at Serenta Homecare discretion. Such an offer will be made only where there is confidence that the employee will be able to perform well in the redeployed role. It will normally be offered only as an alternative to dismissal in circumstances in which Serenta Homecare are satisfied that the employee should no longer be allowed to continue to work in their current role. While the employee is free to refuse any offer of redeployment, the only alternative available will usually be dismissal.
- If all suitable training, guidance and all forms of reasonable assistance have been pursued; there is no suitable redeployment opportunity or the employee declines redeployment; and there has been no satisfactory, sustained performance improvements, then there may be no alternative but to dismiss.
- Any dismissal will be with full notice, unless gross misconduct has occurred then this may lead to instant dismissal. The decision to dismiss together with the reasons for dismissal will be set out in writing and sent to the employee.
- Where an employee is dismissed in accordance with this procedure, they will have a right of appeal.

Appeal

An employee has a right of appeal against a sanction issued under stage 3 of this procedure. A request for an appeal should be sent in writing and set out the grounds on which the employee believes that the decision was flawed or unfair. The request should be sent within five working days of the employee receiving their outcome letter.

- An appeal hearing will be convened to consider the matter. It will be chaired by a Director. The employee will be entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or a trade union official.
- At the hearing, the decision given at the end of the Stage 3 meeting will be reviewed and the employee will be entitled to make representations about its appropriateness.
- The result of the hearing will be either to confirm the decisions made, or substitute any outcome that was available to the panel conducting the hearing in which the decision was made.
- The outcome of the appeal will be confirmed to the employee in writing, explaining the grounds on which the decision was reached. The outcome of the appeal will be final.

Timescales

- In all stages of this policy, there is reference made to review meetings which are held to evaluate whether the required level of improvement has been made in the employee's performance. There is no specific time period relating to when a review should take place, although it is recommended this should normally be between 1 and 3 months. Where possible, the review timeframe should be discussed and agreed with the employee, although ultimately this should be determined by the manager.
- Following the successful completion of a performance improvement plan, the employee's performance will continue to be monitored. If, at any stage during the following 12 months, the employee's performance falls short of an acceptable standard (for reasons similar but not necessarily the same), the line manager may decide to initiate stage 2 of this procedure.

Document Control

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