

Hunts Mind



For better  
mental health

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# Hunts Mind Service User Suspension Policy

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Ratified by the Board of Trustees in November 2010

To be reviewed November 2011 or as legislation changes

**The Limes  
24, New street  
St Neots  
Cambridgeshire PE19 1AJ**

**Registered Charity number 1084452  
Company Limited by guarantee 3949645**



## HUNTS MIND SERVICE USER SUSPENSION POLICY

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| <b>1.0</b> | This policy sets out the action Hunts Mind will take if a service user breaches the Code of Conduct. It relates to both groups and one to one activities that take place under the auspices of Hunts Mind either at the Limes or at other venues where Hunts Mind activities take place. |                              |
|            |  | <b>Action to be taken by</b> |
| <b>2.0</b> | <b>Actions that will trigger an immediate suspension from any service provided by Hunts Mind.</b>  |                              |
| 2.1        | Anyone threatening or engaging in violence to any service users, staff, trustees or volunteers in any of Hunts Mind activities will be asked to leave. If he/she refuses to leave, dependent upon severity, the police may be called.  |                              |
| 2.2        | If it is suspected someone has stolen anything from the premises or another person on the premises they will be asked to leave and the alleged crime will be reported to the police.   |                              |
| 2.3        | Anyone taking illegal drugs on the premises, or who are perceived as being under the influence of illegal drugs, or who is thought to have been dealing illegal drugs, or who is under the influence of alcohol will be asked to leave.  |                              |
| 2.4        | Anyone engaging in blatant racist, sexist, homophobic or other forms of discriminatory behaviour or harassment will be asked to leave.   |                              |
| <b>3.0</b> | <b>Process for immediate suspension</b>  |                              |
| 3.1        | The senior staff member on duty will make the decision to effect an immediate suspension. They will do this having   | <b>Senior member of</b>      |

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|     | <p>taken into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to protect other people in the building</li> <li>• Whether or not the police should be involved, depending on the nature of the breach.</li> <li>• The verbal account of the incident available at the time from staff, service users, volunteers and other people in the building.</li> </ul> <p>The senior staff member will inform the service user of the period of suspension. This may be for a period of between one day to four weeks.</p>   | <b>staff on duty</b>               |
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| 3.2 | The length of suspension will depend on the nature of the breach of the Code of Conduct. Longer suspensions should be given where it is necessary to conduct a full internal investigation and/or await any police investigation into the matter so that a decision can be made about the service user's future use of Hunts Mind services.   |                                    |
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| 4.0 | <b>Process following suspension</b>   |                                    |
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| 4.1 | If the suspension is of a short duration [less than five working days]– the person will be told at the time when they can return and an interview should be arranged with a staff member to discuss the incident and to gain the service user's agreement not to repeat the behaviour. The service user can bring a friend, family member or advocate to this meeting. This course of action would be appropriate for example if someone was under the influence of alcohol, or made inappropriate remarks when unwell.   | <b>Senior staff member on duty</b> |
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| 4.2 | For more serious incidents immediately after the exclusion the service user will be sent in writing the reason for the exclusion, the length of the exclusion and the process of investigation that will take place. The CEO or the senior member of staff available will initiate a full investigation into the incident, which will include the service user's account of the incident. The process for the investigation will be agreed with the CEO, or in their absence the most senior staff member available or Chair and it will be undertaken by a senior staff member who was not involved in the incident. A report will be made available to the CEO. | <b>CEO or senior staff member</b>  |
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| 4.3 | The CEO will consider the information available in the written report and decide if the person can resume their attendance of Hunts Mind services after the period of suspension. If it is agreed that they can the service user will be asked to attend a meeting with a staff member to discuss the incident or behaviour and to gain the service user's agreement not to repeat the behaviour. The service user can bring a friend or representative to this meeting.  | <b>CEO</b>           |
| 4.4 | The return to Hunts Mind will initially be on a four week trial period and the service user will be given key worker support at this time. Towards the end of the fourth week the key worker will meet with the service user to confirm whether or not they can continue to use Hunts Mind services. If there have been further breaches of the Code of Conduct during the four week trial period a further period of suspension will occur and the matter will be referred to the panel as set out in paragraph 4.5 below. | <b>Key worker</b>    |
| 4.5 | If it is felt they cannot resume attendance, and it is recommended that the person is to be permanently excluded, then the matter will be referred to a panel which will include the CEO and two members of the Board of Trustees, one of whom should be the Chair. The service user will be entitled to see a copy of the investigation report, be given the reasons for the permanent exclusion and bring a friend, family member or advocate to the panel meeting. The decision of the panel will be final.              | <b>CEO and panel</b> |
| 4.6 | Hunts Mind will only seek to permanently exclude someone from its services once every attempt has been made to resolve matters.   |                      |
| 5.0 | <b>Other actions or behaviours that may trigger a period of suspension.</b>   |                      |
| 5.1 | Some actions or behaviours may not in themselves be sufficient to trigger an immediate suspension, but if repeated over a period of time will call into question whether the behaviour of the individual is acceptable and is in breach of the Code of Conduct.   |                      |

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| 5.2 | <p>Factors that will be taken into account include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent of disruption/fear/insult to others</li> <li>• The degree of provocation in relation to the behaviour</li> <li>• The degree to which the incident or behaviour appears to be deliberate</li> <li>• The number of similar incidents</li> <li>• The personal circumstances of the service user at the time, including their mental health.</li> </ul> |   |
| 6.0 | <b>Procedure</b>  |   |
| 6.1 | Where it is thought a breach of the Code of Conduct may have occurred, the staff member who has witnessed the behaviour, or who has had the behaviour reported to them will discuss the situation with the service user, and other people present at the time. Every effort will be made to resolve the matter.   | <b>Staff member</b>                               |
| 6.2 | Staff should always keep a written record in the service user's file of perceived minor breaches of the Code of Conduct, with any witnesses, the views of others and any factors that should be taken into account.   | <b>Staff member</b>                               |
| 6.3 | It may be felt necessary to issue a verbal warning, and if one is given this should be recorded in the service user's file.   | <b>Staff member</b>                               |
| 6.4 | If the behaviour continues the staff member will remind the service user of the verbal warning and the matter will be referred to a senior staff member who will decide whether to issue a written warning. Any written warning will specify what action will be taken should the offending behaviour occur again, and within what time frame.  | <b>Staff member</b><br><b>Senior staff member</b> |
| 6.5 | In the event of offending behaviour still continuing it may result in an individual being suspended from a specific group, or any activity provided by Hunts Mind. The length of the suspension will be determined on an individual basis taking the severity of the breach into consideration.   |   |
| 6.6 | For any suspension of longer than one week an investigation will need to take place as described above in 4.2 above.  |   |

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| 6.7 | Following an investigation the process described in 4.3 to 4.6 above will be followed. |  |

Signed:



Sharon Cox  
Chair

Ratified: November 2010

Date for review: November 2011