Companionship Standards Policy

Policy Title: PRN-026: Companionship Standards Policy
Company Name: AI Auto-Tech Ltd
Trading/Business Name: CAREHOPES
Company Registration Number: 15556946
SIC Code: 88100 – Social Work Activities Without Accommodation for the Elderly and Disabled
Email: admin@carehopes.com
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1. Policy Introduction

CAREHOPES, the trading name of AI Auto-Tech Ltd, is committed to delivering exceptional companionship services that promote dignity, independence, wellbeing, and social connection. This policy defines the standards expected of all companions to ensure safe, professional, and high-quality companionship aligned with organisational values, safeguarding requirements, and regulatory expectations.

Companionship is a non-care, non-clinical service focused on social, emotional, and practical support. This policy ensures clarity, consistency, and excellence in how companionship is delivered.

2. Key Principles

- **Person-centred:** Companionship must reflect the service user's preferences, interests, and goals.
- **Safety-focused:** All companionship activities must comply with safeguarding and risk management rules.
- **Professional:** Companions must maintain boundaries, integrity, and ethical conduct.
- **Respectful:** Interactions must uphold dignity, privacy, and cultural sensitivity.
- **Consistent:** Standards apply across all settings, staff types, and service users.
- **Non-duplication:** Companions must not duplicate services provided by external professionals.
- **Accountable:** Companions must document activities accurately and report concerns promptly.

3. Policy Statement

CAREHOPES ensures that:

- Companionship is delivered safely, respectfully, and professionally
- Staff follow organisational policies and safeguarding rules
- Activities are appropriate, risk-assessed, and person-centred
- Professional boundaries are maintained at all times
- Staff avoid prohibited tasks, proxy working, and unauthorised shift swapping
- Documentation is accurate, factual, and secure
- Service users receive consistent, high-quality companionship

4. Purpose

- Define the standards of companionship delivery
- Ensure safe and appropriate interactions
- Promote wellbeing, independence, and social connection
- Support staff in delivering high-quality companionship
- Strengthen safeguarding and risk management
- Maintain organisational consistency and compliance

5. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Agency workers
- Zero-contract workers (**PRN-149**)
- Managers and supervisors

It covers companionship delivered in:

- Private homes
- Community settings
- Public spaces
- Group companionship
- Multi-staff working environments

- Digital environments

6. Related Policies

PRN-107 Care and Support Planning Policy PRN-108 Community Participation Policy PRN-110 Cultural Competence Policy PRN-112 Data Protection and GDPR Policy PRN-113 Deprivation of Liberty Awareness Policy PRN-139 Social Isolation Reduction Policy PRN-143 Wellbeing Monitoring Policy PRN-145 Working in Pairs and Multi-Staff Working Policy PRN-146 Working with Other Social Workers and Carers Policy PRN-147 Proxy Working Principle PRN-148 Use of Personal and Service Users Gadget Policy PRN-150 Working with Vulnerable Children Policy

7. Companionship Standards

7.1 Person-Centred Practice

Companions must:

- Tailor activities to the service user's interests
- Respect cultural, religious, and personal preferences
- Encourage independence and self-expression
- Support emotional wellbeing
- Promote social connection

7.2 Professional Conduct

Companions must:

- Maintain professional boundaries
- Use respectful language and behaviour
- Avoid personal involvement or dependency
- Dress appropriately
- Arrive on time and prepared
- Follow care and support plans

7.3 Safety and Risk Management

Companions must:

- Conduct dynamic risk assessments
- Follow safeguarding rules
- Avoid unsafe environments

- Follow allocation restrictions (e.g., gender-based child safeguarding rules)
- Report concerns immediately
- Document risks accurately

7.4 Respect and Dignity

Companions must:

- Respect privacy and confidentiality
- Avoid judgemental behaviour
- Support autonomy
- Promote dignity in all interactions

8. Appropriate Companionship Activities

Examples include:

- Conversation
- Reading
- Games
- Walks (risk-assessed)
- Social outings
- Cultural activities
- Emotional support
- Light organisational tasks (non-care)
- Community participation (PRN-108)

Activities must be:

- Safe
- Appropriate
- Respectful
- Person-centred
- Within companionship scope

9. Prohibited Activities

Companions must **not**:

- Provide personal care
- Administer medication
- Perform clinical tasks
- Manage finances
- Transport service users without approval
- Engage in physical sports
- Attend private family events unless authorised
- Provide childcare
- Engage in unsupervised contact with children
- Share personal contact details
- Engage in proxy working
- Swap shifts without TC approval
- Perform tasks assigned to external professionals

10. Safeguarding Requirements

Companions must:

- Follow PRN-143 and PRN-150
- Maintain strict boundaries with vulnerable adults and children
- Avoid unsupervised contact with children
- Follow gender-based allocation rules
- Report concerns immediately
- Document safeguarding observations accurately

If external professionals are already providing a service:

- Companions must skip that service
- Document: *"Service already being provided by other service: {name of service}."*
- Avoid duplication
- Escalate concerns to management

11. Multi-Staff Working Standards

Companions must:

- Follow PRN-145
- Identify the Lead Companion
- Maintain communication
- Avoid splitting up unless safe
- Support each other's safety
- Document multi-staff involvement

12. Documentation Standards

Companions must document:

- Activities completed
- Locations visited
- Observations
- Safeguarding concerns
- External professionals present
- Multi-staff involvement
- "Service already being provided" entries

Records must be:

- Factual
- Objective
- Clear
- Secure

13. Roles and Responsibilities

13.1 Trustees

- Oversee governance and compliance

13.2 Senior Management

- Ensure companionship standards are upheld
- Approve policy changes
- Oversee safeguarding integration

13.3 DSL

- Review safeguarding concerns
- Provide training and guidance

13.4 Managers

- Support staff
- Conduct audits
- Review documentation

13.5 Staff

- Follow standards
- Maintain boundaries
- Report concerns
- Document accurately

14. Non-Compliance

Non-compliance may include:

- Boundary breaches
- Safeguarding failures
- Proxy working
- Poor documentation
- Unsafe behaviour
- Failure to follow care plans

Consequences may include:

- Retraining
- Formal warnings
- Suspension
- Termination
- Referral to safeguarding authorities

15. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to:

- Legislative changes

- Safeguarding updates
- Organisational changes
- Audit findings