Suspension Policy

PRN-137: **Suspension 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. Introduction

CAREHOPES (TC) is committed to maintaining a safe, ethical, and professional environment for clients, companions, volunteers, staff, and organisational partners. Suspension is a protective measure used when allegations, misconduct, safeguarding concerns, or operational risks require temporary removal of a staff member or companion from duties.

Suspension:

- is **not** a penalty
- is **not** an assumption of guilt
- is a **neutral, protective action**
- ensures safety and fairness during investigation
- protects TC's reputation and safeguarding obligations

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- define suspension procedures
- protect clients and companions
- ensure fair and unbiased investigations
- maintain safeguarding compliance
- outline staff responsibilities during suspension
- clarify communication expectations
- prevent operational disruption

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- companions
- volunteers
- permanent staff
- fixed-term staff
- contract staff
- organisational partners (where applicable)

4. Reasons for Suspension

Suspension may occur when:

4.1. Safeguarding Concerns

- allegations involving client safety
- concerns about vulnerable adults
- environmental risks
- breaches of safeguarding protocols

4.2. Misconduct Allegations

- serious misconduct
- repeated misconduct
- breach of professional boundaries
- breach of confidentiality
- breach of TC policies
- breach of transportation rules
- breach of referral rules
- salary disclosure to clients or third parties
- misrepresentation
- financial misconduct

4.3. Gross Misconduct Allegations

- violence
- harassment
- discrimination

- theft
- fraud
- transporting clients in private vehicles
- accepting private payments
- revealing payment rate
- sharing confidential organisational information
- breach of UK safeguarding laws

4.4. Operational Reasons

- pending investigation
- risk assessment changes
- client complaints requiring review
- environmental or logistical concerns

This list is unexhausted and may be further defined by responsible authorities according to UK legislation.

5. Nature of Suspension

5.1. Suspension Is Not a Punishment

Suspension is:

- neutral
- protective
- temporary
- non-disciplinary

5.2. Suspension With Pay

Unless otherwise stated in contract terms, suspension is normally:

- **with pay**
- without prejudice
- without assumption of guilt

5.3. Suspension Without Pay

Suspension without pay may occur only when:

- contract terms specify it
- the staff member is not available for investigation

- the staff member refuses to cooperate
- the staff member is not fulfilling contractual obligations

6. Suspension Procedure

6.1. Notification

Staff will be notified:

- verbally (initial)
- followed by written confirmation
- with clear explanation of reasons
- with instructions on next steps

6.2. Removal From Duties

Upon suspension:

- staff must stop all client engagement
- staff must stop all TC-related communication
- staff must not contact clients
- staff must not contact sponsors
- staff must not contact colleagues about the case
- staff must not represent TC publicly

6.3. Confidentiality During Suspension

Staff must maintain strict confidentiality and must not:

- discuss the suspension with clients
- discuss the suspension with colleagues
- post about the suspension online
- disclose internal TC information
- disclose salary or payment rate
- disclose investigation details

Breaching confidentiality may result in **immediate dismissal**.

7. Staff Responsibilities During Suspension

7.1. Availability

Staff must remain available for:

- interviews
- meetings
- investigation procedures
- communication with TC management

7.2. Cooperation

Staff must:

- cooperate fully
- provide accurate information
- respond promptly
- comply with instructions
- avoid obstructing investigation

7.3. Conduct

Staff must:

- behave professionally
- avoid conflict
- avoid influencing witnesses
- avoid contacting clients
- avoid discussing the case publicly

7.4. Communication

Staff must:

- maintain communication with their manager
- respond to TC emails or calls
- update TC on availability

8. Investigation During Suspension

8.1. Fairness

Investigations must be:

- unbiased
- evidence-based
- confidential

- timely
- compliant with UK employment standards

8.2. Evidence Gathering

TC may:

- interview staff
- interview clients
- review documents
- review digital communication
- review safeguarding reports
- consult external authorities (if required)

8.3. Duration

Suspension duration depends on:

- complexity of investigation
- availability of evidence
- safeguarding requirements
- operational needs

TC aims to complete investigations **as quickly as reasonably possible**.

9. Outcomes After Suspension

9.1. No Case to Answer

Staff may return to work with:

- no penalty
- support plan (if needed)
- updated risk assessment

9.2. Informal Warning

For minor issues, staff may receive:

- informal coaching
- performance guidance

9.3. Formal Disciplinary Action

Depending on findings:

- first written warning
- final written warning
- action short of dismissal
- dismissal with notice

9.4. Summary Dismissal

For proven **gross misconduct**, staff may be dismissed **immediately**, including for:

- salary disclosure
- transporting clients in private vehicles
- accepting private payments
- revealing payment rate
- breaching confidentiality
- safeguarding violations

9.5. Referral to External Authorities

TC may refer cases to:

- safeguarding boards
- police
- regulatory bodies
- legal authorities

10. Right to Representation

During formal meetings, staff may be accompanied by:

- a union representative
- a colleague
- a legal representative (where applicable)

11. Appeals

Staff may appeal suspension outcomes.

Appeals must be:

- submitted in writing
- within 7–14 days
- reviewed by senior management or the Board

12. Safeguarding Priority

TC prioritises:

- client safety
- companion safety
- organisational integrity
- compliance with UK safeguarding laws

Suspension may be immediate if safeguarding risk is identified.

13. Documentation & Record-Keeping

TC will:

- document suspension decisions
- store records securely
- restrict access to authorised personnel
- comply with UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018

14. Amendments to This Policy

TC may update this policy to reflect:

- legal changes
- safeguarding updates
- operational improvements
- governance decisions

Updates will be communicated through official TC channels.