

Disciplinary Procedures

PRN-48: Disciplinary Procedures

Company Name: AI Auto-Tech Ltd

Trading/Business Name: Trusted Companionship

Company Registration Number: 15556946

SIC Code: 88100 – Social Work Activities Without Accommodation for the Elderly and Disabled

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1. Introduction

Trusted Companionship (TC) is committed to maintaining the highest standards of professionalism, safeguarding, and ethical conduct. To protect clients, companions, and the organisation, TC enforces a structured disciplinary framework that addresses misconduct, policy breaches, and unsafe behaviour.

This policy outlines the disciplinary procedures applied when companions fail to comply with TC policies, safeguarding rules, or professional standards.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- establish clear disciplinary procedures
- ensure fair and consistent handling of misconduct
- protect clients from harm
- protect companions from unsafe practices
- uphold TC's professional reputation
- ensure compliance with safeguarding and legal requirements
- outline consequences for policy breaches

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- companions
- volunteers
- staff engaged in client-facing duties
- supervisors and managers
- governance and safeguarding personnel

4. Definitions

4.1. Misconduct

Behaviour that violates TC policies, professional standards, or expected conduct.

4.2. Serious Misconduct

Behaviour that poses significant risk to clients, companions, or TC operations.

4.3. Gross Misconduct

Severe behaviour that results in immediate termination due to safeguarding, legal, or ethical violations.

4.4. Disciplinary Action

Corrective measures taken by TC in response to misconduct.

4.5. Investigation

A structured process to determine facts, assess risk, and decide appropriate disciplinary outcomes.

5. Roles & Responsibilities

5.1. Companion Responsibilities

Companions must:

- comply with all TC policies
- maintain professional boundaries
- report incidents or concerns
- cooperate with investigations
- attend supervision and training

5.2. Supervisor Responsibilities

Supervisors must:

- identify policy breaches
- initiate investigations
- provide guidance and corrective feedback
- enforce disciplinary actions
- escalate safeguarding concerns

5.3. Governance & Safeguarding Team Responsibilities

The Governance Team must:

- oversee investigations
- ensure fairness and consistency
- maintain disciplinary records
- ensure compliance with legal requirements
- escalate matters to external authorities when required

6. Types of Misconduct

6.1. Minor Misconduct

Examples include:

- lateness
- incomplete documentation
- minor communication issues
- failure to follow minor procedures

6.2. Serious Misconduct

Examples include:

- repeated lateness
- ignoring safety protocols
- boundary concerns
- failure to escalate safeguarding issues
- misuse of client property

6.3. Gross Misconduct

Examples include:

- romantic relationships with clients
- financial involvement
- theft or fraud
- unauthorised recording
- digital exploitation
- physical or verbal abuse
- serious safeguarding violations
- intoxication during duty
- sharing personal contact details
- entering client bedrooms without cause

Gross misconduct results in **immediate termination**.

7. Disciplinary Procedure Stages

7.1. Stage 1: Informal Discussion / Retraining

Used for minor breaches. Supervisor may:

- discuss concerns
- provide corrective guidance
- assign refresher training
- monitor improvement

7.2. Stage 2: Formal Warning

Issued when:

- misconduct is repeated
- misconduct is moderate
- retraining fails to correct behaviour

Warnings may be:

- verbal
- written
- final written

Warnings remain on record for a defined period.

7.3. Stage 3: Suspension

Used for serious breaches or safeguarding concerns. Suspended companions must:

- cease all client contact
- avoid accessing TC systems
- comply with investigation procedures

Suspension is not a disciplinary penalty but a protective measure.

7.4. Stage 4: Termination

Used for:

- gross misconduct
- repeated serious misconduct
- safeguarding violations
- legal breaches

Termination may be immediate depending on risk.

7.5. Stage 5: Safeguarding Escalation

If misconduct involves client safety, TC will:

- escalate to safeguarding authorities
- notify relevant agencies
- cooperate with external investigations

7.6. Stage 6: Legal Referral

If misconduct violates UK law, TC may:

- refer the matter to police
- pursue legal action
- provide evidence to authorities

8. Investigation Procedures

Investigations ensure fairness, accuracy, and safeguarding compliance.

8.1. Investigation Steps

TC will:

- gather evidence

- interview companions
- interview clients (if appropriate)
- review documentation
- assess safeguarding risk
- consult supervisors
- determine disciplinary outcomes

8.2. Companion Cooperation

Companions must:

- participate in interviews
- provide accurate information
- avoid withholding evidence
- comply with investigation instructions

Failure to cooperate may result in disciplinary action.

9. Safeguarding Considerations

Safeguarding concerns override all other considerations.

TC must:

- prioritise client safety
- escalate concerns immediately
- remove companions from duty if risk is present
- notify external agencies when required

Safeguarding breaches are treated as **gross misconduct**.

10. Documentation Requirements

TC must maintain:

- disciplinary records
- investigation notes
- incident reports
- safeguarding escalations
- written warnings

- termination letters

Documentation must be:

- factual
- objective
- securely stored
- GDPR-compliant

11. Appeals Process

Companions may appeal disciplinary decisions.

11.1. Grounds for Appeal

Appeals may be submitted if:

- procedures were not followed
- new evidence emerges
- the decision appears disproportionate

11.2. Appeal Review

TC will:

- review the appeal
- reassess evidence
- consult independent supervisors
- issue a final decision

The final decision is binding.

12. Legal & Regulatory Compliance

This policy aligns with:

- UK safeguarding legislation
- Care Act 2014
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- TC Confidentiality Policy
- TC Digital Security Policy

Companions must comply with all legal and organisational requirements.

13. Amendments

TC may update this policy to reflect:

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

Updates will be communicated through official TC channels.