# Registered Care Home

## Staff Meals Policy

### References

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<td>Staff Handbook</td>
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### Legislation relating to this policy

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### Addendum:

Where this Policy and its Appendices/Formats states Contract Manager it also relates to the Service Manager. And where the title of Service Co-ordinator and Housing Support Co-ordinator appears - this relates to Support Manager.
Community Lives Consortium is regulated as a Domiciliary Care Agency by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales.

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‘Community Lives Consortium is regulated as a Domiciliary Care Agency by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales’
1. Introduction

This policy outlines the main values, principles and policies underpinning the Consortium’s approach to the provision of staff meals to ensure fairness and consistency throughout the organisation.

The Consortium values the work of its employees and would like our services to be as efficient and cost effective as possible.

We also recognise that there should be a sense of fairness and consistency for all staff working within the organisation, this includes residential and supported living services as well as Central Departments.

This policy does not form part of any contract of employment and may therefore be updated or amended at any time.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Consortium.

3. Staff meals when providing support at the homes of the people we support

3.1 General principles

The role of the Consortium’s support staff is to provide support to people living in their own homes. This can include providing support for the people we support to plan, purchase and prepare their daily meals. In order to encourage independence in this area, staff may be required to provide social and role modelling support at meal times, such as sitting and eating their meal with the people we support, however staff must provide their own food for this.

The people we support are responsible for purchasing their own food, therefore the food found within the services remains the property of the people we support.

Staff working at the homes of the people we support at meal times are expected to provide their own food. This will not be provided by the people we support or the Consortium.

In order to safeguard the financial interests of the people we support, staff are not permitted to consume any food that has been purchased by the people we support. The only food that may be consumed while working at the homes of the people we support is to be provided by the staff member.
It must not automatically be assumed that the kitchen facilities found within the homes of the people we support may be used for the preparation of staff meals. Therefore express permission must be obtained from the people living within the service before the facilities are used.

Any food preparation for staff meals should require limited use of the kitchen facilities i.e. warming food using the cooker or microwave, or the preparation of cold foods on kitchen work surfaces.

Staff should prepare and eat their food at the same time as they are supporting the people we support to prepare and eat their food. This is to ensure that both time and fuel efficiencies are maximised.

When preparing and eating their own food, staff should take the sensitivities of the people we support into consideration, this includes particular diets that the people we support may be on, allergies or triggers of potential behaviours or anxieties.

Clear Support Plans must be in place to address any identified risk.

Food that is brought by staff into the homes of the people we support must not constitute any health risk to the people we support or their colleagues and is therefore subject to the Consortium’s policies on Food Hygiene.

Hot drinks, i.e. tea and coffee will be provided for staff who work in the homes of the people we support.

3.2 Take away meals

When the people we support are having a take away meal, e.g. fish and chips, or a Chinese or Indian take away meal, the food purchased by the people we support will be for their consumption only.

If any staff member on shift wishes to eat the take away food with the people they are supporting, this should be purchased separately and paid for in full by the staff member(s). The cost of the meal must not be combined or shared under any circumstances.

3.3 Storage of staff food at the homes of the people we support

Staff must seek express permission from the people we support or their advocates if they would like to store their food in the homes of the people we support, please see Appendix – 2, Staff Food Storage Permission Form. The signed permission form should be kept in the service and should be reviewed every three months or as circumstances dictate.

The amount of food requiring storage must be limited to the amount of food required for the particular shift(s) being worked by the staff member on that day.

Where there is suitable available space, staff should keep their non-perishable food in the Sleep-In Room.
Where fridge storage is required in the case of perishable food, minimal fridge space may be utilised only with the express consent of the people we support or their advocates for use of the fridge. Again, the amount of fridge space utilised for staff food storage must be limited to the amount of food required for the particular shift(s) being worked by the staff member on that day.

Any unused staff food should be removed from the service at the end of the shift.

4. **Staff meals when providing support outside the homes of the people we support**

When staff are providing support outside the homes of the people we support as a result of a planned activity and at a place where staff are not able to consume their own food, for example, a meal at a restaurant, the person/people being supported may choose to pay for the staff member’s meal/snack.

In these circumstances, the staff member must ensure that the cost of their food with a non-alcoholic drink is not excessive and a receipt must be obtained for this purchase.

5. **Special occasion meals**

The Consortium realises that there may be occasions where a celebration may be arranged for, or by, the people we support to celebrate a special event, e.g. birthdays, Christmas etc. This may include a buffet or celebratory meal and would also usually be paid for by the people we support.

As Consortium staff are not normally entitled to eat food which has been purchased by the people we support, in circumstances where staff member(s) have been invited to be a part of the celebration, express permission must be provided by the people we support, or their advocates, for the staff member(s) to eat food from the buffet or at the celebratory meal. **Appendix – 1, Staff Entitlement to Buffet or Special Occasion Consent Form.**

Any other types of special occasion meal are subject to the specific guidance in this policy.

6. **Staff meals as a result of emergency cover**

The Consortium realises that there may be occasions that a staff member has been unable to plan their food for a shift e.g. adverse weather conditions; where they have been asked to work on following the end of their planned shift while cover is found for short notice staff absence etc.
In these circumstances, the staff member must negotiate with the manager who has asked them to work on how their food will be provided and the appropriate arrangements should be made.

As far as possible, staff should try to plan their food where there may be a possibility that they will be required to remain on shift e.g. where there is a warning of inclement weather.

7. **Appropriate staffing levels to be maintained**

It is important that appropriate support is provided at all times. Therefore the required staffing levels for the people we support must be adhered to at all times.

Under no circumstances should the people we support be left alone or with unsafe staffing levels.

If staff do not have food to eat while on shift it is their responsibility to make arrangements for food to be delivered to them, e.g. by a colleague, family member or take away delivery. This will **not** be the responsibility of the On Call Manager.


When providing support, the Consortium’s Support Staff are exempt from the requirement for a 20 minute daily rest break and will therefore not be entitled to a break within which to eat their food.

Under the Working Time Regulations 1998 (“WTR”) workers are entitled to an uninterrupted rest break of 20 minutes when working more than six hours per day, which the employee is entitled to spend away from the workstation (**regulations 12(1) and (3) WTR**).

A daily rest break under regulation 12 **must be uninterrupted** and the worker must know in advance that they are taking their break [Gallagher v Alpha Catering Services Ltd [2005] IRLR 102].

There are however exemptions from the daily rest period, weekly rest period and rest breaks for special cases and shift workers.

Special cases (exemptions) include where the worker’s activities involve the need for continuity of service or production (**regulation 21(c) WTR**) as may be the case in relation to –

(i) services relating to the reception, treatment or care provided by hospitals or similar establishments (including the activities of doctors in training), residential institutions and prisons (**regulation 21(c)(i) WTR**).

When providing support, the Consortium’s support staff’s activities involve the need to provide a continuous service for the people we support, it therefore would not be possible to provide an uninterrupted rest break.
Therefore, the Consortium’s support staff when providing support, are exempt from the requirement for a daily rest break under regulation 12 of the Working Time Regulations, however, if a worker is exempt from this requirement, compensatory rest will usually have to be given under regulation 24 of the Working Time Regulations.

Regulation 24(a) – Compensatory Rest

Where the application of any provision of these Regulations is excluded by regulation 21 or 22, or is modified or excluded by means of a collective agreement or a workforce agreement under regulation 23(a), and a worker is accordingly required by his employer to work during a period which would otherwise be a rest period or rest break—

(a) his employer shall wherever possible allow him to take an equivalent period of compensatory rest

Government guidance suggests that provided each worker receives ‘on average’ at least 90 hours’ rest a week, then the obligation to give compensatory rest will have been discharged.

9. **Staff meals for people working in the Consortium’s Central Departments**

Staff working within the Consortium’s Central Departments are expected to provide their own food. This will not be provided by the people we support or the Consortium.

Staff working within the Consortium’s Central Departments should ideally consume their food away from their desk during their allocated 30 minute lunch break.

Hot drinks, i.e. tea and coffee will be provided for staff working within Central Departments.

Fridge and cupboard space is available in the kitchen areas for storage of food.

Staff working within the Central Departments are responsible for removing any of their stored food which has passed its expiry date.

10. **Breaches of this policy**

Any breaches of this policy may be interpreted as potential financial abuse and may therefore result in formal action under the Consortium’s Disciplinary Policy.