*\*\*BLUE TEXT SHOULD BE REMOVED BEFORE ISSUE\*\**

***Telephone policy***

*It's important in all office-based workplaces to have policy statements on the use of computers, e-mail and the Internet at work and on using the telephone. The policy sets out useful provisions both on using the telephone for private calls (including company mobile phones) and on having personal mobile phones in the office.*

Telephone usage

The Company’s telephone lines (including Company mobile phones) are for the exclusive use by employees in connection with the Company’s business. Whilst the Company will tolerate essential personal telephone calls concerning an employee’s domestic arrangements, excessive use of the telephone for personal calls (and also, in the case of Company mobile phones, for personal text messages, personal use of apps and personal internet access) is prohibited. This includes lengthy, casual chats and calls at premium rates. Not only does excessive time engaged on personal telephone calls lead to loss of productivity, it constitutes an unauthorised use of the Company’s time. If the Company discovers that the telephone has been used excessively for personal calls (or, in the case of Company mobile phones, for personal text messages, personal use of apps or personal internet access), this will be dealt with under the Company’s disciplinary procedure and the employee will also be required to pay the Company the cost of the personal calls (or, in the case of Company mobile phones, personal text messages or personal data usage) made.

Acceptable telephone use should be no more than . . . . . . *(insert a suitable figure)* minutes of personal calls in each working day. Personal telephone calls should be timed so as to cause minimum disruption to the employee’s work and should, as a general rule, only be made during breaks except in the case of a genuine emergency.

On Company mobile phones, employees are not permitted to use private email, text messaging, messaging apps or any other instant messaging or chat programs or services to discuss work-related matters or for any other business purposes – employees must always use the Company’s official correspondence channels for work-related business and must never use such private correspondence channels.

Employees must not use Company landlines and mobile phones to place gambling bets under any circumstances and doing so will be a disciplinary matter dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.

Telephone monitoring

Employees should be aware that telephone calls made and received on the Company’s telephone network will routinely be monitored in real time by managers and recorded. In addition, an itemised call log may be maintained and retained of all external calls made and received on the Company’s telephone network. This may include details of the external caller’s or recipient’s number and the date, time and duration of the call.

The Company will only monitor telephone systems and record telephone calls where we have a lawful basis for doing so. The business purposes for such monitoring are to:

* establish the existence of facts, e.g. in response to a client or customer complaint
* ascertain compliance with regulatory or self-regulatory requirements, practices or procedures
* assess standards of employee performance and conduct and promote productivity and efficiency
* investigate or detect any unauthorised use of the telephone system
* ensure the security of the telephone system and network and their effective operation
* ensure the smooth running of the business by checking whether there are any relevant business voicemail messages that need to be dealt with
* ensure that the Company’s rules, policies and procedures are being complied with
* record transactions
* promote client and customer satisfaction
* ensure that the telephone system is not being used for any unlawful purpose or activities that may damage the Company’s business or reputation
* make sure there is no unauthorised use of the Company’s time
* perform effective internal administration
* protect the privacy of personal data, trade secrets and sensitive or confidential Company information and ensure there is no breach of confidentiality or data protection provisions.

Employees should also be aware that voicemail messages may be checked by managers for business calls when they are absent for any reason. It may therefore be unavoidable that some personal messages might be heard in these circumstances.

Members of the IT department are also authorised to monitor telephone systems during routine audits or random spot checks and they may be instructed to do so by managers where a problem is suspected. Access to the results of monitoring is restricted to the IT department and to those managers who are authorised to access them in accordance with the purposes outlined above. Disclosure of the results of monitoring to other third parties will only be made in accordance with the purposes outlined above and will be limited to:

* the police and other law enforcement agencies, where the results could assist in the prevention or detection of a crime or the identification and prosecution of an offender
* prosecution agencies, such as the Crown Prosecution Service
* relevant legal representatives
* managers involved with Company disciplinary and performance management processes.

The Managing Director (or another senior director acting in their absence) is the only person who is permitted to authorise disclosure of information to external third parties such as law enforcement agencies.

The Company is committed to being transparent about how and why employees are monitored and will always consider whether the monitoring measures are proportionate.

If employees wish to make or take a particularly sensitive, private or confidential personal telephone call, they are advised that they can use the telephone located at: . . . . . . . . . . . . . *(insert details)* which will not be subject to any form of monitoring or recording by the Company. Alternatively, you should use your own personal mobile phone for such calls (subject to the rules below on the use of mobile phones).

Telephone monitoring also covers Company mobile phones. The Company reserves the right to monitor Company mobiles phones, both during routine audits or random spot checks and in specific cases where a problem relating to excessive or unauthorised use is suspected. The purposes of such monitoring are as set out above but also include ensuring that inappropriate, restricted or blocked websites are not being accessed from Company mobile phones and that offensive or illegal material is not being viewed, sent, downloaded or circulated. Therefore, in relation to Company mobile phones, the Company reserves the right to obtain an itemised list from the mobile phone service provider of all outgoing calls made on the mobile phone. This list may include details of each number called, the date, time and duration of each call and the cost of each call. In addition, the Company reserves the right to obtain an itemised list from the mobile phone service provider of all outgoing text messages sent from the mobile phone. This list may include details of each number texted, the date and time of each text message and the cost of each text message. Where exceptional circumstances warrant it, the Company may also ask the mobile phone service provider to provide access to the actual content of text messages. Finally, where applicable, the Company may request internet access records from the mobile phone service provider, including websites and individual web pages visited, apps accessed, the date and time of access and the amount of mobile data used.

Mobile phones

[Whilst the Company will tolerate the use of employees’ own mobile phones for essential personal calls during normal working hours, excessive use is prohibited. Also prohibited are lengthy calls, casual chats, text messaging, emailing, web browsing, accessing phone apps, using social media sites and the taking of video and/or still images (if your phone is so enabled). Your mobile phone should be set to a silent ring or vibrate during normal working hours.]

Or

[If you wish to use your mobile phone, you should do so outside of normal working hours.]

Contravention of this policy

Failure to comply with any of the requirements of this policy is a disciplinary offence and may result in disciplinary action being taken under the Company’s disciplinary procedure, up to and including summary dismissal for gross misconduct.