

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
INDEPENDENT DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICES
CODE OF CONDUCT

1. About this policy

This policy sets out the approach of Independent Domestic Abuse Services (IDAS) in relation to ensuring employees, volunteers and students adhere to and maintain professional standards and appropriate conduct at all times. The Board of IDAS acts in accordance with a specific trustee Code of Conduct.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

2. Related policies & procedures

- Anti-Corruption and Bribery
- Anti-Harassment and Bullying
- Confidentiality and Access to Information
- Dignity at Work
- Disciplinary Action
- Equality and Diversity
- Gifts and Donations
- Grievance
- Information Technology
- Protection from Abuse
- Recruitment and Selection
- Safeguarding Adults
- Safeguarding Children
- Support and Supervision
- Support Planning
- Volunteering
- Whistle Blowing

3. Aims and principles

3.1 IDAS expects high standards of conduct and behaviour from everyone who works with us – staff, volunteers and students. This Code identifies the standards we expect; these are based on the principles of professional competence and behaviour, ethical standards and integrity.

3.2 Our values also underpin all that we do and how we do it. We are *compassionate, determined, inclusive, courageous and respectful*.

4. Professional Competence and Behaviour

You are required to:

4.1 Ensure that your knowledge and competence is maintained and updated.

- 4.2 Seek appropriate support and guidance when needed.
- 4.3 Provide a professional, current and insightful service.
- 4.4 Accept responsibility for your own actions and decisions.
- 4.5 Apply high standards of relevance, accuracy and timeliness in respect of the information and advice you provide to colleagues, clients, commissioners and other stakeholders.

5. Ethical Standards and Integrity

You are required to:

- 5.1 Establish, maintain and develop relationships based on confidence, trust and respect. This relates to your relationships with colleagues, clients, commissioners and other stakeholders.
- 5.2 Exhibit and defend professional integrity at all times.
- 5.3 Demonstrate sensitivity for the customs, practices, culture and personal beliefs of others.
- 5.4 Promote employment and work practices that advance equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion, and support human rights and dignity.
- 5.5 Safeguard and treat as confidential, commercially and / or personally sensitive data acquired in the course of work relationships and not use this for personal advantage or the benefit or detriment of third parties.

6. Relationships with colleagues

You are required to:

- 6.1 Ensure that your professional judgement is not compromised nor could be perceived as being compromised because of bias or undue influence of others.
- 6.2 Declare to your line manager any personal friendship or sexual relationship that exists or develops between yourself and a colleague in order that they are aware of and can manage the potential conflict of interest that may arise from this. A friendship is considered personal when people socialise outside of a work setting.
- 6.3 IDAS doesn't permit individuals to line manage people with whom they are having an intimate relationship.
- 6.4 Support decisions and actions that have been made within IDAS's policies, procedures and delegated authorities.

6.5 Raise concerns or issues openly in team meetings or through supervision with your line manager.

6.6 Uphold the rights of your colleagues to a private life. You should not discuss or denigrate other staff or team members with colleagues, clients or stakeholders. This does not supersede your right and your responsibility to raise issues of concern through the Grievance or Whistle Blowing procedures.

6.7 Challenge or report others if you suspect unlawful or unethical conduct or behaviour.

7. Representing IDAS

You are required to:

7.1 Always act in a way which supports and upholds the reputation of IDAS.

7.2 Be mindful of your responsibilities as a representative of IDAS towards the wider community. This includes being aware of your presence on social media.

7.3 Behave as a role model maintaining the highest standard of ethical conduct.

7.4 Be mindful of the distinction between acting in a personal and professional capacity.

7.5 When using electronic media, communicate in a professional and formal manner.

7.6 Ensure that you communicate positively when answering the phone and ensure that you identify both yourself and the organisation.

8. Specific guidance for work with clients

You are required to:

8.1 Maintain a professional relationship with current and recent clients at all times. This means that you must not form a sexual or personal relationship with a client or recent client or any related party (alleged perpetrator, close family member etc.). This includes engaging with someone on social media.

A client may develop strong or close feelings about you but you have a responsibility to manage this within the boundaries of your role as a professional. To allow your relationship to develop beyond the boundaries of a professional one would be to abuse your relationship with the client, given the power imbalance that exists between you.

8.2 Be mindful not to impose your own personal, cultural, religious, philosophical or other beliefs on clients.

8.3 Conduct all interactions with clients on a professional basis. You must not give your home telephone number, personal mobile number or address to clients. If a chance meeting occurs outside of work you must bear in mind your professional relationship at all times and notify your line manager of any significant conversation or contact.

8.4 If a friend, family member or neighbour becomes a client of IDAS you should notify your line manager who will agree how this can best be managed.

8.5 Bear in mind the language you use with clients and avoid colloquial terms such as 'love', 'sweetheart' etc. when speaking with them.

9. Dress and appearance

9.1 You should ensure that you are present decently, hygienically and appropriately for the daily tasks you need to undertake.

9.2 You should ensure that you are fit for work when in work and not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

9.3 When attending appointments with or on behalf of clients, you should dress appropriately.

10. Dealing with finances

IDAS is committed to maintaining the highest standards of financial management and a suite of separate procedures are in place outlining how we deal with:

- Bribery and corruption,
- Gifts and donations,
- Handling money in the refuges,
- Management of petty cash.

11. Breaches of this policy

Breaches of this policy may be dealt with through the provision of additional supervision or training. In more serious cases, the Disciplinary Procedure will be used.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Last Review Date	August 2018
Approved By	Board
Issue Date	April 2006
Author	Sarah Hill

Next Review Date (must be less than 3 years from previous version date)	April 2021
What are the key changes to this procedure? (in brief)	Fully reviewed to reflect new values.