



employee handbook

April 2025

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EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Welcome

As a new employee of Near Media Co-Op, you will receive a written Contract of Employment. This document outlines the general Terms and Conditions of Employment and is a confidential document between you and Near Media Co-Op. Please read it carefully and sign it. This signifies your acceptance of the Terms and Conditions under which you are employed. You will be kept informed and notified in writing of any subsequent changes to your terms of employment.

1.2 Purpose of this Handbook

This Employee Handbook is designed to provide you with information about working conditions, benefits, and policies affecting your employment.

The information contained in this Handbook applies to all our employees. Following the policies described in this Handbook is considered a condition of continued employment. However, nothing in this Handbook alters an employee's status. The contents of this Handbook shall not constitute nor be construed as a promise of employment or as a contract between the Near Media Co-Op and any of its employees. The Handbook is a summary of our policies, which are presented here only as a matter of information. You are responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with the provisions of this Handbook. Our objective is to provide you with a positive and safe work environment that is free from Discrimination and Harassment.

1.3 Near Media Co-Op Background and Mission Statement.

Near Media Co-Op is the operating name for Comhar Chumann Cumarsaide Pobal BAC Thoir Thuaidh Teo/ Dublin North East Community Communications Co-operative Society Ltd. The Society was established in 1983, and is a communally owned, not-for-profit project. The Co-Op-

erative is open to all organisations and individuals in Dublin North-East. It's programming and general ethos incorporates a positive emphasis on areas such as facilitating and supporting community development, providing access and providing a platform to a wide range of local groups.

The Co-operative currently operates Near Fm and Near TV productions. It has offices and studios in the Northside Civic Centre and the Coolock Development Centre. Near Media Co-Op is operated by a Committee of Management. Members are elected at the Society's Annual General Meeting. The Committee elects a Co-Ordinating Committee to manage and administer the affairs of the Co-Op on a daily basis. The Co-Ordinating Committee comprises the Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer. The Project Co-Ordinator sits at all meetings of the Co-Ordinating Committee.

1.4 Employment Records:

Your Employment Record is very important. It contains all relevant information pertaining to your employment including address, telephone number, emergency contact details, educational attainments etc. It is most important that these records are kept up to date. Please notify Near Media Co-Op of any changes that might affect your employment record.

1.5 Data Protection:

Near media co-operative needs to collect and use data (information) for a variety of purposes about its staff, volunteers and other individuals who come in contact with the Co-operative. The purposes of processing data include the organisation and administration of training courses, radio and TV programming, research activities, the recruitment and payment of staff, compliance with statutory obligations, etc. Data Protection is the safeguarding of the privacy rights of

individuals in relation to the processing of personal data. The Data Protection Act 1988, the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 and the Data Protection 2018 confer rights on individuals as well as responsibilities on those persons processing personal data. Personal data, both automated and manual are data relating to a living individual who is or can be identified, either from the data or from the data in conjunction with other information.

Purpose of this policy

This policy is a statement of the Co-operative's commitment to protect the rights and privacy of individuals in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003.

Collecting information about you.

We collect and use information to provide the following services:

- to provide a community media service, which includes nearfm, neartv productions and near.ie.
- To undertake this service with the financial support of statutory bodies, including the City of Dublin Education & Training Board, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection/INTREO and the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland.
- To provide you with regular updates about near media co-op using our newsletter, which may be circulated via email, hard copy and on our website.
- To provide you with information about ongoing training, general meetings and other activities in near media co-op
- to perform accounting and other record-keeping functions.
- to keep your information secure.
- to enhance or improve your experience on our website.

In general terms, the data we collect from you is your name, address, telephone number and email address. We may also collect your PPSN number and bank account details where we are making any payment to you for services provided.

Principles of the Acts

The Co-operative administers its responsibilities under the legislation in accordance

with the eight stated data protection principles outlined in the Acts as follows:

1. Obtain and process information fairly
The Co-operative obtains and processes personal data fairly and in accordance with the fulfilment of its functions.

2. Keep it only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purposes

The Co-operative keeps data for purposes that are specific, lawful and clearly stated and the data is only processed in a manner compatible with these purposes.

3. Use and disclose it only in ways compatible with these purposes

The Co-operative only discloses personal data that is necessary for the purpose/s or compatible with the purpose/s for which it collects and keeps the data.

4. Keep it safe and secure

The Co-operative takes appropriate security measures against unauthorised access to, or alteration, disclosure or destruction of, the data and against their accidental loss or destruction. The Co-operative is aware that high standards of security are essential for all personal information.

5. Keep it accurate, complete and up-to-date

The Co-operative has procedures that are adequate to ensure high levels of data accuracy. The Co-operative regularly examines the general requirement to keep personal data up-to-date. The Co-operative has in place, appropriate procedures to assist staff in keeping data up-to-date.

6. Ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive

Personal data held by the Co-operative is adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose/s for which it is kept.

7. Retain it for no longer than is necessary for the purpose or purposes

The Co-operative has a policy on retention periods for personal data.

8. Give a copy of his/her personal data to that individual, on request

The Co-operative has procedures in place to ensure that data subjects can exercise their rights under the Data Protection legislation. To make an access request, please submit your request in writing to Ciaran Murray, near media co-op, Northside Civic

Centre, Bunratty Road, Dublin 17. E-mail: ciaran@near.ie Please ensure that you describe the records you seek in the greatest detail possible to enable us to identify the relevant records.

Responsibility

Near media co-operative has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Data Protection legislation. However, all employees and volunteers of the Co-operative who collect and/or control the contents and use of personal data are also responsible for compliance with the Data Protection legislation. The Co-operative provides support, assistance, advice and training to all departments, offices, staff and volunteers to ensure it is in a position to comply with the legislation.

The standard of security expected of all employees and volunteers of near media co-operative includes the following:

- access to the information restricted to authorised staff/volunteers on a "need-to-know" basis in accordance with a defined policy,
- computer systems password protected,
- information on computer screens and manual files kept hidden from callers to offices,
- back-up procedures in operation for

computer held data, including off-site back-up,

- all waste papers, printouts, etc. disposed of carefully by shredding,
- all employees/volunteers must log off from their computer on each occasion when they leave the workstation,
- personal security passwords must not be disclosed to any other employee/volunteer of near media co-operative,
- all near media co-operative premises to be secure when unoccupied,

Procedures and Guidelines

This policy supports the provision of a structure to assist in the Co-operative's compliance with the Data Protection legislation, including the provision of best practice guidelines and procedures in relation to all aspects of Data Protection.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed regularly in light of any legislative or other relevant indicators.

The point of contact for further information is Sabrina Ryan, Secretary, near media co-op (sabrina@near.ie) or Ciaran Murray, Project Co-Ordinator (Ciaran@near.ie)

Mission statement

NEAR MEDIA CO-OP IGNITES THE POWER OF STORYTELLING, SKILL-BUILDING, AND COLLABORATION TO ENSURE LOCAL VOICES NOT ONLY SHAPE THE NARRATIVE OF DUBLIN'S NORTHSIDE BUT INSPIRE A MOVEMENT TOWARD A MORE JUST, INFORMED, AND CONNECTED SOCIETY.

NEAR MEDIA CO-OP

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

2.1 Code of Discipline

This code of discipline is intended to be used in situations where an employee's work or conduct at work is unsatisfactory. In many instances, disciplinary matters can be dealt with on an informal basis by the supervisor discussing the situation with the employee concerned and agreeing any necessary corrective action.

Inevitably, there will be times when disciplinary matters need to be formalised.

When such situations arise, it is of the utmost importance that the formal disciplinary procedure is followed.

2.1.1 Purpose of the Code

In order to provide for the well being of staff, Near Media Co-Op requires a number of systems and procedures. A Code of Discipline and procedure is essential to assist Near Media Co-Op to operate effectively and create a fair, efficient and caring working environment.

The first aim of this code is to ensure consistency in the manner and circumstances in which disciplinary action will be taken. The second aim is to make clear the rights and responsibilities of employer and employees when such action is being taken. The code and procedures will apply to all employees whether full-time or part-time, permanent or temporary, with the principle of ensuring fair treatment for all.

2.2.2 Operation of the Code and Procedure

The objectives of this Code of Discipline are

- to ensure that staff against whom allegations are made are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner, and
- to provide an adequate means by which impropriety can be dealt with effectively and the highest standards of conduct can be maintained.

This Code has been devised on advice from INTREO, and uses best practice from a number of public service and private organisations.

All matters of discipline shall be dealt with by management in a manner that protects the dignity of the employee and shall not be administered by management in the presence of other staff, volunteers or the general public.

All staff shall co-operate fully in the investigation of allegations of impropriety, for example, by providing such explanations as are sought in the course of the investigation.

In cases where a staff member has been found in breach of regulations or where conduct is otherwise unsatisfactory, a number of options shall be open to management in regard to disciplinary action, for example: warnings about need for improvement, reduction in salary, suspension, dismissal.

There are several areas covered by disciplinary procedures:

- ❑ Unsatisfactory performances of one's work duties.
- ❑ Absence without proper notification
- ❑ Any form of abuse or aggression
- ❑ Being unfit to carry out one's duties

The nature and/or degree of a staff member's misconduct would generally determine the appropriate disciplinary action to be taken.

Management will write to the staff member in question inviting them to attend a disciplinary meeting, explaining the reason of the meeting.

Staff may bring another member of staff to the meeting, if they wish.

Following the meeting, management will discuss the matter and make a decision.

The decision will be communicated in writing to the staff member within 3 working days.

The normal course of events will be:

- One verbal warning
- One written warning
- One final written warning
- Dismissal

In case of gross misconduct, management reserve the right to dismiss a staff member.

2.2 Grievance/Disputes Procedure

Grievances will occur in the normal course of interaction in any organisation or workplace. It is accepted that failure to provide a procedure to deal adequately with these grievances, as they arise, will inevitably lead to disputes affecting not only the aggrieved party but all those employed in the organisation/workplace.

It is Near Media Co-Op's intention to settle amicably, at all times, any disagreements between it and individual employees or groups of employees, or between employees themselves.

All grievances will be dealt without undue delay and at the earliest possible

stage of this procedure. A senior member of management will ensure that all

grievances will be dealt with consistently and fairly having regard to:

- Near Media Co-Op Policy
- Custom and Practice within Near Media Co-Op
- Labour Court and Third Party precedents

Stage 1.

You should first raise the matter with your Supervisor/Manager who will make every effort to solve the problem as quickly as possible. The matter will be discussed informally by the employee or employees concerned, with their immediate supervisor and agree any corrective actions.

Stage 2.

If you feel the problem has not been solved within a reasonable time of if you feel the solution is unsatisfactory, the matter will be referred to senior management. A meeting will take place within seven working days.

Stage 3.

Should the matter remain unresolved, it will be referred to the Labour Relations Commission or for a hearing by a rights commis-

sioner. If still unresolved, it will be referred to the Labour court for investigation, or, to, the Employment Appeals Tribunal, under the relevant acts.

During the period in which the above procedure is being followed, no form of industrial action designed to bring pressure to bear on either party will take place, until all avenues as prescribed have been followed by both parties and at least 14 days have elapsed following the issuing of a Labour Court Recommendation or a determination of the Employment appeals tribunal.

In the event of any issues arising which cannot immediately be disposed of and which are being processed in accordance with the above disputes procedure, normal working-under protest if necessary will continue, pending a settlement

2.3 Dignity at Work

2.3.1. Purpose and Principles

Near Media Co Op I recognises the right of all employees to be treated fairly and with dignity and respect. Near Media Co Op is committed to ensuring that all employees are treated equally and provided with a safe working environment which is free from all forms of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment.

2.3.2. Equality, Human Rights and Diversity

As an equal opportunities employer, and in line with existing Employment Equality Legislation -

<https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/21/enacted/en/html>, Near Media Co Op does not discriminate against employees, applicants or potential applicants due to their age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, civil status, family status, membership of the travelling community, race (colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins), religious beliefs or disadvantaged socio economic background.

All employees have an important role to play in ensuring equality of opportunity throughout the organisation. All employees are required to co-operate with any measures introduced by Near Media Co Op to promote equal opportunities and

must not themselves, either directly or indirectly, discriminate, harass or intimidate fellow employees in any way.

All employees will be treated equally in relation to

- Recruitment and Selection
- Training, including vocational training
- Promotion
- Pay and Employee Benefits
- Employee Grievances and Discipline Procedures
- Terms and conditions of employment

Employees will not discriminate against employees or prospective employees in relation to

- access to employment
- conditions of employment
- promotion or re-grading
- classification of posts
- training or experience for or in relation to employment

This policy is aimed at preventing bullying, harassment and sexual harassment in the workplace. This policy extends to behaviour which occurs away from Near Media Co Op premises, such as at work related social functions or training events, provided there is a connection with the work of Near Media Co Op and its employees.

All employees have the right to be treated with dignity and respect at work. Near Media Co Op has zero tolerance to bullying, harassment and sexual harassment which can have a devastating effect on the health, confidence, morale and performance of those subjected to it. Bullying, harassment and sexual harassment may also have a damaging impact on employees not directly subjected to inappropriate behaviour but who witness it or have knowledge of it.

Bullying (as defined in Appendix 1) is legally distinct from harassment as the alleged bullying behaviour does not have to relate to one of the nine discriminatory grounds specified in the Equality Acts.

Harassment (as defined in defined in Appendix 1) is governed by the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 ("the Equality Acts") and relates to one of the nine discriminatory grounds specified within the Equality Acts.

Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005-2014 ("the 2005 Act") and in line with the HSA and Work Place Relations Commission's Code of Practice 2021, employers have a duty to prevent any improper conduct or behaviour which is likely to put the health and safety of employees at risk.

Near Media Co-Op is committed to protecting the dignity and respect of all those who work together in Near Media Co Op. In particular, the Near Media Co-Op Committee of Management are committed to en-

suring that the workplace is free from any form of bullying or harassment, and that our work environment is conducive to providing a high-quality service in an atmosphere of respect, safety and equality.

No bullying or harassment within the workplace or in connection with the work of the organisation will be tolerated. This policy extends to behaviours that occur outside the work premises, such as at social functions, festivals, award ceremonies, residencies, workshops or training events that are connected in any way with the

workplace or a particular project. Complaints of bullying or harassment may be dealt with either in a formal or an informal way, or by alternative means, as described below.

Complaints by employees or other persons in the workplace, of bullying or harassment at work, will be treated with fairness, sensitivity, respect and (as far as possible) confidentiality for all parties concerned. Any person accused of bullying and/or harassment will be afforded natural justice and treated with fairness and sensitivity.

Near Media Co-Op's management, its employees and any other person engaged with the organisation has responsibility for creating and contributing to the maintenance of a work environment free from bullying and/or harassment. There is a responsibility on management to ensure the prevention of incidents of bullying and/or harassment, and to take action

should any incidents be brought to their attention. Employees, contractors and freelance contributors also have an obligation to cooperate with the investigation of complaints of bullying and/or harassment in the workplace. Employees, contractors and freelance contributors who make or participate in the investigation of a complaint will not be subject to victimisation of any kind for doing so.

This policy extends to behaviours that occur outside the workplace, such as at social functions or training events, provided there is a connection with the workplace and the people working there.

Nothing in this policy limits the right of the employer to investigate any matter that may relate to bullying and/or harassment in circumstances where a complaint has been made. All employees, contractors and freelance artists continue to have an obligation to cooperate with any such investigation.

Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying

Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. Harassment is related to any of the following grounds:

- Family status
- Civil status
- Sexual orientation
- Religious belief (or lack thereof)
- Gender
- Age (16+)
- Race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origin; or
- Membership of the Travelling community
- Disability

For the purpose of the above definition, conduct includes acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material. To constitute harassment, the behaviour can be a once-off event or persistent and repeated behaviour.

The following are some specific examples of the forms such conduct might take:

- Verbal harassment – spoken words, shouting, ridicule, unfair or excessive criticism, jokes, comments or songs
- Physical harassment – pushing, shoving or any form of assault
- Written harassment – including production of faxes, text messages, emails or notices
- Intimidatory harassment – gestures, posturing or threatening poses
- Visual displays such as posters, emblems or badges
- Isolation or exclusion from social activ-

ities

- Excessive monitoring of work
- Unreasonably changing a person's job content or targets
- Pressure to behave in a manner that the person thinks is inappropriate – e.g. being required to dress in a manner unsuited to a person's ethnic or religious background where there is no objective need to do so.

These examples are not exhaustive, and offences of a similar nature are also prohibited and will be dealt with appropriately.

Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

It is up to the person to decide which behaviour is unwelcome, irrespective of the attitude of others to the matter.

For the purposes of the above definition, conduct includes acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material. Sexual harassment may occur between men and women or between persons of the same gender. A single incident may constitute sexual harassment.

The following are some specific examples of the forms such conduct might take:

- Non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature – looks, gestures, whistling, suggestive symbols, pictures, written materials, faxes, emails or text messages
- Verbal conduct of a sexual nature – advances, propositions, suggestions, jokes, comments or innuendo and continued suggestions for social activity outside the workplace
- Physical conduct of a sexual nature – groping, kissing, fondling, patting, pinching, unnecessary touching, assault or rape
- Gender-based conduct – conduct that denigrates, ridicules or is intimidatory or physically abusive of a person because of his or her sex, such as derogatory or degrading abuse or insults that are gender-related.

These examples are not exhaustive, and offences of a similar nature are also prohibited and will be dealt with appropriately.

A person is protected from different treatment because he/she has rejected or accepted the sexual harassment or harassment

Bullying

Any form of bullying is prohibited in Near Media Co-Op. Bullying is defined as repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work.

An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work, but, as it is not repeated, it is not considered to be bullying.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of types of bullying, and offences of a similar nature are also prohibited and will be dealt with accordingly:

- Being treated less favourably than colleagues

- Verbal abuse, insults
- Humiliation
- Intimidation, aggression or threatening behaviour
- Isolation or exclusion with negative consequences
- Intrusion by pestering, spying and stalking
- Repeatedly manipulating a person's job

content and/or targets

- Withholding work-related information
- Unfair and excessive criticism
- Undermining behaviour
- Excessive monitoring of work.

The behaviour must reasonably be capable of undermining dignity at work.

Bullying is behaviour that is inappropriate at a human level – e.g. purposely undermining an individual, targeting them for special negative treatment, the manipulation of their reputation, social exclusion or isolation, intimidation, aggressive or obscene behaviour, jokes that are obviously offensive to one person, intrusion by pestering, spying and stalking. These are all examples that share the feature that they are unacceptable at the level of human interaction.

Intention of perpetrator

The intention of the perpetrator of bullying or harassment is irrelevant. The fact that the perpetrator has no intention of bullying or harassing the victim may not be a defence.

Performance management

The reasonable and essential discipline arising from the good management of the performance of a person at work does not amount to bullying or harassment. Similarly, an action taken that can be justified with regard to the safety, health and welfare of people does not amount to bullying or harassment.

Complaints procedure

All employees, contractors and freelance contributors have a right to make a complaint if they feel they have been bullied and/or harassed, and they should follow the steps in the following procedure. All complaints will be taken seriously, and the procedure will be handled with fairness, sensitivity and due respect for the rights of both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator. There is a two-tiered approach in the procedure – informal and formal – to address the issue of bullying or harassment in the workplace. During any investigation into a complaint, the principles of natural justice must be ad-

hered to. External assistance may be necessary to deal with complaints in some circumstances so as to ensure impartiality, objectivity and fairness in an investigation.

The informal procedure

Method of making an informal complaint
Any person who believes that he or she is being bullied or harassed should, where possible, indicate directly to the person complained of that the behaviour in question is unacceptable.

If the person believes that this approach is not suitable or has been unsuccessful, they may then make an informal complaint.

Informal complaints should be addressed to the line manager. If the line manager is involved in the incident, the complaint should be submitted to the Project Co Ordinator, Ciaran Murray. Where the Project Co Ordinator is the issue, the person should raise the complaint with a board member or the designated person, appointed by Near Media Co-Op, who deals with such issues. The appointed designated person may assist in making arrangements to employ an external party to facilitate resolving the issue.

An informal complaint may be verbal or written.

Near Media Co Op will designate a person to handle the complaint. If the complaint was verbal, a written note of what is complained of will be taken by the designated person and a copy given to the complainant.

Support contact person

In the event that any employee, contractor or freelance has any question or query about the operation of this policy, or requires any clarification about it, they may

approach the designated contact person for advice, which will be given in strictest confidence. Please note that speaking to the designated contact person is not the same as making a formal or informal complaint. The Project Co ordinator has been designated as the contact person in respect of this policy.

Procedure that will be followed when receiving an informal complaint

The facts and context of the complaint will be established, and the next course of action in dealing with the matter under the informal procedure will be determined. Other possible courses of action available to the complainant, including mediation, will be discussed.

- Where specific examples are given

If the complaint concerns bullying and/or harassment and includes specific examples of the behaviour complained of, the person complained against will be presented with the complaint and given a chance to respond.

After the response is received (or a reasonable period of time has elapsed without a response having been received), a method will be agreed to progress the issue to resolution so that both parties can return to a harmonious working environment without bullying or harassment being a factor.

If the behaviour complained of does not concern bullying or harassment as defined, an alternative approach will be put in place and a rationale recorded.

- Where no specific examples are provided

If no specific examples are provided, there is no complaint to be answered under this policy. Then other means of protecting and repairing workplace relationships may be considered by the person receiving the complaint.

A record of all stages of the process, the complaint, the first meeting, action agreed and signed records of the final meeting will be kept. The purpose of the records, which will not include detail of discussions, is to provide evidence that the complaint was dealt with in an appropriate manner.

All parties will maintain, insofar as possible, the confidentiality of the informal process. Breaches of confidentiality will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

Resolution

When resolution is found through the informal procedure, both parties will be given support or periodical reviews, as appropriate. These may include counselling or other appropriate interventions.

Where a complaint is found not to have been made in good faith, the complainant will be the subject of disciplinary action.

Resolving the problem by mediation

Mediation is an alternative method of resolving issues relating to bullying and harassment. Mediation involves the parties seeking to arrive at a solution through mutual agreement, rather than through an investigation and decision.

Mediation provides a confidential oppor-

tunity for the person who feels that he/she has been bullied or harassed, and the person accused of carrying out this inappropriate behaviour, to discuss the matter and to reach an agreement on their continuing working relationship.

Mediation is conducted in private, and is directly between the parties concerned, with the support of a mediator, who will act as an independent facilitator. Either party may withdraw from the process at any time by notifying the mediator, in writing, that they wish to do so.

If both parties agree to resolve the issue by mediation, the Project Co Ordinator will arrange the mediation process. If the Project Co ordinator is involved in the issue, you may be directed to a board member or designated person who can assist in organising a mediator. An appropriate person, acceptable to both parties, from within or outside the organisation, will be assigned as mediator.

If the mediation process results in an agreement acceptable to both parties, the mediator may draw up a written record of the terms of the settlement for signature by both parties.

If the matter is resolved by mediation, no disciplinary action will be taken.

If mediation breaks down or fails to achieve its goal, the only other option is to have the matter resolved by investigation. A person involved in the mediation process will not be involved in the investigation process. Resolving the matter by investigation may also be considered if the person concerned feels that it is inappropriate to resolve the matter by mediation.

Formal procedure

In cases where a person believes that an informal resolution is not a suitable means of addressing his or her concern, or where the person believes that their previous recourse to the informal complaints procedure has been unsatisfactory, a person may make a formal complaint of bullying and/or harassment. Choosing to bypass the informal process will not reflect negatively on the person concerned.

In cases where a person makes an informal complaint, but where management believes, because of the gravity of the subject matter of the complaint or for some other reason, that the informal complaints procedure is inadequate to address the complaint, the complaint may be dealt with by using the formal complaints procedure.

Method of making a formal complaint

Formal complaints should be made in writing, signed and dated. The complaint should be confined to precise details of alleged incidents of bullying and/or harassment, including the dates of such incidents and the names of any witnesses.

Formal complaints should be addressed to the person's line manager. If the person's line manager is involved in the incident, the complaint should be submitted to the Project Co Ordinator. Where the Project Co Ordinator is the issue, the person should direct the complaint to a board member or the designated person, nominated by the organisation's director, who may conduct an investigation or assist in making arrangements to conduct an investigation.

On receipt of a formal complaint, an inves-

tigatory panel will be designated by the Project Co Ordinator or another designated person nominated by the Committee of Management— whichever is appropriate. The investigator panel may consist of up to two persons, and may include management or board representatives. The organisation may engage an external independent investigator/s if it is deemed appropriate in the circumstances.

In exceptional circumstances, if either party has an objection to the investigatory panel, the Project Co Ordinator may designate an alternative panel. An objection to the designated investigatory panel must be made in writing to the Project Co Ordinator in a timely fashion, and must clearly outline the grounds of the objection.

Complaints in writing

Where a formal complaint is made but the complainant declines to submit a written statement, then a written record will be made of the complaint by the investigatory panel. The complainant will be asked to sign this record.

In the event that the complainant refuses to sign this record, the complainant will be made aware that the ability of Near Media Co-Op to investigate the complaint on a formal basis may be compromised by any failure of the complainant to cooperate with the procedure in place. Efforts will be made to clarify this issue before any further steps are taken.

The complainant will be advised of the aims and objectives of the formal process, the procedures and time frame involved, and the possible outcomes. He or she will be assured of support as required throughout the process. He or she will be given a copy of this policy.

Procedure that will be followed

The investigation will be governed by the terms of reference, which will include the following provisions:

- A provision to the effect that the investigation will be conducted in accordance with this policy
- An indicative time frame for the completion of the investigation
- Provisions relating to the scope of the investigation, indicating that the investigator will consider whether the complaint falls within the definition of bullying or harassment at work and whether the complaint has been upheld.

The person complained against will be notified in writing that an allegation of bullying and/or harassment has been made against him or her. He or she will be advised of the aims and objectives of the formal process, the procedures and time frame involved, and the possible outcomes. He or she will be assured of support, as required, throughout the process. A meeting will be organised at which he or she is given a copy of the complaint in full and any other relevant documentation, including this policy. He or she will be given time to consider the documentation and an opportunity to respond.

The investigator will meet with the complainant, the person complained against, and any witnesses or relevant persons, on an individual basis, with a view to establishing the facts. The complainant, the person complained against, and any witnesses will be entitled to be accompanied by a work colleague/trade-union representative, if applicable, at any meeting.

All interviews with parties and witnesses will be conducted sensitively and with due

respect to the rights of all concerned. The investigation will be conducted on a confidential basis, insofar as that is possible.

Statements from all parties and witnesses will be recorded in writing. Copies of the statements will be agreed with, and given to, those who make statements to the investigatory panel.

During the investigation

All parties will continue to work normally during the investigation, unless directed otherwise. Where necessary, parties to the complaint will be suspended with full pay to allow for a fair and thorough investigation. Such a suspension is not a disciplinary sanction, and this will be made clear to the relevant parties.

The management will make every effort to ensure the protection of all involved in the investigation.

The parties to the complaint should not communicate regarding the complaint.

Any effort by any party to intimidate or otherwise influence any complainant, respondent or witness during the course of an investigation will be regarded as a disciplinary matter of the upmost gravity.

Conclusion of investigation

The objective of an investigation will be to ascertain whether or not, on the balance of probabilities:

- The behaviour complained of occurred, and, if so,
- Whether or not that behaviour amounted to bullying and/or harassment, as defined,

It will be open for the designated investigators to determine if there is a prima facie case to answer based on the definitions of bullying and harassment outlined in this policy.

The investigation will be completed as quickly as practicable, preferably within the indicated time frame. The investigatory panel will submit a report to the Project Co Ordinator, which will include the conclusions. The report will be examined for thoroughness, objectivity and reasonableness. The complainant and the person complained against will be given a copy of

the report as soon as practicable by the Project Co Ordinator and will be given an opportunity to comment, within a prescribed period of time, before the management decides on any further course of action.

The management will decide the action that is to be taken in light of the investigatory panel's report and any comments made by the parties. The management will then, in writing, inform the complainant and the person complained against of the next steps which are to occur.

Action where the complaint is upheld

If the complaint is upheld, the matter will be treated as a serious disciplinary issue, and the management will follow the appropriate disciplinary procedures with the relevant employee, contractor or freelance artist, which may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. If the perpetrator is not an employee – e.g. if he or she is a contractor or a freelance artist – other appropriate measures will be taken.

The management may also take other appropriate action to support and protect the victim and/or ensure that similar situations do not arise in the future.

Action where the complaint is not upheld

If the complaint is not upheld but the complainant is found to have acted in good faith, the management may take appropriate measures to support both the complainant and the person complained against. This will include taking appropriate measures to ensure that other parties to the investigation are made aware that the complaint was not upheld.

Where a complaint is not upheld and is found not to have been made in good faith, the complainant will be the subject of disciplinary action. The same principle will apply to witnesses giving evidence in bad faith.

Preservation of rights and prevention of victimisation

Making a complaint under this policy will not affect an employee's statutory rights. No one will be victimised for making a complaint in good faith or for acting in good faith as a witness in an investigation.

Appeals

If either party is dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal complaints procedure, they may lodge an appeal within seven working days of receipt of notification of the outcome of the process.

The reason for the appeal should be out-

lined in writing to the management. The appeal will be heard by another person(s) of at least the same level of seniority as the original investigator/investigatory panel. The appeal will focus only on the aspect of the case cited by the appellant as being the subject of the appeal.

The grounds of the appeal and any outcome and methodology employed will be appended to the investigation file. Please note that the final report of the investigation itself will not be subject to amendment.

Resolution

Both parties will be given appropriate support and periodical reviews, insofar as is reasonable, after the formal process has been concluded.

External investigation

In any situation where, by reason of the size of the management team, seniority of a complainant or of a person complained against, or for any other reason it is not appropriate for a formal complaint, informal complaint or appeal to be investigated by the management, the Near Media Co Op reserves the right to appoint an appro-

priate external person to carry out the investigation. Any such external person will carry out his or her functions in accordance with the provisions of this policy, and Near Media Co Op will give appropriate effect to the findings of such an external person.

This policy may be amended from time to time at the discretion of the Near Media Co Op Committee of Management.

2.4 Health & Safety Policy

It is Near Media Co-Op's intention to protect our employees from accident or ill health at work. Near Media Co-Op will seek to ensure that all our equipment and systems do not constitute a risk to the Health & Safety of our employees and we will consult with employees on risk improvements.

Our objective is to meet our duties and obligations to our staff and volunteers by providing a safe and healthy working environment.

A copy of Near Media Co-Op's Health and Safety Statement is enclosed.
(Appendix 2)

2.5 Equality Policy.

Equal Opportunities Policy

Near Media Co-op is committed to equality of opportunity in all its employment practices, policies and procedures and to the creation of a working environment free from discrimination.

Near Media Co-op's employment policy fully conforms to the Employment Equality Act, 1998 and accordingly, the Co-op will ensure that no job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment due to any of the nine grounds contained in the Act (i.e. age, gender, marital status, family status, religious, race, sexual orientation, membership of the traveller community, disability), pay and conditions of work, training and work experiences and opportunities for career development and promotion.

Selection, promotion and treatment of all employees will be on the basis of their abilities and merits only and according to the requirements of the job.

The responsibility for ensuring the provision of Equality of Opportunity rests primarily with Near MediaCo-Op as an employer. Managers and Supervisors have particular responsibility to engender respect for difference and to accommodate Diversity where appropriate.

All staff have an important role to play in ensuring Equality of Opportunity throughout the organisation. It is also recognised that individual employees on behalf of Near Media Co-op have responsibilities in law and are:

- a) Required to co-operate with any measures introduced by Near Media Co-Op to promote Equal Opportunities.
- b) Must not themselves, either directly or indirectly, discriminate against fellow employees or harass or intimidate them in any way.

2.6 Smoke Free and Vaping Policy

Since 29th March, 2004 the Irish government has implemented a ban on smoking in the workplace. This ban was introduced as part of the public health (tobacco) Act, 2002 (Section 47) Regulations 2003. The purpose of this ban is to offer protection to employees and the public who are exposed to the harmful and toxic effects of tobacco smoke in the workplace.

Near Media Co-Op is obliged to protect the health of staff, customers and visitors to their premises. Any person found guilty of breaching the ban may be subject to a fine of €3,000. Breaches of the smoking regulations will be dealt with under the Near Media Co-Op disciplinary procedure. Employees are only entitled to time off for breaks as set down in section 12 of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997. Near Media Co-Op does not provide additional time for smoking breaks for employees.

Our commitment as an organisation is to protect all staff, volunteers, customers and visitors from exposure to second-hand smoke, to ensure compliance with legal obligations and to ensure a safe working environment. It is therefore the general policy that all Near Media Co-op workplaces are smokefree and that all staff and volunteers have a right to work in a smoke

free work environment.

This policy also prohibits the use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), personal vaporisers (PV) or electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), commonly known as 'vaping'.

2.7 Overtime Policy

Near Media Co-Op receives funding from a number of different statutory organisations in order to employ staff. Therefore individual or groups of staff will be employed under differing Contracts of Employment. Due to the nature of the Co-Ops business and particularly with due regard to the large number of volunteer members, your contract may have a requirement for evening and some weekend work. Near Media Co-Op does not require staff to work over-time. Where evening or weekend attendance is required, advance notice will be given to you, and your weekly roster will be amended accordingly. If you do work beyond your contracted hours, time in lieu will be granted.

2.8 Children and Vulnerable Adults protection Policy and Guidelines

The protection of children and vulnerable adults is an issue of concern to all those working with young people today. Child Protection is about ensuring the well

being and safety of all children and young people in our care. Near Media Co-Op is committed to providing a safe environment for any children or young people under 18 years of age with whom it interacts. Near Media Co-op is fully committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of all children and vulnerable adults. A copy of our Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy and Guidelines is included in APPENDIX 3.

2.8.1. Garda Vetting Policy

It is Near Media Co-op policy to ensure that all staff or volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults are garda vetted. It is Near Media Co-ops understanding that it is not a relevant organisation, within the meaning of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts

A relevant organisation means a person (including a body corporate or an unincorporated body of persons) who employs, enters into a contract for services or permits any person to undertake relevant work or activities, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the person having access to, or contact with, children or vulnerable persons. The Act shall not apply to persons who assist on an occasional basis and for no commercial consideration. This would include persons who assist on an occasional basis at a school, sports or community event or activity other than where such assistance includes the coaching, mentoring, counselling, teaching or training of chil-

dren or vulnerable persons.

In practice, no staff member or volunteer works alone with children and/or vulnerable adults. In addition, one member of any team working with children/vulnerable adults will always be garda vetted. Where Near staff, volunteers or external contractors are involved in a Near project or activity that involves working with children or vulnerable adults, it is the policy of Near Media Co-op that they are garda vetted. Near Media Co-op has a Service Level Agreement with Fingal Volunteer Centre who are a registered organisation for garda vetting purposes. Applications should be made through The Secretary (Sabrina@near.ie)

It is the policy of Near Media Co-op to review the status of an individual's garda vetting after a period of five years.

2.9 Near Media Co-Op Retirement Gratuity Policy

Near Media Co-Op recognises the valuable contribution made by each of its employees and in this regard provides a retirement gratuity of €50 per year of service, up to a maximum gratuity of €500 to employees upon retirement from Near Media Co Op at statutory pension age.

This gratuity is paid to employees of Near Media Co Op, and is a small token of appreciation from the Society.

The gratuity will be reviewed annually and is subject to approval by the Coordinating Committee and to availability of funds to the Co op.

2.10 NEAR Media Co-op Diversity and Inclusion policy

At NEAR Media Coop Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are at the core of who we are. Diversity must be present in all that we are and all that we do, from the Committee of Management to the content we produce.

It must live in our content, hiring policies, training, audience, workplace, our partnerships, and our collaborations with community media organisations across the world.

Media has the power to affect perceptions of diverse communities. The power of inclusion is that it allows us to hear the stories and voices of people who are often under-covered, misrepresented or left out. Inclusion promotes mutual understanding between all cultures within our community.

Our processes are designed to prevent discrimination against our people regardless of gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, age, neurodiversity, disability status, citizenship, or any other aspect which makes them unique.

Some of the greatest stories and the greatest ideas come from a diverse mix of experiences and background.

Our mission is to provide an alternative to mainstream media by offering an outlet for those underrepresented or excluded through training and access to distribution facilities.

This policy reinforces our commitment to our founding mission.

Near Media Co-op:

- Guarantees the rights of all people involved with Near Media Co-op;
- Ensures representation of voices that are consistently marginalised in the media;
- Fosters a sense of belonging for all who participate with Near Media Coop;
- Communicates Near Media Co-operative's ethos and intercultural approach in an accessible way;
- Protects Near Media Co-op from charges of incitement to hatred;
- Makes a clear statement to those within and beyond Near Media Coop about the fundamental importance we place on equality
- The Committee of Management of the Near Media Co-op aims for gender balance and diversity in its make-up.
- We strive for gender balance on all sub-committees
- We are committed to a diversity of voices and faces on our programming.
- Part of our strategic plan is a commitment to gender balance in our voices on-air, and starting from a low base, this has been improving over the years.
- We deliver training courses for women, migrant groups, and other minorities to help us achieve this aim.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

3.1 Hours of Work

Near Media Co-Op will use appropriate means to record attendance. Employees should be at their place of work, ready to start work at normal starting time. Near Media Co-Op attaches great importance to punctuality. Disciplinary action will be taken against late comers.

3.2 Lunch Periods and Breaks

A 15 minute break is permitted during the morning, while 30 minutes is allowed for lunch. Employees should stagger breaks and lunch to ensure that a sufficient service is provided to clients of the Co-Op.

3.3 Absence

Employees absent from work without prior permission must notify Near Media Co-Op within 2 hours of their scheduled starting time. All absences other than certified illness, compassionate, annual or written leave-of-absence approved by management, will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the procedures outlined.

An employee absent through illness or injury for more than three consecutive working days must provide a doctor's certificate not later than the third day of absence. This certificate must cover the period of illness and contain a declaration as to when the employee will be fit to resume normal duties.

In the case of prolonged illness or injury, or a series of intermittent illnesses, Near Media Co-Op reserves the right to have the employee examined by a doctor of its choice.

3.4 Hygiene

The highest standards of hygiene must be maintained at all times. All employees must comply with Near Media Co-Op requirements with regard to hygiene standards.

3.5 Alcohol & Drugs

Near Media Co-Op is committed to providing a safe and productive workplace for its employees. In keeping with this commitment, the following rules regarding alcohol and drugs of abuse have been established for all staff members, regardless of rank or position. The rules apply during working hours to all employees of Near Media Co-Op while they are on Near Media Co-Op premises or elsewhere on Near Media Co-Op business.

- The manufacture, distribution, possession, sale, or purchase of controlled substances of abuse on Near Media Co-Op property is prohibited.
- Being under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or substances of abuse on Near Media Co-Op property is prohibited.
- Working while under the influence of prescription drugs that impair performance is prohibited.

In implementing this policy, the Near Media Co-Op reserves the right to random drug tests.

3.6 E-Mail and Internet Use

Electronic mail enables Near Media Co-Op to communicate promptly and efficiently with customers and suppliers. While e-mail brings many benefits to Near Media Co-Op in terms of its communications, it

also brings risks to Near Media Co-Op. For this reason, it is necessary for Near Media Co-Op to set down specific rules for the use of e-mail and internet within Near Media Co-Op.

Every employee has a responsibility to maintain Near Media Co-Op's image, to use electronic resources in a productive manner and to avoid placing Near Media Co-Op at risk of legal liability based on their use.

E-mail is not to be used for private purposes and should not be used for any purpose other than Near Media Co-Op business.

Near Media Co-Op has access to the internet which enables staff to obtain information specific to their role within Near Media Co-Op. Employees requiring access to the internet will need the approval of management. Internet connections are intended to support Near Media Co-Op business or the professional development of employees. General internet access will only be provided with the permission of management.

3.7 Confidentiality

Employees will be required not to divulge secrets or any information, which is regarded as confidential by Near Media Co-Op or any associated companies or their business during or after your employment, except in the proper course of your employment or as required by law.

You may not remove any documents or things belonging to Near Media Co-Op or which contain any confidential information from Near Media Co-Op's premises at any time without proper advance authorisation.

You must return to Near Media Co-Op upon request and, in any event, upon the

termination of your employment, all documents and things belonging to Near Media Co-Op or which contain or refer to any confidential information and which are in your possession or under your control.

3.8 Resignation and Termination

An employee may terminate his/her employment by giving notice as per the terms and conditions outlined in the contract of employment. Near Media Co-Op reserves

the right to pay the appropriate payment in lieu of notice and may require the employee not to work the notice period.

The minimum period of notice to be given to an employee depends on the length of the employee's computable service.

Notice to an employee will be in accordance with the minimum notice and terms of employment acts 1973 to 2001 as follows.

Length of Service Notice

13 Weeks To Less Than 2 Years 1 Week

2 Years To Less Than 5 Years 2 Weeks

5 Years To Less Than 10 Years 4 Weeks

10 Years To Less than 15 Years 6 Weeks

More Than 15 Years 8 Weeks

3.9 Lay-Off/Short-Time

While it is Near Media Co-Op's intention to provide continuity of employment, there may be circumstances outside Near Media Co-Op's control which necessitates shorttime working or lay-off. Should the need arise to put staff on short time or lay them off, Near Media Co-Op will give as much notice as is reasonable in the circumstances. Employees will only be paid for actual hours worked during such periods.

3.10 Redundancy

It is recognised that circumstances may arise which leave Near Media Co-Op with no alternative but to declare redundancies.

Where employees are made redundant, the prime consideration will be to protect the employment of as many people as possible, consistent with maintaining a fully efficient operation. Therefore, selection will be on retaining key employees required to maintain an efficient operation. All else being equal, a policy of last-in, first-out will apply.

Should the need for redundancy arise, appropriate consultation with employees will take place.

3.11 Time in Lieu

Near Media Co Op recognises that on occasion staff may be required to work additional hours, outside of their normal working hours. This time can be taken back as Time in Lieu (TIL). TIL must be requested and approved in advance (except in emergencies) with the line manager. This TIL must be used in the same week, or the following week in which it was accrued, unless otherwise agreed with line manager.

LEAVE AND BENEFITS

4.1 Annual Leave:

Annual leave will be as per the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997.

Near Media Co-Op has the discretion to nominate up to 5 working days in each calendar year, upon which employees will be required to take a day's holiday. Generally these nominated days fall during the Christmas period. Near Media Co-Op also has the discretion to nominate operational periods during which you may be required to take annual leave. Employees will be given reasonable notice of any such periods. The nominated days are normally set by Near Media Co-Op at the beginning of the calendar year.

Holidays must be taken in the calendar year in which they are due. At management's discretion, an employee may be allowed to carry over days into the following calendar year.

Employees are also entitled to nine public holidays per year. These days are as follows:

1. New Years Day
2. St Patrick's Day
3. Easter Monday
4. May Bank Holiday
5. June Bank Holiday
6. August Bank Holiday
7. October Bank Holiday
8. Christmas Day
9. St. Stephens Day

Scheduled holidays are agreed between management and employee, subject to the business needs of Near Media Co-Op.

4.1.1 Compassionate Leave

Compassionate leave days are at the discretion of the Near Media Co-Op. In all cases of personal tragedy, please inform management who will help arrange your

absence from work. You are allowed up to three days to attend to personal affairs following the death of an immediate family member. An immediate family member is defined as Mother, Father, Brother, Sister, Spouse Child.

4.1.2 Maternity Leave

Arrangements for maternity leave will be in accordance with the provisions of the Maternity Protection Acts 1994 & 2004.

As a pregnant employee you are entitled to 26 weeks maternity leave around the time of birth of the child and an additional unpaid leave period up to a maximum of 16 weeks, following consultation with you and management. It is important that, of the 26 weeks, at least 2 weeks should be taken before the end of the week in which the baby is due, and 4 weeks after that date. The remaining 20 weeks may be taken before or after the birth.

You must give Near Media Co-Op at least 4 weeks notice in writing of your intention to take maternity leave combined with a medical certificate confirming the expected week of the birth of the baby. If you wish to take additional maternity leave, this must be confirmed in writing 4 weeks before the end of the maternity leave period. When returning to work you should give 4 weeks notice of your intended return to work date.

You are entitled to paid time off for medical or related ante-natal and postnatal care. Please give management 2 weeks notice of such appointments. Medical evidence of these appointments may be requested.

During maternity leave, your rights such as annual leave are preserved and continue to accrue as if you were not absent from work.

While on maternity leave an Employee will normally be entitled to Maternity pay from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection for the 26 weeks maternity leave, depending on meeting certain PRSI eligibility criteria. Social welfare benefits are not payable during the optional additional 16 weeks maternity leave. You should apply at least 10 weeks prior to the expected birth of the child.

An employee, who is pregnant, has recently given birth or who is breastfeeding, will not be placed in any job that is a risk to her Health & Safety or that of her child. If such a risk exists Near Media Co-Op will remove the risk, re-assign the employee or place her on Health & Safety leave.

There are two Breastfeeding Arrangements in place. Option 1 allows an Employee who is breastfeeding to reduce her hours by 1 hour per day for the purposes of breastfeeding other than in the workplace. Option 2 allows an Employee who is breastfeeding, to work breaks equivalent to 1 hour per day for the purposes of breastfeeding in the workplace.

Near Media Co-Op reserves the right to refuse payment for time-off to Employees where there is an abuse of this procedure, and any such abuses will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

4.1.3 Paternity Leave

With effect from 1 September 2016, new parents (other than the mother of the child) are entitled to paternity leave from employment or self-employment following birth or adoption of a child. The Paternity Leave and Benefit Act 2016 provides for statutory paternity leave of two weeks. The provisions apply to births and adoptions on or after 1 September 2016. Paternity leave can start at any time within the first 6 months following

the birth or adoption placement.

Further information is available at www.welfare.ie

Near Media Co-op offers two options to new parents.

-> If you are entitled to, and wish to, claim Paternity Benefit from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, the Co-op will continue to pay you while you are on two weeks Paternity Leave (pro rata). In such cases, you will be required to ensure that any Paternity Benefit is paid directly to the Co-op.

-> If you are not entitled to claim Paternity Benefit, but wish to avail of Paternity Leave, the co-op will pay you up to a maximum of three days (pro rata)

4.1.4 Parental Leave

Parental Leave provides for unpaid leave from work for parents to look after their young children to a maximum age of 8 years. All employees who have completed one year's continuous service on the date the parental leave is due to commence are entitled to 18 weeks unpaid Parental Leave.

An employee must give written notice to Near Media Co-Op of their intention to take Parental Leave, not later than 6 weeks before the commencement of the leave.

Employees may be required to provide evidence of his or her entitlement to parental leave. Once notification of the intention to take Parental Leave has been made, a confirmation document must be prepared which must include:

- The date on which the leave will commence
 - The duration of the leave
 - The manner in which the leave will be taken
 - The signatures of employer and employee.
- Management may decide to postpone the parental leave, for up to 6 months, if satisfied

that granting the leave would have a substantial adverse effect on the operation of the business.

Parental Leave may be terminated if there are reasonable grounds to believe that it is being used for a purpose other than taking care of the child concerned.

4.1.5 Force Majeure Leave

Employees may avail of Force Majeure Leave with pay for unplanned, extreme and urgent family reasons, where an immediate family member suffers an illness or injury and the employee's immediate presence with the injured party is absolutely indispensable.

Force Majeure Leave is to a maximum of 3 days in a consecutive 12-month period and a maximum of 5 days in a 36 month period. Absence for part of a day is counted as one day of Force Majeure Leave. Family members are defined as:

1. Child/Adoptive Child
2. Spouse or Partner (only where partner is living with employee)
3. Brother/Sister
4. Parent/Grandparent.

Force Majeure Leave will only apply in cases where the employee's personal presence is indispensable. If an alternative person (other family member, friend, babysitter) can be found to deal with the situation then this will not apply.

4.1.6 Carer's Leave

Carer's leave will be granted in accordance with the terms and provisions of the Carer's Leave Act 2001.

Relevant Person:

A care recipient will be considered a "Relevant person" if they need continual supervision and frequent assistance throughout the day in connection with normal bodily func-

tions or need continual supervision in order to avoid danger to themselves or others.

Employees will be considered eligible to apply for Carer's leave if:

- 1) They have completed 12 months continuous employment with Near Media Co-Op.
- 2) The person they wish to look after is considered a "Relevant Person"
- 3) The Employee will be providing full time care to the relevant person.
- 4) The Employee has provided Near Media Co-Op with a decision from a deciding officer from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection will be responsible for ascertaining the validity of applications to avail of Carer's Leave.

Leave will be taken in either one continuous period of 104 weeks, or one or more periods, the total of which amounts to more than 104 weeks.

An Employee who proposes to avail of Carer's Leave must give written notice that they will be taking leave not later than six weeks before the date they are due to leave.

This notice must include:

The proposal to take Carer's leave.

The date when Leave will commence.

The manner in which it is intended to take the leave.

Confirmation that an application has been made to the Department of Social, and Family Affairs that the person to be cared for is a "Relevant Person".

An Employee while on Carer's Leave will be regarded as still being in Employment and none of their rights relating to employment will be affected.

4.1.7 Adoptive Leave:

Near Media Co-Op is committed to providing employees with the necessary support and

leave to adoptive employees. Unpaid Adoptive Leave of 24 weeks is available to adoptive mothers and sole male adopters. The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection provides the payment of an adoptive leave allowance for employees taking statutory adoptive leave.

In addition to the minimum period of adoptive leave, an employee may elect to take up to 16 weeks additional adoptive leave. During this period there is no entitlement to social welfare adoptive leave benefit.

An adopting mother or sole male adopter must notify Near Media Co-Op in writing of their intention to take Adoptive leave no later than 4 weeks of the expected date of placement, if you feel you can offer the date sooner, please do so. If you wish to take the additional adoptive leave of 16 weeks, you must inform Near Media Co-Op no later than 4 weeks before your expected return to work date.

During Adoptive Leave, your rights such as annual leave are preserved and continue to accrue as if you were not absent from work.

4.1.8 Jury Duty:

In circumstances where an employee serves on a jury, Near Media Co-Op will grant leave in accordance with the Jury's Act 1976. Employees are required to attend work before and after each court session and submit written evidence to Near Media Co-Op of involvement in Jury duty.

4.1.9 Marriage Leave/Civil partnership

Employees may avail of on addition 3 days annual leave on the occasion of their marriage/civil partnership. Applications must be submitted to the Secretary, Near Media Co Op, via an employees supervisor. Marriage leave will only be granted on receipt of a marriage/civil partnership certificate.

4.2 Pension Policy and Plans

Near Media Co-Op does not operate an Occupational Pension Scheme for all employees. However, under the terms of the Pensions (Amendment) Act 2002 the Co-Op is obliged to provide employees with access to a Personal Retirement Savings Account (PRSA). The current PRSA provider is Permanent TSB, (Artane Branch)..

4.3 Training and Professional Development

Training and Development is a management responsibility and is an ongoing process aimed at fulfilling organisational needs and individual growth. Near Media Co-Op intends to ensure that all employees appointed to a job are correctly selected, inducted and trained. Employees are obliged to co-operate fully with Near Media Co-Op training programmes.

Near Media Co-Op Policy endeavours to provide career opportunities for employees whenever possible and to encourage employees who wish to progress. Promotion will be at the discretion of management and will be based on suitability for the position to be filled.

Where possible Near Media Co-Op will make every effort to facilitate any employee who wishes to participate in further education and training opportunities to enhance their skills, career development and occupational mobility.

Near Media Co-Op recognises the value in training and development of staff. In this regard, the Committee of Management operate a scheme for the grant of study/exam leave.

The following conditions apply:

Applications for study/exam leave must be submitted for approval at

least 2 weeks in advance, to the Project Co-ordinator (Ciaran Murray)

A maximum of 2 days study/exam leave will be granted per year.

The course pursued must be relevant to employment in the Media Co-Op

It should be noted that the grant of study/exam leave, like all other categories of special leave other than maternity leave, is subject to the exigencies of the Co-Op and is at the discretion of the Co-Ordinating Committee.

4.4. Near Media Co-op Career Break Policy

Introduction:

This Scheme has been agreed by the committee of management to provide employees with the facility of taking a break in their careers. The Scheme is promoted as providing not only opportunities for staff, but also benefits to the organisation. However, breaks must be well planned and beneficial to both employer and employee. It's important for both sides to agree to continuity of service, exact length of leave and how the employee will keep in touch.

Definition

A career break is a period of unpaid leave granted by an employer for a specific duration; employees can take from one to five years off during their career while remaining a member of staff. This is distinct from unpaid maternity, parental or other authorised unpaid leave of less than one year's duration. The main feature of a career break is that your job is guaranteed at the same level, on return. Employees

take career breaks for a variety of reasons including travel, study, voluntary work, starting a business or to care for children or a family member.

Employees are guaranteed re-employment within twelve months of the expiry of their career break. The decision to grant or refuse a career break to an applicant will be the decision of the co ordinating committee. The Scheme is applicable to all staff directly employed by the Co-Op, and who have at least 3 years service in the Co-Op. Staff employed by the City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETB) may avail of any such scheme operated by that body.

Employees will not receive payment of wages, allowances, or pension contributions for the duration of a career break.

Duration

A Career Break shall be granted for a period of not less than one year and for not more than five years. A Career Break of less than five years may be extended for a period of not less than one year on each occasion provided that the total period of special leave does not exceed five years in all.

Purpose

A career break may be allowed for most purposes including further study, domestic responsibilities, conducting one's own business, maintaining a family business or a stay abroad.

A career break will not be allowed for the purpose of taking up alternative salaried or wage earning employment unless the prior written approval of the board of management has been obtained. Such approval will only be given in exceptional circumstances.

Procedure

An employee wishing to apply for a Career Break shall make application by submitting the agreed form to the Secretary of the committee of management. An application for a Career Break, or an extension to a Career Break, shall normally be made at least four months prior to the proposed date of commencement or extension.

It shall be for the co ordinating committee to consider all applications along with details of the arrangements which the management proposes to put in place to ensure the continued efficient operation of the organisation for the duration of the Career Break and to approve or reject the application. All final approvals/rejections will be brought to the attention of the Committee of Management.

Appeal

An employee who believes the request has not been properly considered, or that the procedure has not been properly followed, may lodge an appeal, stating the grounds, in writing, within 14 working days of receipt of the notification of the decision.

An appeal shall be heard by a designated appeals sub-committee of the committee of management which must arrange a meeting to hear the appeal within 14 working days of receipt of the appeal.

The employee has the right to be accompanied at the meeting by a colleague or a recognised trade union representative. Legal representation is not permitted. The appeals sub-committee must inform the employee of the outcome of the appeal, in writing, within 14 working days of the date of the meeting.

If the appeal is upheld the employee should be advised of the date of start and duration of the Career Break. If the appeal is dismissed the notification must:

- state the grounds for the decision;
- provide an explanation as to why the grounds for refusal apply in the circumstances; and
- be dated.

There is no further right of appeal under this Scheme.

Continuity of Service

An employee retains continuity of service while on a Career Break. However, this period of unpaid absence will not count as service in the calculation of sickness or redundancy payments. Service before and after a Career Break will be accrued for these purposes. It is strongly recommended that an employee considering a Career Break should investigate fully the impact of the Career Break on service, salary and pension.

A Career Break Immediately Following Maternity Leave

An employee may apply for a Career Break immediately following a period of maternity leave. Where an employee resigns during the course of the Career Break or fails to return to work for at least 13 weeks at the end of a Career Break, she shall be required to refund any occupational maternity pay received prior to the Career Break.

Returning From a Career Break

An employee on a Career Break must contact management not less than four months before the end of the Career Break:

- to confirm the intended date of return to work duties; or
- to apply for an extension to the Career Break; or
- to indicate his/her intention to resign.

Where an employee fails to contact man-

agement as above, management will write to the employee at their last known address, to invite them to indicate their intention. Where an employee fails to contact management he/she will be deemed to have resigned 4 weeks after the end date of the Career Break.

An employee shall normally retain an entitlement to resume duty in a post similar to that which he/she vacated at the commencement of the approved Career Break. Where, in exceptional circumstances, this is not possible, the employee shall be assigned to another post. Where the employee had previously undertaken additional responsibility and had been in receipt of remuneration, the duties attaching to that remuneration may be changed on return to work. Sympathetic consideration will be given to an employee wishing to return early from a Career Break when specific reasons warrant such early resumption.

General

It is the responsibility of the employee to determine from the Department of Health, Employment Affairs and Social Protection and Revenue his/her entitlements, if any, for the duration of the Career Break and to check his/her position as regards PRSI contributions or tax liability.

An employee, while on a Career Break must ensure that management has up to date contact details. An employee while on a career break:

- must ensure that management has a current contact address.
- shall not be exempt from consideration from the consequences of redundancy/re-organisation in the organisation;
- shall be eligible for consideration for any vacancies or promotions within the organisation which become available during the absence.

Any post of responsibility which becomes vacant as a result of a Career Break should be filled, if necessary, through the normal procedures.

Nothing in this Scheme shall prejudice existing arrangements for the granting of other categories of special leave.

The operation of this Scheme shall be subject to periodic review.

Career Break application form can be found in **Appendix 6**

The contents of this handbook are detailed in good faith, deemed to be best practice and are correct at the time of publication. Policies and procedures may be reviewed from time to time, and the handbook will be updated accordingly. © Near Media Co-Op

APPENDIX 1

Dignity at work. Definitions

Bullying at work has been defined as “repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual’s right to dignity at work”.

What Bullying is not?

- An isolated incident of the behaviour described within the above definition of bullying may be an affront to dignity at work, but, as a once-off incident, is not considered to be bullying.
- Objective criticism and corrections that are intended to provide constructive feedback
- Expressing differences of opinion strongly.
- Ordinary performance management.
- Reasonable and essential discipline arising from the good management of the performance of an employee at work.
- Actions taken which can be justified as regards the safety, health and welfare of the employees.
- Legitimate management responses to crisis situations which require immediate action.
- Complaints relating to instructions issued by a manager, assignment of duties, terms and conditions of employment or other matters which are appropriate for referral under the normal grievance procedure, assignment of duties, terms and conditions of employment or other matters which are appropriate for referral under the normal grievance procedure.
- Workplace conflict where people disagree with or disregard the other person's point of view.

This list is not exhaustive.

Bullying puts at risk the safety, health and welfare of people at work. A pattern of the following behaviours are examples of types of bullying.

- Exclusion with negative consequences
- Verbal abuse/insults
- Being treated less favourably than colleagues
- Belittling a person's opinion
- Disseminating malicious rumours, gossip or innuendo
- Socially excluding or isolating a person within the work sphere
- Intrusion – pestering, spying or stalking
- Intimidation/aggressive interactions
- Excessive monitoring of work
- Withholding information necessary for proper performance of a person's job
- Repeatedly manipulating a person’s job content and targets

- Blaming a person for things beyond their control
- Use of aggressive and obscene language
- Other menacing behaviour.

Bullying at work can involve people in many different work situations and at all levels:

- Manager to employee
- employee to manager
- one employee to another (or group to group)
- client or service provider to employee/manager
- employee/ manager to client or service provider.

Note, this policy does not apply to complaints of bullying made by employees against children associated with Near Media Co Op. Such complaints will be treated in accordance with Near Media Co Op's Child Protection and Welfare Policy.

Bullying can be carried out by internal and external stakeholders such as Committee of Management members, managers, colleagues, service provider, suppliers, or members of the public and can take place at any location where the individual is working on behalf of Near Media Co Op for example, at the office in Northside Civic Centre, Bunratty Drive, Dublin 17, at home (if home working), online (cyber bullying) and at external meetings, social settings and events.

Harassment (other than sexual harassment) is defined as any unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person and which relates to one of the following nine protected grounds (as specified in the Equality Acts): gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race, or membership of the traveller community.

The unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures, or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material. Inappropriate behaviour that is not linked to one of the nine grounds above is not covered by this definition.

Examples of harassment include:

- verbal harassment including jokes, derogatory comments etc.
- written harassment including emails, text messages, notices etc.
- physical harassment including shoving or jostling.
- intimidatory harassment including gestures or threatening poses.
- persistent negative body language.

An act of harassment may occur outside of the work premises or normal working hours provided that the perpetrator was acting in the course of employment, for example, at a training course, conference or work related social event.

Sexual harassment is any form of verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. This

includes same-sex sexual harassment. The unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures, or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material.

Sexual harassment may consist of one single incident or repeated inappropriate behaviour. Examples of sexual harassment include:

- sexual gestures
- unwelcome sexual advances
- offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favours
- displaying sexually suggestive objectives, pictures, calendars
- sending suggestive and pornographic correspondence, including e-mails or text messages
- unwelcome physical conduct, such as pinching, unnecessary touching, etc.
- unwanted or derogatory comments about dress or appearance.

An act of sexual harassment may occur outside of the work premises or normal working hours provided that the perpetrator was acting in the course of employment, for example, at a training course, conference or work related social event.

The examples stated in this policy are not an exhaustive list and the Arts Council reserves the right to take action against these and other inappropriate behaviours.

APPENDIX 2

Near Media Co-Op Health & Safety Statement.

Safety Statement:

This statement sets out the health & safety policy of Near Media Co-Op and the means through which that policy is to be implemented. Our objective is to meet our duties and obligations to our staff and volunteers by providing a safe and healthy working environment.

It is Near Media Co-Op's intention to protect our employees from accident or ill health at work. Near Media Co-Op will seek to ensure that all our equipment and systems do not constitute a risk to the Health & Safety of our employees and we will consult with employees on risk improvements.

Our approach to Health & Safety as far as is reasonably practicable will be:

1. To Provide a Safe Place of Work.
2. To continue to identify and control hazards.
3. To prevent as far as is reasonably possible, any improper conduct or behavior likely to put the Safety, Health & Welfare of employees at risk.
4. To consult with staff on all Health & Safety matters.
5. To provide protective clothing and equipment where necessary.
6. To provide a safe means of entering and leaving the building.
7. To provide a safe system of work practices.
8. To provide appropriate information and training to staff members on a continuous basis.
9. To make Health & Safety a key issue.

Employer Responsibilities:

The responsibility for the provision of a safe place of work rests with the Committee of Management of Near Media Co-Op. Specifically these responsibilities are:

- To maintain a safe and healthy work environment for employees, in addition to conforming to all current statutory requirements.
- To provide the appropriate type and level of training to enable employees perform their work safely and efficiently.
- To make available to every employee appropriate equipment to ensure Health & Safety.
- To maintain a vigilant and continuing interest in all Health & Safety matters relevant to both the co-op and staff.

Employee Responsibilities:

As a valued employee of Near Media Co-Op, you have a responsibility to yourself and your fellow workers to carry out your work in a safe and considerate manner. Employees must:

1. Co-Operate with the co-op in maintaining a safe work place.
2. Report any potential hazards to management and not work in any hazardous conditions should they; in the employee's opinion exist.
3. Be aware of the nearest emergency exits and firefighting / first aid equipment.
4. Never interfere with or misuse anything provided by the co-op in the interests of Health & Safety.
5. Read the co-op Health & Safety statement and obey all mandatory signs.
6. Not partake in any form of horseplay or prank likely to lead to injury to you or others.

Smoking/Alcohol and Drugs:

It is not permissible to attend work under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs. The smoking of tobacco products is prohibited in the offices of Near Media Co-Op. Smoking can take place outside the co-op building at least 3 meters' distance away from door entrances and windows.

This smoking policy forms part of the overall Health & Safety Policy and any breach will be dealt with under the Co-op's disciplinary procedure.

Visitors, contractors and temporary members of staff are expected to abide by the terms of this policy.

Manual Handling:

Manual Handling is defined as the "transporting of a load by one or more employees and includes lifting, putting down, pushing, carrying or moving a load, which by reason of its characteristics or of unfavourable ergonomic conditions involves risks, particularly of back injury to employees".

This is a priority issue because it is a major cause of accidents in the workplace. It is Near Media Co-Op's policy to minimise the need for manual handling of loads and so therefore should be avoided as far as is reasonably practicable.

Employees must check the weight of the load before attempting to lift it and if the load is too heavy get help. When lifting, follow the following basic principles.

1. Relax the knees. Lowering movements should start at the knees not the head.
2. Get close to the object to be lifted. Get a good balance by keeping the feet apart. One foot will automatically be ahead of the other.
3. When in position, bend the knees and lift with the strong muscles in the legs.
4. Lift gradually, smoothly and without jerking, keeping the object close to the body and the back straight.

Training:

The co-op is committed to identifying the safety training needs on an ongoing basis. Staff will be involved in the identification of hazards in the office and advised of the particular hazards pertaining to their area. Staff will be trained to respond to such hazards in order to prevent accidents/injury to themselves, their colleagues and clients.

All staff will be trained in emergency procedures and where appropriate, staff will be trained in

the use of special machinery and equipment. All staff will be trained in the correct techniques involved in safe manual handling.

Consultation:

The co-op is committed to consulting with its staff members regarding safety, health and welfare in the office. Staff is involved in the identification of hazards and are trained in dealing with the hazards identified.

The safety statement will be included in Induction Training and staff will be advised on how to deal with any problems that arise.

Reporting of Accidents:

Staff are required to report all accidents and near misses, whether resulting in injury or not, to management. Under the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work General Application Regulations 1993, employers must report certain occurrences to the Health & Safety Authority and ensure records are kept on site for a period of 10 years.

The following details are required:

- Date, Time and Place of the incident.
- Name, Address, Occupation and Age of the injured person.
- Circumstances, including cause and nature of the injury and the arrangements made for its treatment. (See Appendix 1)

All accidents will be investigated by a member of management and a written report prepared. Corrective action will be taken where necessary to avoid a reoccurrence.

Accidents involving persons who are not members of staff but are visiting or working on the premises must also be reported.

Fire Procedures:

In the event of a fire and providing there is no danger to the persons concerned every effort should be made to extinguish or contain the fire pending the arrival of the fire brigade. The magnitude of the outbreak must dictate whether attacking the fire should take priority over reporting and evacuation.

All staff should be familiar with the exit routes and should also know the location and type of fire extinguishers in the office.

If you discover a fire you should:

- Activate the fire alarm.
- If there is a reasonable hope of extinguishing the blaze, attack the fire immediately.
- Do not under any circumstances, expose yourself to danger.
- Leave the building by the nearest fire exit and proceed to your designated assembly point.

If you hear the alarm you should:

- Switch off any equipment under your control and leave the building by the nearest fire exit.
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings.

- Once outside, do not enter the building until you are told it is safe to do so.
- Management will on occasion perform fire drills to ensure that procedures are known and followed in the event of a real fire.

Guidelines for VDU users.

As part of their duties some employees spend long periods of time using visual display screens. Any necessary adjustments will be made to avoid RSI, eyestrain and other ailments associated with work on screens, which must be adjustable for height, tilt and brightness. No employee will be asked or expected to work any computer which is not in proper working condition, or does not meet the highest specifications.

Employees working continuously on-screen should alternate tasks so that at least 10 minutes during each 60 minutes of work is spent doing off-screen type of work. This work is to be undertaken away from the screen, but does not constitute a break.

Employees who habitually use VDU's have the right to an eyesight test, the cost of which will be met or reimbursed by the co-op.

Hazard Analysis:

A hazard is anything at work that might cause harm e.g. Electricity, Hot Surfaces, Lifting Heavy Loads, Slippery Floors, and Poorly Lit Stairways etc. Staff must be aware of the potential hazards and risks involved and report specific hazards to management.

A hazard analysis will be carried out once a year by Management. Particular attention will be paid to areas of high risk i.e. Floors, Stairs and Manual Handling.

The co-op will remove hazards by engineering means where necessary.

First Aid:

First Aid boxes are provided to ensure that first aid supplies are easily accessible when required in an emergency. First Aid boxes are located at Northside Civic Centre Office and Near TV productions office (Coolock Development Centre). They are to be checked weekly and shortages replaced. Employees have an obligation to ensure that First Aid Boxes, like any safety equipment, are not tampered with. Free access to First Aid Boxes must be maintained at all times. Painkillers cannot be provided in the First Aid Boxes.

Security:

Responsibility for building security rests with the management company of the building (i.e. CDC and Civic Centre) All visitors must comply with whatever security arrangements are in place. In some cases a swipe card is required for entry, in others a sign-in book is used. Any difficulties should be brought to the attention of the Project Co-Ordinator or Committee of Management.

Offsite Work Practice

All Staff and assigned Volunteers will when working off site:

- inspect the work area for potential hazards before starting work, and ensure that there is sufficient space and that the space provided in the vicinity of any equipment is adequate, to enable the operation of same and will mitigate against injury to themselves or others.

- All Equipment on site will be subject to annual Safety audit and will be operated in accordance with best practice methodology
- On site Near Media Co-op will designate a suitably qualified individual as lead person. A technical competent person will function as technical coordinator and will refer to best practise when assessing the location and the layout of any Equipment in use.
- This person will insure correct use of transport equipment such as trollies and camera dolly tracks. A designated individual will act as safety supervisor.
- Suitable H&S protective equipment will be used for the mitigation of trip and other hazards, this will include the securing of trip hazards such as trailing power and Audio/video cabling.

Prior to the deployment of any temporary equipment or structure a suitably qualified individual will carry out a risk assessment of any proposed site this will include:

- Equipment location
- Fire hazards
- Fire escape Plan of building
- Map the siting of any proposed Trailing cables
- A short Statement of works will be prepared stating the purpose of the visit

This will highlight any significant Hazards that may present.

All relevant safety procedures will be followed in line with:

- Health and safety authority
- Comreg
- Broadcast Authority of Ireland

Vincent Teeling

Chairperson

Signed on Behalf of the Coop

Accident or Near Miss Reporting Form

Date, Time and Place of the Incident

Name, Address, Occupation and Age of the injured person

Circumstances, including cause and nature of the injury and the arrangements made for its treatment

APPENDIX 3

Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy & Guidelines

Policy Statement

Near Media Co-op is a communally owned, democratic, not-for-profit project open to all organisations and individuals in Dublin North-East. Near Media Co-op runs Near FM, Community Radio for North-East Dublin, Near TV Productions which provides community television content to Dublin City Community Television (DCTV) and a number of other community media activities.

These guidelines are intended to assist staff and volunteers of Near Media Co-op who, for teaching, research or work reasons have contact with children or vulnerable adults, and who have any concerns in relation to the wellbeing and safety of children and vulnerable adults. This document provides advice to staff and volunteers of Near Media Co-op on their responsibilities in relation to the protection and welfare of children and vulnerable adults. Near Media Co-op also supports the use of professional and safe practices when working with children and vulnerable adults. The guidelines are based on the “Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children” and are specific to the needs of Near Media Co-op. For the purpose of this document, the term “staff and volunteer” may be a member of staff or volunteer, intern of Near Media Co-op and those working on a voluntary or unpaid basis on behalf of the Co-op.

Under Irish law, a child is a person under the age of eighteen, who is not or has not been married (Child Care Act 1991). A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may require assistance to care for themselves, or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may be because they have a disability (either mental health, intellectual or physical), a sensory impairment, are old and frail, or have some other form of illness. For the purpose of practice and, in as far as is possible, this document will have equal application to vulnerable adults as to children.

Near Media Co-op is fully committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of all children and vulnerable adults. In its policies, practices and activities, Near Media Co-op will adhere to the following principles:

Near Media Co-op will:

- Recognise that the protection and welfare of children and vulnerable adults is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations
- Fully cooperate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child and vulnerable adults protection and welfare matters
- Adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents to children and vulnerable adults

- Fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child and vulnerable adults protection matters
- Commit to provide appropriate training to staff and students in relation to the protection of children and vulnerable adults. All staff and volunteers will be made aware of this Policy and Near Media Co-op will promote best practice in safeguarding the well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

The Oireachtas has enacted legislation which places personal responsibility on all individuals to report to the Gardai in respect of information that they become aware of in relation to an offence against a child or a vulnerable person. Below is a brief explanation of this Legislation. The Legislation can be found at:

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/24/enacted/en/html>

and all Near Media Co-op staff and volunteers are advised to familiarise themselves with it. The essence of the legislation is as follows: It is an offence not to disclose information on serious offences against children where a person:

- knows or believes an offence has been committed; and
- has information that he/she knows or believes might be of material assistance in securing the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of the offender; and,
- fails without reasonable excuse to disclose this to An Garda Síochána Serious Offences are identified as either Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 offences and these Schedule relate either to children (Schedule) 1 or vulnerable persons (Schedule 2). Examples of these offences include but are not limited to (this is not the complete list, which can be found in the Legislation):

- Murder
- Manslaughter
- Rape
- Sexual Assault
- Incest
- Trafficking /Pornography re children
- Reckless Endangerment
- Assault causing Harm
- Abduction
- Child Cruelty
- Female Genital Mutilation

It is the personal responsibility of each individual person to comply with the provisions of the Criminal Justice (Withholding of information on offences against children and vulnerable persons) Act 2012. It is important to note that the fact that the Designated Person has made a report to TUSLA and/or An Garda Síochána does not relieve a person of their legal obligation to disclose information to the Gardai under this Act where that person has information that falls within the ambit of the Act

Procedures

The procedures can be categorised under the following headings:

1. Child-Centred Approach
2. Good Practice
3. Inappropriate Behaviour
4. Physical Contact
5. Health and Safety
6. Reporting Procedures
7. Form of Consent for Working with Children/Young People
8. Further Information and Training

Child-Centred Approach

- Treat all children and young people equally.
- Listen to and respect children and young people.
- Involve children and young people in decision-making, as appropriate.
- Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability).
- Use appropriate language (physical and verbal).
- Have fun and encourage a positive atmosphere.
- Offer constructive criticism when needed.
- Treat all children and young people as individuals.
- Respect a child's or young person's personal space.
- Discuss boundaries on behaviour and related sanctions, as appropriate, with children and young people and their primary carers.
- Agree group 'contract' before beginning session.
- Encourage feedback from group.
- Use age-appropriate teaching aids and materials.
- Lead by example.
- Be aware of a child's or young person's other commitments when scheduling rehearsals or activities, e.g., school or exams.
- Be cognisant of a child's or young person's limitations, due to a medical condition for example.
- Create an atmosphere of trust.
- Respect differences of ability, culture, religion, race and sexual orientation.

Good Practice

- Register each child or young person (name, address, phone, special requirements, attendance, emergency contact).
- Make primary carers, children/young people, visitors and facilitators aware of the child protection policy and procedures.
- Have emergency procedures in place and make all staff aware of these procedures.
- Be inclusive of children and young people with special needs.
- Plan and be sufficiently prepared, both mentally and physically.
- Report any concerns to the Designated Person and follow reporting procedures.

- Encourage children and young people to report any bullying, concerns or worries and to be aware of anti-bullying policy
- Observe appropriate dress and behaviour.
- Evaluate work practices on a regular basis.
- Provide appropriate training for staff and volunteers.
- Report and record any incidents and accidents.
- Update and review policies and procedures regularly.
- Keep primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children.
- Ensure proper supervision based on adequate ratios according to age, abilities and activities involved.
- Don't be passive in relation to concerns, i.e., don't 'do nothing'.
- Don't let a problem get out of control.
- Avoid taking a session on your own. If this is not possible then it should be in an open environment with the full knowledge and consent of primary carers.
- Avoid if at all possible giving a lift to a child or young person and if you do then make sure that primary carers are informed.
- Maintain awareness around language and comments made. If you think that something you said may have caused offence or upset, then try to address it in a sensitive manner.

Inappropriate Behaviour

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children or young people.
- Don't use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language.
- Don't single out a particular child or young person for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule, or unwelcome focus or attention.
- Don't allow/engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Don't hit or physically chastise children or young people.
- Don't socialise inappropriately with children or young people, e.g., outside of structured organisational activities.

Physical Contact

- Seek the consent of children or young people in relation to physical contact (except in an emergency or a dangerous situation).
- Avoid horseplay or inappropriate touch.

Health and Safety

- Don't leave children unattended or unsupervised.
- Manage any dangerous materials or equipment.
- Provide a safe environment.
- Be aware of accident procedure and follow accordingly.

Vulnerable Adults

All adults have the right to be safe and to live a life free from abuse. All persons are entitled to this right, regardless of their circumstances. It is the responsibility of all service providers, statutory and non-statutory, to ensure that, service users are treated with respect and dignity, have their welfare promoted and receive support in an environment in which every effort is made to promote welfare and to prevent abuse.” ‘Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse – National Policy and Procedures’.

In December 2014, the HSE launched its safeguarding policy for older persons or persons with a disability that, as a result of physical or intellectual impairment, may be at risk of abuse.

The “Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse - National Policy and Procedures”, which applies to all HSE and HSE funded services, outlines a number of principles to promote the welfare of vulnerable people and safeguard them from abuse. These include a requirement that all services must have a publicly declared “No Tolerance” approach to any form of abuse and must promote a culture which supports this ethos. Near Media Co-op endorses this approach.

All vulnerable people have a right to be protected against abuse and to have any concerns regarding abusive experiences addressed. They have a right to be treated with respect and to feel safe, regardless of the setting in which they live. If anyone has a concern about abuse or neglect of a vulnerable person in Near Media Co-op, they should report it to a health care professional (e.g. public health nurse, physiotherapist, GP etc.) or the Safeguarding and Protection Teams .

Reporting Procedures

Designated Persons

Sally Galliana, Radio Co Ordinator has been designated as the person to contact if you have an issue or concern about any aspect of a young persons or vulnerable adults safety and welfare. It is the responsibility of this person to support and advise staff about policy and procedures in relation to child protection and to ensure that procedures are followed. It is also the responsibility of the Designated Person to liaise with TUSLA, the Child and Family Agency, the Health Service Executive (HSE) or Gardai where appropriate.

Sally can be contacted at 01 8671190 or sally@near.ie

Ciaran Murray, Project Co Ordinator has been designated as deputy to Sally and can be contacted at 01 8671190 or Ciaran@near.ie

Grounds for Concern

The following excerpt from Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (4.3.2 – p. 38) shows what would constitute reasonable grounds for concern;

- (i) specific indication from the child or young person that s/he has been abused
- (ii) an account by a person who saw the child or young person being abused
- (iii) evidence, such as an injury or behaviour, which is consistent with abuse and unlikely

to be caused another way

(iv) an injury or behaviour which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse (an example of this would be a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, other indications of abuse, dysfunctional behaviour)

(v) consistent indication, over a period of time, that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

Recording Procedures

The designated person will be responsible for the collection, safe and confidential storage of all information relating to a child protection referral. A copy of the standard reporting form is available at:

<http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/publications-and-forms>

Dealing with a disclosure/allegation

It is of utmost importance that disclosures of allegations are managed in a sensitive and discreet manner and any response to a young person making a disclosure should take the following into consideration;

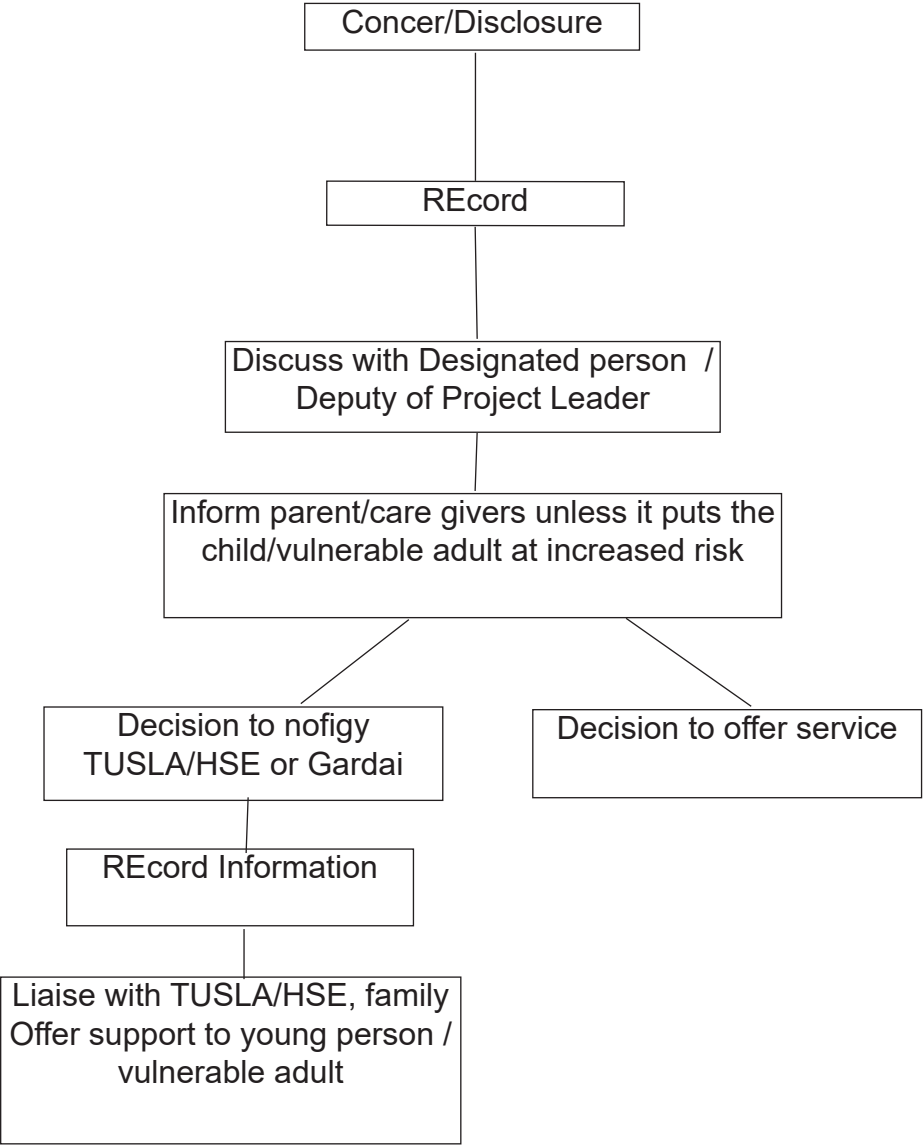
- Take what the young person says earnestly
- React in a calm manner as over reaction may intimidate the young person and increase any feelings of guilt that s/he may have
- Reassure the young person that it was right to tell someone what happened
- Listen carefully and attentively
- Be careful when asking questions. Conversation should be supportive and for the purpose of clarification, allow the person to speak without interruption, accept what is said.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement
- Never ask leading questions. Do not seek intimate details beyond those volunteered by the young person. Such questions and suggestions could complicate the official assessment/investigation by the statutory authorities
- Do not express any opinion about the alleged abuser to the person reporting to you
- Do not confront the alleged abuser
- Write down immediately after the conversation what was said, including where, when and other significant factors noting marks and signs observed. All reports should be signed and dated by the person recording the event
- Check with the young person to ensure what has been heard and understood accords with what they actually said
- Make no promises that cannot be kept, so not promise to keep secret what will be revealed
- Advise that you will offer support, but that you must pass on the information; ensure that the young person understands what will happen next.
- Explain and make sure that the young person understands what will happen next. Clarify the information is being recorded and referred. Ensure that it is confined and treated as strictly confidential, to be shared with only those

Reporting Procedures

If staff or volunteers have a child protection concern where they suspect a young person is being abused or neglected or a young person discloses an alleged abuse or neglect to them they should follow the steps outlined below.

1. Record concern or disclosure
2. Ensure in as far as is possible that no situation arises which could cause further concern
3. Immediately inform the Designated Person or if unavailable the Deputy Designated Person
4. The most appropriate person should discuss the concern or consult the parents/primary care givers. Parents/primary care givers or responsible adults should be made aware of a report to TUSLA or HSE unless it is likely to put the young person at further risk.
5. The Designated Person may contact the TUSLA or HSE duty social work department for an informal consultation prior to making a report
6. Information will be shared strictly on a need to know basis.
7. If there are reasonable grounds for concern the Designated Person will contact the Duty Social Worker in TUSLA, or the HSE area using the standard reporting form available. Reports to the Duty Social Worker can be made verbally initially and then followed by the standard reporting form. Reports should be made to TUSLA/ HSE without delay.
8. The Designated Person will keep a record of all telephone calls and reports in relation to the notification to the health board
9. In case of emergencies outside of the TUSLA/HSE social work department hours contact the Gardai. In situations that threaten the immediate safety of a young person it may be necessary to contact the Gardai.

Concern/Disclosure



Form of Consent for Working with Children/Young People/Vulnerable Adult

To Parent/Guardian:

Date:

Time:

Place:

Details:

In order for your child or young person to take part in this event can you please fill in the consent form below and return it ASAP to:-

.....,
(Name of organiser)
Near Media Co-op,
Northside Civic Centre,
Bunratty Road, Coolock, Dublin 17.

If you have any queries you can contact me on 8671190 or

#.....

To Near Media Co-op

Name of Child/Young Person/vulnerable adult:..... has permission to attend

.....

on.....

at

Signature of Parent/Guardian:.....

Contact Phone No:.....

APPENDIX 4

Near FM Social Media Policy

Policy

This is the official Policy, approved by the Committee of Management, for participating in social media for Near Media Co-op. If you're a Near Media Co-op employee or volunteer creating or contributing to blogs, wikis, social networks, social bookmarking or any other kind of digital media, these guidelines are for you. This policy applies to the use of digital media both for volunteering, work and personal purposes, whether while volunteering, at work or otherwise. The policy applies regardless of whether the digital media is accessed using our facilities and equipment or personal equipment. Please note, this policy links to all other policies therefore social & digital media should never be used in a way that breaches any of our other policies (you can find our policies in Near Media Co-op Operations and Procedures handbook: <http://near.ie/operations-and-procedures-manual/>)They will evolve as new social networking tools emerge, so check back regularly to make sure you're up to date.

We believe that, participation in social computing on behalf of Near Media Co-op is not a right but an opportunity, so please treat it seriously and with respect. Failure to abide by these guidelines or the Near Media Co-op internet safety guidelines contained in this policy could put your participation at risk. Please also follow the terms and conditions for any third-party sites.

Use of the Near Media Brand Guidelines

Use of 'Near', 'Near FM' 'Near TV' or any other variant of the Near brand in personal email / Facebook, Twitter or any other Social Network, Blog, Vlog or any other digital account must be cleared by Near Media Co-op Management. Please check with the Social Media moderator before setting up any user name containing the Near brand. If you set-up any account without prior approval, Near Media Co-op reserve the right to require it to be discontinued.

Social Media Moderator: Alan Braddish (Alan@near.ie)

If you publish to any digital platform outside Near Media Co-op, please also use a disclaimer to reflect that the postings on the site are your own and don't necessarily represent Near Media Co-op's positions, strategies, or opinions.

Please also tag Near Media Co-op (by including media appropriate reference, page/profile/hashtag or link in your post) to allow the promotion of your posts.

- Be transparent: Use your real name, identify that you work for or volunteer with Near Media, and be clear about your role.
- Be truthful: If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing; be the first to point it out and be specific about what it is.

- Be yourself: Stick to your area of expertise; write what you know.
- Your honesty - or dishonesty - will be quickly noticed in the social media environment. Please represent Near Media Co-op ethically and with integrity. Make sure that transparency doesn't violate Near Media Co-op's confidentiality or legal guidelines - or your own privacy. Remember, if you're online, you're on the record - everything on the Internet is public and searchable. And what you write is ultimately your responsibility.
- Add value: There are millions of words out there - make yours helpful and thought-provoking. Remember it's a conversation, so keep it real. Build community by posting content that invites responses then stay engaged. You can also broaden the dialogue by citing others who are writing about the same topic and allowing your content to be shared.
- If you see content in social media that disparages or reflects poorly on Near FM, Near TV or Near Media Co-Op, you should report it to the Social Media Moderator. All volunteers and employees are responsible for protecting our reputation.

Moderation

Moderation applies to any content written on behalf of Near Media, whether the site is on or off near.ie, including on social media or any other digital platform.

We do not endorse or take responsibility for content posted by third parties, a.k.a. user-generated content (UGC). This includes text input and uploaded files, including video, images, audio, executables and documents. While we strongly encourage user participation, we ask third parties to follow Internet Safety Guidelines to keep it safe for everyone.

Of particular importance here is the received verbal consent of any person whose image you want to include either in reference to, or in promotion of your Near FM/Near TV programme or related project. Please note, Near Media Co-Op does not permit tagging of vulnerable adults or anyone under the age of 18.

The "house rules": Whether content is post-moderated or community moderated, we use this rule of thumb: Tell the truth and don't be nasty.

- If the content is positive or negative and in context to the conversation, then it is okay, regardless of whether it's favorable or unfavorable to Near Media. In addition, if the content is ugly, offensive, denigrating, and/or completely out of context, then we ask our moderators and communities to reject the content.

Please keep in mind that Near Media Co-Op monitors social media related to our organisation, including the activities of our community. If we find any non-disclosed relationships or statements that are false or misleading, we will contact you for correction.

Internet Safety Guidelines

- Don't slam another organisation: Play nice. Anything you publish must be true and not misleading, and all claims must be substantiated and approved.
- Don't over share: Be careful out there - once you hit "share", you usually can't get it back. Plus being judicious will help make your content more crisp and audience-relevant.

- Perception is reality and in online social networks, the lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred. Just by identifying yourself as an Near employee or volunteer you are creating perceptions about your expertise and about Near Media.
- Keep it cool: There can be a fine line between healthy debate and incendiary reaction. Try to frame what you write to invite differing points of view without inflaming others. And you don't need to respond to every criticism or barb. Be careful and considerate.
- Did you screw up? If you make a mistake, admit it. Be upfront and be quick with your correction. If you're posting to a blog, you may choose to modify an earlier post, just make it clear that you have done so.
- Keep it relevant & timely – To make sure postings on official and personal digital media outlets are relevant and current, we encourage starting conversations about related events and topics, we only ask not to over-share or mention same event/topic several times in row. Make sure to check with your colleagues if this may become an issue.
- Digital media rewards interesting and witty thoughts. You can be interesting without being controversial.

Keep in mind that what you write is your responsibility and failure to abide by these guidelines could put your Near Media Co-op activities at risk. Also please always follow the terms and conditions for any third-party sites in which you participate. Remember as employee or volunteer you are a representative of Near Media Co-op and you have committed yourself to positively promoting this project. Should you have problems or difficulties within the organisation these should be dealt with through the specified Grievance Procedure and not publicly through any social media platform.

APPENDIX 5

Privacy statement

Comhar Chumann Cumarsaíde Pobal Bhaile Átha Cliath Thoir-Thuaidh Teoranta, Dublin North East Community Communications Co-operative Society Ltd (Near Media Co-operative), the publisher of near.ie, is committed to protecting your privacy. References to “we”, “us”, “you” or “our” in this Privacy Policy are references to Near Media Co-op, a registered co-operative. RFS No: 4128R

We have adopted this Privacy Statement to let you know how your personal information is processed and used. We promise that we will take steps to use your personal information only in ways that are compatible with this Privacy Statement.

Near Media Co-operative confirms that it adheres to key responsibilities as set out by the Data Protection Commissioner and with respect to the Irish Data Protection Acts 1988, 2003 and 2018. With any personal data collected by near media co-operative, we aim to:

1. Obtain and process the information fairly;
2. Keep it only for one or more specified and lawful purposes;
3. Process it only in ways compatible with the purposes for which it was given to Near Media Co Op initially;
4. Keep it safe and secure;
5. Keep it accurate and up-to-date;
6. Ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive;
7. Retain it no longer than is necessary for the specified purpose or purposes;
8. Give a copy of his/her personal data to any individual, on request.

The following policies are only in effect for the web pages, newsletters, discussion lists and opt-in announcement lists owned and operated by Near Media Co-operative, including near.ie, nearfm.ie, near.tv.ie, mediacoop.ie, nearintercultural.ie, neararchive.org, nearpodcast.org, archive.ie, nearchoice.ie, neardigital.ie, medialiteracy.ie

What information are we collecting and how are we collecting it?

We collect personal information from you when you enquire about our activities, ring, text or email for information and advice, register for a volunteer course with us, submit an on-air radio request or subscribe to one of our services. This may include your name, title, email address, physical address and telephone numbers.

Every computer connected to the Internet is given a domain name and a set of numbers that serve as that computer's "Internet Protocol" or IP address. When a visitor requests a page from any website within near media co-operative online network, our web servers automatically recognize that visitor's domain name and IP address. The domain name and IP address reveal nothing personal about you other than the IP address from which you have accessed our site. We use this information to examine our traffic in aggregate, but do not collect and evaluate this information for individuals.

If you email near media co-operative, we will retain a copy of your correspondence, and any reply from us, on our servers.

We may share your information with other third parties in order to carry out our services effectively. For example in order to receive the newsletter you must be held on a database stored in Mailchimp. You will be informed if we share your personal data with a third party if it applies to the service you signed up for and we promise not to share your personal data with any other third parties or marketing companies if you have not consented to do so.

What are cookies?

From time to time, near.ie or nearfm.ie, near.tv.ie, mediacoop.ie, nearintercultural.ie, neararchive.org, nearpodcast.org, archive.ie, nearchoice.ie, neardigital.ie, medialiteracy.ie may send a "cookie" to your computer. A cookie is a small piece of data that is sent to your browser from a web server and stored on your computer's hard drive. A cookie cannot read data off your hard disk or read cookie files created by other sites. Cookies do not damage your system. We use cookies to identify which areas of the suite of near websites that you have visited or customized, so that in time we may provide a better and more personalized experience for you.

You can choose whether to accept cookies by changing the settings of your browser. You can reset your browser to refuse all cookies, or allow your browser to show you when a cookie is being sent. If you choose not to accept these cookies, your experience at our site may be diminished and some features may not work as intended.

What other information do we request?

We may also request your e-mail address or mailing address for the purposes of conducting a survey or to provide additional services (for example, subscriptions to e-mail newsletters, announcement lists or information about near media co-operative events). Whenever we request the identity of a visitor, we will clearly indicate the purpose of the inquiry before the information is requested. In addition, we will not send you e-mail that you have not agreed to receive. If you do not wish to receive further updates, you can opt-out by sending an email to mailinglist-unsubscribe@near.ie

Will we disclose the information you collect to outside third parties?

near media co-op may share aggregate information about our users to third parties but will not share any personally identifiable information about you without your expressed consent.

Security

Near Media Co-op uses reasonable precautions to keep the information disclosed to us secure. This includes the use of password protection and regular maintenance of our servers. We do not sell, rent, or otherwise give your e-mail address to a third-party without your consent. Furthermore, we are not responsible for any breach of security or for any actions of any third parties who receive the information. As a directory, near.ie including nearfm.ie, near.tv.ie, mediacoop.ie, nearintercultural.ie, neararchive.org, nearpodcast.org, archive.ie, nearchoice.ie, neardigital.ie, medialiteracy.ie has links to a wide variety of other sites. We are not responsible for their privacy policies or how they treat information about their users.

Please note that Near Media Co-op will release specific personal information about you if required to do so in order to comply with any valid legal process such as a search warrant, subpoena, statute, or court order. 'We reserve the right to release personal information without your consent or without consulting you, when we believe that this is appropriate to comply with our legal obligations, to enforce our terms and conditions or other legal rights, to protect the security of the Site, to prevent fraud, or otherwise to protect our legitimate interests and/or the legitimate interests of our users.'

Near media co-operative takes its obligations very seriously and adopts the strongest line in relation to the misuse of customer information by any of its staff. Any breach of trust with regard to the confidentiality of information is treated as serious misconduct and may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal in accordance with the terms of the Disciplinary Code.

In accordance with the Data Protection Acts, near media co-operative will not keep data for longer than is necessary for the purpose to which it was received. In general we hold your contact details for as long as you subscribe to our newsletter and/or other mailing lists. In the case of a volunteer we will hold your contact information as long as you remain as a volunteer with near media co-op

Your Consent to This Agreement

By using our near.ie nearfm.ie, neartv.ie, mediacoop.ie, nearintercultural.ie, neararchive.org, nearpodcast.org, archive.ie, nearchoice.ie, neardigital.ie, medialiteracy.ie websites, you consent to the collection and use of information by us as specified above. If we decide to change our privacy policy, we will post those changes on this page so that you are always aware of what information we collect, how we use it, and under what circumstances we disclose it.

Near Media Co-operative has procedures in place to ensure that data subjects can exercise their rights under the Data Protection legislation. To make an access request, or if you would like us to correct, update or delete any information we hold on you, from our records, under the Data Protection Acts 1988, 2003 and 2018, please submit your request in writing to Ciaran Murray, near media co-op, Northside Civic Centre, Bunratty Road, Dublin 17. E-mail: ciaran@near.ie Please ensure that you describe the records you seek in the greatest detail possible to enable us to identify the relevant records.

The point of contact for further information is Dave O'Connor, Secretary, near media co-operative (Dave@near.ie) or Ciaran Murray, Project Co-ordinator (Ciaran@near.ie).

DISCLAIMER

All information contained on the near.ie website is intended for informational and educational purposes.

Near media co-operative May 2018

APPENDIX 6

APPLICATION FOR A CAREER BREAK

(Please complete this form and submit to the Secretary, Committee of Management)

Name :

Home Address:

Contact Number/email:

Date of Appointment to Co-Op:

Purpose/Reason for Career Break:

If for further education, please give details:

Date wishing to begin Career Break:

Date wishing to return to work (approx.):

Signature of Applicant:

Date:

For use by Co Ordinating Committee

Please comment on the attached request for career break in particular whether (a) it is recommended and (b) if so, whether a replacement is required.

Signed:

Date:

Approved/Not Approved:

Secretary's Signature:

Date:

TORY
E ACCESS
SPIRITED HONEST
NT CREATIVE INCLUSION
WWW.NEAR.IE INDEPENDENT
CCOUNTABLE DIALOGUE COMMUNITY OPEN
POSSIBLE TRANSPARENT IMAGE
CULTURAL 90.3FM SOUND DIVERSITY
NEAR.IE SOCIAL CHANGE HUMAN RIGHTS
ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION NON-PROFIT
TIVE LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY DEMOCRATIC
COMMUNITY BUILDING NEW TECHNOLOGIES
BROADCAST ALTERNATIVE INFORMATIVE
AND DIVERSITY DIALOGUE COMM
ITS OPEN ENVIRONMENT AC
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DEPENDENT CRE
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