

# **DEADWOOD ARBORISTS | TREE CARE SPECIALISTS**

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### ABSENCE POLICY

Here at Deadwood Arborists we prioritise the welfare of our employees (including subcontractors) and pledge to handle all absences; both planned and unplanned, with a level of care and consideration above that implemented by the standards of employment law as per our own moral standing.

This policy will break down and detail all aspects of absence; including but not limited to sickness, annual leave and lateness. Employees are welcomed to raise any queries they may have about the terms presented and a further documented discussion can be scheduled to clarify and confirm a thorough understanding of all factors.

All information outlined below has been established with the resources provided by ACAS and the legitimacy of all terms can be verified through the guidelines accessible on their online platform.

Deadwood Arborists may alter any of the terms below with instant effect with notification to relevant employees. All terms not upheld by the legal rights and requirements of employment are adhered to at the discretion of management.

## 1. PLANNED ABSCENCES

Though they will not technically be listed as "absences", this article refers to all forms of time off that has been arranged with notice and may be paid as applicable depending on the type of leave.

## 1.1 ANNUAL LEAVE (HOLIDAYS)

All employees (subject to PAYE) of Deadwood Arborists are granted 30 days of paid annual leave per calendar year; running in correspondence with the tax year and accrued on a pro-rata basis. Aside from 15 days, your annual leave is allocated at the discretion of Deadwood Arborists as required for business shutdown (exact dates given at minimum 14 days' notice). Including:

- 8 DAYS for BANK HOLIDAYS.
- 7 DAYS for FESTIVE SHUTDOWN.

From the 15 days given for the employee to arrange, holidays must be booked in writing with Liam Hughes at a minimum of two weeks' notice and will not be declined without due cause; any requests made within the appropriate window of time may only be rejected for the needs of the business. A maximum of one team member per day is permitted for the approval of annual leave; though individual circumstances will always be considered and may be granted as an isolated occasion per the discretion of management.

Where the employee has not taken all their holiday entitlement, Deadwood Arborists agree to carrying over a maximum of 3 days untaken holiday entitlement in one holiday year to the next one. Carry-over requests must be pre-approved by Liam Hughes and must be taken within the first six months of the new holiday year. If the carried over days have not been taken by the end of those six months, the entitlement to take them will expire.

Any additional leave required (not relating to sickness) once holiday entitlement has been exhausted is unpaid and granted at the discretion of Deadwood Arborists for considerable circumstances. Should employees be required and agree to work a bank holiday, an additional day of leave shall be granted in its place. There is no obligation to for the employee to accept this exchange and they may not propose it to management for themselves if it has not already been offered for the needs of the business. In the situation that an additional bank holiday is approved by the government for a specific event, Deadwood Arborists carry no obligation to honour this with an additional day of paid leave.

### 1.2 MATERNITY

All employees (subject to PAYE with a minimum of 26 weeks service) of Deadwood Arborists who are entitled to maternity leave should report their pregnancy no later than 15 weeks before their baby is due. The intended start date for the maternity leave should also be proposed by the employee no later than 15 weeks before their due date and any changes to this schedule should be notified with at least 28 days' notice; exceptions are made in exceptional circumstances.

Risk assessments will be carried out once Deadwood Arborists are alerted of the pregnancy and regularly throughout in order to monitor the safety and comfort of the employee.

Those subject to maternity leave are permitted to take up to 52 weeks off, comprised of 39 weeks statutory pay and the final 13 weeks unpaid. For the first 20 weeks of maternity leave, Deadwood Arborists will subsidise the statutory payment to elevate the amount to the employee's full wage. If an employee approaching maternity leave within 4 weeks has a pregnancy related sickness in this time, their maternity leave and relevant pay may start at this point.

An employee's return from maternity leave should ideally be scheduled up to 8 weeks prior to the intended date. Any changes following this notice should be presented and discussed with 28 days' notice where possible.

Employees are permitted to book any holiday entitlement accrued during their maternity leave as an extension of their time off; however this must be requested with the usual notice period.

Deadwood Arborists will agree to what level of and forms of communication to retain with the relevant employee during this time.

In the unfortunate event of a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy, the employee is still eligible for the full entitlement of maternity leave.

## 1.3 PATERNITY

All employees (subject to PAYE with a minimum of 26 weeks service) of Deadwood Arborists who are entitled to paternity leave will be granted two weeks paid leave as standard. This period can be extended with an additional 4 weeks of unpaid "parental leave" or with use of holiday entitlement; however this must be requested with the usual notice period.

The intended start date for the paternity leave should be proposed by the employee no later than 15 weeks before the due date and any changes to this schedule should be notified with at least 28 days' notice; exceptions are made in exceptional circumstances. All details are to be confirmed in writing. Deadwood Arborists will agree to what level of and forms of communication to retain with the relevant employee during this time.

In the unfortunate event of a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy, the employee is still eligible for the full entitlement of paternity leave.

### 1.4 PARENTAL LEAVE

All employees (subject to PAYE) of Deadwood Arborists who are entitled to ordinary parental leave are permitted to take a maximum of 4 weeks per year from an allotted total of 18 weeks per child up to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Parental leave should be requested with 21 days' notice and Deadwood Arborists pledge to not outright decline any claims without due cause; rather they would deliberate with the employee on postponing the scheduling should it serve the needs of the business. All details are to be confirmed in writing. Deadwood Arborists will agree to what level of and forms of communication to retain with the relevant employee during this time.

### 1.5 ADOPTION

All employees (subject to PAYE with a minimum of 26 weeks service) of Deadwood Arborists who are entitled to adoption leave are permitted similar allowances to maternity leave and can take up to 52 weeks off, comprised of 39 weeks statutory pay and the final 13 weeks unpaid. For the first 20 weeks of adoption leave, Deadwood Arborists will subsidise the statutory payment to elevate the amount to the employee's full wage.

If the employee is part of a couple, only one parent is entitled to take full adoption leave.

Notice of an adoption should be given by the employee with a minimum of 7 days in being matched; though ideally 28 days would be preferred where possible. The date of the child's placement and intended start date of starting the aforementioned leave should be provided at this time.

Proof of adoption must be provided prior to the commencement of adoption leave, given in writing with the employee's name and address, the adoption agency's name and address, the dates the adoption was matched and the expected placement date of the child.

The start of the employee's leave is permitted to start as agreed upon being matched for a child or up to 14 days before their placement.

An employee's return from adoption leave should ideally be scheduled up to 8 weeks prior to the intended date. Any changes following this notice should be presented and discussed with 28 days' notice where possible.

Deadwood Arborists will agree to what level of and forms of communication to retain with the relevant employee during this time.

## 2. <u>UNPLANNED ABSENCES</u>

The terms provided below relate to unplanned absences surrounding the points of sickness, bereavement, lateness, unauthorised time off and temporary business suspension.

### 2.1 SICKNESS

All employees of Deadwood Arborists must notify management of any absence due to sickness with a minimum of 2hrs notice; exceptions are made in exceptional circumstances.

Any time off due to sickness is subject to SSP of £109.40 per week following 4 consecutive days of absence; therefore the first three consecutive days are unpaid. SSP can be paid for up to 28 weeks. Should the time off due to sickness surpass 7 days, a fit note is required to be provided by a medical professional; exceptions are made in exceptional circumstances, for example should the employee face a delay receiving the fit note.

The employee is requested to retain contact with Deadwood Arborists during their absence and give a minimum of 24hrs notice for their return to work unless agreed otherwise.

All absences due to sickness will be recorded and monitored for any absence trigger points (Section 5) which may ultimately lead to further formal investigation and ultimately disciplinary action.

### 2.2 LONG TERM SICKNESS

If absence due to sickness surpasses 4 weeks it is considered as long term sickness and the provision of fit notes covering this extensive period is expected.

Deadwood Arborists would provide support where possible and should the employee's sickness surpass the 28 weeks permitted for SSP, then holiday pay may be used to subsidise any further time off if the employee has a remaining allowance.

Contact with a government team would also be advised to consider any eligibility for benefits in the situation that payment from Deadwood Arborists is no longer available. In these circumstances, the sickness must continue to be reported to Deadwood Arborists as per contractual obligation.

Deadwood Arborists will agree to what level of and forms of communication to retain with the relevant employee during periods of long term sickness, however regular contact must be maintained.

### 2.3 UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES

Any employee of Deadwood Arborists who fails to report an absence with notice or takes time off without permission is considered AWOL and may be subject to disciplinary action; exceptions are made in exceptional circumstances.

Should an employee end their working day and leave early without permission, this is also deemed an unauthorised absence and again may initiate disciplinary proceedings. As with all matters, individual circumstances are considered.

All unauthorised absences will be recorded and monitored for any absence trigger points (Section 5) which may ultimately lead to further formal investigation and ultimately disciplinary action.

## 2.4 LATENESS

If an employee is going to be late, it is their responsibility to notify management of Deadwood Arborists immediately and discuss any course of action required for a resolution to the needs of the business. Failure to report lateness will result in the working time missed being considered as unauthorised absence and may lead to disciplinary action; exceptional circumstances will be considered. In the event of lateness due to a disruption of travel/transport, employees are expected to make arrangements for an alternate route to work.

Should lateness occur due to unforeseen preparations surrounding the care of a child or dependant, Deadwood Arborists will make allowances as appropriate and discuss if unpaid leave would be more appropriate to allocate for the day.

Pay will be deducted as suitable for the portion of the working day missed due to lateness.

A system of flexible working may be discussed between Deadwood Arborists and the employee to make reparations for time of missed work and subsequent payment; however, there is no obligation for either party for this to be agreed.

All lateness; regardless of circumstance, will be recorded and monitored for any trigger points (Section 5) which may ultimately lead to further formal investigation and ultimately disciplinary action.

## 2.5 TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS

In the event that Deadwood Arborists suspend operations for a day or period of time, the circumstances surrounding payment for these occasions are dependent on the root cause.

Should this occur due to an insufficient workload or any other reason at the discretion of management, then all relevant employees of Deadwood Arborists (subject to PAYE) who would be willing, ready and able to work are to be awarded full pay for the time off.

If operations are suspended due to conditions where safe and adequate methods of practice for the business would not be permissible and therefore no employees could physically work due to factors outside of the control of management; such examples being exceptionally adverse weather or a staff shortage making the workload insurmountable, then Deadwood Arborists are not obliged to provide payment for the time off.

A system of flexible working may be discussed between Deadwood Arborists and the employee to make reparations for day(s) of missed work and subsequent payment; however, there is no stipulation for either party that this is to be proposed or agreed.

### 2.6 BEREAVEMENT

The unfortunate circumstances surrounding time off due to the loss of a loved one is a sensitive subject that Deadwood Arborists pledge to handle with care and respect.

To determine any sense of appropriate time for someone to take a leave of absence and grieve is certainly improbable, however a standard must be established and is outlined below;

- The loss of a child (including a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy) 4 weeks with full pay.
- The loss of a partner/spouse -4 weeks with full pay.
- The loss of a parent/parental figure 2 weeks with full pay.
- The loss of another immediate family member (e.g. sibling) -1 week with pay.
- The loss of any other relative or persons of significance 1 day with pay.

Full consideration is shown for individual circumstances where a figure in their life may not hold the actual title of a specific role but had the equivalent position or emotional attachment.

If the day of the funeral does not fall within the allotted time off given as bereavement leave, an additional day will be granted as either unpaid or using a holiday.

Extending the time off following bereavement with sick leave is valid and often unavoidable; in this situation the normal rules of absence due to sickness apply.

Additional paid leave for bereavement may be granted at the discretion of Deadwood Arborists' management per the circumstances.

Deadwood Arborists will agree to what level of and forms of communication to retain with the relevant employee during periods of bereavement, however regular contact must be maintained.

## 3. RETURNING TO WORK

There may be differing procedures for managing an employee's return to work from an absence depending on the type of leave they have taken. Unless the employee wishes to discuss a change in circumstance which occurred during their time off, returning from holiday is not subject to any additional arrangements.

### 3.1 RETURNING FROM SICKNESS

Employees must notify Deadwood Arborists 24 hours prior to their return from absence due to sickness or injury and confirm their current condition.

Depending on the circumstances surrounding the sickness; type of illness/injury, length of time off, an informal conversation may be sufficient if agreed between Deadwood Arborists and the employee. Otherwise, a full return to work meeting will be conducted to discuss the employee's absence due to sickness or injury and offer support as required for a smooth transition back to normal service. Where required, risk assessments will be carried out as part of the return to work procedures and reasonable adjustments to the employee's working role may be discussed and agreed; for example, light duties. Should this occur, a follow up consultation will be scheduled to confirm the conclusion of or any extension for the adjustments made; the timeline of this should be outlined during the initial meeting. If the instance of sickness which the employee is returning from is considered in relation to an absence trigger point, a return to work meeting must occur during which this will be addressed and any further formal meetings will be arranged to discuss the next step of the process (Section 5).

All information provided to Deadwood Arborists during these meetings is treated with the utmost confidentiality.

### 3.2 RETURNING FROM MATERNITY

For employees coming back from maternity leave, they are expected to notify Deadwood Arborists of their anticipated return date 8 weeks prior. Any changes following this notice should be presented and discussed with 28 days' notice where possible.

A full return to work meeting will be scheduled up to two weeks in advance of the employee's official return date to discuss and confirm all factors that may affect their resumption of work duties. During this time, any risk assessments regarding breast feeding or any other elements that may require reasonable adjustments to ensure safety and comfort.

Should an employee wish to request a reduction in their working hours or a phased return following maternity, this must be submitted in writing at least 4 weeks prior to the agreed return date and may lead to an additional or earlier consultation period to discuss to the course of action.

If the employee uses holidays to follow on from their official maternity period to extend their leave, the usual terms of returning from maternity still apply.

All information provided to Deadwood Arborists during these meetings is treated with the utmost confidentiality.

## 3.3 RETURNING FROM PATERNITY

If an employee is returning from paternity leave, Deadwood Arborists will offer a return to work meeting to offer support and provide opportunity for the employee to make apparent any reasonable adjustments or support they would wish to request.

The employee is not obligated to agree to a return to work meeting if they do not believe their role or work is to be affected. If any adjustments are requested by an employee following paternity leave, Deadwood Arborists may prepare further consultation depending on impact to the needs of the business.

## 3.4 RETURNING FROM ADOPTION LEAVE

When an employee returns from adoption leave, they are expected to notify Deadwood Arborists of their anticipated return date 8 weeks prior. Any changes following this notice should be presented and discussed with 28 days' notice where possible.

A full return to work meeting will be scheduled up to two weeks in advance of the employee's official return date to discuss and confirm all factors that may affect their resumption of work duties. Should an employee wish to request a reduction in their working hours or a phased return following adoption, this must be submitted in writing at least 4 weeks prior to the agreed return date and may lead to an additional or earlier consultation period to discuss to the course of action.

If the employee uses holidays to follow on from their official adoption period to extend their leave, the usual terms of returning from adoption still apply.

All information provided to Deadwood Arborists during these meetings is treated with the utmost confidentiality.

### 3.5 RETURNING FROM BEREAVEMENT

As an employee returns from bereavement, Deadwood Arborists will extend compassion and support to help them adjust back into the workplace following their loss.

Irrelevant of the circumstances surrounding the bereavement leave, Deadwood Arborists will offer the employee in question a return to work meeting to discuss their wellbeing following the bereavement and confirm if an additional day off will be required for a funeral. For bereavement leave that occurs for a single day, the employee is free to decline this meeting however for a bereavement that lasts 1 week or more it will be mandatory.

Deadwood Arborists may agree to any reasonable adjustments that will benefit the employee's return to work and support them through it; including but not limited to phased return or alternate/reduced duties.

If the employee uses holidays or sickness to follow on from the official bereavement period to extend their leave, the usual terms of returning from bereavement still apply.

### 3.6 RETURNING FROM PARENTAL LEAVE

Any employee returning from parental leave will resume their role in full without further consultation unless they make Deadwood Arborists aware of a change in their circumstances during this period which may require further discussion. In this event, a formal meeting will be arranged to discuss the details and Deadwood Arborists may confirm any reasonable adjustments that do not compromise the needs of the business.

### 4. TIME OFF FOR APPOINTMENTS

In the event that an employee needs time off for a scheduled appointment, Deadwood Arborists may approve the absence and potentially provide full pay depending on the reasoning and notice period provided. Flexible working arrangements may be proposed in order to compensate for time missed due to an appointment.

## 4.1 TIME OFF FOR MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Should an employee have any health issues that require medical consultation or intervention, Deadwood Arborists will permit the time off dependant on circumstance.

If the appointment has been scheduled for the employee by the medical professional, cannot be rescheduled and reasonable notice is given then the time off will be approved as unpaid. If the appointment has been scheduled at the employee's discretion then it is expected to be planned for outside of working hours where possible. Due to the common difficulties that can occur in accessing available appointments for treatment, these may still be approved as unpaid with reasonable notice. Individual circumstances will always be considered in relation to the term "reasonable notice". Any time off granted for a medical appointment covers the travel time to and from plus the duration of the appointment itself; depending on the time of day it is scheduled for then an employee may not be expected to arrive at or return to the workplace before or after the appointment respectively. Deadwood Arborists may request the employee to make up their lost hours of work during the process of agreeing to the appointment if the appropriate notice or reasoning is not provided in exchange for the time off granted. Similarly, an employee may request to make up their lost hours of work to compensate for the unpaid period however Deadwood Arborists are under no obligation to approve this proposal.

Evidence of a scheduled appointment may be required by the relevant medical party in cases with minimal notice.

### 4.2 TIME OFF FOR OPERATIONS

If an employee has an operation scheduled, they are expected to notify Deadwood Arborists at the earliest opportunity and normal sickness terms apply for the operation and subsequent recovery period. With the relevant notice period, employee's may request to use holidays in order to cover all or part of the required time off.

The same terms for returning from sickness will apply for an employee returning from time off due to an operation, including reasonable adjustments made available for an appropriate resumption of duties.

## 4.3 TIME OFF FOR ANTENATAL APPOINTMENTS - MATERNAL

Should an employee require time off for scheduled appointments throughout their pregnancy, full pay will be provided for all appointments that are arranged at the advice of a medical professional irrelevant of notice given.

### 4.4 TIME OFF FOR ANTENATAL APPOINTMENTS – PATERNAL

In the circumstances where an employee requires time off for the scheduled appointments relating to the pregnancy of a child which they are to parent, then 2 appointments of 6.5 hours each will be granted at full pay.

Additional appointments will be granted as unpaid leave with the appropriate notice given and flexible working may be agreed if proposed by either the employee or Deadwood Arborists; though neither party are obligated to suggest this or agree.

### 4.5 TIME OFF FOR ADOPTION APPOINTMENTS

If an employee is in the process of facilitating an adoption then Deadwood Arborists will approve any necessary appointments with full pay if evidence can be provided. Evidence required must be sourced from the adoption agency with their details submitted.

Individual circumstances will be considered in situations where the adoption agency cannot provide documentation in a timely manner; for example if the employee suddenly has a meeting arranged regarding a prospective in adoption.

In circumstances where the employee is matched for an adoption prior to the birth of the child, they will be granted full pay for 2 antenatal appointments of 6.5 hours each should the birth parent allow or request their attendance outside of the adoption agency's schedule.

### 4.6 TIME OFF FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A DEPENDENT

When an employee may be required to attend an appointment for their child or dependent, this will be granted as unpaid leave when requested with notice; though individual and/or unforeseen circumstances will always be considered.

Flexible working may be agreed if proposed by either the employee or Deadwood Arborists; though neither party are obligated to suggest this or agree.

## 5. MONITORING & HANDLING ABSENCE

The attendance of all Deadwood Arborists employees is logged daily with any absences recorded along with the cause and length of the time off. Particular attention is paid to sickness, lateness and unauthorized absences in order to identify any absence trigger points which may be addressed with further formal consultation and ultimately lead to disciplinary action.

### 5.1 ABSENCE TRIGGER POINTS

Deadwood Arborists regard the following as absence trigger points which indicate further engagement is required with the employee in question for discussion surrounding these factors;

- 3 or more occurrences of absence in a 6 month period if an employee is off for three different occasions within the space of 6 months, whether these are three individual days off or three absences of varying length.
- 10 or more days of absence in a 12 month period if the total number of days the employee is absent is 10 or more, regardless of the number of occurrences.
- Patterns of absence if there is indication that an employee is regularly late or absent on certain days of the week, certain times of the month/year or when certain aspects of work are in place; for example when are they notified they will be working in certain areas, with certain fellow employees or completing certain tasks.

When an employee is regarded as reaching any of these trigger points, a three stage process will be initiated and include disciplinary action that may ultimately lead to their dismissal. Individual circumstances will always be considered to allow for exceptions to these trigger points, though procedure will likely still be followed as far as Stage One.

### 5.2 STAGE ONE - WARNING

In the first instance that an employee reaches an absence trigger point, Deadwood Arborists will request their attendance at a formal meeting; this may take place as an extension of their standard return to work meeting. During this meeting, Deadwood Arborists will raise their concerns around the absence trigger point and give ample opportunity to explain their perspective of the situation and relay any details that had not previously been shared.

Standard resolution to this first stage will be a verbal warning, however exceptions may be made at the discretion of management if any exceptional circumstances come to light.

Should a reasonable adjustment to the employee's role be discussed and agreed subsequent to any exceptional circumstances, it will be documented and regularly reviewed.

## 5.3 STAGE TWO – FINAL WARNING

Should the same employee surpass the original absence trigger point which resulted in Stage One of the process, they will be escalated to Stage Two and invited to a further, formal, meeting that will take place separately to their return to work meeting.

Again, Deadwood Arborists will raise their concerns and endorse the employee to provide a full response. Individual circumstances will be considered, however disciplinary action will be taken and likely result in a writing warning to act as final notice that the situation must not recur again. In the event that reasonable adjustments were made at Stage One yet the employee's absence has persisted, these factors will be readdressed and potentially elevated or withdrawn depending on circumstance.

### 5.4 STAGE THREE – DISCIPLINARY CONCLUSION

When an employee fails to improve their attendance, adhere to the terms set in their warning from Stage Two or account for the support options provided by Deadwood Arborists then final disciplinary action will take place.

The employee will be invited to a formal meeting that will take place separately to their return to work meeting. All details surrounding their persistent absence will be investigated with reasonable allowances and understanding made for exceptional circumstances.

Following the conclusion of this meeting, management will review all notes and invite the employee to return for the disciplinary resolution. If it is believed that all avenues to supportively handle the situation have been exhausted or no further action would be effective in the best interests of the business then a dismissal may occur.

In exceptional circumstances, management may choose to allow the employee one further opportunity for improvement and effectively deescalate the current disciplinary level to a repeat of Stage Two.

## 5.5 APPEAL

In the event that an employee is ultimately dismissed from their role due to prevalent issues surrounding absence, they are welcomed to submit an appeal in writing and a meeting can be scheduled at the discretion of Deadwood Arborists to reexamine the factors for discussion.

Under no circumstances are Deadwood Arborists obligated to make arrangements for a formal conversation or reverse their decision in the event of an appeal. Should an additional face to face consultation on the matter be declined, further deliberations will be made in writing.

## 6. DUTY OF CARE

Deadwood Arborists pledge a duty of care to all employees and those who may be affected by their operations of work.

In the event that the health (physical/mental) or behaviour of an employee is deemed a concern whilst carrying out the duties of their role during work hours, management have every right to suspend them from further action whilst this is discussed. If the employee is ultimately considered unfit to continue at that time then they may be sent home in the best interest of their own welfare and that of the business. This may be extended to enforce a reasonable adjustment to the employee's role and duties at the discretion of Deadwood Arborists as deemed necessary for the welfare of the employee themselves, those around them and the business itself. Any and all such changes administered in this scenario would be documented and reviewed after an allotted period of time.

If an employee knowingly and intentionally carries out any duties that they are currently unfit to complete to the best of their ability and safe working practice, they are liable for any consequences which may arise. Additionally, if an employee knowingly or intentionally deviates from any reasonable adjustments made to their role following a return from absence then again they hold the responsibility for any adverse outcomes.

Deadwood Arborists may take disciplinary action against any employee who creates a risk to themselves, others or the business by participating in work activity that they are physically or mentally unfit to pursue with best practice or safe operations of work.

In my position as manager of Deadwuphold and enforce this policy.	wood Arborists Tree Care Specialists Ltd. I <b>Liam Hughes</b> swear to
SIGNATURE	
18/03/2024 DATE REVIEWED	
In my position as an employee of Do	eadwood Arborists Tree Care Specialists Ltd. I
	have confirmed my full understanding of and swear to adhere to
the terms set within this policy.	
SIGNATURE	