

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR FIRST STEP TRUSTEES.

### **A Code of Conduct for trustees**

A trustee code of conduct is an agreement between the charity and individual trustees that spells out the standards of behaviour expected from trustees. Trustees sign up to the code when they join the board. When they do so, they are pledging to uphold its standards. A more detailed discussion can be found on pages 43-46 of the ncvo's 'The Good Trustee Guide'. The code of conduct below summarises the essential elements:

### **Selflessness**

Trustees of First Step have a general duty to act in the best interest of First Step as a whole. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, their friends or the organisation they come from or represent.

### **Integrity**

First Step trustees:

- ◆ should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their role;
- ◆ as well as avoiding actual impropriety, should avoid any appearance of improper behaviour;
- ◆ should avoid accepting gifts and hospitality that might reasonably be thought to influence their judgement.

### **Objectivity**

In carrying out their role, including making appointments (including trustee appointments), awarding contracts, recommending individuals for rewards and benefits or transacting other business, First Step's trustees should ensure that decisions are made solely on merit.

### **Accountability**

First Step's trustees:

- ◆ have a duty to comply with the law on all occasions in accordance with the trust placed in them and in such a way as to preserve public confidence in First Step;
- ◆ are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public, funders and service users. They must submit themselves to what scrutiny is appropriate to their role.

### **Openness**

First Step's trustees:

- ◆ should ensure that confidential material, including material about individuals, is handled in accordance with due care;
- ◆ should be as open as possible about their decisions and action that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider interest clearly demands;
- ◆ should raise concerns in atmosphere of openness with an emphasis on positive development. This should generally occur in the context of regular trustee meetings.

**Honesty**

First Step's trustees:

- ◆ have a duty to declare any interests relating to their trustee role and to take steps to resolve any conflicts that may arise. Where private interests of a trustee conflicts with their trustee duties, he/she must resolve this conflict in favour of the trustee role;
- ◆ must make relevant declarations of interest in the different circumstances and roles they play both within and outside First Step.

**Leadership**

First Step's trustees:

- ◆ should promote and support the principles of leadership by example;
- ◆ must respect the role of the Service Manager. There will be circumstances under which trustees will be working directly with First Step staff. Guidelines for such working relationships must be clear to both staff and trustees, and, when these occasions arise the Service Manager/Chair of Trustees should be informed in advance.

**Trustee Declaration**

I declare that:

- ◆ I am over age 18.
- ◆ I am not an undischarged bankrupt.
- ◆ I have not previously been removed from trusteeship of a charity by a Court or the Charity Commissioners.
- ◆ I am not under a disqualification order under the Company Directors' Disqualification Act 1986.
- ◆ I am, in the light of the above, not disqualified by the Charities Act 1993 (Section 72) from acting as a charity trustee.
- ◆ I undertake to fulfil my responsibilities and duties as a trustee of First Step in good faith and in accordance with the law and within First Step's objectives and mission statement.
- ◆ I do not have any financial interests in conflict with those of First Step; (either in person or through family or business connections) except those which I have formally notified in a conflict of interest statement. I will specifically notify any such interests at any meeting where trustees are required to make a decision which affects my personal interests, and I will absent myself entirely from any decision on the matter and not vote on it.

Signed.....

Dated.....

**DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT  
AND QUALIFICATION FOR TRUSTEESHIP OF FIRST STEP**

I .....am committed to achieving the objects of First Step.

I understand the responsibilities and liabilities I am taking on in becoming a trustee of First Step, and agree to devote the necessary time and effort to my trusteeship.

I am not disqualified from acting as a trustee under section 72 of the Charities Act 1993.\*

I have not been cautioned or convicted of offences against children.

Signed.....

Dated.....

**\*Section 72 of the Charities Act 1993 disqualifies people who:**

- ◆ have unspent convictions for any offence involving deception or dishonesty;
- ◆ have been adjudged bankrupt or sequestration of their estate has been awarded and (in either case) they have not been discharged;
- ◆ have made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for, their creditors and have not been discharged in respect of it;
- ◆ have been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by an order made by the Commissioners or by the High Court, on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity for which they were responsible or to which they were privy, or which they by their conduct contributed to or facilitated;
- ◆ have been removed, under Section 7 of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1990 (powers of Court of Session to deal with management of charities), from being concerned in the management or control of any body;
- ◆ are subject to a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 or to an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under county court administration order).