



# Caregiver Employee Handbook

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## Notice of Proprietary Information

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

Employee Welcome Message	A
Organization Description	B
Office Contact Information	C

## EMPLOYMENT

101 This Handbook	1
102 Employee Relations	1
103 Business Ethics and Conduct	1
104 Conflicts of Interest	2
105 Client Relations	2
106 Client Confidentiality	3

## EMPLOYMENT STATUS & RECORDS

201 Employment Category	3
202 Employment Applications	3
203 Employment Reference Checks	3
204 Personnel Data Changes	4
205 Access to Personnel Files	4
206 Performance Evaluations	4

## EMPLOYEE PROGRAMS

301 Comforts of Home – Care Benefits	4
302 Vacation Benefits	5
303 Holidays	5
304 Bereavement Leave	6
305 Worker’s Compensation Insurance	6
306 In-Services	6
307 Online Training (RELIAS)	7

## TIMEKEEPING & PAYROLL

401 Timekeeping	8
402 Paydays	9
403 Pay Advances	9
404 Pay Deductions and Setoffs	9
405 Employment Termination	10
406 Tax Benefits	10

## WORK CONDITIONS & HOURS

501	Use of Phone	10
502	Vehicle Use	11
503	Healthy Work Environment	11
504	Work Schedules	11
505	Cell Phone Charges	12
506	Availability Commitment	12
507	Booking Vacation Time	12
508	Overtime	13
509	Rest and Meal Periods	13
510	Rates of Pay & Shifts	13
511	Mileage and Parking Reimbursement	14

## EMPLOYEE CONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY ACTION

601	Employee Conduct and Work Rules	14
602	Substance Dependence Impairment	16
603	Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment	16
604	Attendance and Punctuality	16
605	Personal Appearance	17
606	Uniforms	17
607	Care Plan	18
608	Solicitation	18
609	Progressive Discipline	18
610	Problem Resolution	18

## WORKING WITH A CLIENT

701	The Visit	19
702	Companion Job Description	20
703	Health Care Aide Job Description	21
704	Emergency Procedures	22
705	Incident Reporting	22
706	Workplace Etiquette	23
707	Success Tips	23



Welcome to the Comforts of Home – Care family! We are delighted you have decided to join our caregiving team and help seniors and people who need assistance to live independently in their homes for as long as possible.

We believe each employee contributes not only to Comforts of Home – Care’s growth and success but also to the improvement and quality of life for our clients. We hope you will take pride in being a member of our team.

This handbook contains our policy and training materials. It is important you familiarize yourself with all the information presented in this handbook before beginning service with a client. Because we value training and education, we will continue to provide ongoing opportunities to update your skills, knowledge, and expertise. We want you to feel confident in your experience working with our clients.

We hope your experience here will be inspiring, enjoyable, and rewarding. Again, welcome!

Sincerely,

*Jen Hiebert*

*Director of Homecare Operations*

Comforts of Home – Care



## Organization Description

### I. Services Provided

Comforts of Home – Care specializes in providing non-medical, in-home companion care for the elderly and those who are disabled. We offer many in-home services including companionship, light housekeeping, laundry, meal planning and preparation, incidental transportation, running errands, and personal bathing and grooming assistance.

### II. How Comforts of Home – Care began. . .

Katherine Peters always had a passion to make a difference. Social Working at the Health Science Centre alerted her to the fact there was a great need for people who ‘fell between the cracks.’ They were not well enough to stay at home without assistance of some sort, yet their condition didn’t warrant the supports of the hospital or a personal care home. When Katherine brought patients their papers to sign for a personal care home, they either responded with loud, angry resistance, or sad, quiet resignation. It was the most disturbing part of the job. Katherine broke her wrist in June 2005 which led her to ask herself the question, “**What do I really want to do with my life?**” In the weeks that followed, her search brought me her to The Senior’s Choice. They would help her develop a business that would be rewarding in many ways.

### V. Our Mission

Our mission is to ensure a better quality of life for our clients and their families by providing dependable and affordable care. We choose to make a positive difference in the lives of younger and older adults who need help to remain independent and bring peace of mind to their families.

The Comforts of Home – Care team will perform its collective duties with confidence, commitment, and care. We will treat every contact as a friend, every client as family and perform every task with honour.

### VI. Manifesto

It starts with a belief every life should be celebrated.

Every person, young or old, limited in their abilities or not, deserves dignity regardless of their current contributions.

It demands respect for people regardless of any physical or mental frailty.

It requires compassion, patience and kindness.

It is leadership that listens, embraces innovation, and is uncomfortably transparent and accountable.

It rejects the idea loss of dignity, isolation or malnutrition is part of aging or living with a disability.

At Comforts of Home – Care we make a difference;

*Your Care Your Way*





## **OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 02/08/22

### **Location**

2147 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB R3J 0L4

### **Office Hours**

Monday to Friday, from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm

Phone: (204) 949-3234

Toll-Free: 1 (866) 949-3234

### **After Hours Urgent Call**

Phone: (204) 949-3234

*Press 1 to speak to someone directly*

### **To Leave a Non-Urgent Message after Hours**

Phone: (204) 989-3232

*Press 2 to leave a message*



## **EMPLOYMENT**

### **101 This Handbook**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 02/08/22

This handbook is intended to provide employees with a general understanding of the Comforts of Home – Care (COHC) personnel policies. However, this handbook cannot anticipate every situation or answer every question about employment.

In order to retain necessary flexibility in the administration of policies and procedures, Comforts of Home – Care reserves the right to change, revise, or eliminate any of the policies and/or benefits described in this handbook. The only recognized deviations from the stated policies are those authorized and signed by the Director of Homecare Operations of Comforts of Home – Care. Employees will be notified of changes to the handbook.

### **102 Employee Relations**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 27/09/17

Our experience has shown when employees deal openly and directly with supervisors, the work environment can be excellent, communications can be clear, and attitudes can be positive. We believe Comforts of Home – Care amply demonstrates its commitment to employees by responding effectively to employee concerns.

### **103 Business Ethics and Conduct**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 08/11/19

The successful business operation and reputation of Comforts of Home – Care is built on the ethical conduct and integrity of its employees.

The continued success of Comforts of Home – Care is dependent upon our clients' trust and we are dedicated to preserving that trust. We rely on our employees to act so they impart the continued trust and confidence of the public.

Comforts of Home – Care will comply with Manitoba Employment Standards and expects its employees to conduct business in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct. In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide our employees to act with acceptable conduct.

## **104 Conflicts of Interest**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 27/09/17

Employees have an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest.

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when an employee is in a position to influence a person they know through Comforts of Home – Care that may result in a personal gain for that employee or for someone they know.

No "presumption of guilt" is created by the mere existence of a relationship with outside clients or home care companies. However, if employees have any influence on transactions involving care agreements it is imperative they disclose the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest to their supervisor at Comforts of Home – Care as soon as possible so safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

Employees are specifically prohibited from making private arrangements with or to provide care independently to any Comforts of Home – Care client during their employment with Comforts of Home – Care and for one year after leaving the employ of Comforts of Home – Care. Any violation of this policy will result in the employee's financial liability to Comforts of Home – Care in the amount of 45% of any monies received from these clients during their employment and for up to six months after terminating employment.

Employees may contact their supervisor with any questions they may have in regard to a potential or possible conflict of interest.

## **105 Client Relations**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 02/08/22

Clients are among our organization's most valuable assets. Every employee represents Comforts of Home – Care to our clients and the public. Nothing is more important than being courteous, helpful, and prompt in the attention we give to current or potential clients.

Although our employees may develop a close bond with their clients it is prohibited for an employee to spend unscheduled time with their client not paid by Comforts of Home – Care. Any time spent with the client must be scheduled and approved of by the administrative staff. If the employee sees a need for more than their scheduled time with the client, the staff coordinator will welcome any information that can be shared in this regard. If extra time was spent with the client for any reason without prior permission, this must be reported to their supervisor.

To keep professional boundaries clear, it is important for COHC employees not to 'friend' clients or members of client families on Facebook or other Social Media platforms. You must never share your phone number or email address with clients or their families.

## **106 Client Confidentiality**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 02/08/22

Employees of Comforts of Home – Care are required to keep all information regarding the client confidential. This includes information such as their name, address, date of birth and information about the clients’ health, condition or situation.

Information may only be shared when such information is specifically permitted by the client to be shared and then only with the individuals specified by the client. The employer may disclose confidential information to other persons in the workplace about the client when it is necessary and beneficial to do so. The only other time personal client information may be shared is with emergency or medical personnel as is necessary while caring for the client in an emergency. Client information is not to be discussed in any casual way with staff, family or friends.

## **EMPLOYMENT STATUS & RECORDS**

### **201 Employment Category**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 08/11/19

Employees carrying out caregiving duties typically work part-time or full-time. Hours and schedules cannot be guaranteed and are determined by client’s needs and schedules. The more flexible the employee’s schedule is the more likely COHC can satisfy the employee’s need for hours.

### **202 Employment Applications**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Comforts of Home – Care relies on the accuracy of information on the employment application, and any other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in the exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

### **203 Employment Reference Checks**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 28/12/10

To ensure individuals who join Comforts of Home – Care are well qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, Comforts of Home – Care checks the employment references of all applicants.

Comforts of Home – Care will respond to all reference check inquiries from other employers. Responses to such inquiries will be limited to factual information that can be substantiated by Comforts of Home – Care records.

## **204 Personnel Data Changes**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 27/09/17

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify Comforts of Home – Care of any changes in personnel data. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, individuals to be contacted in the event of emergency, banking information, educational accomplishments, and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times. If any personnel data has changed, notify the Administration Office within one business day.

## **205 Access to Personnel Files**

Effective Date: 12/10/2005

Revision Date: 08/11/19

Comforts of Home – Care maintains a personnel file on each employee. The personnel file includes information such as the employee's job application, resume, records of training, documentation of performance appraisals and other employment records. The employee receives copies of documents they have signed when they sign the documents.

Personnel files are the property of Comforts of Home – Care. Access to the information they contain is restricted.

## **206 Performance Evaluations**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 27/09/17

Supervisors and employees may discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis. Formal performance evaluations are conducted to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals.

Performance evaluations are scheduled at three months of employment and annually. Raises are directly related to completion of scheduled and assigned training.

# **EMPLOYEE PROGRAMS**

## **301 Comforts of Home – Care Benefits**

Effective Date: 01/01/12

Revision Date: 27/09/17

Employees will receive all legally mandated benefits such as Workers' Compensation Insurance, Canada Pension Benefits, Employment Insurance, vacation pay, and general holiday pay.

COHC offers an in-house Health & Wellness Program for its employees. There is no cost to the employee for this program. The maximum benefit of \$600 per year is dependent on a number of factors. Because COHC places a high value on training, it is no surprise training completions are tied closely to employee benefits. Please see the Health and Wellness Program booklet for more

detailed information about this program which will be provided at your three-month review. If you have any questions, please contact the office.

### **302 Vacation Benefits**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 27/09/17

For employees working as caregivers, vacation pay in the amount of 4% in the first 5 years and 6% after 5 years, will be paid out in each pay period. Employees are entitled to take vacation time as approved by their supervisor, but do not receive any additional vacation pay during this time as it has already been paid out in each pay period.

### **303 Holidays**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 08/11/19

Comforts of Home – Care recognizes the following general holidays:

- New Year’s Day
- Louis Riel Day
- Good Friday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

Easter Sunday & Monday, Remembrance Day, the August Civic holiday, and Boxing Day are not general holidays. COHC pays wages for time worked on Remembrance Day and the August Civic Holiday at time and a half.

Every employee of Comforts of Home – Care is granted general holiday pay. General Holiday pay equals five per cent of the employee’s total wages in the previous four-week period immediately before the holiday. Overtime is not included in this calculation. Those who work the holiday will receive pay for their shift plus General Holiday pay.

All employees receive general holiday pay unless:

- They are absent from work on a general holiday that is normally a workday and they are expected to work.
- They are absent from work on their last scheduled workday before the holiday or their first scheduled workday after the holiday, unless they are absent with the employer's consent.

As a continuously operating business, Comforts of Home – Care is exempt from paying time and a half for workers who work on a general holiday. We continue to operate on a holiday because many of our clients require care every day of the week.

### **304 Bereavement Leave**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 28/12/10

Employees who wish to take time off due to the death of a family member should notify their supervisor immediately. We reserve the right to request reasonable verification the leave is needed. Up to 3 days of unpaid bereavement leave will be provided to anyone employed for at least 30 days with the same employer.

Family is defined as children, stepchildren, parents, grandparents, spouses, common law spouses, aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews. The definition also includes those who are not related but are considered a family member.

### **305 Workers' Compensation Insurance**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 08/11/19

Comforts of Home – Care participates in Workers' Compensation Insurance for each employee at no cost to employees. This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment requiring medical, surgical, or hospital treatment. Workers' compensation insurance provides benefits upon being injured.

Employees who are covered and who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses should inform their supervisor *immediately*. No matter how minor an on-the-job injury may appear, it is important it be reported immediately. This will enable Worker's Compensation Board to verify the injury. The employee needs to see a doctor to substantiate their claim. Any related medical costs the doctor may charge for filling forms, etc. will be the responsibility of the employee.

If an employee is injured at work but has not missed work or gone to the doctor, Comforts of Home – Care administration staff will keep track of the injury and complete a "Notice of Injury" WCB form. A minor injury such as a small cut should be reported to your supervisor, but it may not be necessary to see a doctor or open a claim.

Neither Comforts of Home – Care nor Workers Compensation will be liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for injuries that occur during an employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity sponsored by Comforts of Home – Care.

### **306 In-Services**

Effective Date: 01/06/12

Revision Date: 02/08/22

A minimum of twelve in-services are held at the Comforts of Home – Care Portage Avenue location throughout the year. Caregivers are expected to attend at least six in-services per year to fulfill their training requirements for raises and as a requirement for benefits. The in-services will cover a variety of topics.



Notification will be emailed to caregivers throughout the year to inform of upcoming sessions. The caregiver makes a commitment to attend an in-service when they sign up for an in-service. If an employee is unable to attend for any reason, a minimum of 48 hours' notice must be given to their supervisor. If the required notice is not given, the employee will receive an unexcused absence on their employee file. An unexcused absence may have an effect on the employee's benefits and wage increases.

### **307 Online Training (RELIAS)**

Effective Date: 01/12/11

Revision Date: 02/08/22

RELIAS on-line training is designed to better equip the caregiver to perform his or her duties with confidence and help the caregiver provide a consistent, higher level of skilled care. Employees feel better about themselves and their own skills because they are equipped to handle more complex and diverse situations.

Each caregiver will receive a personal Username and Password at Orientation for RELIAS. The launch page for this website can be found on the COHC website under Caregiver Log-In.

Comforts of Home – Care requires their employees to complete progressive levels set forth according to a specified timeline. Completion of each level is rewarded with a PAID TRAINING benefit. Working within the specified timeline qualifies the employee for the in-house benefit program and on-going raises.

**Level 1** - Training is comprised of 4 courses that will equip the caregiver for their shifts. Completion of Level 1 is mandatory within their first week of employment. The subjects covered are:

- Caregiver Core Values and Teamwork
- Caregiving Tasks and Client Populations
- Communicating with Others
- Body Systems and the Aging Process

**Level 2** - Caregiver Training; to be completed within **6 weeks** of the employee's first shift. The topics covered are Elder Abuse, Client's Rights, Chronic Senior Diseases, Handling Difficult Behaviors, Avoiding Caregiver Stress, and more. **\$50.00 PAID TRAINING benefit is available with completion of Level 2 and 6 weeks of employment.**

**Level 3** – Alzheimer specific training; to be completed within **90 days** of the employee's first shift. Level 3 includes information on the many aspects of dementia. Because a large percentage of our client's experience dementia, it is important for the caregiver to learn this valuable information. **At the employee's three-month review, the employee is eligible to receive a .25 raise with completion of level 3. \$50.00 PAID TRAINING benefit is available with completion of Level 3 and 90 days of employment.**

**Level 4** - Client Focused Communication training; to be completed within **6 months** of

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employment. In these courses, you will learn how to be courteous, how to be available, how to be a good listener and reliable, and how to be positive when interacting with client's and guests at work. **\$50.00 PAID TRAINING benefit is available with completion of Level 4 and 6 months of employment.**

**Level 5** - Personal Care; to be completed within **9 months** of employment. Level 5 includes Toileting, First Aid Courses, Vital Signs and End of Life care. Even if the caregiver is not interested in performing personal care, the information learned in this level is extremely valuable. **\$50.00 PAID TRAINING benefit is available with completion of Level 5 and 9 months of employment.**

**Level 6** - Disabilities Training: to be completed within **12 months** of employment. This information is relevant to those clients with disabilities and their specific needs. **\$50.00 PAID TRAINING benefit is available with completion of Level 6 and 12 months of employment.**

Employees in good standing will receive pay for training if they are employed at the time of the payout and available according to section **508** in this handbook. Payouts occur as outlined in the levels above.

All levels of training need to be completed by the end of the first year of employment. Completion of these courses is necessary to receive raises with the company.

## **TIMEKEEPING & PAYROLL**

### **401 Timekeeping**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 02/08/22

Accurate recording of time worked is the responsibility of every employee. Employment Standards requires Comforts of Home – Care to keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits. Time worked is all the time spent on the job performing assigned duties.

The system provided for timekeeping is Telephony. Telephony allows the employee to clock in or out at the beginning and end of each shift. The employee must use their mobile App for clocking in and out. They may not use their cell phone to call the Telephony number directly.

If it is not possible *for any reason* to clock in or out using Telephony, the employee **must phone the employment line (204) 989-3232** and leave a detailed voice mail message with the hours worked on the shift and the reason they did not clock in or out. Failure to report information about the shift or using the Telephony system may result in loss of pay. The supervisor will review and confirm the time record before submitting it for payroll processing.

If the payroll supervisor must initiate verification of the shift with the employee because the employee failed to use Telephony, fifteen minutes of pay will be docked from the employee's pay for that shift.

Overtime work must always be approved before it is performed. Altering, falsifying or tampering with time records will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

#### **402 Paydays**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 08/11/19

Employees are paid bi-weekly on alternate Fridays. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period. The payroll period is two weeks in duration and ends on the alternate Saturday six days prior to pay Friday.

Paychecks will be deposited via direct deposit to the employee's bank account. A void cheque must be submitted in order to receive pay. Pay stubs will be emailed to each employee.

If any errors are discovered in pay, the employee must contact their Staff Coordinator by calling (204) 949-3234 error within 1 week of payday. An investigation will be performed, and adjustments will be made on the following pay cheque if warranted.

#### **403 Pay Advances**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Comforts of Home – Care does not provide pay advances on unearned wages to employees.

#### **404 Pay Deductions and Setoffs**

Effective Date: 05/11/07

Revision Date: 08/11/19

By law Comforts of Home – Care is required to make certain deductions from every employee's compensation. This includes federal income taxes, Canada Pension and Employment Insurance premiums. Comforts of Home – Care matches the amount of Canada Pension paid by each employee and submits it to Canada Revenue Agency.

Pay setoffs are pay deductions taken by Comforts of Home – Care to help pay off a debt or obligation to Comforts of Home – Care or others. Such setoffs include wage garnishment due to legal judgments.

If you have concerns regarding deductions made from your paycheck or how they were calculated, the Payroll and Billing Clerk can assist in answering your questions. Email: [accounts@cohcinc.com](mailto:accounts@cohcinc.com) or phone (204) 272-6238.

#### **405 Employment Termination**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 02/08/22

Termination of employment is an inevitable part of personnel activity within any organization.

Resignation, discharge, layoff, or retirement are examples of some of the most common circumstances under which employment is terminated.

Since employment with Comforts of Home – Care is based on mutual consent, both the employee and Comforts of Home – Care have the right to terminate employment at will, with or without cause, at any time. Employees will receive their final pay in accordance with Employment Standards.

Upon termination all company property must be returned to the office. This includes lanyards and company shirts.

#### **406 Tax Benefits**

Effective Date: 02/08/22

In the event that COHC has specified a certain requirement such as having a cell phone or a vehicle, you may be eligible to claim these expenses on your taxes. COHC will provide for you upon request a T2200 – Declaration of Conditions of Employment outlining the expenses you are eligible for. These forms must be requested no later than February 15<sup>th</sup> and will be available each year for pick up only on the week of February 28<sup>th</sup>. Claimable expenses must be listed in your employee contract in order to be eligible.

For a complete guide on claiming employment expenses and the exact requirements, please refer to the Canada Revenue Website.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/forms-publications/publications/t4044/employment-expenses.html>

Although COHC is providing our caregivers with this courtesy, it is the sole responsibility of the employee to understand their own personal tax situation and file accordingly with Revenue Canada.

### **WORK CONDITIONS & HOURS**

#### **501 Use of Phone**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 28/09/17

Personal use of telephones, including cell phones, is forbidden while in the workplace. Use of a client's home phone should be restricted to client-specific, work-related issues, utilizing the Telephony system or emergency use.

#### **502 Vehicle Use**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 08/11/19

While performing caregiving duties a client may request the employee to use the client's vehicle

for transportation. It is the employee's responsibility to review the client's vehicle registration to ensure it is current prior to vehicle usage. In addition, the employee MUST have a current driver's license. If the employee has any concern over the safety or legal status of the client's vehicle, the employee will decline its usage and report that concern to their supervisor.

### **503 Healthy Work Environment**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 18/12/17

In keeping with Comforts of Home – Care's intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment, smoking and/or vaping is prohibited while on duty. Additionally, avoid the use of perfumes and colognes as your clients may be allergic to particular smells.

Employees who smoke or vape will make every effort to ensure their clothes do not smell of smoke while on a shift. This can be accomplished by avoiding smoking or vaping on the way to work.

Every effort will be made to avoid assignments which would compromise the health of an employee. Please notify your supervisor if you feel your health has or will be compromised. You may request to not work with clients who are heavy smokers.

### **504 Work Schedules**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 08/11/19

Work schedules for employees vary throughout the organization. Supervisors will advise employees of their individual work schedules which may vary from week to week.

**According to Manitoba Employment Standards**, the Employer, is in complete control of the employee's schedule. The employer tells the employee when they are to work and can change the employee's schedule to according to the company or client's needs. The employee is not permitted to book off except for 3 days a year for personal illness or the needs of their family. The employer can ask for reasonable verification of the day that was booked off.

Employment Standards states cancelled shifts do not have to be paid if, prior to the employee reporting to work, the employer advises the employee their shift has been cancelled.

**Comforts of Home – Care** offers flexible scheduling. The employee submits a signed availability form. The Staff Coordinators work with each employee to give them the number of hours they would like within their specified available hours. The employee is matched to a suitable client according to preferences and skills.

The signed availability form gives the Staff Coordinators the authority to assign an employee to a shift. Once the employee is assigned to a shift, the employee must attend the shift. If the employee does not attend the shift, disciplinary actions will be taken, including termination of employment.

It is the responsibility of the employees to view their on-line eRSP schedule daily. eRSP is accessed through the Caregiver page COHC company website. eRSP includes pertinent information about the client and the client's address. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure they get to work on time with the information they need.

The employee will be paid for hours worked. If employee leaves a shift early for personal reason, they will not receive wages for time not worked.

Hours cannot be guaranteed. Schedules change according to the client's needs. If a caregiver is no longer required for a particular client, the staff coordinator will reassign the caregiver to other clients as shifts become available.

### **505 Cell Phone Charges**

Effective Date: 08/11/19

Revision Date: 02/08/22

Your cell phone carrier may charge you for texts related to answering broadcast calls through eRSP. It is your responsibility to know whether your carrier will charge you per-message costs. You may receive extra charges if you do not have an unlimited texting plan, if you have exceeded your monthly quota of free messages, or if eRSP's form of texting is not covered by your provider or for any other reason. COHC assumes no responsibility for charges incurred on your cell phone bill for any reason.

### **506 Availability Commitment**

Effective Date: 08/11/19

All employees must commit to and work a minimum of 3 hours per week to maintain their current employment with COHC. Failure to work a minimum of 3 hours per week will be viewed as voluntary resignation.

### **507 Booking Vacation Time**

Effective Date: 23/01/08

Revision Date: 29/08/17

Requests for holidays and time off will be considered however, not all requests will be able to be granted. The final decision is made by the employer.

Knowing our caregiver's availability is critical for the proper functioning of Comforts of Home – Care. An employee must inform their supervisor at least two months in advance of their plan for vacation time.

### **508 Overtime**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 08/11/19

From time to time, employees may be asked to work overtime hours. All overtime work must be authorized by their supervisor prior to being worked.

COHC maintains the following MB Labour Board variance:

The employees may be on duty up to a maximum of twelve (12) hours per day, from commencement to completion, sixty (60) hours per week and eighty (80) hours in a two (2) week cycle, without the payment of overtime rates of pay.

All hours worked in excess of 12 hours per day or 60 hours per week and 80 hours in a two-week cycle, shall be paid overtime at a rate of 1.5 times the employee's regular rate of pay. Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Time off on sick leave, vacation leave, or any leave of absence will not be considered hours worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations.

### **509 Rest and Meal Periods**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 28/12/10

After 5 hours of work, the legislated 30-minute break may be eliminated. Instead, the employee will be permitted to eat and take breaks during the course of each shift alongside the client. Eating lunch with the client will be considered as hours worked. Individual client exceptions will be discussed with the caregiver prior to the shift (Work Break Order variance #1137).

### **510 Rates of Pay & Shifts**

Effective Date: 07/05/09

Revision Date: 08/11/19

Comforts of Home – Care has three (3) main types of shifts. Companion (CCA), Combined Personal Care (CPC), and Personal Care (PC). Each shift type is paid at a different rate as specified each year.

After three months of employment, with completion of specified training and in accordance with the three-month review, the employee may receive a \$.25 raise. Annual raises are received on the employee's anniversary date with the company in accordance with the annual review.

**Daytime Shifts:** The caregiver's duties will be outlined in the Care Plan on eRSP and given verbally by the supervisor. The caregiver will be paid his/her current hourly rate of pay as communicated by the supervisor.

**Overnight Shifts:** The caregiver is required to be fully awake and attentive throughout the entire overnight shift. They may be allowed to rest; however, they must be available at all times for any client needs. The caregiver will be explained the expectations of the overnight shift by their Staff Coordinator.

**Training Shifts:** Any Caregiver training required will be paid at a different rate as specified each year.

**Stipend Shifts:** Stipend shifts are used when the client does not need care the entire shift and are typically put in place for overnight shifts according to a client's needs. The caregiver does not

work all the hours of the shift therefore all the hours on shift will not contribute towards hours worked, or overtime. Stipends are paid at a flat rate of pay. A separate Stipend agreement is signed for each Stipend client.

**Constant Care:** Caregiver is required to provide care and supervision in the client’s residence 24 hours a day. They work 12 hours during the day around the client’s schedule, taking breaks and rest periods when the client does not require help. The caregiver will have the opportunity to sleep for 8 hours uninterrupted at night. If the client is up regularly at night, that client is not suitable for the Constant Care shift. A separate Constant Care agreement is signed for each Constant Care client.

### **511 Mileage and Parking Reimbursement**

Effective Date: 28/11/08

Revision Date: 02/08/22

The employee may use their own vehicle for incidental transport on the client's behalf providing the employee has proven full and current drivers’ license and All-Purpose Vehicle Insurance coverage from MPIC to the Administration Office prior to that service. Comforts of Home – Care will pay mileage reimbursement at the rate of \$0.58 per kilometer for any kilometers incurred while providing service to the client. There is no car allowance for mileage incurred traveling to a client’s home, except as outlined below.

- If an employee must drive further than 20 kilometers to a client’s residence, they will be reimbursed \$0.30 for each kilometer over 20 kilometers.
- In most circumstances, a caregiver who lives outside the City of Winnipeg who chooses to work with clients within Winnipeg will not be reimbursed for mileage costs. However, each assignment may be considered for reimbursement on a case by case basis.

It may be necessary for an employee to pay for parking in order to visit a client. If paying for parking is necessary, efforts must be made to use the most cost-effective space available, even if it is further away. The caregiver will be reimbursed for parking expenses upon turning the parking receipts into the office. Receipts must be turned in within two weeks of incurring the expense.

## **EMPLOYEE CONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

### **601 Employee Conduct and Work Rules**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 29/09/17

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, Comforts of Home – Care requires employees to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all employees and the organization.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following are examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment:



- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property.
- Falsifying timekeeping records.
- Working under the influence of alcohol, legal or illegal drugs.
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol, legal or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating vehicles.
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace.
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace.
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer's or client's property.
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct.
- Violation of safety or health rules.
- Smoking or vaping while on the job.
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment.
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace.
- Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice.
- Unauthorized disclosure of business "secrets" or confidential information.
- Violation of personnel policies.
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct.

### **602 Substance Dependence/Impairment**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 08/11/19

All individuals working at Comforts of Home – Care are expected to report fit for duty for scheduled work and be able to perform assigned duties safely and acceptably without any limitations due to use of or after effects of alcohol, illicit drugs, non-prescription drugs, prescribed medications, or any other substance that may impair judgment or performance.

Comforts of Home – Care has taken the position that the presence of illicit drugs, recreational drugs and alcohol on the work site is not permitted.

Any individual failing to adhere to this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal.

### **603 Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 08/11/19

Sexual harassment means one or a series of comments or behaviours, gender-related or sexual in nature, that is known or might reasonably be known to be offensive, intimidating, hostile or inappropriate. Any person who believes he or she is experiencing harassment should direct their complaint to the Office staff.

## 604 Attendance and Punctuality

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 08/11/19

Comforts of Home – Care requires employees to be reliable and punctual in reporting for scheduled work. Absenteeism and tardiness are disruptive and place a burden on clients, other employees, and on the company.

In the rare instances when employees cannot avoid being late to work or are unable to work as scheduled, they need to notify their supervisor **as soon as possible** in advance of the anticipated tardiness or absence and at minimum, 3 hours prior to the start of a shift. However, anticipated absenteeism calls should not be made between 11:00 pm and 6:00 am.

When calling off work, the employee **must speak with someone** by calling (204) 949-3234. If the line is busy or goes directly to voicemail, the employee must call again until someone picks up the phone. **Leaving a message or sending an e-mail is not allowed when it comes to sick or late calls.**

Absenteeism and tardiness may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Excessive absenteeism is defined as more than 6 occurrences per year and/or more than 2 times per calendar month.

## 605 Personal Appearance

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 08/11/19

Dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the business image Comforts of Home – Care presents to clients and visitors. When representing Comforts of Home – Care, caregivers are expected to present a clean, neat, and tasteful appearance.

The employee's dress code is specified below. The employee's supervisor may give further instruction to establish a suitable dress code for a particular client. Consult your supervisor if you have questions as to what constitutes appropriate appearance.

The following personal appearance guidelines need to be followed:

1. Shoes must provide safe, secure footing, and offer protection against hazards.
2. Tank tops, tube or halter tops, short shorts may not be worn under any circumstances.
3. Jeans and tights must be respectable; fit nicely, not too tight, no holes, no underwear or underwear lines showing.
4. Mustaches and beards must be clean, well trimmed, and neat.
5. Hairstyles and hair colors and makeup must not be extreme.
6. Long hairstyles should be worn with hair pulled back off the face and neck to avoid interfering with job performance.
7. Offensive body odor and poor personal hygiene are not acceptable.

8. Perfume, cologne, and aftershave lotion should be avoided altogether, as some individuals may be sensitive or allergic to strong fragrances.
9. Jewelry should not be functionally restrictive, dangerous to job performance, or excessive.
10. Facial and torso jewelry must be appropriate.
11. Visible excessive tattoos and similar body art must be covered from neck down to elbow up.

### **606 Uniforms**

Effective Date: 11/03/09

Revision Date: 02/08/22

Upon completion of Orientation, the caregiver receives a company shirt and can be assigned shifts.

The company shirts are to be worn to each shift after receiving them. Additional shirts may be purchased for \$20.00 from the office. When the shirt wears out, it will be replaced free of charge by the company.

### **607 Care Plan**

Effective Date: 02/08/22

It is the caregiver's responsibility to review the Client Care Plan and Activities using the eRSP Mobile app. Once an employee is assigned to a shift, they will have access to shift information on the eRSP Mobile app. Caregivers must read all client information. If they have any questions, it is the caregivers responsibility to call the office and ask to receive clarification prior to their shift.

### **608 Solicitation**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 08/11/19

Persons employed by Comforts of Home – Care may not distribute literature in the workplace at any time for any purpose, including activities and events they may have interest in. The employee may not solicit for or collect money, goods or gifts for any community, charitable or political group.

Only company approved material may be given out by COHC caregivers while on duty.

### **609 Progressive Discipline**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 08/11/19

Comforts of Home – Care administers equitable and consistent discipline for unsatisfactory conduct in the workplace, ensuring fair treatment of all employees, exercising prompt, uniform, and impartial disciplinary actions. The purpose of which is to correct the problem, prevent

recurrence, and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future.

Progressive discipline means, with respect to most disciplinary problems, these steps will normally be followed: a first offense may call for a verbal warning; a next offense may be followed by a written warning; and, still another offense may then lead to termination of employment. Using this method most employee problems are expected to be corrected at an early stage, benefiting both the employee and Comforts of Home – Care.

Comforts of Home – Care recognizes there are certain types of employee problems serious enough to justify termination of employment without going through the usual progressive discipline steps. While it is impossible to list every type of behavior that may be deemed a serious offense, section 601 Employee Conduct and Work Rules, includes examples of problems that may result in immediate termination of employment.

### **610 Problem Resolution**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 08/11/19

Comforts of Home – Care strives to ensure fair and honest treatment of all caregivers. Supervisors, managers, and caregivers are expected to treat one another with mutual respect. Caregivers are encouraged to express any problem, complaint, suggestion, or question they may have to office staff.

If employees disagree with established rules of conduct, policies, or practices, they can express their concern. No employee will be penalized, formally or informally, for voicing a complaint with Comforts of Home – Care in a reasonable, business-like manner.

Not every problem can be resolved to everyone's total satisfaction, but only through discussion of concerns can employees and management develop understanding.

## **WORKING WITH A CLIENT**

### **701 The Visit**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 02/08/22

First days are nerve wracking for many people. You want to be liked and you want to do a good job. Like everything else, first days run more smoothly if you have a plan of action.

1. Always arrive on time.
2. Be neatly groomed.
3. Refer to clients as "Mr." or "Mrs." and their last name unless they tell you differently.
4. Introduce yourself. Let the client know you are there for them. Ask about their interests and hobbies.
5. Ask the client to help you develop a task schedule based on his/her normal routine. If

- he/she likes to watch a specific TV show schedule vacuuming at a different time.
6. Make a list of her food preferences. You can also ask to see favorite recipes she would like included in her meal plans.
  7. Sit with the client during meals, even if you are not eating.
  8. Begin performing tasks as scheduled and do them her/his way.
  9. Keep all client information confidential.
  10. Never smoke in a client's house or on shift, even if the client smokes.

Remember, part of your job is to **help the client stay active and involved**. If he likes to cook but his eyesight is failing, let him break up the lettuce for his salad. If she likes to garden but her hands shake, help her plan her garden and let her teach you how to plant the seeds for her. Find ways to allow your client the dignity of being involved. You will find that the companionship of sharing tasks makes many clients very happy and gives them a sense of purpose and a way to be useful again.

### **Have a plan of action and improve the life of a client!**

#### **702 Companion Job Description**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 02/08/22

The Job Description outlines your primary responsibilities as a caregiver. This description is not meant to be an exhaustive list of services as the exact duties to be performed for each assignment will vary. Prior to beginning a new assignment your supervisor will provide you with background information about your client and review any special needs of the client.

**OBJECTIVE:** TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL CAREGIVING SERVICES AND IN ORDER TO PROVIDE THE CLIENT WITH THE ASSISTANCE THEY REQUIRE.

#### **General Companion Aid Duties**

- Provide companionship; including meaningful conversation and enjoyable activities
- Assist with walking and light exercise
- Housekeeping to include all household duties
- Provide incidental transportation using client or caregiver car including client errands

#### **Nutrition**

- Plan, prepare and package (when specified) meals followed by clean up
- Prepare meals so they are as appetizing and as nutritious as possible.
- Assist to feed clients.

#### **Communication**

- Communicate effectively with clients, family and visitors. This includes being polite and respectful to everyone who comes in contact with you.

- Answer the phone clearly and politely stating your name and who you are and writing down messages promptly and accurately verifying with the caller that what you have written is accurate.

#### **Dementia Care**

- Provide client with stimulating activities and social contact.
- Use skills to provide positive re-direction for escalating agitation or aggression.
- Provide patient support and assistance with all ADL's.

#### **Infection Control**

- Prevent cross infection by using universal precautions and hand washing
- Assist in keeping client's home clean and tidy

#### **Other Requirements**

- Document activities using the eRSP Mobile app at the end of your shift
- Record hours worked via telephony using the eRSP Mobile app
- Record mileage driven on behalf of the client using the eRSP Mobile app
- Report any significant client changes to the office immediately

#### **703 Health Care Aide Job Description**

Effective Date: 28/10/10

Revision Date: 02/08/22

The Job Description for a Certified Health Care Aide outlines your primary responsibilities as a Health Care Aide in addition to the previously listed duties of a caregiver. This description is not meant to be an exhaustive list of services as the exact duties to be performed for each assignment will vary. Prior to beginning a new assignment Comforts of Home – Care will provide you with background information about your client and review any special needs of the client.

**OBJECTIVE:** TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL HEALTH CARE AIDE DUTIES AND CAREGIVING SERVICES IN ORDER TO PROVIDE THE CLIENT WITH THE ASSISTANCE THEY REQUIRE.

#### **Personal Care**

- Clients are to be treated with dignity, respect and discretion whilst maintaining their confidentiality.
- Ensure patients' personal hygiene requirements are met. This will include assisting with washes, bed bathing, assisting clients to use the shower and bath, providing mouth care and cleaning dentures.
- Promote continence by ensuring that clients' toilet needs are met. This will include bedpans, emptying catheter bags and bowel and stoma care. Clients are to be helped to use the toilet or commode and the needs met for clients with incontinence.
- Assess pressure areas and skin integrity and report any changes to the supervisor or family member.

### **Medication**

- Monitor to ensure that medications have been taken correctly.
- Provide medication reminders when necessary.
- In certain circumstances and under the guidance of the Palliative Program, it may be necessary to administer specific medications. Guidelines will be provided, and additional documentation will be required.

### **Moving and Handling**

- Adhere to the COHC instructions on body mechanics and transferring being careful not to lift dead weight or heavy objects.
- Maintain the comfort of clients confined to bed or wheelchair by helping to reposition them as required.
- Keep skills and training in Hoyer and Track Lift systems up-to-date.

### **Documentation**

- Document using the eRSP Mobile app at the end of the shift
- In special circumstances such as Palliative Care situations there will be additional documentation for medication, bowel movements, feeding, etc. These care details will be provided on a client by client basis.

### **Other Requirements**

- Report any significant client changes to the office immediately.

### **Qualifications**

- In addition to the qualifications of a Caregiver the Health Care Aide must provide an authentic document as proof of their certification.

### **704 Emergency Procedures**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 02/08/22

The emergency procedures information is found on the eRSP Mobile app in client activities. It outlines your responsibilities in the event your client suffers an emergency. You are expected to be familiar with the procedure, remain calm and stay with the client until emergency personnel place the client in an ambulance.

**\*If during an emergency you have any question about how to proceed,  
Call the office for support. \***

The emergency personnel will have some basic questions about your client: his/her name, age, a brief description of what happened, what time it happened, what medications he/she is taking and if you are aware of any allergies. They will ask if he/she has a "DNR" or Do Not Resuscitate order. If you don't know the answer to a question, say so.

If your client takes medications, put them in a bag and give it to the paramedics to sort through, or give them the blister pack of medications.

### **705 Incident Reporting**

Effective Date: **01/06/12**

Revision Date: 02/08/22

In the event a critical incident occurs while on shift, it is the caregiver's duty to report this to the Client Outreach Coordinator as quickly as possible and no later than 24 hours after the incident occurred.

According to Manitoba legislation a critical incident is:

An unintended event that occurs when health services are provided to an individual and results in a consequence to him or her that:

- a. is serious and undesired, such as death, disability, injury or harm, unplanned admission to hospital or unusual extension of a hospital stay, and
- b. does not result from the individual's underlying health condition or from a risk inherent in providing health services.

Some examples of a critical incident might include:

- Fatality or death
- Critical injury
- Injury that requires medical attention
- Property damage
- Fire
- Medication error
- Elder Abuse
- Bitten by pet
- 'Breakdowns' in communication during transitions of care that result in serious harm to the individual.
- Any other event that takes place causing physical or emotional distress

To report a critical incident the caregiver is required to phone the office and speak to the Client Outreach Coordinator assigned to the client. The caregiver will then need to come to the office. Together the caregiver and the Client Outreach Coordinator will complete a written Comforts of Home – Care incident report which the caregiver will sign.

### **706 Workplace Etiquette**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 09/11/19

Comforts of Home – Care strives to maintain a positive work environment where employees treat each other with respect and courtesy. Sometimes issues arise when employees are unaware their behavior in the workplace may be inappropriate or troublesome. Many of these issues can be addressed by politely talking with a co-worker to bring the perceived problem to his or her attention. In most cases, common sense will dictate an appropriate resolution. Comforts of Home – Care encourages all employees to keep an open mind and graciously accept constructive



feedback or a request to change behavior that may be affecting the client or irritating another employee.

- In the event of a disagreement with a client, call the office immediately. Do not simply walk off the job.
- In the event of a disagreement with another caregiver, remove yourself from the client, and call the office immediately.

### **707 Success Tips**

Effective Date: 12/10/05

Revision Date: 02/08/22

Caregivers come from a wide range of backgrounds and frequently caregivers consider their services common. The truth is only a select few individuals have the emotional strength and personal confidence necessary to be a caregiver. It is important you realize you are a professional and as such need to act in a professional manner. There are 3 professional behaviors that will promote your success as a caregiver and in all else that you pursue:

#### **Punctuality      Courtesy      Communication**

**Punctuality** is the key to making a good impression and building respect especially when working with seniors. They are a very time-oriented generation. Seniors view lateness as a sign of disrespect and laziness; so first and foremost, arrive on time! A good rule of thumb to live by is:

“If you're early, you're on time. If you're on time, you're late.  
And if you're late, they will think you're dead!”

It means if you're early, you took the time to prepare yourself, overcome any unforeseen obstacles along the way and arrive calm and ready to begin work in a professional manner without fuss. In short, your head is in the game as soon as you walk up to the client's door.

If you're on time, you got there by the skin of your teeth or were lucky enough not to have any problems, but you walk in thinking, "I made it!" and you get your head in the game within a couple of minutes.

If you arrive late, you failed to plan, failed to prepare and are so busy thinking up excuses that you don't get your mind on the job for some time, if at all. That means you do your job poorly and likely won't make the client happy regardless of how good a caregiver you are.

**Tip:** When assigned to a new client it is a good idea to use google maps to see where your shift is and how long it will take you to get there. Then on the day of introduction, the stress of getting to shift on-time will be eliminated.

### **Be consistently early to make a good impression.**

**Courtesy** is the language of respect, deference and civility. "Please", "Thank you", "You're welcome", "excuse me", "do you mind if I", "allow me", "sir", "Ma'am", and many others are

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common courtesy phrases that have become truly uncommon in today's informal society, but they are cherished by seniors. Even if your client insists you use his or her first name it is very important you do not forget to use these courtesy phrases. And SMILE! Without a smile, you may look disinterested or even angry. If you are not used to smiling, get used to it! It can mean the difference between a client trusting you and being afraid of you.

**Tip:** When giving up an assignment or leaving your employment of Comforts of Home – Care please give the office two weeks notice. We will find a replacement caregiver who can go to the client's house with you. This way you can introduce the new caregiver to your client and show your replacement how your client likes things done.

### **Smile and be polite to show respect for your elders.**

**Clear and Open Communication** is part of respect and courtesy. It is the only way we can be sure that everyone shares the same expectations. Communicate regularly with the office, other caregivers, family members and clients.

Seniors tend to be modest and can feel self-conscious about their disabilities especially concerning personal care such as incontinence, bathing and dressing. Warm the bath water before undressing a senior to reduce the time they are exposed to the cold air. When you help a client get undressed for his bath, speak conversationally and let him know you are going to take off his shirt before you reach for the buttons.

The client is one of many people relying on you for good communication. If the client's daughter tells you she's taking Mom out to lunch tomorrow and wants you to reschedule your shift, call the office.

**Tip:** Unexpected things happen. Tires go flat, cell phone batteries run out of power, road maintenance slows traffic. If anything unusual comes up or if you have any questions, call the office. That's what the office staff is here for. Just like in school, the only dumb question is the one not asked. We're here to help.

### **No one can read your mind - communicate in every way necessary.**