



Temporary Employee Handbook

Version 11

STATUS OF DOCUMENTS

The Best Connection Group Ltd (TBC) reserves the right to amend this Handbook.

The latest version is published on our website at www.thebestconnection.co.uk.

This Handbook is to be regarded as a Code of Practice, which means that failure to comply with the Code may be taken into account in Disciplinary or Grievance proceedings.

CONTENTS

HEALTH AND SAFETY	3
MANUAL HANDLING	4
ABSENCE FROM WORK	6
PAID ANNUAL LEAVE	7
THE INTERNET, EMAILS & MOBILE PHONES	8
COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES	9
DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES.....	11
AGENCY WORKER REGULATIONS 2010.....	14
FAMILY FRIENDLY ISSUES	15
PERSONAL DATA.....	17
FINES, PENALTIES & CHARGES	17

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Introduction

You will be working under the supervision, direction and control of our clients and must make sure that you are familiar with, and comply with, the rules and procedures at each client site, as explained to you during your induction at the client.

Below is general guidance regarding Health and Safety.

Health and Safety Inductions at our clients

You should receive a Health and Safety induction before starting work on every assignment. Inform your branch if you do not receive a Health and Safety induction before starting work on an assignment.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

You will be notified of the client's requirements when you are notified about the assignment. Make sure that you wear or use the required PPE as directed by the client.

General rules for Health and Safety

Equipment

You must not operate any item of equipment unless trained, and authorised to do so.

You must not remove any guarding from equipment used or deviate from the authorised usage of the equipment

You must report immediately any equipment defect, and never attempt repair.

Hazard/Warning Signs & Notices

You must comply with all hazard/warning signs and notices displayed at the premises.

Working Conditions/Environment

You must make proper use of all equipment and facilities provided to control working conditions/environment.

You must ensure you keep your work areas clear/tidy.

You must dispose of any waste/scrap in the appropriate receptacles.

You must never obstruct any fire escape routes, fire fighting equipment or fire doors.

Accidents

You must see the first-aider or first aid appointed person for any injury you may receive, irrespective of how minor, and ensure details are entered into the accident book.

You must report any incident in which damage is caused to property.

Health

You must report any medical condition that could affect the safety of yourself or others.

You must not become involved with horseplay, or practical jokes.

You must follow all rules pertaining to no smoking areas.

MANUAL HANDLING

Manual handling can never be entirely free of risk and the following guidance is provided to help reduce the risk of both long and short term injury. It is up to you to assess each situation or ask advice from an employee of the client company before carrying out manual handling tasks. **For more information:** www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg143.pdf



1. STOP AND THINK

Plan the lift. Where is the load to be placed? Use appropriate handling aids if possible. Do you need help with the load? Remove obstructions such as discarded wrapping material. For a long lift, such as floor to shoulder height, consider resting the load mid-way on a table or bench in order to change grip.



2. POSITION THE FEET

Adopt a stable position with feet apart and one leg slightly forward to maintain balance.



3. ADOPT A GOOD POSTURE

When lifting from a low level, bend the knees. But do not kneel or over flex the knees. A slight bend of back, hips and knees is preferable to stooping or squatting, lean forward a little over the load if necessary to get a good grip. Keep the shoulders level and facing in the same direction as the hips.



4. GET A FIRM GRIP

Try to keep the arms within the boundary formed by the legs. The best position and type of grip depends on the circumstances and individual preference but it must be secure. A hook grip is less tiring than trying to keep the fingers straight. If you need to vary the grip as the lift proceeds, do it as smoothly as possible.



5. KEEP CLOSE TO THE LOAD

Keep the load close to the trunk for as long as possible. Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the trunk. If a close approach to the load is not possible, slide it towards you before trying to lift.

6. DON'T JERK

Lift smoothly, keeping control of the load.

7. MOVE THE FEET

Don't twist the trunk when turning to the side.

8. KEEP YOUR HEAD UP

When handling, look ahead, not down at the load (once it has been held securely)



9. PUT DOWN, THEN ADJUST

If precise positioning of the load is necessary, put down first, then slide into the desired position.

10. BE AWARE

A worker may be at risk if he or she:

- Is physically unsuited to carry out the task
- Is wearing unsuitable clothing, footwear or other personal effects.
- Does not have adequate or appropriate training or knowledge.



11. MECHANICAL AIDS

Always consider using mechanical aids as they can improve productivity as well as safety. Even something as simple as a sack truck can make a big improvement.

12. FREQUENT LIFTING AND LOWERING

Ensure that the weights and operation are well within your capability so as to minimise the risk of injury due to repetitive lifting and lowering.

13. TRAINING

Training by the client and on the clients site should be provided so that safe manual handling and good handling techniques are used for the specific task.

ABSENCE FROM WORK

Requesting Time Off

If you need time off for any reason, you should request this as far in advance as possible. If, for whatever reason, you are unexpectedly unable to come into work or are delayed the following rules apply:

- You must make sure that TBC is notified at least one hour prior to the commencement of your assignment on that day, or as soon as possible, to explain your absence or delay.
- Repeated or prolonged absences of any kind may result in disciplinary action against you.

Reporting Absences

If you are absent from work due to sickness or injury the following rules apply:

- Whenever possible, you, or someone on your behalf, must notify TBC by telephone to give details of your absence at least one hour prior to the commencement of your shift. You must state the reason for absence and the date on which you expect to return.
- A self-certification certificate must be completed by you and returned to TBC on the day of your return to work to cover all periods of absence up to and including seven days (including Saturdays and Sundays).
- After seven days of continuous absence, a doctor's certificate (sick note or Statement of Absence form) must be sent as soon as possible to TBC. Further certificates will be required to cover the total period of absence. It is your responsibility to keep TBC informed about your progress and your likely date of return. Failure to supply the necessary certificates may result in non-payment of sick pay.

Statutory Sick Pay

Provided you notify us as above, your earnings are high enough and you qualify, you will be paid SSP in accordance with current legislation and at the current rate.

- You will be entitled to SSP if you are incapable of working for more than 4 consecutive days.
- A medical certificate must support any absence from work immediately preceding or subsequent to holiday or if you are absent for more than 7 consecutive days.
- SSP is based on your average earnings for the 8 week period prior to the period of sickness.
- When you are off sick, particularly for longer periods, you must remember to stay in touch with TBC and keep us informed about your progress.

Medical Reports

We reserve the right to have you examined by a doctor of our choosing. We may also request, with your permission, a medical report from your doctor.

PAID ANNUAL LEAVE

Entitlement

Under the Working Time Regulations, you are entitled to 28 days paid leave each year, if you work continuously during the year.

Your entitlement to paid leave accrues in proportion to the amount of time worked on assignment during the leave year.

Additional entitlement

After the 12 week qualifying period, you may be entitled to additional paid leave, depending on the client.

Leave Year

Our Leave Year starts on 1st March each year.

Calculation of your pay for Paid Annual Leave

Our software calculates your average hourly rate and the average number of hours worked over the previous 12 weeks worked on assignment.

Taking your Paid Leave

It is your responsibility to ensure that you take all the Paid Leave to which you are entitled during the Leave Year. You will lose your entitlement if you do not take the leave before 1st March each year.

Payment in lieu

Under the Working Time Regulations, we are not permitted to pay you instead of you taking your holiday entitlement.

Notification

When you wish to take any accrued leave to which you are entitled, you must notify TBC in writing of the dates of your intended absence.

The amount of notice which you are required to give is at least twice the length of the period of leave that you wish to take.

The minimum leave you can take is 0.5 days.

Planning for busy periods

As your employer, we can refuse your application to take paid leave on the dates you requested if the client wants you to continue working. We are obliged to offer alternative dates.

Termination of your contract

In the event of your leaving TBC you will be entitled to unclaimed accrued holiday pay.

If on termination you have taken more annual leave than you have accrued in that holiday year, you agree to repay an amount equivalent to the number of days by which you have exceeded your entitlement. TBC will deduct this sum from any monies owing to you. If this amount is in excess of such sums, you must pay this money back to TBC within 7 days of your leaving date.

TBC reserves the right to require that any outstanding holiday entitlement is taken during any period of notice whether given by you or TBC.

TBC THE INTERNET, EMAILS & MOBILE PHONES

The law in the UK regards virtually anything published on the Internet as in the public domain, even if it is addressed to "friends".

If you publish racist, rude or offensive remarks you may lose your job.

Even e-mails and text messages are not secure – they get forwarded to other people, and again you may lose your job if the email contains rude or offensive remarks about TBC, its employees, fellow temporary employees or temporary workers or people working at a client.

Use of Mobile Phones on client's sites

In general, the use of mobile phones during working hours is not permitted and may result in termination of your assignment. Check with your supervisor at the client before using your mobile phone.

Use of Mobile Phones in client's vehicles

Using a non hands free mobile phone while driving is illegal.

Check with your supervisor at the client before using hands free mobile phones.

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

Resolving your problems quickly

The Best Connection aims to resolve any grievance which is affecting your work promptly and fairly.

If you would like to raise a grievance then please contact us first rather than complaining to our client.

In the first instance, contact your consultant or the manager of the branch, If this does not resolve your problem then the Grievance Procedure outlined below should be used.

Raising a formal grievance – Grievance Procedure

1. If you wish to lodge a grievance, we will ask you to submit full details in writing to Dave Payne, Operations Support, The Best Connection Group Limited, Unit 1 Topaz, Topaz Way, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 OGD.
2. We will use your written statement as the basis for carrying out an investigation. The investigation may involve interviewing you and obtaining statements from your fellow workers, people at the client where you were working, and our branch personnel.
3. We may ask you to attend a formal meeting following the investigation and you may be accompanied at the meeting by a work colleague or trade union representative.
4. The findings of the meeting will be issued to you in writing.

We aim to complete the grievance procedures within 20 working days of receipt of the written details.

If your grievance has still not been resolved or you feel that you cannot talk to branch personnel then contact Dave Payne, Operations Support on 0121 504 3141.

Appeal

If you do not agree with the findings you must appeal, giving the full details of the reasons for your appeal, in writing to a Director at the above address, within 5 working days. The facts and any new information will be reviewed and the decision will be given to you in writing.

Complaints about your pay

We aim to pay everyone accurately and on time for work they have done, but sometimes there are mistakes. Contact your branch first and then the above if you do not get satisfaction from the branch.

We may delay payment while we carry out an investigation, which is normally because we have not received a timesheet authorised by the client.

Discrimination

The Best Connection Group Ltd is an Equal Opportunities employer. The company commits itself to promote and develop equal opportunities and will keep under review its policies, procedures and practises to ensure that they accord with the principles of equal opportunities and are consistently applied.

The Best Connection recognises that discrimination is unacceptable and it is in its own best interests, as well as the interests of its employees, to utilise the skills of the total workforce and work seekers.

The aim of the Equal Opportunities Policy is to ensure that no employee, temporary worker or work seeker receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, marriage or civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, disability, race, colour, ethnic background, nationality, religion or belief, age or trade union membership.

Contact your consultant or manager of the branch if you wish to complain about discrimination.

Contact Dave Payne. Operations Support on 0121 504 3141 if you feel unable to discuss your issues with the branch personnel.

Agency Worker Regulations (AWR)

Contact your branch if you want any information regarding the AWR, and in particular if you think you have not been treated fairly. Alternatively, visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications> and search Agency Worker Regulations 2010– Guidance.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The Best Connection's disciplinary policy and procedure aims to ensure that all employees are treated consistently and fairly. The disciplinary procedure provides for warnings to be given for failure to meet TBC's standards of job performance, conduct (whether during working hours or not) and attendance, or for breach of any of the terms and conditions of employment. The procedure is non-contractual but applies to all temporary employees.

All disciplinary warnings will remain on your file for up to 12 months after the last warning. If you do not meet the standards that have been explained to you within the next 12 months or there is any repetition of such or similar misconduct within the next 12 month period you may be disciplined further and this may lead to either a further written warning, a final written warning or dismissal, dependent upon the misconduct. You should understand that for this period your work will be closely monitored.

TBC reserves the right to depart from the precise requirements of its disciplinary procedure where it is expedient to do so and where the resulting treatment of the temporary employee is no less fair.

The following procedure will normally apply but, depending upon the seriousness of the offence, may be invoked at any level including summary dismissal.

Informal Discussion

In some cases the formal disciplinary procedure might not be necessary, minor incidents of misconduct can often be resolved informally with your manager.

If the matter cannot be resolved informally then the formal procedure below will be followed.

Investigation

If disciplinary allegations are made against you, before we decide whether or not to proceed with a disciplinary hearing we will complete an investigation to establish the facts. The level of investigation will depend on the allegations against you.

Suspension Pending Investigation

Where there is of an act of gross misconduct, or where your continued presence at work may hinder the investigation then you may be suspended from work on full pay pending the outcome of the investigation.

Disciplinary Hearing

Following the investigation if we believe there are sufficient grounds for disciplinary action then you will be asked to attend a disciplinary hearing.

- Before the disciplinary hearing you will be informed of the allegations against you and the reasoning for those allegations.
- At any disciplinary hearing, you have a right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative. If your companion cannot attend the meeting on the date set, TBC will postpone the meeting for up to 5 days.
- At the disciplinary hearing you will be able to respond to any allegations against you and provide any evidence of your own.
- There are three stages within the disciplinary procedure TBC reserves the right to initiate the procedure at any stage including dismissal.

(1) Written Warning

In the case of serious offences or a repetition of earlier minor offences the temporary employee may be given a written warning setting out the nature of the offence, the likely

consequences of further offences and specifying, if appropriate, the improvement required and over what period.

(2) Final Written Warning

In the case of a further repetition of earlier offences, if the temporary employee still fails to improve or if the offence, whilst falling short of gross misconduct, is serious enough to warrant only one written warning, the temporary employee may be given a final written warning setting out the nature of the offence, a statement that any recurrence will lead to dismissal and specifying, if appropriate, the improvement required and over what period.

(3) Dismissal

In the case of gross misconduct, or if all previous stages of the warning procedure have been exhausted, you may be dismissed.

The decision to dismiss will not normally be taken without reference to a Director.

Gross Misconduct

If TBC considers that your behaviour is so serious as to amount to gross misconduct then you may be dismissed summarily without notice. In that instance, you may not receive any payment in lieu of notice.

Gross misconduct may result in immediate dismissal without notice or pay in lieu of notice

The following types of behaviour are likely to constitute gross misconduct and will normally be dealt with by way of summary dismissal and you may not receive any payment in lieu of notice.

The list given below is not exhaustive:

- Physical violence, actual or threatened theft or attempted theft or other offence;
- Theft or attempted theft or other offence;
- Falsification of records, particulars of job applications, records of hours worked, records of driving hours, claiming tax and NIC relief on expenses to which you are not entitled;
- Malicious damage to property;
- Rude, offensive and threatening behaviour;
- Failure to notify us by the required deadline of any period in which you anticipate not being on assignment;
- Failure to comply with the requirements to notify the TBC of your availability for work during periods when you are not on assignment;
- Refusal to accept a suitable offer of work under an assignment;
- Serious breaches of Health and Safety and involvement in activities likely to endanger temporary employee safety;
- Consumption of alcohol or drugs or other illegal substances or being under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other illegal substances on Clients' premises;
- Failure to submit timesheets in respect of work done by you;

- Deliberate and serious breaches of confidence in relation to TBC or its Clients' affairs (subject to the Public Interest (Disclosure) Act 1998);
- Convictions for any serious criminal offence;
- Misuse or unauthorised use of computers, electrical equipment or telephones;
- Serious breaches of TBC policies and procedures;
- Sexual or racial discrimination or harassment or some other form of discrimination or harassment;
- Gross negligence;
- Insubordination, including insolence or failure to carry out instructions or disregard of duties or instruction;

Decision

Usually the disciplinary hearing will be adjourned whilst the decision is reviewed. The length of the adjournment will vary depending on the amount of information to be considered. When reconvened TBC will inform you of the decision and the reasoning. This decision will then be confirmed to you in writing.

Appeal

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the disciplinary procedure you may appeal in writing, giving the full details, and reasons for your appeal, to a Director at, Unit 1 Topaz, Topaz Way, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire. B61 0GD, within 5 working days of the date of the decision which forms the subject of the appeal. The facts and any new information will be reviewed and the decision will be given to you in writing. Where an appeal relates to a dismissal, for the avoidance of doubt, the dismissal will remain effective pending the outcome of the appeal.

AGENCY WORKER REGULATIONS 2010 (AWR)

The following notes are intended as a basic guide.

Contact your branch if you want any information regarding the AWR, and in particular if you think you have not been treated fairly. Alternatively, visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications> and search Agency Worker Regulations 2010– Guidance.

The Agency Worker Regulations 2010 are available at www.legislation.gov.uk .

As soon as you start work at a client you are entitled to the following facilities, if the client provides the facility to permanent staff.

- access to lockers
- access to car parking
- use of shared facilities such as canteens, drinks machines, rest rooms, and toilets
- access to child care facilities.
- access to transport services.
- access to information about job vacancies at the client.

After a 12 week qualifying period you will be entitled to either:

(a) Equal pay with no pay between assignments

Or

(b) Pay between assignments and no equality of pay.

Equal pay means that you are entitled to the same pay, as you would have been, had you been hired directly by the hirer to do the same job, with the same qualifications and experience.

To complete the 12 week qualifying period you must have worked in 12 weeks at the client, with no more than 6 week gaps between periods of work. If you have a gap of more than 6 weeks at the client after the 12 week qualifying period, you will have to re-qualify.

FAMILY FRIENDLY ISSUES

Maternity

As a temporary employee you are entitled to receive maternity benefits in accordance with your statutory entitlements.

All pregnant temporary employees are entitled to:

- a) 26 weeks' ordinary maternity leave (OML)
- b) 26 weeks' additional maternity leave (AML)
 - which will begin automatically the day after your ordinary maternity leave ends and
 - will be 13 weeks paid and 13 weeks unpaid leave.

If you are eligible you may also be entitled to Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP).

To be eligible for SMP, pregnant temporary employees must meet the following conditions:

- You must have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks by the qualifying week. The qualifying week is the 15th week before the baby is due.
- Your average weekly earnings over the eight weeks ending with the qualifying week must not be less than the lower earnings limit.
- You must notify your TBC branch, in writing in the qualifying week, when you intend to stop work due to pregnancy.
- You must give to your TBC branch medical evidence of the date your baby is due. This can be obtained from your doctor on form Mat B1.
- Finally, you must actually stop work – you cannot receive SMP and wages at the same time.

You are also entitled to reasonable paid time off to go to ante-natal care if you are working on a TBC assignment at the time. There are certain qualifications for this: you must be pregnant; an appointment must have been made by a qualified doctor, midwife or health visitor; it must be at a properly recognised ante-natal clinic or equivalent and you must try to arrange the appointment to be outside your normal working hours. You may be required to provide confirmation of your appointment.

Paternity leave

Paternity leave is available to the father of a newly born child provided he has responsibility for the child's upbringing. Eligible temporary employees will be able to take either one week or two consecutive weeks' paternity leave (not odd days) in the eight weeks following the birth of the child; this leave will be paid at a flat rate set by the government.

To be eligible temporary employees must meet the following conditions:

- You must have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks by the qualifying week. The qualifying week is the 15th week before the baby is due.
- Your average weekly earnings over the eight weeks ending with the qualifying week must not be less than the lower earnings limit
- You must notify your TBC branch, in writing in the qualifying week, when the baby is due, when you wish to take your Paternity Leave and how much leave you want to take.
- You must give to your TBC branch a self-certificate which has been designed for the purpose.

You are also entitled to take unpaid time off work to attend up to two antenatal appointments.

Time off for emergencies involving dependants

All temporary employees are entitled to take reasonable time off during working hours to deal with an unexpected or sudden problem involving their dependants. This is a statutory right and any such time off will be unpaid.

Parental leave

TBC temporary employees with at least one year's continuous service are entitled to take Parental Leave for the purpose of caring for a child, in respect of all children who are under 18 years old. A total of 18 weeks' Parental Leave may be taken for each child, but not more than four weeks in any one year.

All Parental Leave under this scheme is unpaid and at least 21 days' notice of intention to take leave must be given.

Shared Parental Leave and Pay

Employees on maternity leave can chose to end their maternity leave and pay early, and use the remaining entitlement as shared parental leave and pay, which either parent can receive.

Shared parental pay is payable at a set rate.

Adoptive leave

Adoptive leave is available to temporary employees who have been notified by an approved adoption agency of a match with a child or children. It can begin from the actual date of the child's placement or from a fixed date up to 14 days before the expected date of placement.

All employees are entitled to a minimum of 52 weeks adoption leave 26 weeks' ordinary adoption leave (OAL) and 26 weeks' additional adoption leave (AAL) and, if eligible, Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP).

Flexible working

TBC, by the nature of its operation, offers various forms of flexible working but also has to take into consideration the needs of its clients.

All temporary employees with 26 weeks continuous service can apply, in writing, to vary their manner of working, in terms of total hours per week or at what times those hours are worked and TBC will reasonably consider such requests, in conjunction with its client where appropriate, and respond within four weeks. This is not a contractual right.

PERSONAL DATA

TBC is licensed to process personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998.

We ask for your consent on the Application Form to release personal information to our clients in order to obtain or secure work for you.

We require written application from any other third parties before releasing personal data, including the police.

Our computer systems are password protected.

You can obtain a copy of your personal data by request and on payment of £10.

FINES, PENALTIES & CHARGES

You will be liable for payment of any fines or penalties incurred whilst working on assignment.

This is particularly relevant to drivers and includes road traffic offences, parking and congestion charges.