

Anti-Fraud & Bribery Policy

Department:	Hopstead
Policy Owner:	Chief Executive Hopstead
Approved:	May 2022
Date for renewal:	May 2025
Version:	Version 1

This policy makes reference to “Flagship Group” as Flagship Housing Group is the sole corporate member of Hopstead and, in addition, the Trustees may, from time to time, and so long as it is in the best interest of Hopstead, share resource with Flagship Group by delegating some of its functions to a team within Flagship Group. The Trustees have decided that it is in the best interest of Hopstead to delegate some functions in relation to this Policy to the Flagship Group Director (Legal & Governance), Flagship Group Governance Team and the Flagship Group Governance Audit and Risk Committee.

Purpose

To ensure that Hopstead adopts a ‘zero tolerance’ approach to both fraud and bribery, and to raise awareness of fraud and the actions to be taken. Hopstead is committed to acting professionally, fairly and with integrity in all its business dealings and relationships and implementing and enforcing effective systems to counter fraud and bribery.

This policy applies to all persons working for Hopstead or on its behalf in any capacity, including employees at all levels (including apprentices), Volunteers, Trustees, agency workers, agents, contractors, third-party representatives and business partners, sponsors, or any other person associated with Hopstead, wherever located.

Training on this policy forms part of the induction process for all individuals who work for Hopstead and all Trustees and regular refresher training will be provided as necessary.

1. Definition and examples

Fraud is defined as making a personal gain or causing a loss to another by dishonestly making false representation, dishonestly failing to disclose information or abuse of position.

Bribery is defined as offering, promising, giving or accepting any financial or other advantage as an inducement to act improperly in the performance of their functions, or to reward them for acting improperly, or where the recipient would act improperly by accepting the advantage or to create or influence an outcome which is favourable to another party.

Examples of fraud include but are not limited to:

- Theft of any organisation property, monies or other assets
- Internal or external collusion for personal gain
- Misuse of data or IT systems
- Forgery, alteration or falsification of any document
- Destruction or removal of records
- Falsifying expense claims
- Disclosing confidential information to outside parties without authority for personal gain
- Tenancy and benefit fraud
- Money Laundering
- Offering or accepting a bribe
- Charitable contributions and sponsorships being used for bribery

This policy should be read and understood in conjunction with:

- Disciplinary Procedure
- Fraud & Bribery Response Plan
- Whistleblowing (Confidential Reporting) Policy
- Code of Business Conduct (in particular, but not limited to, in relation to Gifts & Hospitality)
- Anti-Money Laundering Policy

All policies, plans and procedures referred to in this document are available on bob or are available on request. The following legislation is used to inform this policy:

- The Fraud Act (2006)
- The Bribery Act (2010)
- The Social Housing Fraud Act (2013)
- Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (Amendment) Regulations (2019)

2. Reporting and investigation

Employees, Volunteers, Trustees, agents, consultants and contractors of Hopstead must promptly report all incidents of suspected or attempted fraud and / or bribery of which they become aware. A failure to make such a report may be viewed as an act of fraud or bribery, as defined above. Details of how to report fraud are provided in Section 4 of this policy.

Service users, suppliers, other such Stakeholders and all other associated persons of Hopestead are encouraged to promptly report incidents of concern.

Appropriate action shall be taken by Hopestead in response to each reported incident.

All matters of concern raised shall be treated in the strictest confidence using the process outlined in the Fraud & Bribery Response Plan.

3. Principles

- Instil a culture of ethical behaviour throughout Hopestead.
- Importance of deterring and preventing fraud is raised through awareness training.
- Hopestead's Anti-Fraud & Bribery Policy is communicated to suppliers during formal tender procedures. For other procurement, suppliers are directed to this policy which is published on the Hopestead website.
- The Hopestead Chief Executive has primary and day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy. The responsibility for the monitoring of its use and effectiveness and auditing internal control systems and procedures is delegated by Hopestead, for the time being, to Flagship Group Director (Legal and Governance).
- Fraud risk assessments are overseen by a competent senior manager or Internal Audit, as requested by the Hopestead Chief Executive or the Flagship Group Director (Legal and Governance) to identify areas potentially at most risk and ensure the Fraud Register is maintained.
- The Flagship Group Governance, Audit & Risk Committee shall consider and recommend to the Hopestead Board what action is to be taken where fraudulent activity is confirmed – Hopestead will pursue the recovery of losses where possible.
- Any losses due to fraud will be reported annually to Hopestead's Regulator, or Flagship Group's Regulator, if required.
- Maintain a register of Gifts & Hospitality to ensure that only modest and transparent corporate hospitality is offered or accepted.
- Maintain a Disclosure of Interests Register to monitor any employee and Trustee conflicts.

4. What to do upon suspicion of fraud

Employees must report all incidents of identified or suspected fraud or bribery as soon as possible via the online fraud reporting form (which can be found on the website or bob) or directly to their Line Manager. If this is inappropriate, the report may be made to the Hopestead Chief Executive (marie-claire.delbrouque@hopestead.org), the Flagship Group Director (Legal and Governance) (edward.marcus@flagship-group.co.uk) or Lisa Collen, Flagship Group Director People and Workplaces (lisa.collen@flagship-group.co.uk).

Flagship Group's Internal Auditors - KPMG (Neil Hewitson, Gavin Egmore or Melita Fearnley – neil.hewitson@KPMG.co.uk or gavin.egmore@KPMG.co.uk or melita.fearnley@KPMG.co.uk), the Chair of the Hopestead Board (Philip.Burton@flagship-group.co.uk) or the Chair of the Flagship Group Governance, Audit & Risk Committee, Rob Bennett (rob.bennett@flagship-group.co.uk) may be contacted if this is proportionate to the identified fraud or bribery incident.

Trustees must report all incidents of identified or suspected fraud or bribery as soon as possible to the Hopestead Chief Executive or the Flagship Group Director (Legal and Governance) or if this is inappropriate, to the Chair of the Flagship Governance, Audit & Risk Committee (Rob.Bennett@flagship-group.co.uk) or to the Chair of the Hopestead Board (Philip.Burton@flagship-group.co.uk). Volunteers, agents, consultants, contractors and all other associated persons of Hopestead must follow the guidelines for employees, with the Hopestead manager commissioning the volunteers, agents, consultants, contractors or other associated persons work being regarded as the Line Manager.

Reporting can be verbal or in writing via email or the online fraud reporting form dependent upon the circumstances. All reporting made in good faith will be treated with confidentiality. However, malicious allegations by employees will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

5. Action

Hopestead Fraud & Bribery Response Plan will be activated upon report of Fraud or Bribery. Hopestead, for the time being, has delegated the responsibility for the investigation of any reports of Fraud or Bribery to Flagship Group Director (Legal and Governance). The following principles will be followed:

- The Flagship Group Director (Legal and Governance) will consult, as appropriate, with the Hopestead Chief Executive, the Flagship Group Chief Executive, Flagship Group Directors and professional advisors, as appropriate, and will decide how to investigate each reported incident.
- If an investigation is instigated it will be conducted promptly and objectively by a suitably qualified and resourced senior manager, Internal Audit or an external body (such as the Police) appointed by either the Hopestead Chief Executive or the Flagship Group Director (Legal and Governance) as necessary and proportionate to the level of the suspected fraud.
- The individual raising the concern will be informed of the outcome of the investigation where this is possible and appropriate.
- Individuals reporting suspected fraud are guaranteed support and protection from reprisals or victimisation.
- No action will be taken against a person making allegations of suspected fraud, in good faith, that subsequently transpire to be unfounded.

- Deliberate abuse, or vexatious or frivolous use or breach of the Anti-Fraud and Bribery policy by a member of staff, Trustees agents, consultants and contractors of Hopestead will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

6. Further detail

The Fraud & Bribery Response Plan gives detail of the confidential reporting process, responsibilities for taking action, the investigation process (including initial enquiries), actions to be taken following the investigation and lessons to be learned from incidents and reporting.

All employees of Hopestead, volunteers and Trustees, have a responsibility to read, understand and comply with this policy and have a responsibility to communicate Hopestead’s zero-tolerance approach to fraud and bribery, together with this policy, to all suppliers, contractors and business partners at the outset of Hopestead’s business relationship with them and as appropriate thereafter.

7. Review

This policy is updated as required and formally reviewed every three years by the Hopestead Chief Executive and/ or the Flagship Group Director (Legal and Governance). In addition, is it reviewed by the Flagship Group Governance, Audit and Risk Committee annually.

8. Measures

All incidents of suspected, attempted or actual fraud shall be entered into the Fraud Register. Hopestead has delegated, for the time being, the maintenance of this register to the Flagship Group Governance Team and the annual review to the Flagship Governance, Audit & Risk Committee prior to any submission to any Regulator.

Version Control

Note: minor updates increase version number by 0.1; major updates increase version number by 1.0.

Version	Detail	Approved by	Date
1.0	First issue	Hopestead Board	May 2022