



Forces Online CIO

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Registered Charity: 1188955 (England & Wales) SC050678 (Scotland)



Definition: “Forces Online” means both Forces Online CIO Registered Charity (England & Wales) Reg No. 1188955 & Forces Online Scotland (Scotland) SC050678 Unless the Policy indicates it refers to Forces Online CIO or Forces Online Scotland.

Definition: “veteran” Veterans are defined as anyone who has served for at least one day in Her Majesty’s Armed Forces (Regular or Reserve) or Merchant Mariners who have seen duty on legally defined military operations. Our use of the word veteran includes anyone still serving in the armed forces.

Definition: “Beneficiary” means a veteran or someone still serving in HM Armed Forces, or a close family member.

Definition: “Family Member” means someone that is in the immediate family circle. i.e., mums and dads, spouses, and children.

Definition: “Agency Worker” means a worker from a registered armed forces community, or other organisation that as part of their work come into contact/offers support for an armed forces veteran and/or their close family members.

Definition: “Close Military Colleagues” means someone that has served or is still serving with the beneficiary.

Definition: “Staff” means any official representation by a paid or volunteer worker at Forces Online.

Definition: “Agency Worker” mean any other Agency Worker that is working on a case in conjunction with Forces Online or the beneficiary has been referred to them via Forces Online.

BENEFICIARIES BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Introduction

We at Forces Online work with a huge variety of support issues, signposting, and information cases, each individual case is evaluated and actioned on its own merit. Cases that get referred (in/out) are categorized into two areas.

- (1) Self-referral where Forces Online give the beneficiary information of how to self-refer to other agencies which can be a charity, CIC, Government, Local Authority, NHS, Private Organisations, Hubs, Breakfast Clubs, National and Local Support Groups, etc. (military and non-military).
- (2) Forces Online referral where we support beneficiaries to transition to one or more services as deemed required.

Sharing Information (GDPR)

Forces Online GDPR Policy allows for agreements for information sharing and the levels to sufficiently support the beneficiary with consent. We are bound by a code of ethics and policy, procedure to protect and preserve the beneficiary’s wellbeing. This will be covered in your initial contact, and/or your assessment meeting.

Sometimes however, there are some grey areas relating to information particularly where we received referrals from external sources, on some accounts from the beneficiary themselves, external, internal sources may conduct further fact finding. Where the beneficiaries intentionally or unintentionally give information which is later found to be untrue will significantly lead to delays in processing levels of support or exclusion.

Advice and Verification

We have found that on occasions we might need to be completely clear and factual about the advice we offer. We or our agency colleagues may come across shortfalls in information which we may then need to check, and this can often lead to conflict (i.e. "it's not what the veteran or their family wants to hear", or they disagree with what's being said or offered).

Process of Information

Often the gathering of information is subject to that being given by the veteran or their representative, as this can be a long process particularly when it is often being given in very stressful circumstances. When we are working with other agencies, we have experienced that there has been some conflicting information which has not matched (previously supplied), particularly when further checks have been conducted.

Meetings

Meetings to gather information can be conducted over the telephone, in the VirtualHub, messenger, email or in person.

Behaviour

Whilst Forces Online and partner agencies realise, particularly when any form of support is asked for their may be very high levels of anxiety. The beneficiaries have a responsibility to behave in a civil manner, where any abuse either verbally or physically threatening is unacceptable to our staff, in whatever capacity they are supporting the beneficiary, or their representative. The team have been instructed to report all levels of abuse and to withdraw from any situation regarding this. Furthermore, Forces Online will correspond with any other partner agencies relating to any incidents of threatened or intended abuse at them, to ensure that their own staff are not exposed further abuse. This ensures all issues are fully transparent and recorded. This allows the Forces Online team and other agency teams to reference them.

Follow-Up

Where any Forces Online staff are forced to terminate a meeting either online or face-to-face. This will be taken up by a senior team member who will contact the beneficiary or their representative to fact find and to try and resolve the situation to ensure that the business of the support required can be recommenced. Further abuse may lead to the charity withdrawing any support. If or where beneficiaries experience any abuse from any Forces Online staff member, or partner organisations we are collaborating with they should contact HR or a Senior management official or call 0300 300 2288. Where this cannot be resolved you have the right to talk to the Charity Commission.

The Forces Online complaints procedure in [HERE](#) and a copy of our Bullying Policy is [HERE](#)

Change Record

Date of Change:	Changed By:	Comments:
19.12.22	LC/KS	Policy adopted by the Trustees 19.12.22