

Recording of Meetings Policy

Ben's Centre for Vulnerable People (Sheffield)
Charity Number: 1087606.

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Introduction

For a number of reasons, you may wish to make a recording of a work meeting, such as a disciplinary or grievance hearing or a meeting with your line manager. This will probably be in circumstances where you feel that you have been treated unfairly and you want to either prevent such treatment or to obtain evidence of it.

You may also think a recording will provide evidence of unfairness, for example to demonstrate that a grievance meeting was not a genuine attempt to deal with issues that you had raised.

You may also wish to have a full transcript of the meeting, for use at the next stage of an internal process, or in future litigation.

However, you do not have the legal right to record an internal meeting. Therefore, if you ask to record a meeting, we must decide whether or not to permit your request.

There is no general reluctance to allow recordings, but it is our policy to ask for your reasons for wishing to record the meeting so that we can make a considered decision.

You may have a disability that would make it difficult for you to take a written note of the meeting and, in such a circumstance, we need to consider if allowing you to record the meeting would be a reasonable adjustment.

Employee

If, as an employee, you are considering recording a meeting without our knowledge and without our agreement, we remind you to read our Disciplinary and Grievance procedures where it states that this is in breach of both policies and that it will likely be grounds for disciplinary action being taken.

Volunteer

If, as a volunteer, you make a recording of a meeting with another employee, without our knowledge and without our agreement, and following a thorough investigation, you may be permanently removed from any role that you undertake or occupy.

Refusing a request from an employee to record a meeting

We are entitled to refuse a request from you to record a meeting. We may decide to do this because:

- We are concerned that it will be difficult to run an effective meeting if participants know that it is being recorded.
- It is possible that participants will feel uncomfortable and be reluctant to contribute fully to the meeting if they know that their comments may be used against them later.
- Knowledge that a meeting is being recorded could also lead to a more formal and adversarial approach than would be appropriate.

Permitting a request from an employee to record a meeting

We do not operate an organisation-wide stance that requests to record meetings will be permitted. Therefore, do not anticipate or expect that you will be allowed.

However, on a case-by-case basis, we may decide to permit recordings, provided that the person chairing the meeting and other participants agree to the request.

To assess any such request, we require a written request from you at least four days in advance of the meeting.

If we permit you to record a meeting, we will need to ensure that you understand and agree to the method in which you make, store, and use the recording, and you must agree to provide us with an un-edited copy immediately as the meeting ends.

You will also need to confirm in writing that you will not broadcast the recording, post on the internet, or use it for any purpose other than keeping a record of the meeting for your own personal use.

Recordings made by the employer

If we receive a request from you to record a meeting, and upon our agreement to do so after considering the reasons, we will likely offer to record the meeting ourselves and we will provide a copy of the recording to you.

This will be in a format that is workable for you and a format in which you are fully able to control its use and its storage. This may be a video, a voice recording or a written transcript.

This approach may not be practicable for all meetings because of the additional administration involved, but for matters that are likely to be particularly contentious or difficult, it is something that we will consider.

This will not stop us taking notes during any meeting, in case of technical difficulties.

Reasonable adjustments

If you have a medical condition that makes it difficult for you to take a written record of the meeting or to recall the detail of what was said it is likely, but not guaranteed, that we will permit you to make a recording of the meeting.

This may be a matter of procedural fairness and may also be required as a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010.

We commit to not place a disabled employee or volunteer at a substantial disadvantage when compared to a non-disabled employee or volunteer.

It may be that other steps can be put in place to help you, such as offering the support of a note-taker or allowing you additional time for notetaking during the meeting.

Covert recordings

You may decide to make a covert recording of a meeting instead of seeking permission to do, or after such a request has been turned down.

Circumstances in which you may decide to make covert recordings of meetings are varied and where such a recording produces evidence of serious wrongdoing, we may consider its contents and address the issue that it uncovers, even where the evidence was obtained in breach of our policies and without our permission.

Such a disclosure does not exclude you from potential disciplinary action being taken against you.

We will assess the need for this after establishing the facts of the case and deciding whether or not it is appropriate. We will consider your reason for making the recording, whether or not you were told that recording was not permitted and any mitigating circumstances.

Summary

The potential for covert recordings is a reminder to managers and coaches that they should follow good practice at all times, in every meeting they attend.

Review

This policy may be reviewed at any time at the request of any member of staff, but it will be automatically reviewed 2-years after initial approval and thereafter on a triennial basis unless organisational changes, legislations, guidance, or non-compliance prompt an earlier review.

Definitions

Ben's Centre ("we", "us", "our")

The Employee ("you")