



Modern Slavery Act Statement

2021-22

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Introduction

Advance provides housing, support and other community related services, specialising in supporting people with learning difficulties and mental health conditions.

Our vision is to transform the lives of people with a disability or mental health condition by providing the best quality housing and support services. We want to enable our customers to live the lives they choose, achieve their personal goals, feel valued and know their voices are heard.

Advance operates solely in England.

Our Values

Advance has five PRIDE values which are embedded throughout the organisation. They form the basis of the way we work together to support our customers.

Partnership: to work in partnership with our customers and build relationships with others that help us serve our customers better.

Respect: to treat our customers, colleagues and others as we would like to be treated.

Innovation: to try new things - especially when we can make things better for our customers.

Drive: to do the right thing at the right time and everything we do is driven by our customers' needs.

Efficiency: to make best use of our resources, maximising efficiency, to deliver the best services for our customers.

Commitment and Accountability

Advance is committed to understanding the risks of modern slavery and human trafficking and is doing all it can to ensure these are recognised and mitigated in Advance and in partner organisations.

Any new commitments to anti-slavery initiatives that come forward in this financial year from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 will be presented to Board for approval. Regarding the organisation structure, specific accountability for monitoring and implementation is given to the Executive Director of Resources and the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development.

Policies

Advance has a number of key policies and practices which support our belief in the importance of treating everyone with dignity and respect and are directly relevant to our approach to combating modern slavery. These are:

- Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Recruitment Selection Policy
- Diversity and Equality policy
- Procurement Policy
- Safeguarding Policies
- Incident and Accident Reporting Policy
- Risk Assurance Framework

These practices and policies are regularly reviewed and the avoidance of modern slavery is an integral part of the review process. Some examples of our approach include:

- Advance's Recruitment and Selection Policy and associated Safer Recruitment, Selection and Employment Standards checks means thinking about the safeguarding of adults at risk and promoting their welfare at every stage of the recruitment process. In addition, the policy ensures we have a thorough process of recruiting individuals. This includes carrying out right to work checks for every employee in order to safeguard them against modern slavery or human trafficking. Advance will only use reputable recruitment agencies or training providers and will always verify the policies of any new suppliers
- Advance's Safeguarding and Incident Reporting policies and procedures are central to our operations. These are primarily about Adult Safeguarding and are key routes to identify possible risks and act on them appropriately. Assurance in relation to the effective operation of these policies is overseen by the Safeguarding Panel, chaired by an independent expert, which reports quarterly to the Audit & Risk Committee and then to Board.
- As part of the Housing Service, Advance provides enhanced housing management. This includes the employment of Housing Outreach Workers, enabling more engagement with vulnerable customers and more time on site at schemes. This helps to mitigate against a number of risks our customers may face, including the potential risks of modern slavery.

Due Diligence and Supply Chains

We regularly review our supply chain to identify any areas of potential risk. We assess our procurement and contract management practices to ensure they identify, monitor and mitigate any modern slavery risks in the Supply Chain.

Within the procurement and contract management of Property Services, Advance expects its suppliers to ensure their goods, material and labour related supply chains fully comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015. For example, we procure suppliers through procurement consortia such as EEM, who ensure this is factored into all framework agreements. The framework agreement section on the Modern Slavery Act 2015 covers the Contractors' own activities; procedures; sub-contractors; record keeping; and requirement to provide evidence of compliance upon request. Advance also provides Safeguarding training to Contractors free of charge and monitors this to ensure all main contractors send representatives who can then cascade to their colleagues.

Training and Awareness

It is mandatory for all Advance staff to be trained on the principles of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 including how to recognise and report slavery, both internally and externally, in their field of work.

Performance

We regularly review our performance to ensure we can effectively monitor our progress and performance in delivering our commitment to combating modern slavery. These include:

- Ensuring all staff are trained on the Modern Slavery legislation
- Undertaking regular reviews of our Procurement Policy
- Exercising due diligence in relation to our suppliers.



Julie Layton,
Chief Executive