

WELCOME TO THE A24GROUP

A24Group is widely recognised as one of the leading **temporary** staffing businesses for healthcare professionals in the UK and South Africa.

In South Africa we operate as:

Ambition24hours – providing Registered Nurses, Care Assistants, Allied Health Professionals and Doctors.

The Nursing Services of South Africa – providing Registered Nurses, Care Assistants.

Our agencies predominately operate in the temporary market and provide services to a range of clients including private hospitals, government hospitals, clinics, prisons, nursing and residential homes and home nursing.

Once you have registered with us once you are able to work for both agencies, but you should check pay rates for each assignment as both agencies operate independently and pay rates vary from client to client. Our agencies are committed to obtaining the best pay rates for our Agency Workers.

The A24Group is a collection of staffing agencies, namely Ambition24hours and Nursing Services of South Africa, providing temporary and long-term assignments to locum doctors, allied health staff, nursing & carers.

We pleased that you have chosen to work for the A24Group. We aim to make your experience of working for the A24Group as positive as we can.

We have designed this handbook to give you an idea of what to expect when on assignment with us and to give you the information you need to carry out your role with confidence. Our policies set out the standards which you are expected to comply with at all times.

If you require clarification of anything contained in our policies please do not hesitate to let us know.

Whilst this handbook outlines the A24Group's policies and standards, these do not supersede the national guidelines of the South African regulatory bodies (SANC; HPCSA etc).

Each agency operates independently, with its own client database, consultants and unique contracts: You can contact us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to check for work or to simply update your availability.

- Ambition24hours (Nurses/Care Assistants): www.a24.co.za – 087 357 0644
- Nursing Services of South Africa (Nurses/Carers): www.nursingservices.co.za – 087 357 0642
- Ambition24hours (Locums): www.ambition24hours.co.za – 087 357 0645
- Your compliance will be managed by a centralised team of recruitment specialist, who can be contacted on 08713570643 or email: compliance@a24group.com

You can also manage your own compliance via our online profile service: www.staffshift.com

As a member of the A24Group, we sincerely hope you enjoy your time with us, whether for a short or the rest of your career!

WHAT THE A24GROUP CAN DO FOR YOU?

Provide the work you want, when and where you want it.

Most Agency Workers, who join an agency, say that they do so because they want flexibility in their work. They want to work but they also want to choose where and when they do so, for a variety of reasons:

- To broaden work experience;
- To plan their work around other commitments;
- To earn additional money.

We aim to:

- Get to know our Agency Workers and understand how they like to work. We can offer very flexible shift pattern as well as contract work.
- Support our Agency Workers in their work – we call you after your shift with the client, for feedback and any assistance if required.
- Give people the opportunity to work in different environments – hospitals, nursing/old age homes, community clinics.

We do our utmost to provide a personal and rewarding service for our Agency Workers. Our Agency Workers after successful registration would gain access to the widest variety of temporary work in SA.

We not only have an extensive range of temporary work, but also have permanent vacancies with top healthcare organisations.

Help you maintain your compliance

The process of achieving and maintaining your compliance with contractual requirements and government legislation is managed by A24Group's dedicated compliance team.

To ensure the all-new applications are processed efficiently and accurately to achieve full compliance and then ensuring that you never find that you are unable to work due to missing or expired documents.

Once your recruitment profile, including qualification, references, health and training has been established, you will be eligible to undertake work with the A24Group.

You can contact your dedicated compliance team on 0861 144 244 or email compliance@a24group.com

Induction, orientation & training

The Employment Businesses policy is to provide the highest quality of service to all of its Clients. To provide this quality of service, A24Group recognises that all Agency Workers must undergo training and development that equips them to perform their work competently and must provide evidence of that training for A24Group records.

It is A24Group's policy that management is responsible for ensuring that Agency Workers are provided with access to appropriate education, training and development and A24Group expects Agency Workers to reciprocate this commitment by inputting on a regular basis to their own development activity in the interests of Patient Safety, all A24Group Agency Workers have access to SETA accredited training courses and advice regarding additional Continuing Professional Development. The A24Group is registered with Services SETA.

Induction & Orientation ensures the quality of its Agency Workers through safe recruitment practices. Following the standard recruitment process and before an Agency Worker is offered a work placement, he or she must be taken through a formal work place induction process in line with the clients requirements.

The agency group offers a combination of practical & distance learning training modules. Based on client specific requirements agency staff would need to complete Life Support training (CPR) every 3 years, this must be classroom based/practical sessions. We offer this training (accredited via the Resuscitation Council SA & American Heart Association) in-house via our qualified clinical facilitator. All distance learning (online) training is internationally accredited and available to all staff as required (Here) or via the South African Knowledge Hub (Here).

Operate an effective process for booking your work

The A24Group has developed a sophisticated computer system, which enables your bookings team to identify work, which is suitable for you and matches your areas of experience.

The most important thing is for you to communicate with your bookings team. Keep your availability updated on your Staffshift profile (www.staffshift.com).

To effectively manage your profile it is important that you hold a valid email address and keep all your personal details updated (cell phone number, land line;; home address) so that we could contact you at short notice and send you details of available shifts.

Self-booking is certainly permissible and is very much welcomed by some clients. However, you should ensure you inform your bookings team before working the next shift, giving the reference details of the applicable shift, in order for your timesheet to be processed correctly.

This is important because we are required to maintain our records and knowing when and where you are working, this assists us to ensure we give you the best possible service. Failure to provide information of any self-bookings and applicable reference numbers may delay payment to you.

Shift/Assignment briefings

We will give you as much notice as possible when offering and confirming shifts, we will also provide you with a full briefing, which will include:

- The dates and time of shifts, booking reference if applicable;
- The length (duration) of shift and confirmation of pay rate;
- Details of location, client address and contact details;
- Any other information, e.g. talk and duties expected by the client or and additional request.

Payment Process – accurately & on time

Once you have submitted a fully completed and authorised timesheet, payment will be made directly into your bank account. If you have changed your bank details, ensure you supply us with the updated information.

This timesheet must be faxed to 0860 010 203 or emailed to queries.sa@a24group.com before 12h30pm on Tuesdays. Any timesheets received after 12h30pm on Tuesdays will only be paid the following week.

IMPORTANT GENERAL INFORMATION WHILST ON ASSIGNMENT

General obligations

As an Agency Worker to be deployed in the provision of the services below is an overview of the information you need to be aware of, at all times whilst on the clients' premises:

- You are at the instruction and control of the client at all times;
- Must work as directed by the client and follow all reasonable requests, instructions, policies, procedures and rule of the client (including cell phone usage, discrimination and equal opportunities policies);
- Shall not neglect, nor without due and sufficient cause omit, to discharge task promptly and diligently as required within the terms of engagement;
- Shall not act in a manner likely to bring discredit upon the client;
- Shall abide by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act;
- Shall abide by the directive on remunerative work outside the public service;
- Shall not falsify records, timesheets or attempt to defraud the client in any way;
- Shall not corruptly solicit or receive any bribe or other consideration from any person, or fail to account for monies or property received in connection with duties performed under the provision of the service on an engagement;
- Shall observe the highest standards of hygiene, customer care, courtesy and consideration when working in a health service environment;
- Shall keep confidential information howsoever acquired, whether relating to the client, its business or relating to patients, including but not limited to patient identity, clinical conditions and treatment;
- Shall be able to communicate effectively with the clients' staff, other healthcare workers, patients and the general public;
- Be helpful, pleasant and courteous;
- Have good telephone skills;
- Shall have legible handwriting;
- Shall be confident and able to deal with clients staff at all levels;
- Shall be able to work with minimum supervision, where appropriate;
- Shall be punctual and on time;
- shall maintain proper standards of appearance and properly presented in dressed uniform or otherwise agreed between parties;
- Shall display your photo ID badge on your clothing at all times during your shift and on the clients' premises;
- Shall not wear the uniform, photo ID badge or use the equipment on the clients' premises unless fulfilling the terms of the agreed engagement;
- Shall not engage in any form of physical or verbal abuse, threatening behaviour, harassment/bullying or be otherwise uncivil to persons encountered in the course of work;
- Shall not at any time be, or appear to be in the possession of firearms or other offensive weapons;
- Shall report any injury or accident sustained and/or witnessed whilst on the clients' premises;
- Shall, on being charged or cautioned with any criminal offence, notify the A24Group immediately;
- Shall not misuse or abuse the clients' property;
- Shall not smoke while on the clients' premises except in those areas where smoking is permitted;
- Shall adhere to all other relevant obligations that the client shall reasonably require from time to time including, but not limited to, the obligations identified below:
 - you must obtain from the client, upon arrival at the clients' premises, relevant information regarding the clients' fire, emergency, health and safety procedures, on-site security or request the information relating to the establishments' induction and orientation;
 - shall adhere to the clients' policies and procedures including but not limited to the establishments' code of conduct, health and safety or infection control procedures;
 - shall before commencing any assignment inform the client, via the agency, about any complaint made against them that is relevant to their professional competence, registration or conduct.
- In the event that the Agency Worker becomes the subject of a complaint, the Agency Worker must inform the client via the agency immediately and provide regular reports about the complaint progress.

Fitness to practise

The client may require you to declare fitness to practice prior to being deployed in the provision of services. Should you not be able to give this declaration truthfully, then the A24Group might need to supply the client with an alternative Agency Worker.

Contractually we require evidence of your immunity against the following:

Hepatitis B	Recent pathology report showing (immunity) titre levels of > 100lu/l. If the result is < 100lu/l, then a Hepatitis B Booster is required. Or evidence of prior Hepatitis B infection Or immunity (anti-HBc- Core Positive)
Tuberculosis (TB)	A medical report confirming positive BCG scar, evidence of prior TB vaccination or record of positive skin test.

You should not declare yourself to be fit to work if you are suffering from any of the following conditions:

- Vomiting;
- Diarrhoea;
- Rash;
- Undiagnosed cough for more than 7 days;
- Declared unfit to work by a medical doctor;
- Agree to comply with the current Occupational Health & Safety Act (OHSA).

You should inform the client via the agency if you become injured or diagnosed with any medical condition.

You MUST also let us know if you are pregnant. If you are concerned that your assignment involves unnecessary risks to your health or fitness, or that of your unborn child, please do not hesitate to contact us.

The client may request that you undergo a medical exam before any occasion on which you are involved in the provision of the services. The client shall instruct you of the circumstances and reasons for the medical examination. The client shall be entitled to refuse to allow you to be involved in the provision of the services unless the medical examination demonstrates that it is safe for you to work. The client shall also be entitled to refuse to allow you to be involved in the provision of the services if you decline to be examined.

Needle stick injuries

If you suffer a needle stick injury you must attend for treatment immediately and report the incident to your immediate senior on site. If possible take note of the patient's details in order to assist identify potential risks.

As soon as a needle stick (sharp) injury occurs you should do the following:

- Encourage bleeding by squeezing site of puncture wound, do not suck. Wash the wound with soap and water, do not scrub;
- Cover wound with waterproof dressing;
- Report incident to the A24Group;
- Complete the IOD document W.Cl.2 (notice of accident and claim for compensation) and forward to payqueries.sa@a24group.com within 48 hours.

Ensure it is clearly documented the circumstances that led to exposure. Counselling is available following these blood tests, as required. Always report a needle stick injury even if it occurs with a clean needle, via an incident report or accident book according to local/site protocol.

Identification

You may be required to produce proof of identification in the form of your ID book or photo ID card, driving license, before starting any assignments.

You are also required to wear your A24Group ID badge, which will be issued to you once you have cleared the compliance process. Should you not receive your ID badge or lose your current badge, you can request a new badge by emailing id@a24group.com or contact the compliance team on 086 114 4244.

Failure to comply with any of these requirements could result in you being refused permission to work by the client. Badges must be returned to us on termination of your employment with the A24Group.

Uniform and personal appearance

This guide describes the dress code expected for all the staff working in the clinical areas, including non-medical and non-nursing, whilst on duty within the clients' premises. The guide enables staff to present a professional image to all clients, which also demonstrates the professionalism we have in the care we provide and maximises safety via clear identification of staff.

A dress code and uniform carry symbolic meaning and serves to:

- Create a sense of pride in the profession;
- Separates work and non-work time;
- Allows patients to distinguish particular staff;
- Acts as protective clothing;
- Creates patient confidence in competence and trustworthiness.

Only authorised uniforms and/or relevant standard operating attire is to be worn in line with the institutions' infection control protocol.

- Long hair must be secured neatly, as not to impose an infection or safety hazard;
- Nail gel is prohibited as it may be an infection hazard;
- Do not wear excessive jewellery as this may constitute as a health hazard;
- All visible face and body piercings must always be removed whilst at work except for simple stud earrings;
- For all staff who access clinical areas and those who handle patient equipment/notes, fingernails should be kept short and clean;
- Perfume/aftershave must be used discreetly as patients may find it too strong.

EXTERNAL SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

Background checks

The A24Group prides itself on only supplying the best Agency Workers to our clients and to ensure we uphold our reputation, we may from time to time request you to under external screening.

A background check may include, but not be limited to full work history, qualification checks, verification of identity documents and/or work permits.

Polygraph consent (Lie Detector Test)

Due to the nature of your profession and to ensure we provide the maximum protection to our service users, the A24Group may require you to undergo a polygraph test, should any allegations be made against you whilst on assignment or while actively registered with us.

An A24Group authorised staff member will supply you with a consent form, should a polygraph test be required.

Criminal record checks

The healthcare industry will always rely on its recruited staff to be comprehensively screened, due to the sensitive nature of the industry and the fact that you will be working with vulnerable adults and children. It is important that part of the screening includes criminal record/background checks.

If you have had or currently have a criminal record, it is important that you notify us immediately of this, as it may impact the screening process. Should it be required we will request consent to conduct the applicable screening.

In accordance with the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 if the temporary worker has at any time been convicted of a sexual offence against a child, vulnerable adult or a person who is mentally disabled (including persons who have been declared so by a Judge in Chambers and who are alleged to have committed a sexual offence against a child or a mentally disabled person) the temporary worker must without delay immediately disclose such offences or findings to the A24Group.

In accordance with the Children's Act No. 38 of 2005, the temporary worker must without delay immediately disclose to the A24Group if their name appears in Part B of the National Child Protection Register issued by the Director General.

CODE OF CONDUCT

SCOPE/PURPOSE OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

To inform all Agency Workers of our clients' expectations about their general conduct and approach to tasks To emphasise the importance of a professional approach to all clients and service users.

To highlight situations that Agency Workers may have to deal with.

WHAT YOU MUST DO

Discrimination

Agency Workers should not discriminate between people on the grounds of creed, colour, race, political preference, sexual preference, ethnic backgrounds, disability of whatever nature, age, marital status or gender.

Reputation

Agency Workers are ambassadors of the A24Group and must not say or do anything that may harm our reputation.

Own Duties

Agency Workers must never attempt to perform any duties of care, or otherwise, that may fall outside of your expertise and/or qualifications or competency levels. Specifically, care staff must not attempt to perform the duties reserved for nursing staff.

Confidentiality

Agency Workers will at times become privy to information concerning a client or service user, this information must be treated with respect and remain confidential at all times. At no time may any Agency Worker discuss the private affairs of any A24Group client or service user without the specific written permission to do so. The only exceptions to this requirement are cases where the law dictates otherwise or if silence may negatively affect a patients wellbeing.

Computer Use

The client may at its discretion authorise you to gain access to certain computer systems and certain programmes and data within those systems.

- You shall not attempt to gain access without authorisation.
- Shall not load any information from external sources (USB, CD ROM) or transfer any data.
- Shall not download any files or connect any piece of equipment without the consent of the client.

Dignity

Agency Workers must not do or say anything that may put the dignity or health of a patient at risk.

Professionalism

Must at all time remain professional while on assignment, even if regular contact with patients or others may produce personal relationships. Agency Workers must take specific care to keep the professional nature of the relationship intact in the working environment.

Keep Updated

Agency Workers must at all times keep up to date with the policies/procedures and changes to legislation/law that may affect them.

Respect

Must always respect the working practices and demands of patients/clients unless unreasonable or working practice may breach health and safety.

Notifications

Agency staff should always in the first instance notify the manager of the institution where you working, if you have any concerns, and follow this with a call to your A24Group consultant.

Complaints

The A24Group has a detailed policy on how to report complaints, in the event of a complaint that may affect your duties and obligations, please refer to our policy and notify us immediately. We take all complaints very seriously and undertake to investigate and resolve complaints to the satisfaction of all parties in accordance with our complaints procedure.

Security

Whilst on the clients' premises, you must comply with all security measures of the client. The client may request to search your personal belongings or vehicles used while on the premises of such client.

Harassment/Bullying

The A24Group is committed to creating a working environment where every Agency Worker is treated with dignity and respect and where each person's individuality and sense of self-worth within the workplace is maintained. All workers have a duty to treat those alongside whom they work with respect and dignity and to take all steps necessary to ensure harassment does not occur.

Gifts and Gratuities

Agency Worker services are provided in return for agreed fees. Under no circumstances should you seek any other money, gifts, favours, or rewards for services rendered, either for yourself or any third party. It is not uncommon for a client, their friend or relative, to offer a voluntary gift as a mark of appreciation for the care they have received. We believe that giving or receiving such offers is not generally appropriate to the provision of professional care and wherever possible any such gift should be politely refused.

Absenteeism and shift attendance/cancellation

This serves to ensure that our agency provides consistent and reliable nursing services to our clients, primarily hospitals and medical facilities. Absenteeism without significant notice impacts the quality and efficiency of medical care and puts patient lives at risk. It's imperative that our nurses understand and respect their commitment to our clients.

- **Significant Notice:** All nurses must provide at least 24 hours' notice if they are unable to attend a scheduled shift.
- **Shot Notice:** Cancellations made within 24-hour window will be considered as short notice and will require valid reasoning and documented proof.
- **Valid Reasons for Short Notice Cancellation Include:**
 - Sickness (requires a doctor's note or relevant medical documentation);
 - Family bereavement (requires an obituary, funeral programme, or other documentation);
 - Any other emergencies, which will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Please refer to the Disciplinary Code for consequences for Non-compliance regarding attendance and timekeeping. If a nurse believes that their situation warrants an exception or feels that they have been unjustly penalised, they may appeal to the agency management in writing within 7 days of the action taken. The agency will review the appeal and provide a response within 14 days.

The well-being of our clients and the patients we serve are our top priority. While we understand that unforeseen circumstances arise, it is crucial for our nurses to understand the repercussions of short notice cancellations and ensure appropriate communication is applied accordingly.

Let's work together to uphold the reputation and commitment of our agency.

DISCIPLINARY CODE

DISCIPLINARY CODE		DISCIPLINARY ACTION		
Category	Nature of offence	First Offence	Second Offence	Third Offence
Timekeeping offences	Late for work or leaving work early without good reason.	Written Warning	Final Written Warning	Dismissal
	Unwarranted absence from place of work without good reason.	Written Warning	Final Written Warning	Dismissal
	Absence - away from work station for three or more working days without permission, or without good reason.	Dismissal		
	Fraudulent timekeeping.	Dismissal		
Work output offences	Poor performance (low quantity of output & unsatisfactory attitude to such performance).	Written Warning	Final Written Warning	Dismissal
	Sleeping on duty.	Dismissal		
	Refusal to work.	Dismissal		
	Refusal to obey reasonable instructions related to work.	Final Written Warning	Dismissal	
Quality of work offences	Poor quality of and/or not working to standards.	Written Warning	Final Written Warning	Dismissal
	Poor maintenance of company vehicle/machinery/equipment.	Final Written Warning	Dismissal	
	Wastage of material.	Final Written Warning	Dismissal	
	Negligent or malicious damage to equipment or material.	Dismissal		
	Injury to others through negligence or horseplay.	Final Written Warning	Dismissal	
Social offences	Under the influence of alcohol or intoxicating drugs at work or on the work premises.	Dismissal		
	Unauthorised possession of alcohol or non-medical drugs on work premises.	Dismissal		
	Possession of dangerous weapons at work on the company premises without permission.	Dismissal		
	Assault	Dismissal		
	Threat of assault.	Dismissal		
	Threat of assault to supervisor.	Dismissal		
	Intimidation or incitement to violence.	Dismissal		
	Committing unsanitary acts.	Final Written Warning	Dismissal	
Attitudinal offences	Breach of employee's duty of good faith to the Company.	Dismissal		
	Failure to wear protective clothing or equipment where supplied.	Final Written Warning	Dismissal	
	Failure to wear full nurses uniform at all times with epaulettes and insignia.	Written Warning	Final Written Warning	Dismissal
	Failure to wear and display name badge at all times.	Written Warning	Final Written Warning	Dismissal
	Failure or refusal to carry out a reasonable and lawful instruction.	Final Written Warning	Dismissal	
	Failure to observe security and safety regulations.	Dismissal		
	Smoking in a "No Smoking" area.	Final Written Warning	Dismissal	
	Being in an "out of bounds" area without authorisation or without good reason.	Final Written Warning	Dismissal	
	Use of abusive and/or derogatory and/or offensive language or signs.	Final Written Warning	Dismissal	
	Gross insubordination, serious disrespect, impudence or insolence.	Dismissal		
	Gross negligence.	Dismissal		
Other offences	Wilful damage to company materials, equipment, possessions or property.	Dismissal		
	Unlawful possession of company property.	Dismissal		
	Industrial sabotage.	Dismissal		
	Driving company vehicle whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs.	Dismissal		
	Driving company vehicle without authority.	Dismissal		
	Dishonesty during the course of employment.	Dismissal		
	Deliberately supplying incorrect or falsified information.	Dismissal		
	Any other reason recognised in law as being sufficient grounds for instant dismissal.	Dismissal		

Disciplinary action for other misconduct

Any misconduct not specifically covered in the code will be dealt with according to the severity of the offence.

Note

The code makes provision for progressive disciplinary actions in each category of offence. Discipline will, therefore, be taken progressively in each of the offences and not necessarily only in regard to a specific offence. The disciplinary action prescribed by the code may be deviated from where justified by the particular circumstances of the case. Accordingly, such action may be more severe than prescribed guideline where aggravating circumstances exist, or less severe where mitigating circumstances exist. In certain circumstances and in the case of certain offences, dismissal even for a first offence would be appropriate.

What is eSigning?

The term "eSigning" (also referred to as eSign and eSignature) describes the online ability to electronically "sign" documents in lieu of a traditional "wet" or ink signature on physical documents.

Declaration:

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and familiar with the details displayed in the Disciplinary code.

Agency Worker

Reviewed date

DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

Definitions of abuse

Abuse comes in various forms and below is a brief guideline to safeguard vulnerable children & adults:

- Physical abuse, including hitting, smacking, pushing, kicking, or any inappropriate contact;
- Sexual abuse, including encouraging relevant individuals to look at pornography, harassing them by making sexual suggestions or comments, or sexual acts where the individual has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting. Psychological abuse, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, humiliation, intimidation, verbal abuse, harassment or isolation;
- Financial or material abuse, including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits;
- Discriminatory abuse, including racist, sexist, based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

Detecting abuse

There are a number of ways in which suspicions of abuse may be raised or actual abuse is brought to your attention:

- A child/young person/vulnerable adult may confide in you, mentioning that they have or being abused;
- A colleague may report to you that a child/young person/vulnerable adult has confided in them about being abused or that they have a suspicion that a child/young person/vulnerable adult is being abused;
- A child/young person/vulnerable adult may display signs of physical abuse;
- The behaviour of, or a change in behaviour of a child/young person/vulnerable adult, may suggest that they are being abused;
- A colleague may confide in you that they have been abused as a child/young person/vulnerable adult;
- The behaviour of, or a change in the behaviour of a colleague, may suggest that they are abusing a child/young person/vulnerable adult.