81-87 Victoria Street,
The Old Haymarket, Liverpool L1 6DG
T: 0151 231 6100
E: Liverpool@cityresidential.co.uk

City Residential Policy: Identifying and Managing Fake Internet Reviews

1. Purpose
This policy outlines the procedures for detecting, reporting, and managing fake or misleading online reviews relating to City Residential, in order to protect the agency's reputation, maintain compliance with consumer protection and advertising laws, and ensure transparency and trust with clients.

2. Scope
This policy applies to all employees of the agency. It covers all online platforms where reviews are posted (e.g., Google Reviews, Trustpilot, Facebook, Yell, etc.) and includes both positive and negative reviews.

3. Definitions
Fake Review: Any review that is fabricated, misleading, or not based on a genuine customer experience. Examples include:
- Reviews written by non-clients or competitors.
- Reviews written by staff members, friends, or family pretending to be clients.
- Paid or incentivised reviews that do not disclose the incentive.

4. Identification Procedure
Staff must regularly monitor reviews, we do this by the management team being notified by google that a review has been posted. If the staff or management team notice anything suspicious they flag it, investigate and report it to Google to be removed. Indicators of fake reviews include:
- Inconsistent details (incorrect property addresses or services).
- Generic or repetitive language.
- Extreme tone (overly positive or excessively negative without detail).
- Reviewer profile anomalies (no other activity, reviewing competitors).
- Sudden spikes in review volume.
- Location mismatch between reviewer and agency area.

5. Verification Process
When a suspicious review is identified:
1. Record the review details (date, username, platform, content).
2. Check internal records to verify whether the reviewer is a legitimate client.
3. Escalate to the senior Management for review.
4. Contact the platform if the review violates their terms.
5. Respond professionally, avoiding public accusations without evidence.
6. Prohibited Conduct
Employees must never:

- Write or commission fake positive reviews.
- Ask family, friends, or colleagues to post false reviews.
- Offer incentives for positive reviews without clear disclosure.

6. Legal & Compliance References

Relevant legislation and guidance:
- Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (UK).
- Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) Guidelines.
- Data Protection Act 2018 (UK GDPR).

7. Record-Keeping

Maintain a log of reported fake reviews, actions taken, communications with platforms, and evidence of investigations. Logs should be reviewed quarterly to identify trends.