

RBF'S NEW 'HELP PACK' FOR RAIL INDUSTRY WORKERS IN NEED OF SUPPORT

A new help and advice pack has been launched this month by the Railway Benefit Fund (RBF) encouraging rail industry workers and their families experiencing difficulties to seek its expert advice.

The charity's 'How We Can Help' folder and information sheets are available free of charge for anyone in the rail industry - past and present - whose lives might be adversely affected by issues ranging from debt management to bereavement.

And it also contains a three-point plan for HR departments and managers in the rail industry to spread the word about RBF and encourage workers and their dependants to seek its help at times of need.

The 'How We Can Help' pack is being championed by Pete Waterman, the famous record producer and RBF president, who has long-standing links to the rail industry.

Pete said: "This information pack is a proactive step in making more people in the rail industry aware of the RBF and the outstanding work it does to support those in need.

"The charity has existed for more than 160 years but there are still people within the fabric of the rail industry that either don't know about the RBF or are unsure whether to contact the charity when faced with a particular problem or issue.

"We can ease the burden for current and former railway employees and their families and the 'How We Can Help' pack is easy to understand and shows exactly what the RBF does in a very clear, visual way.

"Whether people request it or download it directly, or whether managers in the rail industry make them available to their own employees, it is a great resource and we hope it becomes widely distributed."

The pack contains four new information sheets on some of the key services offered by the charity, which include;

Family Support Fund - a small grants programme that provides support to railway staff with children where the annual gross household income does not exceed £30,000. The fund provides up to £200 to support child and family related expenses such as school trips, extracurricular activities and clubs, school uniforms and baby equipment.

Grants Programme - direct financial support to rail staff and their families experiencing hardship. The RBF's grants support current, retired and former rail staff and their dependents. Grant applications are subject to qualifying criteria to include evidence of 12 months service and less than £6000 in capital if a single person, or less than £10,000 if a couple.

Debt Advice – free proactive support for all rail staff who may be at risk of debt, through the provision of practical and accessible money advice services. The RBF is partnered with Citizens Advice Manchester to provide free and confidential, general and specialist debt advice.

Information & Advice – access to free services that enable rail staff to live their 'everyday' lives as well as helping to overcome life events that may impact on their family, financial or physical wellbeing, or their ability to sustain their employment within the rail industry. The RBF also offers dedicated legal advice and information resources so rail staff can navigate wider issues that they face outside of the workplace.

In addition, each sheet gives a short three-point guide for rail companies to better promote the RBF internally by publicising its contact details; including links to the charity's website and apps in internal communications; and talking to the charity to develop co-branded welfare and advice programmes.



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RBF Head of Fundraising and Engagement Faye Jaques said: "We are always keen to work directly with employers to assist and develop their own staff wellbeing initiatives using the skills, knowledge and resources within the RBF.

"Companies can always refer their employees directly to us and all cases are managed in the strictest confidence. Or we can also work with them to create their own welfare programmes.

"Ultimately, the RBF exists to support all workers, past and present, in the entire rail industry during tough times– however they access our services."

Founded in 1858, RBF is based in Crewe, Cheshire, and supports current or former railway employees and their families.

With an App available for Apple and Android devices, a dedicated telephone hotline and website, the RBF offers a wide range of confidential free of charge services which are all easy to access.

Funded entirely by donations, the RBF is the only charity dedicated solely to providing help and support to current and retired workers in times of need. It focuses on the modern needs and concerns of those working in the industry today, offering advice and financial support.

To request a hard copy or download the new information pack 'How We Can Help', visit the RBF website www.railwaybenefitfund.org.uk or email fundraising@railwaybenefitfund.org.uk.

Follow the charity on Twitter @RBF1858, Facebook @RBFCharity and LinkedIn Railway Benefit Fund. The RBF mobile App is available on the Google Play Store and Apple Store.

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About RBF

Founded in 1858 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1949, the Railway Benefit Fund is the rail industry's charity supporting current or former railway employees and their families. Assistance is provided in many forms, on a short or long-term basis and is specifically tailored to an individual's situation.

The charity, based in Crewe, Cheshire, offers financial assistance, practical help and wide-ranging support, all in the strictest confidence.