



# **Employee Handbook**

Last Modified 10/17/2017

Resolution 18-06

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# WELCOME

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We are happy you have chosen the Housing Authority of the County of DeKalb as your place of employment. We are glad to have you with us and hope that you will find this a pleasant place to work.

This Employee Handbook is provided as a source of information on Authority expectations, employment philosophies, and likely administrative actions. This manual of employment does not constitute a contract nor does it contain any provisions that are to be construed as contractual.

We know that our major asset is people and that a general personnel manual cannot anticipate every human problem or need that may arise. Therefore, if you have a special problem, concern or idea, are troubled or have a need, please tell us. As we continue to grow, as circumstances change, and as applicable laws are enacted or amended from time to time, the need may arise to change policies described in the manual. The Authority therefore reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind without notice any policies or portions of the manual from time to time as it deems appropriate or as may be necessary to comply with changing laws, in its sole and absolute discretion.

We appreciate your efforts and the good work you are doing each day to make the Authority a success. We look forward to a mutually satisfactory relationship with you.

Again, may we extend a sincere,

WELCOME.



Executive Director

# ARTICLE I - THIS MANUAL

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## PURPOSE, AMENDMENT, AND EMPLOYMENT AT-WILL

This manual is intended as a general guideline for current Authority policies. Every employee is expected to read, understand, and follow the provisions of the manual and will be held responsible for knowing its contents. The Authority reserves the right to change these guidelines, its policies, and this manual at any time without notice.

**Nothing of this manual is intended or should be construed as an agreement and/or a contract of employment, express or implied. All employees of the authority are at-will, and no officer, supervisor, or other employee of the authority has the authority to alter, orally or in writing, the terminable-at-will status of any employment. It is expressly understood that any employee and the authority are free to terminate the employment relationship at any time. The authority reserves the right, at all times, to take any action deemed to be in its best interests.**

We will make reasonable efforts to keep the employee informed of all changes as soon as practical. However, occasionally changes must be made immediately to meet unforeseen circumstances. This Policy will be available in hardcopy at the Central Office and on [www.dekcohousing.com](http://www.dekcohousing.com).

# ARTICLE II - GENERAL INFORMATION

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## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Authority is an equal opportunity employer. The Authority does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, and marital status, and religion, unfavorable discharge from military service, sexual orientation, or mental or physical disability.

The Authority will make a reasonable accommodation as required by law for qualified individuals with a disability upon request unless doing so would result in an undue hardship to the organization or a direct threat to the employee, co-worker or the population we serve.

This policy governs all aspects of compensation and all other terms and conditions of employment. Equal employment opportunity shall apply to all personnel actions including, but not limited to, recruitment, hiring, promotion, demotion, transfer, or termination.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT PROHIBITED

### *General Policy*

The Authority is committed to maintaining a workplace free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as well as state discrimination laws. The Authority will not tolerate such misconduct as it is capable of causing great damage to individual employees and to the Authority's employment climate.

This policy applies to protect all employees and other persons visiting our premises. Sexual harassment is prohibited, whether directed toward men or women. Reprisals against individuals filing complaints under this policy will not be tolerated. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to discipline, including possible discharge. Other persons who violate this policy will be subject to expulsion from the Authority's premises. Any supervisor or manager who receives a complaint and does not act upon it under the procedures of this policy will also be subject to discipline, including possible discharge, and any employee who knowingly or maliciously files a false report of sexual harassment will be subject to discipline, including possible discharge. Refer to Appendix A, Code of Ethics.

## *Definitions*

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or verbal conduct or physical contact of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is either implied or stated to be a term or condition of employment or a factor in evaluating the individual's job performance, eligibility for promotion, eligibility for an increase in compensation or any other component of employment; or
- Such conduct interferes either directly or indirectly with an individual's work performance by creating a hostile, offensive or intimidating environment.

Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome social advances such as repeated uninvited requests for social dates, dinners or any other non-business-related activity where the invitee has indicated that she/he is not willing to accept such invitations.
- Verbal harassment such as sexual innuendo, demands or requests for sexual favors, comments or jokes of a sexually vulgar nature, including threats or slurs, remarks about an individual's physical anatomy, derogatory comments about gender or sexually explicit telephone calls.
- Physical harassment such as sexual advances, touching (or the threat to touch) in a sexual manner, physical interference with normal work or movement, or otherwise invading the personal privacy of employees inside or outside the workplace.
- Distribution or display of written or graphic sexual material such as sexually oriented magazines or posters, nude pictures or sexually explicit writing of any kind.

Occasional compliments of a socially acceptable manner or statements or acts that are acceptable to all elements of society are not sexual harassment.

## *Procedure*

Any individual who feels sexually harassed by a supervisor, manager, co-worker, subordinate or other person should take the following course of action:

1. Tell the offending individual(s) to stop the harassment. State employee's objection to the action and the specific behavior to which employee objects. If this discussion does not resolve the problem or if employee fears reprisal will result from such discussion, or if employee feels uncomfortable confronting the harassing individual, proceed to step 2.
2. Inform employee's supervisor of the situation, or if it is the supervisor who is the harasser or if employee feels uncomfortable telling employee's supervisor, inform another supervisor or management employee with whom you feel comfortable or inform the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is the harasser, then inform the Authority Board of Commissioners.
3. All complaints received by anyone in management will be directed to the Executive Director or in the case of harassment by the Director then to the Board of

Commissioners, for investigation unless the complaining employee specifically requests otherwise. During the course of the investigation, the complaining employee's identity, as far as possible, will be withheld from all involved parties. The Authority will attempt to do the utmost to protect the privacy of the complaining employee and to protect the integrity of any individual who may have been wrongfully accused of sexual harassment.

4. The investigation will be thorough and should be completed within 10 days. Investigation findings and any recommended discipline will be presented to the harassing employee's immediate supervisor. As soon as possible thereafter, the harassing employee will be told what discipline will result.
5. Only the complaining employee and the accused harasser will be told of the final disposition of the complaint.
6. If the accused harasser is not an employee of the Authority, upon completion of an investigation which indicates that harassment did occur, the Authority will take appropriate remedial action. Possible remedial steps range from letters of objection to the accused harasser to refusal to allow the alleged harasser on Authority premises.

## **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

Refer to Appendix B – Drug Free Workplace Policy.

## **EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATION, POSITION LIST AND DESCRIPTIONS**

An employee is exempt or non-exempt as defined in the Federal Wage and Hour Law.

**Exempt** - Exempt positions are excluded from minimum wage, overtime regulations, and other rights and protections afforded non-exempt workers. Employers must pay a salary rather than an hourly wage for a position for it to be exempt.

**Non-Exempt** - Non-exempt employees, as the term implies, are not exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requirements. Employees who fall within this category must be paid at least the federal minimum wage for each hour worked and given overtime pay for not less than one and a half times their hourly rate for any hours worked beyond 40 each week.

Current Authority positions are as follows:

- Admissions Manager – Exempt
- Capital Fund & Procurement manager – Exempt
- Chief Financial Officer – Exempt
- Director of Operations – Exempt
- Executive Director – Exempt

- Housing Choice Voucher Administrator - Exempt
- Property Manager – Exempt
- Administrative Assistant – Non - Exempt
- Admissions Assistant – Non-Exempt
- Case Manager – Non-Exempt
- Temporary Employees – Non-Exempt
- Financial Analyst – Non-Exempt
- File Clerk – Non-Exempt
- Grounds/Custodian – Non-Exempt
- HQS Inspector – Non-Exempt
- Maintenance I – Non-Exempt
- Maintenance II – Non-Exempt
- Night Managers - Stipend
- Receptionist – Non-Exempt

Position descriptions will be provided upon request and are subject to change at the discretion of the Executive Director or, in the case of the Executive Director’s description, at the discretion of the Authority Board of Commissioners.

## **EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS AND BENEFITS; CHANGES IN CLASSIFICATION**

**Probationary Period** - The first 90 days of an employee’s employment shall be a probationary period during which the Authority will continually evaluate a new employee’s job abilities and performance. During any probationary period, the employee will be entitled only to the following regular benefits: pay for hours worked; holiday pay as stated in this manual; and, for employees who will be classified as full-time or part-time if retained after the probationary period and are otherwise eligible under the terms of this manual and the health plan, health benefits. The Executive Director may extend the probationary period for an additional period or additional periods of 90 days each.

All employees who have completed their probationary period(s) will receive a formal evaluation. Employees who are retained after completion of probationary periods(s) are classified as either full-time, part-time, or temporary employees, provided, however, that:

**The authority and each employee maintains the right to sever the employment relationship at any time for any reason, with or without notice, and neither these provisions on probationary status, the classification of an employee as full-time, part-time, or temporary, or any other provisions of this manual should ever be interpreted as altering the employment-at-will relationship between the authority and every employee.**

**Full-time** - Full-time employees are employees who are regularly scheduled to work thirty (30) or more hours in the work week and whose position is specifically listed in the position list set out in this manual. Classification as “Full-time” does not guarantee employment for a fixed number of hours per day or days per week.

**Part-time** - Part-time employees are employees who are regularly scheduled to work no more than twenty nine (29) hours in the work week and whose position is specifically listed in the position list set out in this manual. Classification as “Part-time” does not guarantee employment for a fixed number of hours per day or days per week. Part-time employees cannot work more than 718 hours during any consecutive 13 pay periods. (retirement plan eligibility restriction).

**Temporary** - Temporary employees may be regularly scheduled to work any combination of full- or part-time hours in the work week, but temporary employees are hired only to fulfill periodic needs of the Authority. Temporary employees cannot work more than 1508 hours in a fiscal year and are only entitled to pay for hours worked.

**Benefits** - Full-time, part-time and temporary employees are entitled to the benefits generally described in the table set out below in this section, subject to the more specific benefit terms and eligibility requirements set out elsewhere in this manual and in the terms of the plan of any third-party benefit provider.

*Chart of Classifications & Benefits*

<b>FULL-TIME</b>	<b>PART-TIME</b>	<b>TEMPORARY EMPLOYEE</b>
30 or more hours	29 hours or less – not to exceed 718 hours during any consecutive 13 pay periods (retirement plan restriction).	As needed – not to exceed 1508 hours in a fiscal year
Holiday Pay	Holiday Pay	No Holiday Pay
Paid time off	Paid time off	No Paid time off
Short term disability	Short term disability	No short term disability
Potential Unpaid Personal Leave of Absence	Potential Unpaid Personal Leave of Absence	No Personal Leave of Absence
Pay for jury duty/witness	Pay for jury duty/witness	Pay for jury duty/witness
Health Insurance Plan for employee only	No Health Insurance Plan	No Health Insurance Plan
Retirement Plan	No Retirement Plan	No Retirement plan

**Changes in Classification** - When an employee's status is changed from full-time or part-time to temporary, the employee forfeits all accrued benefits except those to which they are legally entitled. When changing from part-time to full-time, benefits will be increased to full-time commencing with the month following the month of change. When changing from full-time to part-time, benefits will be decreased to part-time commencing with the month following the month of change. Employees making changes in classifications must do so on the first (1<sup>st</sup>) of the month.

## **AUTHORITY TO EFFECT PERSONNEL ACTIONS**

Final authority to appoint and separate the Executive Director shall be vested in the Authority Board of Commissioners. Final authority to appoint, promote, transfer, demote, suspend, and separate other personnel shall be vested in the Authority's Executive Director.

## **MEDICAL EXAMINATION AND CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK**

The Authority requires all positions, upon acceptance of a job offer as a condition for employment to undergo a criminal background check and a drug test at a health care provider selected by, and paid for by Authority. All maintenance staff must also pass a physical examination.

# ARTICLE III - EMPLOYEE BENEFITS & PRIVILEGES

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## PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS AND MERIT INCREASES

As previously stated in this manual, all employees receive their first formal performance evaluation at the end of their probationary period(s). Thereafter, formal performance evaluations will occur on mid-year and annual basis.

Performance ratings shall be noted in employee service records and shall be considered in affecting personnel actions. Adjustments in wages or salary will be considered after each performance evaluation, transfer, promotion or demotion.

At the Executive Directors discretion, through Department Head recommendations and within the approved current fiscal year budgeted amount, a monetary bonus maybe awarded to a selected employee(s) who has contributed in an exceptional manner by a specific action or event to improve the operation of the Authority.

Employees transferring from one department and/or one position to another will be evaluated after three (3) months. Whether such transfers are to be accompanied by an increase in pay is subject to the discretion of the Executive Director.

## SERVICE RECORDS

The Authority shall maintain employee service records at the main office. Those records will include the following items:

- Job Applications
- Date of employment and termination
- Job description
- Employee evaluations
- Absentee record
- Sick leave record
- Paid Time Off accumulation
- Pay changes
- Miscellaneous

## OVERTIME COMPENSATION

Compensation for overtime shall be paid in accordance with applicable federal and state law and provisions of the HUD assistance contracts.

All overtime must be approved by a manager and reason for overtime noted on time card.  
Overtime is paid for all hours physically worked in excess of forty (40) hours per week.

Overtime work shall be avoided but may be required in the interest of efficient operation. The non-exempt employee shall be paid overtime at the rate of 1 ½ times their regular hourly rate for hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours. The non-exempt employee must physically work 40 hours to be compensated at the over time rate for any hours above the forty (40) worked hours. If PTO is taken in the 40 hour time period the overtime rate will not be paid. Time will be paid at the regular wage. For Example,

In this scenario - 48 hours on the time card. 8 hours <b>will not</b> be paid at overtime. It will be paid at the regular rate.				
Monday 10 hours worked	Tuesday 10 hours worked	Wednesday out sick - 8 hours of PTO	Thursday 10 hours worked	Friday 10 hours worked
In this scenario – 50 hours on the time card. 10 hours <b>will be</b> paid at the over time rate.				
Monday 10 hours worked	Tuesday 10 hours worked	Wednesday 10 hours worked	Thursday 10 hours worked	Friday 10 hours worked

If the non-exempt employee works on a holiday they will be paid at the rate of 1 ½ times their regular hourly rate.

Exempt employees shall not be compensated or granted compensatory time off for overtime worked.

## HOLIDAY PAY

The Authority observes the following holidays, consistent with local community practice:

New Year’s Day	Columbus Day
Martin Luther King Day	Veteran’s Day
President’s Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Day after Thanksgiving
Independence Day	Christmas Day
Labor Day	

All full-time and part-time employees will be paid for the listed holidays at their regular rate of pay, but due to the nature of the Authority’s services, it reserves the right to require any employee to work the holidays, and in such event the non-exempt employee will be compensated accordingly.

An employee who wishes to observe religious or ethnic holidays other than those designated above may do so by notifying the Executive Director in writing, at least two weeks prior to such holiday. Late notices may be accepted in certain circumstances in the Executive Director's discretion, but may be rejected. Employees may use PTO for such holiday observance, or, alternatively, employees who have no accrued and unused PTO days available will be granted an unpaid absence for this purpose if the holiday absence is approved.

## **PAID TIME OFF (PTO)**

Paid Time Off (PTO) is used for rest, relaxation, and occasional illness. It is designed to provide employees with flexibility to use their time off to meet their own personal and family needs, while recognizing individual responsibility to manage their own paid time off.

Eligible employees will accumulate a specified amount of PTO based on their accrual rate. It is up to each employee to allocate how they will use it – for vacation, occasional illness for yourself and your family members, caring for dependents, school activities, and medical/dental appointments for yourself and your family members, additional bereavement leave needed, personal business or emergencies. The amount of PTO earned is dependent on the employee's length of service with the Authority.

### *Eligibility*

Full and part-time employees are eligible to accrue PTO, unless otherwise notified. Interns, seasonal and temporary employees are not eligible to earn PTO. PTO will begin accruing on the date of employment. Eligible employees must complete the 90-day probation period to be eligible to use accrued PTO.

- PTO accrues on hours worked and paid PTO hours only.
- PTO does not accrue on hours worked above 80 hours in a bi-weekly pay period.
- Employees may carry over 40 PTO hours into the next fiscal year.
- HACD does not allow employees to sell, donate or purchase PTO.
- HACD must maintain adequate staffing coverage. The use of PTO shall be up to the discretion of the employee's manager.
- Excessive use of unscheduled PTO or a pattern of absenteeism may result in disciplinary action.
- To maintain a balance between PTO requests and meeting staffing needs, usual work schedules may be altered to provide coverage.
- HACD reserves the right to limit or postpone the use of PTO.
- Non-exempt staff may use PTO in a minimum of one-hour increments.
- Advanced use of PTO hours that have not yet accrued is not permitted.
- PTO benefits do not accrue while on a leave of absence, short or long term disability, or while receiving workers compensation benefits.

All benefit eligible employees shall accrue PTO according to the following:

<b>Years of Service</b>	<b>Accrual rate per Hour</b>	<b>Annual PTO accrual</b>
0-4	.0654	136 hrs/17 days
5-8	.0846	176 hrs/22 days
9-14	.1038	216 hrs/27 days
15+	.1192	248 hrs/31 days

## **SHORT TERM DISABILITY (STD)**

For any accident or illness that exceeds 7 scheduled working days, the employee will transition to a paid short-term disability (STD) policy (to begin on the 8<sup>th</sup> day). Employee's can use PTO during the 7 day waiting period. The STD policy will provide 12 weeks of 60% gross pay benefit to an employee who works 25 hours per week. Eligibility for STD begins on the first of the month following 30 days of employment. Application for STD must be made through the Finance Department. If an illness causes an employee to be absent in excess of 5 scheduled work days, a doctor's release is required before the employee may return to work. PTO may be utilized instead of STD, at the employee's option by submitting an attendance adjustment form to your manager.

## **COURT LEAVE**

**Summons** - A summons or subpoena must be legally served and may be for serving as a witness or for jury duty. All employees when actually summoned shall immediately inform the Executive Director.

**Reimbursement** - The pay of any employee who has received a subpoena for jury duty or as a witness will continue at the regular rate. All reimbursement received by the employee for time required to perform jury duty or to testify as a witness shall be turned over to the Authority to be credited against regular salary. Payment by the Court to the employee for travel expenses at the prevailing rate may be retained by the employee.

## **BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

If there is a death in the immediate family of either a full-time employee or part-time employee then a paid leave of absence not to exceed three (3) days will be granted, as required by the individual circumstances after notification to the employee's Department Head or to the Executive Director. "Immediate family" includes an employee's spouse, parent, grandparent, stepparent, brother, sister, stepbrother or sister, children, stepchildren, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law. If additional bereavement leave is needed, prior approval must be obtained from the Executive Director. If extended time off is desired, an unpaid personal leave of absence must be obtained.

For part-time employee's, bereavement leave of absence pay will be calculated based on four (4) hours daily pay. Temporary employees and employees who are in the initial evaluation period are not eligible for bereavement benefits, but may be granted unpaid time off for this purpose upon request in accordance with these procedures, at the Executive Director's discretion.

## **FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE**

The Authority will comply with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 and the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994. Specific regulations of the Family and Medical Leave Act and Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Act are available for review by contacting the Executive Director.

**NOTE:** All accrued PTO must be taken by the employee before the employee can qualify for FMLA leave.

## **OTHER UNPAID LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

Situations beyond control sometimes interrupt regular work attendance. Where the needs of the Authority permit, the Authority will consider requests for unpaid personal leaves of absence for full-time and part-time employees who have worked continuously at least six (6) months prior to the requested leave.

Any eligible employee who desires to take a personal leave of absence from work must first obtain permission for a personal leave of absence. All requests for personal leaves shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Director. Whenever possible, requests shall be made at least thirty (30) days prior to the leave of absence. Based on discussion with your Department Head, the Executive Director shall grant or deny the request. The Executive Director shall notify you of this decision and if the leave of absence is granted.

No person has the authority to guarantee an employee's position with the Authority. Employees granted personal leave continue to be at-will employees whose employment with the Authority may be terminated at any time. An employee ready to return from approved personal leave will be considered generally eligible for the same or comparable position held prior to the leave, but whether the employee is returned to any employment with the Authority is at the discretion of the Executive Director, in the case of the Executive Director at the discretion of the Authority's Board of Commissioners. The needs of the Authority, the length of the leave and the prior performance of the employee ready to return from approved leave will be included in consideration of whether to return or separate an employee following approved leave.

Unless expressly stated in writing, signed by the Executive Director, employee benefits (e.g., vacation, paid sick days) will not accrue to an employee on a personal leave of absence. If an employee's position is available after a leave of absence or the employee is offered a comparable position, the employee's failure to return to work on the day specified will be construed to be a voluntary resignation by the employee. Prior to returning from a leave of absence involving medical incapacity, an employee may be required to submit to the Executive Director a medical report from his/her physician certifying that he/she is able to resume his/her regular job responsibilities.

An employee who takes a leave of absence of more than thirty (30) days will have his/her anniversary date adjusted to a date commensurate with the length of the leave (i.e., an employee who takes a thirty-one (31) day leave of absence will have his/her anniversary date reset to a date thirty-one (31) days later.)

The employee's employment with another employer while on leave of absence will automatically constitute a voluntary resignation.

## **HEALTH BENEFITS PLAN**

All full-time employees, excluding temporary workers, working at least thirty (30) hours per week are eligible to participate in the Authority's health insurance plan, subject to the particular terms of the plan. Full-time employees will be eligible on the first of the month following 30 days of employment.

An employee eligible for the health benefits plan wishing not to participate will be required to sign a waiver. The Authority reserves the right to choose the plan and insurer and to change plans and/or insurers without advanced notice, regardless of resulting changes to deductibles, co-payments and other terms of coverage. The Authority also reserves the right to change the premium percent paid by the employee for their individual coverage without advance notice.

## **RETIREMENT PLAN**

All full-time employees working at least thirty (30) or more hours a week are eligible to participate in the Authority's retirement plan, subject to the particular terms of the plan. Full-time employees will be eligible for the retirement plan on the first of the month following 6 months of employment. The Authority reserves the right to choose the plan and provider and to change plans and/or providers without advanced notice, regardless of resulting changes to plan terms or offerings.

## **ORGANIZATIONS AND AFFILIATIONS**

Expenditures for membership dues and fees in organizations will be considered eligible for payment by the Authority if:

- The organization furnishes technical or professional information, training, workshops, or other services beneficial to federally sponsored public housing and urban renewal activities.
- The membership is specifically authorized by official action of the Authority's Board Commissioners or the Executive Director.

## **SECURITY INSPECTIONS**

The Authority reserves the right to inspect any locker, desk, or other area used by any employee at any time, including articles within such areas. Employees who fail to cooperate with such an investigation may be subject to disciplinary action, including discharge.

# ARTICLE IV - EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

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## EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES, GENERALLY

All employees are expected to observe the Authority's policies and procedures and to perform their assigned duties in a satisfactory manner. Such observance would include, but not be limited to: work as scheduled, being at your place of work during working hours, following the instructions of your Department Head, and, obeying safety regulations and other policies and practices of the Authority. Refer to Appendix C HACD Employee Expectations.

## RULES AND REGULATIONS

**Purpose:** To achieve its objectives in an orderly, efficient and safe manner, to facilitate cooperation between employees, and to assure that the rights and interests of employees and the Authority are maintained, the Authority must have and enforce certain written and unwritten rules and procedures regarding the conduct of its employees. It is essential to the successful operation of the Authority's business and the welfare of its residents and employees that discipline, health, safety, attendance, workmanship and honesty be maintained. Disregard or violation of these rules and regulations, inability or unwillingness to meet established standards or unauthorized disclosure of confidential Authority or resident matters will subject an employee to discipline in the Executive Director's discretion. The Authority's Board of Commissioners are responsible for all disciplinary actions that involve the Executive Director.

**Forms of Discipline:** Potential forms of discipline include: verbal warning, written warning, suspension without pay, and discharge. The administration of discipline by the Executive Director toward an employee may embrace all or some of these disciplinary forms in a progressive manner or may include only any one of them without regard to progressivity, depending upon the gravity of the offense and the discretion of the Executive Director.

**Oral warning:** An oral warning is a form of discipline, which is generally appropriate to warn an employee of a minor instance of misconduct. An Oral Warning may include a written note to the employee's personnel file that such an Oral Warning was given.

**Written Warning:** Some instances of employee misconduct may not be so serious as to warrant Suspension Without Pay or Discharge, and may be corrected by a formal Written Warning. Employees shall have an opportunity to sign formal written warnings, acknowledging that such warning has been given, and to comment in writing on such warning or to any other discipline.

**Suspension Without Pay:** Suspension is a forced absence from work without pay. Suspension Without Pay of up to three days is likely to be imposed to correct an employee's second infraction (of the same or different type of misconduct) after an Oral Warning or a Written Warning has been given. However, like the other forms of discipline, the Suspension Without Pay can be imposed independently of other disciplinary forms or in a progressive manner.

**Discharge:** Discharge means termination of the employment of an employee. Discharge may be based upon a single violation or a series of violations, in the Executive Director's discretion, depending upon the circumstances. Discharge is likely to be used for infractions following the prior imposition of Suspension Without Pay. However, none of the other disciplinary forms must be used prior to an employee's Discharge.

**Rules, Regulations and Potential Discipline.** No guide will substitute for the Executive Director's judgment in the use of the forms of discipline discussed above. However, general guidelines on the likely use of discipline are offered to reduce the likelihood of surprise.

**Some Major Violations Resulting In Immediate Discharge:**

The following infractions include some, but not all, of the major violations which shall be grounds for immediate discharge of an employee, even for a first offense, depending upon the circumstances:

- A. Stealing from a resident, visitor, or other employee, or from the Authority.
- B. Possession, use, sale, purchase or being under the influence of alcohol, or of an illegal drug during working time or on Authority premises. "Illegal drug" means any drug (a) which is not legally obtainable or (b) which is legally obtainable but has not been legally obtained, including prescribed drugs not legally obtained and prescribed drugs not being used for prescribed purposes. A determination of whether an employee is "under the influence" can be established by a professional opinion, a scientifically valid test, and in some cases, by a layperson's opinion. In any event, an employee will be conclusively considered "under the influence" of illegal drug(s) if at the time they are tested the drug test reveals that the employee has illegal drugs in his/her system. An employee will be conclusively considered "under the influence" of alcohol if testing reveals a concentration of alcohol in the employee's bloodstream that exceeds the legal limit for operation of a motor vehicle under state law.
- C. Unauthorized possession or use of a weapon of any type during working hours or on Authority premises.
- D. Insubordination or refusal to obey instructions (disobedience or disregard of the Executive Director, a department head, or an immediate supervisor, or some other person in authority).
- E. Destruction or damage to property belonging to the Authority or to any person.
- F. Abusing or attempting to injure in any way a resident or any other person.
- G. Altering, falsifying or making a willful misstatement of fact on any work record, employment applications, or time card.
- H. Verbal or written threat to injure or harm any other person.
- I. Failure to report injury, accidents or safety hazards involving a resident or staff.

- J. Unauthorized use of cameras or recording devices.
- K. Asking for, or accepting tips or gratuities of any kind from residents or the families of residents.
- L. Revealing to any person any confidential information concerning a resident, other than to an employee working with the resident.
- M. Loafing or sleeping while on working time.
- N. Fighting or provoking a fight.
- O. Failure to meet health test requirements, where the test is not satisfactorily completed within seven (7) days of the required date (employees not meeting health test requirements will not be permitted to work until the test is satisfactorily completed).
- P. Any other misconduct which, in the Executive Director's judgment is so serious as to warrant immediate discharge.

**Other Offenses:** Though there is no exhaustive list of all possible offenses, and the Executive Director retains the right to implement any form of discipline deemed appropriate at any time under the circumstances, the following list is offered as a guideline for the types of infractions which are likely to result in discipline less severe than discharge for a first infraction:

- A. Gambling on Authority premises.
- B. Unauthorized posting, removal or tampering with items on Authority bulletin boards.
- C. Playing radios or other equipment loudly, so as to disturb residents or others.
- D. Unauthorized use of telephones or other equipment for purposes other than the Authority's business.
- E. Loitering in work areas when not scheduled to work.
- F. Failure to follow dress code and good hygiene.
- G. Smoking in unauthorized areas.
- H. Engaging in horseplay or otherwise acting in an unsafe manner.
- I. Failure to notify the personnel coordinator of address or telephone number change(s), which the Authority shall keep confidential.
- J. Failure to be in your assigned workplace at starting or quitting time.
- K. Any swearing or obscene language, or discourteous language to another employee, a resident, or visitor.
- L. Being in an unassigned area during working hours without permission, other than in the line of duty.
- M. Overstaying break or lunch period.
- N. Failure to follow any work standard or any policy or procedure established by the Authority.
- O. Inefficiently or negligently performing assigned duties.
- P. Unpermitted absence from work.

## TRAVEL

Refer to Appendix D for the HACD Travel Policy.

## **USE OF HOUSING AUTHORITY PROPERTY**

The Housing Authority will provide its employees with the equipment, supplies and materials necessary for performance of their assigned jobs. Equipment, vehicles, tools, materials and supplies that belong to the Housing Authority shall not be used or removed from the Housing Authority business.

Equipment and vehicles assigned to employees/Properties shall be maintained and kept in good working condition by the employees. If it is found that the equipment or vehicle is being abused or used in an unsafe manner, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. If it is determined that the employee is negligent in the proper use of storage of tools, equipment, vehicles, materials or supplies, or if they are abused, misplaced or stolen, the employee may be required to repair or replace them and/or the employee will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Employees are required to return all Housing Authority equipment, vehicles, supplies, materials, keys, uniform, photo identification badges, and other Housing Authority owned property upon separation from employment. Failure to return said property may result in a charge to the employee, which may be deducted from any final payment due to the employee. In addition, employees who fail to return said property upon separation from employment will not receive payment for accrued PTO.

## **DRESS CODE**

All employees are required to wear appropriate dress and/or uniform while employed at the Authority. Each Department Head will inform new employees of uniform regulation or dress requirements.

## **SEPARATIONS**

An employee who desires to terminate his/her employment is expected to submit a written resignation to the Executive Director at least two (2) weeks in advance, setting forth his/her reasons for resigning. Failure to meet this expectation may be cause for denying future employment with the Authority.

An employee who resigns, is discharged, retires, or fails to return after an authorized leave of absence, will be regarded as permanently separated from employment. Should such separated employee be rehired, he/she will be re-employed as a new employee. An employee, who is involuntarily terminated, other than in connection with a reduction in force, will be ineligible for rehire.

Separated employees will receive their final paycheck on the first regularly scheduled payday following their separation date.

## SAFETY

The personal safety and health of each employee of the Authority and the residents is of primary importance. The prevention of work-related injuries and illnesses is of such significance that it will be given precedence over operation productivity whenever necessary and feasible. The Authority will make every effort to ensure the personal safety and health of all employees by providing a safe, sanitary, and healthful working environment.

Employees will be covered by Worker's Compensation Insurance.

For the Authority's Safety and employee well being all employees must comply with the following rules at all times.

1. All employees are responsible to ensure that their work areas are maintained in a clean, neat and orderly fashion.
2. While in a course of daily activities, employees are to be constantly watchful for any condition that appears abnormal.
3. If an employee observes any unsafe conditions such as broken or frayed electrical wires, or smells leaking gas, unusual odors, etc., he/she should report it immediately to the Department Head or Executive Director or other managerial employee, in their absence.
4. Employees should not use any materials in their work area that are labeled flammable unless instructed by the Department Head in the proper use of same.
5. If smoke is detected coming from any area, the alarm should be sounded and the Authority's standard fire fighting procedures followed.
6. Smoking is permitted only in authorized areas in each of the Authority facilities.
7. In the event of a fire: unless otherwise directed by his/her Department Head, the employee will follow the fire procedures which have been established and/or posted.
8. Employees should exercise good fire prevention practice at all times. (i.e., No candle burning in offices).
9. Refer to Appendix E HACD Disaster Plan

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The Authority encourages prompt and informal resolution of disputes as they arise. A sincere attempt shall be made to resolve any dispute informally, however, if no informal resolution is possible, employees shall have the right to invoke this Grievance Procedure in any dispute arising out of or relating to their employment relations. This Grievance Procedure is intended to provide employees with an option to pursue dispute resolution. An employee wishing to file a complaint concerning an alleged act of sexual harassment may, in the alternative to filing a grievance pursuant to this procedure, file a complaint by following the procedure described in Article II of this manual concerning sexual harassment.

**Step 1:** Within seven (7) calendar days after the dispute or concern, an employee must present any grievance to his/her Department Head at which time he/she must notify the Department

that he/she is formally invoking this grievance procedure. The Department Head shall respond to the grievance within seven calendar days after the grievance procedure has been formally invoked.

**Step 2:** Within two (2) calendar days after the Department Head has responded to the grievance thereby completing Step 1, the employee may appeal the Department Head's decision to the Executive Director. The employee must notify the Executive Director that he/she is invoking Step 2, of this grievance procedure and explain the grievance. Within three (3) calendar days of the invocation of Step 2, the Executive Director shall confer with all persons that the Executive Director deems necessary for resolution of the grievance in an effort to adjust the matter to the satisfaction of all concerned. Within ten (10) calendar days after the invocation of Step 2, the Executive Director shall issue a written decision. The decision of the Executive Director shall be final unless the aggrieved employee elects to appeal the grievance further to the Grievance Committee.

Ultimately, any employee shall have the right to appear before and present his or her grievance to the Grievance Committee, which shall consist of the Executive Director, the Attorney for the Authority, and one Board Commissioner. Such appearance shall be a final appeal.

## **HOURS OF WORK; WORK SCHEDULE; LEAVING THE PREMISES**

Work schedules may differ from one department to another and the manager of each department will determine each employee's hours and work schedule. Scheduling of weekends and holidays should be on a rotating basis wherever possible. Employees will be expected to record their own time worked in accordance with established Authority policies and procedures. The Authority may change the starting time of any work shift.

The regular work week shall consist of forty (40) hours, with the provision of one (1) non-paid hour lunch break. Two additional paid breaks may be taken at the discretion of the employee, provided, however, said breaks do not impede the normal operation of the Authority and generally should not exceed 15 minutes.

Employees may leave the Authority's premises for their meal period. Employees are expected to be working on the premises during their regularly scheduled hours, unless they have properly notified their manager of illness or other absence.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

The Housing Authority is to be open for business despite snow or other inclement weather conditions unless otherwise determined by the Executive Director.

Employees are not expected to endanger themselves by driving to work during adverse weather conditions. Attendance during bad weather should be a matter of individual judgment based on safety and availability of alternative modes of transportation. Common sense must be exercised. During inclement weather, some travel delays are to be expected.

Any decision to delay opening of the office or to close for the day will be conveyed by email/text/or phone and if possible, posted on the website. Generally, if no announcement is made by 7:00 a.m. the office will be open at the usual time. In regards to opening and closing the authority due to inclement weather:

- If there is a delayed opening and an employee arrives by the Housing Authority specified time: All employees who report at that time will be paid for the entire day;
- If an employee arrives after the specified delayed opening time: Salaried and hourly employees will be paid from the arrival time through the remainder of the day, and the employee may use PTO to be paid for the work hours prior to the time of arrival.
- If the employee is unable to come in at all: Salaried and hourly employees may use PTO to be paid for the day, or the employee may choose to be unpaid for the day.
- If inclement weather begins during the day and there is early dismissal: All employees present at the time of dismissal will be paid for the remainder of the day as scheduled.
- If inclement weather begins and the Housing Authority does not close but the employee chooses to leave early: Salaried and hourly employees will be paid only through the period that was worked. The employee may take PTO for the remainder of the day.
- If the office is closed all day: All employees scheduled to work will be paid for the day as scheduled.

## **TIMECARDS; PAYCHECKS; WAGES**

Anyone who tampers with the timecard of another employee will be subject to disciplinary action, including discharge.

Employees are required to enter their complete legal signature on their timecard at the end of the last worked shift in any pay period. All timecards must be approved by the manager before payroll checks are issued.

Paychecks are issued bi-weekly. They may be picked up at the location designated by the Authority from time to time.

If an employee thinks an error has been made concerning his/her pay, this matter should be brought to the attention of the HR department, and a correction will be made as soon as possible. Paychecks are only issued to the person named on the check unless advance arrangements have been made with the HR department to deliver the paycheck by mail to the person named or to deliver it to another employee pursuant to a written consent signed by the named person. Paychecks should be examined by the employee as soon as received and any

errors or discrepancies reported immediately to the HR department. Direct deposit is required for all paychecks unless an extenuating circumstance applies.

## **PAY PERIOD**

The regular pay period is two (2) weeks. The workweek begins on Saturday at 12:01 a.m. and ends seven (7) days later on Friday at 11:59 p.m. Payroll will be deposited into employee's accounts the morning of each payday. Paystubs will be distributed to employees. Changes in job title, rate of pay, etc. will be effective at the beginning of the next regular pay period following the date of the change.

## **ACCIDENTS AND ILLNESS ON THE JOB**

Any employee injured on the job must, as soon as possible, report the injury (no matter how slight) to his/her manager. In the event an employee becomes ill on the job, the same procedure should be followed. The injured employee and manager must fill out an accident report. If there is a witness to the injury they will fill out a witness form. Post accident doctor visit and drug testing is mandatory.

Employees must also report all accidents or incidents involving a resident, other employee, or visitor to the Department Head or Executive Director, immediately.

## **SOLICITATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE**

To avoid disruption of operations or disturbance of residents, the following rules apply to solicitation and distribution of literature, on the Authority's premises:

**Employees:** Solicitation, for any purpose, is prohibited during working time. Thus, solicitation must be confined to periods when both employees are on non-working time. Further, an employee may not distribute materials any time for any purpose in working areas. And, employees may not distribute materials anywhere during working time. Thus, distribution must be confined to periods when both employees are on non-working time, and in non-working areas.

Non-working time refers to the period(s) during the employee's workday when the employee is properly not engaged in the performance of work, including meal and break periods, immediately before or after the employee's work hours, or other times when no work is expected to be performed.

**Non-Employees:** Persons not employed by the Authority may not solicit, or distribute literature, on the Authority's property, at any time, for any purpose.

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

Refer to Appendix A for the Authority's Code of Ethics.

## **PROHIBITED POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

Each employee has the right to vote as he or she chooses and to express his or her opinions on political subjects or candidates. However, Authority employees and officers are prohibited by federal law {5 U.S.C. Section 1502} from taking part in the following "political activities":

- A. Using their official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering or affecting the result of an election or a nomination for office;
- B. Directly or indirectly coercing, attempting to coerce, commanding, or advising a State or local officer or employee, including another employee of the Authority, to pay, lend, or contribute anything of value to a party, committee, organization, agency or person for political purposes; or
- C. Being a candidate for elective office.

Employees who have questions about their involvement in political activities, or who believe that others may be involved in political activities in violation of this provision, are encouraged to consult their manager or the Executive Director.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Housing Authority employees must exercise extreme care to maintain the strict confidentiality of the Housing Authority business. Internal matters shall not be discussed in the presence of unauthorized persons within the Housing Authority or with anyone outside of the Housing Authority (including but not limited to clients, landlords, contractors and other associates we conduct business with).

Any information employees receive regarding the Housing Authority and or its residents are the private property of the Housing Authority except as otherwise provided by law. Any employee found to have violated this rule may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

# ARTICLE V – DIGITAL SECURITY

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## **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

Electronic Communication Devices (ECDs) include, but are not limited to cellular phones, smart phones, PDAs, radios, and any other wireless device used for communication. Housing Authority owned or issued ECDs are intended to be used for Housing Authority business. The Housing authority understands, however, that extenuating circumstances may arise in which employees may need to use their Housing Authority owned or issued ECD for personal reasons. Personal use should be kept at a minimum and shall not be abused. Excess personal use of Housing Authority ECDs may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Excess use of personally owned ECDs that interferes with the successful completion of job duties may also result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### *Etiquette*

Housing Authority employees should use reasonable consideration and respect for Housing Authority clients, vendors, Commissioners and employees when placing or accepting phone calls, text messages, or any other electronic communications. These actions should be avoided while in meetings or when dealing with clients, except in situations where there is an emergency. ECDs should be placed on silent or vibrate mode to avoid unnecessary interruptions.

### *Authority Review of ECD Usage*

The Housing Authority reserves the right, for legitimate business reasons, to audit and review calls, text messages, and any other communications made using a Housing Authority owned or issued ECD. Housing Authority employees shall have no expectation of privacy with regards to calls, text messages, or other communications made using a Housing Authority owned or issued ECDs.

## **COMPUTER, INTERNET & EMAIL USAGE**

The security, integrity, and proper usage of Housing Authority Computers, email addresses, and internet access is a necessity for the effective conduct of Housing Authority business. The intent of this policy is to safeguard the security and integrity of the Housing Authority's information system, assure reasonable access to computer based information, and prevent in appropriate use of Housing Authority computers, email addresses or internet access.

This policy covers all Housing Authority owned or issued computers, email addresses, and Housing Authority provided internet access, regardless of the time or location of use. This includes, but is not limited to email or internet access obtained through Housing Authority issued electronic communications devices such as cellular phones, smart phones and PDAs.

Additionally, this policy applies to all outside contractors and consultants who have been given authorized access to any of the Housing Authority's computer based information systems.

### *Prohibited Uses*

Housing Authority employees may not engage in misuse of Housing Authority computers, email addresses or provided internet access. Examples of such misuses include but are not limited to:

1. Downloading software without approval from a manager. Software that is approved for downloading must be registered to the Housing Authority.
2. Copying software, unless such copying for legitimate back-up purposes and has been approved by a manager.
3. Knowingly introducing a computer virus or any other contaminating or destructive features in to the Housing Authority computer systems.
4. Transmitting copyrighted materials.
5. Downloading files from the internet except for an express business purpose.
6. Transmitting, forwarding, or downloading material that is offensive, abusive, pornographic, obscene profane, discriminatory, harassing, fraudulent, or otherwise prohibited by federal, state or local law.
7. Using email or the internet for any purpose that is illegal, against company policy, or contrary to the Housing Authority's best interest.
8. Transmitting or disseminating confidential Housing Authority or tenant information or proprietary materials without and express business purpose or authorization.
9. Sending or forwarding any chain email, broadcast email or spam.
10. Gambling.
11. Use a Housing Authority email address or internet access for personal gain including outside employment, self-employment, and family owned businesses.
12. Use social media, visit chat rooms, use listservs, or use instant messaging, or news groups when not business-related.
13. Post Housing Authority email address on the internet when not business related.
14. Receive or forward unsolicited emails that violate company policy.
15. Download radio, video, or music transmissions from internet sites without approval.
16. Attempt to defeat any security mechanisms to gain unauthorized access to computer files or other information on the Housing Authority's telephone systems, electronic communication systems, or information systems.
17. Attempting to read, intercept, copy, or delete emails sent or received by other users.
18. Posting or transmitting any message anonymously under a false name or permitting any other individual to do so.
19. Impersonating another person.
20. Collection information about others including email addresses, without their consent.
21. Browsing through information or files on Housing Authority computers or networks not directly related to the employees job.

Misuse of Housing Authority computers, email addresses or internet access may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. In addition, such misuses may also be reported to appropriate federal, state or local authorities.

### *Ensuring Compliance*

The Housing Authority has the right, but not the duty, to monitor any and all aspects of its computer system, including employee email and internet usage to ensure compliance with this policy. Therefore, employees should be aware of the following:

1. Employees should not have an expectation of privacy in anything they create, send, or receive using a Housing Authority Computer, email address or any other form of electronic communication.
2. All information generated on the computer is the property of the Housing Authority and is subject to subpoena for legal purposes.
3. Unless otherwise provided by law, any document, file or other record a Housing Authority employee creates, sends, or receives using a Housing Authority computer email address, or other electronic communications device will be subject to disclosure under the law.
4. Managers have the responsibility to assure that vigilant computer security procedures are followed for their area. Records should be kept regarding employee authorization to use computers. These records should be kept up to date, with changes to the records made promptly as employees are hired or leave the Housing Authority.

### *Employee Acknowledgement*

Without exception, all employees will be informed of this policy and will be asked to sign the Employee Acknowledgement form enclosed in this policy, acknowledging the **Computer, Internet & Email Usage policy** prior to gaining access or authorization to use Housing Authority computers, email addresses, internet access or electronic devices. Employees already having access at the time of the establishment of this policy will also be asked to sign the Acknowledgement in order to retain access.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

The Housing Authority recognizes the increasing use of social media as a communication tool. This addresses Housing Authority employee's use of social media. For the purpose of this policy, the Housing Authority considers the term "social media" to include but not limited to:

- Personal websites & blogs
- "wikis", Twitter
- Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn)
- Online media sharing websites (e.g., YouTube, Flickr)
- Online forums, message boards or bulletin boards.

The Housing Authority acknowledges that some of its employees may choose to use social media on their own time for personal purposes. Housing Authority rules and policies apply to the conduct and communications of Housing Authority employees while using social media just as those rules and policies apply to conduct and communications in any other setting. In addition, Housing Authority employees are prohibited from using social media in any manner that:

1. Violates any federal, state, or local laws or regulations.
2. Violates any Housing authority policy, rule, standard, or requirement, including but not limited to the:
  - a. Harassment, discrimination, and retaliation policy
  - b. Confidentiality policy
  - c. Code of Ethics
  - d. Political Activities and
  - e. Outside Employment
3. Disrupts or hinders the Housing Authority's operations.
4. Infringes on any third party rights, including but not limited to intellectual property rights such as copyrights or trademarks.
5. Is defamatory, libelous, or might be construed as harassment or disparagement on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability or any other legally protected status.
6. Discloses confidential information related to Housing Authority business, tenants, employees or other matters.

Employees are reminded that information posted or communicated using social media may often be accessible by virtually anyone with internet access. This may include other Housing Authority employees, such as supervisions and subordinates, as well as Housing Authority tenants. Also, once information is posted or uploaded onto a social media website or network, it can be nearly impossible to completely remove or eliminate. Housing Authority employees are therefore encouraged to use good judgment if they use social media.

Employees are also reminded that, pursuant to the Computer, Email and Internet Usage Policy, and the Electronic Communications Policy, they have no expectation of privacy with respect to the use of any Housing Authority owned or issued computer or electronic communications devices.

Use of social media by a Housing Authority employee in violation of this Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

# HACD Employee Handbook

## EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge the receipt of the Authority's Employee Handbook which describes many of my employee benefits and obligations. I agree to abide by the Authority's written and unwritten policies, procedures, rules and regulations.

Since the information, policies, and benefits described here are necessarily subject to change, I understand that revised information will supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the Board of Commissioners and the Executive Director of the Authority have the ability to adopt any revisions to the policies in this manual.

**This Employee Handbook manual is only a guide. Neither the provisions of this handbook nor any other human resource policies of the Authority, establishes a contract of employment between any employee and the Authority. Neither the Authority nor any of its employees are committed to any employment relationship for a fixed period of time. Employment can be terminated with or without cause and with or without notice, at any time at the option of the employee or the Authority. No one at the Authority may change this understanding.**

_____	_____
Print Employee Name	Date
_____	_____
Employee Signature	Date
_____	_____
Authority Witness	Date

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appendix A - Code of Ethics        | <input type="checkbox"/> Appendix D - Travel Policy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appendix B - Drug Free Workplace   | <input type="checkbox"/> Appendix E - Disaster Plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appendix C - Employee Expectations |   |

- This signed acknowledgment will be placed in the above listed employee's personnel file.