**[Company]**

**EMPLOYEE [TEAM MEMBER] HANDBOOK**

Disclaimer

The following is a federally compliant sample employee handbook. It does not contain any policies or provisions pertaining to state or local laws. Prior to using, employers should review their state and local laws to determine if additional policies or provisions are necessary. Before implementing any employee handbook, employers should consult counsel to ensure that the handbook is tailored toward the specific needs of the employer and is compliant with the laws of all relevant jurisdictions.

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1.0 Welcome

*1.1 Welcome*

Welcome! You have just joined a dedicated team of employees and managers. We hope that your employment with the Company will be rewarding and challenging. We take pride in our employees as well as the products and services we provide. We consider ourselves leaders in the field of [industry].

Please take the time now to read this employee handbook carefully. Sign the acknowledgment at the end to show that you have read, understood, and agree to the contents of this handbook, which sets out the basic rules and guidelines concerning your employment. This handbook supersedes any previously issued handbooks or policy statements dealing with the subjects discussed herein. The Company reserves the right to interpret, modify, or supplement the provisions of this handbook at any time.

Please understand that no employee handbook can address every situation in the work place. If you ever have questions about your employment, you are encouraged to ask them. If you have any difficulty reading or understanding any of the provisions of this handbook, please contact [Human Resources]. Likewise, if you have any suggestions related to Company policies or procedures, please let us know.

We wish you success in your employment here at [Company]!

All the best,

President or CEO Name, President or CEO Title

[Company]

*1.2 At-Will Employment*

Your employment with the Company is on an "at-will" basis. This means your employment may be terminated at any time, with or without notice and with or without cause. Likewise, we respect your right to leave the company at any time, with or without notice and with or without cause.

Nothing in the employee handbook or any other Company document should be understood as creating guaranteed or continued employment, a right to termination only "for cause," or of any other guarantee of continued benefits or employment. Only the [name or title of hiring authority] has the authority to make promises or negotiate with regard to guaranteed or continued employment, and any such promises are only effective if placed in writing and signed by the [name or title of hiring authority].

2.0 Introductory Language and Policies

*2.1 About the Company*

[Add language regarding your individual company after the model Handbook has been generated and downloaded.]

*2.2 Ethics Code*

[Company] will conduct its business honestly and ethically wherever operations are maintained. We strive to improve the quality of our services, products, and operations and will maintain a reputation for honesty, fairness, respect, responsibility, integrity, trust, and sound business judgment. Our managers and employees are expected to adhere to high standards of business and personal integrity as a representation of our business practices.

We expect that officers, directors, and employees will not knowingly misrepresent the Company and will not speak on behalf of the Company unless specifically authorized. The confidentiality of trade secrets, proprietary information, and similar confidential commercially-sensitive information (i.e. financial or sales records/reports, marketing or business strategies/plans, product development, customer lists, patents, trademarks, etc.) about our Company or operations, or that of our customers or partners, is to be treated with discretion and only be disseminated on a need-to-know basis (see policies relating to privacy).

Violation of the Code of Ethics can result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment. The degree of discipline imposed may be influenced by the existence of voluntary disclosure of any ethical violation and whether or not the violator cooperated in any subsequent investigation.

[Insert for publicly traded companies: Any misuse of material inside information in connection with trading in the Company's securities can expose an individual to civil liability and penalties under the Securities Exchange Act. Under this act, officers, managers, and employees in possession of material information not available to the public are considered "insiders." Spouses, friends, suppliers, brokers, and others outside the Company who may have acquired such information directly or indirectly from an officer, manager, or employee are also "insiders." The act prohibits insiders from trading in, or recommending the sale or purchase of, the Company's securities, while such inside information is regarded as "material," or if it is important enough to influence you or any other person in the purchase or sale of securities of any company with which we do business, which could be affected by the inside information. The following guidelines should be followed in dealing with inside information:

* Until material information has been publicly released by the Company, an employee must not disclose it to anyone except those within the Company whose positions require use of that information.
* Officers, managers, and employees must not buy or sell the Company's securities when they have knowledge of material information concerning the Company until it has been disclosed to the public and the public has had sufficient time to absorb the information.
* Officers, managers, and employees shall not buy or sell securities of another corporation, the value of which is likely to be affected by an action by the Company of which the employee is aware and which has not been publicly disclosed.]

*2.3 Mission Statement*

The mission of our company is: [insert your Company mission statement].

*2.4 Organization*

[Add your company organization chart after the model Handbook has been generated and downloaded.]

*2.5 Company Facilities*

[Add language regarding your company facilities after the model Handbook has been generated and downloaded.]

*2.6 Revisions to Handbook*

This employee handbook is our attempt to keep you informed of the terms and conditions of your employment, including Company policies and procedures. The handbook is not a contract. The Company reserves the right to revise, add, or delete from this handbook as it determines to be in its best interest except the policy concerning at will employment . When changes are made to the policies and guidelines contained herein, we will endeavor to communicate them in a timely fashion, typically in a written supplement to the handbook or in a posting on company bulletin boards.

3.0 Hiring and Orientation Policies

*3.1 EEO Statement and Nonharassment Policy*

**Equal Opportunity Statement**

Our Company is committed to the principles of equal employment. We are committed to complying with all federal, state, and local laws providing equal employment opportunities, and all other employment laws and regulations. It is our intent to maintain a work environment which is free of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation because of age (40 and over), race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, pregnancy (including childbirth, lactation and related medical conditions), physical or mental disability, genetic information (including testing and characteristics), veteran status, uniformed servicemember status, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local laws. The Company is dedicated to the fulfillment of this policy in regard to all aspects of employment, including but not limited to recruiting, hiring, placement, transfer, training, promotion, rates of pay, and other compensation, termination, and all other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

The Company will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of all allegations of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, or any violation of the Company's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy in a confidential manner. The Company will take appropriate corrective action, if and where warranted. The Company prohibits retaliation against any employee who provides information about, complains, or assists in the investigation of any complaint of discrimination or violation of the Company's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy.

We are all responsible for upholding the Company's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and any claimed violations of that policy should be brought to the attention of your manager and/or human resource personnel.

**Policy Against Workplace Harassment**

[Company] has a strict policy against all types of workplace harassment, including sexual harassment and other forms of workplace harassment based upon an individual'sage (40 and over), race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, pregnancy (including childbirth, lactation and related medical conditions), physical or mental disability, genetic information (including testing and characteristics), veteran status, uniformed servicemember status, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local laws. All forms of harassment of, or by, employees, vendors, visitors, customers, and clients are strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

**A. Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's employment (2) submission to, or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

While it is not possible to identify each and every act that constitutes or may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of sexual harassment are provided below: (a) unwelcome requests for sexual favors; (b) lewd or derogatory comments or jokes; (c) comments regarding sexual behavior or the body of another employee; (d) sexual innuendo and other vocal activity such as catcalls or whistles; (e) obscene letters, notes, emails, invitations, photographs, cartoons, articles, or other written or pictorial materials of a sexual natures; (f) repeated requests for dates after being informed that interest is unwelcome; (g) retaliating against an employee for refusing a sexual advance or reporting an incident of possible sexual harassment to [Company] or any government agency; (h) offering or providing favors or employment benefits such as promotions, favorable evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, etc., in exchange for sexual favors; and (i) any unwanted physical touching or assaults, or blocking or impeding movements.

**B. Other Harassment**

Other workplace harassment is often verbal or physical conduct that insults or shows hostility or aversion towards an individual because of the individual'sage (40 and over), race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, pregnancy (including childbirth, lactation and related medical conditions), physical or mental disability, genetic information (including testing and characteristics), veteran status, uniformed servicemember status, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local laws.

Again, while it is not possible to list all the circumstances that may constitute other forms of workplace harassment, the following are some examples of conduct that may constitute workplace harassment: (a) the use of disparaging or abusive words or phrases, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to the above protected categories; (b) written or graphic material that insults, stereotypes or shows aversion or hostility towards an individual or group because of one of the above protected categories and that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, email, voicemail, or elsewhere on the Company's premises, or circulated in the workplace; and (c) a display of symbols, slogans, or items that are associated with hate or intolerance towards any select group.

**Reporting Discrimination and Harassment**

Any employee who feels that he or she has witnessed, or been subject to, any form of discrimination or harassment is required to immediately notify their supervisor, Human Resources manager, or other manager at the Company.

[Company] prohibits retaliation against any employee who provides information about, complains, or assists in the investigation of any complaint of harassment or discrimination.

We will promptly and thoroughly investigate any claim and take appropriate action where we find a claim has merit. Discipline for violation of this policy may include, but is not limited to reprimand, suspension, demotion, transfer, and discharge. If the Company determines that harassment or discrimination occurred, corrective action will be taken to effectively end the harassment. As necessary, the Company may monitor any incident of harassment or discrimination to assure the inappropriate behavior has stopped. In all cases, the Company will follow up as necessary to ensure no retaliation for making a complaint or cooperating with an investigation.

*3.2 Affirmative Action Policy for Government Contractors*

[**Note:** This policy is optional and applies only to government contractors.]

As a government contractor, the Company will take affirmative action to ensure that job applicants are employed and that employees are treated during employment without regard to their race, creed, color, national origin, sex, or other protected classifications.

*3.3 Disability Accommodation*

The Company complies with federal and state disability regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Qualified applicants or employees who inform the Company of a physical or mental disability requiring accommodation in order for them to perform the essential functions of their jobs should inform [Human Resources or supervisor] of this so that we can together discuss what accommodations are available and appropriate.

Procedure for reasonable accommodation requests:

* Employee advises [Human Resources or supervisor] of the need for accommodation. Employee completes a Request for Accommodation form and gives it to his or her supervisor.
* The accommodation request will be discussed with the employee and the employee's manager(s).
* The employee may be required to provide documentation supporting a disability, including medical certification.
* If a reasonable appropriate accommodation is readily available, the request will be approved and the accommodation implemented.
* If an accommodation is not readily ascertainable, the matter will be pursued further with assistance from appropriate external resources.

The Company will consider the request but reserves the right to offer its own accommodation to the extent permitted by law. Some, but not all, of the factors that the Company will consider are cost, the effect that an accommodation will have on current established policies, and the burden on operations -- including other employees -- when determining a reasonable accommodation.

*3.4 Religious Accommodation*

[Company] is dedicated to treating the religious diversity of all our employees equally and with respect. Employees may request an accommodation when their religious beliefs causes a deviation from [Company]'s dress code, schedule, basic job duties, or other aspects of employment. The Company will consider the request but reserves the right to offer its own accommodation to the extent permitted by law. Some, but not all, of the factors that the Company will consider are cost, the effect that an accommodation will have on current established policies and the burden on operations, including other employees, when determining a reasonable accommodation. At no time will the Company question the validity of a person's belief.

Religious accommodation request forms are available from [your supervisor or Human Resources].

*3.5 Posting of Openings*

[**Note:** This section is optional.]

[Company] desires to promote qualified employees from within where it believes that is possible, consistent with the need to assure that all positions are staffed by highly competent individuals. New job openings generally will be posted on the employee bulletin board, as well as on the Company internet site. [Employees who refer a new employee may be eligible for a referral bonus.] [Prior to any outside recruitment, we will announce all new positions within the Company for five working days.]

*3.6 Conflicts of Interest*

[Company] is concerned with conflicts of interest that create actual or potential job related concerns, especially in the areas of confidentiality, customer relations, safety, security, and morale. Any actual or potential conflict of interest between an employee of the Company and a competitor, supplier, distributor, or contractor to the Company, must be disclosed by the employee to [Human Resources]. If an actual or potential conflict of interest is determined to exist, the Company will take such steps as it deems necessary to reduce or eliminate this conflict.

*3.7 Employment of Relatives and Friends*

We will not employ friends or relatives in circumstances where actual or potential conflicts may arise which could compromise supervision, safety, confidentiality, security, and morale at the Company. It is your obligation to inform the Company of any such potential conflict so the Company can determine how best to respond to the particular situation.

*3.8 Job Descriptions*

[Company] attempts to maintain a job description for each position. If you do not have a copy of a current job description you should request one from your supervisor. Job descriptions prepared by [Company] serve as an outline only. Due to the needs of business, you may be required to perform job duties not within your written job description. Furthermore, the Company may have to revise, add to, or delete from your job duties according to company needs. On occasion, the Company may need to revise job descriptions with or without advance notice to the employee.

If you have any questions regarding your job description, or the scope of your duties, please speak with your supervisor or [Human Resources].

*3.9 New Employees and Introductory Periods*

The first [90] days of your employment is considered an introductory period. During this period you will become familiar with [Company] and your job responsibilities. During this time we will have the opportunity to monitor the quality and value of your performance and make any necessary adjustments in your job description or responsibilities. If, at the completion of this introductory period, we believe that the quality and value of your performance merits your continued employment and work remains available, you will become eligible for company benefits. Your introductory period with the Company can be shortened or lengthened as deemed appropriate by management and Human Resources. Completion of this introductory period does not imply guaranteed or continued employment. Nothing that occurs during or after this period should be construed to change the nature of the "at-will" employment relationship.

*3.10 Training Program*

In most cases, and for most departments, employee training is done on an individual basis by the department manager. Even if an employee has had previous experience in their specified functions, it is necessary for them to learn our specific procedures, as well as the responsibilities of the specific position. If you ever feel you require additional training, please consult your supervisor or department manager.

*3.11 Employment Authorization Verification*

All new hires and current employees are required by federal law to verify their identity and eligibility to work in the United States. You will be required to complete federal Form I-9 on the first day of employment. If this form and verification of employment eligibility is not completed during the first three days of employment, we are required by law to terminate your employment. If you are currently employed and have not complied with this requirement or if your status has changed, please inform your supervisor.

4.0 Wage and Hour Policies

*4.1 Introduction*

An employee's pay depends on a wide range of factors, including pay scale surveys, individual effort, profits, and market forces. If you have any questions about your compensation, including matters such as paid time off, commissions, overtime, benefits, or paycheck deductions, please speak with your supervisor or Human Resources.

*4.2 Pay Period*

The standard pay period is [weekly, biweekly, semimonthly, etc.] for all employees. Pay dates are [insert day or dates]. Should any pay period fall on a holiday, you will be paid [on the preceding workday. If a pay date falls on a Saturday, paychecks will be issued on Friday. If a paycheck date falls on a Sunday, paychecks may be issued on Monday. Special provisions may be required from time to time if holidays fall on paycheck dates. Please inquire of your supervisor if this type of date arises. [Insert other special circumstances here, if applicable, or revise previous language as applicable.]

Additional statement for sales personnel:

Sales Personnel: Sales personnel are paid semimonthly. All commissions or bonuses earned in the preceding month will be paid on the [\_\_\_\_] day of the month. Draw paychecks will be issued on the [\_\_\_\_] day of the month for sales that took place during that month. On the [\_\_\_\_] day of the following month the net commission checks (commissions less draw) will be issued. [Adjust language for sales personnel as appropriate.]

*4.3 Paycheck Deductions*

The Company is required by federal, state, and certain local laws to withhold certain deductions from your paycheck. This includes income and unemployment taxes, and FICA contributions (Social Security and Medicare) as well as any other deductions required under law or by court order for wage garnishments. The amount of your tax deductions will depend on your earnings and the number of exemptions you list on your federal Form W-4 and applicable state withholding form. You may also authorize voluntary deductions from your paycheck, including contributions for insurance premiums, retirement plans, spending accounts, or other services. Your deductions will be reflected in your wage statement.

Contact the Payroll Department or Human Resources for any questions about your paycheck.

*4.4 Direct Deposit*

We encourage all employees to enroll in direct deposit. If you would like to take advantage of direct deposit, ask [the Payroll Supervisor or Human Resources Director] for an application form. Typically, the bank will begin the direct deposit of your payroll within 30 calendar days after you submit your completed application.

If you have selected the direct deposit payroll service, a written explanation of your deductions will be given to you on paydays described in the preceding sections in lieu of a check.

*4.5 Posting of Work Schedules*

[**Note:** This section is optional.]

Sample statement #1:

All work schedules will be posted on the Company bulletin board located at [ ] on every [Friday] for the following week. If, by Friday afternoon, you are uncertain of your work schedule for the following week, please contact your supervisor.

Sample statement #2:

All work schedules will be posted on the Company bulletin board located [\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]. The work schedules are done on a monthly basis, and are posted at least [7] days before the start of a new month. If, by the last week of the current month, you are uncertain of your next monthly work schedule, please contact your supervisor or store manager.

*4.6 Recording Time*

Federal and state laws require us to keep accurate records of hours worked by nonexempt (hourly) employees. You should clock in no more than five minutes ahead of time and clock out no later than five minutes after your quitting time. Every nonexempt employee of the Company is required to enter his or her hours worked accurately, including all lunch periods and any rest periods of more than 20 minutes. Employees are required to notify the company of any pay discrepancies, unrecorded or misrecorded work hours, or any involuntary missed meal or break periods.

Do not complete the time sheet of any other employee or request that they do so for you. Please be sure to indicate your days off. Any changes to your time card must be approved of and initialed by your supervisor. Time cards are to be turned in to [accounting] on the [\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_] day of each month.

Falsification of time records or recording time for another employee may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

*4.7 Travel Time Pay*

Some nonexempt positions within [Company] require travel. [Company] pays nonexempt employees for travel time in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). For purposes of this policy, the regular workday is [8:30 – 5:30 (Monday – Friday), etc.].

**Home to Work Travel**

An employee who travels from home before the regular workday and returns to his or her home at the end of the workday is engaged in ordinary home to work travel, which is not work time.

**Home to Work on a Special One Day Assignment in Another City**

An employee who regularly works at a fixed location in one city is given a special one day assignment in another city and returns home the same day. The time spent in traveling to and returning from the other city is work time, except that the employer may deduct/not count that time the employee would normally spend commuting to the regular work site.

**Travel That Is All in a Day's Work**

Time spent by an employee in travel as part of their principal activity, such as travel from job site to job site during the workday, is work time and must be counted as hours worked.

**Travel Away from Home Community**

Travel that keeps an employee away from home overnight is travel away from home. Travel away from home is clearly work time when it cuts across the employee's workday. The time is not only hours worked on regular working days during normal working hours but also during corresponding hours on nonworking days. [Company] will not consider as work time that time spent in travel away from home outside of regular working hours as a passenger on an airplane, train, boat, bus, or automobile.

**Calculating and Reporting Travel Time**

Employees are responsible for accurately tracking, calculating, and reporting travel time. Travel time should be calculated by rounding up to the nearest quarter hour.

*4.8 Overtime Authorization for Nonexempt Employees*

If you are a nonexempt employee, you may qualify for overtime pay. All overtime must be approved in advance, in writing, by your supervisor. Please request an overtime authorization form prior to working overtime.

At certain times the Company may require you to work overtime. We will attempt to give as much notice as possible in this instance. However, advance notice may not always be possible. Failure to work overtime when requested or working unauthorized overtime may result in discipline, up to and including discharge.

Overtime pay of one and one-half an employee's regular rate of pay or average pay rate (if you perform work at different pay rates during the relevant week) is paid for any hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek. Holidays, vacation days, and sick leave days do not count as time worked for computing overtime.

*4.9 Attendance Policy*

If you know ahead of time that you will be absent or late, provide reasonable advance notice to your supervisor. Employees may be required to provide documentation of any medical or other excuse for being absent or late.

The Company reserves the right to apply unused vacation, sick time, or other paid time off to unauthorized absences. Absences resulting from approved leave, vacation, or legal requirements are exceptions to the policy.

*4.10 Job Abandonment*

If an employee fails to show up for work or call in with an acceptable reason for the absence for a period of three consecutive days, he or she will be considered to have abandoned his or her job and voluntarily resigned from the company.

*4.11 Travel Expenses*

[**Note:** This section is optional and should reflect the company's travel policies. The policy provided below is a sample only.]

The purpose of this policy is to define employee travel rules and the authority for incurring and approving travel expenses.

Travel expenses are the reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by employees when traveling on approved Company business trips. Company travel is limited to business activities for which other means of communication is inadequate and for which prior approval of the employee's supervisor has been received.

**Advances**

The Company does not generally provide cash travel advances. Normally, employees are expected to use personal credit cards and/or their own cash and submit their approved expenses on the standard Expense Report Form.

**Travel Expenses**

The Company pays the actual amounts incurred for appropriate expenses when employees are on travel assignments. Examples of typical expenses include the following:

* Airline tickets.
* Meals and lodging.
* Car rental, bus, taxi, parking.
* Telephone and fax.
* Laundry and dry cleaning (trips exceeding one week only, unless emergency).
* Business supplies and services.
* Associated gratuities.
* Other expenses necessary to achieve the business purposes.

**Family Members**

The Company will pay the travel expenses of spouses or other family members only when their presence is necessary to the business purpose of the trip and when approved in advance in writing by the [President or Chief Executive Officer].

**Air Travel**

Employees are to use economy or tourist class airfares when traveling on Company business. In addition, private, noncommercial aircraft or chartered aircraft is not to be used, and no more than two Company officers should travel together on the same flight.

Airfares are to be charged to personal credit cards and subsequently turned in on a monthly expense report.

**Hotels**

Neither in-room movies nor refreshment bars are approved Company expenses.

**Insurance**

The Company does not pay for personal travel insurance for employees.

**Rental Cars**

Employees are to use rental firms having existing relationships with the Company and, where feasible, have negotiated discounts rates. Reasonable transportation available is to be used.

**Personal Vehicles**

All employees using their own vehicle for business purposes must maintain insurance coverage as required by law and may not have more than [2 points] on their driving record. Travel between the employee's home and primary office is not considered to be business travel. Employees are not authorized to use personal vehicles for business travel without authorization. Every attempt should be made to utilize the use of courier and delivery services in order to avoid hazard of liability and the time away from work. Employees will be reimbursed for vehicle use at the standard IRS mileage rate. The [President or Chief Executive Officer] must authorize any deviation from this policy.

**Employee Reporting**

Employees are to report their approved expenses on the standard Expense Report Form and must include a description of the expense, its business purpose, date, place, and the participants.

**Travel Reservations**

Airline travel, rental cars, and hotels must be booked through the corporate designated travel agency in order to be reimbursed.

*4.12 Business Expenses*

[**Note:** This section is optional and should reflect the company's business expense policies. The policy provided below is a sample only.]

The purpose of this policy is to define approved nontravel employee business expenses and the authority for incurring and approving such expenses.

Approved business expenses are the reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by employees to achieve legitimate business purposes that are not covered by normal Company procurement processes.

**Business Meetings (Company-Sponsored Events and Meetings)**

The Company pays for expenses necessary to achieve a valid business purpose when meetings are held with customers, vendors, or other Company employees. The most senior Company employee present is to pay and report all expenses.

The Company will make every effort to have a master account set up for Company-wide and large group events. However, if you are at a small meeting or staying by yourself at a hotel, pay individually and submit for reimbursement accordingly.

**Entertainment**

The Company pays for entertainment expenses only when they clearly benefit the Company and include customers and are promotional in nature. The most senior Company employee present is to pay and report all expenses.

**Technical and Training Seminars**

The Company pays for expenses associated with attendance at classes and seminars that enhance job-related skills. Prior approval must be obtained by the employee's manager/supervisors and appropriate management.

**Gifts**

Employees may present gifts only under exceptional circumstances and with prior approval of the appropriate Company officer. The Company does not reimburse cost over $25 for business gifts.

**Other Expenses**

The Company will pay for postage and telephone expenses that are for business purposes.

**Employee Reporting**

Employees are to report their approved expenses on the standard Expense Report Form and must include a description of the expense, its business purpose, date, place, and the participants.

*4.13 Use of Company Credit Cards*

[**Note:** This section is optional and should reflect the company's policies. The policy provided below is a sample only.]

Every employee in the possession of a Company issued credit card will adhere to the strictest guidelines of responsibility for the proper protection and use of that card. Company credit card purchases related to Company vehicle use (gas, oil, etc.) under $100 do not require prior approval. Company credit card purchases for vehicle use over $100 and any other business purchases over $25 must receive prior approval from your supervisor or manager.

All sales receipts generated by use of the Company credit card must be turned in [weekly/monthly] to [your immediate supervisor/manager/accounting]. Company credit cards are not to be used for personal reasons. Use of the company credit card is restricted to approved business related expenses.

Any unauthorized purchases made with a Company issued credit card will be the cardholder's responsibility. Any such purchase will be reimbursed to the company by the employee within [\_\_\_\_ days].

Lost or stolen Company issued cards must be reported immediately to your supervisor or manager. Failure to follow this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

*4.14 Rest and Meal Periods*

The Company strives to provide a safe and healthy work environment and complies with all federal and state regulations regarding rest and meal periods. Please check with your supervisor regarding procedures and schedules for rest and meal breaks. The Company requests that employees accurately observe and record meal and rest periods. If you know in advance that you may not be able to take your scheduled break or meal period, please let your supervisor know; in addition, notify your supervisor if you were unable to or prohibited from taking a rest or meal period at the soonest opportunity.

*4.15 Accommodations for Nursing Mothers*

[Company] will provide nursing mothers reasonable [paid/unpaid] break time to express milk for their infant children for up to one year following the child's birth.

To ensure privacy, nursing mothers will be provided a private room, other than a restroom, to express their milk. The room will be clearly designated and either have a lock or a sign on the door to indicate when the room is in use.

Nursing mothers will also be provided a refrigerator to store their breast milk. Employees are responsible for labeling their milk with their name and the date on which the milk was expressed.

Nursing mothers are encouraged to discuss the length and frequency of breastfeeding breaks with [their supervisor, HR, etc.].

Employees who have any questions or concerns regarding this policy should contact [their supervisor, HR, etc.].

[Optional clause: This policy applies only to employees classified as nonexempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act.]

5.0 Performance, Discipline, Layoff, and Termination

*5.1 Performance Improvement*

[Company] will make efforts to periodically review your work performance. The performance improvement process will take place on [an annual basis], or as business needs dictate. You may specifically request that your supervisor assist you in developing a performance improvement plan at any time.

The performance improvement process is a means for increasing the quality and value of your work performance. Your initiative, effort, attitude, job knowledge, and other factors will be addressed. You must understand that a positive job performance review does not guarantee a pay raise or continued employment. Company pay raises and promotions are based on numerous factors, only one of which is job performance.

*5.2 Promotions*

In an effort to match you with the best job for you and to meet the business needs of the Company, you may be transferred from your current job. It is the Company's policy to promote from within the Company only when the most qualified candidate is available. Promotions are made on an equal opportunity basis according to employees possessing the needed skills, education, experience, and other qualifications that are required for the job.

All employees promoted into new job positions will undergo a 90-day introductory period as described in the New Employees and Introductory Periods section. Unlike new hires, however, such employees will continue to receive Company benefits for which they are eligible.

*5.3 Pay Raises*

Depending on the Company's financial health and other factors, efforts will be made to give pay raises consistent with Company profitability, job performance, and the consumer price index. [Company] may also make individual pay raises based on merit or due to a change of job position.

*5.4 Transfer*

[Company] may transfer your employment from one position to another with or without notice, as required by production or service needs, or upon request by an employee and management approval. Transfers in excess of 90 days may be considered final and your paycheck may be increased or decreased consistent with the pay scale for your new position.

*5.5 Workforce Reductions (Layoffs)*

If necessary based upon the needs of the business, management may decide to implement a reduction in force (RIF). We acknowledge that RIFs can be a trying experience for management and employees alike, and the Company will make its best effort to make sound business decisions while acknowledging the needs of its workforce.

*5.6 Standards of Conduct*

[Company] wishes to create a work environment that promotes job satisfaction, respect, responsibility, integrity, and value for all of our employees, clients, customers, and other stakeholders. Every employee has a shared responsibility toward improving the quality of our work environment. By deciding to work at this Company, you agree to follow the Company's rules.

While it is impossible to list every item that could be considered misconduct in the workplace, what is outlined here is a list of common-sense infractions that could result in discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment. This policy is not intended to limit the Company's right to discipline or discharge employees for any reason permitted by law. In fact, while we value our employees, the Company retains the right to terminate an employee on an "at-will" basis.

Examples of inappropriate conduct include:

* Violation of the policies and procedures set forth in this handbook.
* Possessing, using, distributing, selling, or negotiating the sale of illegal drugs or other controlled substances.
* Being under the influence of alcohol during working hours on Company property (including Company vehicles), or on Company business.
* Inaccurate reporting of the hours worked by you or any other employee.
* Providing knowingly inaccurate, incomplete or misleading information when speaking on behalf of the Company or in the preparation of any employment related documents including, but not limited to, job applications, personnel files, employment review documents, intra-Company communication or expense records.
* Taking or destroying Company property.
* Possession of potentially hazardous or dangerous property [where not permitted] such as firearms, weapons, chemicals, etc., without prior authorization.
* Fighting with, or harassment (as defined in our EEO policies) of, any fellow employee, vendor, or customer.
* Disclosure of Company trade secrets and proprietary and confidential commercially-sensitive information (i.e. financial or sales records/reports, marketing or business strategies/plans, product development, customer lists, patents, trademarks, etc.) of the Company or its customers, contractors, suppliers, or vendors.
* Refusal or failure to follow directions or to perform a requested or required job task.
* Refusal or failure to follow safety rules and procedures.
* Excessive tardiness or absences.
* Smoking in nondesignated areas.
* Working unauthorized overtime.
* Solicitation of fellow employees on the Company premises during working time (Refer to Nonsolicitation/Nondistribution Policy).
* Failure to dress according to Company policy.
* Use of obscene or harassing (as defined by our EEO policies) language in the workplace.
* Outside employment which interferes with your ability to perform your job at this Company.
* Gambling on Company premises.
* Lending keys or keycards to Company property to unauthorized persons.

Nothing in this policy is intended to limit employee rights under the National Labor Relations Act.

*5.7 Criminal Activity/Arrests*

Involvement in criminal activity, whether on or off Company property, during employment may result in disciplinary action including suspension or termination of employment. Disciplinary action depends upon a review of all factors involved, including whether or not the employee's action was work-related, the nature of the act, or circumstances which adversely affect attendance or performance. Any disciplinary action is not dependent upon the disposition of any case in court.

Employees are expected to be on the job, ready to work, when scheduled. Inability to report to work as scheduled as a result of an arrest may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, for violation of an attendance policy or job abandonment.

Any disciplinary action taken will be based on information reasonably available. This information may come from witnesses, police, or any other source as long as management has reason to view the source as credible.

*5.8 Drug and Alcohol Policy*

[Company] considers drug and alcohol abuse a serious matter which will not be tolerated. The Company absolutely prohibits employees from using, selling, possessing, or being under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or a controlled substance or prescription drug not medically authorized while at their job, on Company property, or while on work time.

Therefore, it is the Company's policy that:

1. Employees shall not report to work under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or any controlled substance or prescription drug not medically authorized.
2. Employees shall not possess or use alcohol, illegal drugs, or any controlled substance or prescription drug not medically authorized while on company property or on company business.

The Company also cautions against use of prescribed or over-the-counter medication which can affect an employee's ability to perform his or her job safely or the use of prescribed or over-the-counter medication in a manner violating the recommended dosage or instructions from the doctor. Employees must have a valid prescription for any prescription medication [or medical marijuana] used by employees while working for the Company. Please inform your supervisor prior to working under the influence of a prescribed or over-the-counter medication that may affect your ability to perform your job safely. If the Company determines that the prescribed or over-the-counter medication does not pose a safety risk, you will be allowed to work. Failure to comply with these guidelines concerning prescription or over-the-counter medication may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

A violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

[Optional provision: The Company may assist its employees who seek treatment or rehabilitation for drug or alcohol dependency. The company may consider continued employment as long as the employee adequately addresses continued concerns regarding safety, health, production, communication, or other work-related matters. Employees may also be required to obtain a medical clearance, and agree to random testing and a "one-strike" rule as a condition of continued employment.]

**Drug-Free Workplace Policy [Federal Contractors]**

As a federal contractor, [Company] must comply with the requirements of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, which is a part of Public Law 100-690, Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988. The federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (section 5152) covers grants and contracts for the procurement of any service with a value of $25,000 or more.

**Drug-Free Workplace Act**

To comply with the act, federal agency contractors and federal grant recipients must provide a drug-free workplace. These federal contractors and grant recipients will:

* Publish a statement prohibiting the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of illegal drugs in the workplace and specify the actions that will be taken against employees for violations.
* Distribute a copy of the policy statement to each employee engaged in the performance of a federal grant or contract.
* Notify each employee that compliance with the policy is a condition of employment on such grant or contract and that the employee must abide by the terms of the policy statement. The policy statement includes the requirement that the employee notify the employer of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such conviction.
* Notify the granting or contracting agency within 10 days after learning of a criminal drug statute conviction.
* Impose a sanction as required under this act on any employee who is so convicted.
* Establish a program of drug-free awareness, informing employees about the organization's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace, the penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug-abuse violations, the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace, and any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and assistance programs.
* Make a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of these requirements.

**Americans with Disabilities Act**

In addition to complying with the federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, [Company] must comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Individuals who currently use drugs illegally are not individuals with disabilities protected under the ADA when an employer takes action because of their continued use of drugs. This includes people who use prescription drugs illegally as well as those who use illegal drugs. However, people who have been rehabilitated and do not currently use drugs illegally, or who are in the process of completing a rehabilitation program, may be protected by the ADA.

**Drug-Free Workplace Policy**

[Company], in compliance with the federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, has adopted the following policy that must be adhered to as a condition of employment:

* The unlawful use, possession, manufacture, dispensation, or distribution of controlled substances in all [Company] work locations is prohibited.
* Any [Company] employee convicted of a criminal drug statute violation occurring in the workplace must notify his or her supervisor of the conviction within five days after the conviction. As required by the federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, [Company] must inform contracting or granting agencies of such convictions within 10 days after receiving notification from the employee or otherwise receiving notice of a conviction.
* Upon receiving such notification, [Company], in conjunction with the location concerned, will take all steps necessary to assure the proper conduct of sponsored projects and programs. If a decision is reached to allow the affected employee to continue employment with [Company], the employee must participate in and satisfactorily complete an approved drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

If you have any questions, you may contact the Human Resources Department.

*5.9 Disciplinary Process*

Violation of Company policies or procedures may result in disciplinary action including demotion, transfer, leave without pay, or termination of employment. The Company encourages a system of progressive discipline depending on the type of prohibited conduct. However, the Company is not required to engage in progressive discipline and may discipline or terminate an employee where he or she violates the rules of conduct, or where the quality or value of the employee's work fails to meet expectations at any time. Again, any attempt at progressive discipline does not imply that your employment is anything other than on an "at will" basis.

In appropriate circumstances, management will provide the employee first with a verbal warning, then with one or more written warnings, and if the conduct is not sufficiently altered, eventual demotion, transfer, forced leave, or termination of employment. Your supervisor will make every effort possible to allow you to respond to any disciplinary action taken. Understand that while the Company is concerned with consistent enforcement of our policies, the Company is not obligated to follow any disciplinary or grievance procedure and that depending on the circumstances, employees may be disciplined or terminated without any prior warning or procedure.

*5.10 Problem-Solving Procedure*

We strive to provide a comfortable, productive, legal, and ethical work environment. To this end, the Company wants you to bring any problems, concerns, or grievances you have about the work place to the attention of your supervisor and, if necessary, to Human Resources or upper level management. To help manage conflict resolution we have instituted the following problem solving procedure:

If you believe there is inappropriate conduct or activity on the part of the Company, management, its employees, vendors, customers, or any other persons or entities related to the Company, bring your concerns to the attention of your supervisor at a time and place that will allow the supervisor to properly listen to your concern. Most problems can be resolved informally through dialogue between you and your immediate supervisor. If you have discussed this matter with your supervisor before and do not believe you have received a sufficient response, or if you believe your supervisor is the source of the problem, we request you present your concerns to Human Resources or upper level management. Please indicate what the problem is, those persons involved in the problem, efforts you have made to resolve the problem, and any suggested solution you may have.

*5.11 Outside Employment*

Outside employment which creates a conflict of interest or which affects the quality or value of your work performance or availability at the Company is prohibited. The Company recognizes that employees may seek additional employment during off hours, but expects, in these cases, that any outside employment will not affect job performance, work hours, or scheduling, or otherwise adversely affect the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her duties. Any conflicts should be reported to your supervisor. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in discipline up to and including termination.

*5.12 Exit Interview*

You may be asked to participate in an exit interview when you leave the Company. The purpose of the exit interview is to provide management with greater insight into employee relations and to avoid unnecessary employee claims. Your cooperation in the exit interview process is appreciated.

*5.13 Post-Employment Reference Policy*

The Company policy is to confirm dates of employment and job title only. With written authorization, the Company will confirm compensation. Please forward any requests for employment verification to Human Resources.

Optional sample policy: Our Company policy is to provide prospective employers with references only for employees who have worked for the Company within the past three years.

We will provide prospective employers with the dates of employment and final job position of a former employee. All references are to be given by [Human Resources] only.

If the former employee is requested to provide a prospective employer with additional information by way of reference, the employee must sign a form that holds the Company and the prospective employer harmless from any claims related to any information provided in response to that reference. Please contact [Human Resources] for the release form.

6.0 General Policies

*6.1 Driving Record*

All employees required to operate a motor vehicle as part of their employment duties must maintain a valid driver's license and acceptable driving record. The Company may run a motor vehicle department check to determine an employee's driving record. It is your responsibility to provide a copy of your current driver's license for your personnel file. Any changes in your driving record, including, but not limited to, driving infractions, must be reported to the Company.

State law requires all motorists to carry auto liability insurance. It is against the law to drive without insurance. Employees using their own vehicle as a part of their employment duties must provide management with a current proof of insurance statement or card. A new proof of insurance is required every time your policy expires and renews.

*6.2 Telecommuting Policy*

[**Note:** Employers may use the sample language provided here, but should populate this policy with further details that outline requesting procedure, safety, productivity, etc.]

Telecommuting is defined as an employee regularly working a full or partial workday from home or some other alternate work site.

The company will make telecommuting available to employees when it benefits organizational and departmental needs. This option may not be available in some job classifications due to business needs. Each department manager will determine, in his or her discretion, which positions within the department are suitable for telecommuting.

Employees meeting eligibility requirements for telecommuting must submit a Telecommuting Agreement form to their immediate supervisor for departmental approval. Those granted a telecommuting arrangement will be subject to the same performance standards as if they were prior to telecommuting. Telecommuting work areas may be evaluated to ensure that appropriate safety standards are met. Telecommuting may be a reasonable accommodation, and if you are requesting telecommuting as a reasonable accommodation you should consult with Human Resources as soon as possible.

*6.3 Use of Company Vehicles*

Company vehicles are to be used for Company business only. Unless the use of the vehicle has been approved for personal use, personal or outside business use is strictly prohibited.

Drivers of Company vehicles are to immediately report all infractions or violations while driving a Company vehicle and all restrictions, suspensions, or revocations against their driver's license to their supervisor, manager, or Human Resources immediately.

When a Company vehicle cannot be operated, is unsafe for use, or has been damaged, notify a supervisor or manager immediately.

The driver of a Company vehicle is responsible for the vehicle while in his or her charge and must not permit unauthorized persons to drive it.

The driver is responsible for the daily housekeeping of the vehicle; it is to remain clean and uncluttered.

No person shall operate a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or a chemical substance or other substance that can impair judgment.

Multiple driving moving violations that appear on the annual state department of motor vehicle check will result in suspension of rights to drive a company vehicle or drive a personal vehicle on company business. Suspension of rights will continue until one year has passed with no infractions. If there are persistent and ongoing problems with driving infractions, and driving a vehicle is a part of successful execution of job responsibilities, termination of employment is possible.

*6.4 Authorization for Use of Personal Vehicle*

All employees required to operate a motor vehicle as part of their employment duties must maintain a valid driver's license, acceptable driving record, and appropriate insurance coverage. The Company may run a motor vehicle department check to determine an employee's driving record. It is your responsibility to provide a copy of your current driver's license and insurance coverage for your personnel file. Any changes in your driving record, including, but not limited to, driving infractions or changes to your insurance policy, must be reported to the Company.

*6.5 Notice of GPS Monitoring Policy of Company Vehicles*

Our company desires to strike the appropriate balance between today's technologies, an employee's desire for privacy, and the company's interests in protecting its vehicles, equipment, and drivers. Due to safety, efficiency, and other business purposes, the Company uses GPS technology to monitor the whereabouts of our vehicles at all times.

Questions concerning the use of the system should be directed to the [Human Resources]. Questions concerning the proper use of any vehicles should be directed to the employee's immediate supervisor and/or the [safety officer].

Any employee who abuses the privilege of driving company vehicles will be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment. If necessary, the Company will also advise law enforcement officials of any illegal conduct.

*6.6 Personnel and Medical Records*

The Company maintains a personnel and medical file for every employee. Medical records will be kept in a separate folder. Every effort will be made to keep your personnel and medical records confidential. Access is on a "need-to-know" basis only. This includes, but is not limited to, supervisors and others in management reviewing the file for possible promotion, transfer, or layoff.

If an employee wishes to review his or her personnel or medical file he or she may do so after giving the Company reasonable notice. Inspection must occur in the presence of a Company representative. All requests by an outside party for information contained in your personnel file will be directed to the Human Resources department, which is the only department authorized to give out such information.

*6.7 Employee Privacy and Right to Inspect*

Company property, including but not limited to, lockers, phones, computers, tablets, desks, work place areas, vehicles, or machinery, remains under the control of the Company and is subject to inspection at any time, without notice to the employee, and without the employee's presence. Employees should have no expectation of privacy in any of these areas. We assume no responsibility for the loss of, or damage to, any employee property maintained on Company premises including that kept in lockers and desks.

[Additional statement if you have lockers:

The Company provides lockers for the personal possessions of its employees. These lockers should be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. As part of the employee's privilege for use of these lockers, employees must agree to allow the Company to inspect or otherwise gain access to the locker and its contents at any time, with or without notice to the employee, and without the employee's presence.]

*6.8 Voicemail, Email, and Internet Policy*

This Voicemail/Email/Internet Policy is intended to provide each employee of the Company with the guidelines associated with the use of the Company's voicemail/email/Internet system (the system). This policy applies to all employees, contractors, vendors, partners, or associates, and any others accessing and/or using the Company's system through onsite or remote terminals.

**General Provisions**

* The system, and all data transmitted or received through the system, are the exclusive property of the Company. No individual should have any expectation of privacy in any communication over this system. Any individual permitted to have access to the Company's system will be given a voicemail, email and/or Internet address and/or access code, and will have use of the system, consistent with this policy.
* The Company reserves the right to monitor, intercept, and/or review all data transmitted, received, or downloaded over the system. Any individual who is given access to the system is hereby given notice that the Company will exercise this right periodically, without prior notice and without the prior consent of the employee.
* The Company's interests in monitoring and intercepting data include, but are not limited to: protection of Company trade secrets, proprietary, and similar confidential commercially-sensitive information (i.e. financial or sales records/reports, marketing or business strategies/plans, product development, customer lists, patents, trademarks, etc.); managing the use of the Company's computer system; and/or assisting the employee in the management of electronic data during periods of absence. No individual should interpret the use of password protection as creating a right or expectation of privacy. In order to protect everyone involved, no one can have a right or expectation of privacy with regards to the receipt, transmission or storage of data on the Company Voicemail/Email/Internet system.

Any employee who violates the policies in this handbook will be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment. If necessary, the Company will also advise law enforcement officials of any illegal conduct.

*6.9 Social Media Policy*

At [Company], we understand that social media can be a fun and rewarding way to share your life and opinions with family, friends, and co-workers around the world. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. To assist you in making responsible decisions about your use of social media, we have established these guidelines for appropriate use of social media.

This policy applies to all employees who work for [Company].

**Guidelines**

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. ***Social media*** includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with [Company], as well as any other form of electronic communication.

The same principles and guidelines found in Company policies and these basic beliefs apply to your activities online. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for what you post online. You may be personally responsible for any litigation that may arise should you make unlawful defamatory, slanderous, or libelous statements against any customer, manager, owner, or employee of the company. Before creating online content, you may want to consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved.

**Know and Follow the Rules**

Carefully read these guidelines, the Company Ethics Code, Standards of Conduct, and EEO Statement and Nonharassment Policy, and ensure your postings are consistent with these policies. Postings that include unlawful discriminatory remarks, harassment (as defined by our EEO policy), and threats of violence or other unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject you to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**You Are Encouraged to Show Respect**

The Company cannot force or mandate respectful and courteous activity by employees on social media during nonworking time. However, everyone should be aware of the negative impact comments of this nature can have on the workplace and relationships with others. In addition, please keep in mind that you may be more likely to resolve work-related disputes by speaking directly with your co-workers or by utilizing our Open Door Policy than by posting complaints to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, if you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video, or audio that reasonably could be viewed as unlawful, slanderous, threatening, or that might constitute unlawful harassment (as defined by our EEO policies). Examples of such conduct might include defamatory or slanderous posts meant to harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, age, national origin, religion, veteran status, or any other status or class protected by law or company policy.

**Honesty and Accuracy**

You should understand that honesty and accuracy are important when posting information or news, and that it is good practice to correct a mistake quickly. You may want to be open about any previous posts you have altered. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings often can be searched.

**Posting Information**

When posting information:

* Maintain the confidentiality of Company trade secrets and confidential Company-related commercially-sensitive information (i.e. financial or sales records/reports, marketing or business strategies/plans, product development, customer lists, patents, trademarks, etc.).
* Do not create a link from your blog, website, or other social networking site to a Company website that identifies you as speaking on behalf of [Company].
* Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for [Company]. If the Company is a subject of the content you are creating, do not represent yourself as speaking on the Company's behalf.
* Respect copyright, trademark, and similar laws and use such protected information in compliance with applicable legal standards.

**Using Social Media at Work**

Refrain from using social media while on your work time, unless it is work related as authorized by your manager or consistent with the Company Equipment Policy.

**Retaliation Is Prohibited**

Company prohibits taking negative action against any employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any employee who retaliates against another employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

**Media Contacts**

Employees should not speak to the media on the Company's behalf without contacting the Human Resources Department. All media inquiries for official Company responses should be directed to them.

**For More Information**

If you have questions or need further guidance, please contact your HR representative.

Nothing in this policy is designed to interfere with, restrain, or prevent employee communications regarding wages, hours, or other terms and conditions of employment, or to restrain employees in exercising any other right protected by law. Employees have the right to engage in or refrain from such activities.

*6.10 Employee Suggestions/Open Door Policy*

We welcome suggestions for continued improvement and welcome your ideas for better ways to do your job, produce or sell the products or services of our Company, or meet customer and client needs. Discuss your ideas with your supervisor or another member of the management team.

We also encourage you to offer any suggestions derived from seminars, magazines, or other outside sources of information you believe would add value to the Company.

Understand that any suggestions, innovations, inventions, or other matter created by you on work time or with Company tools or property are considered to be the property of the Company.

*6.11 Company Bulletin Boards*

[Company] maintains an official bulletin board located at [list location here] for the purpose of providing employees with its official notices, including wage and hour laws, changes in policies, and other employment-related notices. At times the Company may also post information of general interest to the employees on the bulletin board. Please keep informed about this material by periodically reviewing the Company bulletin board. Only authorized personnel are allowed to add and remove notices from the Company bulletin board.

*6.12 Nonsolicitation/Nondistribution Policy*

To avoid disruption of business operations or disturbance of employees, visitors, and others, the Company has implemented a Nonsolicitation Policy. For purposes of the Nonsolicitation Policy, "solicitation" includes selling items or services, requesting contributions, and soliciting or seeking to obtain membership in or support for any organization. Solicitation performed through verbal, written, or electronic means is covered by the Nonsolicitation Policy.

Employees are prohibited from soliciting other employees during their assigned working time. For this purpose, working time means time during which either the soliciting employees or the employees who are the object of the solicitation are expected to be actively engaged with assigned work. Employees may conduct solicitations during their lunch period, coffee breaks, or other authorized nonworking time, so long as they do so when the other employees are also on nonworking time.

To avoid inappropriate litter, clutter, and safety risks, employees may not distribute literature or other nonwork related items in working areas at any time. Working areas do not include break/rest areas, lunch rooms, or parking lots.

*6.13 Personal Appearance*

Your personal appearance reflects on the reputation and integrity of the company. All employees are required to report to work neatly groomed and dressed. You are expected to maintain personal hygiene habits that are generally accepted in the community, i.e. clean clothing, good grooming and personal hygiene, and appropriate social behavior.

[Classification of employee] are required to wear Company uniforms at all times. Please consult with your supervisor as to Company policy regarding fitting, cleaning, and repair of Company uniforms.

[Classification of employees] are required to wear the following safety equipment while on the job [i.e. steel-toed boots, safety glasses, safety masks, etc.].

Management and outside sales persons are expected to dress in a manner appropriate for their job duties. For example, men should wear a suit and tie while women should wear dresses or blouses with skirts or dress slacks. T-shirts, blue jeans, and sneakers are not considered acceptable clothes for any employee except on designated dress-down days.

If you come to work inappropriately dressed, you will be asked to go home and return to work dressed appropriately. If you have any questions regarding the dress code or dress code accommodations, please contact Human Resources. Recurring problems will result in discipline up to and including termination of employment.

*6.14 Company Social Events*

[Company] holds social events for employees. Please be advised that your attendance at these events is voluntary and does not constitute part of your work-related duties as an employee. Any exceptions to this policy must be in writing and signed by a supervisor prior to the event.

Alcoholic beverages may be available at these events. If you choose to drink alcoholic beverages, please do so in a responsible manner. Do not drink and drive. Instead, please call a taxi or appoint a designated driver.

*6.15 Payroll Advances and Loans*

[**Note:** This section is optional.]

Optional language here should reflect the company's payroll policies. The policy provided below is a sample only.

Sample statement #1:

[Company] discourages employee requests for payroll advances or loans. In the event you need an advance or loan against your paycheck for emergency reasons, consult with [your supervisor, payroll, etc.]

Before the Company will agree to advance wages or loan money, you will be required to fill out a promissory note acknowledging the advance or loan and setting forth the terms for repayment including any interest. You will also be required to authorize in writing deductions for repayment directly from future paychecks and to pay the full amount of the advance or loan upon termination of employment.

Sample statement #2:

[Company] does not make payroll advances or loans.

*6.16 Telephone Use*

Our phones are principally for work-related communications. Unless there is an emergency, employees are required to limit long distance telephone calls to business purposes only. Employees should limit personal use of the telephone to brief communications during rest periods where possible. Casual conversation with friends and relatives during working hours is strongly discouraged. Telephone use is subject to the Voicemail/Email/Internet Usage Policy.

*6.17 Company-Provided Cell Phone/Mobile Device Policy*

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to departments and employees regarding eligibility for Company-provided cell phones and plans, and the appropriate use of the phone and plan.

An employee must have a legitimate business need for a cell phone/mobile device and the issuance of same to the employee must be approved by the employee's [supervisor]. The typical legitimate reasons why an employee may need a cell phone/mobile device include frequent traveler needs or when the employee is a member of key personnel who must be immediately reachable in the event of an emergency.

When the cell phone/mobile device is used for personal reasons and the activity results in additional cost to the Company, the individual is responsible for the cost of that usage, including all applicable taxes. The employee should make note of personal calls and reimburse the Company after review of the monthly call detail.

If the cell phone/mobile device has a flat rate airtime/data plan, the user is responsible for reimbursing the Company when personal activities cause the plan threshold to be exceeded. The employee, with concurrence of an authorized signer on the account, should determine the amount of personal use that caused the usage to exceed the plan and reimburse the Company for that amount plus all applicable taxes. Employees who drive a vehicle during the course of their employment may not use any cell phone/mobile device or other communication device while driving unless the device is equipped or configured with a "hands-free" listening/speaking option, and the "hands-free" device is in fact utilized by the employee. This option must be approved by your [supervisor].

The company owns and remains entitled to all cell phone/mobile devices, including all passwords controlling access to them. You may not change those passwords except with permission. At the time of employment termination, all such equipment and passwords must be returned to the company in operable condition.

*6.18 Personal Cell Phone/Mobile Device Use*

While [Company] permits employees to bring personal cell phones and other mobile devices (i.e. smart phones, PDAs, tablets, laptops) into the workplace, employees must not permit the use of such devices to interfere with their job duties or impact workplace safety and health.

Use of personal cell phones and mobile devices at work can be distracting and disruptive and cause a loss of employee productivity. As a result, employees should primarily use such personal devices during nonworking time, such as breaks and meal periods. During this time, employees should use their device in a manner that is courteous to those around them. Outside of nonworking time, use of such devices should be kept at a minimum and limited to emergency use only. Employees with devices that have a camera and/or audio/video recording capability are restricted from using those functions on Company property unless authorized in advance by management or used in a manner consistent with the rights of employees to engage in concerted activity under section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA).

Employees are expected to comply with Company policies regarding the protection of the employer's confidential and proprietary information when using personal devices.

While operating a vehicle on company time, the Company requires that the driver's personal cell phone/mobile device be turned off. An employee that needs to make or receive a phone call should pull off the road to a safe location unless he or she has the correct hands-free equipment for the device that is in compliance with applicable state laws.

Employees [may/may not] connect their personal devices to the Company network or to Company equipment (computers, printers, etc.). [If permitted explain allowable use and any restrictions.]

Employees may have the opportunity to use their personal devices for work purposes. Before using a personal device for work-related purposes, an employee must obtain written authorization from [IT, Management, HR]. The use of personal devices is limited to certain employees and may be limited based on compatibility of technology. To ensure the security of Company information… [Set forth Company security policies related to specific devices, for example any software requirements (antivirus, firewall, VPN, etc.). This should also include details on how Company information will be removed from a device upon termination of employment]. Employees authorized to use a personal device will receive a monthly stipend based on the estimated use of the device. If an employee obtains or currently has a plan that exceeds the monthly stipend, [Company] will not be liable for the cost difference.

Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent employees from engaging in protected concerted activity under the NLRA.

Violation of this policy will subject an employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

*6.19 Mail Use*

Employees are required to limit usage of the company's mail service to business purposes only. You may not use the Company address to receive personal mail. Do not use the Company postage meter for your personal mail. If you notice any suspicious packages or envelopes, please report this to [Human Resources] immediately.

*6.20 Off-Duty Use of Company Property or Premises*

Employees may not use Company property for personal use during working time. Employees are responsible for returning Company property in good condition and repairing or replacing any property damaged as the result of personal use or as the result of negligence. This includes using copy machines, computers, Company products, or office supplies for personal use without prior authorization.

It is the policy of the Company to control off duty and nonworking hour use of Company facilities either for business or personal reasons. Employees are prohibited from using Company facilities during off duty or non-working hours without the written consent of their supervisor. Employees using Company facilities during off duty hours or non-Company hours may be required to sign a log-in and log-out sheet maintained by the Company or building manager.

*6.21 Security*

Every employee is responsible for helping to make this a secure work environment. Upon leaving work, lock all desks, lockers, and doors protecting valuable or sensitive material in your work area and report any lost or stolen keys, passes, or other similar devices to your supervisor immediately. You should refrain from discussing with nonemployees specifics regarding Company security systems, alarms, passwords, etc.

We also request that you immediately advise your supervisor of any known or potential security risks and/or suspicious conduct of employees, customers, or guests of the Company. Safety and security is the responsibility of every employee and we rely on you to help us keep our premises secure.

*6.22 Computer Security and Copying of Software*

Software programs purchased and provided by the Company are to be used only for creating, researching, and processing Company-related materials. By using the Company's hardware, software, and networking systems you assume personal responsibility for their use and agree to comply with this policy and other applicable Company policies, as well as city, state, and federal laws and regulations.

All software acquired for or on behalf of the Company or developed by Company employees or contract personnel on behalf of the Company is and shall be deemed Company property. It is the policy of the Company to respect all computer software rights and to adhere to the terms of all software licenses to which the Company is a party. The [Director of Information Systems] is responsible for enforcing these guidelines.

Company users may not illegally duplicate any licensed software or related documentation. Unauthorized duplication of software may subject users and/or the Company to both civil and criminal penalties under the United States Copyright Act. To purchase software, users must obtain the approval of their manager. All software acquired by the company must be purchased through the [Information Systems Department].

Users may not duplicate, copy, or give software to any outsiders including clients, contractors, customers, and others. Company users may use software on local area networks or on multiple machines only in accordance with applicable license agreements entered into by the Company.

*6.23 Third Party Disclosures*

From time to time, our Company may become involved in news stories or potential or actual legal proceedings of various kinds. When that happens, lawyers, former employees, newspapers, law enforcement agencies, and other outside persons may contact our employees to obtain information about the incident or the actual or potential lawsuit.

If you receive such a contact, you should not speak on behalf of the Company and should refer any call requesting the Company's position to [media contact person]. If you have any questions about this policy or are not certain what to do when such a contact is made, please contact [media contact person].

*6.24 Employee Incentive Programs*

[Add language regarding your available incentive programs after the model Handbook has been generated and downloaded.]

*6.25 Personal Data Changes*

It is your obligation to provide the Company with all of your current contact information, including current mailing address and telephone number. Please inform the Company of any changes to your marital or tax withholding status. Failure to do so may result in loss of benefits or delayed receipt of W-2 and other mailings.

7.0 Benefits

*7.1 Regular Full-Time Employees*

A regular full-time employee is an employee who has completed his or her introductory period and is regularly scheduled to work in excess of [30] hours per week. Unless stated otherwise, all the benefits provided to employees are for regular full-time employees only. This includes vacation, holiday pay, health insurance, and other benefits coverage.

*7.2 Regular Part-Time Employees*

Any employee who works less than [\_\_\_] hours per week is considered a part-time employee. Part-time employees are not eligible for Company benefits unless specified otherwise in this handbook or in the benefit plan summaries.

*7.3 Temporary Employees*

Temporary employees are hired for a specific period or specific work project, not to exceed [\_\_\_] months in duration. The Company reserves the right to extend the duration of temporary employment where necessary. Temporary employees are not eligible for employee benefits unless specified otherwise in this handbook or in the benefit plan summaries.

*7.4 Exempt Employees*

If you are classified as an exempt employee at the time of your hiring, you are not eligible for overtime pay as otherwise required by federal, state, or local laws. If you have a question regarding whether you are an exempt or nonexempt employee, contact your supervisor for clarification.

*7.5 Health Insurance*

The Company provides its regular full-time employees who have completed [90 days] of employment with health insurance. [Employees have the option of dependent coverage at their own expense.] Medical plan benefits for eligible employees [and their dependents] are described in detail in the Summary Plan Description (SPD) prepared by the insurance carrier that is available to all eligible employees. These benefits may be canceled or changed at the discretion of the Company, unless otherwise required by law.

[Health benefits during Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leaves are maintained by the Company on the same terms as if the employee continued to work. Please contact [Human Resources] for clarification. In such circumstances, arrangements must be made by eligible employees to pay their share of the health insurance premium on a monthly basis to maintain insurance coverage. Please contact the [Payroll Department] to determine the amount of your contribution. The Company's obligation to maintain health benefits stops when:

* An employee informs the Company of an intent not to return to work at the end of the leave period; or
* An employee fails to return to work when the FMLA entitlement is exhausted; or
* An employee's premium contribution is past due.

The Company will be entitled to recover premiums paid to maintain health insurance coverage for an employee who fails to return to work from leave.

Please understand that plan eligibility does not necessarily mean coverage for all medical treatments or procedures. In addition, under changed circumstances you may be responsible for contributing to the cost of increased premiums. This benefit, as well as other benefits, may be canceled or changed at the discretion of the Company, unless otherwise required by law.]

[If you or a dependent become ineligible for benefits due to a change in work hours or through a life event, or you leave employment with us, you may have the right to continue your medical benefits under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). The Company will mail you information about your COBRA rights.]

*7.6 Disability Insurance*

**Note:** This section is optional and may be added if the company provides this type of protection.

The Company provides employees with disability income protection when employees miss work due to nonwork related disabilities. The terms and conditions for the disability insurance program are outlined in the Summary of Plan Benefits. Please contact Human Resources for a copy of the plan provisions and for any information you need about the benefit.

*7.7 Life Insurance*

All regular full-time employees who have completed [90 days] of employment are provided with life insurance by the Company. You will be required to notify the benefits administrator of your intended beneficiary. Refer to the Summary Plan Description (SPD) for details about the benefit.

*7.8 Dental Insurance*

All regular full-time employees who have completed [90 days] of employment are eligible for the Company dental plan. Dental plan benefits are described in detail in the Summary Plan Description (SPD).

*7.9 Vision Care Insurance*

All regular full-time employees who have completed [90 days] of employment are eligible for the Company vision care plan. Vision care plan benefits are described in detail in the Summary Plan Description (SPD).

*7.10 Pension and Profit-Sharing Plan*

All regular full-time employees who have completed at least [90 days] of employment, are eligible to participate in the Company's pension and [profit-sharing] plan. After a specified period of employment, this plan provides you with a vested interest related to your length of employment. The Company makes a contribution on your behalf to the plan [which may or may not be matched by your personal contribution].

As with your insurance benefits, refer to the Summary Plan Description (SPD) provided by the benefits administrator for specifics or contact Human Resources for more information.

*7.11 401(k) Plan*

All regular full-time employees who have completed at least [90 days] of employment are eligible to participate in the Company's 401(k) plan. [Company] provides matching funds of [\_\_\_] for each employee dollar contributed up to a maximum Company contribution of [\_\_\_] per year. As with your insurance benefits, please refer to your Summary Plan Description (SPD) provided by the benefits administrator for specifics. Should you have any other questions about pension or profit sharing rights, please consult with the benefits administrator. This benefit, as well as other benefits, may be canceled or changed at the discretion of the Company, unless otherwise required by law.

*7.12 Stock Option Plan*

All regular full-time employees who have completed at least [90] days of employment are eligible to participate in the Employee Stock Option Plan. Please refer to the Employee Stock Option Plan Summary provided by the [benefits administrator]. This benefit, as well as other benefits, may be cancelled or changed at the discretion of the Company, unless otherwise required by law.

*7.13 Continuing Education Policy and Tuition Assistance*

We believe in the continuing education of our employees. If the Company sends you to a class or training program during normal working hours related to your employment and you are a nonexempt employee, you will be paid training pay for that time. If you are interested in attending an outside class and having the Company pay for your attendance, you are required to provide advance written notice indicating a description of the class, including the subject matter, length, and cost. Depending on the type of training, the Company may reimburse some or all of the fees, including materials expenses, meals, and transportation. If your supervisor approves of your attendance at a noncompany-sponsored class, you will be reimbursed once you have attended and paid for the class.

*7.14 Holiday Pay*

[Company] offers the following paid holidays each year [add to or delete from the following list]:

* New Year's Day
* Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
* Presidents' Day
* Memorial Day
* Independence Day
* Labor Day
* Thanksgiving Day
* Friday after Thanksgiving
* Christmas Eve (half day)
* Christmas Day
* Veterans Day
* [Employee's Birthday]
* [Floating Holiday]

When a Company holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be observed the preceding Friday. Holidays falling on a Sunday will be observed the following Monday.

If a holiday falls on your regular day off, the holiday will be observed as your supervisor determines, on the employee's last day of work before the holiday or the first day of work following the holiday.

The Company reserves the right to close on another day or grant compensating time off instead of closing its offices. You [will/will not] receive holiday pay if the holiday falls in the week when you are on vacation or leave of absence. You must work the day before and the day after a holiday to receive holiday pay, unless the day before or the day after is your normally designated day off, you are on vacation, or you have a doctor's note excusing your absence.

[An employee must have satisfactorily completed the introductory period to be eligible for holiday pay.] Holiday pay for full-time employees is computed at the straight time rate of eight hours. In no case may an employee receive more than a normal day's wage for any holiday unless they worked that day.

After six months' employment an employee becomes entitled to one additional paid holiday called a "floating holiday." Out of respect for other religious holidays that employees may wish to observe or to accommodate an employee with special time off needs, this "floating holiday" policy exists. This policy entitles you to take off one day of your choosing (e.g. Rosh Hashanah, Good Friday, your birthday, etc.), at a regular day's pay. Floating holidays will not be counted as a vacation or personal day. Due to staffing requirements, please inform your supervisor or manager of your plans as early as possible. In order to properly staff each department, anyone wishing to work on their religious holiday will receive in exchange one "floating holiday" which may be used on another day of your choice.

*7.15 Paid Time Off (PTO)*

[**Note:** Employers can choose to have a combined PTO policy such as this one, or separate vacation, sick, and personal time policies like those that follow, based on the needs of their organization.]

Paid time off (PTO) provides you with the flexibility to use your time off to meet your personal needs, while recognizing your individual responsibility to manage your paid time off.

You will accumulate PTO each pay period worked and it is up to you to allocate how you will use it -- for vacation, illness, caring for children, school activities, medical/dental appointments, personal business or emergencies. The Company may require you to use any unused PTO during disability or family medical leave, or any other leave of absence. The amount of PTO earned will depend on your length of service with the Company.

[Optional: PTO does not replace the Company's holiday schedule. We will continue to have designated paid holidays each year.]

**Eligibility**

You are eligible to receive PTO if you are a regular status employee scheduled to work at least [\_\_\_\_\_\_] hours per week. [Part-time employees working more than [\_\_\_\_\_\_] hours per week accrue PTO on a prorated basis, depending on the number of hours worked.]

**Deposits Into Your Leave Account**

The amount of PTO you accrue each year is based on your length of service and accrues according to the accrual schedule determined by the Company. PTO is accrued as you work. You will not accrue PTO time while you are taking time off for any reason.

**Maximum Accrual**

Although you may carry over unused PTO time from year to year, there is a cap on the amount of PTO time you can accrue. Once you reach your cap, you will not accrue any more PTO until you use some of the time in your account and drop below the cap. After your balance goes below the cap, you will begin accruing PTO again. However, you will not receive retroactive credit for time worked while you were at the cap limit. PTO accrual is capped at one and one half times your annual PTO accrual rate.

[The amount of PTO accrued, used, and available will appear on your paycheck stub.]

**Termination**

You will be paid for all accrued and unused PTO when you leave the Company.

[**Note:** This is not a requirement in all states. See the applicable state law provision or state law summary.]

**Using Your PTO**

The minimum amount of PTO you can use at one time is one hour.

**Notice and Scheduling**

You are required to provide your supervisor with reasonable advance notice and obtain approval prior to using PTO. This allows for you and your supervisor to prepare for your time off and assure that all staffing needs are met. There may be occasions, such as sudden illness, when you cannot notify your supervisor in advance. In those situations, you must inform your supervisor of your circumstances as soon as possible.

*7.16 Vacation Policy*

[**Note:** If your company elects to have a vacation and sick pay plan, the next two sections would replace the PTO policy outlined previously.]

Vacation is paid to regular full-time employees as follows:

* First year of employment: [one] workweek
* Second through third year of employment: [two] workweeks
* Third through tenth year of employment: [three] workweeks
* Tenth through twentieth year of employment: [four] workweeks
* Over 20 years of employment: [five] workweeks

All employees are required to give at least [days/months] notice to [supervisor] of their vacation plans. You will not be eligible to receive pay instead of vacation time, except with Company permission or upon termination. Any conflict in vacation requests will be decided based on employee seniority and Company needs. You will not accrue vacation during periods when you are not working and taking time off from the company.

If a holiday occurs during your vacation period you will be granted one additional day of vacation. If you are sick during your vacation period you may not count that day towards sick pay. You must use vacation in one week blocks unless specifically approved of by your supervisor.

**Maximum Accrual**

Although you may carry over unused vacation time from year to year, there is a cap on the amount of vacation time you can accrue. Once you reach your cap, you will not accrue any more vacation until you use some of the time in your account and drop below the cap. After your balance goes below the cap, you will begin accruing vacation again. However, you will not receive retroactive credit for time worked while you were at the cap limit. Vacation accrual is capped at one and one half times your annual vacation accrual rate.

[Optional: The amount of vacation accrued, used, and available will appear on your paycheck stub.]

**Minimum Increments of Vacation**

The minimum amount of vacation you can use at one time depends on whether you are an exempt or a nonexempt employee. If you are nonexempt, you may not take less than [one hour] off at a time. If you are an exempt employee you must take vacation in increments of not less than [one-half] day at a time.

*7.17 Sick Pay*

[**Note:** If your company does **not** use a PTO plan but separates vacation time and sick time benefits, this policy may apply.]

The Company allows its regular full-time employees who have completed their introductory period [\_\_\_\_ ] sick days per calendar year. Give your supervisor as much advance notice as possible if you are going to take sick time off. There may be occasions, such as sudden illness, when you cannot notify your supervisor in advance. In those situations, you must inform your supervisor of your circumstances as soon as possible. You may also be requested to provide a certificate of illness to your supervisor.

You may use sick leave benefits for the purpose of dental or doctor visits as well as to care for immediate family members who are sick. There may also be state mandated use of sick time. Unused sick days may not be converted to a cash payment. You may be required to use available sick leave during family and medical leave, disability leave, or other leave.

[Sick time accumulation will be capped at a total of \_\_\_\_\_\_ days per year.]

[**Note:** Remember to comply with any state or local laws requiring sick leave.]

*7.18 Leaves of Absence*

A leave of absence (leave) is defined as an unpaid approved absence from work for a specified period of time for medical, parental, military, or other approved reasons. If an employee finds that he she must be out of work for more than three days, he or she should contact the Human Resources department to determine if a leave of absence may be necessary.

While on leave, an employee must contact the Human Resources department at least every 30 days. This provision does not apply to employees taking Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave. Employees taking FMLA leave should consult the documents they are provided for FMLA leave or should discuss such notification or certification issue with Human Resources. Failure to contact HR upon request may result in voluntary termination of employment. Failure to return to work upon the expiration of the leave or refusing an offer of reinstatement for which the employee is qualified will also result in voluntary termination of employment.

**Required Documentation**

All requests for a leave of absence must be made on a Leave of Absence Request Form for the particular leave (FMLA, disability accommodation, military, pregnancy, other medical leave, personal leave, etc.) and submitted to the immediate supervisor. An employee must provide 30 days' advance notice when the need for the leave or absence is foreseeable; for instance, if medical treatments or other events are planned or known in advance. If the leave of absence is not foreseeable, the employee must provide notice to his or her immediate supervisor as soon as possible. Medical certifications and/or other documentation supporting the need for the leave may be required.

**Job Benefits**

For leaves other than approved FMLA leaves, [Company] will pay its portion of the cost of the employee's benefits including health, dental, life, and disability insurance benefits while an employee is on leave for the end of the monthly billing cycle at which time a COBRA notification will be issued. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leaves of absence allow for up to 12 weeks of group health insurance continuation coverage in the same manner as if the employee continued to work. The employee must continue to pay his or her portion of the benefits which may be made by payroll deductions (when applicable) or by check which must be submitted to the Human Resources department each pay period unless other arrangements have been made. If the employee fails to pay his or her portion of the benefits for more than 30 days, the employee's coverage(s) will be terminated and the employee will be offered COBRA to continue benefits coverage.

While on leave, employees may be required to use any accrued PTO, vacation, or sick time (See Paid Time Off/Sick/Vacation Policy [select appropriate policy]).

No benefits will be accrued while an employee is on leave. Except as otherwise provided by law, time spent on a leave of absence, except for military reserve duty, will not be counted as time employed in determining an employee's eligibility for benefits that accrue on the basis of length of employment.

**Return to Work**

Upon return to work, the employee may be required to take a fitness for duty exam or otherwise provide medical clearance.

*7.19 Family and Medical Leave of Absence Policy*

**A. General**

We recognize that there are times when an employee may need to be absent from work due to qualifying events under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Accordingly, we will provide eligible employees up to a combined total of 12 weeks of unpaid FMLA leave per leave year for the following reasons and any other leave authorized by the FMLA:

* **Parental Leave:** For the birth or placement of an adopted or foster child;
* **Personal Medical Leave:** When an employee is unable to work due to his or her own serious health condition;
* **Family Care Leave:** To care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition;
* **Military Exigency Leave:** When an employee's spouse, parent, son, or daughter (of any age) experiences a qualifying exigency resulting from military service (applies to active service members deployed to a foreign country, National Guard and Reservists); and
* **Military Care Leave:** To care for an employee's spouse, parent, son, daughter (of any age), or next of kin who requires care due to an injury or illness incurred while on active duty or was exacerbated while on active duty. **Note:** A leave of up to 26 weeks of leave per 12-month period may be taken to care for the injured/ill service member.

**B. Key Policy Definitions**

* ***Eligible employees*** under this policy are those who have been employed by our Company for at least 12 months (need not be consecutive months and under certain circumstances hours missed from work due to military call-up will also be counted) and have performed at least 1,250 hours of service in the 12-month period immediately preceding the date leave is to begin. Employees who work in small locations with fewer than 50 employees within 75 miles, are not eligible for leave. However, employees should contact Human Resources to discuss other types of leave that might be available for the reasons listed in this policy.
* ***Leave year*** for the purposes of this policy shall be a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave.
* A ***spouse*** means a husband or wife as recognized under state law for the purposes of marriage in the state or other territory or country where the marriage arose.
* A ***son or daughter*** for the purposes of parental or family leave is defined as a biological, adopted, foster child, step-child, legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stood in loco parentis to, who is (1) under 18 years of age or, (2) 18 years of age or older and incapable of self-care because of physical or mental disability. A son or daughter for the purposes of military exigency or military care leave can be of any age.
* A ***parent*** means a biological, adoptive, step, or foster parent or any other individual who stood in loco parentis to the employee when the employee was a son or daughter.
* ***Next of kin*** for the purposes of military care leave is a blood relative other than a spouse, parent, or child in the following order: brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and first cousins. If a military service member designates in writing another blood relative as his or her caregiver, that individual shall be the only next of kin. In appropriate circumstances, employees may be required to provide documentation of next of kin status.
* A ***serious health condition*** is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider. Ordinarily, unless complications arise, cosmetic treatments and minor conditions such as the cold, flu, ear aches, upset stomach, minor ulcers, headaches (other than migraines), and routine dental problems are examples of conditions that are not serious health conditions under this policy. If you have any questions about the types of conditions which may qualify, contact Human Resources.
* A ***health care provider*** is a medical doctor or doctor of osteopathy, physician's assistant, podiatrist, dentist, clinical psychologist, optometrist, nurse practitioner, nurse-midwife, clinical social worker, or Christian Science practitioner licensed by the First Church of Christ. Under limited circumstances, a chiropractor or other provider recognized by our group health plan for the purposes of certifying a claim for benefits may also be considered a health care provider.
* ***Qualifying exigencies*** for military exigency leave include:
  + Short-notice call-ups/deployments of seven days or less (**Note:** Leave for this exigency is available for up to seven days beginning the date of call-up notice);
  + Attending official ceremonies, programs, or military events;
  + Special child care needs created by a military call-up including making alternative child care arrangements, handling urgent and nonroutine child care situations, arranging for school transfers, or attending school or daycare meetings;
  + Making financial and legal arrangements;
  + Attending counseling sessions for the military service member, the employee, or the military service members' son or daughter who is under 18 years of age or 18 or older but is incapable of self-care because a mental or physical disability;
  + Rest and recuperation (**Note:** Fifteen days of leave is available for this exigency per event);
  + Post-deployment activities such as arrival ceremonies, re-integration briefings, and other official ceremonies sponsored by the military (**Note:** Leave for these events is available during a period of 90 days following the termination of active duty status). This type of leave may also be taken to address circumstances arising from the death of a covered military member while on active duty;
  + Parental care when the military family member is needed to care for a parent who is incapable of self-care (e.g. arranging for alternative care or transfer to a care facility); and
  + Other exigencies that arise that are agreed to by both the Company and employee.
* A ***serious injury/illness*** incurred by a service member in the line of active duty or that is exacerbated by active duty is any injury or illness that renders the service member unfit to perform the duties of his or her office, grade, rank, or rating.

**C. Notice and Leave Request Process**

Foreseeable Need for Leave: If the need for leave is foreseeable because of an expected birth/adoption or planned medical treatment, employees must give at least 30 days' notice. If 30 days' notice is not practicable, notice must be given as soon as possible. Employees are expected to complete and return a leave request form prior to the beginning of leave. ***Failure to provide appropriate notice and/or complete and return the necessary paperwork will result in the delay or denial of leave.***

Unforeseeable Need for Leave: If the need for leave is unforeseeable, notice must be provided as soon as practicable and possible under the facts of the particular case. Normal call-in procedures apply to all absences from work including those for which leave under this policy may be requested. Employees are expected to complete and return the necessary leave request form as soon as possible to obtain the leave. ***Failure to provide appropriate notice and/or complete and return the necessary paperwork on a timely basis will result in the delay or denial of leave.***

Leave Request Process: To request leave under this policy, employees must obtain and complete a leave request form from their supervisor or Human Resources and return the completed form to Human Resources. If the need for leave is unforeseeable and employees will be absent more than three days, employees should contact Human Resources by telephone and request that a leave form be mailed to their home. If the need for leave will be fewer than three days, employees must complete and return the leave request form upon returning to work.

Call-in Procedures: In all instances where an employee will be absent, the call-in procedures and standards established for giving notice of absence from work must be followed.

**D. Leave Increments**

Parental Leave: Leave for the birth or placement of a child must be taken in a single block and cannot be taken on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis. Parental Leave must be completed within 12 months of the birth or placement of the child; however, employees may use parental leave before the placement of an adopted or foster child to consult with attorneys, appear in court, attend counseling sessions, etc.

Family Care, Personal Medical, Military Exigency, and Military Care Leave: Leave taken for these reasons may be taken in a block or blocks of time. In addition, if a health care provider deems it necessary or if the nature of a qualifying exigency requires, leave for these reasons can be taken on an intermittent or reduced-schedule basis.

**E. Paid Leave Utilization During FMLA Leave**

Employees taking parental, family care, military exigency and/or military care leave must utilize available vacation/PTO, personal days, and/or family illness days during this leave. Employees on personal medical leave must utilize available sick, personal, and vacation/PTO days during this leave. Employees receiving short- or long-term disability or workers' compensation benefits during a personal medical leave will not be required to utilize these benefits. However, employees may elect to utilize accrued benefits to supplement these benefits.

**F. Certification and Fitness for Duty Requirements**

Employees requesting family care, personal medical, or military care leave must provide certification from a health care provider to qualify for leave. Such certification must be provided within 15 days of the request for leave unless it is not practicable under the circumstances despite the employee's diligent efforts. Failure to timely provide certification may result in leave being delayed, denied, or revoked. In the Company's discretion, employees may also be required to obtain a second and third certification from another health care provider at Company expense (except for military care leave). Recertification of the continuance of a serious health condition or an injury/illness of a military service member will also be required at appropriate intervals.

Employees requesting a military exigency leave may also be required to provide appropriate active duty orders and subsequent information concerning particular qualifying exigencies involved.

Employees requesting personal medical leave will also be required to provide a fitness for duty certification from their health care provider prior to returning to work.

**G. Scheduling Leave and Temporary Transfers**

Where possible, employees should attempt to schedule leave so as not to unduly disrupt operations. Employees requesting leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis that is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment may be temporarily transferred to another job with equivalent pay and benefits that better accommodates recurring periods of leave.

**H. Health Insurance**

The Company will maintain an employee's health insurance coverage during leave on the same basis as if he or she were still working. Employees must continue to make timely payments of their share of the premiums for such coverage. Failure to pay premiums within 30 days of when they are due may result in a lapse of coverage. In this event, the Company will notify the employee 15 days before the date coverage will lapse that coverage will terminate unless payments are promptly made. Alternatively, at the Company's option, the Company may pay the employee's share of the premiums during the leave and recover the costs of this insurance upon the employee's return to work. Coverage that lapses due to nonpayment of premiums will be reinstated immediately upon return to work without a waiting period. Under most circumstances, if an employee does not return to work at the end of leave, the Company may require the employee to reimburse the Company for the health insurance premiums paid during the leave.

**I. Return to Work**

Employees returning to work at the end of leave will be placed in their original job or an equivalent job with equivalent pay and benefits. Employees will not lose any benefits that accrued before leave was taken. Employees may not, however, be entitled to discretionary raises, promotions, bonus payments, or other benefits that become available during the period of leave.

**J. Spouse Aggregation**

In the case where an employee and his or her spouse are both employed by the Company, the total number of weeks to which both are entitled in the aggregate because of the birth or placement of a child or to care for a parent with a serious health condition will be limited to 12 weeks per leave year. Similarly, a husband and wife employed by the Company will be limited to a combined total of 26 weeks of leave to care for a military service member. This 26-week leave period will be reduced, however, by the amount of leave taken for other qualifying FMLA events. This type of leave aggregation does not apply to leave needed because of an employee's own serious health condition, to care for a spouse or child with a serious health condition, or because of a qualifying exigency.

**K. General Provisions**

Failure to Return: Employees failing to return to work or failing to make a request for an extension of their leave prior to the expiration of the leave will be deemed to have voluntarily terminated their employment.

Alternative Employment: No employee, while on leave of absence, shall work or be gainfully employed either for himself, herself, or others unless express, written permission to perform such outside work has been granted by the Company. Any employee on a leave of absence who is found to be working elsewhere without permission will be automatically terminated.

False Reason for Leave: Termination will occur if an employee gives a false reason for a leave.

*7.20 Military Leave (USERRA)*

The company complies with applicable federal and state law regarding military leave and re-employment rights. Unpaid military leave of absence will be granted to members of the uniformed services in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (with amendments) and all applicable state law. Documentation of the need for the leave is required to be submitted to Human Resources. An employee returning from military leave of absence will be reinstated to his or her previous or similar job in accordance with state and federal law. You must notify your manager of your intent to return to employment based on requirements of the law. For more information regarding status, compensation, benefits and reinstatement upon return from military leave, please contact Human Resources.

[Check your state's regulations for additional military leave protections.]

*7.21 Jury Duty and Witness Leave*

[**Note:** Check with your state requirements to determine if pay is required for jury duty.]

If you are summoned for jury duty, please make scheduling arrangements with your supervisor as soon as you receive your summons or subpoena. You will receive up to [\_\_\_\_] days per year for paid jury duty leave. You may use [PTO/vacation] pay during the unpaid jury leave.

*7.22 Voting Leave*

If your work schedule prevents you from voting on Election Day, the Company will allow you a reasonable time off to vote. The time when you can go to vote will be at the discretion of your supervisor, consistent with applicable legal requirements.

[Check your state's regulations for additional requirements.]

*7.23 Bereavement Leave*

[Company] recognizes the importance of taking leave on the occasion of a death in the family. Employees are entitled to up to [\_\_\_] days off with pay for the funeral of an immediate relative (mother, father, sister, brother, spouse, child, mother-in-law, grandparent, or grandchild). Pay is based on the regular rate for an eight-hour day. Authorized leave without pay is available for extended funeral matters. Personal leave time may also be taken when necessary. Employees taking bereavement leave must notify Human Resources of their intention to do so. The Company may request documentation to support absences for bereavement leave.

*7.24 Workers' Compensation Insurance*

Workers' compensation is a no-fault system designed to provide benefits to all employees for work related injuries. Workers' compensation insurance coverage is paid for by the employer and governed by state law. The workers' compensation system provides for coverage of medical treatment and expenses, occupational disability leave, rehabilitation services, as well as payment for lost wages due to work related injuries. If you are injured on the job, no matter how slightly, you are to report the incident immediately to your supervisor. Consistent with applicable state law, failure to report an injury within a reasonable period of time could jeopardize your claim for benefits.

To receive workers' compensation benefits, notify your supervisor immediately of your claim. If your injury is the result of an on-the-job accident, you must fill out an accident report. You will be required to submit a medical release before you can return to work.

*7.25 Unemployment Compensation Insurance*

Unemployment compensation insurance is paid for by the Company and provides temporary income for employees who have lost their job under certain circumstances. Your eligibility for unemployment compensation will, in part, be determined by the reasons for your separation from the Company.

*7.26 COBRA*

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) provides the opportunity for eligible employees and their beneficiaries to continue health insurance coverage under the company health plan when a "qualifying event" could result in the loss of eligibility. Qualifying events include resignation, termination of employment, death of an employee, reduction in hours, a leave of absence, divorce or legal separation, entitlement to Medicare, or where a dependent child no longer meets eligibility requirements.

Please contact Human Resources to learn more about your COBRA rights.

*7.27 Severance Pay*

[**Note:** This section is optional.]

Sample statement #1:

In its discretion, [Company] may provide a severance pay benefit to exemplary employees who leave work for reasons other than involuntary termination or economic downturn. As a general rule, when severance pay is offered, an employee will be provided with [one week] of severance pay for every year of employment with the Company. In order to be entitled to severance pay the employee must have worked at least [three years] with the Company and be a regular full-time employee at the time of separation.

Sample statement #2:

Any severance pay offered is at Company discretion and requires the employee to sign a Release of Claims Agreement as a condition of payment.

8.0 Safety and Loss Prevention

*8.1 General Safety Policy*

It is the responsibility of every employee of the Company to maintain a healthy and safe work environment. Please report all safety hazards and occupational illnesses or injuries to your supervisor immediately and complete an occupational illness or injury form as needed. Failure to follow the Company's health and safety rules can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

[You may also wish to include your safety program within the employee handbook.]

*8.2 Nonsmoking Policy*

[Company] is concerned about the effect that smoking and second hand smoke inhalation can have on its employees and clients. Smoking in the office, client areas, and restrooms is prohibited.

[Add any stop smoking incentive program language here.]

*8.3 Policy Against Violence*

The safety and security of our employees, residents, tenants, vendors, contractors, and the general public is of essential importance. Threats or acts of violence made by an employee against another person's life, health, well-being, family, or property will not be tolerated. Any act of intimidation, threat of violence, or act of violence committed against any person on Company property is prohibited. The following definitions apply:

* Intimidation: A physical or verbal act toward another person, the result of which causes that person to reasonably fear for his or her safety or the safety of others.
* Threat of violence: A physical or verbal act which threatens bodily harm to another person or damage to the property of another.
* Act of violence: A physical act, whether or not it causes actual bodily harm to another person or damage to the property of another.

No person shall possess or have control of any firearm, deadly weapon, or prohibited knife, as legally defined, while on Company property, except as required in the lawful course of business or as authorized by state law.

The following are prohibited:

1. Any act or threat of violence made by an employee against another person's life, health, well-being, family, or property.
2. Any act or threat of violence, which endangers the safety of employees, residents, tenants, vendors, contractors, or the general public.
3. Any act or threat of violence made directly or indirectly by words, gestures, symbols, or email.
4. Use or possession of a weapon on the Company's premises managed by the Company as permitted by state law.

It is a requirement that employees report to their supervisor or [Human Resources], in accordance with this policy, any behavior that compromises the Company's ability to maintain a safe work environment. All reports will be investigated immediately and kept confidential, except where there is a legitimate need to know.

Employees who violate this policy may be subject to criminal charges as well as discipline up to and including immediate termination of employment.

9.0 Trade Secrets and Inventions

*9.1 Employee Inventions*

Any employee invention created, in whole or in part, during an employee's work hours, or from the use of the Company's equipment or facilities, is a "work for hire" and the property of the Company.

Any employee who intends to develop and maintain property rights in any invention, which relates in any way to the Company's products or services, is required to obtain a written waiver of this policy, signed by both the employee and [insert title].

[**Note:** Refer to any applicable state laws.]

*9.2 Confidentiality and Nondisclosure of Trade Secrets*

As a condition of employment, Company employees are required to protect the confidentiality of Company trade secrets, proprietary information, and confidential Company-related commercially-sensitive information (i.e. financial or sales records/reports, marketing or business strategies/plans, product development, customer lists, patents, trademarks, etc.). Access to this information should be limited to a "need to know" basis and should not be used for personal benefit, disclosed, or released without prior authorization from a supervisor. Any employee who has information that leads them to suspect that an employee or competitor is obtaining such information is required to inform their supervisor or Human Resources.

Violation of this policy may result in the discipline or termination of any employee, as well as subject the employee to civil liability.

[**Note:** Refer to any applicable state laws.]

10.0 Customer Relations

*10.1 Products and Services Knowledge*

As an employee of [Company], you are expected to be familiar with the products and services we offer. Take every opportunity to learn the interrelationship between your department or division and the others of the Company. We consider our employees to be the best reflection of our business brand and company success.

*10.2 Customer, Client, and Visitor Relations*

We strive to provide the best products and services possible to our customers and clients. Our customers and clients support this business and generate your wages. You are expected to treat every customer, client, or visitor with the utmost respect and courtesy during your working time. You should never argue or act in a disrespectful manner towards a visitor or customer during your working time. If you are having problems with a customer, client, or visitor, please notify your supervisor immediately. If a customer, client, or visitor voices a suggestion, complaint, or concern regarding our products or services, please inform your supervisor or a member of management. Lastly, please make every effort to be prompt in following up on customer, client, or visitor orders or questions. Positive customer, client, and visitor relations will go a long way to establishing our Company as a leader in its field.

11.0 Closing Statement

*11.1 Closing Statement*

Thank you for reading our employee handbook. We hope it has provided you with an understanding of the Company's mission, history, and structure as well as our current policies and guidelines. We look forward to working with you to create a successful company and a safe, productive, and pleasant workplace.

President or CEO Name, President or CEO Title

[Company]

12.0 Acknowledgment of Receipt and Review

*12.1 Acknowledgment of Receipt and Review*

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Employee Handbook and understand that it is my responsibility to read the Employee Handbook in its entirety. I agree to comply with the rules, policies, and procedures set forth herein, as well as any revisions made to the Employee Handbook in the future. I also understand that if I violate the rules, policies, and procedures set forth herein that I may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of my employment.

I understand that the Employee Handbook contains information about the employment policies and practices of the Company. I understand that the policies outlined in this Employee Handbook are management guidelines only, which in a developing business will require changes from time to time. I understand that the Company retains the right to make decisions involving employment as needed in order to conduct its work in a manner that is beneficial to the employees and the Company. I understand that this Employee Handbook supersedes and replaces any and all prior Employee Handbooks and any inconsistent verbal or written policy statements.

I understand that except for the policy of at-will employment, which can only be changed by the [president of the Company] in a written and signed document, the Company reserves the right to revise, delete, and add to the provisions of this Employee Handbook at any time without further notice. I understand that no oral statements or representations can change the provisions of this Employee Handbook. I understand that this Employee Handbook is not intended to create contractual obligations with respect to any matters it covers and that the Employee Handbook does not create a contract guaranteeing that I will be employed for any specific time period. I understand nothing in this handbook is created to infringe on any available legal rights.

I understand that this Employee Handbook refers to current benefit plans maintained by the Company and that I must refer to the actual plan documents and summary plan descriptions as these documents are controlling.

If I have questions about the content or interpretation of the Employee Handbook, I will ask my supervisor or Human Resources.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Employee

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name