

CENTRAL CONNECTICUT  
REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

**PERSONNEL POLICIES**

**EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

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I. PREFACE - INTRODUCTION AND CONTRACT DISCLAIMER. This Handbook is intended to serve as a practical guide to Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency's ("the Agency") current personnel policies and to serve as your personal reference in answering questions that you may have about your job. These policies are intended to cover the most common situations. Additionally, the policies and procedures in this Handbook are guidelines only and are not to be construed as an expressed or implied contract of employment, a promise of employment for any specified time, or a guarantee of benefits or working conditions between any employee and the Agency. Moreover, in order to adapt to its changing needs and to respond to specific situations as they may arise, these policies may change from time to time. The Agency's actions, from time to time, may also vary from the attached policies and procedures, or any subsequent policies and procedures that may be implemented. The Agency's supervisors and employees shall use their respective best judgment in responding to situations not specifically covered. As illustrated in this Handbook, the Agency expects that you will conform to certain rules and requirements consistent with maintaining a professional working environment. In addition, Employment with the Agency is at-will, which means that either you or the Agency may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice or cause. ~~and nothing in these policies should be construed as establishing a contractual relationship between the employees and the Agency.~~ Finally, this Handbook replaces (supersedes) any or all other previous Agency employee manuals and/or personnel policies or practices, whether written or oral, which are contrary to the policies contained herein.

## II. POSITIONS

A. Classes/Categories - All employees are classified as either "exempt" or "non-exempt" in accordance with state and federal wage and hour laws. These classifications govern wage and salary procedures.

1. NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES: Individuals who are paid an hourly rate for regular hours worked and at the rate of one-and-one-half times their base rate for all overtime hours worked. Overtime is any period of time actually worked in excess of forty (40) hours in any one-payroll week. And paid-time off provided in a given payroll work will not count towards the determination of overtime.
2. EXEMPT EMPLOYEES: Individuals who are paid based upon an annualized salary which is intended as full compensation for all hours worked, and therefore, exempt employees are not eligible to receive overtime pay for hours worked beyond forty hours in any one-payroll week.

A- All employees are further classified as either Full-time, Part-time, Probationary, [I DO NOT UNDERSTAND THIS CATEGORY, NEED TO DISCUSS: Training and Evaluation Probationary] and Temporary/Intern. These classifications govern eligibility for, among other things, participation in the Agency's benefit programs, in accordance with the terms and conditions outlined in this Handbook.

1. Durational – employees working full-time, funded by grants for one year or

~~less than one year, who may receive regular employee benefits at the discretion of the PFP.~~

2. ~~Regular~~ Full-time (FTE) - employees who regularly working a full 35 or more hours per week and who are eligible for with all Agency benefits; are not funded by a specific grant, nor working with a specific project funding termination date, nor in any other way temporary or part-time.
3. Part-time - employees ~~includes those~~ who regularly work fewer than ~~32~~<sup>35</sup> hours a week and who are only eligible for certain Agency benefits receive no employee benefits, other than vacation, sick, and holiday time on a pro-rated basis (??such as vacation, sick, and holiday time??) [NEED TO EXPLAIN IN VACATION, SICK AND HOLIDAY POLICIES WHAT PART-TIME EMPLOYEES GET]; ~~except that, such employees~~ who work 32 hours or more a week, may be granted full employee benefits at the discretion of the PFP.
4. Probationary - ~~Regular full-time~~ any non-temporary employees who are hired or who have been promoted to a new position and for whom the Agency is evaluating for suitability for the position for a period of six (6) months (or longer if necessary). but have not yet fully qualified for the new position. New hire probationary period employees [??are or are not??] eligible for Agency benefits [??beginning when??]. Promoted probationary employees are eligible for any Agency benefits available to them depending on their full-time or part-time employment status [??beginning when??]. [I DO NOT UNDERSTAND THIS CATEGORY, NEED TO DISCUSS
5. Training and Evaluation Probationary - potential employees who are granted with full employment benefits, but without grievance or employment rights, who work for the Agency for up to 18 months during which time they are trained and their suitability for regular full-time employment with the Agency is evaluated.

6. ~~Temporary and Intern - individuals who work for the Agency for fewer than 1,820 hours five months, who may be recruited outside the Agency's under a simplified Affirmative Action Plan, and who are not eligible for sick or vacation leave, holidays, swap or compensatory time, or personal insurance benefits. employees who are hired as fill in or on an as-needed basis to temporarily supplement the work force, or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Employment assignments in this category may be of limited and specified duration, typically up to 6 months. Employment beyond any initially stated period of time does not in any way imply a change in employment status. Temporary employees retain that status unless and until notified, in writing, of a change. While temporary employees receive all legally mandated benefits, they are ineligible for any of the Agency's other benefits.~~

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B. Creation - Except as otherwise provided herein, the Personnel, Finance and Program Committee (PFP) has final authority regarding the creation of any positions. employment of all staff, except that, tThe Executive Director has the authority to hire any employee, employ, review, and discipline ~~temporary staff, and interns~~ subject to review within 30 days, by the PFP.

C. Elimination - ~~The PFP may consider and recommend the elimination of a staff position to the full Agency Board when such a change is justified by financial considerations and/or program activity changes. The full Agency Board has authority to eliminate a position.~~

D. Supervision - The PFP supervises the Executive Director. The Executive Director, or in an his/her absence, the Deputy Director, supervises and directs staff and has the authority to review, discipline and discharge staff. The Executive Director may assign supervisory responsibilities to ~~ertain~~other staff members as necessary.

III. BENEFITS. Provided below is a general description of the employee benefits currently offered by the Agency to eligible employees. Because the exact provisions of these benefits, particularly insurance coverage, changes from time to time, the detailed descriptions of each benefit and the conditions of enrollment and specific benefit plan terms are set forth in specific plan documents that are available upon request from the Executive Director or his/her designee. The Agency reserves the right to change or discontinue any of its insurance benefits as well as the conditions for participation in such benefits plans in the sole discretion of the Agency. Furthermore, where the terms of this Handbook are inconsistent with the terms of any benefit plans maintained by the Agency, the terms of the more specific benefit plans shall control.

A. Health Insurance -The Agency pays ninety-five percent (95%) of the cost of physician, hospitalization (semi-private), major medical, and dental insurance for an individual employees as provided by a company selected by the Agency, with the other five percent (5%) being paid by the employee. The Agency will pay ninety percent (90%) of the additional cost of doctor, dentist, and hospitalization insurance for employees who choose an employee-plus-spouse, or a family plan, with the other ten percent (10%) being paid by the employee. Employees who have coverage thru a spouse, and who choose not to enroll in the Agency sponsored health insurance program, may be given an allowance of up to \$2,000 per year (for savings that accrue to the Agency as a result of their non-participation) to be awarded proportionally with the issuance of each paycheck, but not considered salary in relation to annual salary increases. Employees and dependents who elect coverage thru Medicare will be provided coverage under a Medicare supplemental plan, and will be ~~held harmless~~ reimbursed? by the Agency up to \$2,000 each annually for out-of-pocket medical expenses which would have been covered by the Agency's regular employee health insurance policy but are not covered by Medicare, nor by their Medicare supplements coverage.

B. Holidays - Each ~~regular~~ full-time employee shall be entitled to the following eleven (11) annual holidays:

New Year's Day	One-half day before Christmas
Martin Luther King Day	Christmas Day
President's Day	One-half day before New Year's Day
Memorial Day	Columbus Day
Independence Day	
Labor Day	<del>Alternative Holiday (each employee may elect either Veteran's Day/</del>
Thanksgiving Day	Friday after Thanksgiving

When a holiday occurs on a Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be taken as the holiday. When a holiday occurs on a Sunday, the following Monday shall be taken as the holiday. To be eligible to receive holiday pay, an employee is required to work his/her regularly scheduled hours on both the workday preceding and the

workday following the holiday, unless the employee is otherwise out on an approved absence or leave. [NEED TO EXPLAIN WHAT HOLIDAY BENEFITS PART-TIME EMPLOYEES GET, AND WHETHER PROBATIONARY EMPLOYEES GET]

C. Leave

1. Bereavement - The Executive Director may grant an employee up to three bereavement days in any fiscal year for the death of an immediate family member. The timing of bereavement leave days shall be granted relative to the staff member's family responsibilities. The term "immediate family member" is defined as a spouse, child, step-child, parent, step-parent, sibling, in-law, grandparent, grandchild, or any member of the same household. ~~" means an individual with any of the following relationships to the employee: (1) Spouse, and parents thereof; (2) Sons and daughters, and spouses thereof; (3) Parents, and spouses thereof; (4) Brothers and sisters, and spouses thereof; (5) Grandparents and grandchildren, and spouses thereof; (6) Domestic partner and parents thereof, including domestic partners of any individual as defined in parts 2) through (5) of this definition; and (7) Any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.~~ One day per fiscal year may be granted; for all other funerals. "Fiscal year" is defined as the period beginning July 1 and ending June 30 of the succeeding year. Employees may use any paid vacation time or take additional unpaid time off for bereavement upon the approval of the Executive Director. The Agency reserves the right to request verification of the death and the relationship of the deceased to the employee.

2. Conference—The Executive Director may approve conference leave for a period covering the duration of a conference, workshop, training course, or special seminar, which an employee asks to attend, and which is undertaken for the enhancement of on the job skills or in service to the Agency and its member municipalities. Employees attending such conferences will be paid as though they were working normal hours. No swap, comp, or overtime may be authorized in relation to such activities. Employee expenses for evening or weekend time participating in such activities will be reimbursed, however no swap, comp, or overtime shall be granted for evening or weekend participation in such events.

3. Earned Personal Days - An employee earns a personal day for taking no sick time for three consecutive months. Earned personal days may be used to take additional accue to vacation time and may be accrued from year to year as part of the accrual of the maximum vacation time allowed to be accrued. Personal days may only be taken in ½ day or full-day increments. [NEED TO EXPLAIN WHETHER PERSONAL DAY BENEFITS APPLY TO FULL-TIME, PART-TIME AND/OR PROBATIONARY AND ANY PRO-RATING].

4. Jury Duty -~~An employee should serve when called for jury duty as a matter of good citizenship, unless there are pressing reasons which make it necessary to be excused.~~ Employees will be granted a leave of absence for serving on a jury. Any employee who is selected for jury duty must notify the Executive Director as soon as s/he receives notice from the court. Employees are expected to report for work during scheduled hours whenever jury services are not required. The Agency shall compensate employees for time lost on regularly scheduled working days for the first five days, or part thereof, of juror service. Certificates from the court must be obtained from the clerk and given to the Executive Director to obtain compensation from the Agency. The difference between the employee's salary and the jury fees will be paid by the Agency for any time off for jury service beyond the first five days if prior approval is obtained

from the Executive Director.

5. Military Training/Leave - An employee who is a member of the National Guard, or organized military reserves of the United States, and who is ordered to attend a period of active duty training shall be allowed two (2) calendar weeks' paid leave for such purpose. During such leave, employees shall be paid the difference between their regular pay and their military base and longevity pay, if any, so that they will continue to take home the same in pay that they would if they were not on military training leave. Such military leave shall not be deducted from vacation leave or in any other way result in loss of privileges or compensation. Any leave required beyond two weeks per calendar shall be provided in accordance with any applicable military leave laws but will be without pay from the Agency (unless the employee chooses to use any accrued paid vacation or personal time). Military orders shall be presented All such leaves shall be reported to the Executive Director with as much advance notice as possible. Employees will be allowed to return to work from military leave in accordance with the requirements of the law, and justified in advance. No military leave shall exceed two (2) weeks' duration.

6. Sickness - Sick leave begins to accrue at the rate of 3.25 hours per pay period the first full pay period after 30 days from the date of a new employee's start date, and employees may accrue up to a maximum of 490 hours. **NEED TO EXPLAIN WHETHER SICK LEAVE APPLIES TO FULL-TIME, PART-TIME AND/OR PROBATIONARY AND WHETHER ANY PRO-RATING** An employee may use sick leave for his/her own illness or medical needs; or to take care of the family medical needs of a child, spouse, parent or grandchild a family member. The Agency reserves the right at any time to require medical verification that an absence, regardless of its duration, was due to illness or other emergency medical reasons. A doctor's notification recommendation is required after an employee has used more than a third consecutive full day of sick leave. Employees who seek to use a sick day must directly notify the Executive Director to obtain approval at least 30 minutes prior to the start of their scheduled workday or otherwise prior to taking sick time. The Executive Director shall authorize the taking of sick leave when an employee must be absent due to illness. Sick time may be taken in one-hour increments up to a full-day's absence. Employees will not be compensated for any amount of accrued but unused sick days Accumulated days of sick leave are cancelled with the upon termination of employment at any time for any reason. Employees may not take any sick time after they have given notice of resignation.—If The Executive Director believes that an employee is not medically fit for duty, the Executive Director may direct the employee to leave work and provide medical verification of his/her ability to work and or send the employee for a fitness for duty exam before allowing the employee to return to work. has the authority to send any ill employee home.

7. Unpaid Absence Family and Medical Leave - In accordance with the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (hereinafter referred to as "FMLA"), eligible employees may take a leave of absence for certain designated reasons. In general, It is the intent of the Agency to fully comply with State Law, 31-51cc C.G.S. regarding Family and Medical Leaves and the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act as they apply to agencies of the size of the CCRPA.— Full-time Employees who have worked at least 1,250 hours in the 12 month period preceding any request to take FMLA may be granted an unpaid leaves of absence of up to sixteen (16-24) 12 weeks within any two year the 12 month period for the following -following the first day of FMLA taken family and medical leave events for the following purposes: (1) the serious health condition

of the employee or his/her child, parent or spouse; (2) the birth or adoption of a child by the employee or the foster care placement of a child with the employee; (3) to serve as an organ or bone marrow donor; or (4) because of a "qualifying exigency" due to certain events related to the employee's spouse, child or parent on active duty. Employees may further be eligible for up to 26 weeks of leave in the 12 month period following the first day of FMLA taken due to the serious injury or illness of a covered service member. Full details of an employee's rights and obligations when requesting and taking FMLA leave are available in a more detailed policy that can be obtained from the Executive Director. ~~the employee's serious illness, the birth or adoption of a child; an illness of the employee's child, spouse, parent or grandchild. During such leave, the Agency shall pay the employee's proportionate of the employee's health insurance premium and shall maintain the employee's life insurance premium coverage. For unpaid leaves which do not fall under the FLA., the Executive Director may grant a leave of absence without pay for up to ten (10) working days; leaves in excess of ten (10) working days may only be approved by the PFP.~~

8. Personal Leave - The Executive Director, in his sole discretion, may grant a leave of absence without pay for up to ten (10) working days in any fiscal year to eligible employees who need to take time off from work duties to fulfill personal obligations that are not covered under the FMLA. Full and part-time employees are eligible to request personal leave as described in this policy. Personal leaves are considered voluntary time off without pay. Since the purpose of an unpaid personal leave is to enable an employee to maintain his or her ability to continue employment with the Agency, such an employee may not work elsewhere during their regular working hours while on personal leave. Employees may request personal leave only after having completed one year of service. As soon as an eligible employee becomes aware of the need for a personal leave of absence, he/she should request the leave from the Executive Director. Requests for personal leave will be evaluated based on a number of factors, including anticipated workload requirements and staffing considerations during the proposed period of absence. The Agency reserves the right to request any applicable documentation of the need for the leave. Unpaid personal leaves will be considered only after all earned but not taken time off has been exhausted. Subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the applicable insurance plans, the Agency will continue to provide health insurance benefits for the full period of the approved leave. Any requests for unpaid leave beyond 10 days may only be approved by the PFP.

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2.9. Vacation - Annual vacation begins to accrue at the rate of 3.51 hours per pay period the first full pay period after 30 days from the date of a new employee's start date. Employees with five (5) years, but less than ten (10) years, continuous full-time employment accrue vacation time at the rate of 5.11 hours per pay period commencing at the pay period closest to the employee's fifth (5) anniversary date. Employees with more than ten (10) years of continuous full-time employment accrue annual vacation at the rate of 5.80 hours per pay period commencing at the pay period closest to their tenth (10) anniversary. ~~Earned personal days accrue to vacation time.~~ **[NEED TO EXPLAIN WHETHER VACATION APPLIES TO FULL-TIME, PART-TIME AND/OR PROBATIONARY AND ANY PRO-RATING].**

Employees may accrue ~~Up to a maximum of~~ 179 hours of vacation time (which accrual hours include any ~~may be accrued~~ earned personal days that an employee has accrued), except that the Executive Director may accrue up to 214 hours. Employees must provide at least thirty (30) days notice to the Executive Director to take more than three consecutive

vacation days off so coverage arrangements may be made. For one to three days off, two weeks' notice to the Executive Director is required (absent unexpected circumstances in which case the Executive Director may waive the two week notice requirement). Vacation time shall only be taken as approved by the Executive Director in accordance with Agency needs. ~~to meet, as equitably as possible, each employee's preference, and maintenance of the office work schedule.~~ The Executive Director may not take more than three consecutive weeks of vacation without approval of the Chairman of the Agency Board. Vacation time may only be taken in ½ day or full day increments.

An employee whose employment terminates shall accrue vacation time to the last day of the preceding full pay period. Accrued vacation, not to exceed the allowable accrued time, shall be paid upon termination of employment, ~~except unless the employee resigns without providing ten (10) working days' notice or is terminated for what the Agency in its sole discretion deems to be "for cause."~~ A termination "for cause" for purposes of determining payment of vacation time upon termination includes (without limitation) misconduct based terminations (such as terminations due to insubordination, theft, harassment, discrimination etc.). ~~as provided in the paragraph entitled "Resignation."~~ Employees may not take any vacation time after they have provided notice of resignation.

10. Time Off to Vote - All employees will be permitted time-off to vote in accordance with any requirements of applicable state law. Non-exempt employees will not be paid for any such time-off.
  
11. Witness and Crime Victim Leave - Employees who are crime victims or witnesses will be permitted reasonable time off to attend a court proceeding or participate in a police investigation relating to their criminal cases. Witness and crime victim leave will be unpaid, unless the employee chooses to use any available accrued paid time off for such leave or the Agency is otherwise required by law to pay for such leave. A crime victim is defined as an employee who: (a) suffers direct or threatened physical, emotional or financial harm as a result of a crime; or (b) is an immediate family member or guardian of a homicide victim or a minor, physically disabled or incompetent person who suffers such harm. In addition, the Agency will not take adverse actions against any employee for having a restraining order issued on the employee's behalf in a domestic violence case or having a protective order issued on the employee's behalf by a court of any state. Further, the Agency will not take any adverse action against any employee because he/she obeys a legal subpoena to appear in court as a witness in any criminal proceeding. Any leave time allotted under this policy runs concurrently with any leave time afforded under any of the Agency's other policies for which the employee may be eligible.

12. Family Violence Victim Leave - Employees who are victims of family violence will be permitted to take up to twelve (12) days of leave during any calendar year in which the leave is reasonably needed for one or more of the following reasons: (1) to seek medical care or counseling for physical or psychological injury or disability; (2) to obtain services from a victim services organization; (3) to relocate due to the family violence; or (4) to participate in any civil or criminal proceeding related to or resulting from such family violence. Such leave will be unpaid, unless the employee chooses to use any available accrued paid time off for such leave or the Agency is otherwise required by law to pay for such leave. Employees who seek such leave will need to provide at least seven (7) days notice of the need for such leave if foreseeable, or notice as soon as practicable if the need for such leave is not foreseeable. The Agency may require appropriate certification of the need for any such leave. Any such certification provided will be maintained in a confidential manner and will be only disclosed as required by law or to protect the employee's safety in the workplace, provided that the employee is given notice prior to any such disclosure. The Agency will further not discriminate or take adverse actions against any employee for being a victim of family violence or for having to attend or participate in a court proceeding related to a civil case in which the employee is a family violence victim.

13. Pregnancy Disability Leave - The Agency will provide any pregnant employee with a reasonable leave of absence during any period of time when she has been certified by her health care provider as being disabled from the pregnancy. While the length of any such pregnancy disability leave may vary depending on individual circumstances, it is generally expected to be no longer than six (6) weeks. Pregnancy disability leaves of absence will be without pay, unless the employee chooses to use any available paid accrued paid time off for such leave. The Agency will continue to provide health insurance benefits coverage (if applicable) during a pregnancy disability leave of absence. Employees are expected to provide the Executive Director with at least two week's advance notice of their intent to return to work following their pregnancy leave (or of their intent not to return to work) so that appropriate staffing decisions can be made. Any leave time allotted under this policy runs concurrently with any leave time afforded under any of the Agency's other policies for which the employee may be eligible.

D. Life Insurance - The Agency will provide life insurance for full-time employees in an amount based on their fiscal year salary, not to exceed \$50,000, in such amount as the PFP shall determine from time to time. Employees become eligible for coverage on the first day of the month following the satisfactory completion of their **training and evaluation period** - probationary period after hire.

E. Overtime

1. ~~Swap time~~ Overtime - Administrative and secretarial staff Non-exempt employees are not permitted to work overtime (i.e., more than 40 hours per payroll week) unless authorized in advance by the Executive Director. If the Office and Finance Administrator works overtime, the Executive Director, in his sole discretion, may pay for any overtime hours worked at one and one-half times the regular hourly rate or may grant compensatory time off at the rate of one and one-half hours for each overtime hour worked. may earn and use swap overtime with approval of the Executive Director. Swap Overtime will be granted as time off, or additional pay paid overtime, at time and a half. Swap Overtime Any compensatory time provided earned must be ~~paid out or~~ used within 30 days of accrual, (absent unexpected circumstances in which case the Executive Director may waive this requirement).; ~~and n~~ No more than 35 hours of compensatory time may be accrued at any time.

2. Compensatory ("comp") time - ~~Professional staff~~ Exempt employees (excluding the Executive Director), ~~Office and Finance Administrator~~ Manager/Bookkeeper, and secretarial staff) may be awarded accrue comp time for any substantial amount of work undertaken (, and for including meetings attended), outside of beyond their regular working hours. The Executive Director, in his/her sole discretion, shall determine the appropriate amount of any such compensatory time to be awarded and shall determine dates and duration of such time off to ensure that there are no adverse effects on Agency operations. Comp time will be granted as time off on an hour for hour basis. Except for comp time earned during attendance at a meeting in which a staff member is required to directly participate, comp time may only be earned, or used, with the prior approval of the Executive Director. In making decisions on requests for the use of comp time, the Executive Director will consider maintenance of the office work schedule and each employee's preference. No more than 35 hours of comp time may be accrued at any time.

F. Retirement - The PFP may recommend, and the Agency may, from time to time, adopt and/or change the employees' Retirement Program.

G. Salaries and Wages - Salaries and wages will be reviewed and determined at least annually as part of the budget process. Salaries and wages for new hires, promotions, and changes in work hours may be reviewed and determined during the year. Unless specifically otherwise approved, all salary changes will be effective the first pay period in July.

Salaries shall be paid on alternate Thursdays. When a payday falls during an employee's vacation, or on a holiday, swap or compensatory time off, upon request, the employee's paycheck may be issued on the last working day preceding the beginning of that individual's non-work day vacation or holiday. Employees working on an hourly basis will be paid on a regular payday for the actual hours worked or paid time off taken as shown on their time sheets approved by the Executive Director. \_

H. Travel and Conferences Expense Reimbursements (also see "Conference" leave above) - The Executive Director may approve conference attendance for a conference, workshop, training course, or special seminar, which an employee asks to attend, and which is undertaken for the enhancement of on-the-job skills or in service to the Agency and its member municipalities. Non-exempt E employees attending such conferences will be paid as though they were working normal hours. No comp or overtime may be authorized in relation to such activities. Employee expenses for evening or weekend time participating in such activities will be reimbursed, however

~~no comp. or overtime shall be granted for evening or weekend participation in such events.~~ All travel and conference expenses must be supported by appropriate documentation, and shall be presented in an itemized manner on a the Agency travel reimbursement form. When required to be out of town overnight on Agency business the traveling staff or Agency Board Member may request an advance of expense money. If the sum of money advanced to the individual exceeds actual reimbursement expenses, the excess shall be returned to the Agency; if the amount advanced was not sufficient to cover reimbursable expenses, the Agency shall reimburse the difference. The requirement for utilizing Agency forms and documenting expenses applies both to advance payment and retroactive payment.

1. Conference Costs - Agency staff and Board members may be reimbursed for expenses associated with attendance at conferences. Reimbursable expenses for conferences and meetings include reasonable lodging charges, meals and related living expenses. Estimated conference expenses must be approved in advance in writing by the Executive Director before conference attendance. The PFP may approve reimbursement of actual expenses if they exceed the estimated expenses by more than 10%.

2. Meals - An employee who is required to attend a meeting or to perform other Agency duties outside regular working hours may be reimbursed for meals - excluding alcoholic beverages - by providing appropriate receipts. The Executive Director will determine appropriate amounts for such reimbursements (~~see also "Conference" leave~~).

3. Travel/Mileage - Travel costs incurred by Agency Board or staff members on approved Agency business will be reimbursed at the IRS allowed travel reimbursement rate, as adjusted from time to time, plus parking charges and highway tolls. Reimbursement requests shall be submitted no more often than monthly. Such travel costs may include, but are not limited to: (1) automobile travel during regular working hours from the Agency office to meetings, data collection sites, field inspection areas, etc., and return travel to the Agency office; (2) automobile travel outside regular working hours from an employee's home to a meeting, etc., and return to home; (3) commercial transportation (bus, train, air, etc.) as necessary in conjunction with approved meetings, conferences, workshops, etc.

I. Tuition Reimbursement - Subject to a recommendation by the Executive Director with approval by the PFP, the Agency may reimburse employees for relevant academic training which is not eligible for ~~travel reimbursement, comp time or~~ other reimbursement under the following conditions: a) the staff member attains a grade of at least "B" or higher per course; b) the total course amount payable by the Agency, shall be 60% of the tuition cost, and shall not exceed \$500; c) the reimbursement will not be made until 60 days after the course grade is received by the Agency, provided the staff employee is still employed by the Agency at the end of the 60 day period; and, d) each staff member is restricted to one course per semester or two courses per school year. Employees ~~are discouraged from may not taking~~ courses during normal working hours, (absent unusual circumstances in which case the Executive Director may waive this prohibition).

J. Voluntary Pre-Tax Investment Plan - the Agency will provide its regular full-time and regular part-time staff an opportunity to voluntarily contribute to a pre-tax investment plan which will provide for deferral of payment of a portion of their current compensation until death, retirement, termination of employment, or other event, in accordance with the provisions of Section 457(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, with other applicable provisions of such code, and in accordance with the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut. The Agency will not make matching contributions to this plan. Plans may be entered January 1 to July 1 following

the satisfactory completion of the training and evaluation period the new hire probationary period.

#### IV. REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

##### A. Alcohol and Drug Possession, Use and Testing

1. Alcohol & Drug Free Workplace - Substance abuse (alcohol and drugs) poses safety and health risks not only to the abusers, but to all employees who work with abusers and to Agency property, equipment, operations, and reputation. It is the intent of the Agency to maintain a safe and healthy work environment for all its employees and to operate an efficient workplace and protect Agency property, equipment, operations, and its reputation.

It is a standard of conduct for employees of the Agency not to use illegal drugs and not to abuse alcohol or legal drugs. No employees may use, sell, manufacture, receive, distribute, dispense, possess alcohol or any illegal drug or drug paraphernalia or equipment, or abuse prescription or over the counter drugs, while on Agency property, while performing work for the Agency, while operating vehicles on Agency business, or while off-premises where such behavior compromises the Agency's business interests or undermines the public confidence in or harms the reputation of the Agency, or adversely affects the employee's job performance, job safety and/or ability to fulfill Agency responsibilities.

Being under the influence of alcohol or an illegal drug, or abuse of any prescribed or over the counter drugs on Agency premises or while conducting Agency business or during working hours is absolutely prohibited and may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

~~This policy applies to all employees of the Agency while on the job and in situations where an employee's off the job or off the premises conduct impairs work performance or undermines the public confidence in the Agency's reputation. It is also intended to apply and to employees of firms others~~ doing business with the Agency on the Agency's premises.

2. Guidelines Pre-Employment Testing - All prospective employees must have a pre-employment drug screen prior to employment. Prospective employees who refuse to be tested, or who test positive, will not be considered for employment. Urine samples will be required and such samples will be split for potential additional analyses. At least the "DOT 10" screening for common street drugs will be done. The Agency may also request the use of a "10 panel test" by the laboratory (i.e., chromatography/mass spectrometry analysis) specifically to identify substances provided by prescription versus "street" drugs. An applicant may be denied employment on the basis of a positive drug test, which has been confirmed by an independent laboratory test. The applicant will be provided a copy of the positive test result. If

~~these are found to be positive regarding substances other than prescriptions, the prospective employee has the right to review the laboratory findings with a medical doctor and/or pharmacist. The prospective employee may challenge the tests, and the Agency may choose to utilize a second unannounced pre-employment test.~~

3. Procedures Testing During Employment -

a. ~~If~~ The Agency may test employees for drug and alcohol use when the Agency has reasonable suspicion to believe that an employee is unable to perform or is deficient in performing his/her job responsibilities due to the influence of drugs or alcohol. Generally, reasonable suspicion means, but is not limited to, direct, individualized observation by a representative of the Agency of: employee use, possession, sale or distribution of controlled substances, drug paraphernalia or alcohol; aberrant behavior by an employee while at work; a noticeable or substantial change in work performance; or physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of controlled substances or alcohol. Testing for the presence of alcohol will be conducted by analysis of breath. Testing for the presence of the metabolites of drugs will be conducted by the analysis of urine

~~a.b.~~ If a supervisor or an Agency Board member has a ~~good faith reason to reasonable suspicion suspect~~ to believe that an employee is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or in any way appears impaired, that person should attempt to get another supervisor (if available) to confirm this suspicion. The time, date, and name of the employee and observable facts should be documented and signed by the observing supervisor(s).

~~b.c.~~ If an employee is suspected of being under the influence ~~as in (1) above~~, the employee will be referred to an Agency-approved testing facility for an evaluation, including an alcohol and drug screen. During normal office hours, the Employee Assistance Program (EA.) Director (i.e., the Agency Executive Director or the PFP [regarding the Executive Director]) should be contacted to coordinate and facilitate the evaluation. The employee will be asked to sign a "consent to testing form". Arrangements will be made by the supervisor(s) to have the employee transported to the facility for the evaluation.

~~e.d.~~ If the employee refuses to go to an Agency-approved facility or refuses to sign the consent to testing form, this behavior will be treated as insubordination. The employee will be suspended ~~for up to 3 days~~ without pay as lawfully permitted, pending further investigation. ~~The employee's return to work will be contingent upon passing an alcohol and drug screening test and achieving a favorable EA. evaluation. Management will arrange transportation to the employee's home, preferably through a family member.~~

~~d.e.~~ Short of physical restraint, the employee should not be allowed to leave the Agency office without transportation assistance. If the employee insists on leaving the office with the intent of driving a vehicle, the supervisor should notify the local police to warn them of the employee's suspected condition and refusal of assistance. This should be done before the employee leaves the Agency, whenever possible.

e.f. If ~~said the~~ testing facility determines that the employee is not under the influence of alcohol or drugs, then the employee will be ~~able~~allowed to return to work.

g. If ~~said the~~ testing facility determines that the employee is under the influence of alcohol, drugs or both, ~~and is, therefore, impaired and unfit for work, then~~ the employee will, ~~at least, be remain~~ suspended ~~for up to 3 days without pay~~ and may face additional disciplinary action(s), up to, and including, termination.

~~f.h.~~ Should the Agency decide not to terminate the employee for testing

~~positive.~~ The employee's return to work will be contingent on passing an ~~EA~~ evaluation which shall, at a minimum, include successfully passing alcohol and drug detection tests of blood and urine samples, and a thorough evaluation by a qualified medical doctor, or employee assistance program counselor, who determines the extent of all past and present substance abuse(s), treatment program(s) and potential suitability for return to work.

~~i.~~ Confidentiality: drug/alcohol test results will be confidential, and reported initially to the EA. Director (i.e., the Executive Director) and the PFP Chair.

~~j.~~ Failure or refusal of an employee (or applicant) to cooperate fully with any portion of this policy, or to submit to or comply with any drug or alcohol testing as may be lawfully required or requested, will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination (or denial of employment).

~~g.~~

~~B.~~ Calendar

~~The office maintains a staff calendar of scheduled activities and meetings. Employees are expected to indicate their expected return time and destination so that they may be contacted, if necessary.~~

**B. Attendance and Punctuality** - Attendance and punctuality are important factors for your success on the job. We work as a team and this requires that each person be in the right place at the right time. If you are going to be late for work or absent, you must notify your supervisor or the Executive Director at least 30 minutes before the start of your workday. This procedure should be utilized for each day of absence or tardiness, unless otherwise directed. When there is no notification, the absence or lateness will be considered unexcused. Personal issues requiring time away from your work, such as doctors' appointments or other matters, should be scheduled during your non-working hours if possible. If an employee is absent for three (3) consecutive days, or on three (3) separate occasions without leave or authorized approval, he/she shall be deemed to have resigned. The Agency reserves the right to request medical verification of any absence due to illness and/or of the employee's fitness for return to duty following any absence at any time. Any deviation from this policy and/or repeated occurrences of unscheduled time off or unexcused absences could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

~~C.~~ Disciplinary Actions and Complaints Grievances

~~1. Definitions—A grievance is a complaint by an employee, other than an probationary employee in a training and evaluation period, who, during the carrying out of authorized work for the Agency, alleges to have been subjected to arbitrary, capricious, discriminatory, improperly or inequitably applied policies, procedures or practices.—“Employee” shall mean either an individual employee or a group of employees with the same grievance.—A promoted employee may initiate a grievance during a probationary evaluation period, with the exception of grievances about being returned to a previously held position, which shall not be grievable.—~~

~~2.1.~~ Discipline

It is the responsibility of all employees to observe the policies, rules and

regulations necessary for the proper operation of the Agency.

Whenever an employee's performance, attitude, work habits or personal conduct at any time fall below an acceptable level, supervisors shall promptly notify and counsel the employee. If appropriate and justified, a reasonable period of time for improvement may be allowed before initiating a disciplinary action. In some instances, a specific incident may justify immediate disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. The action to be taken generally depends on the seriousness of the incident and the pattern of the employee's past performance and conduct. The Agency reserves the right to determine the appropriate disciplinary action based on individual circumstances. Types of disciplinary actions may include the following:

- i. **Written warning.** In situations where an oral counseling has not resulted in expected improvements or where more severe initial action is warranted, a written warning shall be given to an employee, and a copy shall be placed in the employee's personnel folder.
- ii. **Suspension.** An employee may be suspended with or without pay for reasons of misconduct, negligence, inefficiency, insubordination, disloyalty, unauthorized absence or other reasons deemed appropriate by the Agency.
- iii. **Demotion.** An employee may be demoted to a position of a lower grade for which he/she is qualified.
- iv. **Discharge.** If, after remedial and/or other disciplinary measures have been tried, an employee's performance, conduct or other unsatisfactory behavior does not improve, it may be necessary to discharge the employee. From time to time, certain offenses or circumstances may occur which are of such seriousness that immediate dismissal of an employee may be necessary. The Agency reserves the right to discharge any employee for any legitimate reason, regardless of whether remedial and/or disciplinary measures have been tried, consistent with the "at-will" employment relationship that exists at the Agency.

Disciplinary action, up to and including discharge may be imposed upon an employee at any time for conduct or actions which interfere with or prevent the Agency from effectively or efficiently engaging in its business. Any employee who engages in the following activities shall be subject to disciplinary action; however, the list is meant to be illustrative only and should not be considered to include all reasons for which disciplinary action may be imposed by the Agency:

- Theft or complicity in the theft of Agency or another employee's money or property; dishonesty; unauthorized private use of Agency services, facilities, equipment, or resources.
- Refusal to obey orders or to follow the direction of a supervisor pertaining to work (insubordination).
- The use, possession, sale, or transfer of any illegal substances of any kind on Agency premises or during work hours or meal times and breaks. This includes using or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Falsification or unauthorized alteration of Agency records, including employment applications, payroll records, or other official Agency documents.
- Unauthorized review of and/or release of confidential information.
- Threatening, coercing or intimidating employees or others associated with the Agency.
- Leaving work premises during working hours (excluding break or meal times) without authorization of your supervisor.
- Failing to report for work for 3 consecutive days without notification (job abandonment).
- Gambling on Agency premises.
- Employee carelessness, recklessness, or negligence which contributes to or may contribute to the injury of a person or damage to or loss of Agency property or funds.
- Possession of unauthorized firearms, explosives, or any lethal weapon on Agency property.
- Conviction of any criminal offense while employed by the Agency.
- Activities prohibited by the Agency policies.
- Refusal or failure to satisfy performance requirements, including inefficient, unproductive, or otherwise poor job performance.
- The use of rude or abusive language toward a superior, a co-worker or the public.
- Unauthorized absences or abuse of leave privileges.
- Tardiness or absenteeism.
- Performing services for others during working hours.
- Sexual or other unlawful harassment or discrimination.
- Action or conduct affecting or impairing the efficiency of the Agency or that may bring the Agency into disrepute.
- Any other conduct that the Agency deems is adverse to the best interests of the Agency.

An employee who violates the State Code of Ethics for Public Officials—(<http://www.ct.gov/ethics/cwp/view.asp?a=2313&q=432632#part1>), or Agency Bylaws, or other Ethics rules, abuses drugs or alcohol, makes an

~~error, who is insubordinate, or whose job performance is unsatisfactory, is subject to disciplinary action commensurate with the seriousness of the situation. The Executive Director, or any supervisor authorized by the Executive Director, may take disciplinary action ranging from verbal counseling to termination, and including written reprimands, suspensions with, or without, pay or any combination of the above.~~

2. Appeals of Disciplinary Actions - An employee (other than an employee who is in their probationary period following hire) may be appealed any disciplinary action taken against them to the Executive Director; those taken by the Executive Director may be appealed to the PFP whose decisions on such matters are final. The PFP may take disciplinary action against the Executive Director; appeals of such actions may be taken to the full Agency Board. Performance evaluations or any issues pertaining to work assignments are not disciplinary actions and may not be appealed. Nothing about the existence or implementation of this appeal process alters the "at-will" employment relationship that exists at the Agency.
3. Grievances Complaints - If an employee has a grievance work-related complaint, the employee should ~~shall present and~~ discuss the grievance complaint orally with his/her the supervisor. within ten (10) working days of the occurrence of the action which gave rise to the grievance.

If the matter is not resolved by the supervisor to the employee's satisfaction, the employee may appeal in writing to the Executive Director citing specifically the person(s), act(s) or condition(s) against whom or which the grievance complaint is directed, and the grounds on which the written appeal is taken. The Executive Director will meet with the employee and any other person(s) deemed appropriate by the Executive Director to hear and discuss the appeal. The Executive Director, shall render decisions on such appeals in writing within ten (10) working days, unless operating conditions otherwise necessitate a longer response period.

If the matter is not resolved to the employee's satisfaction by the Executive Director, the employee may appeal the Executive Director's decision within ten (10) working days to the PFP which shall meet to hear the appeal with the employee, a representative, if any, or such other persons as the PFP Chair shall deem appropriate. The PFP shall render a decision in writing to the employee within forty (40) working days of the meeting. ~~Such decision may include, but not be limited to, dismissal of the appeal, correction of the condition, reprimand of an employee, suspension of an employee, or a recommended dismissal of an employee.~~

~~An employee filing or appealing under these grievance procedures shall have the burden of proof that such grievance has cause for redress, and shall document such cause, including actions or inactions by the Executive Director, in writing.~~

If the grievance alleges acts or conditions initiated by the Executive Director, the employee shall communicate with the Chair of the PFP in writing or verbally without the presence of the Executive Director. ~~within ten (10) working days of the occurrence of the action which gave rise to the grievance.~~

Any decision or action taken by the PFP shall be final for the Agency.

~~Nothing about the existence or implementation of this complaint process alters the "at-will" employment relationship that exists at the Agency.~~

~~The Office and Finance Administrator/Manager/Bookkeeper, as an Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, will take the necessary steps to ensure the confidentiality of all Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 Title VII complaint records and of any counseling done in the course of the complaint procedure.~~

D. Hiring, Evaluation and Separation Employment, Probation and Resignation

1. Equal Employment Opportunity - It is Agency policy that no employee or applicant will be discriminated against because of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, marital status, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information, pregnancy, gender identity/expression or any other legally protected status. The Agency will consider all individuals for any position for which they are qualified and able to perform. It is also Agency policy to administer all phases of its personnel activity, including recruitment, hiring, training, promotion, transfer, discipline, compensation and benefits and all other conditions or privileges of employment without regard to any legally protected status. The Agency expects the support of all employees in accomplishing equal employment opportunity and complying with non-discrimination laws.

2. Workplace Accommodations -- It is Agency policy not to discriminate against any qualified employee or applicant with regard to any terms or conditions of employment because of such individual's disability or perceived disability so long as the individual can perform the essential functions of the job with or without a reasonable accommodation. Consistent with this policy of nondiscrimination, the Agency will provide reasonable accommodations to a qualified individual with a disability, as defined under applicable law, who has made the Agency aware of his or her

disability, provided that such accommodation does not constitute an undue hardship on the Agency.

Applicants or employees with a disability who believe they need a reasonable accommodation to perform the essential functions of their job should inform the Executive Director. Upon receipt of a request for an accommodation, the Agency will review the potential reasonable accommodation(s) that the Agency might make to enable the individual to perform the essential functions of the job. As part of this process, an employee or applicant may be required to provide authorization for the Agency to communicate with and obtain documentation from his or her doctors regarding the medical condition(s) for which reasonable accommodation is sought, and may further be required to be evaluated by a doctor of the Agency's choice. All such medical information discussed and received will be treated as confidential to the extent required and permissible by law.

3. Offer of Employment - Each prospective Agency employee who is selected for hire shall receive ~~notice of~~ an offer of employment in writing together with a copy of this Handbook. The written notice shall include information pertaining to ~~remuneration~~compensation and other specific conditions of employment. Upon receipt the prospective staff member must reply in writing, accepting the position and the personnel policies governing employment within five working days.

4. Employee Evaluation - The PFP shall conduct an annual evaluation of the Executive Director. The Executive Director will evaluate each supervisor's performance, and each supervisor will evaluate the performance of each employee they supervise with the concurrence of the Executive Director, using the Agency Employee Evaluation Procedure approved by the PFP. Performance evaluations will be done at least annually in April, and more frequently when deemed necessary. A written record of ~~this~~ each evaluation shall be placed in the employee's personnel file. While satisfactory reviews are necessary for consideration of any pay raises and bonuses, and while performance reviews, in general, may be relied upon for other decisions relating to employment, nothing about the existence or implementation of the performance appraisal process alters the "at-will" employment relationship that exists at the Agency.

~~1.~~

~~2. Employment Notice—Each prospective Agency employee shall receive notice of an offer of employment in writing together with a copy of these Personnel Policies.—The written notice shall include information pertaining to remuneration and other specific conditions of employment. Upon receipt the prospective staff member must reply in writing, accepting the position and the personnel policies governing employment within five working days.~~

~~3.5.~~ Probationary Evaluation Period (applicable only to promoted employees) - The conditions that apply to new hires during their ~~[??training and evaluation??]~~ probationary period also apply to promoted employees during their Probationary period with the following exceptions:

- a. The Probationary period shall be six (6) months and may be extended an additional six (6) months by the Executive Director;
- b. Three (3) months after the beginning of a Probationary period, the Executive Director will complete a performance evaluation of a promoted employee.
- c. During the Probationary period, a promoted employee may be returned to a previous position, or terminated, by the Executive Director.
- d. A promoted employee who is returned to a previously held position during the Probationary period shall also be returned to the previous salary; although such employee shall be eligible for applicable merit and/or cost of living salary increases pertaining to their original position which have been granted during the period of probation

6. Resignation - An employee wishing to terminate service with the Agency shall submit a written resignation to the Executive Director or the PFP. Such written notice shall be included in the employee's service records. Failure to give at least ten (10) working days notice before the final working day will result in the forfeiture of accrued leaves, except under extenuating circumstances accepted by the PFP Committee.

4.7. Exit Interview - After submission of a resignation, but prior to an employee's final working day, an exit interview shall be conducted by the PFP Chair and/or a designee. The Executive Director may be present, if requested by the PFP Chair, or a designee. Statements presented by the employee at the exit interview shall be reported by the exit interview team to the Agency Board.

~~5.8.~~ ~~[??Training and Evaluation Probation—The first twelve months of service by an individual constitutes that individual's Training and Evaluation probationary period.—This period may be extended an additional six (6) months by the Executive Director.—During this period, the Executive Director shall review the individual's work and determine eligibility for regular employment.—After the conclusion of this period the Executive Director shall advise the individual regarding suitability for regular employment.—During this period, employment may be terminated by the Executive Director at any time.—??]~~

9. Resignation—An employee wishing to terminate service with the Agency shall submit a written resignation to the Executive Director or the PFP.—Such written notice shall be included in the employee's service records.—Failure to give at least ten (10) working days notice before the final working day will result in the forfeiture of accrued leaves, except under extenuating circumstances accepted by the PFP Committee. References - All requests for personnel information about current or former employees shall be

referred to the Executive Director. Unless the Agency receives a written authorization from a current or former employee to release personnel information about that individual to a third party, or is otherwise legally obligated to release personnel information, the Agency will only confirm in writing the employee's dates of employment, salary history, and job title, in response to any request for personnel information or for a reference.

~~6.~~

E. Energy Conservation - ~~The Agency's office~~ Staff shall cooperate by reducing electricity consumption when requested by power generating utilities. Whenever possible, telephone calls and other communication methods will substitute for travel. To the extent possible, multi-purpose visits should be made when travel is necessary.

~~E.~~

F. Equipment Use and Treatment of Agency Property - In the conduct of daily business, staff utilizes a variety of Agency-owned equipment including pocket PCs, laptops, cell phones, portable video projectors and DVD recorders. The Agency has an interest in the staff's ability to efficiently and effectively utilize such equipment. Staff is encouraged to become as familiar as possible with the functioning of this equipment during regular working hours. Furthermore, where Agency staff training-related purposes can be achieved, the Executive Director may authorize temporary use of such equipment for private personal use. Otherwise, the Agency's property is to be used only to conduct the Agency's business. Employees are further responsible for protecting and exercising care with respect to Agency property and/or equipment at all times. All records, files, documents, equipment, work product, passwords, and other materials, or copies thereof, relating to the Agency's business, shall be and remain the sole property of the Agency, including all electronic versions of these items regardless of the location in which they are stored. These materials shall not be removed from the Agency except when required in connection with the performance of an employee's duties, and shall not be retained by any employee and shall be promptly returned upon request at any time and upon termination of employment with the Agency.

~~G. In the conduct of daily business, staff utilizes a variety of Agency-owned equipment including pocket PCs, laptops, cell phones, portable video projectors and DVD recorders. The Agency has an interest in the staff's ability to efficiently and effectively utilize such equipment. Staff is encouraged to become as familiar as possible with the functioning of this equipment during regular working hours. Furthermore, where Agency staff training-related purposes can be achieved, the Executive Director may authorize temporary use of such equipment for private personal use.~~

H.G. Ethics - Employees are expected to familiarize themselves with and abide by Chapter 10 of the General Statutes of Connecticut, "Code of Ethics." Code, including Part I, the Code of Ethics for Public Officials, and, for employees whose

duties involve the disposition of State contracts, Part IV, Ethical Considerations Concerning Bidding and State Contracts. Failure to abide by the Code shall result in action pursuant to the Code and may result in disciplinary action in accordance with these personnel policies.

- ~~I.H.~~ I.H. Inclement Weather - Agency staff members shall be provided inclement weather leave, with pay, for time during which the Governor closes state offices and excuses state workers. Staff members will be called, if weather conditions are sufficiently severe to warrant an inclement weather leave, or they may rely upon television or radio announcements during significant storm conditions. During lesser inclement weather conditions, staff members shall make every effort to reach the office at the earliest possible time. Each employee shall make personal decisions regarding travel in these conditions, those individual decisions shall give proper recognition to the individual's personal safety. The office shall be staffed to the maximum extent feasible during inclement weather. Employees shall call the office to provide an estimated time of arrival, if they expect to arrive later than their regular schedule requires. The Executive Director, or the next most senior employee in the office during an inclement weather condition, may advise other staff members whether to attempt travel to the office.
- ~~I.I.~~ I.I. Off Duty Work - staff members shall secure approval from the PFP prior to working in the planning field during off-duty time. The PFP shall consider each request for such approval on an individual basis and act in the best interest of the Region, and provide its decision in writing to the staff member. No one associated with the Agency may have an outside business, any outside financial interest, or perform any outside work, including "moonlighting" which conflicts in any way with his/her responsibilities to the Agency. Outside employment may only be permitted with the PFP's approval if it: (a) will not interfere with company-related work assignments or performance; (b) will not involve the possibility of adverse publicity to the Agency; (c) does not imply sponsorship by the Agency; and (d) is not otherwise prohibited by law.
- ~~K.J.~~ K.J. Office Hours - Office hours shall be 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and full-time non-exempt staff will be allowed an one hour unpaid lunch time. The regular work week is Monday through Friday for a total of 35 hours. Staff shall cover the office during the lunch period. The Executive Director may approve flexible working hours for individual staff members, provided the office is adequately staffed. Such flexible time may allow an employee to begin work between 7:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. and to depart between 3:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., provided the employee works the full seven hour work day.
- K. Personnel Policy Revisions - The PFP Committee, will review and update these policies as appropriate, in consultation with the Executive Director. Revisions and amendments shall take effect upon approval by the PFP Committee, until they are ratified or revised by the Agency Board at its annual meeting in June, or at other times, as appropriate.

## L. Unlawful Harassment or Discrimination - The

Agency will not tolerate verbal, graphic or physical conduct by anyone that discriminates against any employees or other individuals in the workplace on the basis of any applicable legally protected status, or which harasses, disrupts or interferes with an employee's work performance or which creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile working environment, including but not limited to any form of discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, pregnancy, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information or gender identity/expression.

Discrimination or harassment can take many forms. It may be, but is not limited to: words, conduct, adverse job action, intimidation or physical contact/violence. While all forms of discrimination and harassment based on an individual's legally protected characteristic are prohibited, it is the Agency's policy to emphasize that sexual harassment is illegal. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Making unwelcome sexual conduct or requests for sexual favors as a condition of an employee's continued employment; or
- Using an employee's submission to or rejection of such conduct as the basis for making employment decisions (e.g., promotions, raises); or
- Creating a work environment in which conduct of a sexual nature interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an atmosphere that is intimidating, hostile or offensive to employees, contractors or other members of the public.

Although not an inclusive list, the following are examples of the type of conduct prohibited by the policy against sexual harassment:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions or flirtations;
- Unwelcome attention of a sexual nature such as degrading comments, suggestive or lewd remarks, jokes, tricks or noises;
- Unwanted hugs, touches, kisses;

- Cartoons, photos, e-mails, etc. of a sexual nature.
- The threat or suggestion that continued employment, advancement, assignment or earnings depend on whether or not the employee will submit to or tolerate harassment;
- Retaliation for rejecting and/or complaining about sexual harassment;

Harassment is not limited to conduct occurring solely during regular business hours or at the work site. Instances in which it can occur may include during work-related meetings out of the office, social events, or other non-work related occasions. Behavior defined in this policy as sexual harassment may occur between people of the opposite or the same gender.

All employees are further advised that sexually oriented, explicit or offensive materials may not be posted, displayed, shared or even possessed within Agency facilities.

Any employee who believes that the actions or words of an individual in the workplace constitute any type of unwelcome harassment or unlawful discrimination has a responsibility to report such conduct to his/her immediate supervisor if the employee is unable to make a direct request that the conduct cease or if any such direct request made is ignored. If an employee is uncomfortable raising his/her complaint with someone to whom he/she reports, or if the complaint involves someone in his/her direct line of command, then that employee should bring the complaint to the Executive Director and/or the PFP or any Board member.

The Agency will take prompt action upon the receipt of a complaint of unlawful harassment or discrimination. All allegations of unlawful harassment or discrimination will be investigated promptly. Confidentiality of the individual reporting the incident and of the investigation process itself will be preserved to the extent possible in accordance with applicable law. In this regard, the reporting individual, the alleged harasser or discriminator and any other individuals aware of the incident are required to treat this information in a confidential manner.

Any employee determined to have committed unlawful harassment or discrimination will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Moreover, any individual who makes unwelcome advances, threatens, in any way discriminates, or harasses another individual based on a legally protected characteristic may be personally liable for monetary damages for such actions and their consequences. The Agency will not tolerate the taking of any reprisal against an employee who in good faith files a complaint of unlawful harassment or discrimination or who participates in the investigation of such a complaint. However, any individual who knowingly makes a false complaint or knowingly provides false information during the course of any investigation of unlawful harassment or discrimination will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

~~L. \_\_\_\_\_~~

~~M. \_\_\_\_\_ Sexual Harassment - It is Agency policy to ensure equal employment opportunity and to prevent discrimination in all practices. Sexual Harassment is a type of sex (gender) discrimination. It is prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, as amended, and by Connecticut General Statute, as amended, 46a-60 (a)(8) as a Discriminatory Employment Practice. \_~~

~~Sexual Harassment is defined as: "any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or any conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly 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 decision affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment." In addition, Sexual Harassment can include crude or offensive language or jokes of a sexual nature. Sexual Harassment will not be tolerated and will be grounds for disciplinary action. Complaints of sexual harassment will be processed by the Agency's Equal Employment Opportunity Officer through the established Affirmative Action complaint Procedure.~~

~~It is not the Agency's intention to regulate social relationships that are freely entered into by employees, provided that such relationships are in keeping with good taste and proper decorum. However, it is each employee's our affirmative duty to develop and maintain a workplace free of sexual harassment and intimidation. We expect Ffull support and cooperation of every employee to achieve this goal is expected.~~

~~M. \_\_\_\_\_ Soliciting - Soliciting of goods or services by staff members or private individuals is not permitted within the Agency's offices. Solicitation by one employee of another, either in person or via the Agency's electronic communications systems, is prohibited while either is on working time. An employee may engage in solicitation and distribution activities outside of the work area during non-working periods (such as rest and meal periods). The Agency prohibits all solicitation activities for the purpose of financial gain, lotteries or charities on the Agency premises. Trespassing, soliciting or distributing literature by anyone not employed by the Agency is strictly prohibited on the Agency's premises.~~

~~N.~~

N. \_\_\_\_\_ Time Accounting - Each employee shall enter an accurate accounting of time worked on a bi-weekly time sheet which shall be approved by the Executive Director. Included shall be time worked, vacation time, sick leave, holidays, bereavement leave, earned personal days, ~~swap or~~ compensatory time earned and taken, etc. Such time worked shall be allocated to the appropriate funding program(s) as approved by the Executive Director. It is the responsibility of each

employee to assure the correctness of their time sheet; of the supervisor to verify correctness; and of the Office and Finance Administrator ~~Manager/Bookkeeper~~ and Executive Director to confirm the accuracy of each time sheet.

- O. Personal Appearance - All employees are representatives of the Agency and are expected to project a professional image of the Agency to clients, visitors and to anyone associated with the Agency. As such, employees are expected to wear appropriate business attire when at work that presents a neat and professional appearance. All employees are further expected to present a neat and professional appearance with respect to their jewelry, tattoos, makeup, perfume/cologne, hats/head coverings, grooming and hygiene.
- P. Workplace Privacy, Monitoring and Internet Use Policy - The Agency's primary goal is to effectively and efficiently conduct its business and meet or exceed expectations of those who we service. In order to do this, we must be able to: (a) access business information at all times; (b) provide a safe, productive work environment; and (c) supervise our employees to be sure that they are acting consistently with our business objectives. To fulfill these goals, every employee should be aware of the following policies on privacy, monitoring and internet use in the workplace so that they can conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times:
- The Agency reserves the right to inspect employees' work areas and their persons, possessions, and property at the workplace. This includes, without limitation, employee briefcases, bags, purses, clothing, lockers, desks, file cabinets, workstations, vehicles and mail. Employees should consider this policy before bringing private, personal material to the workplace.
  - The Agency provides telephones and computers and other forms of electronic communications (including but not limited to voice mail, e-mail, fax machines, the internet and the world wide web) to employees to facilitate efficient and effective business operations. As such, employees shall use these communications systems for Agency business only, except that incidental personal use of these electronic communications systems is permitted, involving for example occasional personal phone calls, e-mails or web access, to the extent that such incidental use does not affect work productivity or job performance, is limited to non-working hours, does not cause the Agency to incur any additional expenses, and does not violate any policies or procedures of the Agency or applicable laws.
  - The Agency's policy prohibiting harassment and discrimination applies to the use of these systems. Therefore, the creation, transmission, receipt or downloading of inappropriate or offensive comments or other images or information, such as disparaging comments or pictures based on race, color, religion, , ancestry, gender, national origin, age, disability, marital status,

veteran status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, genetic information, gender identity/expression or any other protected category, over any of the Agency's systems, is prohibited.

- World Wide Web access and use of the Internet is allowed where such use is appropriate for business and professional objectives and is conducted lawfully and authorized by management. Web access or internet use through the Agency's electronic communications systems should not be for purposes of personal gain, solicitation of non-Agency business or advancement of individual views. Nor should use of the Internet disrupt the operation of the Agency's electronic communications systems or the networks of other users. In addition, each employee is responsible for the content of all text, audio or images that s/he places, sends, downloads or receives over the Internet. Accordingly, web access or internet use through the Agency's electronic communications systems may not involve the transmission, receipt or use of fraudulent, harassing or obscene information, or be contrary to the Agency's legitimate interests.
- Software programs and materials, other than those that have been properly licensed by the Agency, may not be installed or downloaded on the Agency's computers. In addition, theft of software is a crime, and is punishable by law. Users are not permitted to copy, transfer, rename, add or delete information on programs belonging or licensed to others unless given express permission to do so. No employee may use the Agency's electronic communications systems in ways that are inconsistent with licenses or copyrights, or to download or distribute pirated software or data. Furthermore, no employee may use the Agency's electronic communications systems to propagate any virus, worm or trap-door program code, or to otherwise disable or overload any computer system or network, or to circumvent any system intended to protect the privacy or security of another user.
- Intrusions of another employee's privacy will not be tolerated. Employees are expressly prohibited from accessing information or files at another employee's workstation or vehicle or anywhere else in the workplace unless expressly permitted to do so by authorized management personnel. The tape recording of any conversation in the workplace is strictly prohibited without written authorization from the Executive Director or his/her designee, or with the consent of all parties to the conversation. The tape recording of any telephone conversation to or from the workplace is strictly prohibited absent the consent of the parties to the phone call obtained in accordance with applicable law. Employees are prohibited from taking photographs in the workplace without written authorization from the Executive Director or his/her designee, or unless the consent of any individual to be photographed is obtained in advance.

- The Agency reserves the right to review, access, and intercept all messages created, received, or sent over its electronic communications systems at any time, without advance notice, for such reasons as, without limitation: ensuring that the systems are being used solely to conduct the Agency's business; assisting in the evaluation of employee work performance; maintaining the system; preventing or investigating allegations of system abuse or misuse; assuring compliance with software copyright laws; complying with legal and regulatory requests for information; and ensuring that the Agency's operations continue appropriately. The Agency may also monitor or review employee work performance at any time, without advance notice, through the use of mechanical or electronic devices, or other methods, including the use of telephone or video monitoring. An employee's use of the Agency's communication systems constitutes consent to the Agency's conduct.
  
- Employees are prohibited from gaining access to another employee's computer or other electronic communications and must not use unauthorized codes, passwords or other means to gain access to another employee's computer or other electronic communications systems, unless expressly permitted to do so by authorized management personnel. Employees are prohibited from accessing a file or retrieving any stored information on the Agency's e-mail, voice-mail, and computer systems unless expressly permitted to do so by authorized management personnel. Employees should not create their own computer, voice-mail or other electronic communications system passwords unless permitted to do so by the Executive Director or his/her designee. Employees must provide all personal passwords to the Agency as requested, so that the Agency may effectively conduct business at all times.
  
- Public records retention and Freedom of Information requirements must be satisfied in the use of the Agency's electronic communications systems in accordance with the Agency's policies and applicable law.
  
- Any employee who violates the Agency's privacy, monitoring and internet use policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. In addition, criminal penalties and fines may apply where the employee's conduct violates applicable state or federal laws.

**Q.** Social Media Activities - "Social Media" are various forms of discussion-and information-sharing tools, including social networks, blogs, video sharing, podcasts, wikis, message boards and online forums. Technologies include picture and video sharing, wall postings, e-mail, instant messaging, and music sharing. Examples of Social Media applications include, but are not limited to, Google and

Yahoo Groups; Wikipedia; MySpace and Facebook; YouTube; Flickr; Twitter; LinkedIn; and news media comment sharing/blogging. This policy covers all Social Media tools, both current and future.

While employees may engage in any lawful activities through social media (including exercising any rights they may have to engage in protected concerted activity or political activities), any employee who chooses to use social media should be aware of the following Agency policies in this regard:

- i. Any conduct, which under the law or Agency policy is impermissible if expressed in any other form, is impermissible if expressed through social media.
- ii. Employees are held responsible for their own content expressed through social media and will be expected to communicate in a professional and lawful manner at all times.
- iii. The personal use of social media is not allowed during working time, regardless of the equipment used (e.g., either using personal or Agency phones or computers). Employees may further not use Agency equipment for personal reasons in accordance with applicable policies.
- iv. Employees who use social media shall not post any proprietary Agency data, documents or photographs or any information which would violate any privacy laws applicable to the Agency, regardless of whether the posting is done during working or non-working time. Any information that cannot be disclosed through a conversation, a memo or an e-mail also cannot be disclosed through social media.
- v. Unless authorized in writing by the Executive Director (such as when an employee's job is to send public messages on behalf of the Agency), employees do not have permission to speak on behalf of the Agency via social media.
- vi. While communicating through social media, if an employee posts any content that has something to do with the work they perform for the Agency or subjects associated with the business of the Agency, employees must make clear that they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of the Agency by accompanying their posts with a disclaimer such as: "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent the Agency's positions or opinions."

When an employee's use of any social media violates the law or any Agency policies (including policies pertaining to employee misconduct or job performance), appropriate discipline up to and including termination of employment will be imposed, regardless of when the information was posted or sent and regardless of the tools or site used to post or send such information. Nothing in this policy (or any other Agency policy) will be implemented or should be interpreted in any manner so as to prohibit or inhibit employees from engaging in any lawful activities through social media, including exercising any rights they

may have to engage in protected concerted activity or political activities.

- R. Cell Phones - While at work, employees must exercise discretion in using personal (and/or Agency issued) cell phones. A cell phone is defined to include any mobile phone, personal digital assistant, iPad or tablet, or other portable electronic communications device. Personal calls during work hours, regardless of the phone used, can interfere with employee productivity and can be distracting to others. Cell phones are permissible within the workplace, however all employees are required to use them and/or to make personal calls during breaks and meal periods and to ensure that friends and family members are aware of this policy. The Agency will not be liable for the loss of personal cell phones brought into the workplace.

When business needs demand immediate employee access, a business cell phone may be issued. The Agency reserves the right to monitor all business cell phone activity. Employees in possession of the Agency cell phones are expected to protect them from loss, damage or theft and to not use such them for personal reasons. Upon resignation or termination of employment, or at any time upon request, the employee must return the cell phone.

Employees whose job responsibilities include driving and who must use a cell phone for business use are expected to refrain from using their phone while driving. Safety must come before all other concerns. Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, employees are required to pull off to the side of the road and safely stop the vehicle before placing or accepting a call. If acceptance of a call is unavoidable and pulling over is not a safe option, a hands-free device must be used. Do not take notes, text message or e-mail while driving. In situations where employees drive and accept phone calls, state law, as well as this policy, requires the use of "hands-free" equipment. Under no circumstances are employees allowed to place themselves at risk to fulfill business needs. Employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of their phone while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions.

- S. Workplace Violence - The Agency has a ZERO TOLERANCE policy against any form of intimidation, threats or violence in the workplace. Violations of this policy include but are not limited to: participating in, provoking or otherwise contributing to any threat or violent act in the workplace; abuse, assault, battery, oral or written threats, intimidation, and harassment; and possession of any firearm(s) or any other type of weapon on Agency property or work location(s). Any employee who makes a threat, whether express or implicit, exhibits threatening behavior, or engages in any violent act or other violation of this policy on Agency property or otherwise in the course of their employment with us, shall be removed from the premises as quickly as safety permits, and shall remain out of work pending the outcome of an investigation. Depending on the circumstances

involved, the Agency's response may include, but is not limited to, reassignment of job duties, discipline up to and including suspension and termination of employment, and/or criminal prosecution of the person(s) involved. All employees are responsible for notifying their supervisors and/or the Executive Director of any violation of this policy, including but not limited to, any threats they have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person witnessed or received. If there is an immediate risk of harm, contact the local police department. All reports will be investigated fully and promptly. The Agency's premises are restricted to individuals with a legitimate business purpose. Any employee who observes any individual (including current or former employees) loitering, or present on the premises without an apparent business need to be there or otherwise interfering with operations should contact their supervisors immediately to report the circumstance.

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**T. Confidentiality Obligations - Violating confidentiality as it pertains to the Agency's internal affairs or the affairs of those served by the Agency, either during the course of employment or thereafter, except as may be required in connection with job duties, is strictly prohibited. All Agency records must be kept secured and confidential and not discussed with or released to anyone inside or outside the Agency who does not have a business need to know such information. In addition, all Agency information pertaining to its employees, the Agency's fiscal and legal matters, should be treated as confidential to the extent permissible by law, and should not be discussed with or disclosed to anyone inside or outside the Agency who does not have a business need to know such information.**

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed a copy of Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency's Employee Handbook. I understand that it is my obligation to familiarize myself with and to abide by all of the policies and procedures set forth therein. I have been advised that the policies and procedures in this Handbook are guidelines only and are not to be construed as an expressed or implied contract of employment, a promise of employment for any specified time or a guarantee of benefits or working conditions between any employee and the Agency. Further, I understand that the Agency follows a policy of at-will employment, which means that either the employee or the Agency can terminate the employment relationship with or without cause for any lawful reason at any time.

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_