



PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

Revised By

The Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission, Inc.

Executive Director and Department of Human Resources

Approved By

Governing Board on

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Approved By

Head Start Policy Council On

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WELCOME TO HRDC

The Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission, Inc. ("HRDC") is responsible for providing vital services to citizens of Allegany County through its employees. HRDC expects employees to fulfill their role in providing these services in a professional, fair, honest, and thorough manner. HRDC expects that employees will strive for excellence in advancing HRDC's mission, demonstrating integrity, and professional standards.

PURPOSE OF HRDC'S PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL:

The policies in this Manual are intended to be guidelines to employees and managers. HRDC reserves the right to amend, add to, or change the policies within this Manual at any time and will notify all employees of any changes.

RELATIONSHIP TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS:

For HRDC employees covered by the collective bargaining agreement, the terms and conditions of the collective bargaining agreement supersedes this Manual on any subject covered within a current collective bargaining agreement. The subjects covered in this Manual do not diminish HRDC's management rights and should not in any way be considered a waiver of these rights. Employees should contact their Union representative or the Human Resources Department should they have any questions regarding conflicts between the collective bargaining agreement and this Manual.

The policies set forth in this Manual supersede all previous written HRDC Personnel policies. This Manual does not constitute a contract of employment, expressed or implied, and should not be considered as such. Furthermore, this Manual is not a limitation on HRDC's right to direct its workforce. Unless restricted by law or funding source, HRDC reserves all rights to manage its workforce.

All matters relating to the administration on the policies and procedures in this Manual will be under the general supervision of the Executive Director and Human Resources Department. Questions regarding interpretation and application of this Manual should be directed to the Human Resources Department.

Mission Statement

HRDC, a nonprofit Community Action Agency in Allegany County, strives to reduce social and economic barriers to promote individual and community stability through services, advocacy and collaboration.

Vision Statement

HRDC envisions a community where individuals and families have the opportunities and resources to achieve their fullest potential, maintain long-term independence, and become economically stable.

Core Values: THRIVE

Teamwork: Teamwork is essential to HRDC's success. We work with each other and the community to provide quality services. All members of the HRDC community are encouraged to interact with all levels of management, sharing ideas and suggestions to improve HRDC's effectiveness and quality of services.

Honesty and Integrity: Acts in an ethical manner in all situations.

Respect, Trust and Dignity: Create a supportive environment that promotes respect, trust and dignity among all people.

Innovation and Growth: Committed to developing peoples' skills and capabilities to maximize their potential.

Value of People: Value the worth of every individual.

Effort and Commitment: Committed to excellence.

CHAPTER I – GENERAL OVERVIEW

A. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF HRDC

The Board of Directors constitutes the membership of the corporation and is comprised of representatives of target area groups, elected officials (or their designee) and private sector groups. Officers are elected and committees are formed in accordance with the constitution and by-laws of the Agency.

The Board of Directors is the policy-making unit of the Agency. In its policy-making role, the Board is responsible but not limited to;

- Identify the needs of the community;
- Establish the long and short-range objectives of the Agency;
- Formulate strategic plans for the organization;
- Approve overall program plans and priorities;
- Determine major personnel, fiscal, and program policies;
- Approve proposals for financial assistance;
- Approve major purchases;
- Assure compliance with the conditions of financial assistance; and
- Hire, evaluate and terminate the Executive Director.

The Board of Directors assumes responsibilities for programs for which it receives funds in accordance with the regulations and/or guidelines established by each program-funding source.

The Board of Directors meets as a body six times per year. These meetings are open to the public and are held to transact such business that is necessary to achieve the above stated responsibilities. Committee meetings are held on a regular basis to review, plan, and evaluate program plans and policies. Reports and recommendations from the committees are presented to the full Board for action and/or information.

2. HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START'S POLICY COUNCIL

Under the U.S Department of Health and Human Services guidelines, Head Start/Early Head Start's Policy Council is entrusted with sharing administrative responsibilities of the Head Start/Early Head Start Program with the Board of Directors. Policy Council is involved with the administration of the program including program planning, personnel administration, grant application process, and program evaluation. *See: Head Start/Early Head Start Impasse Procedure for more detailed information.*

3. SENIOR STAFF

a. Executive Director:

- (1) Is the chief administrator for the activities and programs of the Agency and is a full-time, salaried, contractual employee of the Board of Directors.
- (2) Implements the Governing Board's policy decisions by formulating procedures to accomplish the Agency's objectives.
- (3) Delegates responsibility for administering programs to staff members of the Agency as he/she deems necessary for a well-operated, efficient organization and evaluates their performance.
- (4) Hires and terminates Department Directors and Administrative Resources Staff.
- (5) Has the final approval for the hiring and termination of other personnel within the Agency.

b. Department Directors:

- Director of Accounting
- Director of Adult Medical Day Care
- Director of Area Agency on Aging
- Director of Children and Family Services
- Director of Housing and Community Resources
- Director of Human Resources (HR)

(1) The duties and responsibilities of the Department Directors are determined by the Executive Director.

(2) Department Directors are full-time, salaried, FLSA exempt, employees (subject to change based on DOL Overtime Rule).

c. Administrative Resource Staff:

- Executive Assistant
- Data Management Specialist

(1) The duties and responsibilities of each Administrative Resource Staff member are determined by the Executive Director.

(2) The Executive Director hires and terminates the Administrative Resource Staff.

(3) The Administrative Resources Staff are full-time, hourly, employees (subject to change based on DOL Overtime Rule).

4. PROGRAM MANAGERS AND PROGRAM STAFF

a. Program Managers:

(1) The duties and responsibilities of each Program Manager are determined by the Department Director and approved by the Executive Director. When determining the duties and responsibilities of the Director of Children and Family Services, the Executive Director shall work with Head Start/Early Head Start's Policy Council.

(2) The Department Directors hire and terminate Program Managers in consultation with the Executive Director. In the case of the Director of Children and Family Services, Head Start/Early Head Start's Policy Council is involved as outlined in the Head Start/Early Head Start Impasse Procedure.

b. Program Staff:

(1) The duties and responsibilities of each program staff person are determined by the Program Manager and approved by the Department Director and Executive Director.

(2) Program Managers initiate and participate in all actions concerning the hiring and termination of Program Staff personnel.

B. EMPLOYEE CATEGORIES AND CLASSIFICATIONS

A. CATEGORIES All employees within HRDC are categorized into one of five basic categories.

1. Senior Staff (Non-Union): The following positions are categorized as Senior Staff and incumbents are employed as full-time, salaried, employees. Wages, incentives, benefits, and working conditions are approved by the Board of Directors and outlined in this document:

- Executive Director (contracted)
- Department Directors

2. Key Staff and Management Positions (Non-Union): The positions listed below are categorized as key staff and management. Wages, incentives, benefits and working conditions for these positions are approved by the Board of Directors and included in these policies and procedures.
 - Program Managers
 - Facilities and IT Manager
 - Head Start/Early Head Start Component Managers
 - Center Managers/Coordinators
 - Administrative Resource
 - Support Staff
 - Accounting and Human Resources Department
3. Program Staff Positions (Union eligible) - Paid by HRDC: All other positions paid by HRDC are staff positions and incumbents are employed in one of the classifications as defined in *paragraph B below*. Whereas the United Food and Commercial Workers ("UFCW") has been certified by the National Labor Relations Board as the representative of all employees of HRDC [excluding senior staff, key staff and management positions, and casual employees (those who are employed on a regular, limited, or temporary basis who work less than a 4-hour day or 20-hour week)]. Wages, incentives, benefits, and working conditions for most program staff positions paid by HRDC are subject to collective bargaining and are established in the current agreement. Wages, incentives, benefits, and working conditions for casual staff positions paid by HRDC are as established in these policies and procedures.
4. Program Staff Positions - Paid by Others: Positions that are made available to HRDC by outside organizations which dictate wages, incentives and benefits for such positions. HRDC selects incumbents and establishes working conditions in these policies and procedures.
5. Consultants: A person who provides expertise in a particular field based upon a specific written agreement with or without compensation.

B. EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

Employees fall into one or more of the following classifications:

1. Regular Full-Time: Any employee who is regularly scheduled at least 35 hours a week for 12 months a year.
2. Regular Part-Time: Any employee who is regularly scheduled at least 20 hours a week but less than 35 hours a week for 12 months a year.
3. Limited Full-Time: Any employee who is regularly scheduled 35 hours a week for a program that operates between 9-11 months a year.
4. Limited Part-Time: Any employee who is regularly scheduled at least 20 hours a week but less than 35 hours a week for a program that operates between 2-11 months a year.
5. Temporary Full-Time: Any employee hired in a new short-term position (less than 4 months) as an emergency measure to meet a crisis or to reduce a back log who is regularly scheduled at least 35 hours a week.
6. Temporary Part-Time: Any employee hired in a new short- term position (less than 4 months) as an emergency measure to meet a crisis or to reduce a back log who is regularly scheduled at least 20 hours a week but less than 35 hours a week.
7. Continuous Operation Employee: An employee who works in any classification which, by design or job description, provides client services on an uninterrupted basis, 365 days per year.
8. Casuals: An employee who works less than 20 hours per week.

9. Substitutes: An individual hired to fill a position whose incumbent is absent because of illness, leave of absence, vacation, etc. are classified as substitutes.
10. PRN: Those employees who do not have a regular schedule but fill in as needed for the Employer. PRNs are required to work at least one shift every thirty (30) days, provided hours are available (this requirement may be waived or extended by mutual agreement between the employee and HRDC).
11. Non-Union: All senior staff, key staff, and management personnel are non-union. All program staff paid by others and those program staff paid by HRDC whose regular scheduled work hours are less than 20 hours a week (casuals) are also classified as Non- Union.
12. Union Positions: All program staff positions who are regularly scheduled at least 20 hours a week are union. Substitutes have the option to become union eligible upon completing nine hundred (900) hours of employment per CBA.
13. Exempt Positions: Exempt positions are those positions within the Agency that are exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions as outlined in the Fair Labor Standards Act.
14. Nonexempt Positions: Nonexempt positions are those positions within the Agency that are subject to the minimum wage and overtime provisions as outlined in the Fair Labor Standards Act.

C. APPLICABILITY OF POLICIES

- (1) These policies apply to all employees paid by HRDC unless such policies are in conflict with current federal, state, or local government rules or regulations, the agreement between HRDC and the UFCW, or the individual employee's employment contract in which case the latter shall apply. These policies apply to all volunteers.
- (2) With the exception of *Chapters covering PROBATIONARY PERIOD, WAGES, SALARIES AND JOB LEVELS*, and *BENEFITS* all provisions of this manual apply to those employees paid by others

CHAPTER II – EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

POLICY:

HRDC recognizes the value of diversity and the benefits of fostering an inclusive work environment. All HRDC employees should strive to create and support a work environment representative of the individuals we serve and reflective of the demographics of Allegany County. HRDC is committed to fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity and inclusion. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talent that our employees invest in their work represents a significant part of not only our culture, but our reputation and Agency's achievement as well.

HRDC's diversity initiatives are applicable—but not limited—to our practices and policies on recruitment and selection; compensation and benefits; professional development and training; promotions; transfers; social and recreational programs; layoffs; terminations; and the ongoing development of a work environment built on the premise of gender and diversity equity that encourages and enforces:

A. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

HRDC has established a written Affirmative Action Plan (AAP) with respect to equal employment opportunity. This AAP has been prepared in conformity with Executive Order 11246 and the implementing regulations of OFCCP, 41 C.F.R. Part 601 et seq., including Revised Order No. 4, as amended, 41 C.F.R. Part 602. This AAP is designed to provide guidance to management with respect to HRDC's commitment to full implementation of its EEO/affirmative action policy. HRDC's official policy statement, signed by its Board Chair and Executive Director, is included in the Plan. HRDC's policy includes without limitation, the following commitment:

HRDC shall make good faith efforts to recruit, train, hire, and promote members of the protected classes. This includes preventing discrimination in hiring and promoting, providing access to varieties of jobs at all levels of pay and enhancing employment opportunities.

To assure compliance with HRDC's Affirmative Action Plan, the agency's Human Resources Director has been designated as the agency's Affirmative Action Officer and has been charged with the responsibility of administering and monitoring the plan and making reports to all levels of Management. The Plan is available for inspection in accordance with applicable regulations and is presented to the Board of Directors annually at the January board meeting.

B. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY

HRDC is committed to maintaining a professional work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each employee has the right to work in an atmosphere which promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. It is HRDC's policy to assure equal employment opportunities to all persons. HRDC strictly prohibits discrimination against any person in the recruitment, training, examination, appointment, retention, discipline, or any other aspect of personnel administration based on any of the following characteristics ("protected classes"):

- Age
- Ancestry
- Disability
- Genetic Information
- Military/Veteran Status
- National Origin
- Race
- Religion
- Sex/Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- And any other legally protected class/status

All employees of HRDC have a responsibility to treat others (including clients) with dignity and respect at

all times. All employees are expected to exhibit conduct that reflects inclusion during work, at work functions on or off the work site, and at all other company-sponsored and participative events. Any employee found to have exhibited any inappropriate conduct or behavior against others may be subject to disciplinary action, including and up to termination. Employees who believe they have been subjected to any kind of discrimination that conflicts with the company's diversity policy and initiatives should seek assistance from a supervisor or an HR representative.

C. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Policy for Clients

Purpose

Our organization is committed to fostering a welcoming environment where diversity, equity, and inclusion are integral to our values and operations. This policy outlines our commitment to ensuring that all clients are treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their background or identity.

Scope

This policy applies to all clients interacting with our organization, including in-person, online, and through any other communication channels.

Definitions

- **Diversity:** The presence of differences within a given setting, encompassing various identities such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.
- **Equity:** The fair treatment, access, and opportunities for all individuals, while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.
- **Inclusion:** Creating an environment in which all individuals feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued.

Policy Statements

- **Respect and Dignity:** We are committed to treating all clients with respect and dignity. Discrimination, harassment, or any form of unfair treatment based on a client's identity will not be tolerated.
- **Accessibility:** We strive to make our services and facilities accessible to all clients, including those with disabilities. We will provide reasonable accommodations and support to ensure equal access to our offerings.
- **Cultural Competence:** Our staff are trained to understand and respect diverse cultural backgrounds and perspectives. We aim to provide services that are culturally sensitive and appropriate.
- **Inclusive Communication:** We will use inclusive language in all communications with clients. Materials and information will be available in multiple formats and languages as needed to ensure accessibility when needed.
- **Feedback and Improvement:** We welcome and value client feedback on our DEI efforts. Clients can provide feedback through various channels, and we commit to using this feedback to continuously improve our practices.

Implementation and Accountability

- **Training and Education:** Our staff will receive ongoing training on DEI principles and practices to ensure they can effectively support and serve all clients.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** We will regularly monitor and evaluate our DEI initiatives and policies to ensure they are effective and meet the needs of our diverse client base.
- **Reporting and Resolution:** Any client who experiences or witnesses behavior that violates this policy is encouraged to report it. We will investigate all reports promptly and take appropriate action to resolve any issues.

Contact Information

For questions, concerns, or feedback regarding this policy, please contact our DEI Officer at 301-783-1774.

Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary to reflect our ongoing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

D. RSVP VOLUNTEER POLICY

HRDC, Inc. has utilized many efforts to ensure individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) are aware of and can utilize services. The LEP Implementation Plan according to Federal Law-Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 supports these efforts. To determine what LEP services would be needed, a Four Factor Analysis was completed to determine the following: 1) The number or proportion of Limited English Proficiency persons in the eligible service population, 2) The frequency with which Limited English Proficiency individuals come into contact with the program, 3) The importance of the benefit, service, information, or encounter to the Limited English Proficiency person (including the consequences of lack of language services or inadequate interpretation/translation); and 4) The resources available to the recipient and the costs of providing various types of language services. Based on the results, LEP persons represent less than one percent (1%) of Allegany County residents. Given the limited need, HRDC works with CTS Language Link to provide telephonic interpretation services as needed. All agency staff have access to the service and information for the service is posted by all telephones. Additional efforts to establish access to services for LEP clients are: posting of welcome signs in multiple languages in all centers, language identification flashcards and LEP Manuals made available in all centers and staff training to ensure staff are aware of techniques and information. If you believe that you or others have been discriminated against, or if you want more information, contact:

The RSVP Program Coordinator
125 Virginia Avenue, Cumberland, MD, 21502
Phone 301-783-1776
Fax: 301-783-1890
Email: jnelson@alleganyhrdc.org

OR

Office of Civil Right and Inclusiveness
Corporation for National & Community Service
1201 New York Ave, NW Washington, DC 20525
Phone: (800) 833-3722 (TTY)
Fax: (202) 565-3465
Email: eo@cns.gov

E. HEAD START CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP) POLICY

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution (Allegany County HRDC, Inc. and all associated programs receiving USDA nutrition program funding) is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, and reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Procedure:

1. Civil Rights complaints alleging discrimination within U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) child nutrition programs shall be received by the Human Resources Department of the Allegany County HRDC, Inc. Those making a complaint will be directed to complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form.
2. The staff member receiving the allegations either verbally or in writing shall record this complaint in the agency's complaint log
3. Civil Rights complaints pertaining to discrimination within USDA programs will be forwarded to Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Complaints will be sent to the agency's assigned MSDE Program Administration Specialist as soon as the incident is reported.
4. The agency will await further communication from MSDE regarding implementation of a potential action plan and/or closure of the incident.
5. The agency will work with MSDE and/or USDA to implement all required steps to meet any action plan that has been initiated.

F. POLICY ON NON-DISCRIMINATION AND FAIR HOUSING

POLICY CORE COMPONENTS

Core components which should be included in agency policy include:

1. Nondiscrimination

24 CFR 578.93(a) requires CoC Programs to operate in compliance with federal nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements. Through this final rule, HUD implements policy to ensure that its core programs are open to all eligible individuals and families regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status; see 24 CFR 5.105(a) for a full list of applicable laws, regulations, and Executive Orders.

2. Housing for Specific Subpopulations

Recipients and sub recipients may exclusively serve a particular homeless subpopulation in transitional or permanent housing if the housing addresses a need identified by the Continuum of Care for the geographic area. It must meet HUD criteria in 24 CFR 578.93.

3. Fair Housing

A recipient must implement its programs in a manner that [affirmatively furthers fair housing](#), which means the recipient must:

- (1) Affirmatively market their housing and supportive services to eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, familial status, or handicap who are least likely to apply in the absence of special outreach, and maintain records of those marketing activities;
- (2) Where a recipient encounters a condition or action that impedes fair housing choice for current or prospective program participants, provide such information to the jurisdiction that provided the certification of consistency with the Consolidated Plan; and
- (3) Provide program participants with information on rights and remedies available under applicable federal, State and local fair housing and civil rights laws.

4. Equal Access to Housing

Recipients must act in accordance with the [Equal Access to Housing Rule](#) which ensures that programs are open to all eligible individuals and families regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status.

Recipients must:

- Ensure that staff and volunteers understand that a client may present their gender differently than the way staff and volunteers identify their gender.
- Not consider a client or potential client to be ineligible for services because their appearance or behavior does not conform to gender stereotypes.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers maintain the confidentiality of a client's legal name and sex at birth and understand the potential impact that disclosure can have on a client's progress toward self-sufficiency.
- When possible, ensure that new construction and rehabilitation includes and promotes privacy and safety in sleeping areas, bathrooms and showers.
- Take prompt action to resolve inappropriate behavior, treatment, harassment, or any other equal access issues by staff, volunteers or clients.
- Include policies and procedures in employee handbooks and training that prohibit discrimination and provide guidance to staff to ensure that all persons have equal access to the agency's services.
- Not ask questions or seek information concerning a person's anatomy or medical history beyond that necessary to determine program eligibility.
- Not require a person's gender identity to match the gender listed on an ID or other documents

- Help clients understand the resources available to help them obtain legal identification documents.
- Use the client's preferred gender and pronoun.

5. Accessibility and Integrative Housing and Services for Persons with Disabilities

For persons with disabilities, fair housing law makes it illegal to fail to make reasonable accommodation in rules, policies, and services to give a person with a disability equal opportunity to occupy and enjoy the full use of a housing unit; and fail to allow reasonable modification to the premises if the modification is necessary to allow full use of the premises.

6. Prohibition Against Involuntary Family Separation

In accordance with HUD's CoC and ESG program regulations, involuntary family separation is prohibited in CoC-funded and ESG-funded projects. CoC-funded and ESG-funded projects may not deny admission to any household on the basis of:

- The age or gender of a child under age 18; or
- The gender of a parent or parents; or
- The marital status of a parent or parents.

7. Faith-Based Activities

Service providers and their staff shall not discriminate against any client or prospective client on the basis of religion, religious beliefs, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to attend or participate in religious activities.

Guidance for Creation of Nondiscrimination and Fair Housing Policies

- Policy should state that the agency does not discriminate and complies with all nondiscrimination, fair housing, and equal opportunity laws.
- Policy should indicate the availability of aids and services, upon request, to ensure effective communication, such as the availability of qualified sign language interpreters, documents in Braille, or other ways of making information and communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision impairments.
- Policy should state that the agency will make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, and services to give a person with a disability equal opportunity to occupy and enjoy the full use of a housing unit.
- If the agency acts as a landlord, the policy should state that the agency will permit reasonable modification to the premises if the modification is necessary to allow full use of the premises.
- Policy should provide contact information for submitting a complaint or reporting discrimination.
- Policy should apply to all staff, volunteers, interns working for CoC Program recipients and subrecipients; Coordinated Entry Implementers; CoC Lead Agency; Collaborative Applicant, HMIS Lead and all other applicable individuals in service to those experiencing homelessness in the Maryland Balance of State CoC.
- Policy should ensure that all clients shall be informed of their right to access housing and services without discrimination, and of their right to initiate a grievance if they believe they have been discriminated against.

G. WORKPLACE HARASSMENT POLICY

In furtherance of its Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, HRDC strictly prohibits any form of workplace harassment. Workplace harassment is defined as:

- Conduct, whether verbal, non-verbal, or physical:
- That is based on a person's protected characteristic (see above); and

- Creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment that unreasonably interferes with work or negatively affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Workplace harassment can occur between co-workers, an employee and a supervisor/manager, or an employee and a non-employee (such as client, vendor, etc.) who conducts business with HRDC.

Sexual Harassment

The objective of this policy is to define workplace sexual harassment and to outline procedures for filing complaints, investigating sexual harassment claims and issuing appropriate disciplinary measures in the case of violations.

This policy applies to all employees of HRDC at all locations. All employees, at every level, will be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge, for any violation of this policy. Employees are prohibited from harassing others both on and off the employer premises and during or outside of work hours.

If an employee feels that he or she is being subjected to sexual harassment, he or she may immediately inform the harasser that the conduct is unwelcome and needs to stop. If the inappropriate conduct does not cease, or if the employee is unable to or uncomfortable with addressing the alleged harasser directly, he or she should report the incident or conduct to the Human Resources Director. It is helpful, and may be required to provide a written record of the date, time and nature of the incident(s) and the names of any witnesses.

It is important to report all concerns of sexual harassment or inappropriate sexual conduct to the Human Resources Director as soon as possible. Human Resources Director must be made aware of the situation so that he/she can conduct an immediate and impartial investigation and take appropriate action to prevent the prohibited conduct from continuing.

Definition:

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that is persistent or offensive and interferes with an employee's job performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Sexual harassment is defined by the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example: a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. Sexual harassment can be physical and psychological in nature. An aggregation of incidents can constitute sexual harassment even if one of the incidents considered on its own would not be harassing.

Examples of prohibited conduct:

Though sexual harassment encompasses a wide range of conduct, some examples of specifically prohibited conduct include the following:

- Physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults, and intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another employee's body or poking another employee's body.
- Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions or other sexual comments, such as sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks, jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience.
- Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to an employee for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any employee to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward.
- Subjecting, or threats of subjecting, an employee to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct or intentionally making performance of the employee's job more difficult because of that employee's sex.
- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in HRDC's workplace by HRDC employees.

- Retaliation for sexual harassment complaints.

Bullying

Our organization will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of any employee, client, volunteer, intern, and vendor. In addition, our organization will not tolerate any behavior that is classified under the definition of bullying, and to the extent that such actions are disruptive, we will take steps needed to eliminate such behavior.

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying can take on various forms, including:

- a. *Physical bullying* – when one person engages in physical force against another person, such as by hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.
- b. *Verbal bullying* – when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as by belittling or calling another hurtful names.
- c. *Nonverbal or relational bullying* – when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.
- d. *Cyberbullying* – the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs). Cyberbullying can involve:
 - Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images.
 - Posting sensitive, private information about another person.
 - Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad.
 - Intentionally excluding someone from an online group.
 - Hazing – an activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers that person regardless of that person's willingness to participate.
 - Sexualized bullying – when bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Examples of sexualized bullying behaviors include sexting, bullying that involves exposures of private body parts, and verbal bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.

Anyone who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in bullying and can lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

H. ANTI-RETALIATION POLICY

HRDC strictly prohibits retaliatory discrimination and/or harassment by an individual.

Includes, but not necessarily be limited to:

- Filing a charge of discrimination or harassment;
- Cooperating with an internal or external investigation of alleged discrimination or harassment;
- Complaining to anyone about alleged discrimination against oneself or others;
- Threatening to file a charge of discrimination or harassment;
- Refusing to obey an order reasonably believed to be discriminatory;
- Requesting a reasonable accommodation based on religion or disability.

“Retaliatory action” may include, but is not necessarily limited to:

- Employment actions, such as termination, refusal to hire and denial of promotions;
- Other actions affecting employment such as threats, unjustified negative evaluations, unjustified negative references or increased surveillance; or
- Any other action such as an assault or unfounded civil or criminal charges that is likely to deter reasonable people from pursuing their rights.

Any action that is perceived to be retaliatory against an individual should be immediately reported to HRDC's Human Resources Department.

Complaint Procedures:

Complaints should be submitted as soon as possible after an incident has occurred, preferably in writing. The Human Resources Director may assist the complainant in completing a written statement or, in the event an employee refuses to provide information in writing, the Human Resources Director will dictate the verbal complaint.

The HR director is responsible for:

1. Ensuring that both the individual filing the complaint (complainant) and the accused individual (respondent) are aware of the seriousness of a sexual harassment complaint.
2. Explaining HRDC's Workplace Harassment Policy and investigation procedures to all parties involved.
3. Exploring informal means of resolving sexual harassment complaints.
4. Notifying the proper local agency, if criminal activities are alleged.
5. Arranging for an investigation of the alleged Workplace Harassment and the preparation of a written report.
6. Submitting a written report summarizing the results of the investigation and making recommendations to designated Agency officials.
7. Notifying the complainant and the respondent of the corrective actions to be taken, if any, and administering those actions.

The HR director will determine if an in-house investigation will be conducted or if a third party will be contracted to complete the investigation. To ensure the prompt and thorough investigation of a Workplace Harassment complaint, the complainant should provide as much of the following information as is possible:

1. The name, department and position of the person or persons allegedly committing harassment.
2. A description of the incident(s), including the date(s), location(s) and the presence of any witnesses.
3. The effect of the incident(s) on the complainant's ability to perform his or her job, or on other terms or conditions of his or her employment.
4. The names of other individuals who might have been subject to the same or similar harassment.
5. What, if any, steps the complainant has taken to try to stop the harassment.
6. Any other information the complainant believes to be relevant to the harassment complaint.

Discipline:

Employees who violate this policy are subject to appropriate discipline. If an investigation results in a finding that this policy has been violated, the alleged violator will be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including termination. Persons who violate this policy may also be subject to civil damages or criminal penalties.

Confidentiality:

All complaints and investigations are treated confidentially to the extent possible and information is disclosed strictly on a need-to-know basis. The identity of the complainant is usually revealed to the parties involved during the investigation and the Human Resources Director takes adequate steps to ensure that the complainant is protected from retaliation during and after the investigation. All information pertaining to a Workplace Harassment complaint or investigation is maintained in secure files within the Human Resources department.

I. NEPOTISM POLICY

HRDC wants to ensure that corporate practices do not create situations such as conflict of interest or favoritism based on employment of relatives. This extends to practices that involve employee hiring, promotion and transfer.

Close relatives, partners, those in a dating relationship or members of the same household are not permitted to be in positions that have a reporting responsibility to each other. Close relatives are defined as the following: husband, wife, father, mother, father-in-law, mother-in law, grandfather, grandmother, son, son-in-law, daughter, daughter-in law, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, step relatives and cousins.

Individuals will not be hired or promoted into a position that would create a conflict in HRDC's policy. If employees begin a dating relationship or become relatives, partners or members of the same household, and one party is in a supervisory position, that person is required to inform management and Human Resources of the relationship. The employees will have 60 days to resolve the situation on their own. After 60 days, if the employees have not yet resolved the situation on their own by means acceptable to HRDC, such as a transfer or employment outside the company, the employees' supervisors will work with Human Resources to determine the most appropriate action for the specific situation. This may include transfer or, if necessary, the request for one of the employee's resignation.

If there is a situation where an action of HRDC, such as reduction in force, results in an involuntary circumstance in which two relatives, partners or members of the same household may be reporting to each other, one of the employees will be reassigned within 60 days. During those 60 days, the supervisory employee will not have involvement or direct input in the employment decisions of the other employee.

HRDC reserves the right to apply this policy to situations where there is a conflict or the potential for conflict because of the relationship between employees, even if no direct reporting relationship or authority is involved. In these situations, HRDC will reassign one of the employees within 60 days.

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Human Resources office and Executive Director. Written justification for the exception must be submitted to Human Resources prior to any employment decisions.

J. THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT AND AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES AMENDMENTS ACT

ADA/ADAAA

HRDC, in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), seeks to assure its employees that no individual will be discriminated against in the workplace due to a disability. Under ADA, the term disability means: "(a) A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of an individual; (b) A record of such an impairment; or (c) Being regarded as having such an impairment." Simply having a disability does not ensure ADA coverage.

An "ADA Reasonable Accommodation" may be provided to qualified employees. What constitutes a reasonable accommodation will vary from case to case depending on the needs of the position and of the qualified employee. **There is no guarantee that a reasonable accommodation will exist for every situation.** HRDC seeks to ensure that individuals with a disability are hired and retained, and have reasonable access to HRDC owned and leased facilities, as well as facilities occupied by providers under contract with HRDC to provide services.

The Human Resources Department is responsible for implementing this policy, including the resolution of reasonable accommodation, safety/direct threat and undue hardship issues. Employees should contact HRDC's Human Resources Department to request an ADA/ADAAA accommodation.

K. RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS

In accordance with federal and state laws and HRDC policy, HRDC prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion. HRDC provides reasonable accommodations for sincerely held religious beliefs and/or practices unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the Agency. A reasonable religious accommodation is an adjustment to the work environment that will allow an employee to comply with his or her religious beliefs. An employee seeking a reasonable accommodation should initially discuss their request with their immediate supervisor. If the employee is not satisfied with their supervisor's response, the employee can forward their request to HRDC's Human Resources Department for review. HRDC's Human Resources Department will respond to the employee's request within a reasonable time.

CHAPTER III- EMPLOYMENT WITH HRDC

A. APPLICATION

All persons applying for a position vacancy who are not currently employed by HRDC are required to complete HRDC's Employment Application. **All applicants must be a minimum of 18 years' age.**

HRDC Employment Applications are available at:

HRDC, Inc.
125 Virginia Avenue
Cumberland, Maryland 21502

-or-

Maryland Job Service McMullen Building
138 Baltimore Street
Cumberland, Maryland 21502

-or-

www.allegancyhrdc.org

No applicant shall be required to disclose their religious, political affiliation, racial or ethnic origin, except as necessary, on a volunteer basis, to gather Affirmative Action or other statistics that, when collected, will not identify a specific individual.

B. VERIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY

In accordance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, HRDC is committed to employ only United States citizens and aliens lawfully authorized to work in the United States.

Employees hired after June 1, 1987, are required to complete Section 1 of Form I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification and present documentation within three working days to the HRDC's Human Resources Department to verify identity and employment eligibility. HRDC's Human Resources Department shall examine the document and, if satisfied, complete Section 2 of the Form I-9 to record information. The completed Form I-9 shall be retained for three years or for one year past the employment of the individual, whichever is longer.

C. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

All applicants for employment are subject to a Livescan fingerprint criminal background check.

Conviction of a crime or a history of criminal convictions may prevent an applicant from being offered employment. Determination of such action will be based on an analysis of the responsibilities of the position and the nature and timeframe of the conviction. Current employees convicted of a crime may also be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

D. APPLICANT DRUG TESTING

All applicants tentatively offered a position at HRDC will be required to submit a urinalysis to test for illegal drug use prior to actual employment.

E. PHYSICALS

All applicants will be required to pass a pre-hire physical. Applicants applying for driving positions within HRDC will be required to complete a Department of Transportation (DOT) physical. Existing employees of HRDC that are classified as Drivers will be required to complete annual/bi-annual DOT physicals.

F. DRIVING RECORDS

All applicants for Driver positions with HRDC will conduct a Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration driving record as a new-hire and annually. Applicants who have a state driver's license other than Maryland, will be required to provide a state driving record as a new-hire and annually. In addition, it is the Managers responsibility to ensure this request is being completed.

G. PROOF OF COVERAGE

All applicants/employees required to use their personal vehicle for Agency business or claim mileage, must provide HRDC with a Declaration Page as proof of automobile insurance coverage. This is required yearly or at the time of any changes made to the automobile insurance coverage.

H. AGENCY ORIENTATION

All new employees will be required to complete a formal Agency orientation prior to beginning Program/position training/orientation.

Human Resources will conduct the mandatory Agency orientation. At which time, employees will complete all Agency paperwork. A program overview video will be presented representing Department/Program staff. Once complete, employees will begin program training/orientation within their assigned departments.

CHAPTER IV - PROBATIONARY/TRIAL PERIODS

POLICY:

All new, transferred, or promoted employees will serve a probationary/trial period. This will be a period of training in which the employee becomes acquainted with his/her new duties, job description and all phases of his/her work. The immediate supervisor will counsel the new employee as to his/her duties, responsibilities, hours of work, rate of pay, reports to be filed, chain of authority, job structure and employee benefits. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** *The successful completion of this period should not be construed as creating a contract or guaranteeing employment for any specific duration, or establishing a "just cause" termination standard.*

DEFINITIONS

Probationary Period: *The first 90 (newly hired union), or 180 (Non-Union employees) calendar days of an employee's tenure in a position shall be considered as that employee's probationary period.*

Trial Period: *The first 90 (newly transferred or promoted union), or 180 (all other employees) calendar days of an employees' tenure in a position shall be considered as that employee's trial period.*

A. UNION POSITIONS

The first 90 calendar days of any newly hired union employees' tenure in a position shall be considered probationary. Such employees may be terminated during such period for any reason other than upholding union principles or engaging in activity of the union.

The first 90 days of any transferred or promoted employees' tenure in a position shall be considered a trial period. Should the supervisor of the employee reasonably determine at any time within the 90- day period that the employee is unable to successfully perform the duties of the position he or she will be relieved of their duties. *See the current Collective Bargaining Agreement* for placement rights within the bargaining unit. The determination concerning the employee's ability to successfully perform the duties of the new position shall not be made prior to the 30th calendar day of the trial period.

At intervals of 30 calendar days, performance evaluations will be made in writing via the Agency evaluation form, Performance Appraisal Review. A decision as to the suitability of the probationary employee for the position will be made by the supervisor. In the event that an employee is recommended to be terminated or relieved, the action is subject to review by the Executive Director, who will notify the employee of his/her decision.

B. NON-UNION and UNION RN POSITIONS

The first 180 calendar days of any new employee's tenure in a position shall be considered as probationary. For promoted or transferred employees, the first 180 calendar days is considered a trial period. Such employees may be terminated during such periods. The probationary or trial period may be extended at the discretion of HRDC.

During this period, an employee's Supervisor may discuss the employee's performance with them. A decision will be made, in HRDC's discretion, about granting an individual regular employee status, extending his/her probationary period, or terminating the employment relationship. In the event that an employee is recommended to be terminated, the action is subject to review in accordance with HRDC's policy on discharge appeal conferences by the Executive Director.

C. BENEFITS DURING PROBATIONARY PERIOD

1. SICK LEAVE

- (1) All employees will earn sick leave at a minimum, according to the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act (Sick and Safe Leave).
- (2) Sick Leave has no pay-in-lieu-of cash value during the probationary period.

2. ANNUAL LEAVE

During an employee's probationary period, annual leave benefits are accrued but unable to use. Upon the successful completion of the probationary period, the employee's length of service, *for purposes of calculating annual leave*, will be computed from the date he/she was first employed and has maintained uninterrupted service with the agency. See CBA for union annual leave information, details, and accruals information.

3. HOLIDAY/PERSONAL DAYS

Employees can earn, and to the extent earned may use Holiday/Personal days during their probationary period. However, no monetary compensation is granted for unused Holiday/Personal days during the probationary period.

CHAPTER V - WAGES/SALARIES AND PAYROLL

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Agency to assure employee's wages and job classifications are equitably established. Periodic reviews, both within the Agency and with comparable positions outside the Agency, are management practices. Wages are set by the Board of Directors or in accordance with the Agreement between the United Food and Commercial Workers Local 27 and HRDC.

A. COMPLIANCE WITH THE FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT (FLSA)

The Federal Labor Standards Act is a federal law which requires that certain employees be paid at least the federal minimum wage for all hours worked and **overtime for all hours worked over forty (40) hours in a workweek. For Union employees, time worked in excess of eight (8) hours in any one day shall also be considered overtime. It is HRDC's policy to comply with all requirements of FLSA.** In accordance with this policy, all positions with HRDC are categorized as either "non-exempt" or "exempt" based on the nature of the positions. An employee who believes that he or she has been improperly categorized as exempt should contact HRDC's Human Resources Department.

B. PAY PERIOD

The combination of two consecutive workweeks constitutes an Agency pay period. There are 26 pay periods per calendar year. All employees receive a paycheck on every other Friday for their work in the previous two workweeks, unless that particular Friday happens to be a holiday. In such case, employees receive their paychecks on the last work day preceding the holiday.

C. PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

There are two types of payroll deductions that HRDC shall be authorized to make from employee wages:

Mandatory

- Federal, state, and local withholding taxes
- Garnishments
- Court ordered child or spousal support
- Union dues

Voluntary

Employees may authorize deductions from wages for (these options are subject to change periodically based on management's discretion):

- Benefits selection
- Deferred Compensation (403b Plan)
- County United Way Contribution
- All other Voluntary Benefits

Employees should contact HRDC's Human Resources Department to change payroll deductions.

D. PAYMENT UPON SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT WITH HRDC

See Chapter XIII – Resignations, Furloughs, Reductions-In-Force, and Terminations for information.

CHAPTER VI - WORK SCHEDULE/OVERTIME/COMPENSATORY TIME

A. WORKWEEK AND HOURS OF WORK

The basic workweek shall be Monday through Friday for all programs except the Office of Housing Opportunities and the After-Hours Medical Transport Program which operates seven days a week. The "workweek" begins at 12:01 a.m. on Sunday and ends at 12:00 midnight the following Saturday. HRDC's "payroll week" coincides with the workweek. The "regular" workweek for most employees consists of up to forty (40) hours of work within the workweek. HRDC's pay practices, procedures and records are the basis for establishing the number of hours worked by each employee, and govern all questions pertaining to hours worked, overtime, and all other pay issues. Nothing in this Manual is a guarantee by HRDC of hours of work per day, per week, per year, or on any specific work schedule.

B. OFFICE HOURS

The Administrative Office, located at 125 Virginia Avenue, is open from 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM. Program hours are dictated by program needs. Furthermore, hours of work are determined by the Department Director to meet its program needs. An employee's supervisor will advise employees of their regular work schedule, meal periods, and arrangements for personal breaks.

C. NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEE HOURS AND WORKWEEK

Nonexempt Positions: Nonexempt positions are those positions within the Agency that are subject to the minimum wage and overtime provisions as outlined in the Fair Labor Standards Act. All Union positions are classified as Nonexempt positions.

1. HOURS

- a. General: Specific hours shall be established for each employee based upon program needs. Regularly scheduled hours for most employees normally will not exceed eight (8) hours per day or forty (40) hours per week (regular full-time employees).
- b. Split Shift Work: *See Current Collective Bargaining Agreement*

2. MEAL PERIODS/EVENING MEETINGS

- a. Hours of work shall normally be consecutive except for evening meetings and meal periods. Meal periods are normally one-half to one hour in length at approximately the middle of the workday, depending on the position.
- b. Union employees see *Current Collective Bargaining Agreement*

3. OVERTIME

There will be no paid overtime for any employee, except in unusual circumstances approved in advance by the Executive Director. Non-exempt employees, will be paid one and one half-times the employees' regular rate for all hours they are required to work in excess of forty (40) in a workweek and/or more than eight (8) hours in a given day if the employee is in the Union. The amount of overtime work and employees assigned to work such overtime hours is established by HRDC. There will be no duplication or pyramiding in the computation of overtime and other premium wages. No employee will be paid more than once for the same hours worked.

- a. Permission to Work Overtime:

An employee must receive approval from his/her immediate supervisor and the Executive Director before working overtime, except in extenuating circumstances.

D. EXEMPT EMPLOYEES HOURS AND WORKWEEK

Exempt Positions: Exempt positions are those positions within the Agency that are exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions as outlined in the Fair Labor Standards Act.

1. HOURS

Exempt employees are not eligible for Overtime or Compensatory Time. The regularly scheduled working period for the exempt employee shall be up to 40 hours per week; however, the exempt employee may be required to work additional hours per week without additional compensation to the extent such time is reasonably necessary to carry out the duties and responsibilities set forth in that employee's job description.

a. Partial Day Absences:

(1) Part-day Absences Due to Employee Illness or Health Care Appointments

(a) Accrued Sick Leave **Available**

- i. When accrued sick leave is available, the exempt employee must use that accrued sick leave to account for partial day absences in a pay period in which a partial day's absence will cause the employee's total work-hours to be less than the regularly scheduled work period established for that position. The amount of leave to be used to account for the partial day's absence will be determined by subtracting the time worked in the pay period from the regularly scheduled work period established for that position.
- ii. Exempt employees need not account for partial day absences due to illness or health care appointments in a pay period in which a partial day's absence does not cause the employee's total work-hours to be less than the regularly scheduled work period established for that position.

- (b) Accrued Sick Leave **Not Available** -- When accrued sick leave is not available, the exempt employee's pay will not be "docked" for partial day absences due to illness.

(2) Partial Day Absences Due to Personal Reasons

(a) Accrued Paid Leave **Available**

- i. When accrued paid leave(s), i.e., Annual and Holiday/Personal days are available, the non-exempt employee must use some form of accrued paid leave to account for partial day absences in a pay period in which a partial day's absence will cause the employee's total work-hours to be less than the normally expected work period established for that position. The amount of leave to be used to account for the partial day's absence will be determined by subtracting the time worked in the pay period from the normally expected work period established for that position.
- ii. Exempt employees need not account for partial day absences due to personal reasons in a pay period in which a partial day's absence will not cause the employee's total work-hours to be less than the normally expected work period established for that position.

- (b) Accrued Paid Leave **Not Available** -- When accrued paid leave(s) are not available, the exempt employee's pay will not be "docked" for partial day absences.

b. Full Day Absences:

(1) Absences of a Full Day or More Due to Illness

- (a) Accrued Sick Leave **Available** -- When accrued sick leave is available, the exempt employee must use that accrued sick leave to account for full day absences.

- (b) Accrued Sick Leave **Not Available** -- When accrued sick leave is not available, HRDC will use some other form of accrued paid leave to account for full-day absences, or, if the employee has no other paid leave available, the employee will be docked the appropriate number of day(s) of pay.

(2) Full Day Absences Due to Personal Reasons

- (a) Accrued Paid Leave **Available** -- When accrued paid leave(s), i.e., Annual leave and Holiday/Personal days are available, the exempt employee must use some form of accrued paid leave to account for full day absences.
- (b) Accrued Paid Leave **Not Available** -- When accrued paid leave(s) are not available, the exempt employee will not be docked pay. as they are salaried.

E. TELECOMMUTING POLICY

POLICY

In the event of an emergency such as a weather disaster or pandemic, Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission Inc., (HRDC) may allow or require employees to temporarily work from home to ensure business continuity.

Procedures:

In the event of an emergency, HRDC may require certain employees to work remotely. These employees will be advised of such requirements by their supervisor. Preparations should be made by employees and supervisors well in advance to allow remote work in emergency circumstances. This includes appropriate equipment needs, such as hardware, software, phone and data lines. The IT department is available to review these equipment needs with employees and to provide support to employees in advance of emergency telework situations.

For voluntary telework arrangements, either the employee or supervisor can initiate a temporary telecommuting agreement during emergency circumstances. The employee and supervisor will discuss the job responsibilities and determine if the job is appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement, including equipment needs, workspace design considerations and scheduling issues.

A telecommuting agreement will be prepared by Human Resources and signed by the employee and his or her supervisor.

The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within his or her home for work purposes. HRDC will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space.

HRDC will determine the equipment needs for each employee on a case-by-case basis. Equipment supplied by the organization is to be used for business purposes only.

Consistent with the organization's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary company and client information accessible from their home office.

Employees should not assume any specified period of time for emergency telework arrangements, and HRDC may require employees to return to regular, in-office work at any time.

F. Working Alone at a Worksite Policy:

Lone workers are defined as employees not under constant supervision. HRDC takes the health and safety of its employees seriously. At any given time, Union staff may be working alone or without a Manager on site.

Employees have a responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves, clients, and the worksite in lone working situations.

The steps below are to be followed based on lone worksites and non-lone worksites.

Lone Worksites (Head Start off sites):

1. Employees at a lone worksite should have all Manager's contact information readily available and follow the chain of command. The Manager for a lone worksite will provide contact information to the employees. Employees are responsible for carrying out their normal work duties, including documentation and reporting incident/accidents.

Non-Lone Worksites (All worksites with a regular Manager Onsite):

1. When a Manager is going to be out the Manager will need to let their employees know and provide them with the proper contacts to reach out to while they are out.
2. The Manager shall notify HR through e-mail when employees will be working alone, who will be working alone, and confirm that the employees were made aware of whom to contact while the Manager is out.
3. HR will send the notification/e-mail from the Manager to the Union so that the Union is aware.
4. Employees at a lone worksite will have access to a list posted at their worksite with the names and contact information for Managers in that department/program to contact if needed, along with the order in which someone should be contacted to follow the chain of command. Employees are responsible for carrying out their normal work duties, including documentation and reporting incident/accidents.

Please note if at any time an employee request to work alone at a worksite (i.e. making up time for a work shift, or needing to adjust their schedule for a short period of time) they must put the request in writing to their manager for approval and from there an agreement can be drafted and signed.

G. Sub Phone Policy- Head Start/Early Head Start

It is the responsibility of the employee to find a substitute for days requesting off. Once a substitute is found and the time is approved off by the supervisor, the sub phone is to be made aware at 301-876-0273 indicating what leave is being used and which substitute is covering the shift. If for some reason, the above has been completed and the substitute can no longer work the required, then the responsibility of finding new coverage falls on the supervisor/sub phone holder. In addition, if all options have been exhausted and the employee is still having trouble please reach out to the Manager.

Union Substitutes: Union Substitutes should be called first and offered the work shift. If the union substitutes cannot work the required full shift being offered then the next substitute will be called.

CHAPTER VII - EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

HRDC's insurance, pension, and other plan benefits are discussed in more detail during Agency Orientation, in the current Collective Bargaining Agreement, and other plan documents. In the event there is any question or conflict in language or interpretation between Agency Orientation, the current Collective Bargaining Agreement, plan documents, and the provisions of this Manual; the terms of the actual contracts and other plan documents will control over the summaries in this Manual. It is further understood that nothing in any of the benefit plans summarized in this Section will be considered a waiver of HRDC's standards of attendance as stated elsewhere in this Manual.

Here are some of the highlights of HRDC's employee benefits program, and a number of other services and conveniences HRDC offers you in recognition of your value to HRDC:

A. MANDATORY BENEFITS

1. SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security will be deducted from the employee's salary at the current rate and will be matched with the same percent by the Agency.

2. UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION INSURANCE

All employees of the Agency are covered under the Maryland Unemployment Insurance Law. Benefits are determined by State Law.

3. WORKER'S COMPENSATION INSURANCE

The Agency provides Worker's Compensation Insurance for all employees. Claim compensability is determined by the Agency's Workers' Compensation Insurance Company (*See Chapter XI, under safety for more information of compensable time*).

4. FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

It is the policy of HRDC to grant periods of unpaid leave to employees who request time off for family or medical reasons, in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 ("FMLA"). The eligibility criteria and general guidelines used in administering this policy are set forth below.

Covered Employees: To be eligible for leave under the FMLA, an individual must have been employed by HRDC for at least twelve months, whether consecutive or intermittent, and worked at least 1,250 hours during the twelve-month period preceding the leave.

Reasons for Leave: Employees may request leave under the FMLA for the following events: birth of a child; placement of a child with you for adoption or foster care; time needed to care for a spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition; employee or spouse's military obligation, or an employee is unable to perform his/her job due to a serious health condition. For purposes of this policy, a serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care in a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider.

Length of Leave: Leave under the FMLA is limited to a total of twelve workweeks during a twelve-month period. In determining the amount of FMLA available to an employee, HRDC will consider the twelve-month period preceding the date the leave is to be used. Leave taken to care for a sick family member or because of an employee's own serious health condition may be taken intermittently or on a reduced work schedule when medically necessary and supported by certification from a doctor or other health care professional. In such a situation, however, employees may be transferred temporarily to a position which, at the discretion of HRDC, better accommodates the leave schedule, but is equivalent in pay and benefits to the position the employee held prior to the leave.

Pay Status During Leave: An employee's pay status during a period of leave under the FMLA will depend on the reason for the leave, the length of the leave, and the amount of available (i.e., earned but unused), sick, annual and holiday/personal time as of the beginning of the leave.

If an employee is utilizing FMLA for a personal illness/medical need, or birth of a child the employee will receive compensation from short-term disability benefits for the period of time authorized by his/her medical practitioner after first taking three (3) days of available leave. Employees seeking additional leave not required by the medical practitioner but permissible under FMLA after short term disability benefits are exhausted will be required to use all other leave available (sick, annual, and personal time) to cover all or a portion of their absence, and employees will receive full pay until their available leave is exhausted.

Sick, annual, and holiday/personal time will not accrue during any period for which an employee is receiving short term disability benefits or are in an unpaid leave status.

Notice Required: If the need for leave is foreseeable, employees must notify HRDC's Human Resources Department at least thirty days prior to the date the leave is to begin. If the need is not foreseeable, an employee should provide as much notice as practical. The request for leave should be made in writing and include the reason for the leave and amount of time required. If the leave is needed because of a serious health condition, whether an employee's or that of a family member, employees will be required to provide HRDC with a health care provider's certification to support the need for the leave. In the case of leave taken because of an employee's own serious condition, certification of their ability to return to work will also be required and must state: **the employee is able to return without restrictions and able to perform the essential duties of the job description.**

Effect on Benefits and Employment: Coverage under HRDC's group health plan will continue at no additional expense to the employee during any period that they are on leave under the FMLA. Employees will, however; be required to continue paying their portion of the premium for the employee's own and any dependent coverage, as well as any contributions to Voluntary Insurance plans should they wish to keep such coverage in effect. Non-Union employees will continue to have coverage under HRDC's life and long-term disability policies in accordance with the provisions set forth in HRDC's general Leave of Absence policy.

Upon return to work from leave under the FMLA, employees will be placed in the position they held prior to the leave or in one which, in HRDC's judgment, is equivalent in pay, benefits and other conditions and terms of employment to that held prior to the leave. If the employee is considered a key employee under the FMLA, however, HRDC is unable to guarantee reinstatement.

The provisions set forth above are a brief summary of the entitlements and requirements under the FMLA. It is HRDC's intention to administer the policy in a manner consistent with regulations issued by the Secretary of Labor. Questions regarding the FMLA should be directed to HRDC's Human Resources Department.

5. FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE INSURANCE (FAMLI)

Family and medical leave insurance (FAMLI) will ensure eligible Maryland workers can take up to 12 weeks away from work to care for themselves or a family member and still receive income of up to \$1000 a week. Anyone who works at least 680 hours in a position based in Maryland over the previous four calendar quarters will be eligible for benefits.

FAMLI is funded through contributions that HRDC will remit to the State on a quarterly basis. The contribution amount is based on payroll. You may withhold up to 50% of the total contribution rate from your employees' paychecks. Payroll deductions will begin July 1, 2025 for employers participating in the State Plan. Those first payroll deductions from workers and employers will then be submitted to the State by October 2025. Anyone working in a position located in Maryland will contribute, regardless of what state they live in. The contributions employers will remit to the State will create a trust fund. The fund will grow over time and be ready to pay out benefits to Maryland workers starting July 1, 2026. HRDC is responsible for filing quarterly wage and hour reports with the Division. These reports will be the basis for calculating the amount due each quarter. Even if you participate in a private plan, you will be required to file these reports.

What qualifying events could a worker use leave for?

- To welcome a child into their home, including through adoption and foster care
- To care for themselves, if they have a serious health condition
- To care for a family member's serious health condition

- To make arrangements for a family member's military deployment

All employers will be required to provide paid family and medical leave insurance. HRDC may choose whether to provide insurance through the State Plan, a commercial plan, or a self-insured option.

All employers with employees in Maryland, regardless of their paid leave coverage option, will be required to register with FAML I in 2025. After registration, employers will be automatically enrolled into the State Plan administered by the Maryland Department of Labor, which will provide a seamless way to be in compliance. FAML I and FMLA differ as FAML I offers paid time off while FMLA ensures workers have access to unpaid time off.

When an event qualifies for leave through both FMLA and FAML I, the leaves should run at the same time. There will be limited cases when an event only qualifies for FAML I. In that case, an individual does not use any FMLA time while taking FAML I.

HRDC will be required to notify employees about paid family and medical leave:

- six months before benefits begin,
- when the employee is hired,
- once a year,
- when the employee requests paid leave, and
- when the employee's leave request has become known.

Enrolled under the State Plan HRDC will contribute the following:

For employers with 15 or more workers: The rate will be 0.90% of covered wages up to the Social Security cap, and will be equally divided between workers and employers.

Employers may choose to cover part or all of their workers' contributions.

While the Department of Labor sets the contribution rate for the State Plan, private plans will set their own rates.

Workers cannot be charged more in a private plan than they would be through the State Plan.

(FAML I requirements subject to change)

B. EMPLOYER PROVIDED BENEFITS

1. LEAVES & ABSENCES

- General: Leaves & absences may be paid or unpaid and are granted to an eligible employee for specific purposes, personal reasons and other reasons deemed to be in the best interest of HRDC.
- Administrative Leave: Administrative leave is time off (***in increments of no less than a full day***) given to exempt (*salaried*) employees that is not chargeable to any other form of leave, as determined by the Executive Director or Department Director.
- Annual Leave:
 - (1) **Eligibility**: All Regular and Limited full and part-time employees, who work at least four (4) hours per day and twenty (20) hours per week, shall be eligible to earn paid annual leave in accordance with the following policies. No annual leave is earned by any substitute or temporary employee hired from outside of the Agency or by any regular or limited part-time employee who works less than 20 hours a week.
 - (2) **Union Positions**: Annual leave is earned monthly during the current program year and computed and credited to the employee on the first day of the following program year and is available for that employee's use during that program year. Leave earned and not yet credited does represent an entitlement but cannot be used by the individual before the first day of the following program year. Union employees are not eligible to

carry over Annual Leave. **Union employees should consult the current Collective Bargaining Agreement for specific details concerning the earning, accrual and usage of paid annual leave.**

- (3) **Non-Union and Union RN Positions:** Annual Leave is earned bi-weekly and is computed and credited to the employee each pay period when it becomes available for the employee's use. Annual Leave is earned and accrued in proportion to the number of hours the employee is regularly scheduled to work utilizing a days-per-pay-period multiplier in accordance with the chart below:

FOR NON-UNION & UNION RN EMPLOYEES		
End of Program Year Status	Multiplier	Maximum Earnable Leave per Year
1-12 months	1.54	5 days
13-24 months	3.08	10 days
25-72 months	4.62	15 days
73-132 months	5.23	17 days
133-180 months	6.15	20 days
181 and above months	7.69	25 days

- (4) Carryover (Non-Union) – there is no limit to the number of hours an employee may carry over from year to year. However, after an employee who has accrued an amount of credited-but-unused leave of 200 hours, that employee shall earn no additional leave until such time as his/her leave balance falls below the pre-established maximum.
- (5) First Year Employees: All employees must successfully complete the probationary period before they can take annual leave. Annual leave shall accrue for regular employees during this period.
- (6) **Scheduling and Using**
- (a) Generally speaking, to make annual leave meaningful to the employee, annual leave should be taken at least one week at a time. However, it is recognized that from time to time it may be mutually beneficial for the employee to take annual leave in less than weekly increments. Approval is left to the discretion of the Supervisor.
- (b) Annual Leave planning should begin as soon as the program year starts. Employees are responsible for receiving advanced approval through the annual leave request form.
- (c) Supervisors will review and approve requested dates based on operational needs. HRDC will attempt to schedule annual leave at the convenience of the employee, however, the needs of the Agency must be considered as priority.
- (7) **Miscellaneous**
- (a) Pay-In-Lieu of Annual Leave- An employee who leaves employment may be eligible to receive pay in lieu of annual leave. Whether an employee is eligible to receive such pay is governed by the separation procedures outlined in Chapter XIII Resignations, Furloughs, Reduction in Force, and Terminations. Pay- In- Lieu of Annual Leave is not available to employees who have not yet completed their probationary period.
- (b) Holidays during paid annual leave: In the event that a holiday falls during an employee's scheduled annual leave period, the holiday is considered holiday leave and not an annual leave day.
- (c) Illness during paid annual leave: If, during a period of annual leave, an illness of

three or more days occurs, an employee may be granted sick leave for this period of illness, provided the employee notifies his/her Supervisor and requests that the days of illness be granted as sick leave and provide a physician's certificate upon return to work.

- (d) To the extent available, when an employee is transferred or promoted into another program the employee must take or be paid for all credited-but-not- used and all earned-but-not-yet-credited leave. If the employee is paid in lieu of taking this leave he/she, upon request to the new supervisor, may receive time off without pay up to the equivalent of the annual leave paid for in the other program at any time (trial period excluded) up to the end of the next complete program year for the program to which the employee transferred.

- d. Funeral Leave: All employees, (*with the exception of casual, temporary and substitute employees*) are entitled to a leave of absence with pay in the event of a death in his/her immediate family.

- (1) In case of the death of the employee's spouse, domestic partner, parent or step-parent, child, step child or foster child the Employer shall grant an employee a five (5) day leave of absence with pay.
- (2) In case of the death of a brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandmother, grandfather, grandchildren or any relative living with the employee, the Employer shall grant an employee a three (3) day leave of absence with pay.
- (3) In cases with extenuating circumstances such as when substantial travel is necessary, request for leave exceeding the established limits will be forwarded through supervisory channels to the Executive Director for approval. Substitutes are not eligible for funeral leave.
- (4) In the event of the death of any employee's Aunt or Uncle, employees shall be granted time off with pay not to exceed one (1) day to attend the funeral service.
- (5) Funeral leave shall not be charged to vacation or sick leave.
- (6) Funeral leave for union employees is governed by the terms of the current Collective Bargaining Agreement.

- e. Holidays:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (1) New Year's Day | (10) Christmas Day |
| (2) Good Friday | (11) Juneteenth |
| (3) Easter Monday | (12) Veteran's Day |
| (4) Memorial Day | (13) Martin Luther King Day |
| (5) Independence Day | (14) Columbus Day |
| (6) Labor Day | (15) President's Day |
| (7) Day after Thanksgiving | (16) Maryland Day |
| (8) Thanksgiving | |
| (9) Day Before Christmas | |

- (1) Holidays 1-11 shall be observed in accordance with Federal or State designations. If said designations are in conflict, the Executive Director shall designate the day on which any such holiday shall be observed. Casual employees will be paid only for those holidays, (1-11) that when observed, fall on a day they are regularly scheduled to work.
- (2) Holiday leave taken is paid as an employee's regular workday.
- (3) Employees will get paid only for holidays that fall during the week in which they are working.
- (4) Whenever a holiday falls on Saturday, it shall be observed on the preceding Friday.

- (5) Whenever a holiday falls on Sunday, it shall be observed on the following Monday.
- (6) **The right to pay for holidays shall be forfeited by an employee whose:**
- absence is unscheduled/unexcused on workday prior to and/or after the holiday
 - is on leave of absence without pay when the holiday occurs;
 - is furloughed when the holiday occurs; or
 - is eligible for disability pay for illness or injury (Worker's Compensation or disability).
- (7) If work is required on a holiday 1-11, all non-exempt employees shall receive time and one-half of their regular rate of pay or time and one-half time-off which must be taken during the same workweek.
- (8) **Personal Leave Days**
- (a) Holidays 1-11 are observed by all eligible employees on the day they occur. Holidays 12-16 are considered HRDC's Personal Leave Days. Special arrangements for holidays 12-16 for these employees are described below:
- I. To provide increased access to programs by clients, HRDC will conduct normal operations on holidays 12-16. Employees may take holidays 12-16 as personal days. An employee may use Personal Leave at their discretion, prior to September 30th, per program needs.
 - II. Personal days in lieu of holidays may only be taken as earned. Use of holiday/personal days must be arranged with the employee's supervisor, per program needs.
 - III. **It is the employee's sole responsibility to monitor his/her own Holiday/personal leave balance(s.) Holiday/personal days not used in the fiscal year in which they are earned are lost, they cannot be carried over from one fiscal year to another. (*Holiday/personal day accrual and use is based on an October 1 - September 30 cycle (HRDC fiscal year) - not an individual employee's program year.*)**
 - IV. Personal days are taken on any day that is mutually acceptable to the employee and the immediate supervisor. For Limited Head Start personnel, HRDC may designate Holidays 12-16 to be taken on an exact date established by the Department Director.
- (9) **Eligibility**
- (a) Regular and Limited employees are eligible for holidays 1-16.
 - (b) Casual employees are eligible for holidays 1-11 only when the holiday (or the day on which the holiday is observed by the Agency) falls on a day they are regularly scheduled to work.
 - (c) Substitutes/PRNs and Temporary employees are eligible only for holidays 1-11 and only if they are scheduled to work and work the day before and the day after the holiday (or the day on which the holiday is observed by the Agency.) All other temporary or substitute employees are not eligible for holiday pay.
 - (d) Probationary Employees - Probationary employees can earn, and to the extent earned may use Holiday/Personal days during their probationary period.
 - (e) Union Employees must submit holiday leave applications in accordance with the terms of the current Collective Bargaining Agreement.

f. Jury Leave:

- (1) Jury leave is available to all employees except temporaries and substitutes. Time off for jury duty is granted to all employees, in accordance with applicable law. If you are absent for jury duty, employees must provide your Supervisor with a copy of the subpoena, jury certificate, or court order before leave is granted, and again upon your return to work. When you receive a notice to report for jury duty, notify your Supervisor immediately.
- (2) The time required for jury duty is not chargeable to other types of leave for the first two weeks of jury leave. The employee will submit a statement to the Accounting Department from the court as to the amount of jury fees that he/she received. **The combination of jury fees and Agency pay shall not exceed that which the employee would normally be paid had he/she worked.**
- (3) When an employee is excused from jury service, either temporarily or permanently, on any scheduled workday, the employee shall promptly report to complete any remaining hours of his/her scheduled workday, but in no case shall he/she be required to report after 3:30 p.m.
- (4) Union employees should refer to the Union Contract for information on their eligibility for paid jury leave.

g. Extended Federal Jury Policy:

HRDC encourages all employees to fulfill their civic duties related to federal jury duty service. If you are summoned for federal jury duty, notify your supervisor as soon as possible to make scheduling arrangements.

Time spent for federal jury duty service is unpaid; however, if you are classified as exempt, you will not incur any deduction in pay for a partial week's absence due to jury duty. You may opt to use annual or personal leave in place of unpaid leave.

HRDC will not discriminate or retaliate against employees for missing work due to federal jury service. Upon return to work, you will be reinstated to your prior position without loss of seniority and will be treated as if you have been on a leave of absence or furlough.

h. Leave of Absence (Without Pay)

A leave of absence without pay may be granted for valid general, personal, or educational reasons to eligible employees at the discretion of the Executive Director.

- (1) Employees requesting a leave of absence must submit a request through supervisory channels, in writing for approval. All leave without pay will be granted at the discretion of the Executive Director with the exception that the employee's Department Director may grant leave properly documented up to 30 days without pay. Requests must state the reason for the absence, the desired beginning and ending date, a statement concerning the amount of annual leave available, if any, and why it is not being used for this purpose, and the individual's intention concerning self-payment of medical insurance (see *paragraph (5) below*.) Following approval, the Human Resources Department will initiate a Status Salary Change Form and a copy of the approval letter will be placed in the employee's personnel file. A separate Status Salary Change will be submitted when the employee returns.
- (2) HRDC may fill the leaving employee's position during his/her absence.
- (3) Any unused credited annual leave in the current program year will be used prior to commencement of leave unless a special request is made to the Executive Director and a waiver may be granted.
- (4) **Annual leave benefits do not accrue to any employee during a leave of absence without pay, however, the period covering the leave is counted for the purpose of**

determining the employee's end of program year status in computing annual leave benefits. Holidays falling during such a period will neither be earned nor be paid.

- (5) Employees must make arrangements through the Human Resources Department to pay their own medical insurance premiums.
- (6) **Because of the tenuous nature of funding and the potential necessity to abolish positions to accommodate budget constraints, the Agency can make no guarantee of work upon return from the leave of absence.**
 - (a) For Non-Union personnel HRDC can make no guarantee, to place a person who is scheduled to return from leave and whose job has been abolished into another vacated position for which the person is qualified, and at the rate of pay for the new position.
 - (b) For Union employees scheduled to return from leave and whose job has been abolished, the HRDC will recognize Union Seniority and bumping rights procedures set forth in the current Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- (7) Unless the leave is extended by the Executive Director for just cause prior to its scheduled end, an employee who fails to return to work at the end of a leave of absence is regarded as having resigned from his position.
- (8) Union employees should refer to the Union Contract to determine their seniority and bumping rights.

i. Military Leave

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act ("USERRA"), protects all employees who perform "voluntary or involuntary" service in the Armed Forces, including the Air National Guard, the Army National Guard, the Public Health Service and other service categories spelled out by the President. Employees taking a military leave are required to give proper advance verbal and/or written notice to their employer. Provided that the employees comply with these and certain other requirements, their jobs will be guaranteed for their return from up to **five years** of military service. The returning employee will be placed in the position he or she would have attained but for the military service, unless they are not qualified for the position. The time for the employee to report to his employer at the end of his military service varies from one week to 90 days, depending on the length of the service.

After the military employee returns from service, his or her job is guaranteed certain legal protections, over and above those of other employees, depending on the length of military service.

HRDC may not be required to reinstate an employee after military service if the employee is dishonorably discharged, or if HRDC has experienced such changed circumstances that reemployment is impossible or unreasonable, or would create an undue hardship. Also, employees who work only for brief, non-recurrent periods prior to taking military service may not be entitled to reinstatement.

Employee benefits are also protected by law during individuals' military service. A military leave is not deemed to be a "break in service" for seniority and other benefits. The leave is supposed to be included, for example, in any calculations of vesting rights for pension benefit plans.

HRDC will continue health insurance benefits for employees engaged in military service under the same conditions as apply to other types of leaves of absence. Such benefits may terminate in accordance with the benefit plan documents. However, COBRA continuation coverage will be provided in that circumstance.

Employees taking military leave will not be required to use accrued vacation or paid time off during the leave. However, they will be permitted to use such accrued paid leave if they so request.

j. Sick Leave

(1) Policy

- (a) HRDC recognizes that illness may prevent an employee from performing the duties of his/her position; and that if illness caused the employee to suffer a loss in earnings, it would be mutually detrimental to both the Agency and the employee. In order to minimize the adverse economic effect of illness, HRDC provides its employees a privilege which should be conserved and used only when necessary. It should never be thought of as leave to be used in lieu of annual or holiday leave but rather as a health insurance program designed for the protection of the employee. **Furthermore, the number of sick days available to an employee is not to be construed as an implied standard of an acceptable rate of absenteeism.** Absences due to illness impede operations, the magnitude of which varies from position to position and program to program.
- (b) The effective control of sick leave is one of the responsibilities of every Department Director and Supervisor and is to be considered an integral part of the management process. It must be remembered that inappropriate use of sick leave is an individual problem that adversely impacts program delivery; therefore, careful consideration should be given to special problems the employee may be experiencing that may cause his/her sick leave usage to be excessive. The employee and Supervisor bear a mutual responsibility for exploring a course of action which will alleviate the condition which is causing the excessive absenteeism or resolve that the employee is no longer physically qualified for the position and should resign.
- (c) Earned sick and safe leave may be used for the following:
- i. To care for or treat the employee's mental or physical illness, injury or condition;
 - ii. To obtain preventative medical care for the employee or the employee's family member;
 - iii. To care for a family member with a mental or physical illness, injury or condition;
 - iv. For maternity or paternity leave; or
 - v. For an absence due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking committed against the employee or the employee's family member under certain circumstances.

- (2) Availability: Sick Leave for all employees shall be earned and available in accordance with the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act (Sick and Safe Act), at the rate of .75 days per pay period for each pay period that the employee is on HRDC's payroll providing that:

- (a) Total cumulative days earned in any Fiscal Year (10/1 to 9/30) shall not exceed six (6) and that;
- (b) The Sick Leave account balance at the end of any pay period does not exceed the maximum days listed below for the individual's position category:

**CHART NO.1
UNION EMPLOYEES**

Position Category	Max. # of Sick Leave Days
12-month Pos.	11.5
9 - 11+ Month Pos.	10.0
6 - 8+ Month Pos.	8.5
< than 6 Month Pos.	6.0

**CHART NO. 2
NON-UNION EMPLOYEES
& Union RNs**

Position Category	Max. # of Sick Leave Days
12-month Pos.	15.0
9 - 11+ Month Pos.	13.0
6 - 8+ Month Pos.	10.0
< than 6 Month Pos.	6.0

- (c) **Employees can carry forward any unused sick leave at the end of each Fiscal Year up to the maximum days established by Position Category as outlined above in Charts 1 & 2.**
 - (d) **Casual, RN PRNs, and Substitute** in accordance with the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act (Sick and Safe Act), are eligible to earn sick leave based on hours worked and pay period worked.
 - (e) **Temporaries and employees on leave of absence** are not eligible to earn sick leave.
 - (f) **See Chapter XIII – Resignations, Furloughs, Reductions-In-Force, and Terminations for information**
- (3) Notification and Documentation
- (a) Employees unable to report for work due to illness are required to notify their Supervisor (or designee) as soon as possible prior to the start of the work day. Failure to do so will result in the employee's absence being recorded as an Un-Excused Absence. **The employee must include in this notification an expected date-of-return.** The Supervisor (or designee) documents the illness on the appropriate form and forward to the Human Resources Department. All sick leave must be recorded on the payroll time sheet. If the employee is unable to report to work on the expected date-of-return he/she must again notify his/her Supervisor (or designee) as soon as possible prior to the date-of-return. **This notification must also include a new expected date-of-return.**
 - (b) Any employee who has been on sick leave for three (3) consecutive scheduled working days or longer, must submit a **note from their doctor stating the employee is able to return to work and perform the essential job duties as outlined in their Position Description without restrictions** upon his/her return to work. The certificate must be forwarded to Human Resources and must include: the physician's signature, the period of absence and certification that the employee can return to work. Failure to submit a physician's certificate may result in appropriate disciplinary action and time being recorded as leave without pay. **Failure to report absence to immediate supervisor or Human Resources may considered job abandonment. This could result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.**
 - (c) Any employee who fails/refuses to return to his/her position following sick leave will be considered to have resigned.
- (4) Pregnancy
- (a) Pregnancy is a health/medical condition and as such, is covered under all the applicable sick leave policies.
 - (b) As a medical condition, there is no set time when maternity (sick) leave shall begin. This is a medical decision to be decided between the employee and her physician.
 - (c) Once the decision to begin maternity (medical) leave has been made, the employee shall furnish her immediate supervisor with a Physician's Certificate indicating when leave shall begin and forwarded to the Human Resources Department. Human Resources will generate a Status Salary Form at this time. All other documentation requirements for sick leave apply.

(5) **Accommodations for Nursing Mothers**

- (a) HRDC will provide nursing mothers reasonable break time to express milk for their infant child for up to one year following the child's birth.
- (b) If you are nursing, you will be provided with a space, other than a restroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public.
- (c) EMPLOYEES MAY STORE EXPRESSED MILK: in company refrigerators. Sufficiently mark or label your milk to avoid confusion for other employees who may share the refrigerator. You may also bring a personal cooler for storage.
- (d) Break time should, if possible, be taken concurrently with any other break time already provided. Break time may be unpaid where permissible by applicable law.
- (e) You must make reasonable efforts not to disrupt agency operations.
- (f) You are encouraged to discuss the length and frequency of these breaks with your supervisor.
- (g) HRDC will not discriminate or retaliate against employees who express breast milk in the workplace in accordance with this policy.

(6) **Absenteeism Policy**

Policy

The purpose of this policy is to set forth HRDC's policy and procedures for handling employee absences and tardiness to promote the efficient operation of the company and minimize unscheduled absences.

Punctual and regular attendance is an essential responsibility of each employee at HRDC. Employees are expected to report to work as scheduled, on time and prepared to start working. Employees also are expected to remain at work for their entire work schedule. Late arrival, early departure or other absences from scheduled hours are disruptive and must be avoided.

This policy does not apply to absences covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or leave provided as a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). These exceptions are described in separate policies.

Absence

"Absence" is defined as the failure of an employee to report for work when he or she is scheduled to work. The two types of absences are defined below:

Excused absence occurs when all the following conditions are met:

- The employee provides to his or her supervisor sufficient notice at least 48 hours in advance of the absence.
- The absence request is approved in advance by the employee's supervisor.
- The employee has sufficient accrued paid time off (PTO) to cover the absence.

Unexcused absence occurs when any of the above conditions are not met. If it is necessary for an employee to be absent or late for work because of an illness or an emergency, the employee must notify his or her supervisor no later than the employee's scheduled starting

time on that same day. If the employee is unable to call, the employee may have a responsible adult make the necessary telephone call.

An unexcused absence counts as one occurrence for the purposes of discipline under this policy.

Employees with three or more consecutive days of excused absences because of illness or injury must give the Human Resources Department proof of physician's care that states the employee is able to return to work without restrictions and able to perform the essential duties outlined within the employee's job description.

Tardiness and Early Departures

Employees are expected to report to work and return from scheduled breaks on time. If employees cannot report to work as scheduled, they must notify their supervisor no later than their regular starting time. This notification does not excuse the tardiness but simply notifies the supervisor that a schedule change may be necessary.

Employees who must leave work before the end of their scheduled shift must notify a supervisor immediately.

Tardiness and early departures are documented and may be cause for disciplinary actions under this policy.

Union employees and Non-Union and Union RN Employees that are non-exempt and late due to tardiness are paid only for the time actually worked.

The documentation of lateness/illness is recorded and must be given to Human Resources

Disciplinary Action

Excessive absenteeism is defined as four (4) or more occurrences of unexcused absence in a 12-month period preceding the most recent occurrence. This may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Job Abandonment

Any employee who fails to report to work for a period of three or more consecutive days without notifying his or her supervisor will be considered to have abandoned the job and voluntarily terminated the employment relationship.

- (a) In order to prevent abuse of sick leave and to insure proper medical attention for employees, Program Managers, Department Directors and the Executive Director may require an employee to submit a medical certificate signed by a duly authorized physician who authenticates a period of illness of one day or more. This procedure is not to be implemented unless the employee has been absent for more than four (4) occurrences in a given year, with "year" being defined as the 12 months preceding the last occurrence of sick leave.
- (b) Sick leave is a privilege, not be used for any other purpose than described herein. If an employee has excessive use of sick leave or has established a sick leave pattern which indicates possible abuse, counseling will result. Counseling is a process which is to be conducted by the immediate Supervisor and is to be specifically oriented toward identifying and providing solutions to the problem which is interfering with the employee's ability to report to work regularly. There may be many reasons employees use sick leave, principle among which is a legitimate illness. Other reasons for chronic absenteeism could include lack of motivation, personal problems or conflict with other goals or commitments which the employee has. It is essential in the counseling process to identify the causes of absenteeism and assist wherever possible, in correcting work-related situations which contribute to employee dissatisfaction. However, at the same time, the consequences of excessive

use of sick leave, i.e., assessment of the employee's continued employment with HRDC and the detrimental impact on the operations must also be explained.

(c) If a medical condition or series of medical conditions has an adverse impact on program operations, the Agency shall make a determination on a case by case basis regarding the ability of the employee to continue in his/her current position.

(d) Employee Performance Evaluations will consider absenteeism when rating the employee.

(7) Continuous Long-Term Disability

(a) Employees with a continuous disabling illness which precludes full performance of all duties for a period of twenty-six (26) consecutive weeks will be discharged for medical reasons if not able to return to work and perform all duties at the end of the twenty-six (26) week period. The calculation of this twenty-six (26) week period will include periods of furlough. This continuous illness period includes successive periods of absence due to the same or related causes unless separated by a sixty (60) Calendar day period during which the employee is not absent due to these causes. Successive periods of disability due to entirely unrelated causes are considered one (1) disability unless separated by a doctor's certification that the employee can return to work and successfully perform all duties.

(b) Union employees with a long-term disabling illness who have exhausted all sick leave, annual leave, holidays, personal days and disability income coverage will be placed in a leave without pay status, during which time health and life insurance will continue until the end of the 26-week period has been reached.

(c) Employees who (by their inability to return to work and perform all duties assigned to their position) have been placed in a continuous long-term disability status will receive a letter from the Human Resources Director outlining their rights and obligations and the date at which they must return to work or be discharged for medical reasons.

(d) During the period of a long-term disability, i.e. periods when the employee is receiving no compensation from the Agency, Annual and Sick leave benefits do not accrue and paid holidays that fall during this period are neither earned nor paid.

(8) Union employees' right to leave is governed by the terms of the current Collective Bargaining Agreement.

2. INSURANCES

a. Union Employees: See current Collective Bargaining Agreement for a detailed overview of coverage and eligibility rules.

b. Non-Union Employees:

(1) Health Care Benefits

The HRDC's comprehensive benefits program, consists of group medical, prescription, dental, vision, disability, and life insurance.

New Non-Union employees are eligible for health insurance coverage within ninety (90) days. In accordance with the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

HRDC's health benefits may cover an employee's spouse, domestic partner, and

dependent children. In accordance with the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

If the employee is covered by medical coverage elsewhere, the employee may be entitled to waive HRDC coverage and receive a taxable wage incentive for maintaining non HRDC coverage. Employees should contact HRDC's Human Resources Department for more information of this incentive.

Employee contributions for health benefits are paid through a pre-tax payroll deduction.

(2) Open Enrollment

Open enrollment is held during the month of September (subject to change).

(3) Benefits During Unpaid Leaves of Absence

If an employee is on unpaid leave of absence, benefits may be maintained. Employees should contact HRDC's Human Resources Department to make arrangements to pay required monthly contribution payments.

(4) Changes in Medical Benefits Coverage

Under most circumstances, employees can only make changes to benefit elections during the annual open enrollment period. After enrollment, revision to an employee's election is only permitted due to a change in status. Employees must notify HRDC's Human Resources Department and complete a benefit change form, including attachment of required documentation, within thirty (30) days of an eligible change of status.

Examples of changes of status include:

- Marriage;
- Divorce, legal separation, ~~or annulment~~;
- Birth, adoption, placement for adoption, or legal guardianship;
- Change of status in child custody;
- Death of a dependent; and/or
- Loss of alternative coverage

- a. Employee on Leave of Absence: For coverage during Leave of Absence and while on leave under the Family and Medical Leave refer to the provisions of this Manual governing such leave.
- b. Termination of Insurance Coverage: All insurance coverage ceases at the end of the month in which an employee resigns or is terminated unless the employee is eligible to and elects to continue coverage in accordance with his or her rights under COBRA.
- c. COBRA -- Self Payment of Health Insurance Following Separation: In accordance with applicable law, if an employee's employment with HRDC is terminated, or if an employee experiences a reduction in hours of employment, a mandatory furlough, and under certain other conditions, then an employee, their spouse and/or dependent children may be eligible to either continue their present level of health insurance coverage (even if they would otherwise lose coverage) under HRDC's Group Health Insurance Plan, at their own cost, for a period of up to eighteen (18) months (or in some situations up to 36 months), or they may be able to convert their group coverage to individual coverage. Additional details regarding COBRA and insurance conversion rights of employees, their spouses and children are set forth in our Group Health Insurance Plan's Summary Plan Description and/or in other notices distributed directly to covered employees and their spouses. If you are covered by the Plan and you have not received notice of your insurance conversion rights, you should contact the Plan administrator immediately.

3. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

HRDC takes great pride in promoting the development and success of its employees and therefore, will provide opportunity for all eligible employees to attend trainings and /or educational courses related to his/her job, provided that funding is available. Employees may request to engage in training and education courses which they feel will enhance work performance. Such requests will be reviewed by the applicable Supervisor or Department Director. There may also be circumstances where training and/or education may **be required** as stipulated by the program for which they work. Through either of these scenarios, employees will obtain new skills or knowledge which will not only increase their competency in their present jobs, but will prepare them for future advancement within the Agency.

Policy:

Any training or educational activity approved and in progress represents a firm commitment on the part of the employee and the supervisors. Employees must schedule around known employment obligations. Supervisors must work around any day-to-day operations that surface after the training/educational activity has begun and will not interrupt the employee's training/educational activity except in very rare emergency situations.

It is the responsibility of the immediate Supervisor to ensure that money is budgeted and available to cover the cost of all training, whether it be requested by the employee or required by the Agency. If Program funds are not available and the Supervisor believes the activity is needed, he/she will notify their Department Director who will in turn notify the Executive Director for consideration of funding from CSBG or County funds.

Employees must make a commitment to fully apply themselves to all tasks required within the training/ education to successfully complete all required studies/topics. Failure to do so will result in a requirement for the individual to reimburse HRDC for funds expended. Reimbursement will be prorated.

For any training or education course that is **REQUESTED** by the employee and approved, the employee must acknowledge and agree to reimburse HRDC for funds expended, in the event that the employee:

- resigns from his/her current position while enrolled, or within a period of two (2) to three (3) years after completion occurs, Reimbursement will be prorated per year:
 - 50% per year for all employees
 - 33.3% per year for Head Start and Early Head Start employees
- submits his/her resignation or is terminated from employment while still within the training/education period,
- fails to pass an education course with a grade of "C" or above,
- fails to complete the training or education course and/or
- fails to attend the training or education course.

This agreement must be signed as a part of the training/education request.

(1) Agency Meeting/Training

In the event HRDC closes the entire Agency for a meeting or training, the location will be considered the work site. No mileage will be authorized for any Agency sponsored event.

(2) Definitions

Training Activities: Any organized presentation of materials and/or information designed to instill or improve skills or increase knowledge the length of which encompasses one workweek or less. This would include everything ranging from a 1-2-hour workshop to a five (5) day mini-course offered by any educational or training institution.

Educational Activities: Any organized presentation of materials and/or information designed to instill or improve skills or increase knowledge the length of which encompasses a period greater than one workweek).

Required Training or Educational Activities: Any training or educational activity a **supervisor requires** an employee to attend as essential for the employee in the execution of the day-to-day duties of the position for which employed.

Desired Job-Related Training or Educational Activities: Any activity **requested by an employee or suggested by a supervisor** (for which there is the option for the employee to decline) that is shown to have a potentially positive impact on the performance of current duties. It could include a single course or a series of courses, degree producing or non-degree producing.

Desired Non-Job Related Training or Educational Activities: Any activity which the employee requests and can demonstrate as an essential part of a structured plan leading to a higher level of capability within this current career field (beyond the requirements of the current job) or an essential part of a structured plan leading to a new capability in a career field, used by HRDC, but different than the one in which currently employed (non-job related).

(3) Scope / Eligibility

Every effort will be made by all levels of supervision to ensure that the limited training or education funds available are utilized throughout the entire Agency to serve the maximum number of needs.

Employees eligible for this benefit, must complete his/her probationary period and receive "satisfactory" or above on their two most recent performance evaluations.

In order to qualify for Agency funds, employees who wish to enroll for college courses while on a temporary furlough status must have the course request approved by their Supervisor **prior** to enrolling in said course if they wish to utilize Agency funds. The funds approved for the course will be paid to the employee upon his/her return to work from a scheduled furlough.

4. RETIREMENT

- a. Union Employees: The retirement program for employees covered by the Union Contract is governed by the terms of that contract.
- b. All regular full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible to participate in a separate 403(b) program.
 - (1) Vesting: Participating employees are always 100% vested in their own contributions. Vested rights to the employer's contributory matches will be earned at the rate of 20% per year or, stated another way; new employees will be fully vested after five years of service with the agency.
 - (2) Contributory Match: The agency's Board of Directors will establish/reaffirm any contributory match contribution percentages each year at the November board meeting to be effective the first pay in January.
 - (3) Discretionary Match: The Board of Directors may make, in addition to the *contributory match*, a *discretionary contribution* in an amount that will be allocated at the end of each Plan Year.

CHAPTER VIII - EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AND MORALE

POLICY:

It is the policy of HRDC to ensure corporate identity and promote an attractive workplace and a motivated group of helpful employees. It is established to enhance, to the greatest extent practical, employee morale, health and overall welfare. The programs and communities can best benefit from the efforts of our organization if all of our employees feel like an integral part of one, that represents a cohesive organization whose purpose is to serve our particular participants and our communities.

The costs of a morale program are specifically allowed for private, nonprofit corporations by 2 CFR 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles. 200.400 through 200.475.

The following actions and activities may be organized and/or provided to increase the dedication of employees to this organization and to their work.

- Recreational facilities and activities to possibly include, but not limited to:
Annual organization-wide holiday gathering
- Improvement of working conditions to possibly include, but not limited to:
Coffee/tea/hot chocolate
Providing food during staff meetings or other special events
- Employer/employee relations - including inter-program relations:
Flowers sent in cases of employee sickness or death in an employee's immediate family**
Small tokens of appreciation to the staff members.
- Employee morale and performance

All costs will be equitably apportioned to all of the corporation's grants, programs, contracts and/or activities. All actions and activities of this plan will have prior approval by the Executive Director.

If income is generated from any of the activities, it will be used to offset expenses unless a revolving fund has been established which will belong, irrevocably, to an organized employee's welfare fund.

** For this policy, immediate family is defined as spouse, domestic partner, parents, children, step-children, siblings, grandparents and grandchildren. Total cost will not exceed \$75.00. In addition, "In Memoriam" contributions of the families choice not to exceed \$75.00.

Employee Recognition for Resignations/Retirements

HRDC employees with a positive work history and, whose most recent evaluations are average or above who Resign or Retire after 15 plus years of service are eligible for the following:

Years of Service	Description of Celebration
15 - Retirement	Gift certificate NTE \$100.00, an agency certificate, check equal to one week's pay, and an engraved plaque.

Please refer to the Bonus Plan Design Policy shared with through e-mail and located on the t-drive under Common>Personnel Public>Policy Manual>Additional Policies.

CHAPTER IX - PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis. Periodic performance evaluations (see chart below) are required during initial probationary period and during position transfer trial periods. Additional formal performance evaluations are conducted to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals. **After the probationary evaluations, all Department Directors and Supervisors are required to perform annual evaluations at the end of each program year for all employees.**

Union Probationary Evaluations	Non-Union Probationary Evaluations
30 Days	60 Days
60 Days	120 Days
90 Days	180 Days

CHAPTER X - RECORDS MANAGEMENT

A. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

HRDC prohibits the release of confidential information, which consists of any information required by state or federal law or state or federal administrative rule to be kept confidential.

B. COMPLIANCE WITH RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE

Each Department has an established policy to ensure all records are retained in compliance with local, state, and federal laws and regulations. Before disposing of any records, employees must determine whether the disposal is in accordance with the applicable Records Retention Policy.

An employee should contact their Department Director with any questions regarding records retention.

C. PERSONNEL RECORDS

A personnel file on each employee is kept in HRDC's Human Resources Department. Personnel files contain information regarding training, experience, and employment as well as the work history of the employee with HRDC. An employee has the right to inspect their personnel file provided reasonable notification is given to the Human Resources Department.

It is the responsibility of the employee to immediately notify the Human Resources Department of any changes in address, telephone number, emergency contact information, name change and marital status.

When an employee's employment is terminated, it is the responsibility of that employee to notify the Human Resources Department of any address change for W-2 purposes.

D. ELECTRONIC MAIL RECORDS

Employees using electronic mail in the normal course of HRDC business are responsible for adhering to the rules established for electronic mail. Electronic mail is to be used judiciously as such for conducting HRDC business. The use of e-mail for improper purposes, such as intimidation, harassment, non-HRDC business, etc. may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

There is no expectation of privacy for HRDC owned/provided e-mail accounts. The HRDC, without notice to employees, reserves the right to routinely and randomly monitor and/or access any employee's HRDC owned/provided e-mail account. In addition, any record created or received by an employee when using HRDC owned/provided e-mail accounts is generally considered a public record subject to disclosure upon request.

E. I-9 FORMS

Federal law requires that HRDC have properly completed I-9 forms on file for every employee hired after November 6, 1986. Federal law also requires that HRDC re-verifies the continued work eligibility of employees who have only a time-limited work authorization on or before the date their employment eligibility expires. The same documentation rules apply to re-verification efforts as to original I-9 compliance.

F. EMPLOYEE STATUS SALARY POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and consistent procedure for managing changes in employee status within the company, ensuring fairness, compliance with legal requirements, and proper documentation.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Allegany County HRDC, including full-time, part-time, temporary, substitute, casual, and contract employees.

Types of Status Salary Changes are as follows (subject to change):

1. **New Hire**
2. **Successfully Completed Probationary Period**
3. **Furlough (Temporary)**
4. **Recall**
5. **Rehire**
6. **Scheduled Salary Increase**
7. **Union CBA Increase (if applicable)**
8. **Reduction in Force (Permanent)**
9. **Promotion**
10. **Demotion**
11. **Transfer**
12. **Termination**
13. **Resignation**
14. **Leave of Absence (Start/End)**
15. **Workers Comp (Start/End)**
16. **Substitute Accepts Union Status**
17. **Temporary Assignment (Transfer or Promotion)**
18. **Change in Personal Information**
19. **Change in Employment Status (e.g., Full-Time to Part-Time)**
20. **Change in Job Title**
21. **Change in Work Location**

Procedures

1. **Initiation of Status Change**

- A status change will be initiated by the employee's manager or department director.
- A Status Salary (stat salary) Form must be completed and submitted to the HR department.

2. **Approval Process**

- The request will be reviewed by the HR department to ensure it aligns with company policies and legal requirements.
- For promotions and demotions, the employee's performance, qualifications, and the needs of the department will be considered.
- Transfers require the approval of both the releasing and receiving departments.
- The program manager, department director, the HR department, and the accounting department will sign the status salary form.

3. **Notification**

- The employee will be informed of the status change in writing, including details of the change, effective date, and any impact on their compensation or benefits, if applicable.

4. **Documentation**

- All status changes must be documented and copies will be retained in the employee's personnel file, department/program file, and to the individual if they request a copy. The original status salary form will go to the accounting department.
- HR will update the company's Payroll System to reflect the status change.

5. **Effective Date**

- The effective date of the status change will be determined in consultation with the relevant parties and communicated to the employee.

Roles and Responsibilities

Managers/Supervisors

- Identify and recommend status changes for their team members.
- Complete and submit the Status Salary Form.
- Communicate changes to the employee and ensure a smooth transition.

Human Resources (HR) Department

- Review and approve status change requests.
- Ensure compliance with company policies and legal requirements.
- Update Payroll System and maintain accurate employee records.
- Assist with communication and implementation of changes if requested.

Employees

- Provide necessary information and documentation for status changes.
- Acknowledge and comply with the new terms and conditions resulting from the status change.

Compliance and Monitoring

- Any discrepancies or violations of this policy will be addressed promptly.

Review and Amendments

- This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect changes in company practices or legal requirements.

CHAPTER XI- EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Policy:

Allegany County Human Resource Development Commission, Inc. (HRDC) adopts this Employee Conduct and Work Rules Policy to ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment. HRDC expects employees and others who are engaged to provide services, such as temporary personnel, consultants, interns, volunteers and independent contractors, to follow these rules of conduct while on Agency premises, attending Agency functions or otherwise performing work-related activity.

In addition to maintaining and enforcing this policy to protect the interests and safety of all employees and the Agency, HRDC complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations concerning employer/employee rights and obligations.

Conduct that interferes with operations, that discredits the Agency or that is offensive to clients or coworkers will not be tolerated. Disciplinary actions may be enforced, up to and including termination.

A. EMPLOYEE CONDUCT AND WORK RULES

HRDC is responsible for providing a safe and secure workplace and strives to ensure that all individuals associated with the Agency are treated in a respectful and fair manner. Though it is not possible to list all forms of behavior that are unacceptable in the workplace, the following are examples of behavior that would be considered infractions of HRDC rules of conduct. Such behavior may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. This list is not intended to be exhaustive:

- (1) Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of Agency property or the property of a fellow employee.
- (2) Willful destruction of company property or the property of a fellow employee.
- (3) Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- (4) Possession, distribution, sale, transfer or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty or while operating Agency-owned vehicles or equipment.
- (5) Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace.
- (6) Sexual or other forms harassment.
- (7) Using disrespectful, abusive, threatening, or obscene language toward a co-worker or Supervisor.
- (8) Using intimidation tactics and making threats.
- (9) Sabotaging another's work.
- (10) Making malicious, false and harmful statements about others including on social media platforms.
- (11) Publicly disclosing another's (client, staff, vendor) private information and violation of Agency's confidentiality or HIPAA policies without consent.
- (12) Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace.
- (13) Unauthorized disclosure of business "secrets" or confidential information.
- (14) Falsifying company records or reports, including one's time records or the time records of another employee.
- (15) Using your position or title in a fraudulent manner.

Inspections

HRDC reserves the right to inspect all portions of its premises for drugs, alcohol or other contraband; affected employees may have union representation involved in this process. All employees, contract employees, interns, volunteers and visitors may be asked to cooperate in inspections of their persons, work areas and property that

might conceal a drug, alcohol or other contraband. Employees who possess such contraband or refuse to cooperate in such inspections are subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including discharge.

Enforcement

The HR Director and the office of Human Resources is responsible for policy interpretation, administration and enforcement.

(a) HRDC Whistleblower Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to encourage employees, contractors, and other stakeholders to report any unethical behavior, misconduct, or violations of laws and regulations within HRDC without fear of retaliation. This policy aims to support an ethical organizational culture and compliance with applicable laws.

Policy Statement

HRDC is committed to maintaining the highest standards of ethics and integrity. We encourage the reporting of any suspected misconduct or unethical behavior. Retaliation against individuals who report in good faith will not be tolerated.

Definitions

- **Whistleblower:** Any employee, client, contractor, volunteer, or stakeholder who reports misconduct.
- **Reportable Conduct:** Includes, but is not limited to, fraud, corruption, harassment, safety violations, and any illegal activities.

Reporting Mechanisms

Reports can be made through the following channels:

- **Email:** whistleblower@alleganyhrdc.org
- **Online Form:** www.alleganyhrdc.org

All reports will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Procedure

- **Steps to Report:** Fill out the online form, call the main office, or send an email with details of the misconduct.
- **Investigation Process:** Reports will be reviewed by the Compliance Officer within 7 days. An investigation will be conducted within 30 days.
- **Follow-Up:** The whistleblower will be informed of the investigation's progress and outcome, as appropriate.

Protection Against Retaliation

Retaliation against whistleblowers is prohibited. Any such actions should be reported to the Compliance Officer and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Responsibilities

- **Management:** Foster a supportive environment and ensure the policy is upheld.

- **Whistleblowers:** Act in good faith with reasonable belief in the validity of the reported information.

Review

The whistleblower policy will be updated as necessary.

Training and Communication

Regular training sessions will be conducted to ensure awareness of the whistleblower policy. The policy will be accessible located on the t-drive under Common>Personal Public>Policy Manual>Additional Policies and HRDC's website.

By adhering to this policy, HRDC aims to create a safe and ethical workplace for all employees and stakeholders.

B. DRUG AND ALCOHOL-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

Policy

In compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, Allegany County Human Resource Development Commission, Inc. (HRDC), has a longstanding commitment to provide a safe, quality-oriented and productive work environment. Alcohol and drug abuse pose a threat to the health and safety of HRDC employees and to the security of the Agency's Clients, community and facilities. For these reasons, HRDC is committed to the elimination of drug and alcohol use and abuse in the workplace.

Alcohol use, illegal drug use, or any prescription drugs (prescribed specifically to an employee) used in a manner other than as specifically prescribed for a diagnosed medical condition by a licensed physician is strictly prohibited. In addition, the misuse of legal drugs (prescription and possibly Over the Counter) when there is not a valid prescription from a physician for the lawful use of a drug in the course of medical treatment (containers must include the patient's name, the name of the substance, quantity/amount to be taken and the period of authorization).

"Illegal drug" means a substance whose use or possession is controlled by FEDERAL LAW but that is not being used or possessed under the supervision of a licensed health care professional.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees and all applicants for employment of HRDC. The Human Resource (HR) Department is responsible for policy administration.

Employee Assistance

HRDC will assist and support employees who voluntarily seek help for drug or alcohol problems before becoming subject to discipline or termination under this or other HRDC policies. Such employees will be allowed to use accrued paid time off, placed on leaves of absence, referred to treatment providers and otherwise accommodated as required by law. Employees may be required to document that they are successfully following prescribed treatment and to take and pass follow-up tests. Once a drug test has been initiated under this policy, unless otherwise required by the Family and Medical Leave Act or the Americans with Disabilities Act, the employee will have forfeited the opportunity to be granted a leave of absence for treatment, and will face possible discipline, up to and including termination.

Employees should report to work fit for duty and free of any adverse effects of illegal drugs or alcohol. This policy does not prohibit employees from the lawful use and possession of prescribed medications. Employees must, however, consult with their doctors about the medications' effect on their fitness for duty and ability to work safely, and they must promptly disclose any work restrictions to their supervisor.

Work Rules

1. Whenever employees are working, are operating any HRDC vehicle, are present on HRDC premises or are conducting Agency-related work offsite, they are prohibited from:
 - a. Using, possessing, buying, selling, manufacturing or dispensing an illegal drug (to include possession of drug paraphernalia).
 - b. Being under the influence of alcohol or an illegal drug as defined in this policy.
 - c. Possessing or consuming alcohol.
2. The presence of any detectable amount of any illegal drug, illegal controlled substance or alcohol in an employee's body system, while performing Agency business or while in an Agency facility, is prohibited.
3. HRDC will also not allow employees to perform their duties while taking prescribed drugs that are adversely affecting their ability to safely and effectively perform their job duties. Employees taking a prescribed medication must carry it in a container labeled by a licensed pharmacist or be prepared to produce the container if asked.
4. Any illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia will be turned over to an appropriate law enforcement agency and may result in criminal prosecution.

Required Testing

Pre-employment

Applicants being considered for hire must pass a drug test before beginning work or receiving an offer of employment. Refusal to submit to testing will result in disqualification of further employment consideration.

Reasonable suspicion

Employees are subject to testing based on (but not limited to) observations of apparent workplace use, possession or impairment. HR should be notified at the time of suspicion. Supervisor/Management/HR must use the Reasonable Suspicion Observation Checklist to document specific observations and behaviors that create a reasonable suspicion that an employee is under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol.

Examples include, but not limited to:

- Odors (smell of alcohol, body odor or urine).
- Movements (unsteady, fidgety, dizzy).
- Eyes (dilated, constricted or watery eyes, or involuntary eye movements).
- Face (flushed, sweating, confused or blank look).
- Speech (slurred, slow, distracted mid-thought, inability to verbalize thoughts).
- Emotions (argumentative, agitated, irritable, drowsy).
- Actions (yawning, twitching).
- Inactions (sleeping, unconscious, no reaction to questions).

When reasonable suspicion testing is warranted, both management and HR will meet with the employee to explain the observations and the requirement to undergo a drug and/or alcohol test. HR and Management will transport the employee to a medical testing center. Refusal by an employee will be treated as a positive drug test result and will result in immediate termination of employment.

Under no circumstances will the employee be allowed to drive himself or herself to the testing facility. A member of HR and management must transport the employee. When testing is complete, the member of HR and management will transport the employee to their residence.

The employee is then placed on Administrative Leave pending results of any tests. Once results are available, HR will notify the employee to discuss the results and any, if warranted, disciplinary action.

Collection and Testing Procedures

Employees subject to alcohol testing will be transported to Western Maryland Occupational Health - designated facility and directed to provide breath specimens. Breath specimens will be tested by trained technicians using federally approved breath alcohol testing devices capable of producing printed results that identify the employee. If an employee's breath alcohol concentration is .04 or more, a second breath specimen will be tested approximately 20 minutes later. The results of the second test will be determinative. Alcohol tests may, however, be a breath, blood or saliva test, at the Agency's discretion. For purposes of this policy, test results generated by law enforcement or medical providers may be considered by the Agency as work rule violations.

Applicants are subject to pre-hire testing; drug testing, pre-hire physicals and fingerprinting. Each individual will be responsible for the transport themselves to each testing facility.

Employees subject to drug testing will be transported to Western Maryland Occupational Health and directed to provide urine specimens.

Applicants and employees may provide specimens in private unless they appear to be submitting altered, adulterated or substitute specimens. Collected specimens will be sent to a federally certified laboratory. The laboratory will screen all specimens and confirm all positive screens. There must be a chain of custody from the time specimens are collected through testing and storage.

The laboratory will transmit all positive drug test results to a medical review officer (MRO) retained by HRDC, who will offer individuals with positive results a reasonable opportunity to rebut or explain the results. Individuals with positive test results may also ask the MRO to have their split specimen sent to another federally certified laboratory to be tested at the applicant's or employee's own expense. Such requests must be made within 72 hours of notice of test results. If the second facility fails to find any evidence of drug use in the split specimen, the employee or applicant will be treated as passing the test. In no event should a positive test result be communicated to HRDC until such time that the MRO has confirmed the test to be positive.

Consequences

Applicants who refuse to cooperate in a drug test or who test positive will not be hired.

Employees who refuse to cooperate in required tests or who use, possess, buy, sell, manufacture or dispense an illegal drug in violation of this policy will be terminated. If the employee refuses to be tested, yet the company believes he or she is impaired, under no circumstances will the employee be allowed to drive himself or herself home.

Employees who test positive, or otherwise violate this policy, will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Depending on the circumstances, the employee's work history/record and any state law requirements, HRDC may offer an employee who violates this policy or tests positive the opportunity to return to work on a last-chance basis pursuant to mutually agreeable terms, which could include follow-up drug testing at times and frequencies determined by HRDC for a minimum of one year but not more than two years as well as a waiver of the right to contest any termination resulting from a subsequent positive test. If the employee either does not complete the rehabilitation program or tests positive after completing the rehabilitation program, the employee will be immediately discharged from employment.

Employees will be paid for time spent in alcohol or drug testing and then placed on Administrative Leave with pay pending the results of the drug or alcohol test. After the results of the test are received, a date and time will be scheduled to discuss the results of the test; this meeting will include a member of management, a union representative (if requested), and HR.

Confidentiality

Information and records relating to positive test results, drug and alcohol dependencies, and legitimate medical explanations provided to the MRO will be kept confidential to the extent required by law and maintained in secure files separate from normal personnel files. Such records and information may be disclosed among managers and supervisors on a need-to-know basis and may also be disclosed when relevant to a grievance, charge, claim or other legal proceeding initiated by or on behalf of an employee or applicant.

Inspections

HRDC reserves the right to inspect all portions of its premises for drugs, alcohol or other contraband; affected employees may have union representation involved in this process. All employees, contract employees, interns, volunteers and visitors may be asked to cooperate in inspections of their persons, work areas and property that might conceal a drug, alcohol or other contraband. Employees who possess such contraband or refuse to cooperate in such inspections are subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including discharge.

Enforcement

The HR Director and the office of Human Resources is responsible for policy interpretation, administration and enforcement.

C. NOTIFICATION OF STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICER

- a. In order to be in compliance with COMAR 21.11.08, HRDC's Human Resources Director will notify the appropriate state procurement officer (grantor) within ten (10) days of receiving notice from an employee in accordance with this policy of an employee's criminal conviction of a drug or alcohol offense occurring in the workplace or otherwise receiving actual notice of a conviction.
- b. Within thirty (30) days after receiving notice from an employee in accordance with this policy of an employee's criminal conviction of a drug or alcohol offense occurring in the workplace, or otherwise receiving actual notice of a conviction, HRDC will impose the following sanctions or remedial measures on any employee who is convicted of a drug or alcohol abuse offense occurring in the workplace:
 - i. Take appropriate personnel action against an employee, up to and including termination, or,
 - ii. Require an employee to satisfactorily participate in a bona fide drug or alcohol abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

D. SMOKE FREE POLICY

1. POLICY

- a. Smoking is prohibited in all HRDC facilities and Agency vehicles.
- b. Smoking is prohibited in all Head Start/ Early Head Start/Pre-K buildings and on all Head Start/ Early Head Start/Pre-K property. Smoking is also prohibited during all Head Start/ Early Head Start/Pre-K sponsored activities.

2. DESIGNATED SMOKING AREAS

The Agency has designated an outside area at each location to serve as the designated smoking area for that particular site. Employees should refer to their Facility Guide for more information on designated smoking areas.

3. CLIENT SMOKING

Due to the nature of our business in serving a variety of clients in a variety of programs, it is necessary to address the issue of client smoking areas in some HRDC facilities. **Smoking is prohibited at all**

times in all Agency facilities even for clients. All persons should always use the designated smoking areas outside of the facility. Consideration of nonsmokers should be followed in designating these areas.

4. MARYLAND PROHIBITS VAPING IN THE WORKPLACE

Effective July 1, 2024, Maryland's Clean Indoor Air Act will be expanded to prohibit vaping in almost all indoor places of employment. **Vaping** includes using any electronic smoking device or other device that allows the user to inhale aerosol tobacco, cannabis, or hemp.

Employers are required to post a sign that says "NO SMOKING OR VAPING" near every public entrance to their place of employment.

E. DRESS CODE

Policy

The dress code policy of HRDC is designed to promote a professional and comfortable work environment while maintaining the agency image and values. Employees are expected to keep a clean and neat appearance. Supervisors will address dress code violations respectfully and may provide guidance to any employee who does not meet the standards of the policy. Continuous violations may result in disciplinary action. If an Employee violates the dress code policy the employee may be sent home to correct their appearance. Employees will be required to use agency leave for any work missed due to failure to comply with this policy, if no leave is available it will be leave without pay. Agency interns and volunteers are expected to adhere to HRDC's dress code policy.

HRDC Department Directors and Managers should communicate any department-specific workplace attire and grooming guidelines to staff members during the new-hire orientation and evaluation periods. Any questions about the department's guidelines for attire should be discussed with the immediate supervisor.

Exceptions

Employees may request exceptions for religious, medical, or other reasons. Requests should be made in writing to the Human Resources Department and will be considered on an individual basis.

General (Business Casual)

1. Khakis, dress pants, capris
2. Dresses and skirts may not be more than 3" above the knee in length.
3. Dress shirts, sweaters, twinsets, cardigans, polo shirts and tee shirts with agency/program logo or logo less than 3" are appropriate.
4. Shoes should follow basic requirements for comfort and safety. Athletic shoes, loafers, dress boots, flats, sandals with strap across the back, wedges and heels may be worn.
5. Leggings worn in a business casual setting as long as the following requirements are met:
 - Leggings must be a thick material (not see through)
 - Leggings must be full length or just above the ankle
 - Leggings must be worn with blazers, blouse, long sweater, cardigan, dress, skirt, long dress shirt, etc.
 - Leggings must be solid in color.

Casual Attire Days

- Fridays or other agency approved casual days
- Clean, well-fitted jeans, casual shirts, agency shirts, and appropriate footwear.
- Casual Attire may also be worn on inclement weather days defined as 2-hour delay or when working a partial travel day.

Program Specific

Administration and Office Workers- follow the business casual guidelines, except on casual Friday attire day unless there would be incoming guests or staff would have an offsite meeting.

Program Staff

Drivers, Driver Aides (ADC) Center Aides (OAA), Groceries to Go/Communities for Life, Kitchen Staff, Activities Coordinator, and Janitors/Maintenance-

Clean, well-fitting jeans, khakis, capris, work pants, scrubs (kitchen staff), or shorts – no shorter than 3" above the knee (athletic clothing may not be worn). Appropriate footwear for comfort and safety. Shirts must be well fitted, clean and free of holes. Agency/program logo shirts or shirts with less than 3" logo are acceptable. Inappropriate words, phrases or graphics will not be allowed. Hats may be worn with an agency/program logo or in solid subdued colors.

Exception for Center Aides (OAA) - *if a center aide knows in advance that they will be driving a meal delivery route in warm weather (i.e. covering a driver's vacation), then shorts fitting the description listed under the driver section can be worn.*

HS EHS Teachers, TA's, Classroom Aides, and Substitutes-

1. Clean, well-fitting jeans, khakis, capris, work pants.
2. Casual shirts or company issued logo shirts – clean and well-fitting.
3. Close-toe shoes.
4. Shorts – no shorter than 3" above the knee **(can only be worn from June 1st- August 31st)**

F. OFF DUTY ACTIVITIES WHICH AFFECT JOB PERFORMANCE

If a personal situation arises that potentially adversely affects the employee's ability to perform his/her job duties or the ability to meet the minimum qualifications of his/her position, (i.e. a driver's license has been suspended for a motor vehicle violation) he/she shall notify his/her supervisor immediately. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

G. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There are occasions in which Agency staff and/or members of the family of a staff member are eligible for and receive services and/or benefits from established HRDC Programs. When these occasions occur, it shall be the policy of this Agency that no staff member shall assume the role of the intake worker or advocate (social worker - case manager) on behalf of themselves or for any family member. Authorized services and/or benefits will be provided, but all actions required to administer a case shall be accomplished by an independent staff member. Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Human Resources Department.

H. PERSONAL PROPERTY

HRDC does not accept the responsibility for employee or clients' personal property. HRDC urges all employees to leave valuables at home. If employees lose anything, they should inquire at lost and found located at the Receptionist Area on the first floor of the Administrative Office. If employees find anything of value, they should turn it in to lost and found immediately.

RESPECT OUR POLICIES ON E-MAIL, COMPUTERS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

From time to time, HRDC may issue to its employees certain electronic devices or other equipment ("Equipment"). This policy governs the use of such Equipment.

1. COMPUTER MESSAGING AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Employees are particularly cautioned that the use of e-mail, voice mail, or other electronic messaging systems, or the Internet, may give rise to liability for harassment. Employees may not generate, should not receive, and must not forward, any message or graphic that could be taken as offensive based on sex, gender, or other protected characteristic. This includes, for example, the generation or forwarding of offensive "humor" which contains sexually-offensive terms, or terms which are offensive to any race, religion, national origin group, or other protected group.

Employees receiving offensive messages over the HRDC's computer equipment, or receiving other unlawfully offensive messages or graphics over the HRDC's computer equipment, should report those messages to their supervisor immediately.

Employees are reminded that HRDC's computers and the data generated on, stored in, or transmitted to or from the Company's computers remain the property of HRDC for all purposes. No employee is authorized to use any HRDC computer, computer system, network, or software for the preparation, transmission, or receipt of sexually offensive messages or graphics, or for other messages or graphics which might be taken as offensive based on any other protected characteristic. Employees are reminded that HRDC retains the right to monitor its computers, computer systems, and networks to ensure compliance with this requirement.

2. USE OF EQUIPMENT FOR BUSINESS PURPOSES

All Equipment that is issued by HRDC to its employees is issued for the purpose of furthering the business of HRDC. Employees are required to limit their non-business use of Equipment, if any, to unanticipated and necessary circumstances. Any non-business use of Equipment is at the sole and exclusive risk of the employee.

The employee is solely responsible for any claim, expense, damage, or liability that may arise from any non-business use of Equipment. Any use of Equipment which is not supported by documentation or other information sufficient, in the sole discretion of HRDC, adequately to demonstrate the business nature of that use, shall be deemed to be non-business use. Any billing, costs, or other expense attributable to any non-business use of Equipment issued to an employee is the sole responsibility of the employee, and will be billed through to the employee by HRDC.

3. OWNERSHIP AND REVIEW OF DATA

HRDC at all times retains ownership of, and title in, any Equipment provided to any employee (except to the extent title or an interest remains vested in a third-party provider of Equipment). HRDC also retains ownership of all business data sent to or from, generated on, contained on, or transmitted or received by, all Equipment. Accordingly, HRDC has, and expressly reserves, the right to inspect any data contained in, received or transmitted by, generated on, or sent to or from, any item of Equipment. Such an inspection may take place at any time, with or without notice to the employee, and for any purpose deemed acceptable by HRDC in its sole discretion.

Employees are not authorized to transmit business data from any item of Equipment to any person other than in furtherance of the business interests of HRDC. Thus, for example, an Employee may not transmit business data from an item of Equipment to the Employee's home computer system for personal use, use by a friend, or use by another Firm.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this policy, employees are strictly prohibited from using any Equipment in any manner, which may violate any federal, state, or local law, regulation, or ordinance. Employees are not authorized to use any equipment in any unlawful manner, and no officer or other employee of HRDC has the ability to authorize unlawful use of any Equipment. Employees are responsible for ensuring that their use of any Equipment complies with all applicable laws.

Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, employees are specifically prohibited from using any Equipment for any of the following purposes: unlawful surveillance, wiretapping or eavesdropping; the retrieval, receipt, viewing, storage, or transmission of obscene, pornographic, or offensive communications; and harassment of any person, including sexual, racial, religious, and other forms of unlawful harassment.

4. CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT

Employees should take the utmost care to ensure that any Equipment entrusted to them remains in good operating condition, is not abused, and is not lost. An employee who damages, destroys, or loses any item of Equipment through the employees' own negligence, the employees' own intentional act, or the negligence or intentional act of another person to whom the Employee has entrusted the Equipment (other than another Employee), is responsible for the full repair or replacement cost for the Equipment, at HRDC's election. (Due to changing models and technology, replacement cost may be calculated for a comparable, newer model of similar equipment.)

An employee to whom Equipment is issued will be required to execute a written authorization statement, permitting HRDC to withhold from employee salary any payments to be made pursuant to this Policy.

5. REPORTING WITHOUT FEAR OF RETALIATION

No HRDC employee will be retaliated against for reporting harassment. This no-retaliation policy applies whether a good faith complaint of harassment is well founded or ultimately determined to be unfounded.

No HRDC manager or supervisor is authorized, or permitted, to retaliate or to take any adverse employment action whatsoever against anyone for reporting unlawful harassment, or for opposing any other discriminatory practice in the workplace.

Any employee who feels he or she has been retaliated against in violation of this no-retaliation policy is responsible for reporting the retaliation to management, in the same manner as any other form of harassment or discrimination should be reported.

6. QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS POLICY

If you have any questions at all about this policy, about whether employees should report an incident under this policy, or about the HRDC's commitment to a workplace free of discrimination and harassment, please speak to HRDC's Human Resources Department.

I. WIRELESS PHONE USE

- a. Employees using cellular phones in the conduct of agency business must adhere to all federal, state or local rules and regulations regarding the use of cell phones.
- b. **Employees are prohibited from using cell phones while driving.** Should an employee need to make a call while driving, he/she shall locate a lawfully designated area to park and make the call. In an extreme emergency (reporting an accident, for example) have a non-driving co-worker or passenger make the call.
- c. **Agency Provided Cell Phone** Employees should not use agency cellular telephones in the conduct of agency business when a less costly alternative is safe, convenient, and readily available. **Unless otherwise authorized, agency provided cell phones must be used for business purposes only.**
- d. **Personally Acquired Cell Phones** Unless otherwise authorized, the agency assumes no liability for the cost of operating personally acquired cellular telephones. Expenses incurred in the use of personally acquired cellular telephones are the sole responsibility of the employee. The agency assumes no liability for loss or damage to an employee's cellular telephone carried in agency vehicles or left on agency property. Employees assume the risks of loss or damage to personally acquired cellular phones carried by the employee during the workday.
- e. Use of personal cell phones at the work site must be kept to a minimum.

J. RESTRICT PERSONAL PHONE CALLS

While personal phone calls are permitted, they must be kept to a minimum. Calls should be made or

received only when necessary, and be as brief as possible. Personal long-distance calls are not to be charged to HRDC.

K. FOLLOW OUR GUIDELINES FOR ENTERING AND LEAVING

All non-exempt employees may enter the premises no earlier than fifteen (15) minutes prior to the beginning of the shift, and are required to leave the facility within fifteen (15) minutes following the end of your shift. Except for these fifteen (15) minute periods before and after the shift, employees are not permitted access to HRDC jobsites and other HRDC facilities during off duty hours. Exceptions to this rule will be permitted by HRDC to allow attendance at scheduled functions of HRDC or to attend to HRDC business in our administrative or supervisory offices, such as special meetings, the submission of insurance forms, or claiming paychecks.

L. TRAVEL/DRIVING ON HRDC BUSINESS

HRDC employees may be required to travel on business in conjunction with their normal job assignments or in order to fulfill a special agency need. Any decision to travel must be made in accordance with HRDC travel policy. An employee may be denied reimbursement for their travel expenses and may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, if they fail to follow the policies set forth.

HRDC employees who are required to travel are responsible for conducting themselves, at all times, in a manner that advances the goals of HRDC and increases public confidence in the agency. This requires HRDC employees to refrain from behavior that might be harmful to HRDC's interest, or which violates of conflicts with HRDC policies. HRDC employees shall exercise good judgment while traveling, including, but not limited to rules regarding:

- Personal appearance
- Alcohol and drug use
- Sexual or other workplace harassment

M. DRIVING ON HRDC BUSINESS/USE OF HRDC FLEET VEHICLES

Every HRDC employee who drives or operates a HRDC fleet vehicle at any time, or who operates any motor vehicle (i.e. employee's personal vehicle, rental vehicle) on, or in the course of HRDC business must strictly adhere to the following requirements:

- The employee must have and maintain at all times, without interruption, a valid driver's license and the minimum automobile coverage required by Maryland law. Employees are solely responsible for making sure that their licenses and automobile insurance are properly renewed / maintained.
- If an employee's driver's license and/or insurance is expired, suspended, revoked, or otherwise invalid, the employee must immediately notify their direct supervisor, and immediately stop driving on, or in the course of HRDC business. The immediate supervisor will notify HRDC's Personnel Department. The employee will only be permitted to begin driving again after providing acceptable proof of insurance coverage and driver's license (or appropriate documentation).
- All occupants (including non-employees) of any motor vehicle being used on, or in the course of HRDC business are required to wear a safety belt at all times.
- Employees who are required to transport children on, or in the course of HRDC business must follow all applicable Maryland laws regarding use of car seats or other restraints.
- Employees must follow all traffic laws and parking regulations. Employees are solely responsible for the cost of any driving/moving infraction/violation, parking tickets; impound charges, etc. incurred while driving an HRDC fleet vehicle or any other vehicle on, or in the course of HRDC business.
- The use of alcohol and/or other controlled substances-including a prescription or over the counter medication, which may temporarily render an employee unable to operate a vehicle is strictly prohibited.
- An employee involved in a motor vehicle accident must immediately contact their supervisor and complete the required paperwork.

- See *Vehicle Fleet Safety Policy* shared with you through e-mail and located on the t-drive under *Common>Personnel Public>Policy Manual>Additional Policies*.

N. USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLE

An HRDC employee who is required to drive or operate their personal vehicle on, or in the course of HRDC business must adhere to the following requirements:

- The employee's personal vehicle's automobile registration must be current.
- Every employee who submits a Local Travel Reimbursement Form or an Out of Travel Form, certifies that he or she has a valid driver's license, vehicle registration, insurance, and personally operated the vehicle for which travel expense is claimed.
- The employee must maintain the vehicle in a good and safe operating condition.

O. SAFETY

Compensation for wages lost as a result of a work-related injury by accident or work-related illness during the first three days of that injury or illness are covered by Agency sick leave, if available. If the injury/illness incapacitates the employee wholly or in part from performing his/her regular work for more than three (3) days, the employee may be eligible for wage compensation from the Worker's Compensation Insurance Company.

If the employee is required to be off fourteen (14) consecutive days or longer, the waiting period of three (3) days may then be paid retroactively by Worker's Compensation.

**Note: no leave will be granted during this time unless no compensatory time is granted.*

CHAPTER XII COUNSELING AND DISCIPLINE

POLICY

It is the policy of this Agency that all employees are expected to comply with HRDC's standards of behavior and performance. The objective of this disciplinary policy is to assure that employees know what is expected of them, when performance or conduct is below acceptable standards, and that non-compliance with these standards will be remedied. Furthermore, it is the intent of this policy to give clear guidelines as to what must be done to improve and within what time frames improper or prohibited behavior will be corrected.

A. GENERAL LIST OF INFRACTIONS

1. GENERAL LIST OF INFRACTIONS

The following enumeration of infractions is not meant to be an exhaustive list. HRDC reserves the right to discipline employees for other conduct that is detrimental to the agency. The following can warrant disciplinary action ranging from **Written Warning to Immediate Termination**:

- (1) *Stealing private or Agency property.*
- (2) *Removing Agency property from premises (Unauthorized removal)*
- (3) *Falsification of any Agency records, document, or misrepresentation of material information.*
- (4) *Misrepresentation of job title or position.*
- (5) *Discriminatory/harassing comments.*
- (6) *Bullying.*
- (7) *Gambling or fighting on Agency property.*
- (8) *Insubordination in carrying out reasonable requests of Supervisor or designee.*
- (9) *Willful disobedience.*
- (10) *Deliberate destruction or unwarranted abuse of Agency property.*
- (11) *Violation of the policy on drug and alcohol abuse.*
- (12) *Breach of confidentiality.*
- (13) *Interpreting, by public announcement, Agency policy without authority of Executive Director.*
- (14) *Outside employment during scheduled agency employment*
- (15) *Violation of any safety, fire prevention, health or security rule, policy or practice.*
- (16) *Willful obligation of expenditure of project funds for purchase or rental of goods, space, or services which benefit the employee directly or indirectly.*
- (17) *Unexcused absence from work.*
- (18) *Sleeping on the job.*
- (19) *Personal work (other than Agency business) on Agency time.*
- (20) *Inefficiency: failing to do the amount and/or quality of work required.*
- (21) *Violation of agency dress code.*
- (22) *Reckless driving or speeding while transporting clients or while using Agency vehicles.*
- (23) *Failure to receive approval from Executive Director to serve on any board, task force, or committee, whose appointment is a direct result of his/her affiliation with HRDC.*
- (24) *Representing Agency without authority of Executive Director.*
- (25) *Unauthorized use of telephone for long distance calls.*
- (26) *Excessive personal use of telephone.*
- (27) *Participation in partisan political campaigns during work hours.*
- (28) *Acceptance of gifts or gratuities.*
- (29) *Failure to report to a Supervisor, an accident/incident in which you were involved or witnessed dealing with clients, other employees, or Agency property.*
- (30) *The use of profane or abusive language to any employee, Supervisor or client.*
- (31) *Failure to abide by any Agency rule, regulation or policy.*
- (32) *Repeated tardiness without reasonable cause.*
- (33) *Derogatory comments or actions toward/affecting Agency, co-workers, or client on or off the premises.*
- (34) *Violation of the Agency's policy against harassment or discrimination towards an Agency employee or client.*
- (35) *Carrying any weapon while on Agency business, jobsite, premises or property*
- (36) *Threatened or actual physical violence.*

- (37) *An arrest, criminal complaint, summons to answer a criminal charge, statement of charges, indictment, criminal information or any other criminal charge or conviction of an employee, depending on the particular circumstances and the offense charged, including but not limited to HRDC's judgment as to the potential risk to safety or health of employees, the security of HRDC premises and property, and/or HRDC's reputation.*
- (38) *False, fraudulent, misleading or harmful statement, action or omission involving another employee, a client, HRDC or relations with HRDC, including on social media platforms.*
- (39) *False, fraudulent, misleading or harmful statement, action or omission related to an employment application or any other information provided to or requested by HRDC, whether oral or written; or refusal or failure to timely provide such information.*
- (40) *Misuse of agency resources i.e. agency credit cards, gas cards, etc.*
- (41) *In possession of alcohol or non-prescription or illegal drugs while on Agency business, jobsite, premises or property.*

Note: *A series of violations related or unrelated that reveal an undesirable work pattern will be treated as a single repeated violation and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.*

B. COUNSELING

Employees normally perform their duties successfully and follow existing rules. On occasion, it may be necessary to point out to an individual behavior or work habits, which need to be modified. Supervisors at all levels are expected to inform employees who are not performing to expectations. Many times, this is accomplished informally by meeting with an employee to advise him or her of the problem, discuss a resolution to the problem, and to make it clear to the employee what is expected of them to correct the problem. In most cases this informal approach works. It is acknowledged, however, that there are situations that, in the judgment of the supervisor, require a more formal mechanism. What distinguishes the informal counseling session from the formal counseling approach is that, in the latter, the substance of the meeting is committed to writing, given to the employee, and a copy placed in the employee's personnel file. **It must be understood that the counseling session is considered a part of the normal supervisory function and not part of the disciplinary process.** HRDC believes that most problems can be solved outside the disciplinary process by straightforward communication and mutual understanding of expectations. However, should an employee not respond to the counseling approach, and a pattern of behavior (indicated by a series of occurrences related or unrelated) is emerging; the supervisor is expected to take more aggressive action through the disciplinary process. It also must be understood that some problems are more effectively handled through progressive discipline from the onset.

C. DISCIPLINE

1. Disciplinary action can be taken when an employee breaks a specific rule, regulation, policy, request or order, verbal or written, or who is not performing his/her job in a manner required. In administering disciplinary action, the Agency seeks to maintain reasonable consistency and equity by considering, whenever possible, comparable cases. All the circumstances should be weighed carefully, considering the employee's previous record, his/her character and his/her potential and probable consequences before disciplinary action is initiated.
2. When initiating disciplinary actions, all parties must have an opportunity to discuss and allow all sides to be heard. It is required that the Supervisor encourage all statements be submitted in writing. **Documentation for all disciplinary actions is imperative.**
3. The following levels of discipline are set forth merely as a guideline. The implementation of these procedures should not be construed as creating a contract or a guarantee of employment for any specific duration. Nor should they be construed as preventing, limiting, or delaying the agency from taking disciplinary action, including the immediate discharge of an employee without prior warning, in circumstances where the agency, in its sole discretion, deems such action appropriate.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| a. <u>Counseling (Note to File)</u> | d. <u>Suspension</u> |
| b. <u>Verbal Warning</u> | e. <u>Termination</u> |
| c. <u>Written Warning</u> | |

CHAPTER XIII - RESIGNATIONS, FURLOUGHS, REDUCTIONS-IN-FORCE, AND TERMINATIONS

A. DEFINITIONS

1. **RESIGNATION** - Employee terminates his/her employment voluntarily. This may be tendered at any time and HRDC requests **minimum of a two-week notice** in writing.

- a. **Notice:** Employee should give a written two-week notice unless a longer period is required or recommended by contract or the standards or rules applicable to the position. The employee must physically work out their notice. A copy is to be forwarded to the Human Resources Department. Upon receipt of a two-week notice, no manager will authorize leave during this time.

An employee who resigns or retires his/her employment with the agency, who has successfully completed their probationary period and who provides proper notice as defined by CHAPTER XIII – RESIGNATIONS, FURLOUGHS, REDUCTIONS-IN-FORCE, AND TERMINATIONS, under Definitions/Resignation 1.a will be paid for:

1. earned-and-not-yet credited annual leave (UNION ONLY). Note from CBA, because employees do not earn any annual leave during the first twelve months of employment, employees who separate before the first anniversary of their employment will not receive pay in lieu of annual leave.
2. credited-but-unused annual leave
3. credited-but-unused holiday/personal days, and
4. a maximum of one week's unused sick leave

An employee who has been granted and has taken annual leave during the first twelve months of employment as a union employee, or during their 180-day probationary period as a non-union employee, whose employment with the agency ends before completing twelve months of service or the 180-day probationary period, shall be required to repay the amount of compensation received for those annual leave days.

An employee who has been granted and has taken sick leave during the 106 day employment period per Maryland Sick and Safe Leave Law, whose employment with the agency ends before completing 106 days of employment shall be required to repay the amount of compensation received for those sick leave days.

Regardless of an employee's date of hire, **TERMINATION FOR CAUSE** results in employee forfeiture of earned-and-not-yet-credited annual leave (union only), earned, unused annual leave, earned personal leave, and earned, unused sick leave.

2. **FURLOUGHS** - Scheduled furlough of employee due to program constraints, e.g., Head Start/ Early Head Start; or employees furloughed due to funding or other considerations that were not planned and are temporary in nature. Employee expected to be recalled at a later date.
 - a. **Notice:** When a furlough becomes necessary, HRDC will attempt to provide a written notice of action to the employee at least 1 month prior to the employee's last working day. When at least 2 weeks' notice of a furlough is not possible, the employee will receive 2 weeks' pay in lieu of notice. In the event of serious conditions beyond the HRDC's control such as severe fire, flood, snow, power failure, robbery or theft, the above 2-week notice/pay requirement does not apply.
 - c. **Benefits:** Employees who are the subject of a furlough will be paid for any accrued-but- unused compensatory time.
3. **REDUCTIONS-IN-FORCE** - Position is abolished because it is no longer needed or funding for position was terminated. Person not anticipated to be recalled in that position.
 - a. **Notice:** When a reduction-in-force becomes necessary, HRDC will attempt to provide a written notice of action to the employee at least 1 month prior to the employee's last working day. When at least 2 weeks' notice is not possible, the employee will receive 2 weeks' pay in lieu of notice. In

the event of serious conditions beyond the HRDC's control such as severe fire, flood, snow, power failure, robbery or theft, the above 2-week notice/pay requirement does not apply.

- b. Benefits: Employees who are the subject of a reduction-in-force will be paid for any accrued- but-unused compensatory time. To the extent available, employees subject to a permanent- reduction-in-force who have successfully completed their probationary period will also be paid for:
- earned-and-not-yet-credited annual leave,
 - credited-but-unused annual leave,
 - accrued-but-unused holiday/personal days, and
 - a maximum of one week's unused sick leave.

4. TERMINATIONS

a. For Cause

- (1) Notice: Given in writing at time of termination.
- (2) Benefits: A terminated employee will be paid for any accrued-but-unused compensatory time. To the extent available, terminated employees who have successfully completed their probationary period will also be paid for:
- earned-and-not-yet-credited annual leave,
 - credited-but-unused annual leave,
 - accrued-but-unused holiday/personal days, and
 - a maximum of one week's unused sick leave.

b. Due to Expiration of Long-Term-Disability Leave

- (1) Notice: Given in writing at time of discharge.
- (2) Benefits: To the extent available, the employee will be paid for:
- earned-and-not-yet-credited annual leave,
 - credited-but-unused annual leave, and
 - accrued - but-unused holiday/personal days.
- (3) Miscellaneous: Following recovery, the employee is also eligible for consideration in any vacancy for which he/she meets the minimum qualifications. This eligibility continues for one year following termination.

Consideration for placement must be initiated by the employee by responding to the published position vacancy announcement within the time frame established. Union employees' priorities for placement will be as specified in *Article 7, Section 2 of the Union Contract*. Non-union employees will be given priority based upon months of service at time of discharge. Non-union employees would get priority placement on Union vacancies only in those instances where there are no union applicants.

(For furloughs, recalls, etc., Union personnel should also see *Union Contract*).

B. EXIT PROCEDURES

1. Employees leaving the employ of HRDC will be responsible for returning all Agency property and/or equipment assigned to them during the course of their employment prior to his/her last working day. The property shall be returned to the immediate supervisor.
2. It is the Department Director's responsibility to notify the Accounting Department regarding an exiting employee's obligation to repay and/or reconcile outstanding financial obligations. The exiting employee will be responsible for the settlement of all outstanding financial obligations to the Agency.

- a. Exiting employees may be required to repay benefits obtained under the Employee Training and Educational Benefits section of this manual.
- b. Exiting employees will be responsible for returning and/or reconciling travel advancement funds.
 - i. It is the Department Director's responsibility to notify the Accounting Department regarding an exiting employee's:
 1. amount of pay earned and due on time sheet,
 2. annual leave, sick leave, and personal leave owed (if any) in a memo,
 3. compensatory time owed (if any) on time sheet,
 4. reimbursable educational/training expenses (if applicable) in a memo; and
 5. completion of Status Salary documentation

In addition, the Human Resources Department needs to be notified and provided copies. The Human Resources Department will submit the date of termination of the agency provided health care benefits of the exiting employee.

- ii. Exiting employees (and their dependents) may be eligible to elect to continue insurance coverage in accordance with their rights under COBRA.
- iii. Absent the election of Continuation of Coverage by the exiting employee, the Human Resources Department will notify the appropriate Insurance Company that the exiting employee (Name) is no longer eligible for health insurance coverage, (Effective date of coverage termination).

C. REFERENCE INQUIRIES FOR AGENCY PERSONNEL

1. Reference inquiries regarding verification of income and employment history on current or former Agency employees are answered by HRDC's Human Resources Department. All reference requests not initially directed to the above personnel should be referred to them. **No personnel other than those Human Resources Department is authorized to give out references.**
2. When giving references, no information regarding former or current employee is to be released unless that former or current employee, has on file, a signed Employment Reference-Release of Information Form. The Human Resources Department must be contacted to verify that the employee has the appropriate signed documents in his/her personnel file.
3. If the employee for whom the references are being sought does not have appropriate signed documents in his/her personnel file, the caller, or person writing the inquiry, is to be informed that until the employee gives us written permission to release information, no question can be answered except employment dates, title and duties of position.
4. When responding to a request for information concerning a former employee, HRDC will only provide: dates of employment, final position, and final base compensation with a signed authorization form.

CHAPTER XIV - PROBLEM SOLVING PROCEDURE, DISCHARGE APPEAL CONFERENCE, OPEN DOOR AND GRIEVANCE POLICY

POLICY

It is the policy of Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission, Inc. to treat all employees equitably and fairly in matters affecting their employment. Each employee of HRDC will be provided ample opportunity to understand and resolve matters affecting his or her employment which the employee believes are unjust. Problem solving procedures are available to all employees, including probationary employees. For certain issues, union employees should refer to the current contract for grievance procedures.

A. OPEN DOOR POLICY

The office of the Executive Director is open to all employees. If an employee does not get a satisfactory answer to a problem or the employee does not get the answer within a reasonable timeframe, from management, the employee is free to address the problem directly with the Executive Director.

B. PROBLEM SOLVING PROCEDURE

During the performance of an employee's duties, questions or problems may occur that affect their work. The following more formal procedure has been established for employee's use in resolving these matters.

Step 1. Within a week of the occurrence of the problem, an employee may ask for a conference to talk it over with their immediate Supervisor.

Step 2. In the event the employee's Supervisor does not resolve their problem to their satisfaction within a week's time, the employee may ask (within the following week) for a meeting with their Department Director to talk it over.

Step 3. In the event the employee's Department Director does not resolve an employee's problem to their satisfaction within a week's time, the employee may ask (within the following week) to talk it over with the Human Resources Department or the Executive Director or her/his designee for final resolution.

Step 4. In the event the Executive Director's decision does not satisfy the employee's grievance, within three working days after the receipt of decision in *Step 3*, the employee may notify the Board Chairperson in writing of the grievance. The Executive Committee of the Board, after collecting all data concerning the case from the Executive Director, shall review the record of the case and where warranted:

- a. Meet with the employee, his representative (should employee choose to have one), the Department Director concerned, and witnesses called by either party.
- b. In the event the Executive Committee of the Board determines that no hearing is necessary, the Committee shall render its decision in writing to the aggrieved after receipt of the grievance from the aggrieved.

This procedure makes it possible for employees to obtain a quick review of their problem through channels up to our Executive Director.

HRDC recognizes that some problems may be of such a personal nature or that, for some other good reason, you may prefer not to discuss the matter within your department or with your Supervisor. In such a case, employees should take the problem directly to the Executive Director.

This problem-solving procedure is an employee's "direct line" to HRDC management -- If an employee fails to follow this procedure in a timely manner, however, it is understood that the employee will not contest the HRDC's action further. The Employee should remember that HRDC's Management could not help them solve the problem if they are not aware of the problem.

C. DISCHARGE APPEAL CONFERENCE

If an employee is suspended subject to discharge, or discharged, for violation of the HRDC's standards of conduct or attendance as provided in this Manual, they may request an informal conference to discuss their suspension and/or termination. An employee's request must be made in writing to the Executive Director within two days of the time they are notified of the suspension or discharge. If the employee fails to follow this procedure in a timely manner, it is understood that the employee will not contest the HRDC's action further.

If an employee makes a timely request for such a conference, it will be held promptly. The immediate Supervisor and/or Department Director, the Human Resources Department or the Executive Director or his/her designee and any other HRDC personnel deemed appropriate by HRDC, will be present. Employees will remain in disciplinary status during this meeting, pending the HRDC's review and decision on their appeal. No decision on the appeal is final until approved by the Executive Director or his/her representative designated for this purpose. HRDC's decision on an individual's employment status will be given to them promptly, and is final and binding on the individuals and all other persons or entities involved in any way, directly or indirectly.

D. DEFINITION OF NON-GRIEVANCE ISSUES

1. Any matter which is subject to final administrative review outside the Agency, such as an alleged case of discrimination (*see Agency Affirmative Action Plan.*)
2. The content of published policy of the Agency unless alleged to be in violation of federal, state or local laws.
3. Non-selection for interview or promotion from a group of ranked candidates.
4. Non-adoption of a suggestion.
5. A preliminary warning or notice of specific action which, if affected, would be covered under the grievance system.
6. Performance evaluations.
7. A furlough or a reduction-in-force resulting in lay-offs or a reduction/increase in work hours
8. A change in work schedule or work assignment.
9. A position classification within a level on the grade scale.

E. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

All appeals of disciplinary action shall be initiated from the third step of the grievance procedure. Any employee who takes his employment problems outside of the Agency without first attempting to resolve said problems with the grievance procedure outlined above in *Section E., Grievance Procedure* shall be subject to disciplinary action. However, nothing in this section shall be deemed to abrogate any legal means of redress in the courts.

F. PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

The Human Resources Director shall be responsible for overseeing the handling of all employee grievances to ensure that they are processed in accordance with the procedures stated in this section. Supervisors and Department Directors shall keep the Executive Director informed of all grievances in progress.

CHAPTER XV - FACILITY CLOSING

DEFINITIONS

AVAILABLE LEAVE TIME - Accrued, unused annual leave, and/or accrued, unused holiday/personal days and/or accrued, unused compensatory time.

OFFICIAL CLOSING - The appropriate decision maker authorizes the program or facility to cease providing services to clients and close its doors to the public.

CODE RED EMPLOYEES - Employees who work in programs that must provide essential services to clients regardless of the weather (Office of Housing Opportunities and Head Start/ Early Head Start Classroom(s) and Adult Medical Day Care). Head Start/ Early Head Start, Adult Medical Day Care personnel must report to work only if there are children or clients requiring care that day.

POLICY

The inclement weather procedure was developed to respond to issues raised by employees and with the following considerations in mind:

- a. Safety of clients and staff when weather conditions cause hazardous travel.
- b. The Agency's duty to continue to provide essential services to clients in certain programs.
- c. Acknowledging that the geography in this area may cause some regions to be adversely affected by bad weather while other areas may be less severely impacted, thus creating a situation where some employees could get to work while others could not.
- d. Providing work for employees who can get to their job sites that accomplishes two things:
 - (1) tasks are completed that usually cannot get done during normal work days and;
 - (2) offers employees the opportunity to be paid for working rather than using accrued leave time **or** taking time off without pay.
- e. Spending grant funds wisely by paying employees to do meaningful work during inclement weather days, not for sitting in a center where there are no clients or staying at home when the weather is bad.
- f. Maintaining a method of payment for those employees who cannot get to work or for whom no work is available, by permitting the drawdown of available leave time in order to receive pay for such days.
- g. Ensuring fair treatment regarding pay issues considering there are employees who must report to work regardless of weather to provide essential services and there are those who, given the option of working on bad weather days, and who can get to work, will want to work.

Because our greatest priority on inclement weather days is transportation safety, this policy gives each employee (excluding code red employees) the responsibility to decide whether or not he/she can get to work or to remain at work on bad weather days (if there is documented, approved work for them to do.) To ensure there is meaningful work available on inclement days, supervisors, in consultation with employees, develop a list of tasks that can be accomplished by each employee in the absence of clients.

The number of days during which these duties can be carried out is not to exceed three (3). Depending on the position, meaningful work may be available for less than three days. The final determination as to the work to be done and the days available to work rests with management. Exceptions to the three-day maximum may be granted by the Executive Director. In the event of a total Agency closing, no HRDC employees will report to work. To address fair pay issues, this policy allows each employee who has accrued leave to cover time lost due to weather with available leave time.

A. WEATHER POLICY

All HRDC worksites will remain open unless announced by a supervisor, radio/social media, or the Governor declaring a "State of Emergency" requiring closure. Staff are to report as usual, but may follow casual Friday dress code policy.

On days when driving may be hazardous, it is understood that staff may be reasonably late (up to two-hours) on winter weather days, **if needed**, and must notify their supervisor. Staff needing longer to report beyond the two-hour grace period will be required to use leave; if no leave is available, it will be leave without pay. In cases where an employee's worksite would be closed, then the employee has the option to report to an open site to work their shift.

Staff should be making every effort to report for their work shift. Calling off the day/evening before the hazardous weather is expected will not be permitted. If an employee needs to call off, it must be the day of the weather event. **Head Start/Early Head Start** employees will follow both the HS/EHS Inclement Weather Policy below and the HRDC weather policy listed above.

School Closures

All Head Start and Early Head Start centers will remain open with **no transportation**.

School Delays

All Head Start/Early Head Start Centers remain open but will not provide **morning transportation**.

Updates and/or Deviations

All closures and delays related to the operation of HRDC programs will be provided to the following for announcement or dissemination:

- Radio Stations (WCBC, Rocky 106, WFRB, Magic 100.5, 94.1 QZK, etc.)
- Social Media Platforms
- Supervisor

B. CLOSING FOR REASONS OTHER THAN WEATHER

1. In the event that a facility must be closed because of problems with a building resulting from fire, flood, power failure, robbery or theft or any other conditions beyond the employer's control, management shall endeavor to maintain service to the clients and minimize, as much as possible, hardship on employees.
2. Management shall have the flexibility to exercise a series of options, including but not limited to:
 - a. Employees whose job duties can be carried out in another location (as determined by management) may be sent to another location to work.
 - b. If the building is habitable and does not pose an imminent danger to employees' safety, employees may be allowed to work in the building subject to the approval by the supervisor. A five-day work schedule must be submitted by each employee for his/her supervisor's approval prior to the end of the first day the building is closed.
 - c. Employees who are not dispatched to alternate locations or who do not elect to work under the stipulations described above in *paragraph b.* can choose to use any accrued annual leave, holiday/personal days and/or flex time. All employees who have no accrued time or who choose not to take their accrued leave will be placed on temporary furlough status.
 - d. It is understood that any option or combination of options shall not be held as precedent setting for future determinations. In the severe or prolonged cases of shutdown, management will reserve the right to furlough any or all employees.

CHAPTER XVI - CLIENT RECORDS

A. POLICY

Note: Employees should consult the program's HIPAA Compliance Manual or Policy for further instructions regarding the confidentiality of client records.

1. HRDC is obligated to collect and maintain client records. These records are to be kept confidential to protect the client's rights to privacy.
2. At the same time, HRDC is obligated to collect, maintain, and make public, statistical data regarding client groups, their geographic concentrations and their needs.
3. The difference between statistical information and confidential information is that the client is not identifiable in statistical information. Examples of statistics (without identifying information) are income, disability, age, size of family, etc. Identifying information is name, date of birth, social security number, or address.
4. In addition to releasing information in a statistical fashion, HRDC receives requests from other Agencies or individuals to release complete client records. Such requests, when made on the client's behalf, are sometimes warranted. Information from a client's file may then be released to the designated individual. However, no information may be released to anyone unless the CLIENT HAS GRANTED WRITTEN PERMISSION FOR RELEASE OF SPECIFIC CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.
5. From time to time, HRDC takes photographs of program activities involving clients. Sometimes these photos are used in newspaper articles or other publications. However, no client photographs may be released for publication unless the CLIENT HAS GRANTED WRITTEN PERMISSION FOR RELEASE OF HIS/HER PHOTOGRAPH.
6. The Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act apply only to federal agency records. The application to HRDC, therefore, of these acts is limited to specifically named records submitted to the federal grantor agencies (e.g. HHS, DOE). Those records are named in annual lists in the Federal Register.

A client shall be notified within seven business days in the event that HRDC receives a subpoena for his/her medical or educational records.

B. ACCESS

1. Client information is to be kept in locked files when not in use. Records shall remain on the premises of the office in which they are located at all times.
2. No information about or obtained from, an individual shall be disclosed in a form identifiable with the individual without the individual's or parent/guardian's informed consent. Clients will sign an HRDC Release of Information Statement authorizing the individuals outlined below in *paragraphs B. 3. and 4.* to have access to their client records.
3. Access to client's records in all programs is restricted to:
 - a. Staff involved in direct program planning for the client.
 - b. Administrators for the program, including Department and Executive Director, for monitoring purposes.
 - c. Independent Auditors under contract with the Agency
4. When outside consultation, referral, or coordination is necessary for a client's program planning, the client's records will be released only after the client has given written permission for that particular organization/individual to have access to designated documents.

5. Every client, or his/her parents/guardian in the case of a child, has access, upon request, to his/her file. A client may view his/her file at a scheduled time during normal working hours. An appropriate program employee will be present at the time of the review. The client is not authorized to remove anything from his/her file; however, upon request, a photocopy may be furnished for a reasonable fee.
6. Head Start/ Early Head Start and Adult Day Care may need, from time to time, to have medical and/or psychological reports on their clients in order to appropriately plan for the client's maximum benefit. Any psychiatric profiles, medical reports and medical/psychological test scores will be available for client review unless the physician/psychologist states in the report that said disclosures are medically contraindicated. In those select cases, HRDC will honor the physician/psychologist's opinion and therefore not allow the client to view the record in question.

C. RELEASE OF INFORMATION

1. To request information from a client's files, the requester must:
 - a. Request specific records and/or information contained in the records;
 - b. Provide HRDC with his/her- name, address, title, employer, and employer's address;
 - c. State the purpose for requesting the information from the client's record and how the information is to be used;
 - d. Show just cause for personally viewing the confidential information.
2. Release of information is at the discretion of the Program Manager, with approval of the Department Director.
3. After it has been determined that the information requested should be supplied, the client or parent/guardian must sign a written permission statement granting release of information.

D. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Each administrator is responsible for:
 - a. ensuring that the program's client records are kept confidential.
 - b. ensuring that the program's procedures for records release are consistent with those of the grantor agency, licensing departments and officials, etc.
 - c. ensuring that clients are apprised of and approve the **Uses** and **Users** of the client records.
 - d. releasing only that information which is absolutely necessary.
2. Each authorized person with access to the client files is responsible for:
 - a. ensuring that the client's records remain confidential;
 - b. locking the files after use;
 - c. using the information only for that purpose for which the client has given permission.

E. RETENTION PERIOD

Client records inactive for six (6) years will be destroyed if an audit on the program has been conducted and a letter from the funding source indicated that the audit has been resolved and closed.

CHAPTER XVII - CLIENT GRIEVANCES

POLICY

It is the policy of HRDC to treat all people equitably and fairly in all matters concerning participation in our programs. Any program participant or eligible non-participant will be provided ample opportunity to understand and resolve matters affecting their participation which the person believes are unjust, discriminatory, or not in compliance with Agency/program rules or policies. A written copy of the complaint procedure shall be made available to any program participant or eligible non-participant and the presentation of any complaint shall be considered the right of each person without fear of reprisal.

EMPLOYEES/CLIENTS MAY OBTAIN A WRITTEN COPY OF THE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE BY CONTACTING HRDC'S HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT.

(This Chapter does not apply to the Head Start/Early Head Start, Energy Assistance and Weatherization Programs which have their own client grievance procedures determined by their funding sources.)

CHAPTER XVIII - REPORTING OF CLIENT ABUSE

POLICY:

It is the policy of HRDC that any staff person who observes, or has reason to suspect, physical or sexual abuse or neglect of a child (under the age of 18) or abuse, neglect, self- neglect or exploitation of a vulnerable adult, shall be required to report the situation in a manner consistent with the with HRDC guidelines.

Employees should contact HRDC's Human Resources Department for reporting procedures.

The policies and procedures which have been developed for this Chapter are predicated on various segments of Maryland Law. Please review specific program procedures.

CHAPTER XIX - AMENDMENT PROCEDURES AND AMENDMENTS

A. BOARD OF DIRECTORS INITIATED

If the majority of the Board of Directors wish to amend these procedures, it may be put to a vote at a regular Board meeting following a recommendation by the Human Resources Committee.

B. UPDATES AND REVISIONS

Updates and revisions can include, but are not limited to typographical errors, editorial changes, and/or policy changes. Policy changes can include new or revised policies.

The Department of Human Resources will maintain a master copy of all Updates & Revision forms issued.

When a revision involves a change in policy, the effective date change will be included on the right- hand top of the page(s) to be inserted. Typographical or editorial changes will not include an effective date.

The Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council must also approve all amendments to Policies.

CHAPTER XX – HRDC RESPONSIBILITIES

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Manual, all managerial and administrative functions and prerogatives entrusted to and conferred upon employers inherently, expressly, and by law, are retained and vested exclusively with HRDC, including but not limited to the right to exercise our judgment and discretion to take whatever action is necessary to operate HRDC's business, protect its health, property, security, and general welfare; to reduce, contract out, sell, close down, or relocate HRDC's operations or any part thereof; to hire, layoff, direct, discipline, discharge, or increase the efficiency of the workforce in the manner and to the degree HRDC deems appropriate; to set the standards of productivity, maintenance, services, security, research and development; and, in general, to take whatever other actions necessary in HRDC's judgment and discretion to administer HRDC's operations and direct its work force.

Although HRDC from time to time expects to expand the wages, benefits, work rules, services, and policies summarized in this Manual, we reserve the right to alter, amend, reduce or discontinue any wage schedule, policy, work rule or benefit included in this Manual. The failure of HRDC to exercise any prerogative or function in a particular way shall not be considered a waiver of HRDC's right to exercise such prerogative or function or preclude it from exercising that prerogative or function in some other way.

Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission, INC.
Personnel Policy Manual Acknowledgement Page



By signing this page below, I am acknowledging that I have received and had the opportunity to read, review and understand the contents of this HRDC, Employee Personnel Policy Manual.

Again, any questions, comments, or concerns about the contents of this manual should be addressed to your immediate supervisor, who may seek technical assistance from the fiscal and/or personnel departments. The HRDC highly values its most precious resource, its employees. The HRDC intends for this manual to be a valuable resource for all personnel.

Employee Signature

Date: