

Capital Area
Community
Action
Agency



Employee Handbook and Policies and Procedures Manual

Agency Vision: To provide opportunities for economic security
for low-income individuals and families.

It is the mission of Capital Area Community Action Agency, Inc. to provide a comprehensive, seamless system of services and resources to reduce the detrimental effects of poverty, empower low-income citizens with skills and motivation to become self-sufficient and improve the overall quality of their lives, and our community.



Updated: 01/2020

Capital Area Community Action Agency, Inc.

Employee Handbook

**309 Office Plaza Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(850) 222-2043 (telephone)
(850) 942-2090 (fax)
www.cacaainc.org**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
INTRODUCTION	1
AGENCY INFORMATION	2
Agency Mission	2
Delegation of Authority	2
Channels of Communication.....	2
Publication of Personnel Policies.....	3
EMPLOYMENT	4
Non-Discrimination Policy	4
Sexual Harassment Policy.....	4
Recruitment and Selection	5
Selection Policies	5
Persons Not Eligible for Employment	6
Criminal Records and Background Screenings	6
Physical Examinations and Tuberculosis Screening.....	7
Job Descriptions.....	7
Classes of Employees	7
Orientation of New Employees.....	8
Probationary Period	8
Promotions	9
Transfers	9
Work Schedules	9
Agency Hours	10
Employees' Work Week.....	10
Outside Employment	10
Termination of Employment.....	10
Voluntary Termination (Resignation).....	10
Involuntary Termination (Dismissal).....	11
Reduction in Work Force (Lay Offs).....	11
Death	12
Personnel Records & Reports	12
Service Time Adjustments	12
Training and Career Development.....	13
Formal Education & Training.....	13
In-Service Training	13

PAY PRACTICES	14
Salary & Job Classifications	14
Salary Increases	14
Performance Evaluation.....	14
Overtime Policy	15
Pay Period	15
TimeStar.....	15
TRAVEL/TRANSPORTATION	16
Travel	16
Agency Vehicles	16
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS.....	18
Insurance	18
Direct Deposit	19
Retirement Plan.....	19
AGENCY PREMISES AND WORK AREAS.....	20
Employee Safety	20
Work-Related Injuries.....	20
Personal Property	20
Security	21
Communications Equipment Use Policy	21
General Policies and Guidelines	21
Internet and Email Use.....	22
ATTENDANCE & LEAVE	23
Leave Records.....	23
Annual Leave	23
Holidays	24
Sick Leave.....	25
Family and Medical Leave Act.....	26
Administrative Leave (With Pay)	28
Jury Duty.....	28
Domestic Violence Leave	28
Military Leave	29
Educational Leave.....	29
Voting Leave.....	29
Death in the Family.....	29

Worker's Compensation Leave.....	29
Natural Disasters	30
Volunteer Service.....	30
Leave of Absence (Without Pay).....	30
Absent Without Leave/Job Abandonment	30
Voluntary Sick Leave Pool	31
Emergency Closing.....	32
Weather Related.....	32
Agency Specific Emergency	32
EMPLOYEE CONDUCT	33
Confidentiality	33
Dress Code	33
Representing the Agency	33
Honoraria and Fees	33
Professional Meetings	34
Relations with Others.....	34
Personal Telephone Calls and Mail	34
Contracts	34
Acceptance of Gratuities.....	34
Direct Action.....	35
Political Activity	35
Lobbying	35
Circulation of Petitions	36
Drug Free Policy	36
Smoke Free Workplace Policy.....	37
Acquired Immune Disease Syndrome (AIDS)	37
Workplace Violence Policy	38
Guns in the Workplace.....	38
Agency Credit Card	39
Agency Cell Phones.....	39
Return of Agency Property	40
Personal Cell Phone Usage	40
DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS & GRIEVANCES	41
Disciplinary Actions	41
Grievance/Complaint Policy.....	43
Grievance Procedures Time Frame.....	44

INTRODUCTION

The policies set forth in this manual are guidelines and may be revised by the Board of Directors from time to time without prior notice to the employees. They are intended to give each employee of the Capital Area Community Action Agency (the Agency) a clear understanding of the organization's current policies. These policies are not intended to, and should not be construed as, creating an employment contract. The employment relationship is at-will and may be terminated by the employee or the Agency at any time for any reason.

Approved by Capital Area Community Action Agency's Board of Directors: November 27, 2007

Revisions: 6/30/2010

AGENCY INFORMATION

Agency Mission

To provide a comprehensive, seamless system of services and resources to reduce the detrimental effects of poverty, empower low-income citizens with skills and motivation to become self-sufficient and improve the overall quality of their lives and our community.

Delegation of Authority

The Executive Director is the chief executive officer of the Capital Area Community Action Agency, Inc. The Executive Director reports directly to the Agency's Board of Directors, which is responsible for hiring, supervising, and terminating the Executive Director.

The Executive Director is responsible for the administrative leadership of the Agency. The Executive Director hires, supervises and terminates staff; oversees the daily operations of the organization; ensures sound fiscal policy; and is responsible for the general welfare of the Agency and its staff.

The Executive Director may delegate authority and responsibility to employees of the Agency to perform specific functions required to carry out the Agency's mission, goal and objectives.

In the absence of the Executive Director, the Finance Director or the Human Resources Director shall be designated as the executive in charge.

When serving as the executive in charge, the Finance or Human Resources Directors will provide general direction and oversight of the Agency, but will not make policy. In an emergency situation, they will consult with the Chair of the Board of Directors if the Executive Director is not available.

If the Executive Director is on extended leave due to illness or family emergency, the Chair may appoint the Finance Director or Human Resources Director as Acting Executive Director, as indicated above, after consultation with the Board's Executive Committee.

Channels of Communication

All communications regarding policy decisions concerning the Agency's operations are channeled from the Board of Directors via the Executive Director to all employees of the Agency through the Agency's established administrative channels of communication.

The Executive Director establishes the administrative channels through which all forms of communication must flow. Employee communications which by-pass any administrative level will be returned for submission through proper channels.

Publication of Personnel Policies

Each employee will receive a copy of this manual in order to become familiar with the Agency's personnel policies and to use as future reference. In addition, a copy of this manual will be given to Head Start Policy Council members and each member of the Agency's Board of Directors for guidance in personnel matters.

Each employee will sign an acknowledgement stating that he/she received a copy of the manual and it is his/her responsibility to read and review the contents. The signed acknowledgement will be retained in the employee's personnel file. New acknowledgements will be required when the manual is changed or updated. New policies and procedures, changes to existing policies and procedures and notification of deletion of existing policies and procedures will be distributed in a timely manner to all staff.

EMPLOYMENT

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Capital Area Community Action Agency, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

The Agency does not discriminate and does not tolerate discrimination against employees, job applicants, clients, students, parents or guardians of students, or members of the Board of Directors or Head Start Policy Council on the basis of race, religion, color, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, age, national origin, disability, veteran or familial status or any other status or condition protected by applicable state or federal laws, except where a bona fide occupational qualification applies. The Agency's policy of equal employment and non-discrimination extends to recruitment, employment, advancement and promotion, compensation and benefits administration, training and development, and other personnel practices. This policy prohibits both acts of intentional unlawful discrimination and other acts which have an unlawful discriminatory impact on a protected group.

It is the Agency's policy to afford equal opportunity to all employees, regardless of physical or mental disability. However, all employees with such disabilities are expected to perform the essential functions of their positions as both defined in their respective job descriptions or as performed on a regular basis as part of their normal responsibilities. All employees with disabilities are eligible for accommodations per the Americans with Disabilities Act. Such requests must be made to either the employee's direct supervisor or made to the Agency's Human Resources Director. While the Agency cannot make all requested accommodations, it will work with the employees to define reasonable terms and supply such terms to the employee. If the employee cannot perform the essential functions with the requested accommodation, the employee may be terminated from the Agency.

All reports of unlawful discrimination should be reported to the Human Resources Director immediately. Such reports will be promptly reported by the Human Resources Director to the Executive Director and immediately investigated.

The Agency also prohibits retaliation against any persons who report unlawful discrimination, or who cooperate in investigations of discrimination.

Sexual Harassment Policy

It is the policy of the Agency to prohibit sexual harassment of its employees in the workplace by any person and in any form.

Each supervisor has an affirmative duty to maintain his or her workplace free of sexual harassment. This duty includes discussing this policy with all employees and assuring them that they are not required to endure insulting, degrading, or exploitative sexual treatment.

No supervisor shall threaten or insinuate, explicitly or implicitly, that an employee's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect the employee's employment, evaluation, wages, advancement, assigned duties, shifts, or any other condition of employment or career development.

Other sexually harassing conduct in the workplace, whether committed by supervisors or non-supervisory personnel, is also prohibited. Such conduct includes:

- Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions;
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature;
- Sexually suggestive or other erotic comments about an individual's body;
- Sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; and
- The display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.

Any employee who feels that he or she is being harassed or discriminated against must immediately report the offensive conduct to their direct supervisor. However, if the employee's direct supervisor is involved in the alleged conduct or is unavailable, the employee should report the behavior directly to the Human Resources Director and the Executive Director, or the Chair of the Board of Directors if the Executive Director is involved.

All actions taken to resolve complaints of sexual harassment through internal investigations shall be conducted confidentially, but documented in writing.

Any supervisor, agent, or other employee who is found, after appropriate investigation, to have engaged in sexual harassment of another employee will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include termination.

Recruitment and Selection

The Agency's Board of Directors interviews, hires, and terminates the Executive Director. The Executive Director approves hires and terminates Agency employees. However, the Head Start Policy Council must approve all hires and terminations for the Head Start Program before final approval by the Executive Director. Position vacancies may be advertised in local newspapers, employment services, or other appropriate places, or as required by contracts or grants.

Selection Policies

When a current employee applies for a job opening, their application will be considered at the same time all other applications are considered. However, the employee, when qualified, will be given first preference when filling the position. Seniority shall be the determining factor in the selection process only when two or more applicants have equal or nearly equal qualifications.

Every consideration shall be given to providing employment for persons who have been denied the benefit of formal education or who have been unable to acquire sufficient work experience. To the extent practical, employees shall be selected from the poor target area residents, older citizens (over 50 years of age) and those persons with disabilities who may experience difficulty in obtaining other suitable employment, if qualified for the position. If certain educational and work experience requirements for a position are required by law or included as a requirement in a program funding, these requirements shall be adhered to in selection.

Employment shall not be offered as a consideration or regard for the political support or defeat of any political party or candidate or issue. Further, employment shall not be based on political, nepotism, personal or other biased grounds.

Written reference checks and employment verifications will be required. Certain Agency positions require criminal background screenings and pre-employment drug testing. In addition, positions such as the Executive Director and fiscal staff may require a credit check as a condition of hiring.

All agency employees will be hired in accordance with the Agency's Hiring Procedures.

Persons Not Eligible For Employment

The following policies shall apply to employment of family members of Agency staff, Board of Directors or Policy Council:

- No person shall hold a job over which a family member exercises supervisory authority.
- No person shall hold a job while he/she or a family member serves on any board, council or committee of the Agency or its delegate agencies if that policy-making body has authority to order personnel actions affecting his/her job or is vested with the authority to nominate, recommend, screen or select candidates for employment with the Agency.

Such family members include spouse, children, grandchildren, step-children, parents, step-parents, grandparents, in-laws, siblings, aunts, uncles, nieces or nephews.

Criminal Records & Background Screenings

All new Head Start employees must pass all local, state and FBI background screenings, pre-employment drug screening and driver's license screening. In addition, current Head Start employees must renew their background screening every five years. Any person convicted or whose judicial disposition is adjudication of guilt, adjudication withheld or entered pleas of nolo contendere or guilty of a disqualifying offense as listed in Chapter 435, Florida Statutes, will not be employed, remain employed or serve as a volunteer in the Head Start Program.

New employees for all other positions within the Agency must also have an FDLE background screening and a driver's license screening before final approval of employment. In the case of professional, fiscal and managerial personnel, a criminal record may disqualify the applicant. Before the Agency employs an applicant with a criminal record, the Human Resources Director shall conduct an investigation. If it finds that the prior conviction does not disqualify the person for the proposed position, the Executive Director shall approve the submission of that person's application. In the case of other positions, including clerical and non-professional jobs, criminal records by themselves shall not constitute a basis for disqualification for employment, but the Agency shall require full disclosure of any such record by an applicant. Failure to disclose a criminal record may result in termination.

A current employee who is convicted or whose judicial disposition is adjudication of guilt, adjudication withheld or entered pleas of nolo contendere or guilty after being hired by the Agency must advise their supervisor of the criminal record. If they do not, the penalty may include termination.

Physical Examinations and Tuberculosis Policy

The Head Start Program requires a physical examination and tuberculosis testing upon hiring and every two years thereafter for all employees who have contact with children and/or serve food to children. Written reports of medical examinations are confidential and shall be treated as such. However, records of such examinations will be made available to public agencies if required by law or regulation.

Employees returning from sick leave or maternity leave may be required to have a physical examination or a physician's release to determine their capability to perform satisfactorily their regular work without endangering themselves or their fellow employees.

Job Descriptions

The Agency shall provide each employee with a job description for his/her position at the time of employment or when the employee changes positions within the Agency. Job descriptions may be revised periodically as program changes and revisions occur, and revised copies will be provided to all employees before the effective date. A copy of the job description shall be filed in the employee's personnel folder.

Classes of Employees

Exempt Employees: Employees, whose duties are of an executive, administrative, or professional nature, and who meet the legal requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act are exempt from the normal overtime and minimum wage requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Non-Exempt Employees: Employees whose duties are not of an executive, administrative or professional nature, and who are covered by the legal requirements of the Fair

Labor Standards Act. Non-exempt employees will receive overtime pay at the rate of 1.5 times their normal rate of pay for time worked in excess of their normal work week. These employees must be paid at least the minimum wage.

In the event that a non-exempt employee supervises other non-exempt employees with hours equivalent to at least two full-time equivalencies, the non-exempt supervisor may be reclassified as an exempt employee.

Full-Time Employees: Exempt and non-exempt employees who work at least 1820 hours per year, whose employment is not time-limited and who receive full Agency benefits, sick or annual leave and holiday pay.

Part-Time Employees: Part-time employees are non-exempt and are regularly scheduled to work fewer than 1820 hours per year and whose employment is not time-limited. Part-time employees fall into two categories:

- Eligible part-time employees regularly scheduled to work at least 1560 hours per year and receive Agency benefits and prorated sick leave, annual leave, and holiday pay. Prorating is based on a 40-hour full-time week.
- Part-time employees regularly scheduled to work fewer than 1560 hours per week and who receive only benefits required by law (Social Security, worker's compensation, and unemployment compensation.)

Temporary Employees: Employees whose employment is time-limited. Temporary employees are not eligible for Agency benefits, sick or annual leave accrual or holiday pay.

Orientation of New Employees

All new employees shall receive a general orientation to the Agency, to be conducted by the Human Resources Director. A copy of the Personnel Policies shall be given to and discussed with each employee. Project Directors and Center Directors will provide more specific orientation of their staff.

Probationary Period

Each new employee hired by the Agency shall serve a probationary period of 90 days, beginning on the first day of employment. Each new employee will receive a 45-day performance evaluation and a 90-day performance evaluation. At the end of the probationary period, if the employee's performance is satisfactory, the employee will be removed from probationary status and be eligible to use accrued leave. During the probationary period supervisors are required to monitor performance closely, provide training and support as needed, and provide timely written feedback on expectations to the employee.

In the event that the employee's performance has been less than satisfactory during the probationary period, the employee's probationary period may be extended up to an additional 90 days or the employee may be terminated.

New employees whose job performance is unsatisfactory may be terminated at any time prior to completion of the probationary period with documentation of poor performance and evidence that supervisor provided adequate training and direction. New employees who are terminated during or at the conclusion of a probationary period have no rights of appeal. All recommendations for termination of employment for probationary employees must be accompanied by a completed performance evaluation, and must be approved by the Executive Director.

When an employee is promoted to a new position, the employee shall serve a probationary period for the new position only. The first 30 days shall be a trial period for the employee to become acquainted with the job and responsibilities. During those 30 days, other staff members will handle the duties in the lower position or if that is not possible, temporary help may be hired. After the initial 30 days, the employee may choose to return to his/her previous position. Should the employee decide to remain in the new position, the employee will be required to complete the additional 60 days of probation and may have no option to return to the position should he/she not be able to perform satisfactorily during the remainder of the probation. The employee may use leave during this probationary period which was accrued in the previous position.

Promotions

Every effort shall be made to fill vacancies by promoting from within the Agency. When vacancies occur, all employees shall be provided notice of the vacancy and afforded the opportunity to apply for the vacant position. Selection and advancement shall be based only on merit and the capability to perform the job.

Transfers

Employees who transfer to a position in a lower pay grade shall be paid at a rate determined by the position's immediate supervisor and Human Resources Director and approved by the Executive Director. The employee shall have the right to appeal the pay rate, first to the Program Director and then to the Executive Director.

Work Schedules

Agency Hours

Agency business hours are 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, 52 weeks/year. Head Start Center business hours are 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. for full-day centers and 7:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for part-day centers Monday through Friday, 44 weeks/year. This schedule may vary due to trainings, holiday and emergency closures and other approved agency closures.

Employees' Work Week

The Agency's work week runs Saturday through Friday. Employees work schedules are set by their supervisor. Working hours of various positions may vary from the regular Agency or Head Start Center business hours. Employees are expected to report for work and begin work on time in accordance with their schedules, as outlined by their supervisors.

Full-time employees are entitled to one hour unpaid lunch break daily. A part-time employee who works more than five hours in one day is entitled to one hour unpaid lunch break on that day. However, Head Start Center employees may be required to eat at the center and will be paid for their lunch break. The Agency retains the right to schedule lunch breaks to meet its operational needs. In addition, employees may take a 15-minute rest break in each four-hour work period.

Except in unusual circumstances and with prior permission from the immediate supervisor, an employee may not forego a meal break or use a rest break to shorten his/her scheduled work hours.

Outside Employment

All full-time employees are required to notify their supervisor before accepting outside employment. Such employment must not be a conflict of interest with the Agency, must not interfere with the employee's regular job duties, and must not overlap into the time that the employee is working for the Agency. The outside employment cannot involve Agency supplies or equipment, and in no way should the employee appear to be a representative of the Agency. Agency supplies or equipment may not be used for work (paid or volunteer) on political campaigns.

Termination of Employment

Voluntary Termination (Resignation)

An employee may leave the Agency voluntarily by resignation. The voluntary resignation should provide sufficient notice, which is generally not less than two weeks for non-professional positions and four weeks for professional positions. In a case where the Executive Director feels it would be detrimental to the Agency and/or the employee to work out a notice of resignation, the resignation may be accepted early. The resignation notice shall be in writing and submitted to the employee's supervisor and the Human Resources Director, and should include the date of separation. The required two week or four week notice period does not commence until the written notice has been submitted in accordance with this section.

Employees terminating voluntarily are entitled to any pay due plus payment for unused accrued annual leave. However, employees who quit without notice or fail to honor their notice period forfeit payment for unused accrued annual leave. The Executive Director can suspend this policy on a case by case basis if there are extenuating circumstances. No payment is allowed for

unused accrued sick leave. In addition, employees who use sick leave during their “notice” period must provide a medical excuse in order to be paid for the absent sick days.

All resigning employees are required to conduct an “Exit Interview” with the Agency’s Human Resources Director. All funds or materials due to the Agency may be returned during the interview.

All funds due to an employee shall be paid by check (not direct deposit) at the next regularly scheduled pay day after fulfilling all exit requirements. All funds or materials due to the Agency must be returned prior to release of an employee's final pay check.

Involuntary Termination (Dismissal)

Employees being dismissed as a result of major infractions of the Agency’s policies shall be given a written notice of discharge two weeks prior to the effective date of discharge, except when in the judgment of the Executive Director, the infraction is of such magnitude that keeping the employee on the job shall be detrimental to the Agency. In the latter case, termination may become effective immediately or the employee may be suspended pending termination. An employee may contest a discharge action by following the appeals procedure outlined in this manual (see Disciplinary Actions & Grievances). The Head Start Policy Council must approve all hires and terminations for the Head Start Program before final approval by the Executive Director

Employees terminated involuntarily are generally entitled to any pay due, plus payment for unused accrued annual leave, when proper exit procedures have been followed. No payment is allowed for unused accrued sick leave. Employees who use sick leave during their “notice” period must provide a medical excuse in order to be paid for the absent sick days. Any funds owed to the Agency may be deducted from any final pay due to the employee.

Reduction in Work Force (Lay Offs)

Lay offs may result from a cut-back in Agency funds or requirements for decreased staffing by grantors or funding sources. Lay offs will be based on the job description, performance and length of service. In such cases, a full-time employee being terminated shall be given consideration for reassignment by the Agency to fill a vacant position for which he/she is qualified based on seniority. All reductions in force must be approved by the Board of Directors or for Head Start, the Policy Council and the Board of Directors.

Any employee who has been with the Agency for six months or more and is involuntarily terminated (when forced to reduce personnel because of budgetary limitation or otherwise) will receive payment of unused accrued annual leave.

Death

All funds due to the employee and payment for unused accrued annual leave shall be paid directly to the surviving beneficiary or next of kin.

Personnel Records and Reports

All personnel records and files are property of the Agency and considered confidential. No employee is authorized to copy or disclose any file or record without prior written approval. Access to the information in personnel files is limited to the Executive Director, the Human Resources Director, direct supervisor with a need to know, and employees to their own individual files. Employee review of their file will be under the supervision of the Human Resources Director or the Executive Director. If an employee disagrees with any information found in the employee's file, the employee may place a written disagreement in the file which will be attached to the specific document. However, the employee may not remove any item from his/her personnel file, but may be provided a copy of any or all of the personnel file upon formal request.

Each individual personnel file must contain at least the following forms: Application for Position/Resume; Reference Reports; Letter of Employment/Acceptance; Job Description; Criminal Background Screenings; Disciplinary Actions; Acknowledgement of Personnel Manual; Confidentiality Form; Standards of Conduct Form; Performance Evaluations; and W-4. During the period of employment, various memoranda, salary increase forms, certificates of achievement and other pertinent information may be added to the individual's personnel file.

In addition, the Agency abides by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) requirements as it relates to employee medical information. The Agency maintains all employee medical information in a separate file that cannot be accessed by any other employee in this agency without a legitimate and explainable need for such review. Furthermore, employees maintain the complete right to review their personal medical file at any time by merely contacting the Human Resources Director and requesting such review. This file will include insurance forms, medical records, worker's compensation claim information, and FMLA documentation. All I-9's are kept together in a separate file.

Service Time Adjustments

If an employee has a break in service (termination) for a period of less than 30 days, the employment shall be considered continuous and no adjustment will be made. For example, accumulation of leave will continue as though service was uninterrupted.

If an employee is terminated for a period of 30 days or longer, a reinstatement of prior service must be approved in writing by the Executive Director before the prior service is recognized for tenure and benefit accruals. If recognition of prior service is not granted, the employee shall return as a new hire.

Training and Career Development

Formal Education & Training

Employees who desire and/or need formal (institutional) training may be allowed no more than four hours per week from the job to receive such training, depending upon the staffing needs of the Agency. The Agency will seek funding opportunities to assist employees with their formal training, when possible. Completion of formal training must be documented in the personnel file by a copy of the certificate/diploma and/or official transcript.

In-Service Training

Program directors and/or program managers shall arrange or schedule at least two in-service training workshops for their staff each year. The directors/managers should evaluate the need for training of each staff member and to take appropriate steps to see that such training is provided. All program staff are required to attend the in-service training meetings, whether these meetings are scheduled during or outside of normal working hours. Head Start employees may be required to attend training during summer break if it is deemed mandatory. Employees must document their training by providing to Personnel a copy of the certificate and/or completion of the Agency's training-conference attendance form.

PAY PRACTICES

Salary & Job Classifications

The State of Florida established a minimum wage, which is separate from the federal minimum wage. The Florida minimum wage is recalculated yearly on September 30 based on the Consumer Price Index. Every year on January 1, the new Florida minimum wage takes effect. The minimum wage for persons employed by the Agency will comply with either the federal minimum wage or the Florida minimum wage, whichever is higher.

All positions within the Agency have been classified into salary ranges. Persons employed by the Agency shall normally be compensated at the base salary in the grade established for that position. However, the Executive Director shall have the authority to establish a higher starting salary based on education and experience.

Salary Increases

Cost Of Living Increase: All full and part-time employees may receive a cost-of-living increase when funding is available, regardless of date of hire. The amount of the increase will be established by the funding agency or the Board of Directors.

Merit Increase: Merit increases of up to five percent (5%) may be authorized by the Board as part of the annual budget approval process, to be given once each year to full and eligible part-time employees, if funding is available. Merit increases will be based on a performance evaluation of at least an “above average” level and a recommendation from the immediate supervisor. In order to receive a merit increase, an employee must be employed with the Agency in their current position at least one year.

Maximum Salary Range: Once an employee has reached the maximum salary within their pay grade, their base pay within that pay grade cannot be increased unless the pay grade range is increased. Cost of living and merit increases will be allowed only as a one-time lump sum payment and cannot be used to increase the cap, or maximum, for the base pay for that pay grade.

Adjustment Salary Schedule: Changes in Agency staffing, employee’s job duties or economic conditions may indicate the desirability or the necessity for adjustment in a portion of or the entire salary schedule. When changes are made to the Salary Schedule, the appropriate adjustment will be made to the employee’s salary, as required to comply with adjustments to the minimum level in the range.

Performance Evaluations

Full-time and eligible part-time employees shall receive annual performance evaluations at the end of the fiscal year. The performance evaluations will be completed by the immediate supervisor or, in their absence, the program director/manager and a copy provided to the

employee no later than September 30, the end of the program year.

Probationary employees shall receive a mid-term evaluation 45 days after date of hire. Another evaluation will be completed 90 days after date of hire. Notification should be provided to employees who successfully complete their 90-day probationary period by the immediate supervisor.

Performance evaluations shall be kept in the employee's personnel files and shall be used to determine promotion, awards or discipline, to include termination. Employees with disciplinary actions during the period covered by the evaluation are not eligible for merit increases, but are entitled to a cost-of-living or other across the board salary increase granted to all employees.

Overtime Policy

Non-exempt employees receive time and a half in overtime pay for all time worked over 40 hours in one week. When possible, supervisors will ensure that non-exempt employees do not work beyond a 40-hour work week. No employee shall be permitted to work overtime without prior authorization and approval from the Program Director and/or the Executive Director. Such authorization must be documented in writing. Every effort should be made by supervisors to offset hours beyond an 8 hour day with planned time off during the same 40 hour work week.

Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime pay.

Pay Period

Paychecks are issued on a bi-weekly basis for 26 paychecks a year. Head Start Center employees who do not work during summer break may opt to receive 26 paychecks.

TimeStar (Effective 12/1/10)

Non-exempt employees are required to sign in and out on the Agency's TimeStar timekeeping system when he/she reports to work, leaves the premises, or leaves at the end of the day. If an employee misses a punch for any reason they should immediately report it to their supervisor so it can be corrected. Exempt employees should punch in at least once a day. All employees should enter all leave requests in TimeStar for approval. All employees should review all punches at the end of the pay period and check the approval box. Supervisors should review and correct all red alerts and approve or decline all requests in TimeStar by the close of business on the last day of the pay period. Falsification of a time record or punching for another employee may result in disciplinary action including termination.

TRAVEL/TRANSPORTATION

Travel

All official travel by employees of the Agency shall be performed in accordance with the official travel procedures set up by the Agency's Fiscal Department. All travel must be approved in advance. Each employee is responsible for the preparation of his/her own travel authorization form and for processing the travel voucher through supervisory channels for approval. All travel must be accomplished within the shortest time possible and by the lowest available transportation rates. Employees traveling in their private vehicle shall be reimbursed at the rate established by the Agency's Board of Directors. This rate cannot exceed the lower of the state or federal rate.

When more than one person travels in one private vehicle, reimbursement for mileage shall be made to the employee providing the private vehicle. Group travel on Agency business is encouraged in every possible instance.

All employees are expected to pay for any reasonable travel expenses for which they shall be reimbursed in connection with the performance of their official duties. Provision may be made for advance payment for out-of-town travel when circumstances justify such action. Employees who require advance payment of travel expenses for out-of-town travel must make this known at the time that travel authorization is requested. Employees receiving travel advances must return all unspent funds along with a reconciliation of funds within 30 days. Unspent funds not returned within 30 days may be deducted from the employee's pay check.

All agency employees who use their personal vehicles for company business must provide the Agency with a copy of their valid driver's license and valid proof of insurance. No travel reimbursements will be authorized without valid documentation. It is the employee's responsibility to keep this information current with the Personnel Department.

Agency Vehicles

Agency vehicles are to be used **only** for **official business** and in full compliance with the rules and regulations of the funding source and Head Start procedures. Only authorized employees may use Agency vehicles. All drivers of the vehicles must be fully licensed by the State of Florida and employed by the Agency. Copies of valid drivers' licenses must be on file with the Head Start Support Services Coordinator and the Human Resources Director.

Smoking is banned in Agency vehicles.

If an agency vehicle incurs any damage while under the charge of an employee, the employee must report the damage immediately and may be responsible for paying the deductible amount toward repair. If an employee receives a traffic citation while operating an agency vehicle, the employee will be exclusively responsible for paying any fine or penalty. Any employee whose duties include the operation of Agency vehicles, who is cited for D.U.I or

D.W.I. or reckless driving involving illegal substances or for any other serious moving violation will be considered to have an unacceptable driving record and his/her continued employment will be subject to review.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Employee benefits are provided by the Agency to full-time and eligible part-time employees. Abuse of employee benefits may result in the withdrawal of the privileges.

Insurance

Worker's Compensation: The Agency carries Worker's Compensation Insurance which provides medical and wage replacement benefits because of a disability resulting from an accident or injury in the course of job performance. Should any employee sustain an injury during the work day, the employee must immediately report the details of the accident to his/her supervisor. The supervisor shall immediately report to the Personnel Office to have the proper reports filed.

Social Security & Medicare (FICA): Under federal law, a percentage of the employee's salary is withheld and forwarded to the Social Security Administration. The Agency matches equally the employee's contribution. Information concerning benefits under this plan and method of application may be obtained from the local Social Security Administration Office.

Unemployment Compensation Insurance: The Agency carries State Unemployment Compensation Insurance, which may provide funding for lay offs or involuntary termination.

Cafeteria Plan: The Agency offers its full-time and eligible part-time employees a cafeteria plan through AFLAC from which an employee may select such benefits as health insurance, dental insurance, increased life insurance, increased short-term disability among others. Insurance is available during the first 30 days of hire or only during open enrollment thereafter.

- **Group Health Insurance:** Health insurance becomes effective on the first day of the month following the date of hire. If date of hire is the first day of the month, the insurance becomes effective immediately. Dependent coverage is available. The Agency pays for a substantial portion of the employee's premium. The employee pays the total cost of the premiums for dependent coverage.
- **Dental Insurance:** Dental insurance is effective the first day of the month following the date of hire. If date of hire is the first day of the month, the insurance becomes effective immediately. Dependent coverage is also available. The employee pays the total cost of the premiums for both the employee and dependents.
- **COBRA:** Federal law requires the Agency to provide continuation of their group health insurance at group rates to employees and their families in certain instances where coverage under the plan would otherwise end. If you are covered by the Agency's health or dental insurance plan, you have the absolute right to choose continuation coverage if you lose your group coverage because of a reduction in

your hours of employment or the termination of your employment. Your eligible dependents may also have the right to elect and pay for continuation coverage for a temporary period in certain circumstances where their coverage under the plan would otherwise end. COBRA payments are must be received in full before the 20th of the month before the month of coverage. If you have any questions concerning you rights under COBRA, please contact the Human Resources Director for details. By signing the employee handbook acknowledgment, you agree that you will provide your dependents with a copy of this policy for review and agree to assume all responsibility to inform such dependents of this policy.

- **AFLAC Insurance:** AFLAC offers a variety of insurance policies including dental, life, vision, accident and short-term disability, hospital and cancer. The employee pays the total cost of the premiums for both the employee and dependents. AFLAC plans are portable and may be continued by the employee upon termination of employment with the Agency.
- **Life Insurance/Short Term Disability Insurance:** The Agency provides life insurance and short-term disability to all full-time and eligible part-time employees upon completion of their probationary period. The life insurance equals the amount of one year's salary. The disability portion pays 60% of an employee's weekly salary during periods of disability effective 15 days after the date of the accident or the onset of the illness. This insurance may not be continued upon termination of employment.

Direct Deposit

Direct deposit is available for employees who wish to have their paychecks directly deposited into their checking or savings accounts. Enrollment forms are available through the Personnel Department. All employees are encouraged to have their checks direct deposited for greater efficiency and safety.

Retirement Plan

The Agency offers its employees a 401(k) deferred compensation retirement plan. Employees working more than 1000 hours/year are eligible to join the plan. The Agency will match an employee's contribution dollar for dollar up to three percent of the employee's salary. An employee may join the plan at any time, but the employer match will not begin until the employee has been employed for one-year. In addition, the plan contains vesting requirements.

AGENCY PREMISES AND WORK AREAS

Employee Safety

It is the Agency's policy to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all employees and to promote safety on the job. The health and well-being of our employees is foremost among our concerns. Employees are expected to comply with all safety and health requirements whether established by the agency or by federal, state or local laws. Employees are urged to follow common sense safety practices and correct or report any unsafe condition, defective tool, or equipment to your supervisor. Each employee is expected to assist the Agency in maintaining safe working conditions.

All accidents and incidents – including those which do not involve serious injury and those involving clients, students, parents or volunteers – must be reported immediately. Written incident/accident reports should be completed immediately, and submitted to the employee's supervisor and the Human Resources Director. If the accident results in an injury, first aid should be administered or medical treatment sought. In the case of the Head Start Program, Head Start procedures must be followed.

All employees are encouraged to submit suggestions to the Safety Committee, their supervisor, the Head Start Director, Program Director, Human Resources Director and/or Executive Director concerning safety and health matters.

Safety is a state of mind, and requires constant vigilance and common sense. Safety is Everyone's responsibility. Remember: ***SAFETY IS ALWAYS FIRST.***

Work-Related Injuries

Employees who suffer any work-related injury, no matter how minor, shall report to their supervisor for first-aid treatment and/or recording of the incident. In the case of a serious injury, the employee's immediate supervisor or any other member of management has the authority to have injured employees transferred to an outside medical facility for emergency medical treatment. Any injury to an employee must be reported immediately to the Human Resources Director.

Personal Property

The Agency's business insurance does not provide coverage for employees' personal belongings or property. The employee assumes all risk when bringing personal property to the Agency. Articles of personal property found on the premises should be returned to the owner, if known, or turned in to the Personnel Department. Inquiries regarding lost property should be directed to the Personnel Department.

Security

Security is the responsibility of all agency employees. Visits to the agency by family, friends and acquaintances of employees are not encouraged. Only authorized Agency employees will be allowed keys or provided with security codes for the Agency's facilities. Authorized employees are Executive staff members and senior level management staff. In addition, for facilities other than Headquarters, the Program Director may designate the appropriate authorized staff for those facilities. For the central office, only Executive level employees are authorized to receive the access code, except in limited situations in which authority is delegated to another employee by the department/program director for the purpose of daily opening and closing. A list of all authorized persons in each department must be provide to the Administrative and Personnel offices and kept on file. Any changes must be reported immediately.

During normal working hours, Agency employees may enter the premises through the same entrances used by the public. Employees needing entrance to the agency after normal business hours will be allowed to do so only if an authorized Agency employee is present. Under no circumstances will a non-authorized employee be given a key or security codes to Agency premises.

The Agency assumes no responsibility for personal possessions or property of Agency employees. Employees must exercise reasonable care for their own protection and that of their personal property. In addition, employees are expected to respect the property of others. Unauthorized possession of property belonging to another employee or the Agency will be considered a breach of agency security and will subject the employee to disciplinary action.

Violations of security procedures and instances where agency property or keys have been lost or stolen must be reported immediately to the Executive Director and/or Executive staff members.

Communications Equipment Use Policy

In the use of Agency technologies and communications systems, all employees are expected to ensure and promote appropriate agency-wide communications and accurate data collection, software licensing compliance, protection of information technology equipment and software from misuse, loss, theft or destruction, and to limit access to confidential information.

Computer and electronic information technologies include, but are not limited to, host computers, file servers, stand alone computers, laptops, printers, fax machines, phones, on-line services, Email systems, bulletin board systems, and all software that is owned, licensed or operated by the Agency.

General Policies and Guidelines

Hardware, software, Internet access, etc., are to be used for Agency business only. Personal use of communications resources is generally discouraged. Although incidental and

occasional personal use of the Agency's communications systems are permitted, users automatically waive any rights to privacy.

All information, including e-mail, created or stored on Agency equipment or using Agency accounts, is the property of the Agency. This information may be accessed at any time by your supervisor or designated technology specialist. Employees must keep ID's and secure passwords, known only to them at any time. However, the Agency management and/or technology specialist may delete an employee's password for any reason, including resetting the password, if forgotten, or to check an account's mail or activities. Unauthorized use, installation and/or download of software are prohibited and employees may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

Any computer or network problems should be brought to the attention of a supervisor or the technology specialist. Users may not physically alter or attempt repairs on any hardware at any time. Hardware and software maintenance and repair must be provided only by Agency approved technicians and the technology specialist. Employees are responsible for technology equipment and software and shall report any damage, loss, theft or other unauthorized use.

Computers and other electronic equipment should be completely turned off when the employee leaves for the day. All files should be stored in designated network directories to ensure backups and access from other stations, if their computer is down. Access to the Agency's systems via remote connectivity is restricted and requires authorization by appropriate management.

Internet and Email Use

The Internet and e-mail systems are for Agency business only. Use and messages must be accurate, appropriate and should not subject the Agency to potential liability. Employees may not use the Internet for personal purchases.

Downloading, printing, storing materials and/or sending email messages of an abusive, prejudicial, threatening or sexual nature will lead to disciplinary action, including termination. Engaging in any communication that is in violation of federal or state laws is prohibited, including protected copyright or trademark materials. Employees are also prohibited from: campaigning for or against any candidate for political office and any ballot proposal issue; proselytizing or promoting any religious belief or tenet; and sending, forwarding, redistributing or replying to "chain letters."

Email attachments from unknown senders should be deleted without opening. If the attachment seems suspicious, notification should be made to designated management. Viruses are often spread by enclosing them in Email attachments that look legitimate. Employees may not disable any automatic scanning that takes place on a machine.

ATTENDANCE AND LEAVE

The Agency recognizes that circumstances beyond an employee's control may cause an individual to be absent from work for all or part of a day. However, unauthorized absences, excessive absenteeism or chronic tardiness may result in disciplinary action, including termination.

Leave Records

Leave records for each employee are maintained on the TimeStar timekeeping system. This record shows each pay period, the leave accrued that pay period and the leave used during the pay period, indicating days, number of hours and what type of leave was used. In addition, the number of hours of accrued leave and the type of leave are reflected on each employee's check stub or pay voucher. If the employee has a question or if the amount differs from the employee's figures, he/she should contact their supervisor.

Annual Leave

Full-time employees earn annual leave according to the following schedule:

- 0-3 years service - 4 hours/pay period;
- 3-10 years service - 6 hours/pay period;
- More than 10 years - 8 hours/pay period.

Eligible part-time employees earn annual leave according to the following schedule:

- 0-3 years service – 3.25 hours/pay period;
- 3-10 years service - 4.75 hours/pay period;
- More than 10 years – 6.5 hours/pay period.

Temporary and non-eligible part-time employees do not earn annual leave. Annual leave is not accrued on the third paycheck of the months that have three pay checks.

Full-time and eligible part-time employees accrue annual leave during their probationary period, but cannot use the leave until the probationary period is satisfactorily completed.

Annual leave is credited to the employee on the last day of the bi-weekly pay period and must be earned before it can be taken.

Except in unusual circumstances, accrued annual leave must be used during the Agency's fiscal year or the leave will be lost. The Executive Director may allow an employee to carry over a specified number of annual leave hours in certain circumstances. The Board of Directors must approve any carryover by the Executive Director and the request must be made prior to the end of the fiscal year.

If an employee becomes ill during annual leave, sick leave may be substituted for annual leave with proper medical documentation. The number of sick days used shall be determined by the physician's statement.

Requests for annual leave must be submitted and approved at least three calendar days prior to the date of the requested leave. In the case of a non-illness related emergency, such as car trouble, the employee should notify the supervisor of the problem immediately and complete a leave form upon return, noting the emergency on the leave form. **Annual leave which is not supported with proper documentation will be considered unauthorized unpaid leave.**

Annual leave requests are not official until they are completely approved by the employee's immediate supervisor and/or program director in the TimeStar system. The Executive Director's request must be approved by a board officer.

An employee's supervisor, the program director or the Executive Director may deny the use of annual leave in certain circumstances in order to ensure adequate staffing or to ensure equitable leave opportunities for all staff.

Upon change of status from full time or part-time eligible to part-time ineligible, the employee will either be paid for unused accrued annual leave or be able to use the annual leave until it is exhausted.

Upon termination, employees will be paid for any unused accrued annual leave. However, employees who quit with no notice or do not honor their notice forfeit all payment for unused accrued annual leave. The Executive Director can waive this requirement on a case by case basis if there are extenuating circumstances. Employees who terminate during their probationary period will not be paid for unused accrued annual leave.

Holidays

Full-time and eligible part-time employees shall be paid for the following legal holidays each calendar year:

- New Year's Day - January 1
- Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday - Third Monday in January
- Memorial Day - Last Monday in May
- Independence Day - July 4
- Labor Day - First Monday in September
- Veteran's Day - November 11
- Thanksgiving (2 days) - Fourth Thursday and Friday in November
- Christmas, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah or other recognized winter religious holiday (2 days) - December 24 and 25 or December 25 and 26
- Personal Holiday

Holidays occurring on Saturday or Sunday shall be taken on Friday (for Saturday) and Monday (for Sunday). Deletions or additions to the above listed holidays shall be by direction of the Executive Director or the Board of Directors. The Personal Holiday must be taken during the calendar year (January 1-December 31). Holidays do not accrue.

Employees who call in sick or call in a personal “emergency” the day before or the day after a holiday must provide adequate medical or other documentation to support their request for leave. Failure to provide adequate documentation will result in loss of payment for the sick/emergency days and may result in disciplinary action.

Sick Leave

Full-time employees earn sick leave according to the following schedule:

- 0-3 years service - 4 hours/pay period;
- 3-10 years service - 6 hours/pay period;
- More than 10 years - 8 hours/pay period.

Eligible part-time employees earn sick leave according to the following schedule:

- 0-3 years service – 3.25 hours/pay period;
- 3-10 years service - 4.75 hours pay period;
- More than 10 years – 6.5 hours/pay period.

Temporary and non-eligible part-time employees do not earn sick leave. Sick leave is not accrued on the third paycheck of the months that have three pay checks.

Full-time and eligible part-time employees accrue sick leave during their probationary period, but cannot use the leave until the probationary period is satisfactorily completed.

Sick leave is credited to the employee on the last day of the bi-weekly pay period and must be earned before it can be taken. After three consecutive absences, an employee must submit a medical certificate from a physician before any additional leave will be authorized. An employee with excessive absenteeism may be required to submit a medical certificate before any additional sick leave can be authorized.

Sick leave must be used for legitimate sick leave purposes and cannot be used for annual leave. In addition to personal illness and/or injury, sick leave can be used for (1) quarantine; (2) disability caused by or contributed to by pregnancy, miscarriage abortions, childbirth and recovery there from; (3) medical appointments during an employee’s work hours; and (4) illness or injury of a member of the employee’s immediate family. Immediate family includes:

Spouse	Stepchildren	Father/Mother-in-law
Parents	Grandchildren	Son/Daughter-in-law
Children	Step grandchildren	Brother/Sister-in-law
Siblings	Grandparents	Employee's Niece/Nephew
Employee's Aunt/Uncle		

Sick leave may also be used, in the absence of annual leave, for the death of an immediate family member.

Notification of sick leave, except in sudden onset or emergencies, must be given to the employee's supervisor for approval at least three days before the absence, when possible. Emergency sick leave must be reported as soon as possible on the first day of absence, within 30 minutes of the employee's regular arrival time. A leave request must be submitted in the TimeStar system on the day the employee returns to work.

Sick leave requested the day before and/or the day after annual leave is taken or the day before and/or after a legal holiday must be accompanied by a doctor's statement documenting a doctor's visit for the date requested

The Agency has a Voluntary Sick Leave Pool that allows employees to donate a portion of their sick leave to the pool to be used by another "pool member" who is out of leave and is facing a dire emergency.

Upon change of status from full time or part-time eligible to part-time ineligible, an employee will be able to use the remainder of their unused accrued sick leave until the sick leave is exhausted. No additional sick leave will be accrued and the part-time ineligible employee is not eligible to use the Voluntary Sick Leave Pool.

No payment will be made for unused accrued sick leave upon termination of employment.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for specified family and medical reasons, including the birth and care of a newborn child or placement for adoption or foster care; the care of an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) with a serious health condition; or for medical leave when the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition. Under some circumstances, employees may take FMLA leave intermittently which means taking leave in blocks of time, or by reducing their normal weekly or daily work schedule. Intermittent leave is not permitted for a birth of a child, to care for a newly-born child, or placement of a child for adoption or foster care.

To be eligible for FMLA benefits, an employee must have worked at least 12 months for the Agency, have worked at least 1,250 hours for the Agency over the previous 12 months and worked in at a location where there are at least 50 employees within 75 miles. Spouses employed

by the Agency are jointly entitled to a *combined* total of 12 workweeks of family leave for the birth and care of the newborn child, for placement of a child for adoption or foster care.

Eligible employees may receive up to 12 workweeks of unpaid leave during any “rolling” 12-month period, measured backward from the date from the date of any previous family or medical leave. Family and medical leave involving the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care must be concluded within 12 months of the birth or placement.

Employees seeking to use FMLA leave are required to provide a written 30-day advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable and such notice is practicable. The Agency also requires employees to provide medical certification supporting the need for leave due to a serious health condition affecting the employee or an immediate family member. In addition, the employee must provide status reports and intent to return to work every 30 days while on FMLA leave and must provide a fitness-for-duty certificate before returning to work if the leave was due to a serious health condition. If the employee is able to return to work early, the employee must notify the Agency at least two working days before the employee intends to return to work. Finally, the Agency may require second or third medical opinions (at the Agency’s expense) and periodic recertification.

Up to 26 weeks of caregiver leave is available during any 12-month period to employees caring for a recovering service member who sustains an injury or illness while on active duty that may render that person unable to perform the functions of the member’s office, grad, rank or rating. Additionally, close family members of military personnel (defined as spouse, child, or parent) may take up to 12 weeks of FMLA, if qualified, if the member of the military’s departure creates a qualifying exigency. This policy is guided by federal law and forthcoming interpretation and is subject to modification without formal notice.

The Agency requires employees to substitute accrued sick leave and/or annual leave to cover some or all of the FMLA leave in accordance with the Agency’s sick and annual leave policies.

While on unpaid FMLA, the Agency will continue the employee’s health, dental and other insurance coverage provided before the FMLA. Upon return to work, the employee will reimburse the Agency for the premiums. The Agency will recover premiums paid to maintain the employee’s insurance coverage for an employee who fails to return to work from FMLA.

Except in specified and limited circumstances involving certain highly paid “key” employees, upon return from FMLA leave, an employee must be restored to the employee’s original job, or to an equivalent job with equivalent pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. In addition, an employee’s use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that the employee earned or was entitled to before using FMLA leave.

Outside employment during the FMLA leave period is prohibited, and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Any employee who exceeds their 12-week FMLA entitlement may be subject to termination of employment.

The duration of leave, availability of benefits, opportunity for job restoration, and other rights and privileges associated with FMLA leave are limited by the requirements of applicable state and federal law. No express or implied contractual rights should be inferred from this policy. The Agency reserves the right to modify this or any other policy necessary, in its sole discretion.

Administrative Leave

Administrative leave is authorized leave with pay for full-time and eligible part-time employees. Request for administrative leave must be submitted in writing to the employee's supervisor and the Human Resources Director, and must include appropriate documentation.

Administrative leave cannot be used on any day that the employee would not otherwise be working or on leave. The employee must use the whole day as annual or sick leave rather than deducting the amount of time that normally would have been spent on administrative leave. Administrative leave does not accrue.

Administrative leave may be granted for the following reasons:

Jury Duty: If an employee is subpoenaed to serve jury duty, the employee must notify his/her supervisor immediately and must complete an Agency leave sheet with his/her subpoena attached. The employee is expected to report to work for any part of a day the employee may be available. In no case will administrative leave be approved for court attendance when an employee is engaged in personal litigation; however, an employee may use accrued annual leave in such cases.

Domestic Violence Leave: Agency employees will be allowed up to three days of administrative leave in any 12-month period if the employee, or a family or household member of the employee, is a victim of domestic abuse. To be eligible for such leave an employee must be employed for at least three months as of the date the leave is needed. In addition, employees must request leave at least three days in advance, except in the case of an emergency such as imminent danger to the employee, family or household member. An employee may also use annual leave and/or sick leave in accordance with the Agency's annual leave and sick leave policies. For employees who are FMLA eligible, some situations may also qualify for Family Medical Leave and may run concurrently.

Leave may be taken if the employee provides documentation that such leave is being used to seek an injunction for protection against domestic violence or dating or sexual violence; obtain medical care or mental health counseling relating to injuries resulting from domestic violence; obtain services from a victim-services organization; make the employee's home secure from the perpetrator or to seek new housing; and/or seek legal assistance to address issues arising from the domestic violence.

Military Leave: Employees who are members of the National Guard, Coast Guard, or a Reserve component for the Armed Forces shall be allowed a maximum of 17 days of administrative leave per year to attend required training camps or trips. Military leave of absence in excess of 17 days shall not be granted as administrative leave. It is the policy of the agency, where possible, to rehire all employees leaving to enter the military services and upon rehire to recognize prior service with the Agency.

Educational Leave: Administrative leave, not to exceed four hours per week, may be granted to employees for attendance at approved educational institutions when his/her enrollment shall benefit the Agency and supplement the employee's career development. The employee shall commit, in writing, to be employed with the Agency for one full year following educational leave. Failure to do so will result in the Agency's recovery of payment for leave time taken. Approval must be given prior to the employee arranging for class. Once the employee is enrolled and prior to attending the first class, a copy of his/her class schedule must be furnished to his/her supervisor and the Human Resources Director. At the end of the semester, a copy of the employee's grade shall be provided to the Human Resources Director for filing in the employee's personnel file. Administrative leave will not be granted during school breaks or on any day that the employee would not otherwise be working, i.e. sick or annual leave, etc.

Voting Leave: An employee may be granted administrative leave not to exceed one hour to vote in national, state, local and primary elections, provided that the employee's work schedule is such that the employee is unable to vote either before or after work.

Death in the Family: Administrative leave, not to exceed two days will be granted for death in an employee's immediate family. Annual leave or sick leave may be authorized for leave in excess of two days. The leave request must be accompanied by an obituary notice. Immediate family includes:

Spouse	Stepchildren	Father/Mother-in-law
Parents	Grandchildren	Son/Daughter-in-law
Children	Step grandchildren	Brother/Sister-in-law
Siblings	Grandparents	Employee's Niece/Nephew
Employee's Aunt/Uncle		

Worker's Compensation Leave: Administrative leave may be granted to employees during the first seven (7) days following a work-related injury for which the employee cannot work. Employee must complete the Agency leave request process and provide medical documentation for time absent from work. All work-related injuries must be reported to the employee's supervisor immediately, and the supervisor must complete an incident report and submit to the Human Resources Director before the close of business on the date of the incident. If the injury requires medical attention by a Worker's Compensation authorized provider a drug test will be required along with medical treatment. The employee must provide medical documentation listing any limitations, if any, to return to work. Administrative leave will also be granted to employees for medical appointments during normal work hours which are related to a

work-related injury. Employee must provide proof of medical appointment upon return to work along with a leave request for Administrative leave.

Natural Disasters: Administrative leave may be granted by the Executive Director in the event of office closing due to natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes floods, etc. Leave requests are not required in such instances.

Volunteer Service: The Executive Director may grant administrative leave for service with a volunteer fire department, law enforcement unit, or civil defense unit if an employee is a member of such organization and is called to duty in times of civil disorder, riot or natural disaster.

Leave Without Pay

A leave of absence without pay is an authorized period of extended absence for which an employee does not receive pay. Such leave shall not forfeit any other benefits that would otherwise accrue to the employee. This type of leave may be granted to full-time and eligible part-time employees for a period not to exceed one year and must be approved by the Executive Director. The Agency shall fill the position with a temporary employee, if necessary. Requests must be made in writing at least three calendar days in advance of the effective date or be considered absent without leave.

A leave of absence may be used even if the employee has accrued annual and/or sick leave and may be granted for the following reasons:

- During the probationary period when the employee cannot take annual leave or sick leave.
- For educational purposes when the course of study being pursued relates to the employee's work and shall enhance the employee's value to the Agency. This type of leave for educational purposes would require the employee to be away from his/her employment all day for at least one full semester or whatever the shortest period of enrollment is for that institution.
- To extend the time requested for military leave beyond the previously established 17 days.
- To extend annual or sick leave to provide uninterrupted benefit to the employee.

Absent Without Leave/Job Abandonment

Any employee who does not report to work, does not notify his/her supervisor, and does not return for three consecutive days shall be deemed to have abandoned his/her job and such absence will be considered a voluntary resignation. Employees who do not report for work for shorter periods of time without notifying his/her supervisor shall be issued a warning notice. If the behavior is repeated disciplinary action which may include termination is required.

Voluntary Sick Leave Pool Policy

The Agency has established a Voluntary Sick Leave Pool to provide an additional safety net for employees, who are dealing with financial problems due to extended leave caused by injury or illness. The following guidelines establish the framework for donating to and withdrawing from the Sick Leave Pool.

- Employee must have at least 48 hours of sick leave available at the time of application to join the Voluntary Sick Leave Pool. A minimum annual contribution of eight (8) hours is required.
- The employee must use all accrued annual leave and sick leave in order to withdraw from the Sick Leave Pool. An employee may not withdraw more than 80 hours of leave from the Pool in one fiscal year, in 40 hour increments.
- The qualifying event must not be covered by Worker's Compensation. The qualifying event must be catastrophic such as dire illness/accident in the immediate family requiring the employee to be out of work more than one week and certified by a doctor. Under no circumstances can sick leave be borrowed from the sick leave pool for ordinary illnesses, or be used intermittently.
- Proper documentation will be maintained in the Personnel Department. Documentation should contain donor's name, number of hours donated, date donated, and the conversion of hours into dollar amounts. The documentation should also indicate withdrawals, employee name, number of hours withdrawn, date withdrawn, equivalent dollar amount of the hours withdrawn and a balance on hand after the withdrawal. The file should also contain a copy of the request form by the donor indicating approval by the Sick Leave Pool Committee.

Donor Requirements: The employee must complete the Sick Leave Pool request form and forward to the Human Resources Director for the Sick Leave Pool Committee's approval. After approval, the Human Resources Director will subtract the requested amount of hours from the donor staff member's accrued sick leave and post it to sick leave pool. A copy of the approved transfer request will be placed in the donor's personnel file and the original kept in the Sick Leave Pool file. The employee will be provided a statement which shows the decrease to his/her sick leave hours and the new sick leave balance.

Recipient Requirements: To be eligible to withdraw funds from the Sick Leave Pool, an employee must have contributed a minimum of eight (8) hours of sick leave to the Pool annually. Any exempt or non-exempt employee, based upon criteria listed above, may request a withdrawal from the Sick Leave Pool if they have been employed by the agency for a minimum of one year. The recipient employee is never expected to repay the transfer of hours back to the Sick Leave Pool. The employee must complete a request form and return it to the Personnel Office. The Human Resources Director must verify that the employee is eligible, approve eligibility and forward the form to the Sick Leave Pool Committee for final approval.

Emergency Closing

When it becomes necessary to close Agency offices or centers on days and times of normal operations, notices will be provided to media of widest circulation. Notices will be posted outside the agency in a place where they would be clearly visible in general.

Weather Related

In cases of weather or other emergencies affecting the community (communities) served by the Agency, the Agency will follow the office closing policy of the state, or local government (city and/or county) for the impacted community or county.

Agency Specific Emergency

Office closings resulting from emergencies arising within the Agency may be authorized on a case by case basis by the Executive Director. In the Executive Director's absence, closing decisions may be made by the Executive Director's designee with authorization from the Board Chairman.

Head Start Centers, however, will be closed for students when weather emergencies result in closing of the county schools where the center is located.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Employees are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a professional manner. While employed by this Agency, individuals shall refrain from actions and public announcements which would reflect negatively upon the Agency.

Confidentiality

Employees are expected to use in a responsible manner all information gained in professional relationships. Discussion of confidential aspects of the Agency's records (including records of clients), between and with employees who are not entitled to the information or to a person outside the Agency, without specific approval of the employee or client or an employee's immediate supervisor, is strictly prohibited and shall be grounds for immediate termination. The release of Agency information will be governed by the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts.

Dress Code

Good grooming and appropriate dress are important to the Agency's relationships with the public. The Agency expects employees be suitable attired and maintain high standards of personal appearance and hygiene during working hours or when representing the Agency. All employees are expected to dress in appropriate business attire suitable for their position at the Agency. If a supervisor feels an employee's attire is out of place, he/she may be asked to leave the workplace and return when properly attired. The employee will not be paid for time off the job for this purpose.

Representing the Agency

The Executive Director is the spokesperson for the Agency. However, the Executive Director may designate employees to represent the Agency at various events and speaking engagements.

All agency press releases shall be released in writing by the Executive Director or designee. However, program directors or other employees at the direction of the program directors may release public service announcements, approved by the Executive Director, to the media with information concerning time, place and purpose of scheduled meetings that are within the Agency's approved program of work.

Honoraria and Fees

Employees shall not accept honoraria and/or fees for Agency work unless the honorarium or fee is donated to the Agency.

Professional Meetings

Employees may attend, with supervisors' approval, professional conferences or meetings deemed beneficial to their working performance. The Agency shall not reimburse employees for local luncheons or other entertainment expenditures unless directly related to program activities.

Relations with Others

Employees shall treat respectfully differences of opinions between themselves and their colleagues. Employees should express their complaints and dissatisfaction only to their supervisor so as to not create dissension among fellow employees by airing differences of opinion and dissatisfaction to them. Employers shall act so as to support rather than obstruct colleagues in fulfilling their responsibilities. Employees shall assume responsibility for sharing pertinent knowledge with colleagues. Employees shall respect the privacy and the human dignity of all persons with whom they have contact.

Personal Telephone Calls and Mail

The use of the Agency's telephone system should be confined to business calls. Personal telephone calls should be limited to those which are absolutely necessary and should be as brief as possible. This restriction on the use of telephones also applies to making unnecessary personal calls to fellow employees within the agency. Personal long distance calls are prohibited.

In addition, employees shall not use the Agency's mailing address to receive personal mail. Agency stationery will not be used for personal correspondence.

Violation of these procedures will result in disciplinary action, including termination.

Contracts

No employee, agent or officer of the Agency shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by public grant funds if a real or apparent conflict of interest would be involved. Such conflict would arise when the employee, agent or officer, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in the firm selected for an award. Violation of these procedures will result in disciplinary action, including termination.

Acceptance of Gratuities

Employees of the Agency and their immediate family members are prohibited from accepting gifts, rewards, money and gratuities from persons receiving benefits or services under any Agency-sponsored program; any person or Agency performing services under contract; or persons who are otherwise in a position to benefit from the actions of any employee, including

any vendor, contractor, individual or firm, or from any other source having or proposing to have a business relationship with the Agency.

However, employees may encourage donations to the Agency. Donations of supplies, intended for the Agency, are to be accepted or rejected by an authorized Agency staff.

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, including termination.

Direct Action

No employee of the Agency or volunteer engaged in carrying out Agency-sponsored programs shall, while in the performance of duties plan, participate in, or provide assistance to others in carrying out any form of direct action which is in violation of federal, state, or local law; or plan, participate in, or provide assistance to others in carrying out any direct action which is designed with the intent to involve physical violence, destruction of property, or physical injury to persons. Employees should do what they can to prevent such activities and to discourage any direct action as stipulated above which is violent in manner or whose purpose is calculated to incite civil disorders. Any employee who participates in direct action shall be terminated immediately.

Political Activity

Employment in this Agency may not be offered as a consideration or reward for the political support for any political party or candidate for public office, nor may any person, as an employee, engage in partisan political activity.

An employee of the Agency may continue his/her employment with the Agency after filing a declaration of candidacy for a partisan public office, providing such employee conducts his/her political activities on his/her own time and refrains from using any materials, supplies, equipment or other Agency resources in conducting his/her political activities.

Partisan political activity of any kind during work hours is strictly prohibited.

Lobbying

Lobbying may be carried out by members of this Agency in so far as they do not violate guidelines of funding sources. Agency employees may not participate as an Agency representative in the following: any activity planned and carried out in such a manner as to disrupt the orderly conduct of business Congress or any other legislative body. These activities include, but are not limited to, any disruptive action; or any demonstration, rally, picketing, or other form of direct action aimed at the family or home of a member of a legislative body for the purpose of influencing his/her action as a member of that body or any campaign of advertising carried on through commercial media for the purpose of influencing the passage or defeat of legislation.

The above restrictions are not intended to limit the rights of individuals to express their personal views on public issues so long as they do so in their capacity as private citizens not as Agency employees.

Circulation of Petitions

No petition shall be circulated by employees during working hours except those which pertain to Agency matters. Authorization for personnel to circulate a petition during working hours must be signed by the Executive Director or his/her designee prior to its circulation. Such authorization shall be signed upon a facsimile of the petition which is to be circulated and the circulated petition must be in the same form as authorized.

Drug Free Workplace Policy

This Agency has contracts with the federal government to administer programs that are maintained with federal funds. We recognize the requirements of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988. The primary goal of the Agency is to maintain a safe, productive, and drug-free working environment for all employees. The Agency has established the following policy:

- It is a violation of Agency policy for any employee to use, possess, sell, trade, offer for sale, or offer to buy illegal drugs or otherwise engage in the illegal use of drugs on or off the job.
- It is a violation of Agency policy for anyone to report to work under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol.
- It is a violation of Agency policy for anyone to use prescription drugs illegally. However, nothing in this policy precludes the appropriate use of prescription or non-prescription medications.
- Any employee must notify the employer, within five calendar days, if he or she is convicted of a criminal drug violation.
- The employer may conduct a “reasonable suspicion” drug test on any employee based on a belief that the employee has violated any policy as outlined above.
- Employees may receive information on drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation programs by contacting the Human Resources Director or the Agency healthcare provider if they are enrolled in the plan.

Violations of this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

All offers of employment will be conditional, pending a satisfactory drug test. Any applicant with a confirmed positive test will be denied employment. Refusal to submit to a drug test will be interpreted as a voluntary withdrawal of application for employment.

Smoke Free Workplace Policy

In compliance with the Florida Clean Indoor Air Act, smoking is prohibited in all indoor areas, including any buildings or facilities owned or leased by this agency including all Head Start centers and all playgrounds and outdoors areas where children are located. Appropriate signs shall be prominently displayed in conspicuous places prohibiting indoor smoking by anyone at any of the facilities. In addition, for outdoor activities, field trips, home visits, etc., parents and volunteers will be advised in the parent manuals, during orientations, on permission forms and prior to the outset of the event.

In addition, smoking is not allowed in any agency-owned or leased automotive vehicles. There will be no smoking in personal vehicles when transporting persons on CACAA-Head Start authorized business. This includes time immediately prior to transporting these persons.

Smoking is not permitted during outdoor activities when children are present. Smoking is not permitted during field trips, and adults will not leave children for smoking breaks. Employees will not smoke and will request that parents and clients do not smoke during home visits. Parents and clients will be informed of the smoke-free request when the visit is being arranged.

The designated smoking area in all Agency facilities shall be outside the building at least 50 feet away from the building and in the case of Head Start at least 100 feet from the playgrounds or outdoors where children may be located. In addition, Head Start staff must smoke out of sight of the children.

During outdoor activities, the designated smoking area shall be out of sight of the children and at least 100 feet away from the activity area.

Any staff member violating this policy will be subject to discipline, including termination, and will be responsible for any fines levied for violating this policy.

Acquired Immune Disease Syndrome (Aids) Policy

The Agency is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy work environment for all employees. Consistent with this commitment, the Agency will treat AIDS and/or ARC the same as other illnesses in terms of all our employee policies and benefits, such as group health and life insurance, disability leaves of absence, and other disability benefits.

Currently, there is no evidence that such diseases are casually transmitted in ordinary social or occupational settings or circumstances. Therefore, subject to changes in available medical information and/or specific conditions involving the potential for transmission of these diseases, it is the policy of the Agency that employees with such diseases or any of their related conditions may continue to work as long as they are able, with any reasonable accommodation required by law, to perform the essential functions of their positions.

Employees who are affected by AIDS and/or ARC or any other life-threatening illness will be treated with compassion and understanding in dealing with their personal crises. Co-workers will be expected not to refuse to work or withhold their services for fear of contracting such diseases by working with such an affected employee and not to harass or otherwise discriminate against such a person.

Employees who would like to be provided with additional information AIDS and/or ARC should contact the Human Resources Director.

Workplace Violence Policy

Workplace violence can be any act of physical violence, threats of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening, disruptive behavior that occurs at the work site. Workplace violence can affect or involve employees, visitors, vendors or clients. Workplace violence is not accepted nor tolerated by the Agency. Every employee is responsible for reporting instances of workplace violence in accordance with this policy. Every supervisor is responsible for responding promptly and thoroughly to allegations of workplace violence in accordance with the terms of this policy.

All persons at the Agency should report instances of workplace violence. In true emergency situations where the threat of harm is imminent, employees should call 911 and request immediate assistance from the authorities.

In non- emergency situations, workplace violence should be reported first to an immediate supervisor. If the immediate supervisor is contributing to the risk of the workplace violence, the incident should be reported to the Executive Director immediately.

The agency takes potential and actual threats of workplace violence very seriously and will take immediate disciplinary action, including termination, when such threats occur. As a result, employees accepting employment with the Agency accept and agree that they will be subjected to such disciplinary action if they make verbal or written threats of violence to other employees.

Guns in the Workplace

In accordance with Section 790.25(7)(a), Florida Statutes and Section 65C-22.002(1)(e), Florida Administrative Code, no firearms or weapons shall be allowed within any building or conveyance on property owned or leased by Capital Area Community Action Agency, or upon any person located on Agency remises (excluding federal, state or local law enforcement officers).

Agency Credit Card

Permission from the Executive Director is required for any employee to make purchases on the Agency credit card. Employees are only authorized to use the Agency credit card for Agency needs within the scope of their responsibilities. The use of the Agency's credit card for an unauthorized use or purchase is strictly prohibited.

Any unauthorized use will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. In addition, the employee will be responsible for reimbursement of any unauthorized charges. Such reimbursement may be made by the employee in a one-time, lump sum reimbursement. Should the employee fail to do so such reimbursement will be withheld from any compensation due to the employee in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Action regarding reduction in pay. Failure to reimburse the Agency for unauthorized charges may result in legal action in which the employee will be responsible for all legal fees as well as reimbursement of the charges.

Agency Cell Phones

Cell phones may be distributed to employees in positions where the employee is very mobile and may have limited access to land-based telephone services, and timely, critical two-way communication is required by the employee, and in case of an emergency. A cell phone may not be used as a substitute for an Agency land-based telephone.

Cell phones are provided for necessary, official Agency business purposes only and cannot be used for personal calls. Employees will be responsible for the safekeeping, care and custody of the cell phone assigned to them. Cell phones issued and paid for by the Agency are the property of the Agency.

Departments are responsible for reviewing employee call detail reports. Annually, at the beginning of the Agency's fiscal year, the Agency's IT specialist will review the past year's billing data from Fiscal to ensure that the Agency's service contract is meeting Agency needs. All requests for additional phones or changes to an existing agency cell phone contract must be submitted in writing to the IT Specialist for review and recommendation, and must be signed by the employee's supervisor and the Department Director.

Employees to whom cell phones are assigned are required to turn in the property to his/her immediate supervisor or the Human Resources Director, upon leaving the employment of the agency. The cell phone can only be reassigned with the written approval of the Department Director. The department, Fiscal, and the IT Specialist will maintain a current written record of all agency cell phones, numbers, and the employees to which they are assigned. Any changes must be provided, after approval, to all three parties. Violation of the Agency's cell phone policy will result in disciplinary action, including termination. In addition, employees will be financially responsible for costs incurred which are not the direct result of their job requirements and the specific purpose for which the phone was issued.

Return of Agency Property

All tools, documents, keys, or other material provided to employees by the Agency are Agency property. Upon resignation or termination, the employee must return all such property by executing the acknowledgement form attached to this manual, the employee accepts and understands that it may be used as an enforceable promissory note. If the employee fails to return any equipment, money, credit cards, or other property assigned to the employee during employment, the Agency may first withhold the value of such amount from any final compensation due to the employee including paychecks, accrued leave, or any other such earned benefit. If such compensation does not exist or is insufficient to offset the value of the property due, the employee understands and agrees that the Agency has legal entitlement and will be responsible for such value and the cost of all attorney fees and costs expended in pursuing such property.

Personal Cell Phone Usage

The Agency is aware that employees utilize their personal cell phones in the workplace. However, if not properly attended cell phones can be a distraction in the workplace. To ensure effective customer service and professionalism employees are asked to leave cell phones on the vibrate mode during work hours. Cell phones should be left securely in the employees' office during meetings, and out of sight while servicing a client. On the unusual occasion of an emergency or anticipated emergency that requires immediate attention, the cell phone may be carried to the meeting on vibrate mode.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND GRIEVANCES

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action may be taken against an employee for a number of reasons, such as:

- Insubordination
- Excessive tardiness
- Abuse of sick leave
- Excessive unexcused absences
- Unsatisfactory job performance
- Drinking alcoholic beverages/using drugs during working hours
- Prohibited political activities, direct action or lobbying
- Acceptance of gratuities
- Discussing confidential matters of the Agency with another employee or a person outside of the Agency
- Falsification of travel and other reimbursement claims
- Falsification of time and attendance reports
- Violation of outside employment provisions
- Any other conduct on the job not in keeping with acceptable standards of behavior generally associated with employment.

The following types of disciplinary action may be used as necessary in enforcing the Agency's work rules and standards of conduct. The specific type and degree of disciplinary action shall be determined by the nature of the offense.

Corrective Interview: When an employee has violated rules or regulations of the Agency or for some other reason requires supervisory attention, the first step taken will be a corrective interview. In this interview, the employee's supervisor shall discuss clearly and frankly with the employee the reason for the interview. The supervisor, as part of this interview, shall offer to the employee some specific suggestions for corrective action on the part of the employee. The reason for the interview and the action recommended shall be recorded by the supervisor with a copy given to the employee.

Reprimand: An employee may be reprimanded by his/her supervisor for:

- Misconduct
- Non-performance
- Insubordination
- Conduct casting a bad reflection on the Agency
- Attendance violations
- Violation of published regulations

The written reprimand shall be completed by the supervisor and reviewed by the employee. The reprimand shall be routed for signatures and placed in the employee's personnel file as a permanent record. Reprimands shall be maintained for a period of two years in the employee's personnel file.

The Executive Director may establish punitive measures in addition to the written reprimand.

An employee can appeal a reprimand by following the Agency's policy for appeals within five days after receipt of the reprimand. Upon the receipt of the third reprimand, the employee shall be dismissed without recourse.

Probation: This action shall be considered a severe warning issued in writing by the immediate supervisor and the Office of the Executive Director. The written notice shall clearly explain the reasons for the probation, the standards for judging the employee's improvement, and the action to be taken if the deficiencies are not corrected within the probation period. The written notice shall be prepared by the employee's immediate supervisor and approved by the program supervisor and the Executive Director. The original shall be given to the employee, a copy retained by the supervisor, and a copy filed in the employee's personnel folder. However, should the employee choose to appeal, the probation will not begin until after all appeals, up to the Executive Director level, have been heard and ruled upon through the agency's appeals process, within the set time frames. Should the employee waive his/her right to appeal, the probation will become effective the day following approval by the Executive Director. Immediate suspension is in order when the employee presents an "immediate" danger to others, or the behavior is so egregious that a delay would cause disruption to the agency's ability to carry out its mission/business.

Suspension with Pay: A supervisor may recommend to the Executive Director that an employee be suspended with pay until such time that a meeting can be held with the Executive Director to determine final form of disciplinary action. A written notice of suspension, approved by the supervisor and the Executive Director, shall be given the suspended employee at the time he/she is notified of the suspension, and a copy retained in the employee's personnel folder.

Suspension Without Pay: When an employee commits an infraction of an agency policy that warrants disciplinary action of suspension without pay, the supervisor must prepare in writing a recommendation to the program director, i.e., Head Start Director. After a review and investigation of the incident(s) if the program director agrees with the recommendation, he/she will prepare a written recommendation with back-up documentation for the approval of the Executive Director. Notice of the recommendation will be provided to the employee to allow for a response or adequate time to submit and appear. The effective date of the suspension without pay will only begin after all appeals, up to the level of the Executive Director, have been filed by the employee in the proper manner, within the proper time frame, have been heard and ruled upon. If the recommendation is upheld in the final appeals hearing, the employee will be notified and the effective date will be the day following the decision. Should an employee waive the

right to appeal, the suspension without pay will become effective the day following approval by the Executive Director.

Should the appeal proceed to the Personnel Committee of the Board and the disciplinary action is overturned, the employee will be paid for the time required to be off work without pay, up to the date of the ruling.

Demotion: Any employee may be demoted to a lower position by the Executive Director in cases in which supervisors can document poor performance, or in the case of Head Start, the Head Start Director with the approval of the Policy Council and the Executive Director. A demoted employee shall be paid at the appropriate salary rate for the position to which he/she is demoted. A demoted employee shall be permitted the right to appeal as outlined for a discharged employee. If a demoted employee elects to resign, he/she shall be paid per instructions for resigning employees.

Involuntary Termination: The Executive Director or his/her designee has the authority to place an employee on probation or to suspend without pay, but only the Executive Director may terminate an employee.

Employees being dismissed as a result of major infractions of the Agency's policies shall be given a written notice of discharge two weeks prior to the effective date of discharge, except when in the judgment of the Executive Director, the infraction is of such magnitude that keeping the employee on the job shall be detrimental to the Agency. In the latter case, termination may become effective immediately or the employee may be suspended pending termination. An employee may contest a discharge action by following the appeals procedure. The Head Start Policy Council must approve all hires and terminations for the Head Start Program before final approval by the Executive Director

Employees terminated involuntarily are generally entitled to any pay due, plus payment for unused accrued annual leave, when proper exit procedures have been followed. No payment is allowed for unused accrued sick leave. Employees who use sick leave during their "notice" period must provide a medical excuse in order to be paid for the absent sick days.

Grievance/Complaint Policy

It is the policy of the Agency to make reasonable and proper efforts to correct the causes of employee dissatisfaction at the earliest possible time. Efforts shall be made to resolve such disputes informally, if possible. The presentation of formal grievances and appeals is not to be prevented or discouraged since this is the final and necessary means of solving disputes.

This section sets forth the policies and procedures for processing employee grievances and appeals at the Agency. A grievance may be filed as a result of an adverse personnel action which is not the result of a discriminatory act, such as disapproval of leave, relationship with supervisors and other employees, promotion, demotion, suspension letters or reprimands, and scheduling of overtime.

Grievance Procedures Time Frame

1. Initial notification to employee of infraction(s) and recommended disciplinary action.
2. Within five working days of notification of action, employees wishing to appeal must notify the supervisor in writing of such appeal.
3. Within five working days of notification of appeal, a meeting must be held with the employee and the supervisor.
4. If the issue is not resolved in the meeting, within five working days a written grievance must be filed by the employee to the next higher authority.
5. The next higher authority shall have five working days to resolve the grievance.
6. If the issue is still not resolved, the employee must notify the next higher authority, i.e. the Executive Director, or in the case of Head Start, the Head Start Director within five working days of the employee's appeal.
7. A conference with the next higher authority will be scheduled within five working days to discuss the grievance with the employee and all parties involved.
8. Head Start employees wishing to appeal the decision of the Head Start Director shall within five working days notify in writing the chairperson of the Policy Council of their appeal.
9. The Policy Council will schedule a meeting within ten working days to resolve the grievance. The written decision of the Policy Council will be furnished to the employee within five working days.
10. If the Policy Council cannot resolve it, the grievance would be presented to the Executive Director within the time frame listed in 6 above.
11. If the Executive Director's decision is appealed, the employee may within ten working days of the decision, file a written request for a hearing before the Personnel Committee of the Board of Directors.
12. Except for the issues of harassment, discrimination or theft, the Personnel Committee shall consider the grievance within ten working days and may call the employee, his/her supervisor or other witnesses to evaluate the grievance to determine if the proper procedures were followed in the previous hearings.

13. For the issues of harassment, discrimination or theft, the Personnel Committee shall consider the grievance within ten working days and should review the substance of the allegation and make appropriate decisions. The Committee may call the employee, his/her supervisor or other witnesses.
14. The written decision of the Personnel Committee shall be put into copies to be forwarded to the aggrieved employee, his/he supervisor and the Executive Director with a copy for the employee's personnel file.
15. If the employee wishes to appeal further, he/she may appeal the Decision to the Board of Directors. This decision must be filed, in writing, within ten working days after notification of the Personnel Committee's decision. The issue will be discussed at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. The aggrieved employee shall be allowed to attend to present any additional evidence not presented at the previous hearings to the board upon completion of listening to the tape of the proceedings. A final decision shall be determined by a majority vote with a quorum present. The Board's decision must be forwarded to the employee within five working days following the meeting, with a copy to the employee's supervisor and the Executive Director.

If further action is desired by the aggrieved employee, he/she shall have the right to appeal directly to the applicable government agency or funding source.

No adverse action shall be taken against any employee because he/she has filed a grievance, testified, asserted or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing.

A full record of employee grievance proceedings shall be made and retained by the agency for a period of four years following the resolution of the grievance.