

# **I-195 Redevelopment District Employee Handbook**

PROVIDENCE  
INNOVATION & DESIGN  
DISTRICT

# Welcome

Dear Employee:

Welcome to the I-195 Redevelopment District or “The District,” which is how we refer to our organization internally and throughout this handbook.

We are delighted that you have chosen to join our organization and hope that you will enjoy a long and successful career with us. Our goal is to attract exceptional performers and to give them the training, tools, and resources to be highly successful. As you become familiar with our culture and mission, we hope you will take advantage of opportunities to enhance your career and further The District’s goals.

You are joining a quasi-public state agency (legally defined as a public instrumentality and body corporate and politic). Our mission is to foster economic development on Rhode Island’s 195 land and beyond and generate job creation opportunities that embrace the city’s demographics by creating an environment that encourages high-value users to build well-designed structures that enhance the value of surrounding neighborhoods and augment the sense of place. Our employees use their creativity and talent to help us achieve this mission. We sincerely hope you will take pride in being an important part of our success.

Please take time to review the policies contained in this handbook. If you have questions, please feel free to reach out to your immediate supervisor.

Again, welcome!

**The District Leadership Team**

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## **Diversity and Inclusion Statement**

At “The District” we are open to all points of view. We want our diversity to drive our innovation. We provide a culture where difference is expected and valued so that we all grow and flourish in our careers regardless of who we are and what we bring to the table. We foster a spirit of serving the greater good and impacting future lives. Our spirit is empowered by our differences.

## **Employment at Will**

Your employment is “at-will.” All employees are at will, which means they may be terminated at any time and for any reason, with or without advance notice. Employees are also free to leave at any time. Any employment relationship other than at-will must be submitted in writing and signed by The District’s Executive Director.

## **Employee Suggestions**

All employees are encouraged to offer suggestions and express their own creative and original ideas on methods and procedures that ultimately will:

- Improve efficiency
- Improve attitudes and working conditions
- Improve The District’s competitive position
- Improve productivity

We consider the ideas and suggestions of our employees to be one of our best sources for making The District the best workplace possible. Management desires to encourage ongoing efforts in creative thinking and originality so that we can maximize our potential.

## **Compensation & Work Schedule**

### **Attendance & Punctuality**

Regular and timely attendance is an essential function of every position at The District. Every employee is expected to attend work regularly and report to work on time.

If you are unable to report to work on time for any reason, telephone your supervisor at least one hour in advance. If you do not call in an absence in advance, it will be considered unexcused.

Unsatisfactory attendance, including reporting late or leaving early, may be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

### **Breaks**

Employees are entitled to a 15-minute break for rest twice each day, spaced evenly throughout the work period. Employees are also entitled to a 30-minute unpaid break for meals during each work period. Breaks may be scheduled at staggered times to allow for department coverage.

## **General Pay Information**

Certain deductions will be made in accordance with federal and state laws. In addition, The District makes available certain voluntary deductions as part of The District's benefits program.

## **Overtime**

Because of the nature of work, employees may be asked to work overtime on weekends or holidays or additional hours during the regular workday and are expected to comply with such requests.

Overtime compensation is paid to all nonexempt employees at one and one-half times their regular rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week.

If you are nonexempt, you must receive authorization from your manager before working overtime. After you have worked overtime, you must enter it on your time record no later than the day after it is accrued.

Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Time taken for lunch or dinner is not included as time worked for purposes of computing overtime. Time off on holidays, sick leave, vacation leave, personal leave, or any leave of absence will not be factored in as hours worked when calculating overtime.

## **Pay Schedule**

Employees will be paid every other Wednesday. If the regular payday falls on a holiday, payday will be the last regular workday before the holiday.

The pay week starts on Monday and includes all work you perform up to the close of business on Friday.

Additionally:

- You will be paid your first pay period's wages during the 2nd pay period.
- If a paycheck is lost or stolen, notify your supervisor immediately.

## **Performance and Salary Review Policy**

### **Purpose**

The performance review process provides a means for discussing, planning, and reviewing the performance of each employee. Performance reviews influence salaries and promotions.

### **Eligibility**

All full and part-time employees are provided quarterly and/or annual performance reviews.

### **Performance Review Schedule**

At a minimum, performance reviews will be conducted on an annual basis by the employee's supervisor.

### **Salary Increases**

A performance review does not always result in a salary increase. The employee's overall performance and salary level relative to position responsibilities must be evaluated along with budget considerations to determine whether a salary increase is warranted and must be preapproved at the discretion of the Executive Director in consultation with The District's Chair.

## **Compensation**

The Executive Director in consultation with The District's Chair has authority to set employee salaries within the ranges approved by the Commission for each position. The Executive Director has the right to change, modify or approve exceptions to this policy at any time with or without notice.

## **Employee Classifications**

There are several different types of employees who are employed by The District.

**Probation Period:** All employees, upon hire, during the first 90 days of employment or any extension of that period may be eligible for some, but not all, company benefits as outlined in this Handbook. Once an employee has successfully completed their probationary period without warning and/or any other employment related issue they are no longer considered a Probationary Employee. Once the probationary period ends, company benefits entitled by the employee including sick leave will be retroactive to start date.

**Regular Full-Time Employees:** Employees who are regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week. Regular full-time employees are eligible for all company benefits, subject to the terms and conditions of the applicable plans.

**Regular Part-Time Employees:** Employees who are regularly scheduled to work less than 30 hours per week. Part-time employees are eligible for some, but not all, company benefits, subject to the terms and conditions of the applicable plans.

**Temporary Employees & Consultants:** Employees who are hired for a specific task or project, or on an as-needed basis. While they do receive all statutory benefits, temporary employees are not eligible for company benefits.

In addition to the above classifications, employees are categorized as either “**exempt**” or “**non-exempt.**”

**Non-Exempt Employees:** Employees who are eligible for overtime after 40 hours under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act and/or applicable state wage/hour laws. They are entitled to an overtime premium for overtime work following state and federal law.

**Exempt Employees:** Employees whose work duties exempt them from the overtime provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act and any applicable state wage/hour laws. Employees classified as exempt receive a salary that is intended to cover all hours worked.

## **Payroll Deductions**

It is The District's policy to compensate employees in compliance with the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and applicable state law. If you are classified as a nonexempt employee, you will receive overtime for all hours worked over 40 hours per workweek, as required by law.

If you are classified as an exempt employee, you will be paid on a salary basis. This means your salary is a predetermined amount that does not vary based on the quantity or quality of work you perform in a given pay period. Certain deductions, if permitted by federal and state law, may be withheld from your salary. These include (but are not limited to) deductions for:

- Social security
- Federal, state, and local taxes
- Participation in The District-sponsored benefit and retirement plans



- Absence from work for one or more full days for personal reasons, other than sickness or disability
- Absence from work for one or more full days because of sickness or disability (including work-related accidents), taken in compliance with The District's sickness or disability policy
- Full or partial days not worked during the initial or terminal week of employment
- Unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act, whether taken in full or partial day segments

However, deductions from exempt employees' salary may not be made for absences from work caused by The District or by its operating requirements (for example, if The District closes on a scheduled workday), if you are ready, willing, and able to work, nor for any other reasons prohibited by federal or state law.

If you have questions about payment of overtime, deductions from your salary, or any other issues regarding your rate of pay, you should contact your supervisor. If you believe that The District has improperly failed to pay you for overtime or that your salary has been subject to improper deductions, you should immediately report your concern to your supervisor or manager. If you feel uncomfortable reporting to your supervisor (or if you have not received a prompt and fully acceptable reply), you should immediately contact the Executive Director. Every report will be fully investigated and if a violation is found, corrective action will be taken, including but not limited to full reimbursement of inappropriately withheld amounts.

It is against The District's policy to retaliate against any employee who makes a complaint in good faith according to this policy. Any form of retaliation that occurs in violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

### **Timekeeping Rules for Non-Exempt Employees**

The District strives to maintain strict compliance with state and federal wage laws. The rules below are designed to help The District with FLSA and to ensure that all employees are paid fairly and legally. Failure to follow these rules may subject you to discipline up to and including termination. These rules apply to non-exempt employees only. If you are unsure of your status as exempt vs. non-exempt, please ask your supervisor. Non-exempt employees must:

- Keep an accurate record of all of your work hours in the manner designated by The District. Employees should maintain an accurate record of their hours.
- Submit your accurate timesheet to your supervisor promptly at the end of each pay period.
- Obtain your supervisor's approval before working over and above your regularly scheduled work hours. This includes time incurred before or after your regular shift, during unpaid meal breaks, or after hours at your home or another off-site location. If you do perform any work outside of your regularly scheduled hours, you should record the time accurately on your time records.
- Do not carry over hours of work from one day to the next, or from one week to the next. Your time records should reflect the exact hours worked for each day indicated.
- Failure to follow these rules will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

## **Work Eligibility Records**

The federal government requires that within three business days of your first day of work, you must complete an employment eligibility verification form (I-9 Form) and show us documentation proving your identity and your eligibility to work in the United States.

If you have previously worked for The District, you need only provide this information if it has been more than three years since you last completed an I-9 Form for us or if your current I-9 Form is no longer valid.

I-9 Forms are maintained separately from other personnel records and are treated as confidential to the extent possible. If you need additional information about the I-9 Form, please contact the Executive Director.

## **Work Hours**

The District follows a work schedule of 40 hours per week. The normal workweek is Monday through Friday.

Your supervisor or manager may establish alternative hours.

## **Telecommute and Remote Work**

The District considers telecommuting to be a viable alternative work arrangement in cases where individual, job, and supervisor characteristics or situation are best suited to such an arrangement. Telecommuting allows employees to work at home, on the road, or in a satellite location for all or part of their regular workweek. Telecommuting is a voluntary work alternative that may be appropriate for some employees and some jobs in certain circumstances. It is not an entitlement, it is not a company-wide benefit, and it in no way changes the original terms and conditions of employment.

## **Understanding the Process**

- Either an employee or a supervisor can suggest telecommuting as a possible work arrangement. All requests must be in writing and submitted to the Executive Director for review and approval.
- Telecommuting can be informal, such as working from home for a short-term project or on the road during business travel, or a formal, permanent arrangement. All informal telecommuting arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing first on the business needs of the organization. See also the Inclement Weather policy for additional details. Such informal arrangements are not the focus of this policy.
- Unless otherwise required by law, individuals requesting formal telecommuting arrangements must have been employed with The District for a minimum of 12 consecutive months and must have exhibited satisfactory performance, in accordance with the company's performance appraisal process.
- The District will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs (including hardware, software, phone and data lines, or other equipment for each arrangement, which is subject to change at any time). The District accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. Equipment supplied by the organization is to be used for business purposes only. The telecommuter should sign for the inventory of all office property and agrees to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Employees agree to follow our Property and Equipment policy. Upon termination

of employment, all company property will be returned immediately to the company.

- Consistent with the organization's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary company and stakeholder information accessible from their home office. Steps include the use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, up-to-date antivirus and malware software, and any other steps appropriate for the job and the environment.
- The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within their home for work purposes. The District will not be responsible for costs associated with the initial setup of the employee's home office. However, The District will reimburse the employee for pre-approved business-related expenses that are reasonably incurred following job responsibilities.
- The employee and manager will agree on the length of time and/or the number of days of telecommuting allowed each week, the work schedule the employee will customarily maintain, and the manner and frequency of regular communication. The employee agrees to be accessible by phone or other means of communication within a reasonable period during the agreed-on work schedule. There may be instances when a telecommuting employee may have to attend or conduct video meetings. In these cases, meetings should be conducted professionally and handled similarly to in-person meetings. Please note employees may be required to attend in-person meetings or come into the office on scheduled work from home days.
- Telecommuting employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to record all hours worked in a manner designated by the organization. Telecommuting employees will be held to a higher standard of compliance than office-based employees due to the nature of the work arrangement. Hours worked more than those specified per day and per workweek, in accordance with state and federal requirements, will require the advance approval of the supervisor. Failure to comply with this requirement can result in the immediate end of the telecommuting agreement. Employees under this arrangement will have access to time off with pay and other benefits outlined in their original employment agreement.
- The employee is solely responsible for taxes and other legal implications for the business use of their home based on Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and state and local government restrictions.
- Employees entering into a telecommuting agreement may be required to forfeit the use of a personal office or workstation in favor of a shared arrangement to maximize organization office space needs.
- The availability of telecommuting as a flexible work arrangement for employees can be discontinued at any time at the discretion of The District. Every effort will be made to provide 30 days' notice of such a change to accommodate commuting, childcare, and other situations that may arise from such a change. There may be instances, however, when no notice is possible.

## Workplace Standards

The District expects every employee to adhere to the highest standards of job performance and personal conduct, including individual involvement with The District personnel and outside business contacts.

The District reserves the right to discipline or discharge any employee for violating any District policy, practice, or rule of conduct. The following list is intended to give you notice of our expectations and standards. However, it does not include every type of unacceptable behavior that can or will result in disciplinary action. Be aware that The District retains the discretion to determine the nature and extent of any discipline based upon the circumstances of each case.

Employees may be disciplined or terminated for poor job performance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Unsatisfactory quality or quantity of work
- Repeated unexcused absences or lateness
- Failing to follow instructions or District procedures, or
- Failing to follow established safety regulations
- Falsifying an employment application or any other District records or documents
- Failing to record working time accurately or recording a co-worker's timesheet
- Insubordination or other refusals to perform
- Using vulgar, profane, or obscene language, including any communication or action that violates our policy against harassment and other unlawful forms of discrimination
- Disorderly conduct, fighting, or other acts of violence
- Misusing, destroying, or stealing District property or another person's property
- Possessing, entering with, or using weapons on District property
- Possessing, selling, using, or reporting to work with alcohol, controlled substances, or illegal drugs present in the employee's system, on District property, or on District time
- Violating conflict of interest rules
- Disclosing or using confidential or proprietary information without authorization
- Violating The District's computer or software use policies, and
- Being convicted of a crime that indicates unfitness for a job or presents a threat to The District or its employees in any way
- Lying or engaging in misrepresentation and/or fraud

## **Equal Employment Opportunity Policy**

The District does not discriminate in the employment of staff, including the hiring, promotion, and termination of employment, benefits, and terms and conditions of employment based on a person's race or color, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information and any other status protected by law, or national origin. The District expects its staff to fully support and comply with its Equal Employment Opportunity policies.

## **Anti-Discrimination & Harassment**

The District prohibits the harassment of any employee or stakeholder of The District based on his or her:

- Race or color;
- Religion;
- Sex;
- Disability;
- Age;
- Sexual Orientation;
- Gender Identity or Expression;
- National Origin; or
- Genetic Information
- Any other status protected by Law

The District will not tolerate unlawful harassment by or toward any employee or stakeholder. Incidents of this nature are considered a serious offense.

This policy applies to all persons involved in the operation of The District, including management and staff as well as supervisors and co-workers. The District will also take all reasonable steps to prevent or eliminate harassment by or toward non-employees, including partners, vendors, suppliers, and anyone else who may have job-related contact with our employees.

### **Sexual Harassment Defined**

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature or related to a person's sex when:

- submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment standing or opportunities; or
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment-related decisions affecting that individual; or
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or creating a hostile, intimidating, humiliating, or offensive environment.

Such behavior may involve pressure from a person of either sex, against a person of the opposite sex or same-sex, regardless of sexual behavior.

## **Examples of Sexual Harassment**

While it is not possible to list all circumstances that constitute sexual harassment, the following are examples of conduct that, if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment, depending upon the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwelcome and unwanted sexual jokes, language, epithets, advances, or propositions;
- Written or oral abuse of a sexual nature, sexually degrading or vulgar words to describe an individual;
- Display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, posters, or cartoons;
- Unwelcome and unwanted comments about an individual's body, sexual prowess, or sexual deficiencies;
- Asking questions about sexual conduct;
- Harassment consistently targeted at only one sex, even if the content of the verbal abuse is not sexual;
- Unwelcome touching, leering, whistling, or suggestive, insulting, or obscene comments or gestures;
- Demanding sexual favors in exchange for favorable reviews, assignments, promotions, continued employment, or promises of the same;
- Assault or coerced sexual acts.

## **Other Forms of Harassment**

The District similarly prohibits all offensive behavior directed at a person's race, ethnicity, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, or genetic information ("protected status"). Racial, ethnic, or other harassment or conduct that has the effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance and creating a hostile, intimidating, or offensive working environment.

Actions constituting such prohibited conduct include, among other things:

Displaying material that is demeaning to or derogatory of a person because of his or her protected status, including material intended as humor; bringing to work for the purpose of sharing or communicating with other employees any material that is demeaning to or derogatory of a person because of his or her protected status.

## **Filing a Discrimination/Harassment Complaint with The District**

It is the goal of this policy and its procedures to create an environment in which people who have experienced harassment or who have concerns about harassment or discrimination issues will feel free to discuss those concerns with someone in a position to do something about them. Upon receipt of a complaint, either oral or written, an investigation will be undertaken, and prompt corrective action will be taken wherever necessary. If your initial complaint is oral, we may ask you to write down all the details, including facts, the names of individuals involved, and the names of any witnesses, if applicable, to assist in the investigation. Prompt reporting is important, as it allows The District to investigate while the facts are fresh and to take prompt corrective action. If you believe that you have been the victim of discrimination, harassment, or offensive communications you should use the following complaint procedure:

The District designates the Executive Director to serve as its Investigative Officer for sexual harassment, discrimination, and retaliation issues. If you have a complaint of sexual harassment and/or retaliation, you should contact the Executive Director, who may appoint a designee to assist in handling sexual harassment /retaliation complaints. Should your complaint be against the Executive Director, you should contact The District's Chairperson, who may appoint a designee to assist in handling sexual harassment/retaliation complaints.

Each employee is responsible for cooperating in any investigation of alleged harassment if requested to do so by the person conducting the investigation. All employees have the responsibility and duty to report any incidents of harassment to the Executive Director to allow The District to investigate and take corrective action as soon as possible to ensure that such incidents will not occur again. Any manager or supervisor or any employee promoted to this role who has knowledge of such behavior and fails to report it is subject to disciplinary action. All employees have the explicit responsibility and duty to report any sexual, racial, ethnic, or other harassment of our employees. Failure to report will subject that person to disciplinary action.

Those investigating for The District will preserve the confidentiality of facts and identities as much as practical. Those making a complaint or participating in an investigation are expected to maintain appropriate confidentiality and to act professionally and discreetly at all times. Retaliation or reprisal against any employee for making such a complaint or for filing any discrimination charge is strictly prohibited. Similarly, retaliation or reprisal against any employee participating in good faith in an investigation of a harassment complaint is strictly prohibited.

Anyone found to have engaged in such wrongful behavior will be subject to appropriate discipline, which may include termination.

### **Harassment by Nonemployees**

The District will also endeavor to protect employees, from reported harassment by nonemployees in the workplace, including partners, stakeholders, and suppliers.

### **Filing a Charge**

Employees have the right to file a charge of discrimination with the federal and state agencies responsible for enforcing the laws against illegal workplace harassment. The names and addresses of those agencies are listed below.

Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights  
180 Westminster Street  
Providence, RI 02903  
(401) 222-2661

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission  
One Congress St., Room 1001  
Boston, MA 02114  
(617) 565-3200

### **Discipline**

Any employee who is found, after appropriate investigation, to have violated any of The District's policies concerning discrimination or harassment will be subject to appropriate discipline. Discipline may consist of a range of actions, including but not limited to warning, reassignment, unpaid suspension, mandatory counseling, and termination of employment. The disciplinary action taken will depend on the seriousness of the violation, and the employee's overall disciplinary record.

Any non-employee found to have committed an act of harassment or discrimination may be removed or barred from The District's premises, or other appropriate action may be taken.

The District prohibits any form of retaliation against any employee for filing a bona fide complaint of harassment or discrimination or for assisting in the complaint investigation. Any employee with a concern that he or she is being retaliated against should immediately bring it to the attention of his or her supervisor. However, if, after investigating any complaint of unlawful discrimination or harassment, The District determines that an employee intentionally provided false information regarding the complaint, disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, may be taken against any individual who provided the false information, including the initial complainant.

It should be noted that while this policy sets forth our goal of providing a workplace that is free of harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit The District's authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace conduct which it deems to be unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the legal definition of sexual harassment.

### **Anti-bullying Policy**

The District is committed to providing all employees a healthy and safe work environment.

The District will ensure that procedures exist to allow complaints of bullying to be dealt with and resolved within The District, without limiting any person's entitlement to pursue resolution of their complaint with the relevant statutory authority. The District is committed to the elimination of all forms of bullying.

This policy applies to all employees of The District. It applies during normal working hours, at work-related or sponsored functions, and while traveling on work-related business. There will be no retaliation for anyone who in good faith alleges bullying.

### **Definitions**

Bullying is unwelcome or unreasonable behavior that demeans, intimidates, or humiliates people either as individuals or as a group. Bullying behavior is often persistent and part of a pattern, but it can also occur as a single incident. It is usually carried out by an individual but can also be an aspect of group behavior. Some examples of bullying behavior are:

#### **Verbal communication**

- Abusive and offensive language
- Insults
- Teasing
- Spreading rumor and innuendo
- Unreasonable criticism
- Trivializing of work and achievements

#### **Manipulating the work environment**

- Isolating people from normal work interaction
- Excessive demands
- Setting impossible deadlines

#### **Psychological manipulation**

- Unfairly blaming for mistakes
- Setting people up for failure
- Deliberate exclusion
- Practical jokes



- Belittling or disregarding opinions or suggestions
- Criticizing in public

## **Responsibilities**

### **Managers and supervisors**

Ensure that all employees are aware of the anti-bullying policy and procedures

- Ensure that any incident of bullying is dealt with regardless of whether a complaint of bullying has been received
- Provide leadership and role-modeling in appropriate professional behavior
- Respond promptly, sensitively, and confidentially to all situations where bullying behavior is observed or alleged to have occurred

### **Employees**

- Be familiar with and behave according to this policy
- If you are a witness to bullying, report incidents to your supervisor
- Where appropriate, speak to the alleged bully(ies) to object to the behavior

### **If you think you have been bullied**

- Any employee who feels he or she has been victimized by bullying is encouraged to report the matter to the Executive Director
- Where appropriate, an investigation will be undertaken, and disciplinary measures will be taken as necessary

## **Complaint Process**

The District recognizes that a peaceful work environment facilitates productivity and will continue to take the necessary steps to create a harmonious working environment. If a misunderstanding or conflict arises, every effort should be made to resolve the situation promptly. Should the situation persist, you are encouraged to bring the complaint to the attention of management by following the process below.

Discuss the situation with your immediate supervisor. If this is not sufficient or appropriate, then meet with the Executive Director, who may proceed to conduct an investigation into the situation and find possible remedies. Should your complaint be against the Executive Director, you should contact The District's Chairperson, who may appoint a designee to assist in handling sexual harassment/retaliation complaints.

**Note:** Complaints alleging violations of The District's discrimination/harassment policy should be handled in accordance with the policy entitled "Policy Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination."

Context is important in understanding bullying, particularly verbal communication. There is a difference between friendly insults exchanged by long-time work colleagues and comments that are meant to be or are taken as, demeaning. While care should be exercised, particularly if a person is reporting alleged bullying as a witness, it is better to be genuinely mistaken than to let actual bullying go unreported.

## **Policy Regarding Workplace Violence**

The District strictly prohibits workplace violence. Acts of violence and/or threats of violence, whether expressed or implied toward individuals in The District's workplace, are prohibited and will not be tolerated. All reports of incidents will be taken seriously and will be addressed appropriately.

This prohibition against threats and acts of violence (including domestic violence) applies to all persons involved in the operation of The District, including, but not limited to, employees, contract and temporary workers, and anyone else on District property.

## **Definition of Workplace Violence**

Workplace violence is any conduct that is severe, offensive, or intimidating enough to make an individual reasonably fear for his/her personal safety or the safety of family, friends, or property. Examples of workplace violence include, but are not limited to, threats or acts of violence or behavior that causes a reasonable fear or intimidation response that occurs:

- On The District premises, no matter what the relationship is between The District and the perpetrator or victim of the behavior
- Off The District premises, (1) where the perpetrator is someone who is acting as an employee or representative of The District at the time, (2) where the victim is an employee who is exposed to the conduct because of work The District, or (3) where there is a reasonable basis for believing that violence may occur against the targeted employee or others in the workplace.

Examples of conduct that may be considered threats or acts of violence under this policy include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Threatening physical or aggressive contact directed toward another individual or engaging in behavior that causes a reasonable fear of such contact.
- Threatening an individual or his/her family, friends, associates, or property with physical harm or behavior that causes a reasonable fear of such harm.
- Intentional destruction of or threat of destruction The District's or another's property.
- Harassing or threatening physical, verbal, written, or electronic communications, including verbal statements, phone calls, emails, letters, faxes, website materials, diagrams or drawings, gestures, and any other form of communication that causes a reasonable fear or intimidation response in others.
- *Stalking*. Stalking is defined as a pattern of conduct over a period of time, however short, which evidences a continuity of purpose and includes physical presence, telephone calls, emails, and any other type of communication sent by any means.
- Veiled threats of physical harm, or like intimidation or statements in any form, that lead to a reasonable fear of harm or an intimidation response.
- Communicating an endorsement of the inappropriate use of firearms or weapons of any kind.
- Possessing weapons of any type during working hours, whether such weapons are licensed or not, particularly firearms. The only exception is local, state, and federal law enforcement officers acting in the line of duty.

- *Domestic violence.* Domestic violence is defined as a pattern of coercive tactics carried out by an abuser against an intimate partner (the victim) to establish and maintain power and control over the victim. Where the abuser's tactics include any of the above-described conduct on The District's premises, this policy applies. Where such tactics include any of the above-described behaviors off District premises, this policy applies where the abuser is someone who is acting as an employee or representative of The District at the time; where the victim is an employee who is exposed to the conduct because of work for The District; or where there is a reasonable basis for believing that violence may occur against the victim or others in the workplace. The term "intimate partner" includes people who are legally married to each other, people who were once married to each other, people who have had a child together, people who live together or who have lived together, and people who have or have had a dating or sexual relationship, including same-sex couples.

Workplace violence does not refer to occasional comments of a socially acceptable nature. Such comments may include references to legitimate sporting activities, popular entertainment, or current events. Rather it refers to behavior that is personally offensive, threatening, or intimidating.

### **No Violence Policy**

Any employee who commits workplace violence will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and may also be subject to legal action, as appropriate.

Additionally, where an employee is convicted of a crime of violence or threat of violence under any criminal code provision, The District reserves the right to determine whether the conduct involved may adversely affect the business interests of The District and may implement corrective action, up to and including termination, as a result. Any employee convicted of such a crime must report the conviction to The District, absent a court order to the contrary. Failure to do so is a violation of this policy and subjects the employee to disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

### **Procedures for Reporting**

If an employee believes that a threat or act of violence has been made against that employee or others, the employee should report the details immediately to the Executive Director. Should your complaint be against the Executive Director, you should contact The District's Chairperson, who may appoint a designee to assist in handling sexual harassment/retaliation complaints.

Failure to appropriately report any threats or acts of violence in violation of this policy is itself a violation of this policy and may subject any employees involved to discipline, up to and including termination.

Retaliation against anyone for reporting an actual or suspected violation of this policy in good faith will not be tolerated and will subject the individual engaging in the retaliation to discipline, up to and including termination. Retaliation complaints may be reported in the same manner as violations of this policy are to be reported.

### **What to Expect from The District:**

All incidents of violence and threats of violence that are reported will be taken seriously and investigated. The District will decide whether its workplace violence policy has been violated and whether preventive or corrective action is appropriate. Any person who engages in a threat or violent action on The District property may be removed from the premises as quickly as safety permits and may be required, at The District's discretion, and remain off The District premises pending the outcome of an investigation into the incident.

When threats are made or acts of violence are committed by a District employee, a judgment will be made by The District as to what actions are appropriate, including possible medical evaluation and/or possible disciplinary action.

Once a threat has been substantiated, The District typically puts the threat maker on notice that he/she will be held accountable for his/her actions and then follows through with the implementation of a decisive and appropriate response.

Under this policy, decisions may be made, and actions are taken to prevent a threat from being carried out a violent act from occurring, or a threatening situation from developing. No existing District policy or procedure should be interpreted in a manner that prevents the above from occurring. On the contrary, The District retains complete discretion to act according to the circumstances presented.

**Important Note:** The District will make the sole determination of whether, and to what extent, threats or acts of violence will be acted upon by The District. In making this determination, The District may undertake a case-by-case analysis to ascertain whether there is a reasonable basis to believe that workplace violence has occurred. No provision of this policy shall alter the at-will nature of employment at The District.

### **Expectations of Targeted Employees**

**“Stay Away” or Restraining Orders:** The District reserves the right to seek “stay away” or restraining orders against any person who violates this policy to the fullest extent allowed by law. In such situations, we have an interest in assisting any employee who reports proceedings to obtain a “stay away” order, or the existence of such a “stay away” order that may apply to the workplace. Employees of The District who are targeted by the perpetrator may be asked to work with The District to obtain such an order against that individual. Likewise, employees who have previously sought a “stay away” order against a perpetrator and/or are protected by an existing “stay away” order must immediately notify The District of:

1. The existence of any such order and provide a copy of the order;
2. Any violations or attempted violations of the order;
3. Any changes to the order; and
4. The order’s being lifted.

### **Confidentiality and Safety**

These provisions on workplace violence are intended to protect the safety of all employees and are in no way intended to infringe on an employee’s privacy. The primary goal of these guidelines is to encourage an open, ongoing dialogue with the affected employee and those within The District who need to know, so The District can take reasonable steps to protect workplace safety. The District’s goal is to handle all situations with utmost sensitivity to the particular situation while meeting the goal of workplace safety and security.

### **Avoiding Endangerment**

Unfortunately, victims of violence sometimes choose not to cooperate with their employers’ attempts to help them and to protect other employees. For instance, such victims may decide not to tell their employers about threatened or actual domestic violence that may follow the employee into the workplace or may engage in behaviors that either provoke or continue the threat of such violence. We encourage

victims of violence to report such incidents to The District to assist The District in maintaining a safe workplace.

### **Safety Search Policy**

The District reserves the right to conduct workplace inspections for purposes of enforcing this policy. Any employee who refuses to permit such an inspection upon request will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. The discovery of any violation of any other District policy as a result of such a search will also result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Any illegal activity discovered during an inspection is subject to referral to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

### **District Property, Equipment, and Vehicles**

When using The District property, including computer equipment or hardware, exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines.

Notify your supervisor if any equipment or machines appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair. This prompt reporting could prevent the equipment's deterioration and could also help prevent injury to you or others. Should you have questions about the maintenance and care of any workplace equipment, ask your supervisor.

If you use or operate equipment improperly, carelessly, negligently, or unsafely, you may be disciplined or even discharged. In addition, you may be held financially responsible for any loss to The District because of such mistreatment.

### **District-Sponsored Social Events**

When authorized by The District, alcoholic beverages may be served at District-sponsored social events. Only those individuals legally permitted to consume alcoholic beverages may be served at such functions. However, no employee is obligated to consume alcohol at such events. At District functions, no employee should feel pressured to consume alcoholic beverages. If an employee chooses to drink alcohol during District events, the employee does so at his or her own risk. All employees are expected to maintain a high standard of professional and personal conduct at any District event. In addition, alcohol does not qualify as a reimbursable expense or an expense that may be incurred by The District.

The District reserves the right to arrange transportation for any employee suspected of being intoxicated at a District social event. The District reserves the right to cease allowing alcoholic beverages to be served to any employee whom it suspects is intoxicated or who behaves inappropriately at such functions. Managers and supervisors should remember that even at District social events, they should set the standard for acceptable, responsible behavior.

### **Dating in the Workplace**

Supervisors and employees under their supervision are strongly discouraged from forming romantic or sexual relationships. Such relationships can create the impression of impropriety in terms and conditions of employment and can interfere with productivity and the overall work environment. In the event District employees enter into such a relationship, the employees are required to notify the pertinent supervisor or director so he or she may take the steps necessary to prevent and address the concerns referred to in this section.

If you are unsure of the appropriateness of an interaction with another employee of The District, contact your supervisor for guidance. If you are encouraged or pressured to become involved with a stakeholder, partner, or employee in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable and is unwelcome, you should also notify your supervisor immediately. No stakeholder or employee of The District has the right to subject any employee to sexual or other unlawful harassment, including requests for sexual favors, sexual advances, offensive touching, and any other unwanted verbal, graphic conduct or communications of a sexual nature.

You should also be aware of and are expected to comply with The District's policy against sexual and other forms of illegal harassment in the workplace.

Appropriate action, which may include a transfer or reassignment, leave of absence, suspension, or termination, will be taken against those who violate this policy.

### **Dress Policy**

Appropriate office attire is required. Vendors, partners, and other stakeholders visit our office and District employees should dress professionally. Employees should be guided by common sense and good taste. Specific standards may be required.

### **Drug and Alcohol Policy**

The District strives to maintain a workplace free of drugs and alcohol and to discourage drug and alcohol abuse by its employees. Misuse of alcohol or drugs by employees can impair the ability of employees to perform their duties, as well as adversely affect our partners' confidence in The District.

Employees are prohibited from using or being under the influence of alcohol while performing District business for The District while operating a motor vehicle in the course of business or for any job-related purpose, or while on District premises or a worksite.

The District employees are prohibited from using or being under the influence of illegal drugs while performing District business or while on a District facility or worksite. You may not use, manufacture, distribute, purchase, transfer or possess an illegal drug while on The District property, while operating a motor vehicle for any job-related purpose, while on the job, or while performing District business. This policy does not prohibit the proper use of medication under the direction of a physician; however, misuse of such medications is prohibited.

### **Disciplinary Action**

Employees who violate this policy may be disciplined or terminated, even for a first offense. Violations include refusal to consent to and comply with testing and search procedures as described.

### **Drug Testing**

To the extent allowed by applicable law, The District may require a test, in compliance with Rhode Island law, when The District has reasonable grounds to believe that a District employee is under the influence of a controlled substance. The refusal to consent to test may result in disciplinary action, including termination, to the extent allowed by applicable law. The District reserves the right to require participation in a substance abuse rehabilitation or treatment program as a condition of continued employment/re-employment.

## **Unpaid Suspension**

The District expects the highest standards of professional conduct at all times.

Following The District's policies on harassment, drug or alcohol use, and other workplace conduct rules, The District reserves the right to discipline or discharge any employee for violations of rules of behavior within the workplace, to the extent allowed by applicable law.

An employee will be subject to an unpaid disciplinary suspension for infractions of workplace conduct rules. Suspensions without pay apply to everyone. For exempt employees, suspensions without pay will be in one or more full-day increments. For non-exempt employees, suspensions may be any period within The District's discretion.

## **Ethical and Legal Business Practices**

The District expects the fullest degree of ethical and legal business practices and fair dealing from each employee, officer, director, volunteer, and all others associated with The District. Our reputation is a valuable asset, and we must continually earn the trust, confidence, and respect of our suppliers, our members, our stakeholders, and our community.

This policy provides general guidance on the ethical principles that we all must follow, but no guideline can anticipate all situations. You should also be guided by basic honesty and good judgment and be sensitive to others' perceptions and interpretations.

You are expected to promptly disclose to the management of The District anything that may violate this policy. We will not tolerate retaliation or retribution against anyone who brings violations to management's attention.

If you have any questions about this policy, consult your supervisor or manager. Exceptions to this policy may be made only by the Executive Director.

## **Code of Ethics**

The District adheres to the highest standards of ethical conduct, respects the public trust and the rights of all persons, will be open, accountable, and responsive, avoids the appearance of impropriety, and does not use our position for private gain or advantage, which is in alignment with state regulations. For more information, please see <https://ethics.ri.gov/code/>.

## **Access to Public Records Act (APRA)**

The Access to Public Records Act, or APRA, is a state law that gives individuals the right to see and obtain public records. All state and local governmental agencies are public entities and are subject to APRA. This means that every public body or entity is responsible for maintaining records and documents for public review, inspection, and copying. The law also applies to "quasi-public" agencies, such as The District.

Understand that all employee's professional emails and work products are considered public records and thus are subject to APRA.

## **Non-Business or Social Visits to the Worksite**

While personal visits are not prohibited, their frequency and duration should be limited and should not interfere with ongoing work nor distract fellow employees. Visitors in the work area must sign in and have an employee escort them while on The District's premises. Unaccompanied visitors will be asked to leave the premises. The employee shall be responsible for the acts of visitors in the workplace.

## **Complying with Laws and Regulations**

All activities are to be conducted in compliance with the letter and spirit of all laws and regulations. You are charged with the responsibility of understanding the applicable laws, recognizing potential dangers, and knowing when to seek legal advice.

## **Child Support Reporting Requirements**

Federal and state laws require us to report basic information about new employees, including your name, address, and social security number to a state agency designated as the State Directory of New Hires. The state collects this information to enforce child support orders. Please be advised that if the state determines that you owe child support, it will send us an order requiring us to withhold money from your paycheck to pay your child support obligations. The District is required to comply with such orders as a matter of federal and state law.

## **Giving and Receiving Gifts**

You may not give or receive money or any gift to or from a supplier, government official, or other organization. Exceptions may be made for gifts that are customary and lawful, are of nominal value (\$25 or less).

You may accept meals and refreshments if they are infrequent, are no more than \$25 value, and are in connection with business discussions.

If you do receive a gift or other benefit of more than nominal value, report it promptly to a member of management. It will be returned or donated to a suitable charity.

## **Employee Privacy and Other Confidential Information**

The District collects only personal information about employees that relates to their employment. Only people with a business-related need to know are given access to this information, and the Executive Director must authorize any release of the information to others. Personal information, other than that required to verify employment or to satisfy legitimate investigatory or legal requirements, will be released outside The District only with employee approval.

If you have access to any confidential information, including private employee information, you are responsible for acting with integrity. Unauthorized disclosure or inappropriate use of confidential information will not be tolerated.

## **Accounting and Financial Reports**

The District's financial statements and all books and records on which they are based must accurately reflect The District's transactions. All disbursements and receipts must be properly authorized, recorded, and reported.



Those responsible for handling or disbursing funds must assure that all transactions are executed as authorized and recorded to permit financial statements in accord with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

### **Smoking Policy**

Smoking is prohibited inside The District facilities. All employees and other visitors are expected to comply with this policy, and employees who violate it may be disciplined. Should you have a question, complaint, or dispute about smoking in the workplace, contact your supervisor.

### **Workplace Solicitation**

To promote a professional and collegial workplace, prevent disruptions in business or interference with work, and avoid personal inconvenience, The District has adopted rules about soliciting for any cause and distributing literature of any kind in the workplace.

Employees may not solicit on The District property or use District facilities, such as e-mail, voicemail, or bulletin boards during working time for solicitation. This policy applies to collecting funds, requesting contributions, selling merchandise, gathering employee signatures, and promoting membership in clubs or organizations.

Working time means the time during which employees are expected to be actively engaged in their assigned work; it does not include scheduled meal or break periods.

You may solicit another employee only if both you and the other employee are not on working time, and you may distribute literature only in nonworking areas and while not on working time to other employees who are not on working time.

Nonemployees may not make solicitations or distribute literature at any time.

### **Expenses and Reimbursements**

Employees of The District may incur business-related expenses in performing their duties and furthering the business purposes, policies, and goals of The District. Reimbursable business expenses must be reasonable, accurately reported, and supported by receipts.

The District requires all employees to carefully evaluate the need for all business expenditures. All expenses need approval by the appropriate supervisor in advance to be eligible for reimbursement. Failure to gain approval may result in forfeiture of reimbursement. All expense items need the purpose of the expense, the name of the company, and any other individual who was present along with a detailed itemized receipt reflecting all charges to be considered for reimbursement.

### **General Expenses**

- Credit Cards are not provided by The District. Individuals must use their own personal credit cards. Annual fees, interest charges, and late fees associated with personal credit cards are not reimbursable.

- All full-time employees of The District will receive \$50 per month toward Cellular Service Plans.
- Meal reimbursement for business meetings is permitted. Documentation should include itemized meal receipts, the name of the parties in attendance, and the purpose of the meeting. The selected restaurant location should be moderately priced. Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable. Meal reimbursement requests should be reasonable in nature and are subject to approval by your supervisor.
- Parking fees are reimbursable.

### **Travel Reimbursement**

District employees may be required to incur expenses pertaining to traveling in or out of state in the course of performing their duties and furthering the business purposes and goals of The District. Accordingly, the following policies and procedures establish the methods and policies to be used concerning reimbursement for business travel expenses.

### **Local Business Travel**

Employees whose essential job functions include daily travel around the state are not required to get prior approval from their supervisor for in-state travel. However, employees who do not normally travel on District business should get prior approval from their supervisor in advance of travel.

An Employee Expense Report must be completed by the employee and approved by the employee's supervisor for all business travel expenses. Local travel is defined as travel within a radius of approximately fifty-five (55) miles of the office (including trips to Boston).

### **Mileage Reimbursement**

Employees are required to use their own personal vehicle for official District business receiving the standard mileage rate established by the IRS.

Reimbursement on a mileage basis should show the meter readings at the beginning and end of each trip as a basis for computing miles traveled. All travel must be on commonly traveled routes.

No transportation costs will be allowed between an employee's place of residence and his/her office. When the distance between the employee's residence and his/her destination is shorter than the distance between his/her office and the destination; such travel is not reimbursable.

No overnight lodging will be allowed in connection with travel within the State, as defined above unless authorized by the Executive Director or designee.

## **Operating a Motor Vehicle**

Under no circumstances is The District responsible for paying parking tickets, speeding tickets, or other fines or expenses incurred by District employees for traffic, parking, or other violations of the law. Therefore, The District will not reimburse employees for such costs under any circumstances.

## **Non-local Business Travel**

Non-local travel must be authorized by the Executive Director or designee. Failure to gain prior approval may result in forfeiture of reimbursement.

## **Travel Advances**

Employees traveling non-locally on official business may receive reimbursement for expenses incurred in advance of the scheduled travel, providing proof of the expense is submitted and the amount exceeds \$75. The following expenses are eligible for advance reimbursement: airfare, overnight accommodations, and conference or registration fees.

## **Travel Cancellation**

If there is a cancellation of travel, after an advance for expenses has been issued, the employee must notify accounting immediately and return all advances to and/or reimburse The District for any expenses recouped.

## **Reimbursable Expenses**

No later than two weeks after the completion of the scheduled travel, a fully itemized Employee Expense report, accounting for all advances and all reimbursable expenditures must be submitted for final approval and reimbursement. Travel Reimbursement not submitted within this time frame requires exception approval from the Executive Director.

The following items will be reimbursed to the traveler in total when supported by actual receipts:

- Bus, tax, airport shuttle service transportation, or rental car gas refill
- Parking, toll expenses
- Necessary business telephone calls, fax transmissions, or internet connections
- Automobile Rental

Travelers are expected to use personal funds for trips costing less than \$75 and will be reimbursed by The District for business-related expenses after producing an approved Employee Expense report along with attached receipts and/or invoices.

## **Transportation Options**

Transportation includes all necessary business travel on commercial railroads, airplanes, and other common carriers at standard coach class rates. The following accommodations will be permitted, provided that they are supported by valid receipts and/or invoices.

### **Railroad**

Standard accommodations permitted; the period allowed for the trip will be limited to the time required by railroad travel. Travel on extra fare trains permitted where business necessity requires such means of travel and approved by the Executive Director.

**Airplane**

Allowable transportation accommodations will include coach fares, utilizing the most economical fares possible. The District encourages the use of discount flights, round-trip purchases, advance purchases, or other means of reducing the cost of travel. All airline travel should include 3 bids from the available carriers. Quotes can be obtained through [www.kayak.com](http://www.kayak.com) or any other discount travel website. Airport parking should be prearranged at reasonably priced long-term parking facilities offered at or near the airport.

**Personally-Owned Automobiles**

Personally-owned automobiles may be used for out-of-state travel in place of a common carrier when it is economically beneficial to The District. For example, when two or more travelers are traveling to the same destination, or when common carrier service is not available, the use of a personally-owned automobile may be economically beneficial to The District. Reimbursement will be made based on business miles traveled at the standard mileage rate.

**Automobile Rental**

Travelers shall avail themselves of shuttle buses and all other means of public transportation to the extent practical. The use of an automobile rental will be allowed when economically feasible and/or necessary to accomplish the travel mission.

A memo from the traveler must be attached to the travel request form addressing the following: "The District will save money by the rental of an automobile in lieu of public transportation, due to ... " or "it is necessary to use a rental vehicle for this trip due to..."

The following are obligations of the traveler when renting a vehicle to conduct state business:

- Possess a proper license to operate the vehicle being rented
- Wear seat belts per all state laws
- Obey all laws
- Transporting hitchhikers is prohibited
- Consuming drugs or alcohol before or while operating a vehicle is prohibited
- Complete a report of any vehicle damage and advise your agency immediately

Travelers shall fill the fuel tank of the rental car before returning the vehicle.

**Fares**

The cost between each point of travel should be itemized separately to include the (1) type of common carrier, (2) cost of transportation, and (3) transportation to and from the airport or train or bus station, (4) parking garage fees if applicable.

**Lodging Allowances**

District employees traveling on official District business are expected to stay at the hotel at which their conference or seminar is being held. If no rooms are available at the conference/host hotel, then employees are expected to stay at a comparably priced (tourist class) hotel, at the single occupancy room rate.

**Per Diem Allowance (Meals and Incidental Expenses)**

The per diem allowance for meals and incidental reimbursement is based on a flat rate of up to \$50.00 per full day. If the traveler has additional reasonable expenses or believes that the allowance will exceed the reimbursement amount, he or she can submit a request to the Director of Operations for authorization.

Employees are encouraged to use their best judgment. These expenses must be itemized and may include tips, telephone calls, and any other necessary out-of-pocket expense incurred as a result of travel. Each request will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.

In addition, registration or conference fees and unusual miscellaneous expenses are reimbursable when they are properly explained and documented with attached receipts and/or invoices.

### **Final Reimbursement for Travel**

All claims for reimbursement for travel expenses should be submitted to the employee's supervisor with a completed itemized Employee Expense report and supported by attached receipts and/or invoices for the following:

- Conferences/registration fees, transportation, and lodging (if prepayment was not requested)
- Reasonable meal expenses
- Parking fees, toll expenses
- Shuttle and/or cab fares
- Other expenses with justification

The traveler must also include the following with the reimbursement request:

- Travel itinerary (hotel, air, and car rental)
- Tickets, boarding passes, or ticketless itinerary from the airline
- Baggage fee receipt (the first bag per traveler, each way only, if applicable)
- Hotel detail bill (from the actual hotel)
- Agendas/Proof of attendance
- Car rental receipts
- Taxi/shuttle receipts
- Parking receipts
- Justifications for any exceptions that were made (including extra night accommodations)
- Other supporting documentation

## **Traveling with Co-workers**

When traveling with other District employees, travel expenses should be shared whenever practical. This may include sharing the cost of a car rental, parking fees, lodging, etc.

## **Traveling Companions with a District Employee**

The District reimburses its employees for business-related expenses only. Any expenses incurred by District employees in connection with having a spouse or another person accompany them on a business trip are not business-related and thus not reimbursable by The District; The Executive Director or designee may, in advance, approve a spouse or another person accompanying a District employee as a business advantage to The District and therefore may approve related expenses.

District employees who have a spouse or another person accompany them on a business trip are required to keep an itemized list of their expenses, noting all expenses associated with the spouse or other person and separating those expenses from business-related expenses. To the extent possible, District employees who bring a spouse or other person with them on a business trip must obtain separate receipts and/or invoices for meals, lodging, plane tickets, taxicab fares, room service, use of the telephone, and all other expenses. The employee will receive reimbursement for a single occupancy room rate.

## **Prohibited Use of Cell Phones While Driving**

This policy applies to:

- The operation of District-provided vehicles at any time; and
- The operation of private vehicles while an employee is on work time or conducting business for The District.

The use of a cell phone while driving may present a hazard to the driver, other employees, and the general public. Employees must adhere to all federal, state, or local rules and regulations regarding the use of cell phones while driving. Accordingly, employees must not use cell phones while driving if such conduct is prohibited by law, regulation, or other ordinance. Should an employee need to make a business call while driving, he/she should locate a lawfully designated area to park and make the call.

Violation of this policy may subject an employee to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

## **Travel Compliance**

Employees who fail to comply with this policy will be disciplined, which may include a demand for reimbursement of any losses or damages, termination of employment, and referral for criminal prosecution. Action appropriate to the circumstances will also be taken against supervisors or others who fail to report a violation or withhold relevant information concerning a violation of this policy.

## **Political/Campaign Activities**

The District encourages employees to exercise their constitutional right to vote and participate in the political process. However, political and campaign activities can be disruptive and must be limited during work hours. In the interest of maintaining a productive and tension-free work environment, The District has adopted the following policy restricting political and campaign-related activities in the workplace. Employees may be subject to disciplinary action, up to termination, for violating this policy.

### **Prohibited Employee Activities**

Employees are not permitted to participate in any political activity that interferes with or disrupts the workplace in any manner. It is against this District's policy for any employee to:

- Use work time or District resources to accomplish politically motivated goals.
- Solicit or encourage monetary contributions or other support for a political party, campaign, candidate, or political belief during work hours.
- Use District facilities, such as break or eating areas, conference rooms, or offices for any political or campaign activity.
- Use The District's property or District-issued property, including but not limited to, telephones (both cellular and desk phones), computers, facsimile machines, email systems, interoffice mail or voicemail, photocopiers, postage, paper, envelopes, or other office supplies, for any political or campaign activity.
- Use The District's name or affiliation in connection with any political or campaign activity, at any time, without The District's express written approval.

### **Political Coercion, Harassment, and Retaliation**

The District embraces diversity and respects each employee's political beliefs and preferences. It is against District policy for anyone to behave in a threatening, harassing, or discriminatory manner toward any other employee concerning his or her political beliefs or activities. The District does not permit its officers or managers to coerce employees into supporting or opposing any political candidate, party, or belief. It is a violation of this District's policy for any manager to retaliate, threaten to retaliate, or take any adverse action against an employee for his/her support or opposition to any political campaign or party affiliation.

### **Employees Running for Public Office**

Employees who decide to run for public office are expected to keep politics separate from employment and should not allow political involvement to interfere with work performance. The District strictly prohibits employees seeking public office from using The District's name in association with any political or campaign activity without The District's express written permission. Employees wishing to run for public office should notify the Executive Director in writing of their intentions, specifying the position and venue in which they are seeking election. Employees running for office are expected to maintain all regular work duties during the campaign and upon election. Employees elected to a full-time office are encouraged to either resign or request a leave of absence without pay. The District does not guarantee that employees will be reinstated to their prior position or any other position upon return from a leave of absence for political service. Employees elected to public office must disclose to the Executive Director the existence of any potential or actual conflict of interest affecting the employee's duties or loyalty to The District and shall cooperate to the extent practicable to resolve such conflicts to The District's satisfaction.

## **Leave Policies**

### **Bereavement Leave**

Full-time employees at The District are permitted up to 4 consecutive days with pay inclusive of planning and attending funeral services of an immediate family member.

Eligible employees may be permitted 1 day(s) with pay for the death of a relative who is not an immediate family member.

Your supervisor must approve all bereavement time, and The District may request verification of the facts surrounding the leave and grant or deny the leave as deemed appropriate. Bereavement leave will not be paid if it occurs when the employee is on vacation or leave of absence, absent due to illness or injury, or not working due to a paid holiday.

### **Sick Leave Policy**

#### **Purpose and Use of Health and Safe Families Workplace Act Leave**

The purpose of this policy is to describe the method and manner by which The District will provide sick and safe leave to eligible employees. Sick leave time is time off without pay, including the continuation of healthcare benefits for the following reasons:

- An employee's mental or physical illness, injury or health condition, the need for medical diagnosis, care or treatment of said mental or physical illness, injury or health condition or the need for preventative medical care;
- To allow the employee to care for a family member with a mental or physical illness, injury or health condition, a family member who needs a medical diagnosis, care or treatment of said mental or physical illness, injury or health condition or who needs preventative medical care;
- Due to the closure of an employee's place of business due to a public health emergency, the employee's need to care for a child whose school or place of care has been closed due to a public health emergency or to care for oneself or family member due to a public health emergency;
- To allow for time off when the employee or member of the employee's family is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

A "family member" is defined as a child, parent, spouse, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandparents, grandchildren, domestic partner, sibling, care recipient or a member of the employee's household. A "care recipient" is a person for whom the employee is responsible for providing or arranging health or safety related care.

**Eligibility** Any full-time or part-time employee is eligible to accrue sick time.

#### **Accrual of Sick Time**

- Employees shall accrue a minimum of one hour of sick time for every 35 hours worked up to a maximum of 40 hours per year per R.I.G.L. § 28-57-1 et. al.
- All employees employed by The District on the effective date of this policy shall begin to accrue sick time as of the effective date of this policy. All employees hired on or after the effective date of



the policy will accrue earned sick time in accordance with the above schedule but will not be allowed to use the sick time until they have completed 90 days of employment.

- Employees will not be allowed to use more than the allotted sick time accrued in a particular year without receiving specific authorization from the Executive Director and/or their designee. The sick time does not roll over into the following year.
- Temporary employees are entitled to use accrued sick time after the completion of 180 calendar days following commencement of their employment; while there is a waiting period, the temporary employees still accrue the sick time during the waiting period but can't use it until the completion of the waiting period.

### **Use of Time**

- If an employee wishes to use his/her accrued sick time, he/she must request such time from the supervisor or if not accessible, the Executive Director. Whenever possible, the employee's request should be made in writing and should always include the amount of sick time to be used.
- When the request for sick time is foreseeable, the employee shall give the employer at least one weeks' notice.
- Employees shall be permitted to use the time accrued in no less than one-hour increments.

### **Documentation of Use**

The District requires written documentation of an employee's use of sick time when an employee has been out of work for more than three (3) consecutive workdays.

### **Excluded Use**

Employees will not be allowed to use sick time to compensate for tardiness or unexcused absences that have not been previously requested in accordance with this policy.

### **Discipline**

Employees who request to use sick time must use the sick time in the manner allowed by this policy. Employees found to be engaging in activity that is not consistent with the allowable purposes for sick time may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Employees exhibiting a pattern of taking sick leave prior to vacations, a weekend or a holiday may also be subject to discipline unless the employee is able to provide reasonable documentation that the use of sick time has been for a purpose covered by the policy.

### **Medical Leave**

Employees who have worked at least twelve months and at least 1250 hours within the previous twelve months are eligible for leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

Employees who have worked at least twelve consecutive months and at least an average of thirty hours weekly are eligible for leave under the Rhode Island Parental and Family Medical Leave (RIPFML).

### **Policy Statement**

Employees who meet eligibility requirements under FMLA or RIPFML can request an unpaid leave for certain family or medical reasons that guarantees job security. During a qualifying leave, employees may

also be eligible for benefits under various combinations of Unum Disability Insurance and Rhode Island Temporary Disability and Temporary Caregiver Insurance programs. Information on the state programs may be found online at: [www.dlt.ri.gov/t di](http://www.dlt.ri.gov/t di).

When it is medically necessary, an employee can request leave intermittently or a reduced work schedule under the FMLA. Intermittent leave is taken in separate blocks of time for a single qualifying reason. Intermittent leave can also be offered by establishing a reduced weekly or daily work schedule. When a planned medical treatment is necessary, an employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule treatment to minimize disruptions to The District's operation.

An employee on an approved FMLA leave is entitled to continue health insurance coverage on the same terms as if they had continued to work. An employee returning from FMLA leave must be returned to their original or an equivalent job.

**Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA):** Employees can be absent from work up to twelve workweeks over twelve months. Employees can request leave under FMLA for the following reasons:

- The birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child within one year of the child's birth or placement
- To care for an employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a qualifying serious health condition
- For an employee's own qualifying serious health condition that makes an employee unable to perform their job
- A qualifying situation that arises when an employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a covered military member on "covered active duty"
- To care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness if an employee is the service member's spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin (up to 26 weeks of FMLA leave in certain instances)

**RI Parental and Family Medical Leave:** Eligible employees may take up to thirteen workweeks of leave in a consecutive 24-month period. Eligible employees may request leave under RIPFML for the following reasons:

- The birth, adoption, or foster placement of an employee's child
- To care for an employee's spouse, qualifying domestic partner, parent, child, or parent-in-law with a serious illness
- An employee's own qualifying serious illness that makes an employee unable to perform their job;
- To attend child's qualifying school activities (Note: this leave is limited to ten hours in twelve months)

An employee on an approved leave under RIPFML is entitled to the continuation of health insurance coverage on the same terms as if they had continued to work. Upon the expiration of leave under the RIPFML, an employee is entitled to return to the same or equivalent job.

## Definitions

For this policy, the terms below have the following definitions:

**Serious Health Condition:** Under the FMLA, this is an illness, injury, impairment, or a physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care or continuing treatment by a healthcare provider.

**Serious Illness:** Under the RIPFML, this is a disabling physical or mental illness, injury, impairment, or condition that involves inpatient care in a hospital, nursing home, or hospice, or outpatient care requiring continuous treatment or supervision by a healthcare provider.

All individuals to whom this policy applies are responsible for becoming familiar with and following this policy. All supervisors are responsible for promoting the understanding of this policy and for taking appropriate steps to help ensure compliance with it.

### **Employee Responsibilities**

An employee requesting leave must do so at least thirty days in advance of the leave start date when the leave is foreseeable. Additional responsibilities include:

- An employee is required to formally initiate a leave request.
- An employee must provide a sufficiently completed Certification of Healthcare Provider form to your supervisor.
- An employee is required to provide an expected return to work date. In instances when a return-to-work date is unknown, the employee should work with his/her healthcare provider and use the best estimate based on medical need or until the next appointment with the healthcare provider. This date may be changed as circumstances and information make the return-to-work date clearer.
- When returning from medical leave, the employee must also provide a return to work note from the employee's healthcare provider to the supervisor before or at the time of return.
- If an employee fails to properly notify The District of the need for leave, provide timely and sufficient medical certification, the FMLA/RIPFML designation may be withdrawn.
- The employee requesting leave is responsible for meeting the requirements of taking leave and keeping respective parties up-to-date on any changes to his or her leave status.

### **Consequences for Policy Violation**

Failure to comply with this and related policies is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension without pay, or termination of employment.

### **Supplemental Paid Medical Leave Policy**

The District recognizes the need to offer a policy to supplement employees' insurance payments due to family and medical-related absences.

- Employees who have worked at The District for at least 12 months may be eligible for up to 12 weeks of supplemental paid family and medical leave.
- The supplemental paid leave policy allows for employees that have qualified for Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) or Temporary Caregivers Insurance (TCI) to submit a written request for the supplemental benefit. Employees must provide proof of eligibility and weekly payment approval from TDI/TCI.

- The District will use proof of eligibility and payment information from TDI/TCI to calculate the supplemental paid leave amount and assess eligibility.
- If approved, The District will provide supplemental payments up to the employee's gross base pay for a maximum term of twelve weeks.
- All payments will be issued through the regular payroll process with applicable state and federal taxes.

In the event of any conflict between this policy and the applicable law, employees will be afforded all rights required by law. If you have any questions, concerns, or disputes with this policy, please contact the Director of Operations.

### **Jury Duty**

Employees are encouraged to serve on jury duty and fulfill their civic obligations. Employees who are scheduled for jury duty must provide documentation of the jury duty summons to their supervisor immediately.

Unless otherwise required by state or local law, The District will compensate employees their regular pay for up to 10 days of the time they are required to serve minus any monetary wage payments over \$15 per day received from the courts for their participation in jury duty. Employees must provide evidence of service including monies received from jury duty to their immediate supervisor for submission to the Payroll Department.

If excused or released from jury duty before 1:00 p.m. on a workday, employees are expected to return to work for the remainder of the workday.

### **Time Off from Work In Connection With Court Cases**

We recognize that an employee might be subpoenaed or otherwise required to serve as a witness in a court case or arbitration. If you are called to serve as a witness, notify your manager as soon as possible.

Unless otherwise required by state or local law, employees called to testify will not be paid for the time they are away from work as a result of their participation in a court case or arbitration but may use the time off with pay to cover their time away from work.

### **Requesting Time Off for Voting**

The District encourages every employee to play an active role in the election process. Employees are generally permitted to take time off from work to vote in the event the employee's work schedule does not allow sufficient time for voting either before or after work. Employees are encouraged to check local poll operation times before requesting time off to vote. Requests should be made as far in advance of the election date as possible to minimize disruption to workflow and operations. The District will attempt to accommodate all requests for voting leave; however, management has the discretion to deny leave requests or designate permissible voting times for business reasons, to the extent permitted by law. The District also reserves the right to demand proof that a vote was cast as a condition for excusing an employee's absence or issuing pay for time off. State law and District policy will determine whether you will be paid for time off used for voting.

## **Compensatory Time Off Policy**

### **Purpose**

It is the policy of The District to permit exempt park employees or other specifically designated employees who work more hours than regularly scheduled to receive compensatory time off on a case-by-case basis. This time is not meant for regularly scheduled District meetings, or occasionally required organization events that all employees are expected to attend. Compensatory Time Off is in addition to the paid time off an eligible employee otherwise accrues. However, Compensatory Time Off cannot be rolled over and must be used in the calendar year it is accrued. Employees will not be paid any accrued Compensatory Time Off when they separate from the company and/or are no longer employed by the District.

### **Granting Compensatory Time Off**

Compensatory time off is granted to exempt park or specifically designated employees. There is no legal requirement or obligation of The District to grant compensatory time off to exempt employees. However, The District chooses to grant compensatory time off to exempt park or specified employees who are required to attend special events or complete certain projects during weekdays after 6 P.M. (Monday through Friday) or weekends (Saturday and Sunday). Compensatory time will be granted on an hour-for-hour basis.

### **Using Compensatory Time Off**

All eligible employees should record the appropriate compensatory time off hours during their particular pay period and should submit this in detail to their supervisor. All requests for compensatory time off are subject to supervisor approval.

An exempt employee who has accrued compensatory time and requests use of the time is permitted to use the time off within a "reasonable period" of earning the time.

Supervisors may deny the request if the use of compensatory time will "unduly disrupt" the District's operations.

### **Military Leave**

#### **The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act**

USERRA protects the job rights of individuals who voluntarily or involuntarily leave employment positions to undertake military service or certain types of service in the National Disaster Medical System. USERRA also prohibits employers from discriminating against past and present members of the uniformed services, and applicants to the uniformed services.

#### **Reemployment Rights**

You have the right to be reemployed in your civilian job if you leave that job to perform service in the uniformed service and:

- You ensure that your employer receives advance written or verbal notice of your service;
- You have five years or less of cumulative service in the uniformed services while with that particular employer;

- You return to work or apply for reemployment promptly after the conclusion of service; and
- You have not been separated from service with a disqualifying discharge or under other than honorable conditions.

If you are eligible to be reemployed, you must be restored to the job and benefits you would have attained if you had not been absent due to military service or, in some cases, a comparable job.

### **Right to be Free from Discrimination and Retaliation**

If you:

- Are a past or present member of the uniformed service;
- Have applied for membership in the uniformed service; or
- Are obligated to serve in the uniformed service;

Then an employer may not deny you:

- Initial employment;
- Reemployment;
- Retention in employment;
- Promotion; or
- Any benefit of employment (including wages or salary for work performed)

Because of this status.

### **Health Insurance Protection**

- If you leave your job to perform military service, you have the right to elect to continue your existing employer-based health plan coverage for you and your dependents for up to 24 months while in the military.
- Even if you don't elect to continue coverage during your military service, you have the right to be reinstated in your employer's health plan when you are reemployed, generally without any waiting periods or exclusions (e.g., pre-existing condition exclusions) except for service-connected illnesses or injuries.

### **State Law**

Additionally, state law provides that an employee who has worked for The District for at least 12 months and at least 1,250 hours in the last year and is the spouse or parent of a person called to military service lasting longer than 30 days is entitled to 15 days of unpaid family military leave during the time federal or state orders are in effect. Employees must give 14 days' notice of the intended date upon which the family military leave will begin if the leave consists of five or more consecutive workdays. An employee cannot take this leave unless he or she has exhausted all accrued vacation leave, personal leave, compensatory leave, and any other leave that may be granted to the employee, except sick leave and disability leave.

State law also provides that employees who are members of the state National Guard are entitled to all the rights, protections, provisions, and immunities provided by USERRA.

Those responsible for handling or disbursing funds must assure that all transactions are executed as authorized and recorded to permit financial statements in accord with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.



## **General Employment**

### **Employee Records**

An employee's personnel file consists of an employee's employment application, withholding forms, reference checks, emergency information, and any performance appraisals, benefits data, and other appropriate employment-related documents.

It is your responsibility to notify your supervisor of any changes in name, address, telephone number, marital status, number of dependents, military service status, beneficiaries, or person to notify in case of an accident.

You may be dismissed for misrepresenting any fact on your application or in your personnel file.

Personnel records are considered District property. Up to three times a year, you may review and request that specific documents be copied from your record after giving adequate notice.

Access to personnel records does not apply to records of an employee relating to the investigation of a possible criminal offense or records prepared for use in any civil, criminal, or grievance proceedings, any letter of reference, recommendations, managerial records kept or used only by the employer, confidential reports from previous employers, and managerial planning records.

### **Human Resource Posters**

To comply with the employer's responsibility to display HR posters as a requirement, employers with employees that work remotely or telecommute can gain access to this information through this web page <https://dlt.ri.gov/requiredposters/>.

### **Identity Theft Protection**

The District respects the privacy of your personal data and is committed to ensuring that it will only be accessed and utilized as necessary, in a professional and confidential capacity. In all circumstances, we take reasonable steps to:

- Give you clear notice when we are requesting information from you, the types of information we request from you, the general purposes for which that information will be used or disclosed, and the categories of users to whom we provide the information; and
- Use safe and secure systems, physical and electronic, to safeguard your non-public personal information, including your social security number.

If at any time you feel as if your personal data has been misused or improperly accessed, please report your concerns to the Executive Director for further investigation.

### **Reference Checks**

The District conducts reference checks on all new employees. Employees who have falsified information on their employment applications will be disciplined, which could include termination. Applicants who have provided false information may be eliminated from further consideration for employment.

All inquiries regarding a current or former employee must be referred to the Executive Director.



Should an employee receive a written request for a reference, he/she should refer the request to their immediate supervisor. If no supervisor is available then the request may be sent to the Executive Director. No employee may issue a reference letter to any current or former employee without the permission of the Executive Director.

Under no circumstances should any employee release any information about any current or former employee over the telephone. All telephone inquiries regarding any current or former employee must be referred to the Executive Director.

In response to an outside request for information regarding a current or former employee, The District will furnish or verify only an employee's name, dates of employment, job title, and department. No other data or information regarding any current or former employee, or his/her employment with The District, will be furnished unless the employee authorizes The District to furnish this information in writing that also releases The District from liability in connection with the furnishing of this information or the District is required by law to furnish any information.

## **Confidential Information & Conflict of Interest**

### **General Confidentiality Obligations**

Information that pertains to The District's business, including all nonpublic information concerning The District, its partners, vendors, and suppliers, is strictly confidential and must not be given to people who are not employed by The District.

Employees are expected to protect confidential information -- which may include, for example, trade secrets, partner lists, and District financial information -- by taking the following precautionary measures:

- Discuss work matters only with The District employees who have a specific business reason to know or have access to such information.
- Do not discuss work matters in public places.
- Monitor and supervise visitors to The District to ensure that they do not have access to confidential information.
- Destroy hard copies of documents containing confidential information that is not filed or archived.
- Secure confidential information in desk drawers and cabinets at the end of every business day.

Your cooperation is expected because of our obligation to protect the security of our stakeholders and our confidential information. Use your sound judgment and good common sense, but if at any time you are uncertain as to whether you can properly divulge information or answer questions, please consult the Executive Director.

### **Reasonable Accommodations**

The District recognizes and supports its obligation to endeavor to reasonably accommodate job applicants and employees with known physical or mental disabilities who can perform the essential functions of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation. The District will endeavor to provide reasonable accommodation to otherwise qualified job applicants and employees with known physical or mental disabilities unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on The District or pose a direct threat of substantial harm to the employee or others. An applicant or employee who believes he or she needs a reasonable accommodation of a disability should discuss the need for possible accommodation with his or her direct supervisor or contact the Executive Director.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Employees must avoid any interest, influence, or relationship which might conflict or appear to conflict with the best interests of The District. You must avoid any situation in which your loyalty may be divided and promptly disclose any situation where an actual or potential conflict may exist.

Examples of potential conflict situations include:

- Having a financial interest in any business transaction with The District
- Owning or having a significant financial interest in, or other relationship with, a District competitor, stakeholder, or supplier, and

- Accepting gifts, entertainment, or other benefits of more than a nominal value from The District competitor, partner, or supplier.

Anyone with a conflict of interest must disclose it to management and remove themselves from negotiations, deliberations, or votes involving the conflict. You may, however, state your position and answer questions when your knowledge may be of assistance.

## **Safety & Emergency**

### **Inclement Weather and Emergency Closings**

This policy establishes guidelines for District operations during periods of extreme weather and similar emergencies. The District will remain open in all but the most extreme circumstances. Unless an emergency closing is announced, all employees are expected to report to work. However, The District does not advise employees to take unwarranted risks when traveling to work in the event of inclement weather or other emergencies. Each employee should exercise his/her best judgment concerning road conditions and other safety concerns. Employees may also discuss a short-term telecommute or remote option with their immediate supervisor.

### **Designation of Emergency Closing**

Only by the authorization of the Executive Director will The District cease operations due to emergency circumstances. If severe weather conditions develop during working hours, it is at the discretion of Management to release employees. Employees will be expected to remain at work until the appointed closing time.

### **Procedures during Closings**

If weather or traveling conditions delay or prevent an employee's reporting to work, the immediate supervisor should be notified as soon as possible. If possible, such notification should be made by a telephone conversation directly with the supervisor. If direct contact is not possible, leaving a detailed voicemail message or message with another employee is acceptable.

An employee who is unable to report to work may use any accrued personal time or take the day off without pay.

### **Pay & Leave Practices**

When a partial or full-day closing is authorized by Management, the following pay and vacation practices apply:

- Hourly employees will either be sent home for partial days with the option of using personal / vacation time for the remainder of the day. If personal / vacation time is not available, employees will be excused from work without pay and without disciplinary action.
- Exempt and non-exempt employees already scheduled to be off during emergency closings are charged such leave as was scheduled.

### **Other Work Options**

Supervisors may approve requests for employees to temporarily work from home if doing so allows the completion of work assignments.

## **Injured Employees**

Employees who experience a work-related injury should notify their manager or supervisor immediately. In cases of extreme illness or injury (such as unconsciousness, severe bleeding, or broken bones), The District will call 911.

After an injury, an Employee Injury Report must be completed by the affected employee and given to the supervisor as soon as reasonably possible.

## **Workers' Compensation**

The District provides insurance to compensate for any illness or injury an employee might suffer while working on District premises, traveling on official District business, or attending an activity officially sponsored by The District. If you become ill or injured, please get medical attention at once.

You must also report the details to your supervisor immediately. And you must complete a report for every injury, no matter how small, to keep the coverage in force and to get any benefits or other compensation to which you may be entitled.

A physician's report must be provided to a supervisor or manager before the affected employee returns to work after treatment for an on-the-job injury.

## **Fire Safety**

Every employee is responsible for recognizing potential fire dangers and taking an active role in preventing fires.

Employees are required to observe all OSHA safety requirements and regulations. Flammable materials are to be stored in covered metal containers. Employees should not block any fire doors, fire exits, fire extinguishers, windows, or doorways. Review the fire escape routes posted in each work area.

## **First Aid**

Our goal is to provide employees with the necessary information regarding appropriate techniques associated with administering medical assistance to others and The District is concerned about employees who may be exposed to blood and other bodily fluids when rendering first aid to other employees. The following procedures are to be used when administering first aid:

- Always use latex gloves
- Only those employees who are certified to perform CPR should perform CPR
- In the event CPR becomes necessary, a CPR Micro-Shield should be used if available
- Any materials used in administering first aid should be discarded appropriately
- Hands should be thoroughly washed following any first aid procedure

## **Safety Reporting**

The District is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all employees.

If you or another employee is injured, contact your supervisor or manager immediately. Seek help from outside emergency response agencies, if needed. Contact information is posted in the break area.

You must complete an Employee's Claim for Worker's Compensation Benefits Form if you have an injury that requires medical attention. If your injury does not require medical attention, you must still complete an Incident Report in case medical treatment is later needed and to ensure that any existing safety hazards are corrected. You can obtain the required forms from your supervisor.

A federal law, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, requires that we keep records of all illnesses and accidents that occur on the job. OSHA also provides for your right to know about any health hazards that might be present on the job.

The state Workers' Compensation Act also requires that you report any illness or injury caused by the workplace, no matter how slight.

You can get the required reporting paperwork from your supervisor.

## **Corporate Communications & Technology**

### **Communication with Press or Media**

Media inquiries concerning The District must be handled per the following guidelines:

- Inquiries regarding a specific transaction should be referred to the individual or individuals in charge of the matter; if they are not available, then to the Executive Director.
- All other inquiries should be referred to the Executive Director, who will respond directly or designate another spokesperson and who will also help draft or direct an appropriate response if necessary.

This policy covers all forms of responses to the media, including off-the-record and anonymous statements.

### **Investigations/Searches**

To safeguard the property of our employees and The District, The District reserves the right to inspect property owned and/or supplied by The District. District-supplied property (including but not limited to offices, desks, file cabinets, computers and software, District vehicles, lockers, and other storage facilities) are District property and are subject to inspection by managers at any time, with or without notice. Therefore, employees should have no reasonable expectation of privacy in property owned and/or supplied by The District. Employees may be permitted to store personal items in facilities. However, The District is not responsible for loss, damage, or theft of employees' personal belongings, so employees should exercise discretion in storing any personal items.

Following applicable state and federal law, The District may conduct searches of employees and their personal property on District facilities or worksites when there is reason to believe that the employee has violated this policy or when circumstances or workplace conditions justify such a search in the discretion of The District and in accordance with applicable state and federal law. Such searches may be conducted at any time without prior notice at the discretion of The District. Employees are expected to cooperate fully. District employees have no reasonable expectation of privacy in the workplace.

Personal property may include, but is not limited to, purses, boxes, briefcases, as well as The District property that is provided for employees' personal use, such as desks, lockers, and files. In addition, any controlled substance discovered will be turned over to the appropriate law enforcement authorities and may result in prosecution.

An employee's consent to a search is required as a condition of employment and the employee's refusal to consent may result in disciplinary action, including termination.

### **Software Policy**

The District regulates employees' use of its computer software. It is the policy of The District to respect all computer software copyrights and adhere to the terms of all software licenses to which The District is a party.

You may not duplicate any licensed software or related documentation for use, either on District premises or elsewhere, unless expressly authorized to do so by written agreement with the licensor and with your supervisor's approval. And you may not provide licensed software to anyone outside The District. Employees should be aware that the illegal duplication of software may result in the filing of criminal

copyright charges by the owners of the copyrights and can subject both the employee and The District to liability.

Only software purchased by The District with the approval of the appropriate management may be used on District computers. Employees are not permitted to bring software from home and load it on District computers, unless: (1) such action is approved by The District's management and technology department and (2) such use of the software is consistent with the terms of the software licensing agreements.

### **Prohibited Use of Personal Communication Devices**

The use of personal communication devices shall be limited in the workplace to alleviate distractions and the disruption of regular work routines. However, we recognize that employees may need to use personal communication devices for professional communication at work from time to time or when telecommuting. Any employee carrying a non-District-issued device with an audible alarm or ring must ensure the sound is turned off during work hours and in work areas. Employees should limit calls made or received on personally-owned communication devices during work hours or in work areas.

Limited and temporary exceptions to this policy permitting the use of personally-owned cell phones for personal emergencies can be made only with the prior and continued approval of the employee's supervisor.

Violation(s) of this policy may be grounds for discipline up to and including termination.

### **Return of District Property upon Separation**

When an Employee's employment with The District terminates, for whatever reason, the Employee is required to immediately return all District-owned property used during his/her employment, and all documents, and other materials containing proprietary or confidential information belonging to The District. This includes without limitation, keys, computers, vehicles, communication devices, uniforms, identification cards or badges, and any other equipment, materials, or items purchased, leased, owned, or otherwise belonging to The District.

Upon separation, employees must return any originals or duplicates of any written or other tangible items, whether maintained in hard copy, film, microfiche or electronic medium, belonging to The District, its subsidiaries, affiliates, successors, or assigns, including without limitation, correspondence, reports, memoranda, records, data, charts, notes, devices, specifications, drawings, partner lists, and any other item containing trade secret information or confidential information relating to The District products, services, designs, formulas, developmental or experimental work, computer programs, databases, partners/stakeholders, marketing strategies, business plans, financial information, and employee information. These items are property of The District.

### **Use of District Communication Systems**

The Communication and Information Systems owned by The District should be used only for conducting District business. Communication systems include, but are not limited to cellular phones, smartphones, tablets, laptops, or more traditional devices such as phones, facsimile machines, and mailing systems. Information systems include computers, internet/intranet networks, and electronic mail.

Employees have no reasonable expectation of privacy when using The District communication system. Since The District reserves the right to access any personal communication without prior notice, District systems should not be used by employees to transmit any messages or to access any information that they would not want to be viewed or heard by a third party.

Incidental, occasional, and infrequent use of The District's communication and information systems for personal use is permitted as long as such use does not interfere with your work or the work of any other employee or with the computer's operations.

The District communication and information systems may not be used for any illegal, unethical, destructive, or wasteful purpose. In the event of any such improper use, Employee may be subject to disciplinary action and or termination. Employees should exercise care in the personal use of any communication and information systems device and should not expect their use of personal information stored in these systems to be kept private.

### **Telephone Usage**

The telephone system (including voicemail) at The District is the property of The District and is provided for business purposes. To the extent permitted by law, The District may periodically monitor the use of the telephone systems to ensure compliance with this policy. Therefore, employees should not consider their conversations on The District telephone system to be private.

### **Texting**

Employees' use of texting on District issued cell phones should be limited to work-related matters, except for incidental personal use. Incidental personal use texting by employees is permitted as long as the use does not interfere with the employee's work, The District's operations, or use of communication facilities, and does not violate any policies.

When texting, employees are to follow District security procedures, and employees should not text confidential, proprietary, or trade secret information or personnel information.

### **Internet and E-mail Usage**

The use of The District's information systems is subject to District policies applicable to traditional forms of communication. These include, but are not limited to, policies prohibiting discrimination, sexual harassment, solicitation, and use of District property and resources, disclosure of confidential information, misconduct, and profanity.

The electronic mail (e-mail) system is provided by The District to facilitate business activities within the organization. The hardware of the e-mail system is considered to be District property. All messages written, sent, or received remain District property and are not considered to be the private property of any employee.

The information systems should not be used to upload (send) or download (receive) any trade secrets, proprietary information, copyrighted information, or any similar materials without prior authorization of District officials.

The District's internet and e-mail systems must not be used to create disruptive or offensive messages. These may include but are not limited to racial slurs, sexually implicative messages, or offensive comments about someone's age, disability, national origin, political or religious belief, sexual orientation, or national origin.

Accessing files, utilizing codes, or retrieving stored information is prohibited unless an employee has received prior authorization from management to conduct any such activity. Employees are also prohibited from gaining access to another employee's e-mail unless permission was granted to do so.

E-mail should not be used as a substitute for oral communication with nearby co-workers or telephone calls to key vendors or partners/stakeholders. Generally, verbal communications are preferred when practical.



## **Unsolicited Messages**

The District strictly prohibits the transmission of unsolicited e-mails or mass messages of any kind. Spam (i.e., unsolicited commercial or bulk e-mails, mass, and junk e-mails) will not be tolerated. The electronic mail system is reserved for District business. It may not be used for personal solicitation or any other improper purposes.

Use of The District's communication and information systems constitutes consent to The District's Communication and Information Systems policy.

## **Social Media Policy**

### **Introduction**

The District acknowledges the growing popularity of social media as a means for sharing experiences, ideas, and opinions. However, The District also strives to protect itself, its employees, and third parties such as vendors and business partners from the improper or unlawful use of social media.

For purposes of this policy, "Social Media" is any type of internet-based media created through social or group interaction, where individuals primarily produce - rather than consume - the content. Examples of Social Media include social and professional networking websites (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram), blogs (Twitter, industry blogs), video and image sharing websites (YouTube, Flickr, Pinterest), location-sharing websites (foursquare), consumer review websites (Yelp), virtual worlds (Second Life), and social bookmarking websites (Reddit). The lack of reference to a specific Social Media website in this policy does not limit the extent of application of this policy.

### **Applicability**

This policy applies to all employees of The District during both working and non-working hours, and regardless of whether the employee is using The District's or the employees' computers, network, internet access, equipment, or technology. Employees must understand that The District's other employee relations policies apply to online conduct, including the use of Social Media.

Keep in mind that any of your online conduct that violates District policy, adversely affects your or your fellow employees' job performance, adversely affects the reputation or brand of The District's vendors, affiliates, or business partners, or adversely affects The District's legitimate business interests may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

That being said, nothing in this Social Media policy is intended to prohibit employees from complying with or exercising their rights under any applicable federal state, or local law, or from communicating about wages, hours, or other terms and conditions of their or their co-workers' employment. If you have any questions about this policy or its applicability, please contact the Executive Director.

### **Guidelines**

Employees who choose to use Social Media for personal or professional reasons must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Use caution and your best personal and professional judgment when contributing content about or related to The District, or third parties such as vendors, affiliates, or business partners.
- Do not engage in behavior or contribute content that could be considered an act or threat of violence, bullying, or unlawful discrimination or harassment.

- Do not intentionally or negligently contribute content that could damage the reputation or brand of The District or interfere with The District’s business relationships with its vendors, affiliates, or business partners.
- Employees may not contribute content in the name of The District, on behalf of The District, or in a manner that could reasonably be attributed to The District without prior written authorization from the Executive Director.
- Do not contribute or disclose any content or information about or related to The District, its employees, vendors, affiliates, or business partners that you know to be false. Do not defame The District’s vendors, affiliates, or business partners.
- Do not contribute content that could identify District vendors, affiliates, or business partners without prior consent from The District.
- As a District employee, you have access to proprietary information about The District and its vendors, affiliates, or business partners. The District trusts and expects you to keep this information confidential; you may not disclose it on Social Media. Note that “proprietary” includes The District’s: (copyrights and confidential materials; internal processes, policies, and reports; competitive analysis and strategy; marketing and development plans; potential or actual mergers and acquisitions; and names of vendors and suppliers; among other items).
- Do not use District logos or trademarks for commercial gain without prior consent from The District.
- Do not use your District email address to register for Social Media.
- Do not allow Social Media use to interfere with your work commitments, performance, or productivity.
- Consider whether connecting to The District’s business partners, vendors, or competitors via Social Media is appropriate for your level, position, responsibilities within The District, and relationship with the person at issue. To the extent that you do connect to District business partners, vendors, or competitors via Social Media, consider using available privacy filters or settings to block any inappropriate, unprofessional, or personal content from such people.
- Requests for employment references or recommendations through Social Media, such as LinkedIn, should be referred to the Executive Director.

### **Use of Social Media for The District’s Business Purposes**

The District encourages employee participation in its effort to promote its brand via Social Media. Such participation may include commenting on The District’s official Social Media pages, providing internal suggestions and input for the content of such pages, and submitting your photos of The District’s promotions, and events for inclusion on such pages. Suggestions, input, and photo submissions should be sent to the designated Social Media manager, and if none exists, the Executive Director.

Employees who create content or use Social Media for The District’s business purposes-as part of their job responsibilities and/or at the direction of The District-must understand that they are contributing content on behalf of The District (and, therefore, representing The District). Employees who create or contribute content to District-created, sponsored, sanctioned, or assigned Social Media accounts or pages must understand that The District (and not the employee) is the owner of all content contributed and connections made through these pages or accounts. These employees must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Only contribute or moderate content on District-created, sponsored, sanctioned, or assigned Social Media pages. Use your best professional judgment when creating and contributing content, and when linking to third-party websites or videos. Use proper grammar and spelling.
- Time spent using Social Media for The District's business purposes should be limited exclusively to those business purposes (for example, to moderating designated fan pages or communities).
- Do not download any applications, games, or otherwise engage in any other activities that are irrelevant to your job responsibilities or The District's business purposes on any District-created, sponsored, sanctioned, or assigned Social Media pages.
- Be respectful to The District, its employees, and third parties such as vendors, affiliates, business partners, and competitors.
- Do not contribute any confidential, proprietary, libelous, or defamatory content about or related to The District, its employees, or third parties such as vendors, competitors, affiliates, or business partners.
- Do not contribute content regarding or relating to The District's current, future, or pending legal matters, including mergers or acquisitions, negotiations, internal investigations, and litigation.
- Do not specifically mention a District employee or vendor in Social Media without their prior express consent.
- Comply with all applicable intellectual property, trademark, copyright, and fair use laws.
- Make sure that you are not the only person who knows the usernames and passwords to District Social Media accounts. Usernames and for each District Social Media account should be known to the Executive Director. Do not change the usernames or passwords to any District Social Media account without informing the Executive Director, of the new username and/or password.

## **Employee Benefits**

### **Health and Dental**

All Regular Full-Time Employees are eligible to participate in The District's Health Benefits Program and Dental Benefit Program upon their date of hire. The District covers 95% of the base healthcare plan for eligible employees. Eligible employees will be responsible for funding 5% of the total premium cost for the base health plan and 5% for the base dental plan. Employees opting for a different plan higher than the base health and dental plans are responsible for paying the difference in total premium rates, which includes any cost above 95% of the base plan rate. Dental coverage is provided through Delta Dental USA. Medical coverage is provided through Healthsource RI.

This Handbook provides only a brief description of the benefit plans and programs that are in effect at the time of publication. The District reserves the right to modify, change or eliminate any of its benefits at any time consistent with any applicable laws or regulations. The terms of the specific plan documents control eligibility, benefits determinations, and other conditions. Employees are provided copies of summary plan descriptions and other relevant information at the time of hire. If you have any questions regarding your coverage, or to obtain copies of plan documents, please contact the Director of Operations.

## **Domestic Partner Healthcare Benefits Policy**

### **Purpose**

I-195 Redevelopment District's Domestic Partner Healthcare Benefits Policy is designed to develop the definition of a domestic partner and identify applicable internal benefits.

### **Policy**

The District acknowledges the needs of a diverse workforce and fairness in providing benefits to our employees, their dependents, spouses, and their domestic partners. Therefore, domestic partners are eligible to receive employer-sponsored healthcare benefits including medical and dental insurance per the stated employee benefits plan upon hire if they meet the criteria outlined below.

Domestic partners are those individuals who meet the following criteria:

- At least 18 years old and mentally competent to consent to a contract.
- Not legally married to anyone.
- Two people of the same or opposite sex who live together and share a domestic life.
- Not related by blood to a degree of closeness that would prohibit legal marriage in the state of Rhode Island.
- Have entered into the domestic partner relationship voluntarily and without reservation.
- Are jointly responsible for each other's common welfare and shared financial obligations.
- Intend to continue the domestic partner relationship indefinitely, with the understanding that the relationship can be terminated at any time by either partner.

### **Procedure**

Employees who wish to apply for domestic partner healthcare benefits must complete a Statement of Domestic Partnership and provide proof of domestic partnership [i.e., a bill at a common address, etc.]. The original form can be provided by the Director of Operations. The employee and the domestic partner will both be furnished a copy of the Statement of Domestic Partnership for their records.

This original form will be kept on file indefinitely with the District and will be deemed effective until one of the following occurs:

- The employee changes the partner designation by completing a new Statement of Domestic Partnership and returns the new form to human resources.
- The employee requests removal of the document and completes a Statement of Termination of Domestic Partnership. Benefits coverage for the domestic partner and his or her dependents will terminate at the end of the month in which the relationship ended.

## **Tuition Reimbursement**

At The District, we encourage all full-time employees to continue their education in programs related to their work or our overall business initiatives. Employees are eligible for tuition reimbursement for accredited online, in-person, or hybrid degree programs and courses required as electives to complete the degree or certificate at an accredited local college, university, or trade school. Employees must receive permission from their supervisor and the Executive Director. The District will consider reimbursement course tuition expenses and textbooks for up to two courses during any one trimester or semester for a maximum of up to \$6,000 in 12 months. The amount reimbursed for tuition is based on the grade achievement of the completed course. (A = 100 percent, B = 85 percent, C = 75 percent, D or lower = 0)

The tuition reimbursement program does not cover the cost of registration, entrance exams, transcript fees, hardware, software, computers, printers, parking, calculators, non-accredited programs, or correspondence schools.

## **Social Security**

The District and its employees share the cost of Social Security taxation. If an employee fulfills the government contribution criteria, Social Security provides a monthly benefit at full retirement age. For more information, log onto [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov).

## **Time Off with Pay**

### **Holiday**

The District observes the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Victory Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day

You will be paid for these holidays if you:

- Are a full-time employee at The District, and
- Have worked the full day before and the full day after the holiday, unless time off has been approved in advance as vacation or personal days, or unless a bona fide emergency has prohibited the employee from being at work either before or after the holiday. Circumstances of such should be reviewed with the supervisor on the employee's return to work.
- Holidays that fall on a weekend will be observed either on a Friday or Monday. To avoid confusion, all holidays will be announced in advance.
- Due to business needs, some employees may be required to work on District holidays. Your supervisor or manager will notify you if this may apply to you.

### **Vacation**

The District provides full-time employees with up to 20 days of vacation each fiscal year (July 1 – June 30). Upon hire, the employee is provided with 5 days of vacation time which is available for immediate use, and subsequently provided 5 days every quarter thereafter until the employee's vacation allotment has reached 20 days.

(Example: If you begin work on January 1, you will have immediate access to 5 vacation days, on April 1, you will earn an additional 5 days, on July 1, you will earn an additional 5 days, and on October 1, you will receive 5 days earned for a total of 20 days).

Full Time District employees are eligible to carry up to 10 days of unused and earned vacation into the next fiscal year.

### **Eligibility**

Only active, full-time employees are eligible for time off with pay, and all time must be earned before being taken. You may not substitute pay for unused vacation unless you have your supervisor's written approval.

Managers reserve the right not to approve a request if it will interfere with District operations or adversely affect coverage of job and staff requirements. Whenever possible, employees' requests to use the time off with pay will be accommodated, but where scheduling conflicts arise, seniority and workload priority will prevail.

### **Payment of Unused Vacation upon Termination**

In accordance with state law, if you have been employed for at least one year, you will be paid out for any remaining accrued, unused vacation time upon termination of employment. Any vacation time taken that may have been advanced before accrual will be deducted from your final paycheck to the extent permitted by law. Employees who are discharged or resign will receive their final paycheck on the next regular payday. Final paychecks will include all wages accrued but not paid through the date of separation.

### **Termination, Resignation, and Discharge**

If at any time it is necessary for an employee to resign his or her employment with The District, we request at least two weeks' notice. Employees who are discharged or resign will receive their final paycheck on the next regular payday. Final paychecks will include all wages accrued but not paid through the date of separation.

### **Voluntary Retirement Savings Options**

#### **District 401(a) Plan**

All regular full-time employees hired after January 1, 2017, are automatically enrolled in The District's 401(a) Plan, maintained by Security Benefit (Plan #801349000). This is a portable pension plan. The Plan allows the employee to personally select the investment options that include stable funds, bonds, and mutual fund choices. The retirement program is fully funded by The District. Every quarter, The District contributes 4 percent of the participants' base wages to a tax-deferred 401(a) savings account. The money in your personal 401(a) account vests fully after one year of participation. Employees are eligible for this plan after six months of employment.

#### **District 457 Plan**

The District's 457 Plan (Plan # 613946000) is a tax-deferred retirement savings plan that allows the employee to contribute pretax dollars through payroll deductions. The District will match 100 percent, up to the first 3 percent of base wages, that the employee contributes to a 457 plan. The plan is administered through Security Benefit, it allows participants to select investment options that include stable funds, bonds and mutual fund choices. All regular full-time employees may participate in this plan upon hire and are eligible immediately. The employee match begins after six months of employment. For more information regarding enrollment, investment choices, and changes to your account contact the Director of Operations.

## Appendix

### All Positions

This is a complete list of all current positions. Positions and responsibilities may be subject to change throughout the year per business needs and at the discretion of The District's leadership team. This list will be reviewed and updated annually to reflect updates.

*Executive Director, Full-Time, Regular, Exempt*

*Director of Operations, Full-Time, Regular, Exempt*

*Senior Project Manager / Director of Real Estate, Full-Time, Regular, Exempt*

*Park Manager, Full-Time, Regular, Exempt*

*Park Program Coordinator, Full-Time, Regular, Exempt*

*Office Manager, Full-Time, Regular, Exempt*

### Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have received The District Employee Handbook and that I have read and understood the policies.

**I understand that this Employee Handbook represents only current policies and benefits and that it does not create a contract of employment or term of employment.** The District retains the right to change these policies and benefits as necessary, in its sole discretion without notice.

Unless expressly proscribed by statute or contract, my employment is "at-will." I understand that I have the right to terminate my employment at any time, with or without cause or notice, and that The District has the same right. I further understand that my status as an "at-will" employee may not be changed except in writing and signed by the Executive Director.

I understand that the information I come into contact with during my employment is proprietary to The District and accordingly, I agree to keep it confidential, which means I will not use it other than in the performance of my duties or disclose it to any person or entity outside The District. I understand that I must comply with all of the provisions of the Handbook to have access to and use District resources. I also understand that if I do not comply with all provisions of the Handbook, my access to District resources may be revoked, and I may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

I further understand that I am obligated to familiarize myself with The District's safety, health, and emergency procedures as outlined in this Handbook or other documents.

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Signature

Date

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Please Print Your Name