



Employee Handbook

of Rules, Policies and Procedures

**Adopted by the NCAC Board of Directors
September 20, 2006**

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been prepared as a reference for policies, benefits, and general information that should assist you during your employment with the National Children's Advocacy Center (NCAC). These policies apply to all employees of the agency, unless otherwise stated. However, neither this handbook nor any other organizational communication or practice creates an employment contract.

The policies contained herein were adopted by the Board of Directors and supersede previous policies. The Executive Director shall administer the policies set forth by the Board of Directors and develop the procedures to implement the policies.

As NCAC continues to grow, the need may arise and NCAC reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies and procedures as it deems appropriate even if they have not been reprinted or substituted in this handbook. Any changes in these policies will be approved by the Board of Directors. Employees will be notified of such changes to the handbook as they occur.

It is also understood that nothing in this handbook or any other policy or communication changes the fact that employment is at-will for an indefinite period unless terminated at any time by you or the NCAC. Any change in the at-will employment relationship must be in writing and signed by the Executive Director of the NCAC.

Notice

Any provision of these policies which conflicts with applicable federal, state, or local law, now existing or hereafter enacted shall be void.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

The employee handbook describes important information about the National Children's Advocacy Center (NCAC), and I understand that I should consult NCAC Human Resources regarding any questions not answered in the handbook.

I have entered into my employment relationship with NCAC voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no specified length of employment. Accordingly, either I or NCAC can terminate the relationship at-will, with or without cause, at any time, so long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law.

Since the information, policies, and benefits described herein are necessarily subject to change, I acknowledge that revisions to the handbook may occur, except to NCAC's policy of employment at-will (unless in writing signed by the Executive Director of the NCAC). All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the Board of Directors has the ability to adopt any revisions to the policies in this handbook.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I have received the handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

EMPLOYEE'S NAME (printed): _____

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

Section I: Code of Ethics

The successful operation and reputation of the National Children's Advocacy Center (NCAC) is built upon the principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct of our employees, board members, volunteers, and interns. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and letter of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as a scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity.

This Code of Ethics is the policy of NCAC and expresses its fundamental values. Accordingly, this Code guides the conduct of *all* representatives and is intended to foster an environment that promotes ethical conduct in carrying out their responsibilities.

1.1 Personal Integrity

A personal commitment to integrity in all circumstances benefits each individual as well as the organization. NCAC representatives:

- Respect and seek out the truth and avoid misrepresentation.
- Ensure fairness and objectivity in all activities.
- Set an example for high standards of professionalism.
- Honor the right to privacy of all people.

1.2 Professional Excellence

As an employer, NCAC promotes professional excellence and encourages open and honest communication among all representatives to create an atmosphere conducive to personal growth and career development.

NCAC supervisors:

- Encourage development and communication with representatives to help them achieve their goals and increase self-esteem through job enrichment.
- Evaluate employees, at least annually, on a fair and consistent basis so that all employees know what is expected of them and how they are progressing toward fulfilling expectations.
- Show respect and empathy for representatives and are considerate while being mindful of supervisory responsibilities.
- Create an environment that encourages the voicing of minority opinions.
- Encourage the reporting of breaches of the Code and protects persons who report these offenses.

NCAC representatives:

- Refuse to engage in or tolerate any fraud, misuse, abuse or waste of NCAC resources.
- Encourage growth and self-improvement in themselves and their co-workers.
- Respect all those they encounter through NCAC.
- Comply with Madison County Drug and Alcohol Policy.

- Comply with laws and regulations affecting NCAC. This includes the requirement that all employees must comply with Alabama's law regarding mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect for any situations that arise while conducting NCAC business.
- Direct questions or concerns related to interpretations or compliance with the Code to the agency's Human Resources department or Executive Director.
- Report breaches of the Code and encourage other representatives to do the same.

1.3 Accountability and Efficiency

NCAC has responsibilities to its partners who include donors, volunteers, and other agencies. These partners have placed trust in NCAC. To uphold this trust, NCAC:

- Makes full and fair disclosure of all relevant information to partners who have a right to know how their dollars are spent.
- Spends partners' money efficiently, objectively, and effectively.
- Is a good steward of donations, grants, and other contributions that are used to pay operating expenses, salaries and employee benefits, and refrains from allowing expenditures that by their nature or amount do not directly advance NCAC's mission.

1.4 Responsibilities to Donors

The NCAC relies on the goodwill of its donors to continue providing services to the community, and recognizes its obligation to respect and protect the privacy of donors. To accomplish this, the NCAC:

- Handles information about donations with respect and confidentiality to the extent provided by law.
- Respects the wishes of contributors who prefer to remain anonymous.
- Does not lend, exchange, rent, or sell donor lists to other organizations.
- Ensures that information provided when making an online donation or registering for an event is protected, and is not disclosed to any third parties.
- Allows those on the NCAC mailing list who receive periodic mailings about upcoming events to opt out by notifying the NCAC.

1.5 Responsibilities to NCAC Board of Directors

The NCAC Board of Directors provides important leadership to the agency. A good relationship between Board and employees is key to the organization's success. As such, the NCAC will:

- Provide the board with the information and support required so all members can perform at their highest level and receive personal satisfaction.
- Treat all board members with fairness and due respect, providing appropriate mechanisms for their views, interests, and concerns.
- Set clear standards of expectations, and ensure that all board members understand the goals of the agency and the expectations of the board.

1.6 Responsibilities to Employees

The employees of NCAC are its most valuable resource and the key to the organization's success. As such, the NCAC will:

- Support employees so they can perform at their highest level and receive personal satisfaction.
- Treat all employees with fairness and due respect, providing appropriate mechanisms for their views, interests, and concerns to be expressed.
- Set clear standards of performance, and ensure that all employees understand the goals and expectations set by NCAC.
- Assist in the career development of employees, providing opportunities for advancement, raises, training, and awards when necessary, applicable, and/or possible.

1.7 Responsibilities to Volunteers

Volunteers who serve NCAC, through its Board of Directors or otherwise, are crucial to the success of NCAC. In order to assist volunteers to serve effectively and to obtain satisfaction from their service, NCAC supervisors and employees:

- Support volunteers so they can perform at their highest level and receive personal satisfaction.
- Treat all volunteers with fairness and respect, providing appropriate mechanisms for their views and interests to be expressed.
- Assist in the development and the understanding of the roles of volunteers and employees, respectively; set clear standards of performance for volunteers and appropriately recognize their contributions.

1.8 Responsibilities to Interns

Students who serve NCAC through internships are part of an important, mutually beneficial relationship. While interns perform work at NCAC on a temporary basis to gain relevant experience, they can provide valuable assistance, updated knowledge, fresh enthusiasm, and an outsider perspective to NCAC employees. In order to maximize the productivity of internships, NCAC supervisors and employees:

- Support and guide interns so they can perform at their highest level and achieve the goals set forth at the beginning of their internships.
- Treat all interns with fairness and respect, providing a standard of workplace professionalism by which they may learn to conduct themselves.
- Set clear standards of performance and reasonable expectations, appropriately recognizing interns' contributions.
- Develop meaningful and challenging tasks for interns to perform, which adhere to the program requirements set forth by their respective educational institutions.

1.9 Vendor Relations

Vendors are treated fairly to avoid favoritism or appearances of impropriety. NCAC:

- Affords all vendors the opportunity to offer or qualify their products or services on a competitive basis.
- Conducts all competitive bidding in a fair and professional manner, giving no special preferences or advantages to any vendor.
- Purchases all products and services under its purchasing policy procedures, which adhere to this Code of Ethics.

1.10 Equal Opportunity

NCAC is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, gender, color, creed, religion, national origin, disability, veteran status, pregnancy, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law. The NCAC is also committed to providing equal employment opportunities based on sexual orientation. All representatives will adhere to the letter and spirit of the NCAC Employee Handbook regarding equal opportunity.

1.11 Personal Gain

With respect to performing his/her NCAC responsibilities, no representative will:

- Solicit or accept gratuities, gifts, entertainment, or favors from any contributor, supplier, agency, or individual seeking favors or special consideration from NCAC other than promotional gifts valued below \$50 for themselves or their families.
- Keep for personal use any door prizes, or other prizes won from random chance drawings, valued above \$50.
- Accept food, transportation, lodging, or entertainment unless directly related to NCAC business.
- Use NCAC resources for personal gain.
- Use insider knowledge gained about, or through, NCAC or any of its partners for personal gain.

1.12 Outside Activities

NCAC representatives should ensure that other activities, including outside employment, do not interfere with their responsibilities with NCAC and do not adversely affect NCAC. All employees will be judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to NCAC's scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work requirements. All employees will adhere to the letter and spirit of the NCAC Employee Handbook regarding outside employment.

1.13 Favoritism

Favoritism is unfair to other representatives. Favoritism is easily perceived from actions that otherwise are harmless. Accordingly:

- The NCAC shall not employ or allow internship of relatives of staff or Board members in a direct line of supervision.
- Employees who marry while employed are treated in accordance with this policy.
- NCAC employees consider the nature and appearance of their relationships with other employees to ensure that their decisions and actions are fair.

NCAC representatives with decision-making authority do not improperly influence the selection of consultants or service providers with whom they have personal, professional or business affiliation.

1.14 Confidential Information

NCAC representatives shall not discuss with the public any information or personal opinions gained as a result of participating in confidential NCAC business. An *NCAC Confidentiality Agreement* will be signed by all staff, interns, volunteers and board members.

Similarly, the NCAC will take proper measures to ensure the privacy of board members, employees, clients, interns and volunteers. Private information will never be sold or given to outside companies, and files will be kept in a restricted area. Access to files on board members, employees, clients, interns and volunteers will be limited to those who demonstrate a legitimate need to know and to situations where the law demands disclosure.

1.15 Disclosure

NCAC representatives are encouraged to disclose any perceived breaches of the Code of Ethics. Disclosure should be made to NCAC Human Resources (HR) or the Executive Director. Any reported breaches will be investigated by HR and the Executive Director and appropriate action will be taken. Confidentiality will be maintained for the person disclosing the breach, unless the matter raises serious legal implications. In such instances, the person disclosing the breach will be notified. NCAC supervisors will protect those who make such reports. NCAC encourages all representatives to be prompt, open and forthright in reporting perceived breaches of the Code of Ethics.

1.16 Suspected Abuse of Children – Accusations and Administrative Leave

The NCAC does not tolerate the abuse of children. In the event that an employee or volunteer/intern is accused of abusing a child, upon the completion of the investigations, disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment may ensue. During the investigation by law enforcement and/or Department of Human Resources (DHR), the employee may be placed on administrative leave or reassigned to a non-client contact position. Staff and volunteers/interns will cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by law enforcement and/or DHR.

1.17 CERTIFICATE

I have read and understand the National Children’s Advocacy Center Code of Ethics. I agree to comply with this policy.

Printed Name

Title

Signature

Date

Section 2: Employment Information

2.1 General Employment Information

2.1.1 Employment at Will

Employment is a relationship that exists as long as both the agency and the employee determine it is in their respective best interests. Employees are free to resign at any time for any reason; however, advance notice is requested. The agency may terminate an employee with or without cause and with or without notice. The at-will employment relationship can only be modified in writing signed by the Executive Director of the NCAC.

2.1.2 Equal Employment Opportunity

In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at NCAC will be based on merit, qualifications, and abilities. NCAC does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of age, race, gender, color, creed, religion, national origin, disability, veteran status, pregnancy, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law. The NCAC is also committed to providing equal employment opportunities based on sexual orientation.

This policy governs all aspects of employment, including selection, job assignment, compensation, discipline, termination, and access to benefits and training.

Any employees with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of NCAC Human Resources. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

2.1.3 Americans with Disabilities Act

NCAC is committed to complying fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and to ensuring equal opportunity in employment for qualified persons with disabilities. NCAC conducts all employment practices and activities on a non-discriminatory basis.

NCAC hiring procedures have been reviewed and they provide meaningful employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. Only pre-employment inquiries regarding an applicant's ability to perform the duties of the job will be made.

NCAC requires post-offer medical examinations only for jobs that have bona fide job-related physical requirements. An examination will be given to any person who enters the job, but only after that person has been given a conditional job offer. Medical records are kept confidential and separate from other personnel files.

Reasonable accommodation is available to an employee with a disability when the disability affects the performance of essential job functions. Employment decisions are made based on the

merits of the situation in accordance with defined criteria, not the disability of the individual.

Qualified individuals with disabilities may make requests for reasonable accommodation to NCAC Human Resources. On receipt of an accommodation request, NCAC Human Resources will meet with the requesting individual to discuss and identify the precise limitations resulting from the disability and the potential accommodation that the agency might make to help overcome those limitations. NCAC Human Resources will discuss the situation with the employee's supervisor and inform the employee of the agency's decision on the accommodation request or on how to make the accommodation.

Qualified individuals with disabilities are entitled to equal pay and other forms of compensation (or changes in compensation) as well as job assignments, classifications, organizational structures, position descriptions, lines of progression, and seniority lists. All types of leaves of absence are available to all eligible full-time employees on an equal basis.

NCAC is also committed to not discriminating against any qualified employee or applicant because the person is related to or associated with a person with a disability. NCAC will follow any state or local law that gives more protection to a person with a disability than the ADA gives.

NCAC is committed to taking all other actions that are necessary to ensure equal employment opportunity for persons with disabilities in accordance with the ADA and any other applicable federal, state, and local laws.

2.1.4 Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

In compliance with the Family & Medical Leave Act, NCAC provides up to 12 weeks family and medical leave of absence to eligible employees who require time off from work:

- to fulfill family obligations relating directly to childbirth, adoption, or placement of a foster child;
- to care for a child, spouse, or parent with a serious health condition;
- for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform his/her job;
- any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a covered military member on "covered active duty;" or
- any additional situations provided for under the Family and Medical Leave Act including twenty-six workweeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the eligible employee is the service member's spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin (military caregiver leave).

As defined by the FMLA, a serious health condition means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility; or continuing treatment by a health care provider.

Employees who have been employed by NCAC, Madison County District Attorney or Madison County Commission for one year and have worked 1,250 hours over the past year are eligible.

Eligible employees should make requests to their supervisors at least 30 days in advance of foreseeable events and as soon as possible for unforeseeable events.

Employees requesting family leave related to the serious health condition of a child, spouse, or parent may be required to submit a health care provider's statement verifying the need for a family leave to provide care, its beginning and expected ending dates, and the estimated time required.

Eligible employees may request up to a maximum of 12 weeks of leave within any 12-month period. Any combination of family leave and medical leave may not exceed this maximum limit. Employees may be asked to first deplete accrued paid leave time before taking unpaid leave. Married employee couples may be restricted to a combined total of 12 weeks leave within any 12 month period for childbirth, adoption, or placement of a foster child; or to care for a parent with a serious health condition.

Subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the applicable plans, NCAC will continue to provide health insurance benefits for the full period of the approved leave. When the employee's paid leave balance (annual and sick) has been exhausted, the employee will continue to be eligible for insurance coverage, but will be responsible for his/her current premium payments. Benefit accruals, such as vacation, sick leave, or holiday benefits, will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon return to active employment.

So that an employee's return to work can be properly scheduled, an employee on leave is requested to provide NCAC with at least two weeks advance notice of the date the employee intends to return to work. When leave ends, the employee will be reinstated to the same position, if it is available, or to an equivalent position for which the employee is qualified. *Note: This provision may not apply to "key" employees if restoration to employment will cause substantial and grievous economic harm to NCAC. See Section 825.309 of the FMLA regulations for more information.*

If an employee fails to return to work on the agreed upon date, or contact his/her supervisor or Executive Management Team member by such date, NCAC will assume that the employee has resigned. An employee who fails to return to work for at least thirty days after FMLA leave for reasons other than the continuation, recurrence or onset of a serious health condition that would entitle him/her to FMLA leave or other circumstances beyond his/her control, he/she may have to repay medical insurance premiums paid on his/her behalf during the leave.

2.1.5 Immigration Law Compliance

NCAC is committed to employing only United States citizens and aliens who are authorized to work in the United States, and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin.

In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. Former employees who

are rehired must also complete the form if they have not completed an I-9 with NCAC within the past three years, or if their previous I-9 is no longer retained or valid.

Employees with questions or seeking more information on immigration law issues are encouraged to contact NCAC Human Resources. Employees may raise questions or complaints about immigration law compliance without fear of reprisal.

2.1.6 Hiring of Relatives and Personal Relationships

The NCAC shall not employ family members in a direct line of supervision of board members or staff. For purposes of this policy, a family member is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage. Individuals involved in a dating relationship with another employee may not occupy a position that will be working directly for or supervising the employee with whom they are involved in a dating relationship.

If a family member relationship or dating relationship is established after employment between employees who are in a reporting situation described above, it is the responsibility and obligation of the employees involved in the relationship to disclose the existence of the relationship to the appropriate Executive Management Team member or NCAC Human Resources. The employees will be given 30 calendar days to submit a written decision to management regarding who will be reassigned or, if necessary, terminated from employment. The following restrictions are applicable:

- If the written decision is not received within 30 days, the Executive Management Team member will decide who is to be transferred/terminated
- The employees may decide *who* gets reassigned, but NCAC determines *where*
- The employee to be reassigned *must be qualified* for an *open* position
- Reassignment is not guaranteed
- Pay rate adjustments, if any, will follow the procedures outlined in the Job Transfers section of this handbook.

Family members working within the same department at the time this policy is adopted will be grandfathered in. Should any conflict arise because of the family or personal relationship, the Executive Management Team member will require the employees in the relationship to make a decision as to who will be transferred or terminated from employment. If a decision cannot be reached in a reasonable amount of time, the decision will be made by the Executive Management Team member.

In other cases where a conflict or the potential for conflict arises because of the relationship between employees, even if there is no line of authority or reporting involved, the employees may be separated by reassignment or terminated from employment. Employees in a close personal relationship should refrain from public workplace displays of affection or excessive personal conversation.

2.1.7 Amendments to the Policies and Procedures

From time to time, NCAC Executive Management Team members may feel that one or more clauses in the Policies and Procedures manual need to be revised. The Executive Management Team members will make such recommendations to NCAC Human Resources which will, if appropriate, discuss the changes with the Executive Director. If the Executive Director also finds the changes appropriate, then NCAC Human Resources will prepare a draft for review by the Executive Management Team, who will discuss the changes and make final suggestions.

NCAC Human Resources will then complete the revisions, and a copy will be sent to the NCAC Board of Directors. All changes must gain final approval from the NCAC Board of Directors. Executive Management Team members and NCAC Human Resources will make every effort to listen to employees and stay abreast of any new laws, or changes to laws, which will affect the Employee Policies and Procedures at NCAC. Changes will be made on a timely basis according to their level of urgency, to be determined by legal and moral standards.

2.2. Employment Categories and Classification

2.2.1 NCAC Relationship with Madison County

All positions within the NCAC are positions with the Madison County District Attorney and not the Madison County Commission. Although employees of the District Attorney receive the same fringe benefits as employees of the Madison County Commission, their employment is administered by the Madison County Personnel Department and their paychecks may be issued by the Madison County Commission, the District Attorney is a state official.

Alabama law provides that employees of the District Attorney “serve at the pleasure of the District Attorney and shall not be considered employees under the State Merit System Act.” Employees of the District Attorney are not covered by the Madison County Personnel Act (73-941) or the Rules, Policies, and Procedures for the classified Service of Madison County, Alabama (unless otherwise stated, i.e. Drug and Alcohol Policy).

2.2.2 Employee Classifications as Established by the Fair Labor Standards Act

It is the intent of NCAC to clarify the definitions of employment classifications so that employees understand their employment status and benefit eligibility.

- A. Exempt – The term “exempt employees” is defined as those employees who are not subject to the hours of work and overtime pay provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Exempt employees do not receive overtime pay or other extra compensation for work performed beyond 40 hours in a work week.
- B. Non-Exempt – Non-exempt employees are those employees who, regardless of title, are subject to the hours of work and overtime pay provisions of the FLSA. All employees who do not meet the qualifications for exemption are included in the term non-exempt. Non-exempt employees receive extra compensation for all hours worked over 40 hours in a work week.

Non-exempt employees are expected to confine their work to their usual work days and number of hours per week unless additional hours are authorized in advance by their supervisor. Non-exempt employees may not transfer any work hours to volunteer hours if the work completed during these hours constitutes part of their assigned job duties and/or was performed during their regular work schedule. *See Section 2.5.3 Overtime, Compensatory Time and Staff Volunteering for more information and requirements regarding approval in advance for any work hours beyond the employee's regular work schedule.*

A more detailed explanation of the categories and conditions for exempt employees may be found on the US Department of Labor's website.

2.2.3 Employee Categories as Established by the NCAC

- A. Regular Full-Time employees are those who have completed the probationary period, are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work 37.5 hours per week (NCAC's full-time schedule). Generally, they are eligible for NCAC's benefit package, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.
- B. Part Time employees are those who are not assigned to a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than 37.5 hours per week. While they do receive all legally mandated benefits, such as Social Security and Workers' Compensation Insurance, they are ineligible for most of NCAC's other benefit programs. Two exceptions are: 1) Employees working at least 20 hours per week are required to participate in the Alabama Employee's Retirement system and 2) Employees regularly working 30 hours or more per week may be eligible for the health insurance plan depending on the terms of the current plan.
- C. Temporary employment may be full-time or part-time, and is for a specified period of time (normally less than six months). Temporary employees retain that status unless and until notified of a change. While temporary employees receive all legally mandated benefits (such as workers' compensation insurance and Social Security), temporary full-time employees are not eligible for all of NCAC's other benefit programs.

The Probationary Period of employment occurs during the first six months at NCAC and applies to employees whose performance is being evaluated closely to determine whether further employment in a specific position or with NCAC is appropriate. During this time the employee is ineligible for various benefits and may be dismissed at any time without following any progressive discipline that may have been more likely if the employee had completed the probationary period. The Probationary Period applies to both Regular Full-Time and Part-Time employees. Benefits requiring completion of the probationary period include annual leave, sick leave, and personal day. Employees will be notified when they satisfactorily complete the probationary period.

Note about Contractors: Independent Contractors are *not* considered employees of NCAC, and are not eligible for benefits provided to employees of NCAC. However, contractors are expected to follow the NCAC Code of Ethics and adhere to applicable NCAC rules and regulations while at the NCAC.

2.3 Employment Policies

NCAC will recruit qualified individuals to fill job vacancies on the basis of experience, ability, and aptitude for the position. In consideration of an employee's desire to move toward more challenging positions, increase skills, and advance to higher positions, it is the agency's policy to first try to fill vacancies from within the agency by promotion or transfer.

2.3.1 Employment Applications

NCAC relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. All applicants are required to sign a release form that allows Madison County to obtain information from references and previous employers. Some positions require driving records and credit reports.

Because of the nature of work done here, positions with NCAC require a criminal convictions history check of all employees which includes two screenings: criminal background checks and Child Abuse and Neglect clearances through the DHR Central Registry. These will be repeated every 3 years. **Individuals with a substantiated record of committing domestic abuse, sexual or child abuse, and/or assault may be ineligible for hire at NCAC.** Unsubstantiated reports and other criminal convictions will be considered on a case by case basis. The employee may be asked to submit court records, police reports, and/or the impressions of the district attorney in regard to the report. The job relatedness of the accusation will also be considered.

Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in the exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment. If the individual has been hired, their employment may be terminated.

Misrepresentation as to pre-existing physical or mental conditions may void employee's Workers' Compensation benefits.

2.3.2 Employee Medical Examinations/Fitness for Duty

To help ensure that employees are able to perform their duties safely, medical examinations may be required. After an offer has been made to an applicant entering a designated job category, a medical examination will be performed at NCAC's expense by a health professional of NCAC's choice. The offer of employment and assignment to duties is contingent upon satisfactory completion of the exam.

This also includes current employees wishing to transfer to a job category requiring a medical examination.

Any information pertaining to an employee's medical condition(s), history, or records of payment to health care providers will be kept in a separate file from other employee information and maintained confidentially. Access to this information will be limited to those who have a legitimate need to know.

2.3.3 Employment Reference Checks

To ensure that individuals who join NCAC are well-qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, it is the policy of NCAC to check the employment references of all applicants. Information obtained will be maintained confidentially by NCAC Human Resources.

Inquiries received from outside sources requesting employment verification of NCAC employees, or previous employees of NCAC, will be referred to the Madison County Personnel Department. Responses to phone inquiries will confirm only dates of employment and position(s) held. Written requests for employment dates, positions held and salary will be responded to in writing by the Madison County Personnel Office. No employment data other than employment dates, position held and rate of pay will be released without a written authorization and release signed by the individual who is the subject of the inquiry.

No employee or member of the Board of Directors of NCAC should attempt to provide reference information about current or past employees to individuals outside of the organization unless it is part of their designated job duties to do so. This includes recommendations, good or bad, and statements concerning the performance of past employees which could be considered disparaging or which could adversely affect the former employee's reputation or potential to secure employment or contracts.

2.3.4 Job Posting

Job openings at the NCAC will be posted on the NCAC website, with the Madison County Commission and via an e-mail to All Staff. Additionally, some positions may be posted in the newspaper and other recruitment places. Employees who have completed their probationary employment period may apply for any position for which they feel qualified. Consideration will be given on the basis of experience, skill, previous performance, and ability to meet the requirements of the new position. To apply for an open position, employees should contact NCAC Human Resources.

2.3.5 Job Transfers

NCAC values the experience and skill of its employees and encourages professional growth opportunities within the agency. NCAC may also be forced to eliminate positions, and attempt to relocate employees within the agency. Either situation may involve transferring to a higher, lower, or lateral position. An employee who transfers to another position within the agency will be compensated as follows:

1. Transfer to a higher grade - If the employee's current rate of pay is less than the entry amount of the new position, his/her salary will be adjusted to at least the entry amount of the new position, contingent upon available funding and work experience. If the employee's current

rate of pay is within the range of the new position, the employee may receive up to a 5% increase at the time of transfer, contingent upon available funding and work experience.

2. Transfer to a lateral grade - The employee's rate of pay will remain the same.
3. Transfer to a lower level position - The employee is subject to a salary adjustment based on the entry level of the new grade, and a 2.5% increase for each year of credited service, not to exceed the employee's current salary. Credited service is based on an employee's full-time hire date with the NCAC, Madison County Commission, or SCAN.

All transfers will be considered on an individual basis and in compliance with the NCAC's Equal Employment Opportunity policy (See 2.1.2).

Employees who transfer to a new position will receive a performance evaluation after three months in the new position, and another after six months. Any issues with the employee's performance in the new job will be addressed in the three-month evaluation, and are expected to be resolved by the six-month evaluation. An employee who is not performing satisfactorily within six months of obtaining a new position will be released from duty. Employees are not guaranteed the ability to obtain a new position or return to an old position after being released from duty.

NCAC encourages employees to talk with their supervisors about their career plans. Supervisors are encouraged to support employees' efforts to gain experience and advance within the NCAC. An applicant's supervisor may be contacted to verify performance, skills, and attendance. Any staffing limitations or other circumstances that might affect a prospective transfer may also be discussed.

2.3.6 Training and Development

Within the first week of employment, all NCAC employees must participate in the Madison County Commission New Employee Orientation. This orientation will be scheduled through NCAC Human Resources.

Within the first three months of employment or as soon as it is offered, all NCAC employees must participate in the NCAC New Employee Orientation. This training will be scheduled through NCAC Human Resources.

Within the first six months of employment, all NCAC employees must participate in the Madison County Commission Drug Awareness Training. This training will be scheduled through NCAC Human Resources.

Within the first year of employment or earlier if possible, all NCAC employees must participate in departmental orientations.

All NCAC employees are expected to attend monthly All Staff meetings. Employees who are not able to attend should make arrangements with their supervisor to ensure that the absence is for good reason, and excused.

NCAC employees are expected to attend staff development/in-service training when offered by the agency.

2.4 Employee Relations and Expectations

2.4.1 Job Expectations

The successful operation and reputation of NCAC is built upon the principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct of our employees. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and letter of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as a scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity.

Employees of NCAC are expected to be:

1. On time and alert when scheduled to be at work
2. Careful and conscientious in performance of duties
3. Thoughtful and considerate of other people
4. Courteous and helpful when dealing with the public and with other employees

In general, the use of good judgment based on high ethical principles will guide you with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. If a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of action, the matter should be discussed openly with your immediate supervisor and, if necessary, with NCAC Human Resources for advice and consultation.

Compliance with this policy is the responsibility of every NCAC employee. Disregarding or failing to comply with this standard of business ethics and conduct could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

2.4.2 Access to Personnel Files

NCAC maintains a personnel file on each employee, but the official personnel file is kept in the Personnel Department of the Madison County Commission. The personnel file includes information such as the employee's job application, resume, records of training, documentation of performance appraisals and salary increases, disciplinary actions and other employment records.

Personnel files are the property of the NCAC and access to the information they contain is restricted. NCAC respects the employees' right to have the information on their records treated confidentially. Files of individual employees are available for review only by the employee (under supervision), the immediate supervisor or others within the supervisory line of the employee, management personnel who have legitimate reasons to review information, NCAC board members, and an attorney.

Employees who wish to review their own file should contact NCAC Human Resources. With reasonable advance notice, employees may review their own personnel files in the Madison County Personnel Department in the presence of an individual appointed to maintain the files.

2.4.3 Communications to Employees

It is the desire of NCAC that employees are kept informed on new benefits, new policies, changes in policies and/or procedures and other reminders relating to work and benefits. Employees will be held accountable for, and understood to have received, information that is distributed through any and all of the commonly used means of communication. These include:

- Memos distributed by supervisors
- All Staff e-mails

Madison County will use the following to relay information to employees:

- Memos or letters attached to paycheck
- Memos distributed by supervisors
- “County Clips” Monthly Newsletter
- Postings on Bulletin Boards in each department
- Announcements by Executive Management Team members and/or supervisors

Employees should pay close attention to any communication from their Executive Management Team member, NCAC Human Resources, the Madison County Personnel Department and the County Commission through the above or any other means.

2.4.4 Confidentiality

Employees shall not discuss with the public any information or personal opinions gained as a result of participating in confidential NCAC business. The Confidentiality Agreement (see Appendix I), provides full details of this policy. Confidentiality may include, but is not limited to:

- Financial information
- Personal information about or pertaining to other employees, interns, volunteers, clients, and partners
- Research
- Intra-organizational planning

If an employee is unsure whether the discussion of certain subject matter violates the policy, they should ask a supervisor, Executive Management Team member or NCAC Human Resources. The Confidentiality Agreement will be signed by all staff, volunteers, Board Members and related associates.

Employees should also be aware of the confidentiality policies of their respective departments. Employees in Finance and Human Resources will be required to sign an additional agreement.

2.4.5 Conflicts of Interest

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when an employee or board member is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for that employee or for a relative as a result of NCAC's business dealings. NCAC employees shall not use their positions for purposes that are, or give the appearance of being, motivated by a desire for financial and/or other gain for personal, business or other ties.

NCAC employees should not knowingly solicit or accept gifts or grant favors where a higher interest could be violated, or where there could be the appearance of a conflict of interest.

NCAC employees should also refrain from requesting or sharing confidential child abuse case information and/or should recuse themselves from case involvement when personal connections or relationships exist between the employee and community person(s) associated with a child abuse case.

2.4.6 Drug and Alcohol Use

The NCAC maintains a drug-free work place. Any employee reporting for work under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance will be asked to leave immediately and his/her employment is subject to termination, according to policy set forth in the *Madison County Drug and Alcohol Policy*. The NCAC adheres to the Madison County Drug and Alcohol Policy distributed to employees at the Madison County Commission orientation. If you are not issued a copy of the policy at your county orientation contact NCAC Human Resources.

Occasionally there may be NCAC-related events outside of the normal work day where alcohol is served. These types of events include receptions, September Celebration, holiday parties and other fundraising or social activities sponsored by or affiliated with the NCAC. Staff represent the NCAC at these events and are expected to avoid abuse of alcohol. NCAC reserves the right to ask staff to leave events should behavior due to alcohol consumption be considered unfit for effective participation or a distraction to other participants. Staff who violate this policy may be recommended for further action including disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Employees with questions or concerns about substance dependency or abuse are encouraged to use the resources of the Employee Assistance Program. They may also wish to discuss these matters with their supervisor, the NCAC Human Resources or the Madison County Personnel Office to receive assistance or referrals to appropriate resources in the community.

Employees with questions on this policy or issues related to drug or alcohol use in the workplace should raise their concerns with a supervisor or NCAC Human Resources without fear of reprisal.

2.4.7 Employee Conduct and Work Rules

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, NCAC expects employees to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all employees and the NCAC.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following are examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment:

- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome discrimination or harassment
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace
- Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice
- Unauthorized disclosure of business "secrets" or confidential information
- Violation of personnel policies
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct
- Failing to maintain confidentiality

Although not required, the NCAC will attempt to use progressive discipline to improve employee conduct and performance.

2.4.8 Employment Termination

Termination of employment is an inevitable part of personnel activity within any organization, and many of the reasons for termination are routine. Below are examples of some of the most common circumstances under which employment is terminated:

- Resignation - voluntary employment termination initiated by an employee. An employee wishing to leave the agency in good standing should provide NCAC with a written notice at least two weeks prior to the effective date of resignation.
- Discharge - involuntary employment termination initiated by the organization.
- Reduction in Force - involuntary employment termination initiated by the organization for non-disciplinary reasons.
- Retirement - voluntary employment termination initiated by the employee meeting age, length of service, and any other criteria for retirement from the organization.
- Loss of Grant Funding – termination of employment necessitated by the ending of a grant which paid for the terminated position.

NCAC will generally schedule exit interviews at the time of employment termination. The exit interview will afford an opportunity to discuss such issues as employee benefits, conversion privileges, repayment of outstanding debts to NCAC, or return of NCAC-owned property. Suggestions, complaints, and questions can also be voiced.

Employee benefits are terminated at the same time employment terminates, except when otherwise noted in this handbook (i.e., retirement). Some benefits may be continued at the employees' expense under COBRA, if the employee so chooses.

All agency related items, such as laptop computers, building passes, keys, credit cards, handbooks, etc. must be turned in prior to the release of the employee's final paycheck, final annual leave, and expense checks.

2.4.9 Grievance Procedure

Misunderstandings or conflicts can arise in any organization. To ensure effective working relations, it is important that such matters be resolved before serious problems develop. Most incidents resolve themselves naturally; however, if a situation persists that you believe is detrimental to you or the agency, follow these procedures:

1. Discuss the problem with your immediate supervisor. If you do not believe a discussion with your supervisor is appropriate or you feel uncomfortable, you may proceed directly to step two.
2. If your problem is not resolved after discussion with your supervisor or if you feel discussion with your supervisor is inappropriate or uncomfortable, you are encouraged to request a meeting with your department head or the appropriate member of the Executive Management Team. In an effort to resolve the problem, he/she will consider the facts and conduct an investigation. You will normally receive a response regarding your problem within five working days.
3. If you are not satisfied with the decision made by the department head or Executive Management Team member, or you feel a discussion with one of these persons is inappropriate or uncomfortable and you wish to pursue the problem or complaint further, you may contact NCAC Human Resources. NCAC Human Resources, after a full examination of the facts, will normally advise you of any decision within five working days.
4. If you are not satisfied with the previous decisions, or if you feel that discussion with NCAC Human Resources is inappropriate or uncomfortable, you may contact the Executive Director. The decision by the Executive Director will be final.

An employee who begins the grievance procedure may be asked to sign one or more written statements. These statements will be used only for the purposes of documenting and resolving the situation. They will be kept confidential and added to the employee's file.

The agency does not tolerate any form of retaliation against any employee who feels the need to follow this procedure. Any supervisor, department head, or Executive Management Team member contacted will use his/her discretion, guided by established laws and NCAC rules, integrity, fairness, respect, and the details of the situation to make decisions. In some cases the person contacted (supervisor, NCAC Human Resources, etc.) may feel it is necessary or

appropriate, in the interest of resolving the issue, to discuss the situation with a relevant third party such as the Executive Director or NCAC Human Resources.

2.4.10 Honoraria

An employee may not accept honoraria for any services that would normally be included as part of his/her job duties at NCAC. Board members are not compensated for services, but may be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses through NCAC.

2.4.11 Intellectual Property

Creative or intellectual products developed while in the employment of NCAC are the property of NCAC. If an employee leaves the agency, the products they created, or played a role in creating, remain the property of the NCAC.

2.4.12 Job Descriptions

Each staff position shall have a current written job description approved by the Executive Director and maintained by NCAC Human Resources.

Job descriptions are maintained to aid in orienting new employees to their jobs, identifying the requirements of each position, establishing hiring criteria, setting standards for employee performance evaluations, and establishing a basis for making reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

Job descriptions may also be re-written periodically to reflect any changes in the position's duties and responsibilities, and should be reviewed and revised, if needed, during the annual performance evaluation. All employees will be expected to help ensure that their job descriptions are accurate and current, reflecting the work being done.

Employees should remember that job descriptions do not cover every task or duty that might be assigned, and that additional responsibilities may be assigned as necessary. Any questions regarding job descriptions should be directed to NCAC Human Resources.

2.4.13 Outside Employment

An employee may hold a job with another organization as long as he or she satisfactorily performs his or her job responsibilities with NCAC. All employees will be judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to NCAC's scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work requirements. An employee on paid medical leave from NCAC may not accept outside employment before returning to work at NCAC.

Prior to accepting a position outside of the NCAC, an employee must submit a written request to their supervisor. The request should include the name of the organization the employee is seeking secondary employment from, the proposed schedule for the employee, the proposed start date, and end date if applicable. Employees may not accept outside employment prior to receiving written approval.

Employees may not obtain secondary employment with an organization which has motives, practices, ideals, or courses of action which conflict with those of NCAC, or which will in any other way conflict with or appear to conflict with the interests of NCAC.

It shall be considered a conflict of interest for an employee to hold an outside job where they will further their financial gains through the knowledge they have of NCAC's operations. Outside employment will present a conflict of interest if it has an adverse impact on NCAC or Madison County.

If NCAC determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance or the ability to meet the requirements of NCAC as they are modified from time to time, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if he or she wishes to remain with NCAC.

2.4.14 Performance Evaluations

Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis. Formal performance evaluations are conducted at the end of an employee's probationary period in any new position and on an annual basis for all employees. The performance appraisal allows the supervisor and employee to discuss the job responsibilities, standards, and performance requirements of the new position. Additionally, it provides both supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals.

In order for supervisors to have an appropriate tool to measure the progress of a new employee at the 6 month probationary period performance appraisal, the supervisor shall draft at least 3 primary goals to be addressed during the probationary period. These must be shared within the first week of hire. Additionally, the supervisor will reiterate specific job responsibilities with the new employee on the first day of hire.

The job performance of the Executive Director shall be evaluated by the Board of Directors at least once a year. The job performance of all other employees shall be evaluated by their immediate supervisors at least once each year. Information documented in a performance appraisal may be used in making decisions concerning raises, promotions, training, transfers, disciplinary actions and terminations.

The performance evaluation presented to each employee during the feedback session is final. An employee may provide written comments to his/her evaluation. An addendum may be attached to the evaluation by the employee or supervisor for informational purposes. At the conclusion of the feedback session, the employee's signature should be obtained on the evaluation form and the employee shall receive a copy of the final signed evaluation form. If the employee chooses not to sign the form, a note should be made on the form to that effect. The original signed evaluation shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

2.4.15 Personal Appearance

Dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the business image NCAC presents to clients and visitors.

During business hours or when representing NCAC, employees are expected to present a clean, neat, and tasteful appearance. Dress and appearance should be in accordance with the requirements of the position and accepted social standards. This is particularly true if the job involves dealing with clients or visitors in person.

Supervisors, department heads, and/or members of the Executive Management Team are responsible for establishing a reasonable dress code appropriate to the jobs in each department. If a supervisor feels an employee's personal appearance is inappropriate, he/she may be asked to leave the workplace until properly dressed or groomed. Under such circumstance, he/she will not be compensated for the time away from work. Consult a supervisor with any questions regarding what an appropriate appearance is.

If possible, reasonable accommodations may be made for a person with a disability or a religious dress code.

2.4.16 Personnel Data Changes

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify NCAC of any changes in personnel data. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, number and names of dependents, individuals to be contacted in the event of emergency, educational accomplishments, and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times. If any personnel data has changed, notify NCAC Human Resources and Human Resources will notify the Madison County Personnel Office.

2.4.17 Political Activity

All NCAC employees may participate in city, county, state and national level political activities to the same extent as any other citizen of the State of Alabama. However, participation must be limited to off-duty time. No employee shall conduct politically oriented speeches or other such verbal activities of a political nature, wear political badges, buttons or clothing, seek signatures to any petition, solicit votes, make or solicit contributions, or distribute badges, buttons, pamphlets, stickers or handbills of any kind favoring or opposing any issue for vote or referendum or candidate for election or nomination to public office upon the property of, or during the normal work hours of the NCAC. This prohibition includes the lunch and break periods.

NCAC employees may not use any NCAC funds or property, including vehicles or work time, for any political activities. Employees shall be on approved leave to engage in political action or shall be on personal time before or after work and on holidays. No employee shall solicit any type of political campaign contributions from other employees who work for the employee in a subordinate capacity. No employee shall coerce or attempt to coerce any subordinate employee to work in any capacity in any political campaign or cause.

Any employee of NCAC who qualifies to seek a political office with the government entity with which he/she is employed shall be required to take an unpaid leave of absence from his/her employment, or use accrued compensatory time or accrued annual leave, from the date he/she qualifies to run for office until the date on which the election results are certified or the employee is no longer a candidate or there are no other candidates on the ballot. During the period of unpaid leave, employees may pay to remain on the health insurance program (if allowed under the current plan's terms), but annual leave, holiday benefits, and retirement time will not accrue. Benefits will be reinstated when the employee returns to active work.

2.4.18 Professional Liability

Professional liability insurance is provided for both full-time and part-time clinical and certain administrative personnel by the NCAC, the limits of which are set by the Board of Directors. This should be discussed with a supervisor. Interns or volunteers providing clinical services are required to provide their own professional liability insurance and submit proof of such to NCAC Human Resources.

2.4.19 Professional Organizations

The NCAC encourages participation of the staff in professional organizations. A reasonable amount of time with pay may be granted for attending meetings related to an employee's professional field. Such attendance is subject to the prior approval of the supervisor.

The NCAC will pay for professional membership fees if the employee is required by NCAC to participate in a professional organization. Any publications or other amenities, offered as part of membership to an organization for which NCAC pays the membership fees, are the property of the NCAC.

Professional license fees are paid by the NCAC if the license is required and/or relevant to the work of the employee. Decisions on payment of professional and license fees are made by employee's Executive Management Team member. Each employee should discuss their needs for professional and license fee with their supervisor at the earliest possible time.

2.4.20 Progressive Discipline

The employee's supervisor, upon addressing a situation, shall determine if disciplinary action is necessary regarding an employee. The Board of Directors shall make this determination in the case of the Executive Director.

The purpose of this policy is to state NCAC's position on administering equitable and consistent discipline for unsatisfactory conduct in the workplace. The best disciplinary measure is the one that does not have to be enforced and comes from good leadership and fair supervision at all employment levels.

NCAC's own best interest lies in ensuring fair treatment of all employees and in making certain that disciplinary actions are prompt, uniform and impartial. The major purpose of any

disciplinary action is to correct the problem, prevent recurrence and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future.

Although employment with NCAC is based on mutual consent and both the employee and NCAC have the right to terminate employment at-will, with or without cause or advance notice, NCAC may use progressive discipline at its discretion.

Disciplinary action may call for any of the following four steps, depending on the severity of the problem and the number of occurrences: verbal warning, written warning, suspension with or without pay, or termination of employment. There may be circumstances when one or more steps are bypassed.

NCAC recognizes that there are certain types of employee problems that are serious enough to justify either a suspension, or, in extreme situations, termination of employment, without going through the usual progressive discipline steps. See Section 2.4.7 for examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Although not required, the NCAC will attempt to use progressive discipline to improve employee conduct and performance. All disciplinary action, except a verbal warning, will be documented in the employees' personnel file.

An employee wishing to appeal a disciplinary action taken should first attempt to discuss the disagreement with the supervisor who initiated the action. If the employee is still dissatisfied with the decision, or is too uncomfortable to begin the conversation, then he/she may request a conference with the supervisor, the supervisor's supervisor, and/or NCAC Human Resources. The employee may also refer to the Grievance Procedure outlined in section 2.4.9 of this handbook.

2.4.21 Reduction in Force (RIF) and Severance Policy

The NCAC appreciates the dedication of its employees. Unfortunately, financial or other situations may require that we reduce the number of employees. Employees will receive thirty days notice before losing a job due to a reduction in force (RIF), or loss of funding.

NCAC will allow affected employees liberal leave during the thirty-day notice period. This leave is *not* deducted from the employees' paid annual or sick leave, and may be used to pursue job search efforts. Advance supervisory approval is required, and leave taken is limited to ten hours per week.

Both part-time and full-time employees who have a long record of service to NCAC may receive the following extra compensation (at the sole discretion of the Executive Director): for five years of service or more, one week's pay, plus one day for each year over five. For example, an employee who served six years at NCAC will receive six days of pay (one week, plus one day). Years of service is defined as years of employment with the NCAC *only*. Previous service with the County or sister non-profits does not count. Whole years will be used when determining the number of years of service. There will be no prorating of years. For part-time employees, an

average of the number of hours worked per pay period for the last 12 months of employment will be used when calculating the severance pay.

All employees will be paid for accrued annual leave up to 480 hours. Employees may also be eligible to receive unemployment compensation, and should check with the local state employment claims office for applicable benefits.

NCAC employees who are affected by the reduction in force are encouraged to interview for any openings within the agency. However, if selected, the employee's pay will be subject to the standards outlined in section 2.3.5 of this manual. Any employee who is laid off shall be placed on a preference list for consideration in future vacancies for up to six months.

If there are any questions regarding the reduction in force policy, you may contact NCAC Human Resources.

2.4.22 Search and Seizure of Private Property

Offices, desks, lockers, cubicles, and other storage spaces (including storage provided on the NCAC computer network) may be provided for the convenience of employees, but remain the sole property of NCAC. Accordingly, they, as well as any articles found within them, may be inspected at any time. Though such measures must be available in order to ensure the safety and security of the NCAC and its resources, they are not used frivolously.

The search and/or seizure of property will occur only under the authority of the Executive Director. Although advance notice will not be provided, the affected employee will be provided with a written notice stating the reason for the search/seizure upon its commencement. To ensure that the employee's rights are not violated, there will be at least one witness present.

2.4.23 Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment

NCAC is committed to providing a work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and conduct that can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive, including sexual harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual advances, or visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior and includes gender-based harassment of a person of the same sex as the harasser. The following is a partial list of sexual harassment examples:

- Unwanted sexual advances.
- Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors.
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances.
- Visual conduct that includes leering, making sexual gestures, or displaying of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons or posters.

- Verbal conduct that includes making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, or jokes.
- Verbal sexual advances or propositions.
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, or suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations.
- Physical conduct that includes touching, assaulting, or impeding or blocking movements.

It is important to note that sexual harassment is judged by the effects on the harassed (including bystanders), *not* the intentions of the harasser. Unwelcome sexual advances (either verbal or physical), requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment
2. Submission or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for making employment decisions
3. The conduct has the purpose *or effect* of interfering with work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment

Other forms of harassment that are prohibited include offensive, unsolicited and unwelcome speech to an employee in the workplace based on that employee's race, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, military membership or veteran status, or citizenship status. The NCAC also prohibits harassment or discrimination based on sexual orientation. Examples of such harassment include but are not limited to display or circulation of written materials or pictures degrading to any gender, racial, ethnic, religious or other group listed above.

If an employee feels he/she has been subjected to any form of harassment and/or discrimination, the employee shall report the behavior to NCAC Human Resources in a dated writing (email shall suffice) with sufficient details (including the date, place, time, detailed description of the underlying behavior, and the name(s) of the offending party and any witnesses to the conduct). NCAC Human Resources will then take the necessary steps to initiate an investigation of the discrimination/harassment claim. If the employee is not comfortable reporting the behavior to NCAC Human Resources, he/she shall report it in a dated writing with sufficient details (as described above) to the Executive Director. **(Note: If a report under this policy is made orally, the employee is obligated, regardless of what he/she may be told by the person to whom the oral report was given, to follow the oral report with a written report containing the information outlined above within 24 hours of the oral report.)**

The NCAC will investigate and address each complaint in a timely manner. The NCAC prohibits employees from gossiping about facts learned through an investigation of a harassment or discrimination complaint. However, nothing in this policy prohibits or is intended to discourage employees from complaining about discrimination and/or harassment, nor does anything in this policy affect any rights under any applicable law, including, but not limited to, Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act.

The NCAC's response to the investigation will be communicated to the employee and the other parties involved. The NCAC will take appropriate corrective action, up to and including

termination, against any employee engaging in discrimination and/or harassment. **Please also note that the NCAC strictly prohibits retaliation against any employee for filing a complaint or participating in an investigation.** However, any employee who knowingly makes a false claim of harassment and/or discrimination will be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination.

2.4.24 Smoking Policy

The NCAC is a non-smoking facility; however, there are designated smoking areas outside. Smoking is allowed in the areas between the buildings, and there is an ashtray provided at the front door so that butts may be discarded before entering the building. Cigarette butts should not be thrown out onto the campus grounds.

In order to maintain city regulations and courtesy to others, employees and guests will avoid smoking within 20 feet of the entryways of the buildings. Employees must also avoid smoking in the direct vicinity of any children who may be on the NCAC campus.

2.4.25 Solicitation

Persons not employed by NCAC may not solicit, distribute literature, or sell products or services in the workplace or on NCAC campus. Solicitation includes the collection of money, goods or gifts; the circulation of petitions; and the solicitation of memberships, fees or dues.

2.4.26 Workplace Etiquette

NCAC strives to maintain a positive work environment where employees treat each other with respect and courtesy. Sometimes issues arise when employees are unaware that their behavior in the workplace may be disruptive or annoying to others. Many of these day-to-day issues can be addressed by politely talking with a co-worker to bring the perceived problem to his or her attention. In most cases, common sense will dictate an appropriate resolution. NCAC encourages all employees to keep an open mind and graciously accept constructive feedback or a request to change behavior that may be affecting another employee's ability to concentrate and be productive.

The following workplace etiquette guidelines are not rules with disciplinary consequences. They are simply suggestions for appropriate workplace behavior to help everyone be more conscientious and considerate of co-workers and the work environment. Please contact NCAC Human Resources if you have comments, concerns, or suggestions regarding these workplace etiquette guidelines.

- Return copy machine and printer settings to their default settings.
- Replace paper in the copy machine and printer paper trays when they are empty.
- Retrieve print jobs in a timely manner and be sure to collect all your pages.
- Be prompt when using the manual feed on the printer.
- Keep the area around the copy machine and printers orderly and picked up.
- Avoid taking or discarding others' print jobs or faxes when collecting your own.

- Avoid public accusations or criticisms of other employees. Address such issues privately with those involved or your supervisor.
- Clean up after yourself and do not leave behind waste or discarded papers.

2.4.27 Volunteers and Interns

NCAC accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers and interns as a means of furthering the goals and interests of the agency, and the services they perform are integral to the success of NCAC. Recognizing this, it is the responsibility of NCAC employees to ensure that volunteers/interns are provided:

- The right to be given meaningful assignments
- The right to be treated as equal coworkers
- The right to effective supervision

Volunteers/interns must also adhere to certain standards and are subject to the following responsibilities and restrictions:

- The relationship between NCAC and the volunteer/intern is “at will,” and may be severed at any time
- No person who has a personal, philosophical, or financial conflict of interest with NCAC or any of its activities or programs may serve as an intern or volunteer
- Volunteers and interns must maintain the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information gained at NCAC

All volunteers/interns must submit a volunteer application granting consent for a background check to be performed. Though recruited on a non-discriminatory basis, **NCAC does not accept volunteers or interns who have a history of committing domestic abuse and/or sexual abuse or assault.** Complete Volunteer and Intern Policies are located in the Appendix.

Interacting with and Requesting Volunteers and Interns:

1. Employees may request volunteers by calling or submitting an e-mail to the Volunteer Coordinator. A description of the position and duties and a requested time frame should be included. For event specific support, sufficient advance notice is needed. *NOTE:* Recruitment efforts are greatly enhanced by creative, interesting jobs and advance notice.

An employee’s family members, spouse, and/or persons with whom they have a dating relationship may volunteer and/or intern at NCAC. Interns, however, may not serve in the direct line of supervision of a relative or person with whom they have a dating relationship.

2. Due to the possibility of a breach in confidentiality, NCAC volunteers/interns under the age of eighteen may not have any contact with the Clinical Department or NCAC clients. Volunteers under the age of sixteen must have the written consent of a parent or guardian prior to acceptance at NCAC.

3. Each volunteer/intern will have a clearly identified supervisor who will be responsible for the management and guidance of his/her work, and who will be available for consultation and assistance. The supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that the volunteer/intern understands and abides by the rules of the NCAC, and is corrected when conduct is inappropriate. The supervisor is also responsible for ensuring that the volunteer/intern has appropriate supervision when at the NCAC, *especially* if the volunteer/intern will be on the campus after hours.
4. Volunteers/interns should be treated with the same respect given to other coworkers, and should not be harassed, bullied, or openly criticized. If an employee not acting as a volunteer's/intern's supervisor witnesses behavior that needs correcting or disciplining, they should immediately notify the supervisor, who will then speak to the volunteer/intern in private.

If the behavior is grossly inappropriate, the employee should immediately tell the volunteer/intern to cease and escort him/her to their supervisor. Possible grounds for the immediate dismissal of a volunteer/intern include, but are not limited to: misuse of NCAC property, gross misconduct or insubordination, being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, theft, mistreatment of NCAC employees, and failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties. Before dismissal of a volunteer/intern, staff should consult with NCAC Human Resources.

5. A file will be maintained for each volunteer/intern, including the completed application and all other pertinent information. Intern files maintained by the supervisor may be more inclusive, and contain dates of service, positions held, duties performed, work evaluations, awards received, and disciplinary records. It is paramount that these records be up to date. Serious infractions **must** be communicated to the Volunteer Coordinator and documented in the volunteer's/intern's file. This file will be used for decisions concerning future placement, as well as the appropriateness of corrective actions. Volunteers/interns will be allowed to submit updates, such as: awards received, written statements expressing concerns or grievances, and addendums concerning disciplinary actions.

Group or One-Time Volunteers:

On occasion, volunteers may participate in one-time group projects at the NCAC. These groups include civic clubs, corporate service groups, groups from local churches, and other similar assemblies. Due to time constraints and other complications, these volunteers will not be screened and interviewed individually.

Group projects generally do not involve direct contact with clients or confidential materials. The volunteers may assemble packets, do lawn work, assist with fundraisers, and do other activities with a low level of responsibility and required training.

On rare occasions (such as holiday events) when volunteers or volunteer groups do interact with NCAC clients, additional staff supervision is required to ensure that unscreened volunteers do

not have unsupervised contact with the clients. In addition, children at such events are typically accompanied by parent(s) and/or guardian(s), further limiting the possibility of inappropriate interaction. Prior to the event, NCAC staff members will provide training to designated group leaders and/or members to help them understand the dynamics of child abuse, confidentiality requirements, and any restrictions on their interaction with NCAC clients.

2.5 Employee Work Schedules and Pay

2.5.1 Normal Work Week and Hours

The work week for all NCAC employees begins at 12:01 a.m. Saturday and ends at midnight on the following Friday. Full-time employees work a 37.5 hour work week (excluding breaks) according to a schedule established by the supervisor.

Standard work hours for the majority of the Center are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday with a 60 minute lunch break, unless otherwise designated by a supervisor. In order to provide the most effective and efficient services to clients and other members of the public, work schedules may need to be adjusted. Each employee will follow the work schedule requested by his/her supervisor.

2.5.2 Flex Time

With supervisory approval, employees may modify a given workweek by changing hours of arrival or departure such that the regularly scheduled number of hours is maintained. For planning purposes, all employees (other than direct service providers or as approved by supervisor) will be expected to:

- Be available between the hours of 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Schedule lunch hour between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Employees may also elect to work a compressed work week, subject to supervisory approval. This would entail working extra hours most days of the week to compensate for working less or no hours on another day of the week. One example of a compressed work week is as follows:

- Work 8.5 hours Monday through Thursday
- Work 3.5 hours on Friday morning
- Take Friday afternoon off

If a holiday falls on a day which an employee is scheduled to work more than 7.5 hours, the employee must make up the extra hours during the same week, or take annual leave.

Employee time schedules must be approved in writing by the supervisor and Executive Management Team member. If an approved work schedule becomes detrimental to the operation of the NCAC, it may be rescinded by the supervisor. All flex time adjustments are subject to the approval of the Executive Director and must not interfere with an employee's ability to meet client needs or perform required duties.

2.5.3 Overtime, Compensatory Time and Staff Volunteering

In compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, policies regarding working beyond scheduled hours and/or volunteering for agency events vary depending on the exempt or non-exempt status of the employee's job.

- A. Non-Exempt employees: **For both part-time and full-time employees, working beyond the normally scheduled hours per week must be approved in advance in writing by the immediate supervisor or designee.** If there is an urgent issue where approval cannot be obtained in writing and/or in advance, then it should be brought to the attention of the supervisor by the next business day. Working beyond the normal schedule without approval may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

The regular full-time work week is 37.5 hours (excluding breaks), but no overtime will accrue until forty hours is reached. All hours worked in excess of 40 will accrue overtime and will be reimbursed through overtime pay or compensatory time at time and a half subject to applicable regulations. Any requests for overtime pay in lieu of compensatory time must be approved in writing by the Executive Director. Time off on holidays, sick leave, annual leave or any other paid leave is not time worked and will not be considered for the purposes of calculating overtime.

- For the purpose of calculating hours worked, the workweek begins at 12:01 am on Saturday morning and ends at 12:00 midnight Friday evening.
- Comp time may not be taken in advance, though the work week should be modified when possible to reduce or eliminate the need for comp time.
- Comp time must be in one hour increments.
- When possible, comp time should be used during the same pay period in which it was earned. Comp time must be noted on the employee's timesheet. *All exceptions must be approved in writing by the employee's direct supervisor, and provided to the Finance Department for payroll purposes.* The maximum accrual for regular employees is 240 hours of compensatory time consistent with applicable regulations.
- Paid "Volunteering" – Non-Exempt employees who "volunteer" to work on agency-wide special events or related activities must have advanced approval by their supervisor. The time will be paid and the hours **will** count towards time worked for overtime purposes as long as **one or more** of the following conditions are met:
 1. The work is during the employee's normal work schedule;
 2. A member of management assigns the employee to the volunteer position or requires the employee to volunteer;

3. An “All Staff” email, previously approved by the Executive Director, asks for staff volunteers and indicates the time will be paid; or
 4. The work is part of the employee’s usual job responsibilities.
 5. In addition, non-exempt employees may not transfer any work hours to volunteer hours if the work completed during these hours meets any of the conditions listed above.
- Unpaid Volunteering – Non-exempt employees who choose to volunteer outside of their normal work schedule will **not** be paid as long as **ALL** of the following conditions are met:
 1. The work is not part of their usual job responsibilities;
 2. The employee has not been required to volunteer by a member of management; and
 3. There was no coercion or pressure from management for the employee to volunteer.
 - If a non-exempt employee works through lunch, then that time is considered paid time and counts towards hours worked for the week.
 - All travel/training activities outside of a regular work week must have prior approval of a supervisor. Actual time worked will be determined by the supervisor following applicable guidelines and regulations.
 - Employees should use accrued comp time prior to annual, sick or other paid leave.
 - Non-exempt employees who are terminated will be paid for any balance of comp time according to applicable regulations.
- B. Exempt employees: It is understood that exempt employees may need to work additional hours during the week to accomplish their jobs and do not receive extra compensation for such.
- In lieu of comp time, exempt employees may be allowed *occasional* time off for personal business, i.e., “professional flex time,” *at the discretion of their supervisor*.
 - All travel, training and agency volunteer activities outside of a regular work week must have prior approval of supervisor. Professional flex time may be allowed at the discretion of the supervisor.
 - Exempt employees are encouraged to modify their work week, or the following week if necessary, to accommodate an unusually large work load. If this is not possible, there is no balance to carry forward. Any exceptions must be approved by the Executive Director.

2.5.4 Pay Periods

All employees are paid biweekly on every other Friday. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period. In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a day off such as a holiday, employees will receive pay on the last day of work before the regularly scheduled payday.

Annual leave and sick leave accruals will be posted on the first check of the month following the month the leave was accrued (after probationary period). The employee portion of the insurance premiums will be deducted from the second check of the month and will cover the following month.

2.5.5 Salaries

Salary ranges for staff positions shall be recommended and reviewed periodically by NCAC Human Resources, the Executive Team and the Executive Director. The Board of Directors shall set the salary of the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall approve the salary level of all other positions. Although no salary increases are guaranteed, the objective is to review the potential budget for increases on an annual basis and then to provide appropriate increases if NCAC finances permit. NCAC staff with access to compensation-related information are expected to maintain confidentiality of this information and should not disclose pay rates, increase amounts or any related information to other employees unless job responsibilities require it.

All salaries are subject to payroll deductions as required by law or as authorized by the employee. Various payroll deductions are made each pay period to comply with federal and state laws pertaining to taxes and insurance. Deductions may include the following:

- Federal and State Income Tax
- Social Security and Medicare (FICA)
- Other items designated in writing by the employee or any court order

Nothing in this policy prohibits or is intended to affect any rights under any applicable laws, including, but not limited to, Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act.

2.5.6 Timekeeping

Each staff member shall submit a bi-weekly timesheet to their supervisor for signature. It is the employees' responsibility to sign their timesheets to certify the accuracy of all time recorded.

See the Finance Department's *Time Sheet Procedures* for full details on how to complete a time sheet.

Note that timesheets for **non-exempt** employees should reflect **all** hours worked on the actual day worked regardless if on the weekend or outside the employee's usual schedule. See also Section 2.5.3 Overtime, Compensatory Time and Staff Volunteering.

2.5.7 Leave Approval

All absences from work must be documented by a *Request for Leave Time* form signed by the employee and the supervisor. A leave request form may be used to request annual, sick and/or Leave without Pay (LWOP), or a combination of these in order to cover a period of absence. All annual leave, compensatory leave, and LWOP must be approved in advance. The supervisor has the discretion to disapprove or alter these types of leave requests based on the office customs and work load. As a result, all leave, with the exception of emergencies, should be discussed with the supervisor in advance.

2.5.8 Work at Home or Other Locations

The main campus, located at 210 Pratt Avenue, Huntsville, AL 35801, is the work location for all NCAC employees. This work location may be modified for one of the following two reasons:

1. When in the best interest of the NCAC, an employee may work from home or at another location on a regular or routine basis. *This modification must be documented in writing, and approved by the Executive Director.* The documentation should include justification for the work location and clarification of responsibilities, travel costs, supervision, reporting and other administrative and financial details.
2. Occasionally, it is in the best interest of the NCAC and the employee that some work be accomplished at home or at another remote location. *This work must be pre-approved by the employee's supervisor.* Only the actual time spent working on NCAC business will be counted work time; other time must be credited to annual or sick leave.

Both situations must be documented and approved in advance. If an employee does not maintain sufficient performance standards, or the situation becomes unnecessary or detrimental to the NCAC, the privilege to work away from the main campus will be revoked.

2.5.9 Security, Fire Alarm, Client Emergency or Other Call-Out Situation

A Call-Out is considered to have occurred whenever the employee must leave his/her place of residence in response to a work call outside scheduled working hours (i.e., Security, Fire Alarms, or other urgent issues with supervisor approval such as emergency Forensic Interviews).

Non-exempt employees who are unexpectedly called back to their workplace after normal working hours shall be given time equal to the greater of: The equivalent of four (4) regular hours of work, or the actual number of hours worked. Call-Out pay exceeding actual hours worked does not count towards the accumulation of overtime.

Exempt employees who are unexpectedly called back to their workplace should be allowed some flextime whenever possible.

2.6 Employee Benefits and Rights

As agents of the Madison County District Attorney, eligible employees at NCAC are provided many of the same fringe benefits as employees of the Madison County Commission. A number of the programs (such as Social Security, workers' compensation and unemployment insurance) cover all employees in the manner prescribed by law. Details of many of these programs can be found elsewhere in the Employee Handbook. These benefits are subject to change by the Madison County Commission and/or by the NCAC. Employees who have questions about their benefits or rights or who need additional information are encouraged to first contact NCAC Human Resources before contacting the Madison County Personnel Office.

The following benefit programs are available to eligible employees.

Annual Leave	Bereavement Leave
Credit Union	Deferred Compensation Plan
Dental Insurance	Direct Deposit
Employee Assistance Program	Family/Medical Leave
Health Insurance	Benefits Continuation
Holidays	Jury Duty Leave
Life Insurance	Military Leave
Personal Day	Retirement Plan
Sick Leave Benefits	Special Leave
Vision Care Insurance	Voting Time
Wellness Program	Worker Compensation

Some benefit programs require contributions from the employee.

2.6.1 Leave and Other Absences

2.6.1.1 Annual Leave

Annual leave with pay is provided for all regular full-time employees who have completed their six-month probationary employment period. Annual leave is accrued in the amount of eight hours per month of continuous employment, and is credited after the completion of each month. Although accrual begins upon employment, no time is credited to an employee's account until the completion of the probationary employment period. After five years of continuous full-time service, employees receive an extra day per year of service over five, up to 25 days. For additional information, refer to the Madison County Policies and Procedures Manual.

Paid leave time can be used in minimum increments of one-half hour. To use paid leave time, employees should request advance approval from their supervisors by completing a *Request for Leave Time* form. Requests will be reviewed based on a number of factors, including business needs and staffing requirements.

Employees are encouraged to use available paid vacation time for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits. In the event that available vacation is not used by the end of the fiscal year, employees may carry unused time forward to the next year. The maximum amount of annual leave that can be carried over beyond the last day of the fiscal year is 480 hours. Upon termination of

employment, employees who have completed their six-month probationary period will be paid for unused vacation time that has been earned through the last day of work.

A maximum of 40 hours annual leave per fiscal year may be advanced at the discretion of the supervisor. This advanced leave will be deducted as the employee continues to earn leave. Upon termination, all advanced leave will be deducted from the employee's final paycheck. To request advanced annual leave the employee should submit a *Request for Advanced Leave* form to their supervisor. The advanced leave must be approved by the supervisor, an Executive Team Member and the Executive Director.

2.6.1.2 Bereavement Leave

Bereavement leave will be made available to all full-time employees. In the event of a death in the employee's immediate family, he/she may have time needed up to three working days, with pay, to handle family affairs and to attend the funeral. Employees may, with their supervisor's approval, use available annual or sick leave if additional time is required.

For bereavement leave purposes, NCAC defines "immediate family" as the employee's spouse/life partner, any person with whom the employee resides, and the parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers, children or grandchildren of both the employee and the life partner. Special consideration will also be given to any other person whose association with the employee was similar to any of the above relationships.

2.6.1.3 Family and Medical Leave

An employee wishing to take Family/Medical Leave should complete an *FMLA Leave Request Form* from NCAC Human Resources or the Madison County Personnel Office. For additional information, see Section 2.1.4 or visit the FMLA website: <http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla/>.

2.6.1.4 Holidays

In general, the NCAC follows the State of Alabama holiday schedule. Therefore, the following days shall be observed as paid holidays for all full-time employees (including temporary and those still in the probationary period):

- New Year's DayJanuary 1st
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day3rd Monday in January
- Presidents' Day.....3rd Monday in February
- Confederate Memorial Day4th Monday in April
- Memorial Day.....Last Monday in May
- Jefferson Davis' Birthday.....1st Monday in June
- Independence DayJuly 4th
- Labor Day.....1st Monday in September
- Columbus Day2nd Monday in October
- Veterans' Day.....November 11th

- Thanksgiving4th Thursday in November
- Day after Thanksgiving
- ChristmasDecember 25th

Employees should not work on scheduled holidays unless it is necessary due to special circumstances such as a training class or other external event. Employees must have prior approval to work on a holiday. In addition, full-time employees who are **required** to work a scheduled holiday will be granted a personal day of their choice, taken with prior approval of their supervisor. This personal day is not considered comp time, is not accumulated at the rate of time and one half, and must be used within 30 days.

If a part-time employee is **required** to work a scheduled holiday, then they can either receive pay for the hours worked the same as any regular day or they can take the equivalent number of hours off on another day within the work week with supervisor approval.

A recognized holiday that falls on a Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday. A recognized holiday that falls on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday.

2.6.1.5 Jury and Witness Duty

Jury Duty: An employee must notify his/her supervisor as soon as possible when called for Jury Duty. Either NCAC or the employee may request an excuse from jury duty if, in NCAC’s judgment, the employee’s absence would create serious operational difficulties. The employee must submit a “Certificate of Jury Duty” upon completion of his/her jury duty (Court Clerk automatically issues this certification to jurors).

Witness Duty:

Professional: An employee subpoenaed or otherwise requested to testify as a witness by Madison County or by the State of Alabama as a direct result of NCAC employment duties will be considered at work during the entire period of actual witness duty, and will receive normal pay for that time. The subpoena or summons must be presented to the employee’s supervisor immediately after receipt, and then entered into the appropriate client file.

Personal: An employee subpoenaed or otherwise requested to testify as a witness by Madison County or the State of Alabama will receive paid time off for the entire period of witness duty, not the entire period for which the subpoena may apply. This does not apply if the employee is the defendant in the case. The subpoena or summons must be presented to the employee’s supervisor immediately after receipt.

In all cases, the employee is expected to return for work whenever the court schedule permits. Specifically, if released from duty before 1:00 p.m., he/she must return to work that day.

2.6.1.6 Military Leave

A military leave of absence will be granted to regular full-time employees who are absent from work because of service in the U.S. uniformed services in accordance with the Uniformed

Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Advance notice of military service is required, unless military necessity prevents such notice or it is otherwise impossible or unreasonable.

Pursuant to Code of Alabama, §31-2-13, employees who are active members of the Alabama National Guard, or of any other reserve component of the armed forces of the United States, shall be entitled to military leave of absence on all days that they are engaged in training or on other service ordered under the National Defense Act, or of the Federal laws governing the United States reserves, without loss of pay, time, efficiency rating, annual vacation or sick leave. Notwithstanding the foregoing, no person granted a leave of absence with pay shall be paid for more than 168 working hours per calendar year, and those persons shall be entitled, in addition thereto, to be paid for no more than 168 hours at any one time while called by the Governor to duty in the active service of the State.

Continuation of health insurance benefits is available as required by USERRA based on the length of the leave and subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of the applicable plans for which the employee is otherwise eligible. Benefit accruals, such as vacation, sick leave, or holiday benefits, will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon the employee's return to active NCAC employment.

Employees on military leave for up to 30 days are required to return to work for the first regularly scheduled shift after the end of service, allowing reasonable travel time. Employees on longer military leave must apply for reinstatement in accordance with USERRA and all applicable state laws. Employees returning from military leave will be placed in the position they would have attained had they remained continuously employed or a comparable one depending on the length of military service in accordance with USERRA. They will be treated as though they were continuously employed for purposes of determining benefits based on length of service. Contact NCAC Human Resources for more information or questions about military leave.

2.6.1.7 Personal Day

Regular full-time employees (i.e. full-time employees who have completed the probationary period) will receive one personal day each calendar year. Personal leave may be taken on the day of the employee's choice, subject to prior approval of the supervisor. Personal leave days cannot be carried over from one calendar year to the next. It is the responsibility of each department to maintain a record of personal days taken by its employees.

2.6.1.8 Leave Without Pay (LWOP)

Personal leave-without-pay (LWOP) may be granted for a period of up to 30 calendar days each calendar year. Approval of LWOP is at the discretion of the employee's direct supervisor, the relevant Executive Management Team member, and the Executive Director.

Subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the applicable plans, health insurance benefits will continue to be provided to the employee until the end of the first full month of approved personal leave. At that time, the employee will become responsible for the cost of these benefits

if he/she wishes to continue coverage. Benefits will be reinstated by NCAC upon return from personal leave. Benefit accruals, such as vacation, sick leave, and holiday benefits, will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon active employment.

When leave ends, NCAC will attempt to return the employee to the same position, if it is available, or to a similar available position for which the employee is qualified. However, NCAC cannot guarantee reinstatement. If an employee fails to report to work promptly at the expiration of the approved leave period, NCAC will assume he/she has resigned.

2.6.1.9 Sick Leave

Paid sick leave benefits are provided to all regular full-time employees. Leave begins accruing immediately upon employment and will be credited in the amount of eight hours per month. However, no leave may be used until satisfactory completion of the probationary employment period, at which time six days of sick leave time will be credited to the employee's account. There is no limit to the number of hours an employee may accrue.

Unused sick leave will not be paid to employees upon termination. However, employees who are eligible for retirement may convert any accrued, unused sick leave to retirement credit. Sick leave may be used in minimum increments of one-half hour.

An eligible employee may use sick leave benefits for an absence due to his or her own illness or injury, or that of an immediate family member of the employee.

Employees who are unable to report to work due to illness or injury should notify their direct supervisor before the scheduled start of their workday if possible. The direct supervisor must also be contacted on each additional day of absence, and a physician's statement may be required for absences of three or more consecutive days. If the employee does not have sufficient sick leave, annual leave and/or leave without pay may be substituted. Any unjustified or fraudulent claim for sick leave may result in loss of pay, loss of accumulated leave, and disciplinary action up to and including termination.

2.6.1.10 Sick Leave Bank

NCAC employees may voluntarily participate in the Madison County Sick Leave Bank, which provides income to employees who have medical problems with themselves or immediate family, but are not eligible for Worker's Compensation, Retirement Benefits or other forms of assistance.

Any regular full-time employee who is entitled to accrue leave benefits may join. New employees may join at any time within 30 days of completing the probationary period or during open enrollment. Any eligible employee may join during open enrollment each October and November, and the effective date will be January 1st of the next calendar year. Employees who leave the Bank for any reason may re-apply during open enrollment.

In order to participate, each employee will be required to donate eight hours of non-refundable accumulated leave to the Bank. To maintain a sufficient balance in the Bank, the Review

Committee will recommend that participants donate additional hours. The Personnel Director for Madison County and the Sick Leave Bank Committee will jointly approve any changes in policies or requests for additional contributions. This will occur at any time the reserve balance is less than one-thousand hours.

An NCAC employee who is a member of the Bank may apply for such benefits by completing a Leave Recipient Application Form and turning it in to his/her supervisor. The form will be forwarded to NCAC Human Resources, to the Madison County Director of Personnel, and to the Sick Leave Bank Review Committee. If an employee is not capable of making application on his/her behalf, another NCAC employee or a member of the immediate family may make application on behalf of the employee. However, every effort must be made to first obtain consent from the applicant, or if not possible, a member of the recipient's immediate family.

Additional information or documents beyond that which is required on the application form may be required in order for a determination to be made regarding the applicant's eligibility. For more information on eligibility, approval, donation, transfer, etc. of bank hours, contact NCAC Human Resources.

2.6.1.11 Voting Time

Employees shall be afforded up to one hour paid leave to vote in each Federal, State, County, and Municipal election or primary. To be eligible, employees must:

- Provide reasonable notice
- Be eligible and registered to vote on the date of the election or primary

NCAC department heads may specify the hours during which employees may take leave to vote. If an employee's work schedule begins at least two hours after the polls open, or ends at least one hour before the polls close, NCAC is not required to provide time off.

2.6.1.12 Routine Medical Leave

Four hours of leave time will be given to each full-time employee, per calendar year, for routine medical services with verification from your doctor. Verification must be attached to time sheet covering time away from the office.

2.6.2 Insurance

2.6.2.1 Benefits Continuation (COBRA)

The federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under NCAC's health plan when a "qualifying event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Some common qualifying events are resignation, termination of employment, or death of an employee; a reduction in an employee's hours or a leave of absence; an employee's divorce or legal separation; and a dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirements.

Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage at NCAC's group rates plus an administration fee. NCAC or the health plan administrator provide each eligible employee with a written notice describing rights granted under COBRA when the employee becomes eligible for coverage under NCAC's health insurance plan. The notice contains important information about the employee's rights and obligations, and should be kept for future reference.

2.6.2.2 Dental Insurance

NCAC is part of a group dental insurance plan allowing eligible employees access to rates significantly lower than what an individual would pay. However, NCAC does not share the cost of coverage, which is the sole responsibility of the employee. Contact NCAC Human Resources for more information or to enroll.

2.6.2.3 Health Insurance

NCAC's health insurance plan provides eligible employees and their dependents access to medical insurance benefits. Employees who regularly work 30 hours or more are eligible for the health insurance plan subject to the terms of the current plan.

If dependents are acquired after the initial enrollment, dependent benefits may be added within the timeframe required of the current health insurance plan, generally 30 days from the birth of a child, marriage or adoption.

If an employee already has family coverage, NCAC Human Resources must be notified upon the birth of another child or the acquisition of other dependents within the timeframe required of the current health insurance plan, generally 30 days. **Failure to do so will result in rejection of claims.**

Eligible employees may participate in the health insurance plan subject to all terms and conditions of the agreement between NCAC and the insurance carrier. The employee portion of the cost of the insurance is deducted from the 2nd paycheck of the month as prepayment for the following month.

A change in employment classification or scheduled hours that would result in loss of eligibility to participate in the health insurance plan may qualify an employee for benefits continuation under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). Refer to the Benefits Continuation (COBRA) Policy for more information. A summary plan description and information on cost of coverage will be provided to eligible employees. Contact NCAC Human Resources for more information about health insurance benefits.

2.6.2.4 Life Insurance

Life insurance offers employees important financial protection. NCAC provides a basic life insurance plan through the Madison County Commission for eligible employees. Additional supplemental life insurance coverage may also be purchased.

Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) insurance provides protection in cases of serious injury or death resulting from an accident. AD&D insurance coverage is provided as part of the basic life insurance plan.

Eligible employees may participate in the life insurance plan subject to all terms and conditions of the agreement between NCAC and the insurance carrier. Contact NCAC Human Resources or the Madison County Personnel Office for more information about life insurance benefits.

2.6.2.5 Vision Care

Vision benefits are available for regular full-time employees through the Madison County Commission. The plan provides employees and covered family members prepaid eye care from approved physicians. The total cost is paid by the employee. Contact NCAC Human Resources or the Madison County Personnel Office for more information.

2.6.3 Other Benefits

2.6.3.1 Credit Union

NCAC employees are eligible to join the Rocket City Federal Credit Union. Rocket City offers savings and checking accounts, CDs, IRAs, and loans. All employees may make deposits to these accounts, (except CDs) through payroll deduction.

2.6.3.2 Deferred Compensation and State Supplemental Retirement

Regular full-time employees may enroll in a 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan through Nationwide Retirement Solutions. This is a voluntary savings plan that allows employees to choose the amount of contribution and direct the investment of the plan account. State and federal income taxes on account earnings are deferred.

Full-time and part-time employees may also enroll in a voluntary State Supplemental Retirement Account (RSA-1), which is separate from the Employee Retirement Systems of Alabama. For complete information on either plan or to enroll, contact NCAC Human Resources or the Madison County Personnel Office.

2.6.3.3 Direct Deposit

Employees may elect to have their paychecks deposited directly into the financial institution of their choice. Forms are available from NCAC Human Resources or the Madison County Personnel Office.

2.6.3.4 Employee Assistance Program

NCAC cares about the health and well-being of its employees and recognizes that a variety of personal problems can disrupt their personal and work lives. While many employees solve their problems either on their own or with the help of family and friends, sometimes employees need professional assistance and advice.

Through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), NCAC provides confidential access to professional counseling services for help in confronting such personal problems as alcohol and other substance abuse, marital and family difficulties, financial or legal troubles, and emotional distress. The EAP is available to all employees and their immediate family members, offering problem assessment, short-term counseling, and referral to appropriate community and private services.

The EAP is strictly confidential and is designed to safeguard your privacy and rights. Information given to the EAP counselor may be released only if requested by you in writing. All counselors are guided by a Professional Code of Ethics.

Personal information concerning employee participation in the EAP is maintained in a confidential manner. No information related to an employee's participation in the program is entered into the personnel file.

Contact NCAC Human Resources for more information.

2.6.3.5 Retirement Plan

NCAC employees participate in the Employees' Retirement Systems of Alabama (ERS), as set under state law. Participation in the ERS is mandatory if a person is employed at NCAC in a position eligible for coverage in a non-temporary capacity on at least a one-half time basis earning at least the federal minimum wage.

See the ERS website for the most current information on benefits and participation rules (<http://www.rsa-al.gov/ERS/ers.html>).

Employees who have worked for, or are considering transferring to, another agency that participates in the ERS or any employee considering retirement or resignation should consult with ERS, NCAC Human Resources or the Madison County Personnel Office to determine the effects on their retirement benefits.

2.6.3.6 Wellness Program

NCAC provides a Wellness Program for regular full-time employees. Other employees may be eligible for some portions of Wellness Program benefits; contact NCAC Human Resources if you are unsure of your eligibility.

A free annual medical screening is provided to health plan participants. Employees are encouraged to take advantage of this benefit to better monitor their health. Results from the screening are provided only to the employee, and information is confidential between the employee and the medical facility conducting the tests. The results can be taken to a personal physician, if follow-up is recommended.

2.6.3.7 Workers' Compensation

NCAC employees who sustain personal injuries due to an accident arising out of and in the course of their employment by NCAC may be eligible for benefits under the Alabama Workers' Compensation laws (Code of Alabama, Sections 25-5-1 to 25-5-50).

The employee must notify their immediate supervisor and NCAC Human Resources immediately if they sustain on-the-job injury. Reporting a false injury is forbidden and may result in termination.

Madison County maintains a listing of approved physicians for work-related injuries. Employees who are unsatisfied or have questions regarding their worker's compensation benefits or prescribed treatment should contact NCAC Human Resources and/or Madison County Personnel to determine what other options, if any, may be available. Any prescriptions must be picked up at the County-approved pharmacy. Coverage for medical services will not be provided when employees seek their own treatment.

State law dictates when and how much an employee is paid when there is lost time due to an on-the-job injury. There is a three-day waiting period before compensation begins.

Employees must follow NCAC's prescribed procedures and State laws governing on-the-job injuries. Failure to follow procedures could delay benefits. Any questions regarding treatment must be addressed to NCAC Human Resources or Madison County Personnel. **See section 3.2.4, "Incident Reporting" for procedures to follow when responding to an incident.**

Employees who are injured on the job are required to submit to a drug screening and/or alcohol breath test. *A positive drug or alcohol test could disqualify the employee for Workers' Compensation benefits.*

Section 3: Facility and Equipment Policies

3.1 Information Technology (IT)

NCAC provides various equipment and services which enable employees to increase efficiency and productivity. Many of them are encompassed by the term "information technology," which may be understood as all forms of technology used to create, store, exchange, and use information. Therefore, the policies outlined cover employee use of computers, phones, audio visual equipment, printers, copiers, and fax machines.

The NCAC IT staff and/or the IT service provider are responsible for five functions or areas of support:

- Desktop support
- Network administration
- Web mastery
- Database development
- Overall system administration

Note: the IT staff is only responsible for the computer portion of the audio visual (AV) equipment. Troubleshooting for AV is the responsibility of the Facilities Coordinator.

The rules pertaining to IT are designed to maximize the security and reliability of the network. Employees are encouraged to remain patient in regards to restrictions and to refrain from attempting to circumvent any safeguards, such as administrative rights. Compliance will help ensure that the network continues to run smoothly, that connectivity is continuously provided to all employees, and that any glitches or problems are more easily identified and quickly resolved.

3.1.1 Outside Service Provider and Administrative Rights

NCAC may contract with an outside IT services provider to maintain the internet and network services at NCAC. Employees should report problems with the network, databases, or connectivity to designated NCAC IT personnel. *Employees are not authorized to contact an outside IT services provider directly, and should not attempt to do so.*

Administrative rights are required to make changes to the network, upgrade or add software (including drivers for hardware), and change system properties. Therefore, all hardware and software changes, including upgrades, must be approved and handled by either NCAC IT staff and/or the IT services provider. Administrative rights will *not* be granted to the vast majority of NCAC employees, and shall remain the responsibility of NCAC IT staff and/or the IT services provider.

3.1.2 Applications and Equipment (Standard and Non-Standard)

Software contained on NCAC computers is approved, updated, and maintained by designated IT personnel. Standard software to be provided will be determined on the basis of need and the NCAC's ability to provide such software, and will be reviewed and updated at the discretion of the IT personnel and the designated Executive Management Team member. Standard equipment for an NCAC computer will include a central processing unit (CPU), monitor, mouse, keyboard, and external speakers.

- A. Non-Standard Software – All additional software must be previously approved by the IT Department. No user may load non-approved software programs in NCAC computer disk storage space. If software or data with a questionable legal status is found, the user will be given the opportunity to demonstrate the legal status and purpose. If a legitimate status and purpose cannot be demonstrated, the program will be deleted and the user will be subject to disciplinary action. Any new software applications that gain approval must be installed by the IT services provider or NCAC IT personnel.

The NCAC IT staff will use software metering tools, which are integrated components of the NCAC network, to monitor the use of all approved NCAC software applications. Therefore, a service order must be initiated with the NCAC IT Helpdesk to load new software applications onto the NCAC network.

- B. Non-Standard Equipment– All additional equipment must be previously approved by the NCAC IT staff and/or the IT services provider. This includes external storage devices, portable music and movie playing devices, web-cams, digital cameras, and any other “plug and play” type devices. If the use of such devices is deemed appropriate, NCAC IT staff or the IT services provider must be present to download and/or install any necessary drivers or software.

3.1.3 General Computer Usage

Employees at NCAC are provided with a computer, internal networks, Internet connectivity and an email account for business purposes. Reasonable non-business use is permitted, but should not interfere with an employee’s ability to perform NCAC duties or responsibilities.

Employees are encouraged to remember that while a computer may be assigned to them in their office and is effectively private, it is NCAC property and is connected to the NCAC network. This means that any information transmitted or stored on the network is potentially accessible to the IT services provider staff and/or NCAC IT personnel.

NCAC computers, internal network, Internet connectivity, email system and any associated technology should not be used to create, store, send or view material which:

- Is obscene, profane, bigoted, defamatory, or otherwise inappropriate for the office environment
- Is illegal in nature or intent, or in any way promotes illegal activities
- Amounts to participation in an activity which includes, but is not limited to gambling, pornography, and income-producing endeavors
- Contains information, images, or content which is any way contrary to the mission and goals of the NCAC
- Is extremely personal or sensitive in nature

Notwithstanding the foregoing, nothing in this policy prohibits or is intended to affect any rights under any applicable laws, including, but not limited to, Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act.

3.1.4 Personal Use of Social Media

Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else’s web log or blog, journal or diary, personal web site, social networking or affinity web site, web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with the NCAC, as well as any other form of electronic communication.

The same principles and guidelines found in NCAC policies apply to your activities online. Any of your conduct that adversely affects your job performance; the performance of fellow employees, clients, partners, suppliers, volunteers or any other people who work on behalf of the

NCAC; or the NCAC's legitimate business interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

While use of social media can be fun and a convenient way to stay in touch and/or to share opinions, it does carry certain responsibilities. Consider the risks before you post or create any online content. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. It may be best to assume everything you post is public and permanent.

Ensure your postings are consistent with the following guidelines, the NCAC's Code of Ethics, and the NCAC's and your department's confidentiality policies. Violation of these guidelines may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

1. Be truthful, fair and courteous with fellow employees, clients, partners, volunteers, suppliers or any other people who work with the NCAC.
2. Avoid inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct. They will not be tolerated.
3. Maintain the confidentiality of NCAC and client private or confidential information such as internal agency planning; development of systems, processes and know-how; and especially the identification of clients. Do not post internal reports, policies, procedures or other internal agency or client-related confidential communications.
4. Keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work-related complaints by speaking directly with your co-workers or supervisors than by posting complaints to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, if you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparage clients, partners, associates or suppliers, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion or any other status protected by law or NCAC policy.
5. Make it clear that your opinions are your own and not those of the NCAC. If NCAC is a subject of the content you are creating, it is best to include a disclaimer such as "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of NCAC."
6. Do not create a link from your blog, website or other social networking site to an NCAC website without identifying yourself as an NCAC associate.
7. Do not use NCAC email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use.

Using social media at work – While occasional personal use of social media is permitted on the job, employees should generally refrain from personal use of social media while on work time. This does not apply to work-related use of social media.

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

Notwithstanding the foregoing, nothing in this policy prohibits or is intended to affect any rights under any applicable laws, including, but not limited to, Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act.

3.1.5 Copyright Infringement

To avoid copyright infringement, NCAC employees are prohibited from duplicating or redistributing commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) software products. NCAC Internet users will also refrain from attempting to download or load onto the network unapproved software for use, installation, or distribution.

It is also important to remember that while the Internet is a valuable resource for information, ideas, images, and other media, it is easy to unintentionally violate the intellectual and creative property rights of others. For guidelines and more extensive information on copyrights, fair use, and the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, please visit the government website: <http://www.copyright.gov/laws/>.

3.1.6 Intranet

The NCAC internal network is a valuable resource for employees. Although its format may change, it typically provides links to various calendars, news articles, policies and procedures, request forms, the phone manual, library resources, and other information needed by employees. Employees are encouraged to visit regularly to keep abreast of any changes or additions.

3.1.7 Malicious Software (Malware) and Virus Protection Software

Malware refers to any software designed to cause damage to a computer and/or network, and includes viruses, worms, and Trojan Horses. Spyware and cookies may also fall into this category. NCAC employees will not use or develop malware or any programs that harass, modify the system, or in any other manner cause damage to IT resources. The intentional transmission of destructive programs is likewise prohibited.

Virus protection software is in place on the NCAC network to alert the system administrators and users of suspected malicious programs and ensure the validity of data. The virus software installed on the workstation machines is password protected and cannot be disabled. The workstation software will automatically update virus patterns at workstation startup.

3.1.8 Support Requests

To initiate requests for installations, additions, upgrades or changes to IT resources, an email to the NCAC IT staff and/or the IT service provider must be completed three days in advance either by the user or by a member of the Executive Management Team.

If the request is for new equipment or an upgrade to existing equipment, an email must be submitted by a member of the Executive Management Team indicating funding source and timeline for installation. Otherwise, a user may submit an email directly to IT personnel. Email

notification should also be used to request application resources, software upgrades, email, and changes to user accounts and configurations.

If no procurement is necessary, technical service personnel will be dispatched. Users can expect a response time from eight business hours to five business days (for more detailed requests). Non-approved requisitions will be returned to the requester.

3.1.9 Workstation and Local Area Network (LAN) Security

Each NCAC network user is held accountable for activity on his/her account and is expected to take reasonable care to ensure that unauthorized users are not able to gain access to account and file space. Users will never, under any circumstances, gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to other user accounts or resources. Any attempt to log on with an account which you have not been authorized, regardless of its success, will be considered a security violation. Any evidence that such access has been gained will be investigated and the offending party will be subject to account revocation or other disciplinary action.

Employees will also refrain from the unauthorized copying, deletion, or removal of files that are not his/hers from the network. This pertains to files in all of the drives, including the shared drive. Upon termination of employment, employees relinquish all claims to information stored on the network, and are unauthorized to copy, delete, remove or modify files without prior approval. This also applies to files that were originally created by the employee as part of his/her services to NCAC.

To avoid security infractions, users should not leave their workstations unsecured. Prior to departure at the close of business, each user will log out and/or shut down his/her computer. All computers should be shut down at close of business on Fridays. Password changes will be enforced on an age of forty-two days. Users should never reveal their passwords to anyone, as they will be held responsible for any activity on their accounts. Passwords should not be written down, or easily guessed, such as the user's first name, phone number, or nickname. If a user believes that someone has gained unauthorized access to his/her account, the password should be changed and the suspicion reported to the System Administrator.

3.1.10 Telephones and Cell Phones

NCAC employees will be provided with telephones in their offices. Instructions can be found in the telephone manual. Employees may use the phone for non-business use so long as it is not excessive, does not interfere with NCAC duties and responsibilities, and is not disruptive to other employees. NCAC phones may not be used to make personal calls to long-distance or toll (900) numbers.

Personal cell phone use is permitted on the job, as long as it is not excessive, disruptive to other employees, and does not detract from the performance of NCAC duties.

Numerous NCAC employees have significant needs for cell phones to complete their job duties. As such, the NCAC has an interest in providing cell phone service for these employees.

The NCAC will provide a stipend for employees who have been identified by their supervisors. Some employees require smartphones, and others require standard cell phones (voice and text) to complete their job duties. The stipend amount will depend on the phone type and is subject to change.

In order to receive a stipend, the employee must submit a check request each month with a copy of the most recent bill which must meet or exceed the stipend amount. If the billed amount is less, the reimbursement will match the bill submitted. All employees who receive stipends must obtain their own phone and service. These phones will be considered the property and the responsibility of the employee.

3.1.11 AV Equipment, Printers, Fax Machines, and Copiers

The NCAC provides employees with various AV equipment, printers, fax machines, and copiers for business use. Although reasonable non-business use of printers, copiers, and fax machines is allowed, it should be kept to a minimum as costs for paper, ink, and maintenance costs for these machines are expensive. Additionally, the equipment may not be removed from the NCAC or altered in any way to serve non-business purposes. Printing fliers, posters, and other mass publications for non-business use is prohibited.

For non-computer related problems with AV equipment that cannot be solved by common-sense troubleshooting (making sure all wires are connected properly, that the power is on, etc.), employees should contact the Facilities Coordinator. Employees should not attempt to take apart any of the machines, or disrupt the mechanical parts in any way.

Printers, fax machines and copiers at NCAC generally have internal troubleshooting mechanisms. If following the directions displayed by the machine and using common-sense troubleshooting do not solve the problem, contact the designated NCAC staff member as quickly as possible. Employees should not attempt to take apart any of the machines, or disrupt the mechanical parts in any way.

Following these procedures will help ensure that all problems are addressed and resolved on a timely basis, reducing negative impacts of equipment failures.

3.2 Security and Safety

To help improve campus security, ensure the safety of co-workers and clients, and decrease false alarms, all employees are expected to be familiar with NCAC safety and security policies. Following these procedures will benefit our entire agency.

3.2.1 General Security Information

Buildings on the NCAC campus are wired with alarm systems and are independently monitored. Employees will be provided with access codes and cards for the appropriate building(s). The following procedures should be followed to ensure the safety of everyone on campus, and help reduce the likelihood of false alarms.

- It is important to know your building code, and the code for any other building(s) to which you have been granted access before or after normal work hours.
- You should never give out the code for any of the buildings, even to another employee.
- You should know where to locate the phone number for our monitoring company. Quick access to this number is essential in case of a false alarm. Also know where to find the security contact information for after-hours help. If you do not know where these numbers are posted in your building, please ask your receptionist or your Executive Management Team member.
- Do not prop open doors that have card readers. These doors are designed to secure our work areas, and can only do so if used properly. There may be exceptions during special events, but as a general rule, these doors should remain closed.
- Always use your access card at each secured doorway, even if another employee opens the door for you. Using this procedure will help your security administrator obtain important information in the event of an emergency or alarm activation.
- E-mail door change requests to designated personnel at least 24 hours in advance. Be specific in naming doors and times needed.
- When hosting an event for which door schedule changes have been requested, make arrangements to assure the monitoring and security of the building and area(s) involved during that event. This responsibility includes securing that building or area(s) after the event has ended.

3.2.2 Access Cards

Employees at NCAC are issued access cards that allow movement about the NCAC campus. Each card is the responsibility of the employee to whom it was issued. Access cards are the property of NCAC and must be returned upon the employee's termination. If a card is lost or stolen, is not functioning properly, or is damaged, a supervisor or Executive Management Team member must be notified immediately. Non-functional cards must be relinquished to the appropriate authority for destruction before issuance of a new access card.

Madison County identification cards that display the employee's photograph are also available; employees should contact their supervisor for more information.

It is strictly prohibited to lend out, give away, or dispose of NCAC access cards and/or County identification cards without supervisory approval.

Under no circumstances should an access card be casually discarded or left unattended in an unsecured area.

3.2.3 Alarm System

It is absolutely imperative that employees be familiar with the alarm system at NCAC. **Please be sure to read and understand the alarm system procedures in full.** If you need further clarification, contact the designated personnel.

Before arming the interior security system, make absolutely certain that no one else is in the building. Be thorough. Another employee could be in an area where he or she is not readily apparent. Make sure that all coffee pots and lights are turned off, and that all doors with card readers have been securely closed before exiting your building.

- To activate monitoring system:
 1. Punch in building code
 2. Press 2 to activate system

- To deactivate monitoring system:
 1. Punch in building code
 2. Press 1 to deactivate system

- If the monitoring system will not activate:
 1. Read the message panel to determine the problem. Check it out.
 2. ***If you are sure no problem or threat to security exists***, you may bypass the fault(s) by first entering the building code, then press 6, followed by the default message number. Finally, press 2 to activate.
 3. ***Do not*** use the bypass unless you are *completely* sure there is no security issue.
 4. **Note:** If you enter the code incorrectly on the keypad, press * to clear, then enter the correct code.
 5. **If the alarm is triggered, call the monitoring company immediately to cancel police dispatch.**

The phone number for the monitoring company should be posted at the front desk in your building. When an alarm is triggered, the monitoring company should call the front desk or the phone nearest the alarm panel. If the phone rings before you dial the number for the monitoring company, answer it. When contact with Security Central has been made, explain that the incident is a false alarm and give the code word.

- For entrance into the buildings during non-business hours:
 1. Use the key padded entrance (usually the front door).
 2. Hold your access card in front of the reader. When the reader beeps, enter: star (*), your personal pin number, and pound (#). You should then be able to enter the building.

NOTE: Report all fault messages, alarm activations, or other problems with the security system to your campus security administrator as soon as possible.

3.2.4 Incident Reporting

Incidents are defined as: All situations on or near the NCAC campus, or that occur during the course of an employee's duties off campus, in which there is harm or potential harm to an employee, visitor, or property.

Employee Incident Reporting: All incidents should be reported to the appropriate supervisor and documented immediately by persons directly involved in the incident and any witnesses (when possible) using the *NCAC Incident Report* form (Appendix IV and see procedure below).

Employees/Supervisor involved in the situation will:

- Seek assistance from NCAC staff/supervisor.
- Notify appropriate authorities (police, fire department, ambulance, etc.) as soon as possible.
- Encourage injured employees to seek immediate medical attention at Occupational Health Group, (1963 Memorial Parkway #24, Huntsville, AL 35801; 256-265-7000) or at the Emergency Room if life-threatening.
- If there are any injured employees, notify NCAC HR or, if unavailable, Madison County Personnel (256-532-3614) as soon as possible but no later than the end of the day.
- Designate an employee to contact the injured individual within 72 hours and document on the *NCAC Incident Follow-up* form.
- If the incident involves an injury to an employee, then supervisor or designee needs to work with NCAC Human Resources to complete the *State of Alabama Employer's First Report of Injury or Occupational Disease* form within one business day.

Injured Employees will:

- Notify supervisor immediately if an on-the-job injury is sustained.
- Seek medical attention at Occupational Health Group the same day of injury or at the Emergency Room if life-threatening.
- Submit to a drug screen and/or alcohol breath test.
- Complete the *NCAC Refusal of Medical Treatment* form (Appendix IV) if medical assistance is refused, indicating that medical attention was offered.
- Report to supervisor the status of medical care after obtaining medical attention.

If a visitor is injured, the appropriate Department Director or designee will:

- Encourage the visitor to seek medical attention at the health provider of their choice the same day of injury or at the Emergency Room if life-threatening.
- Encourage the visitor to complete the *NCAC Refusal of Medical Treatment* form before leaving the premises if medical assistance is refused, indicating that medical attention was offered. (See Appendix IV)
- Submit form to NCAC Human Resources within one business day.
- Encourage the visitor to contact the designated NCAC supervisor to report any follow up needs.

Refusal of Medical Treatment Report Form (Appendix IV):

- Completed by injured employees or visitors the day of the incident, if refusing medical attention.
- Submitted to NCAC Human Resources within one business day of incident.

NCAC Incident Report Form (Appendix IV):

- Completed by appropriate NCAC Department Director or designee immediately or as soon as possible after the incident.
- Submitted to NCAC Human Resources within one business day of incident.

NCAC Detailed Account of Incident Form (Appendix IV):

- Completed by all persons involved in incident, including witnesses.
- Submitted to NCAC Human Resources within one business day of incident.

State of Alabama Employer’s First Report of Injury or Occupational Disease Form:

- Completed by supervisor or designee and submitted to NCAC Human Resources within one business day of employee injury. Form may be obtained from Human Resources, Madison County Personnel Office or Alabama Department of Labor website.

NCAC Incident Follow-Up Form (Appendix IV):

- Completed by Department Director or designee within 72 hours of incident and as needed thereafter.
- Send to NCAC Human Resources.

3.2.5 Emergency Closings and Severe Weather

For weather related emergencies, NCAC will follow the lead of the Madison County Commission. Closures or delayed openings will be announced on local radio and television stations. Full time and part time employees who are normally scheduled to work during the hours that an emergency closing is in effect will receive normal pay for that time. Full time employees who planned to take annual leave or sick leave at the time of the emergency closing will not be deducted for annual or sick leave. Part time employees who planned to be off without pay at the time of an emergency closing will not be paid for that time.

The Executive Director shall use his/her discretion in determining whether the agency should close in other emergency situations. The Executive Director will notify each member of the Executive Leadership Team and they will notify their department according to internally established procedures.

In cases where an emergency closing is not authorized but the employee feels it is hazardous for him/her to report to work, the employee may not report but must notify the supervisor. This will be considered unpaid leave, or the employee may use annual or personal leave if they have accrued that time.

When severe weather is a possibility, designated staff members will monitor the weather situation and keep employees updated on pertinent information, such as school and office

closings. If the tornado siren sounds, all employees must immediately report to the designated area of their building and wait for the all-clear to be given by a designated staff member. Employees are only authorized to return to their offices after the all-clear is given.

3.2.6 Fire

If the fire alarm sounds, immediately leave the building through the nearest exit. Ensure that all clients or guests exit with you. Do not remain in the building for any reason. Children and parents who are in separate parts of the building should be evacuated immediately (separately if necessary). Delays are dangerous, and can cause you to become unable to escape a burning building. Immediately convene in the parking lot in front of your building for a “head count.”

If an employee sees fire, but the alarm has not sounded, that employee should pull the alarm and evacuate immediately to the predetermined location. Pulling the alarm in one building will activate the alarms in all of the buildings on campus. Relevant searches will be made by the Fire Department upon their arrival.

For alarm activations during the work day, either the Facilities Coordinator or an Executive Staff member in possession of a campus master key will meet with the responding Fire Department team to offer any needed assistance or access. For after-hours alarm activations, our monitoring company will notify the appropriate staff member on our emergency call list, and that person will be responsible for meeting the Fire Department responders and letting them into the appropriate areas of our campus.

After an alarm activation, no one should re-enter the buildings (unless at the specific request of the fire fighters) until that building’s alarm has been reset and an “all-clear” has been issued by the Fire Department or by the designated NCAC staff member.

3.2.7 Threats and Suspicious Persons or Behaviors

The NCAC will not tolerate any acts or threats of violence against any employee while on our property or while conducting NCAC business. If an employee receives or overhears a threat of violence, including domestic violence, he/she should alert a supervisor immediately.

If an employee suspects or realizes an immediate danger, he/she should use the “panic” button (one in each building) or nearest telephone to call the police. The same procedure should be used to report suspicious persons or behaviors, including that of other employees.

Any incident should be documented by persons directly involved and any witnesses using the *NCAC Incident Report* form (Appendix IV) and submitted to Human Resources within one business day.

In addition, employees with Orders of Protection or restraining orders that reference the NCAC campus must provide their supervisor with a copy of the order. The NCAC will work with employees who are victims of abuse to assess how existing paid and unpaid leave options may be used to help meet their needs. Employees will be encouraged to contact Human Resources, the

Employee Assistance Program, or the Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence Hotline #1.800.650.6522.

3.2.8 Visitors

Employees may, from time to time, need or desire people to visit them at NCAC. Professional visitations are accepted as a necessary part of business, and are allowed as needed. Employees with professional visitors should avoid prolonged distraction of and/or unnecessary interference with other employees. Personal visitors are allowed, but visitations should be kept infrequent and should not interfere with the employee's ability to perform NCAC duties or responsibilities. Personal visitors should not become distracting to other NCAC employees.

Upon arrival, all visitors should wait in the lobby and call the employee they are visiting, or ask the receptionist to alert the employee to their arrival. Visitors will not be allowed to leave the lobby area until an employee is present to escort them to their destination, and should not be allowed to roam the buildings unescorted. Any visitor who does not comply with these rules may be asked to leave the NCAC campus.

3.2.9 Paging System

The National Children's Advocacy Center's current telephone system is equipped with a paging option for each building. This option "should" only be used during the following times:

- Extreme severe weather where it would be necessary for anyone on campus to seek shelter.
- After hours and/or on weekends. This will assist you in knowing if anyone else is in the building prior to setting the alarm system.
- Other emergency situations.

Please use the following extension numbers listed below to activate the paging option for your building. The paging system "should not" be used to locate someone within a building.

Building 'A' 8081	Building 'C' 8083
Building 'B' 8082	Building 'D' 8084

When you enter the number, the phone set will ring one time, then you have four (4) seconds to begin your page announcement or the system will time out and you will be disconnected. If you pause during your announcement for longer than 4 seconds, the system will time out and you will be disconnected.

3.3 Vehicle Usage

3.3.1 Eligible Use

The NCAC uses NCAC-owned vehicles to transport clients and staff to specific destinations. Although clients' needs take priority, the vehicles are available for business use to all NCAC employees. Acceptable business uses may include group-travel to a meeting or other NCAC

business event, travel to a meeting that is far away, transporting clients, and other agency business where it is in the best interest of the agency to use the vehicles.

The vehicles may only be used to transport NCAC clients, multidisciplinary team members and employees. No personal passengers are allowed, including family members of NCAC staff and Board not employed at NCAC, and the vehicles may not be used to pursue personal business. Employees should not leave any personal effects in the vehicles, and personal bumper stickers or other decorations are not allowed.

Employees are allowed to use an NCAC vehicle to acquire lunch, only *if* one of the following two conditions applies:

1. The driver of the vehicle stops to get lunch while already out on NCAC business that will not be complete in time to return to the agency before lunch, *and* the food establishment is on a reasonable route of travel for the completion of the NCAC business. For local business, this refers to carry out and does *not* include “dining in.” When out of town, it is acceptable to “dine in” with an agency vehicle.
2. The lunch is scheduled as part of an NCAC business event, such as a meeting, and several employees and/or clients are attending.

Employees are expected to see that the vehicles are properly maintained and serviced. This includes filling out log books accurately and completely, refilling the gas tanks before returning the vehicles to the NCAC, and immediately notifying the designated staff member if any vehicles appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair.

3.3.2 Agency Requirements for Use

Prior to requesting to use a vehicle, **employees must have a copy of their driver’s license and insurance on file.** Requests submitted without these documents will be automatically denied. To ensure continued eligibility, employees should make sure that licenses and insurance are always up to date, and provide the Finance Director with any new copies. Operating an NCAC vehicle without a valid license is grounds for disciplinary action.

3.3.3 Safety and Driving Records

The improper, careless, negligent, destructive or unsafe use or operation of NCAC vehicles, as well as excessive or avoidable traffic parking violations, can result in disciplinary action, removal of driving privileges, and/or termination of employment. If NCAC’s insurance carrier excludes an employee from coverage, his/her driving privileges will be revoked, and if driving is a necessary requirement of the employee’s job, employment will be terminated.

To determine continued insurance eligibility, NCAC’s insurance carrier periodically reviews the driving records of NCAC employees. Exclusion from insurance coverage may result from any of the following offenses, even if they are committed while an employee is operating a personal vehicle:

- Any major offense beyond one at-fault accident in the previous three years
- Driving under the influence (DUI)
- Reckless driving

Additionally, employees who drive NCAC vehicles must notify the Finance Director of any ticket or arrest for a moving violation within 72 hours of receiving the citation or arrest. The Finance Director must also be notified within 72 hours if either of the following occurs while an employee is in a personal vehicle: the receipt of more than two tickets in a 12 month span of time or any arrest for a moving violation.

3.3.4 Vehicle Policies

Complete information on vehicle policies and requests may be obtained from your supervisor or the Finance department. The reservation book, keys, and log book for the vehicles are also found in Building B.

APPENDIX I
Confidentiality Agreements

Confidentiality Agreement for NCAC Employees

It is vital that all employees of the National Children’s Advocacy Center (NCAC) understand the importance of respecting confidentiality of agency business. While you are free to talk in general about your position and the work of the NCAC, you are not permitted to communicate confidential internal agency business; to discuss contact with clients, vendors and partners; or to identify case details in a way that would make identities known. The very fact that an individual is served by the NCAC may not be disclosed. However, this Agreement is not intended to prevent any disclosure that may be required by law.

Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Any reports, policies, procedures, marketing and financial information, internal or inter-organizational planning, research and related information that have not previously been released to the public at large or to the individual in question by a duly authorized representative of the NCAC.
- Client reports or records generated by the NCAC and those sent by other agencies to the NCAC. This excludes reports of a general or statistical nature that do not identify individual clients or families.
- Client information dealing with specific clients including medical, psychological and any other personal information that is disclosed during interviews, assessments, home visits, group activities, surveys or any other interaction.
- Personal data about or pertaining to employees, volunteers and other associates.

By signing this Confidentiality Agreement, I acknowledge that:

- I will only seek information that is necessary for my job function, and I will take care that unauthorized individuals do not overhear or have access to confidential information.
- I will not discuss with the public any information gained as a result of participating in confidential NCAC business.
- Violation of this policy is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.
- Unauthorized release of confidential information may also result in personal, civil and/or criminal liability and legal penalties.
- This confidentiality obligation shall continue indefinitely even after I leave the NCAC.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, nothing in this agreement prohibits or is intended to affect any rights under any applicable laws, including, but not limited to, Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act.

Signature

Print Name

Date

Witness

Print Name

Date

Confidentiality Agreement for NCAC Volunteers and Other Associates

It is vital that all representatives of the National Children’s Advocacy Center (NCAC), including volunteers, interns, Board members, independent contractors, and other miscellaneous persons affiliated with the NCAC, understand the importance of respecting confidentiality of agency business. While you are free to talk in general about your position and the work of the NCAC, you are not permitted to communicate confidential internal agency business; to discuss contact with clients, vendors and partners; or to identify case details in a way that would make identities known. The very fact that an individual is served by the NCAC may not be disclosed. However, this Agreement is not intended to prevent any disclosure that may be required by law.

Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Any reports, policies, procedures, marketing and financial information, internal or inter-organizational planning, research and related information that have not previously been released to the public at large or to the individual in question by a duly authorized representative of the NCAC.
- Client reports or records generated by the NCAC and those sent by other agencies to the NCAC. This excludes reports of a general or statistical nature that do not identify individual clients or families.
- Client information dealing with specific clients including medical, psychological and any other personal information that is disclosed during interviews, assessments, home visits, group activities, surveys or any other interaction.
- Personal data about or pertaining to employees, volunteers and other associates.

By signing this Confidentiality Agreement, I acknowledge that:

- I will only seek information that is necessary for my role, and I will take care that unauthorized individuals do not overhear or have access to confidential information.
- I will not discuss with the public any information gained as a result of participating in confidential NCAC business.
- Violation of this policy is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of my relationship/contact with the NCAC. Violation of this policy may also warrant contact with the agency/organization I represent, if other than the NCAC, in order to report the breach in confidentiality.
- Unauthorized release of confidential information may also result in personal, civil and/or criminal liability and legal penalties.
- This confidentiality obligation shall continue indefinitely even after I leave the NCAC.

Signature (or guardian if under 18) _____
Print Name (or guardian if under 18) _____
Date

Witness _____
Print Name _____
Date

APPENDIX II
Volunteer Policies

Volunteer Policies

Volunteers are a valuable resource who help the National Children's Advocacy Center (NCAC) fulfill its mission. Within the boundaries defined by the confidential nature of much of the work at NCAC, volunteers are engaged on multiple levels in short-term, periodic and long-term projects, according to individual interests/skills and the daily needs of the agency. The time and talents volunteers contribute enhance community awareness of child abuse issues, increase both the quality and quantity of services to families, and allow the agency to more efficiently utilize staff and financial resources.

Volunteers are expected to uphold a high level of professionalism and the moral standards contained in the NCAC Code of Ethics. Just as it is a privilege for NCAC to work with individuals who volunteer their time and energies to the organization, a volunteer's involvement with NCAC is a privilege and a responsibility, not a right. Volunteers must function within the guidelines in the NCAC Volunteer Policies and the individual NCAC department or program within which they are working.

Intake and Screening Process

Potential volunteers will complete a personal interview with the Volunteer Coordinator at the NCAC. This interview lasts approximately thirty minutes, and involves a standard line of questioning for all volunteers. A potential supervisor from a specific program may also conduct a separate interview if it is expected that the volunteer will spend most of the time working within that program. NCAC recruits and assigns volunteers on a non-discriminatory basis.

All volunteers must complete a volunteer application and sign a confidentiality agreement. The application must include three references from the potential volunteer, at least two of which will be contacted before a volunteer is placed with children or works with confidential information. Volunteers are also required to disclose any criminal convictions on the application.

The application requires that all volunteers give NCAC permission to run a background check. **All** volunteers are screened through the Alabama Department of Human Resources' Child Abuse and Neglect Registry. Volunteers who will handle legal documents, work directly with children, have extra access to clients, or other enhanced responsibilities may be subject to more rigorous standards. These may include more comprehensive background checks, additional trainings, increased supervision, additional information requirements, and other measures. All volunteers with direct or indirect access to children and/or other clients (including but not limited to those working in the Children's Building) will be subject to a comprehensive criminal background check.

Volunteers providing clinical services are required to provide their own professional liability insurance and submit proof of such to NCAC Human Resources.

Failure to satisfactorily complete ANY of these steps may disqualify an individual from volunteering with the NCAC, without requiring a specific explanation to the potential volunteer. Individuals with a record of committing crimes against children or other recent crimes which indicate a lack of maturity and/or trustworthiness are not eligible to volunteer at NCAC.

Responsibilities and Rights for Volunteers

Conflicts of Interest: No person who has a conflict of interest with any activity or program of NCAC—whether financial, personal, or philosophical—shall serve as a volunteer for the agency.

Volunteers as Representatives: Before making any action or statement that might affect or obligate NCAC, volunteers should seek prior consultation and approval from appropriate staff. Volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of the NCAC only as specifically indicated within their job/assignment descriptions and only to the extent indicated.

Confidentiality: Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all privileged information to which they are exposed while serving the NCAC. This may involve information about NCAC staff, operations, clients, or partners. Failure to maintain confidentiality will result in loss of volunteer privileges.

Professional Conduct: All volunteers are expected to perform given assignments to the best of their abilities, and *to be on-time* to work, scheduled events, trainings, etc. If a volunteer must miss or be tardy for an assignment, he/she should make confirmed contact with either the Volunteer Coordinator, his/her supervisor or the front desk with as much advance notice as possible. Repeated unreliability may result in loss of volunteer privileges. Volunteers will dress and conduct themselves appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties, requesting clarification from NCAC staff if necessary.

Harassment Policy: NCAC is committed to providing a work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and conduct that can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive, including sexual harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated. If a volunteer should experience, or witness, sexual or other unlawful harassment at NCAC, he/she should report it immediately to the supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator. Failure to comply with this policy may result in loss of volunteer privileges.

Supervision: Each volunteer will have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for direct management of that volunteer during an assignment. This supervisor shall be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer and shall be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance. If the designated supervisor is not available during the time a volunteer is at NCAC, another designated staff member must provide adequate supervision. Volunteers should not be at NCAC during unscheduled times, or without appropriate, designated supervision.

Volunteer Files: Volunteer applications and completed clearance forms are kept on file in the Volunteer Coordinator's office. Copies of these applications may be shared with other staff in

order to facilitate placement of a volunteer. To ensure files are up-to-date and correct, volunteers should submit updates when the need arises, including change of address or availability status. Volunteers who would like a record of their hours are asked to keep a personal log of their activities and have the supervisor initial their hours at the completion of each project.

Volunteer/Employee Relations: Volunteers and NCAC employees are partners in implementing the mission and programs of NCAC. Volunteers shall be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, to be treated as equal coworkers, to be provided effective supervision, and shall agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and remain loyal to the goals and procedures of the NCAC. NCAC volunteers shall not harass, openly criticize, threaten, or otherwise undermine NCAC employees, and shall not be harassed, openly criticized, threatened, or otherwise undermined by NCAC employees. Breaches of this policy should be immediately reported to a supervisor and/or the Volunteer Coordinator.

Evaluation, Discipline, and Dismissal: Volunteers and staff members are encouraged to give timely feedback to the Volunteer Coordinator regarding specific experiences, including suggestions on ways to improve volunteer involvement. Verbal feedback is permissible for minor complaints. Isolated or minor complaints will be taken into context, and generally do not result in a written record in the volunteer's file. However, repeated complaints (3 or more in a short period of time) or complaints regarding substantive issues (confidentiality, inappropriate behavior, failure to show, etc.) will result in a written note in the volunteer's file. This information will be used for decisions concerning future placement, as well as the appropriateness of corrective actions. These may include the requirement of additional training, reassignment to a new position, suspension, or dismissal from service. A record of inappropriate conduct and corrective actions taken will be kept in the volunteer's file.

Volunteers are also afforded the opportunity to give feedback and express grievances to the Volunteer Coordinator and/or the task supervisor. Informal or verbal complaints are permissible for minor grievances and may be used to help NCAC staff improve future volunteer interaction. Volunteers will be asked to complete a written Grievance Form on substantive issues (such as harassment.) These grievances may result in changes to volunteer management practices and/or disciplinary action toward the offending staff member, which may be added to their record.

Intellectual Property: Creative or intellectual products developed during service to NCAC are the property of the agency. If a volunteer leaves the agency, the products they created, or played a role in creating, remain the property of NCAC.

Search and Seizure of Private Property: Offices, desks, lockers, cubicles, and other storage spaces (including storage provided on the NCAC computer network) may be provided for the convenience of volunteers, but remain the sole property of NCAC. Accordingly, they, as well as any articles found within them, may be inspected at any time. Though such measures must be available in order to ensure the safety and security of the NCAC and its resources, they are not used frivolously. The search and/or seizure of property will occur only under the authority of the Executive Director. Although advance notice will not be provided, the affected individual will be provided with a written notice stating the reason for the search/seizure upon its commencement. To ensure that the volunteer's rights are not violated, there will be at least one witness present.

APPENDIX III

Intern Policies

Intern Policies

The NCAC regularly provides internship opportunities for students who are pursuing a career in the fields of child maltreatment. Although interns do not receive financial compensation for their services, they are able to gain invaluable work experience.

Interns are expected to uphold a high level of professionalism and the moral standards contained in the NCAC Code of Ethics. Just as it is a privilege for NCAC to work with students who volunteer their time and energies to the organization, an internship with the NCAC is a privilege and a responsibility, not a right. Interns must function within the guidelines in the NCAC Volunteer Policies, the individual NCAC department or program within which they are working and their University.

Intake and Screening Process

Interns are usually referred to us by faculty advisors at their universities and so do not provide additional references. However, they are cleared through the Child Abuse and Neglect Registry and are interviewed by the Volunteer Coordinator and/or the staff member who will be providing supervision. Interns are assigned to a specific department based on their interests and the needs of the agency. The Volunteer Coordinator and/or the supervising staff member work with the University to provide meaningful work experiences and evaluation of the student's progress.

All interns must also complete an intern application and sign a confidentiality agreement. The application requires that all interns give NCAC permission to run a background check through the Child Abuse and Neglect Registry. This process takes seven to ten days, and no intern may begin working directly with children before the Volunteer Coordinator receives notice that his/her record is clear.

Interns providing clinical services are required to provide their own professional liability insurance and submit proof of such to NCAC Human Resources.

If an intern is likely to have contact with clients and/or children, the intern will be sent to NCAC Human Resources to complete a full criminal background check. This may not be necessary for all departments. If the student has recently completed a full background check for the university or another agency, a copy of the satisfactory results may be acceptable.

Failure to satisfactorily complete ANY of these steps may disqualify an individual from volunteering with the NCAC, without requiring a specific explanation to the potential volunteer. Individuals with a record of committing crimes against children or other recent crimes which indicate a lack of maturity and/or trustworthiness are not eligible to volunteer at NCAC. The NCAC reserves sole discretion over the acceptance and placement of interns according to the needs of the agency at a particular time.

Responsibilities and Rights for Interns

Conflicts of Interest: No person who has a conflict of interest with any activity or program of NCAC—whether financial, personal, or philosophical—shall serve as an intern for the agency.

Interns as Representatives: Before making any action or statement that might affect or obligate NCAC, interns should seek prior consultation and approval from appropriate staff. Interns are authorized to act as representatives of the NCAC only as specifically indicated within their job/assignment descriptions and only to the extent indicated.

Confidentiality: Interns are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all privileged information to which they are exposed while serving the NCAC. This may involve information about NCAC staff, operations, clients, or partners. *Failure to maintain confidentiality will result in loss of intern privileges, and the student's faculty advisor will be notified of the breach!*

Professional Conduct: All interns are expected to perform assignments to the best of their abilities, and *report to work on time* whether the assignment is at the agency or at another site. If an intern must miss, or be tardy to, work or a scheduled event, he/she should inform his/her supervisor as soon as possible. Interns will dress and conduct themselves appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties, requesting clarification from NCAC staff if necessary. Failure to meet these guidelines will result in disciplinary action. (See **Discipline and Dismissal** below)

Harassment Policy: NCAC is committed to providing a work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and conduct that can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive, including sexual harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated. Interns who experience, or witness, sexual or other unlawful harassment at NCAC, are to report it immediately to their supervisor and/or the Volunteer Coordinator. Failure to comply with this policy may result in loss of intern privileges.

Supervision: Each intern will have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for direct management of that intern during an assignment. This supervisor shall be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the intern and shall be available to the intern for consultation and assistance. If the designated supervisor is not available during the time an intern is at NCAC, another designated staff member must provide adequate supervision. Interns should not be at NCAC during unscheduled times, or without appropriate, designated supervision.

Contact with Children/Clients: Some interns may serve in positions that allow direct contact with clients and/or children, such as SCAN's school-based programs. Those interns will be provided training prior to being assigned such a serious responsibility. Interns will avoid *any semblance* of inappropriate behavior when in contact with children or clients. This may include, but is not limited to: using adult or foul language, making threatening remarks or gestures, or engaging in any behaviors that may physically or verbally harm clients or children.

Interns are urged to keep the NCAC Code of Ethics in mind, especially the clause about confidentiality, when dealing with clients and children. *Failure to comply by NCAC policies will be considered especially grievous when it involves contact between an NCAC representative and a client or child.*

Intern Files: A file will be maintained for each intern, including dates of service, positions held, duties performed, work evaluations, and disciplinary records. This file will be used for decisions concerning future placement, as well as the appropriateness of corrective actions. To ensure files are up-to-date and correct, interns should submit updates when need arises, including written statements expressing concerns or grievances, and addendums concerning disciplinary actions. This file will be kept confidential, and will only be available to those who have a legitimate need to know and/or are in the line of supervision for the intern.

Evaluation and Progress Reports: Interns shall receive a copy of each performance evaluation required by their college/university, generally at least once a semester. Additionally, an intern's supervisor may designate certain times for discussion of the intern's performance, suggestions, and continued interest in NCAC. A written record of each evaluation will be kept in the intern's file. If the school does not require periodic reviews, the supervisor will provide an evaluation at the end of the placement.

Unless requested otherwise by their supervisor, interns are required to make weekly progress reports to their supervisors. Students may use forms provided by their schools or the *Weekly Progress* form provided by the NCAC. This includes days and hours worked, a brief summary and description of tasks accomplished, a brief summary of what the intern learned, and any questions or concerns pertaining to the completion of said tasks. To ensure usefulness and efficiency, progress reports should generally not exceed one page in length. It is recommended that interns retain a copy of all reports for future reference.

Discipline and Dismissal: In appropriate situations, corrective action may be taken toward an intern. This may include the requirement of additional training, reassignment to a new position, consultation with the intern's faculty advisor, or dismissal from service.

Most often, disciplinary action will follow these progressive steps:

1. Verbal warning from supervisor
2. Verbal warning, accompanied by note in file
3. Contact with student's Field Advisor
4. Unsatisfactory evaluation and/or Dismissal

Serious infractions – such as breach of confidentiality or inappropriate behavior – are cause for immediate dismissal. A record of inappropriate conduct and corrective actions taken will be kept in the intern's file.

Intern/Employee Relations: Interns and NCAC employees are partners in implementing the mission and programs of NCAC. Interns shall be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, to be treated as equal coworkers, and to effective supervision and full-involvement, and agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and remain loyal to the goals and procedures of the NCAC.

NCAC interns shall not harass, openly criticize, threaten, or otherwise undermine NCAC employees, and shall not be harassed, openly criticized, threatened, or otherwise undermined by NCAC employees. It is prohibited for interns to have “dating” relationships with employees who are in a direct line of supervision to the intern. Breaches of this policy should be immediately reported to a supervisor, and failure to comply may result in loss of intern privileges.

Intellectual Property: Creative or intellectual products developed during service to NCAC are the property of the agency. If an intern leaves the agency, the products they created, or played a role in creating, remain the property of NCAC.

Search and Seizure of Private Property: Offices, desks, lockers, cubicles, and other storage spaces (including storage provided on the NCAC computer network) may be provided for the convenience of interns, but remain the sole property of NCAC. Accordingly, they, as well as any articles found within them, may be inspected at any time. Though such measures must be available in order to ensure the safety and security of the NCAC and its resources, they are not used frivolously.

The search and/or seizure of property will occur only under the authority of the Executive Director. Although advance notice will not be provided, the affected intern will be provided with a written notice stating the reason for the search/seizure upon its commencement. To ensure that the intern’s rights are not violated, there will be at least one witness present.

APPENDIX IV

Incident Reporting Forms:
Refusal of Medical Treatment
NCAC Incident Report
Detailed Account of Incident
Incident Follow-Up

NCAC Refusal of Medical Treatment

Complete immediately and send to NCAC HR within one business day.

I have been encouraged to seek medical help at Occupational Health Group per Madison County policy after being involved in an accident at work or while performing my job, but have decided not to seek medical attention.

Printed Name

Title

Signature

Date

Witness

Printed Name of Witness

NCAC Incident Report

Complete as soon as possible and send to NCAC HR within one business day.

Date of Incident: _____ Time of Incident: _____ Department: _____

Location/Area Incident Occurred: _____

NCAC Employee Completing Form: _____

Person(s) Directly Involved in Incident (including witnesses): _____

Please check the type of incident:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Injury | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Assault | <input type="checkbox"/> Missing Person |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abuse or Neglect of a minor | <input type="checkbox"/> Abuse or Neglect of an Adult | <input type="checkbox"/> Missing Property |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle Accident | <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment Failure | <input type="checkbox"/> Security/Safety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire | <input type="checkbox"/> Severe Weather Alert | <input type="checkbox"/> Bldg. Emergency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Emergency | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethical | <input type="checkbox"/> Death |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confidentiality | <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal Threat of Violence | <input type="checkbox"/> Assault |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please explain in Detailed Account of Incident Attachment.) | | |

Brief Description of Incident:

Name of Medical Provider (if applicable) _____

Ambulance Notified: Yes No If yes, Date and Time: _____

Did this incident involve criminal conduct: Yes No If yes, briefly explain: _____

Police Notified: Yes No If yes, Date and Time: _____

Responding Police Officer's Name: _____ **Badge#** _____

Signature of Department Director or designee completing form

Date

Additional Instructions:

1. If employee has sought **medical care**, call or email NCAC HR or Madison County Personnel Office (256-532-3614) **as soon as possible but no later than end of day.**
2. Submit the *Alabama First Report of Injury* Form to NCAC HR within one business day of incident.
3. For all incidents, all persons involved, including witnesses, must complete a *Detailed Account of Incident* form. If appropriate, separate forms should be submitted.

Detailed Account of Incident

All involved persons should complete and sign or submit separate, individual forms.
Send to NCAC HR within one business day.

Date of Incident: _____ Time of Incident: _____ Department: _____

Location/Area Incident Occurred: _____

NCAC Employee Completing Form: _____

Person(s) Directly Involved in Incident (including witnesses): _____

Detailed Account of Incident: (Include what occurred, causes, persons involved, details of action taken):

Signature of Person Completing Form

Date

Incident Follow-Up

Complete within 72 hours of incident and ongoing as needed. Send to NCAC HR.

Date of Incident: _____ Time of Incident: _____ Department: _____

Location/Area Incident Occurred: _____

NCAC Employee Completing Form: _____

Person(s) Directly Involved in Incident (including witnesses): _____

Name of medical facility and physician providing treatment to the visitor or employee:

Follow up action taken: (Date, details of follow up)

Signature of Person Completing Form

Date