

**NORTHWEST ALABAMA
MENTAL HEALTH CENTER**

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

January 2023

Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Table of Contents

	Page
Purpose of this Handbook <i>Amended</i>	4
Welcome	5
Vision / Mission / Value / Belief Statements	6-7
Application for Employment	8
Attendance <i>Amended</i>	8
Background Investigation <i>New</i>	8
Behavior of Employees	9
Benefits Plans Information <i>Amended</i>	10
Breaks (Rest and Meal)	10
Bulletin Boards	10
Change in Status	10
Check Distribution / Lost Checks / Direct Deposit <i>New</i>	10-11
Classification of Employees	11
Compliance Plan/Ethics	11-12
Confidentiality <i>New</i>	12
Customer Service/Guest Relations	12-13
Disaster Plan	13
Disciplinary Procedure <i>Amended</i>	13
Dress Code	13
Drug Free Workplace/Substance Abuse	13-16
Electronic Communication	16
Employee Assistance Program <i>New</i>	16
Employment At Will Relationship	16-17
Equal Employment Opportunity/Harassment	17-18
Exit Interview	18
Expressing Milk	18-19
Facility Property/ Use of Equipment and Vehicles	19-20
Funeral Leave <i>Amended</i>	20
Grievance Procedure <i>Amended</i>	20-21
Holidays <i>Amended</i>	21-22
Hours of Work <i>Amended</i>	22
Immigration Law Compliance <i>Amended</i>	23
Information Technology Guidelines <i>New</i>	23-24
In-Service Education	25
Job Posting	25
Jury Duty	25

Leaves of Absence	FMLA / Worker's Comp / Military	25-27
Licensure and Registration		27
Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) / Driving	<i>New</i>	28
Orientation		28-29
Outside Employment		29
Overtime		29
Pay Day		29
Pay Periods	<i>New</i>	29
Payroll Deductions		30
Performance Review		30
Personal Visitors/Children in the Workplace		30
Personnel Files		30-31
Re-employment		31
Relatives, Hiring of		31
Return of Facility Property		31
Safety		31
Safety Rules		32
Sick Leave	<i>Amended</i>	32-33
Sick Leave Retirement Credit	<i>New</i>	33-34
Smoking	<i>Amended</i>	34
Social Networking	<i>New</i>	34-35
Solicitation	<i>Amended</i>	35
Staff Incident Reports		35
Suggestions		35
Telephone Calls and Cell Phones		35-37
Telephone Courtesy		37
Termination	<i>Amended</i>	37-38
Theft		38
Time Records		38-39
Training / Introductory Period	<i>New</i>	39
Transfers		40
Vacation	<i>Amended</i>	42
Vacation Donation	<i>New</i>	42-43
Vacation Sell Back	<i>New</i>	43
Video Surveillance	<i>New</i>	43-44
Voting Time		44
Weather		44
Willful Abandonment (Nursing Staff)		44-45
Worker's Compensation		45
Workplace Violence		45-46

PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide employees of Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center with general information regarding the personnel guidelines the Center attempts to follow in most cases.

Due to the nature of the Center operations and variations necessary to accommodate individual situations, the guidelines in this Handbook may not apply to every employee or in every situation.

The Human Resources Department maintains the Human Resources (HR) Policy Manual. Should a question or discrepancy occur with the information contained in this Handbook, the HR Policy Manual will serve as the official policy.

With the exception of the Employment at Will guidelines, The Center reserves the right to rescind, modify or deviate from these or other guidelines, policies, practices or procedures relating to employment matters from time to time as it considers necessary in its sole discretion, either in individual or (Center)-wide situations with or without notice.

Neither this Handbook nor any provision of this Handbook is an employment contract or any other type of contract.

I understand that my employment is voluntary, at will, and with no specified length. I understand and acknowledge that at will means that I may terminate my employment at any time, with or without a reason. I also understand and acknowledge that the Center may terminate my employment at any time, with or without a reason, respectful of federal and state laws.

I UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS MY RESPONSIBILITY TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE INFORMATION IN THIS HANDBOOK.

I UNDERSTAND THAT I MAY CONTACT MY SUPERVISOR, ANY MEMBER OF MANAGEMENT, OR HUMAN RESOURCES SHOULD I NEED CLARIFICATION OF ANY PORTION OF THIS HANDBOOK.

A HANDBOOK IS LOCATED IN ALL CENTER LOCATIONS AND ON THE CENTER'S WEBSITE.



WELCOME TO NORTHWEST ALABAMA MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

As Executive Director of Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center I am proud to be associated with so many caring and dedicated individuals. I hope that your employment here is meaningful, challenging and rewarding.

The commitment of this facility is to provide quality care to our clients. As part of this commitment, we strive to ensure an ethical and compassionate approach to providing these services. It is our hope that as a member of our staff, you will embrace our Mission and assist us in promoting the values and principles, which are critical to achieving our goals.

This handbook sets forth many general guidelines that the Center attempts to follow in its personnel practices. You should find it useful in understanding our current practices.

I look forward to working with you as we serve the healthcare needs of our clients and communities.

Sincerely,



April Knight
Executive Director

VISION

To be a model community service system known for its integrity, professionalism, and uncompromising commitment to our clients. To be the service provider of choice in the delivery of valued community services and adapting to the changing needs of our clients.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Board of Directors of the Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center, in response to needs presented by clients, families, advisory boards, other agencies and governmental institutions, have committed the Center, its staff and resources, to the mission of providing a comprehensive, effective continuum of care. The continuum of care would address the needs of individuals, groups, and families and actively seek to assist in improving their lives. Our commitment to this mission is spelled out as follows:

1. To provide accessible, cost effective, high quality and goal-oriented outcome based oriented mental health services to the people of Fayette, Lamar, Marion, Walker, and Winston counties.
2. To provide accessible and appropriate services to persons and/or families with problems that relate to psychiatric, habilitation, rehabilitation, or counseling needs and interventions.
3. To prioritize services to those who suffer from severe mental illnesses, children who experience severe emotional disturbances, individuals who suffer from mental retardation, individuals who seek recovery or are recovering from addictions to alcohol/drugs. These mental health services would assist in their bettering the quality of their lives, and to the general population as resources allow.
4. To base services on attaining the highest level of independent living and functioning in the least restrictive environment.
5. To guarantee quality through utilization of a program of continuous improvement.
6. To assist staff in functioning as professionally capable and responsive care givers to ensure effective response to client needs for as long as requested.
7. To work and grow in a caring partnership with the community and to be recognized as the leader in providing the highest quality of mental health services.
8. To conduct all our activities in highest ethical and professional manner; by attracting and retaining honest, qualified, courteous, dependable and productive employees; by offering opportunities for personal and professional growth; and by creating a safe, clean, therapeutic, cheerful environment with a caring atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.

VALUE / BELIEF STATEMENTS

We value and believe in:

- Being compassionate, understanding and responsive to the opinions and needs of our clients.
- Exceeding the expectations of our clients and communities
- Being creative and innovative in providing excellent services
- Providing an environment in which all employees can excel and achieve personal growth.
- Promote teamwork and a cooperative working relationship.
- Managing resources to ensure financial security and integrity.
- Empowerment of people by recognizing their worth, dignity, strengths, and ability to make informed decisions.
- Delivering services at the earliest possible time to prevent or reduce traumatic interventions in the person's future.
- Promoting the participation of all people in the life of the community and this should not be diminished by the presence of any kind or level of mental illness, mental retardation, or alcohol and any other drug dependence.
- Promoting the traditions of community service
- Enhancing partnership with Alabama Council of Community Mental Health Boards and the Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and other agencies with complementary goals

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT - The Center 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 relationship. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in withdrawing an offer of employment or termination of employment.

ATTENDANCE - Because of the nature of our work, regular attendance by each employee is mandatory.

If the employee is unable to report for work as assigned, that employee must personally notify their immediate supervisor, department head, or designee immediately.

Leaving a message without confirmation is not acceptable.

Such notice must be given as far in advance of the time assigned for reporting to work as possible.

An employee absent because of illness should advise their immediate supervisor, department head, or designee of their status and estimated date of return on a daily basis or as agreed upon.

The Center reserves the right to require a healthcare provider's note for absences caused by illness. Excessive absences or tardiness for any reason other than approved leaves of absence may result in disciplinary action, which could result in termination of employment.

An employee absent from work for three (3) scheduled consecutive days/shifts without notifying their immediate supervisor, department head, or designee will be considered to have voluntarily resigned without notice.

BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION As required by the Board and Department of Mental Health Standards, background investigations will be conducted and reviewed prior to employment or engagement with consumers.

All background checks will be coordinated exclusively by Human Resources.

An applicant to whom a conditional offer of employment has been extended may not begin employment or engagement until the criminal background check appropriate to their position has been completed and reviewed by Human Resources.

Those who may be hired, and criminal activities are noted at a later date will be terminated only after a full audit/accountability of his or her job responsibilities is completed.

Individuals employed with the agency and engaged in illegal activities that are detrimental to the organization and its purpose will be suspended immediately and discharged once the findings are substantiated.

Action taken will not be based upon race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age disability or veteran status.

BEHAVIOR OF EMPLOYEES

1. Employees are expected at all times to conduct themselves in a positive manner so as to promote the best interests of the Center. Such conduct includes:
 - a. Reporting to work punctually as scheduled and being at the proper workstation, ready for work, at the assigned starting time.
 - b. Giving proper advance notice whenever unable to work or report on time.
 - c. Complying with all Center safety and security regulations.
 - d. Smoking only at times and in places not prohibited by Center rules or local ordinances.
 - e. Wearing clothing appropriate for the work being performed.
 - f. Maintaining workplace and work area cleanliness and orderliness.
 - g. Treating all customers, visitors, and fellow employees in a courteous manner.
 - h. Refraining from behavior or conduct deemed offensive or undesirable, or which is contrary to the Center's best interest.
 - i. Performing assigned tasks efficiently and in accord with established quality standards and as directed by a supervisor.

2. The following conduct is prohibited and will subject the individual involved to disciplinary action, up to and including termination:
 - a. The reporting to work under the influence of alcoholic beverages and/or illegal drugs and narcotics or the use, sale; dispensing, or possession of alcoholic beverages and/or illegal drugs and narcotics on Center premises;
 - b. The use of abusive language;
 - c. Insubordination or the refusal by an employee to follow management's instructions concerning a job-related matter;
 - d. Fighting or assault on a fellow employee or customer;
 - e. Theft, destruction, defacement, or misuse of Center property or of another employee's property at the work site;
 - f. Falsifying or altering any Center record or report, such as an application for employment, a medical report, a production record, a time record, an expense account, an absentee report, or shipping and receiving records;
 - g. Threatening or intimidating management, supervisors, or fellow workers;
 - h. Smoking if prohibited by local ordinance or Center rules;
 - i. Sleeping on the job;
 - j. Failure to wear assigned safety equipment or failure to abide by safety rules or policies;
 - k. Improper attire or inappropriate personal appearance;
 - l. Engaging in any form of harassment; including sexual harassment
 - m. Improper disclosure of trade secrets or confidential information.

3. The examples in (2), above, are illustrative of the type of behavior that will not be permitted, but are not intended to be an all-inclusive listing. Any questions in connection with this policy should be directed to your supervisor, Department Head, or Human Resources.

BENEFIT PLANS INFORMATION - Employees of the Center may be eligible for coverage under a variety of benefit plans. Complete information about coverage and eligibility is available from the Human Resources Department. 1-205-302-9004 or 1-205-302-9131.

BREAKS – Rest breaks are determined on an as needed basis by each program or department. They should not exceed two fifteen-minute breaks in an 8-hour shift. Breaks should not interfere with the quality of client care or assigned duties. It must be realized that breaks are not "automatic" and workloads on a given day may eliminate the break period. Time spent on rest breaks will be compensated as work time. Unless approved by the supervisor, an employee may not accumulate break time in order to leave earlier than the end of the scheduled shift. Employees on rest breaks are not permitted to leave the center's premises during this period.

BREAKS (MEAL) - Non-exempt employees are allowed a thirty-minute meal period during an eight-hour shift. The meal period is the employee's time and is not compensable. Meals are to be eaten in non-work areas provided for that purpose. If an employee is unable to take a meal break, the employee must indicate the missed meal period on their time record so that they can be paid for the missed meal period. In many of our programs, staff will eat with the clients during their shift. This is considered work time and is compensable. Employees on break or a meal period are not to go into other work areas for non-business purposes and interfere with or distract other employees who are working at that time. No meal/rest break should be taken within an hour of arriving at or leaving work.

BULLETIN BOARDS -Bulletin boards are maintained in most departments for departmental information. Employees should review bulletin boards daily for pertinent facility or departmental information. Bulletin boards are for official facility communications; personal items or notices may not be posted.

CHANGE IN STATUS - It is important that the Center keep an accurate record of each employee's personal status. It is the responsibility of the employee to promptly report any change in address, telephone number, marital status, dependent, licensure, or level of education to the Human Resources Department. It is especially important for each employee to immediately report changes in dependency or family status, which may affect the employee's benefits program.

Unreported changes may affect eligibility for benefits in the event of a claim.

CHECK DISTRIBUTION / LOST CHECKS / DIRECT DEPOSIT

Checks and direct deposit vouchers for employees who work in Walker County will be put in appropriate mailboxes in the Jasper Office. The courier will deliver checks to designated sites in the other counties. If an employee desires his/her check to be sent to another location, either in a one-time situation or henceforth, the payroll office should be notified at least one day before payday.

Lost Checks

Checks and vouchers may also be mailed. Checks lost in the mail will have a 3-day waiting period for replacement if lost. If an employee loses their check, they may contact the payroll office for a replacement but a stop-pay fee will be assessed before replacement.

Direct Deposit

Direct deposit may be set up by filling out a company direct deposit form or obtaining one from the employee's bank and submitting it to the payroll office. Deposits can be made into as many as three accounts. After turning in the necessary paperwork, it takes two payroll runs for the employee's check to be direct deposited.

On payday, the employee will receive a voucher detailing payroll and bank deposit information. To stop a direct deposit, submit a written request to the payroll office.

When an employee closes an account for which a direct deposit is scheduled, the payroll office must be advised at least five days prior to payday of this closure. Failure to do so will result in a \$25 fee that is passed along to the employee.

CLASSIFICATION OF EMPLOYEES - All employees at Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center are employed in one of the following classifications:

REGULAR FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES: A Regular full-time employee is an individual who is so classified, whose employment is for no definite term and who is normally scheduled to work up to 40 hours per week on a regularly scheduled basis.

REGULAR PART-TIME EMPLOYEES: A Regular part-time employee is an individual who is so classified, whose employment is for no definite term and who is normally scheduled to work less than 30 hours per week on a regularly scheduled basis.

TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES: A Temporary employee is an individual who is so classified and whose work assignment is expected to be of limited duration. A temporary employee is not, however, guaranteed employment for the duration of their work assignment.

PRN OR CASUAL EMPLOYEE: A PRN or casual employee is an individual who is so classified, whose employment is for no definite term, and who is scheduled to work on an "as needed" basis.

CONTRACT EMPLOYEES: Employees classified as a contract employee requires an agreement, which can only be executed by the Executive Director.

COMPLIANCE PLAN- The Center's policy is to comply with all applicable laws and regulations of the United States and all state and government subdivisions where business is conducted. Management is committed to establishing effective programs to ensure compliance.

All employees have the responsibility to understand and comply with laws and regulations, which relate to their jobs. Supervisors have the responsibility of ensuring that all employees who report to them are given information to be aware of and comply with such legal requirements.

All employees are required to read, acknowledge understanding, and refer to the Internal Compliance Plan when faced with an ethical or legal issue.

To get help with an ethics or compliance concern or to report a potential violation of our Internal Compliance Plan contact your supervisor, another member of Center Management or the Executive Director.

CONFIDENTIALITY A basic rule to follow is ALL information and records are confidential. If any doubt exists, do NOT release any information until it is cleared by the appropriate Program Director or until further advice is obtained from the respective Division or Clinical Director. Each department will maintain specific guidelines regarding confidentiality.

CUSTOMER SERVICE/GUEST RELATIONS - Our prime concern at NWAMHC is the welfare of our consumers. Employees contribute to their needs by a considerate manner, thoughtfulness, quiet and orderly conduct, conscientious attention to duty and cheerful spirit. This is true throughout the Facility, but especially in client areas.

It is the responsibility of all employees to behave in a professional manner at all times and treat everyone with whom you may come in contact with dignity and respect. This kind of service enhances the image of the Facility and increases client and visitor confidence in the care and services we provide. Client/Guest Relations is the concept of quality service and how we interact with consumers, staff, visitors, and other guests.

The following are examples of the type of Client/Guest Relations concepts and quality service to clients that are expected of all employees:

- Address consumers properly by Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Miss, and their last name.
- Release of information without a consumer's consent is not only improper but also illegal. Do not discuss the consumer's condition except on a need to know basis and never while off-duty.
- Client privacy must be protected at all times. Conversation with consumers should be warm and cheerful and must never involve gossip or personal issues.
- Buying/selling goods or services from consumers or to consumers is absolutely prohibited. Special events may be approved by your supervisor.

- Accepting tips, loans, gifts or other remuneration from consumers is prohibited. Accepting gifts should comply with the Internal Compliance Plan.
- Potential safety hazards to any consumer must be reported immediately.
- Valuables of consumers require extra care because the consumer's room is usually not secure. Report security problems to your supervisor immediately including visitors wandering hallways that do not appear to have business in the facility.

DISASTER PLAN - One of the major responsibilities of the Center in serving the community is to provide emergency services needed in case of disaster. All employees are expected to be available if and when needed, should a disaster occur.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE – It is the policy of the Center that all employees are expected to comply with the Center's and departmental standards of behavior and performance. Any non-compliance with these standards must be remedied.

Disciplinary action may be administered in the form of a verbal discussion, written documentation, suspension with or without pay, involuntary termination, and any other action deemed appropriate. There are no defined steps in the process. Disciplinary action may be administered based on the severity and frequency of the events. Human Resources will review all disciplinary action, which results in suspension or termination, prior to taking action.

Human Resources will review all involuntary terminations with the respective Management Team member prior to the action being taken. Each case will be handled on an individual basis.

DRESS CODE - Clothing must be neat, clean, and appropriate for professional work and the image that the Facility must project to its consumers, visitors and the public. Hairstyles, clothing, and jewelry should conform to the best business and professional standards.

Supervisors have the option to determine the appropriate dress code for their areas of responsibility.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center (NWAMHC) is committed to providing a safe work environment and to fostering the well-being and health of its employees. That commitment is jeopardized when any NWAMHC employee illegally uses drugs on or off the job, comes to work under their influence, possesses, distributes or sells drugs in the workplace, or abuses alcohol on the job. NWAMHC has established the following policy guidelines effective October 1, 2004.

1. It is a violation of company policy for any employee to use, sell, trade, offer for sale, or offer to buy illegal drugs or otherwise engage in the illegal use of drugs on or off

the job.

2. It is a violation of company policy for any employee to report to work under the influence of or while possessing in his or her body, blood or urine illegal drugs in any detectable amount.
3. It is a violation of company policy for any employee to report to work under the influence of or impaired by alcohol.
4. It is a violation of the company policy for any employee to use prescription drugs illegally, i.e., to use prescription drugs that have not been legally obtained or in a manner or for a purpose other than as prescribed. (However, nothing in this policy precludes the appropriate use of legally prescribed medications.) Employees must inform their supervisor if they are taking a prescribed medication containing a warning label related to operating equipment or a vehicle.
5. Violations of this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
6. As a condition of employment, employees must abide by the terms of this policy and must notify NWAMHC in writing of any conviction of a violation of a criminal drug statute no later than five calendar days after such conviction.
7. **CONFIDENTIALITY** The confidentiality of any information received by the employer through a substance abuse testing program shall be maintained, except as otherwise provided by law.
8. **PRE-EMPLOYMENT DRUG TESTING** All job applicant offered a position with the Center will undergo testing for the presence of illegal drugs as a condition of employment. The applicant will be denied employment with a confirmed positive test or if there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the applicant has tampered with the specimen. Testing should be completed within 24 hours of the acceptance of the job.
9. **EMPLOYEE TESTING** The Center has adopted testing practices to identify employees who use illegal drugs on or off the job or who abuse alcohol on the job. It shall be a condition of employment for all employees to submit to substance abuse testing under the following circumstances. Unless otherwise noted, all testing should be completed within 24 hours of the event or notification.

A. Reasonable Suspicion

“Reasonable suspicion” is a belief that an employee is using or has used drugs or alcohol in violation of the employer’s policy.

B. Post Accident

When employees have caused or contributed to an on-the-job injury that resulted in personal injury or damage to Center property or a loss of worktime. Testing should be completed within 3 hours of the accident or event.

C. Post Rehabilitation

As part of a follow-up program for treatment of drug/alcohol abuse. The frequency of such testing shall be a minimum of at least six times during the first twelve months after completion of the rehabilitation program. Then, at least once a year for a two year period. Advance notice of testing shall not be given to the employee. Testing should be completed within 24 hours of notification.

D. Random Testing (effective December 1, 2004)

Random testing is conducted without individualized suspicion of a violation of the company's substance abuse policy. Selection is made by neutral criteria so that all employees eligible for testing have an equal opportunity of being tested.

10. ALCOHOL ABUSE

An employee who is under the influence of alcoholic beverages at any time while on company business or at any time during the hours between the beginning and ending of the employee's work day, whether on duty or not and whether on NWAMHC business or property or not, shall be guilty of misconduct and is subject to discipline up to and including termination. An employee shall be determined to be under the influence of alcohol if the employee's normal faculties are impaired due to the consumption of alcohol, or if the employee has a blood alcohol level of .02 or higher.

11. SANCTIONS – The sanctions apply to employees who have satisfactorily completed the 6 month training period.

Failure to comply with this policy will result in sanctions up to and including termination.

Positive Test/Exceeding Alcohol Limits (random, post accident, reasonable suspicion, post rehab).

Employees testing positive or exceeding the alcohol limits will be suspended without pay for the next three scheduled work day/shifts.

They will be offered a Last Chance Opportunity Agreement which provides them with an opportunity to complete an initial free evaluation conducted by a NWAMHC Substance Abuse Professional for an appropriate referral for treatment. Refusal to participate in the Last Chance Agreement or failure to follow the referral recommendations, complete the treatment program and/or fail/refuse any substance abuse test may result in termination of employment.

Voluntarily Seeks Assistance (prior to testing)

Employees who seek assistance for substance abuse problems prior to being tested will be offered an evaluation and an appropriate referral for treatment.

Employees who fail to follow the referral recommendations, complete the treatment program and/or fail/refuse any substance abuse test will be offered a Last Chance Opportunity Agreement.

12. OPPORTUNITY TO CONTEST OR EXPLAIN TEST RESULTS

Employees and job applicants who have a positive confirmed test result may explain or contest the result to the Company within 72 hours after the MRO contacts the employee or job applicant and shows him/her the positive test result as it was received from the laboratory in writing. Any retesting will be at the employees' expense.

13. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

The Company offers resource information on various means of employee assistance programs in our community, including but not limited to drug and alcohol abuse

programs. Employees are encouraged to use this resource file which is available through Human Resources or your supervisor.

14. COSTS

There will be no charge for the initial evaluation conducted by Northwest. All other costs associated with the treatment program will be the responsibility of the employee.

The intent of this policy is to offer a helping hand to those who need it, while sending a clear message that the illegal use of drugs, and the abuse of alcohol are incompatible with employment at Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION (E-Mail, VOICE MAIL, INTERNET) – As required, NWAMHC provides computers, electronic (E-mail) and voice mail, and Internet access to its employees for use in conducting business only. Use of these systems for transmitting harassing, offensive, profane, vulgar, or offensive messages/information or solicitation may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

NWAMHC retains the right to access, review, and disclose the contents of its information systems, as it deems necessary.

Employees should not expect any information contained in or transmitted by NWAMHC's information systems to be private.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP) It is the policy of the Center to provide referral assistance to employees who are experiencing problems with mental illness, substance abuse, and personal situational difficulties.

In general the following guidelines apply to the EAP:

1. No direct outpatient services to employees of the Center should be provided by employees of the Center.

2. Northwest will act as a referral source by making appropriate referrals for services for employees.

a. An employee may verbally request assistance by contacting one of the following based on who they feel is the most comfortable for the employee:

- Immediate Supervisor
- HR Department

b. After verbally discussing the need for assistance, Human Resources will assist the employee with any program services that are recommended.

EMPLOYMENT AT WILL RELATIONSHIP – The Center is covered under the State of Alabama's Employment-at-Will Doctrine. Northwest recognizes that either party (the employee or Northwest) may end the employment relationship at anytime, with or without a reason.

No company documents or oral or written statements will be construed to create an expressed or implied employment contract, other than a written contract signed by The Executive Director.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY - Equal employment opportunities are provided to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or status as a Vietnam-era or special disabled veteran in accordance with applicable state/federal laws. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training.

HARASSMENT

1. With respect to Harassment in the workplace, this policy expressly prohibits any form of unlawful employee harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or status in any group protected by law. Improper interference with the ability of employees to perform their expected job duties will not be tolerated.
2. Each member of management is responsible for creating an atmosphere free of discrimination and harassment, sexual or otherwise. Further, employees are responsible for respecting the rights of their coworkers.
3. With respect to sexual harassment, the following is prohibited:
 - a) Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and all other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or otherwise offensive nature, especially where:
 - Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;
 - Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting an individual's employment; or
 - Such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
 - b) Behaviors that create a hostile or offensive work environment will not be tolerated. These behaviors may include but are not limited to creating an unacceptable working relationship with co-workers and supervisors, offensive comments, jokes, innuendoes, statements, printed material, material distributed through electronic media, or items posted on walls or bulletin boards.

4. Complaint Procedure:

If employees experience any job-related harassment or believe that they have been treated in a discriminatory manner, they should report the incident within 3 workdays to their supervisor, who will investigate the matter and take appropriate action, including reporting it to the Human Resources Department. If employees believe it would be inappropriate to discuss the matter with their supervisor, they may bypass their supervisor and report it directly to Human Resources, which will undertake a confidential investigation.

If it is determined that an employee has violated the harassment guidelines, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against the offending employee, up to and including termination of employment. Any form of retaliation against any employee for filing a bona fide complaint under this policy or for assisting in a complaint investigation is prohibited.

EXIT INTERVIEW – All employee's leaving employment are allowed the opportunity to complete an Exit Interview form provided by HR. Employees may request a face to face interview with their supervisor or Human Resources.

EXPRESSING MILK

A. Milk Expression Breaks

1. Breastfeeding employees are allowed reasonable break time(s), as frequently as needed by the nursing mother to express milk during work hours using their normal breaks and meal times.
2. An employee who uses break time to express milk will be compensated in the same way that other employees are compensated for break time.

For time that may be needed beyond the usual break times, employees may use personal leave or may make up the time as negotiated with their supervisors.

3. The time period allowed to express milk for the nursing child is up to 1 year after the child's birth.

B. A Place to Express Milk

1. A private room (not a toilet stall or restroom) that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from co-workers and the public shall be available for employees to express milk.
2. The room will be private and sanitary, located near a sink with running water for washing hands and rinsing out breast pump parts, and have an electrical outlet.
3. If employees prefer, they may also express milk in their own private offices, or in other comfortable locations agreed upon in consultation with the employee's supervisor.

C. Communicating the Process

1. Supervisors are responsible for:
 - Alerting pregnant and breastfeeding employees about the company's worksite lactation support program,
 - Negotiating policies and practices that will help facilitate each employee's infant feeding goals
2. It is expected that all employees will assist in providing a positive atmosphere of support for breastfeeding employees.

II. Employee Responsibilities

A. Communication with Supervisors

1. Employees who wish to express milk during the work period shall keep supervisors informed of their needs so that appropriate accommodations can be made to satisfy the needs of both the employee and the Center.

B. Maintenance of Milk Expression Areas

1. Breastfeeding employees are responsible for keeping milk expression areas clean and sanitary.
2. Employees are also responsible for keeping the general lactation room clean for the next user. This responsibility extends to both designated milk expression areas, as well as other areas where expressing milk will occur.

C. Milk Storage

1. Each employee is responsible for the proper storage of their milk using personal storage coolers.

D. Scheduling Lactation Room

1. When more than one breastfeeding employee needs to use the designated lactation room, employees can use the sign-in log provided in the room to negotiate milk expression times that are most convenient or best meet their needs.

FACILITY PROPERTY / USE OF EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES - All Facility property, including but not limited to lockers (whether secured by employees' locks or otherwise), desks, file cabinets and vehicles used by Facility employees, is subject to being searched and the contents held by Facility personnel at any time.

Facility vehicles shall be used for official business only and shall be operated within the limits of traffic law and safety regulations. The improper or unsafe use or operation of equipment or vehicles, traffic and parking violations may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

FUNERAL LEAVE – Full-time employees, regardless of length of service, will be granted, with their supervisor’s approval, up to forty (40) hours of time off to attend the funeral or cremation of a current family member. Additional vacation time beyond 40 hours may be requested. Non-paid time may also be requested. Time off should be taken within one week of the funeral or cremation.

A funeral is defined as an interment or cremation. The Center may request documentation of the funeral or cremation.

The total amount of funeral leave may not exceed 40 hours in a calendar year.

Relatives are defined as: spouse, son, daughter, mother, father, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandchild, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepchild, stepfather, stepmother, Grandparents of employee/spouse, or other relatives for whom the employee assumes financial responsibility.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE - Whenever a group of people are required to work together, problems and misunderstandings can occur. In order to aid in prompt and constructive problem solving, employees may utilize the grievance procedure:

The employee should discuss the problem with their immediate supervisor within 3 working days of the event.

STEP ONE - If resolution does not occur within a reasonable time (5 working days), the problem should be submitted in writing within 3 working days to their supervisor.

STEP TWO - If resolution does not occur within a reasonable time (5 working days), the problem should be submitted in writing within 3 working days to their next level of management. The employee should identify why they feel the action taken was inappropriate and what action should be taken. This step will apply to each level of management.

STEP THREE The employee may appeal the decision of the last level of management in step 2 to the Executive Director within 3 working days.

The Executive Director will review the issues and respond within 10 working days. This decision is final.

Time frames may be affected due to intercompany lines of communication and distribution of confidential correspondence.

Human Resources are not a step in the process, however, will provide assistance to all parties during this process.

HOLIDAYS - The Center recognizes the following holidays for Full-Time employees:

New Year's Eve	Labor Day
New Year's Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving (Day After)
Independence Day	Christmas Eve
Employee Birthday <i>(Effective 1/1/07)</i>	Christmas Day

****TWO Personal Holidays per Calendar Year** *(Effective January 2023)*

- *Use them at your discretion within the following guidelines:*
 - *One personal holiday must be used the first six months of the year/Second One must be used the second six months.*
 - *Personal Holidays will NOT rollover to the next year.*
 - *PRIOR 48-hour notice to Supervisor for Approval is required.*

Because many of our programs must remain open seven (7) days a week year around, employees may be required to work on these holidays.

Compensation

Full-time non-exempt employees who perform work on either the observed or actual holiday may elect one option (pending supervisor's approval):

- Receive up to eight hours of holiday pay in addition to their pay for working the holiday.
- OR**
- Arrange another day off with pay during the next 60 days.

The Center will comply with Wage/Hour Guidelines in computing overtime pay when overtime is earned during the week in which premium pay for a holiday is earned.

Holiday Hours- Hours worked between 12 AM and ending at 12 midnight on the days listed, not to exceed 8 hours.

Holiday pay for non-worked hours is paid up to the maximum of 8 hours and is not included in the computation of overtime.

Premium Pay –Non-exempt/hourly paid employees, full and part time, who work on Christmas Day will receive time and one half pay for hours worked.(May 1, 2015)

Extended Shifts- Full-time staff regularly scheduled for up to twelve hour shifts may elect to add up to four hours of vacation time when taking time off for a recognized holiday.

An employee who is absent from work on either the last scheduled day immediately before or the first scheduled day immediately after a holiday may forfeit holiday pay if their supervisor judges that the reason for the absence is insufficient.

A supervisor has the option to require a healthcare provider's excuse for staff that call in on a scheduled holiday or issue a written warning if an excuse is not provided.

Holidays Occurring During Vacation and Leave of Absence

- If an actual holiday or the day of observance occurs during an employee's approved paid vacation or paid sick leave, the vacation or sick accruals will not be reduced for the holiday.
- Employees on unpaid leaves of absence are not eligible to receive holiday pay.

HOURS OF WORK Each Supervisor has the responsibility to determine the work schedule for their programs. From time to time it may be necessary for the Center, department, or unit to change the starting and completion time of a work shift to accommodate the needs of the Center or its clients. Employees will be required to work the hours assigned.

- Employees will be required to work the hours assigned. Flexible schedules may be permitted with Division Directors' approval. (08/22)

Because the Center operates some programs on a seven-day/24 hour basis, employees must expect some weekend, evening, nights and holiday duty.

A supervisor has the option to issue a verbal warning for 3 call ins in one month. Call ins are not restricted to illness.

IMMIGRATION /E-VERIFY COMPLIANCE - The facility is committed to employing only United States citizens and aliens authorized to work in the United States and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship and national origin.

Each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility.

The E-Verify system will be utilized to confirm employment eligibility.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY GUIDELINES The Center will provide the necessary informational technology systems and equipment to allow the user to conduct Center business efficiently and maintain the confidentiality of its services.

A. Approval for Internet Access

1. Access to the Internet through the Center's network is a privilege and carries responsibilities reflecting appropriate and ethical use.
2. Use of the Internet through the Center's network constitutes the individual's acceptance of this policy.

B. Authentication Process and Confidentiality

1. The use and confidentiality of the username and password is the responsibility of the individual to whom it is assigned.
2. Usernames and passwords should not be used by any other individual(s) to gain access to the Center network and Internet.
4. The issue of a username and password does not insulate the user from employer review for business purposes. Users should not expect that transmissions made through the Center network are confidential.
5. E-mails and windows live messenger should never include a client's name unless it is encrypted with a password. Inter office emails may include a client's # and the first two letters of the client's last name.

C. Downloading / Installation of Programs and Software

1. The IT Department should be contacted prior to downloading or installing any program.
2. All programs presented to the IT Department for approval should be business related and from a trusted / secure website.
3. The following are examples of downloads or installations which are prohibited:
 - Screen Savers
 - Background Pictures
 - Games
 - Desktop Weather programs

- Online Streaming Radio Programs
- Performance enhancers from the internet

D. Computer Settings

1. Computer settings will be setup by the IT Department and should not be changed.
2. These settings are designed to comply with security guidelines, enhance the performance of each computer, and prolong the life of the hardware.

E. Ant- Virus/Anti-Malware Software

1. The Center will install appropriate Anti-Virus software/ applications to protect each computer.
2. Users are not authorized to load any other anti-virus or anti-malware programs.
3. Failure to detect viruses could result in corruption or damage to files and/or unauthorized entry into the Center's system.

F. Licensed, Copyrighted, and Trademarked Applications

1. Each computer will have an appropriate licensed version of Microsoft Office loaded by the IT Department.
2. It is mandatory that users comply with copyright and trademark laws when downloading material from the Internet.

G. Purchasing Computer Equipment

1. The IT (Zuriel) or the Business Office (Phillip Grace) should be consulted prior to purchasing any computer equipment (computers, printers, monitors, etc.).

H. Termination or Transfer of Employment

1. Employees who utilize the Center's network and either terminate employment or transfer to another internal position will coordinate their network information with their supervisor. Network information includes passwords, copying devices, and any other Center network information which would create a potential breach of confidentiality.
2. The supervisor should coordinate the termination or transfer information with the IT department.

I. Violations Violations of this or any other Center policy subjects the user to immediate revocation of system privileges and may result in further disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

INSERVICE EDUCATION - The Center is dedicated to improving service to clients and customers by developing better techniques and procedures for providing services.

An important element in maintaining this atmosphere of learning is inservice education/training, which is offered to employees. All employees will be given the opportunity to participate in job-related training programs. Employee attendance at some educational programs may be required. **Failure to complete required in-services may result in disciplinary action and removal from the schedule until completed.**

JOB POSTING – In most cases, open positions available within the organization will be filled by the promotion or transfer of current qualified employees whenever possible. The facility will inform you about the existence of such positions through job postings. However, the Facility reserves the right to determine which positions are posted.

JURY DUTY – Full-Time non-exempt employees will be paid their base hourly rates for taking time off from their schedule because of required jury duty. Exempt employees will receive their regular salaries during weeks in which they have required jury duty.

Employees will not receive compensation from Northwest for jury duty served during non-scheduled work hours.

A summons or subpoena must be presented to your supervisor prior to reporting for jury duty.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE -

A. Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

FMLA provides up to 12 work weeks of job-protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical reasons. Employees are eligible if they have worked for their employer for at least one year, and for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months. The FMLA permits employees to take leave on an intermittent basis or to work a reduced schedule under certain circumstances.

Reasons for Taking Leave:

Unpaid leave must be granted for *any* of the following reasons:

- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care.
- To care for the employee's spouse, dependent son or daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition.
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.
- Leave to care for a family member who incurred an injury in the line of duty.
- Leave for a qualifying exigency due to a family member's active military duty or call to duty.

Coordination with Vacation and Sick Leave

1. Employees taking medical leave for their own serious health condition or spouse, dependent or parent who have a serious health condition will be required to first use all accrued paid sick leave.

If sick leave is exhausted employees may access their vacation leave.

2. Employees taking family leave for the adoption or foster care of a child will be required to first use their accrued paid vacation days. Sick leave may not be used for this process.

If the adopted or foster child requires medical care, sick leave may be accessed.

Advance Notice and Medical Certification:

- The employee must provide 30 days advance notice when the leave is "foreseeable."
- Medical certification is required to support a request for leave because of a serious health condition and may require second or third opinions (at the employer's expense) and a fitness for duty report to return to work.

Taking of leave may be denied if notice requirements are not met.

The Center may designate any time missed as FMLA leave, provided FMLA criteria are met.

Working in an outside (non-center) position while on leave is not allowed.

Job Benefits and Job Protection:

- For the duration of FMLA leave, the employee's health coverage in effect under any "group health plan will be maintained
- When placed on unpaid leave status the employee will be responsible for paying their percentage of the premium.
- Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

Some exceptions may apply to reinstatement.

- The use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave. (Exceptions will be reviewed with the employee).

FMLA and Workers Compensation

Employees on leave due to occupational injuries or illnesses, and who are unable to work due to these serious health conditions, may be granted FMLA leave to coincide with the workers compensation absence. The injury/illness must meet the criteria of a Serious Health Condition as defined under the FMLA Act.

Fitness For Duty

A fitness for duty release to return to work will be required when medical leave has been taken. An employee will not be returned to work without the proper documentation from the health care provider. Failure to submit a fitness for duty certification may result in the denial of restoration to employment following the leave of absence.

Human Resources will provide information concerning FMLA requirements and eligibility status.

B. General Medical Leave (Non-FMLA)

1. A general medical leave of absence may be granted to an employee who does not meet the service requirements for FMLA. Job reinstatement does not apply.
2. A written request for this leave should be submitted by the employee to the supervisor on the appropriate Leave of Absence Request form. A physician's certification will be required.
3. Medical leaves, if granted, are granted for the duration of the period of illness/injury, not to exceed twelve (12) work weeks during a backward rolling calendar year. If family and medical leave and general medical leave are taken during the same 12-month period, the total combined leave time may not exceed twelve (12) work weeks. (See Family and Medical Leave guidelines).

Medical Verification -

The Company reserves the right at any time to require proof or medical verification of an employee's ability or inability to perform their job. Human Resources should be consulted regarding medical verifications.

C. Military Leave

Employees who must be absent for active or inactive military duty will be granted, upon request, a leave of absence without pay. An employee may use vacation time for military duty obligations.

- Request for military leave should be made sufficiently in advance of the projected beginning of the leave to enable the Center to adjust the work schedule accordingly.
- The employee should use the appropriate Leave of Absence Request form and include a copy of the orders.
- Leave will be granted for the period of the duty.

Employee Benefit Participation While On Leave

An employee on an approved leave of absence may continue group insurance coverage's during the leave. In order to ensure that benefits are continued through an unpaid Leave of Absence, the employee should contact Human Resources for benefit information.

LICENSURE AND REGISTRATION - All employees who perform work that requires licensure, registration or credentialing by the Facility or regulatory agency are held responsible for presenting those credentials during the pre-placement process and for maintaining those credentials after being hired. Failure to maintain credentials, falsification or misrepresentation of credentials may result in a change of position or termination. It is the responsibility of the employee to provide proof of licensure/registration to Human Resources when received.

Reimbursement for renewal of licensure, up to a cap, is available for eligible licensed clinical staff and designated transportation staff.

MOTOR VEHICLE RECORD (MVR) / DRIVING An MVR report will be required by the Center's insurance carrier to determine if those who drive on behalf of the Center (personal or Center vehicle) meet the carrier's insurability criteria.

After an offer of employment and when random drug screens are conducted, the MVR Authorization Form will be completed. A current driver's license will also be requested.

An offer of employment will be withdrawn if the applicant does not meet the insurability criteria.

The Center may request an MVR update at any time for any individual who drives on behalf of Center.

If a random MVR update indicates that a current employee, whose position may require driving on behalf of the Center, does not meet the insurability criteria, the employee will be restricted from driving immediately.

The Division Director will review the results of an uninsurable MVR report and evaluate the following employment status options:

- Continue in their current position restricted from all driving
- Transfer to another non driving position
- Termination of employment

All who drive on behalf of the Center are required to notify their supervisor if they are involved in an auto accident or receive a ticket for other than a parking violation.

If a driving safety concern arises based upon a report from another driver, a non-working related driving incident, or any other reason, the Center may take one of the following actions:

- Discipline the employee
- Discipline the employee and require that the employee take a NWAMHC approved driver's education course at the employee's expense.
- Terminate the employee

No Center employee should transport a client in motor vehicles other than those owned by the Center.

Texting, use of cell phones, or any other distraction is prohibited while driving on behalf of the Center.

ORIENTATION - All new employees, regardless of classification or position, are required to report to a program of general staff orientation.

Employees may begin their assignment prior to attending orientation provided they complete the new hire packet. Supervisor approval is required.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT - Employees may hold an outside job as long as the performance standards of the Northwest job are met. All employees will be held to the same performance standards and will be subject to facility scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work commitments.

If the facility concludes that outside work interferes with performance or the employee's ability to meet the requirements of the facility or may adversely affect the employer's image, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment.

Outside employment that constitutes a conflict of interest is strictly prohibited. An employee may not receive any income or material gain from individuals outside the facility for material produced or services rendered while performing their job in the facility.

Employees are not to accept any employment relationship with any organization that does business with the Center or is a competitor of the Center without Department Head and Executive Director approval in writing. A form should be submitted for consideration.

Any employee who holds a management position must disclose any other employment, including consulting arrangements and obtain prior approval from senior management.

Employees who have accepted outside employment are not eligible for paid sick or vacation leave when the absence is used to work on the outside job or is the result of an injury sustained on that job. Fraudulent use of sick or personal absences will be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination

OVERTIME - Because of the "round-the-clock" nature of Center work, it may be necessary for employees to work some hours in excess of their regular schedule. Non-exempt, hourly employees will be paid an overtime premium in accordance with applicable state or federal laws.

PAY DAY. Payday is scheduled the 15th and last day of each month. This may be adjusted if payday falls on weekends or holidays. Any paycheck questions should be first directed to your supervisor. Payroll will assist your supervisor in resolving questions.

PAY PERIODS There are 24 pay periods in a calendar year. For non exempt, hourly paid staff, the calculation of pay is based on hours submitted for the dates included for each pay period.

Exempt salaried staff will receive 1/24th of their annualized pay rate each semi-monthly pay period.

The pay period of the 1st of the month through the 15th is paid on the 15th of that same month. The second pay period of the month is from the 16th through the last day of the month and is paid through the last day of that same month.

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS – Only those deductions required by law (social security, withholding tax, etc.) plus employee authorized contributions will be deducted.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW - It is the policy of the Center to evaluate employee performance. The first such evaluation may occur during the first 6 months of employment with subsequent evaluations on an annual basis. The purpose of these evaluations is to allow supervisors and employees to communicate concerning the employee's performance and job related behaviors compared to behaviors that are desired and expected.

PERSONAL VISITORS/CHILDREN IN THE WORKPLACE- It is the responsibility of the Center's managers and supervisors to ensure that the work of the Center is accomplished in an environment in which employee health and safety concerns are respected and work related disruptions are minimized.

Personal Visitors

It is inappropriate, other than in a valid emergency, to have extended visits by friends, relatives, or individuals not having official business at any of our catchment locations. Visits distract employees and fellow workers from their work responsibilities.

Children

It is inappropriate, other than in a valid emergency, to bring a child to the workplace.

Each employee should be considerate of their co-workers and ensure proper childcare arrangements are made to include alternate arrangements in case the primary arrangements are cancelled at the last minute.

Responsibility for all aspects of the child's behavior and any damage caused by the child rests solely with the parent.

Client Areas

No visitors will be allowed in areas where clients are primarily served.

Safety and Confidentiality

The responsibility for the safety of children and other personal visitors and the confidentiality of the clients we serve lies with the Center.

Visitors and children exhibiting symptoms of potentially contagious illnesses should not be brought into the workplace.

Duration of Visits/Approval

In the event of a valid family emergency, visits of short duration (30 minutes) may be approved by the employee's supervisor.

PERSONNEL FILES - Personnel files are business records of the Facility and are the property of the Facility. The Human Resources Director, upon request from a current employee, may review

some of the contents of the employee's file with the employee. Photocopying of personnel documents is not permitted.

RE-EMPLOYMENT - All former employees may be considered for re-employment. Re-employment will be based on previous work performance, supervisory recommendations, subsequent work record and other job-related factors. When a former employee is re-hired within 30 days of the termination date, the employee will not experience a break in service. Breaks in service longer than 30 days will require a new application, background screening, and drug testing.

RELATIVES, HIRING OF - Employment of immediate family members with the facility are reviewed on a case by case basis. Immediate family is defined as spouse, parent, brother, sister, child, stepchild and in-laws (father, mother, sister, brother, daughter, son) and other members of the employee's household. Prior approval must be obtained from a Division / Clinical Director. Such employment will not create the appearance of a conflict of interest or have other adverse consequences to business operations.

Members of an immediate family shall not supervise one another directly. Members of an immediate family shall not supervise one another indirectly without prior written approval from a Division Director.

If marriage, promotion or other action creates this situation, one of the related employees must either resign or transfer in order to resolve the situation within one calendar month.

RETURN OF FACILITY PROPERTY - The employee is responsible for all facility property, keys, materials or written information issued to them or in their possession or control. Employees must return all facility property in satisfactory condition immediately upon request or upon voluntary or involuntary termination of employment. Where permitted by law, the facility may withhold from the current or final paycheck the cost of any items that are not returned when required. The facility may also take all action deemed appropriate to recover or protect its property.

SAFETY- It is the commitment of Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center to strive for the highest standards possible in regards to safety in our workplace. Safety does not occur by chance but is the product of a cooperative effort by both management and employees at all levels. It is also the result of communication of the safety rules and regulations set forth by the Center. Employees at all levels must work diligently to execute the company's policy of maintaining safety and occupational health.

The success of the program continues to rely on the assistance of our greatest asset--our employees. It is the obligation of all employees to be familiar with the safety rules and regulations of the Center and adhere to them all as a condition of their employment.

A disciplinary procedure exists at the Center in an effort to help enforce the Rules and Regulations that have been established. Violations of the safety rules are subject to disciplinary action up to possible termination of employment.

SAFETY RULES - In keeping with the Center's policy of providing a safe and healthful work environment, the following safety rules and procedures have been adopted.

1. Whenever you are involved in an accident that results in personal injury or damage to property, no matter how small, report the incident to your supervisor immediately. Get first aid promptly.
2. Report immediately any equipment, condition or practice you think may cause personal injury or damage to equipment.
3. Do not operate any equipment unless authorized, and which in your opinion, is not in a safe condition.
4. Obey all company rules, governmental regulations, signs, markings, and instructions. Be particularly familiar with those that apply directly to you. If you don't know- ask. Keep alert.
5. If your job, or the work you are temporarily performing, requires that you wear safety equipment, such as a seatbelt in a vehicle, be sure that you have the proper safety equipment operational before performing a specific job function.
6. When lifting, use approved lifting technique, i.e., bend your knees, grasp the load firmly, and then raise the load keeping your back as straight as possible. Get help for heavy loads.
7. Don't horseplay; avoid distracting others; be courteous.
8. You must observe "NO SMOKING" rules in designated areas.
9. Be certain that material is stacked safely.
10. Good housekeeping should always be practiced. Return all tools, equipment, and materials to their proper place. Disorder wastes time, energy, and material, and will often result in injury.
11. The use of non-prescribed drugs or intoxicating beverages is prohibited.
12. Observe all parking, traffic flow and speed regulations when entering or leaving company property.
13. Open flames are prohibited.
14. All sharps should be disposed of in appropriate containers.
15. Personal clothing must be appropriate for the work assigned.
16. Do not operate any equipment or vehicle until you have been properly trained.
17. Infractions of safety rules will be considered the same as the infraction of any other Center policy.

SICK LEAVE - Regular full-time employees will begin accumulating sick leave upon employment. Sick leave hours may be accessed after completing 6 months of employment.

Sick leave accumulates at the rate of eight (8) hours per month up to a maximum accumulation of 1040 hours.

Sick leave is available only for absences occasioned by the eligible employee's illnesses or injuries, or for dependants. Dependants are defined as spouse, child, or legal dependants living in household.

A. Compensation

- Sick leave pay will consist of the employee's regular rate of pay for the leave period.

- Sick leave hours will be exhausted prior to utilizing vacation leave hours.
- Employees may elect to take sick leave without pay, except for FMLA. (Family Medical Leave)

B. Scheduling Sick Leave

- The employee will be responsible for notifying their Supervisor of any illness or disability
- The employee will be responsible for notifying their supervisor of any illness or disability as far in advance as possible, but no later than two (2) hours (10/1/14) prior to the start of the employee's designated shift for each absence.
- The supervisor is not required to authorize sick pay if the employee fails to meet the time frame for calling in.
- Any sick leave in excess of 3 consecutive scheduled days may require a doctor's certification. HR should be notified.

The employee's supervisor may, at the supervisor's discretion, request a doctor's statement indicating the employee's fitness for duty at any time during a period a leave.

Reinstatement following a period of illness will be based upon a healthcare provider's release.

C. Change of Status

1. Staff who change from part-time to full-time and have at least 6 months of service may access their accruals following the change of status.
2. Staff rehired within 30 days of termination, to a classification eligible for sick leave, will have their sick balance restored.

SICK LEAVE RETIREMENT CREDIT Unused sick leave of up to 1040 hours may be converted to service credit upon retirement.

The amount of available unused sick leave which may be converted and the service credit is indicated by the following chart:

Hours	Months of Credited Service
0-80	0
81-240	1
241-400	2
401-560	3
561-720	4
721-880	5
881-1040	6

Unused sick leave cannot be converted to retirement credit in order to meet the vesting requirement. Unused sick leave cannot be converted to a cash equivalent.

SMOKING - Smoking on the Center's premises is only permitted in areas designated by the Center. All employees, both smoking and non-smoking are expected to exercise good judgment and common courtesy in respecting the needs and rights of others.

The Center is classified as a public facility. Public facilities are required to follow the guidelines regarding smoking within designated distances from entrances and exits.

Some of our locations serve children and adolescents. These locations may require more restrictive guidelines regarding smoking and tobacco products.

SOCIAL NETWORKING - Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center (Center) has a responsibility to protect itself and its clients from unauthorized disclosure of information. Our social networking policy includes rules and guidelines for Center authorized social networking and personal social networking.

Employees may not publicly discuss clients, services, employees or any work-related matters, whether confidential or not, outside company-authorized lines of communications.

Employees are expected to protect the privacy of the Center and its employees and clients and are prohibited from disclosing personal employee and nonemployee information and any other proprietary and nonpublic information to which employees have access.

Such information includes but is not limited to client and employee information, financial information and strategic business plans.

The Center takes no position on an employee's decision to start or maintain a personal blog or participate in other social networking activities.

Employees are not authorized and are therefore prohibited from speaking on behalf of the Center.

SOLICITATION/DISTRIBUTION - To avoid disruption of services and client care, the following rules apply to solicitation and distribution of literature on Center property:

- Non-Employees or Employees of the Center may not solicit or distribute non-Center related literature on Center's property at any time, for any purpose.
- Non-employees or Employees of the Center should obtain approval prior to engaging in the sale of items for personal gain.
- The Center recognizes the need to participate in fund raising events. Approval should be obtained through their Director prior to engaging in these activities.

STAFF INCIDENT REPORTS- From time to time events may involve staff which is out of the ordinary and which should be reported to management, or recorded for future evaluation. Such incidents might involve personal injury or unusual occurrence involving staff. These instances must be reported on our standard Incident Report Form and forwarded to the appropriate supervisor for follow-up.

SUGGESTIONS - All employees are encouraged to submit beneficial suggestions as needs arise or ideas occur to their supervisor, any member of management or Human Resources.

TELEPHONE CALLS and CELL PHONES

A. Company Owned and Supplied Devices

1. A Center supplied communication device is to be primarily used for Center business purposes. While some minimal personal use is inevitable, a Center provided device is intended for business calls only.
2. An employee issued a Center phone is prohibited from advertising or using the Center issued cell number for their personal business or any personal activity.
3. The Center reserves the right to review the billing statements and call summary reports of Center issued cell phones. **Employees will be required to reimburse the Center for any overage charges related to personal calls.**
4. Any misuse of Center issued equipment will be grounds for disciplinary action.

B. Cell Phones or Similar Devices in the Workplace

Cell phones are a distraction in the workplace. To ensure efficiency in the workplace, the following guidelines will apply:

1. Supervisor Discretion

- Supervisors have the option to restrict staff from bringing cell phones into their work locations.
- If allowed in the work location, phones should be placed in the silent/vibrate mode.
- Supervisors have the option to determine the guidelines to allow staff to access their cell phones during the work schedule.
- Supervisors can designate a location to store cell phones on the unit.
- As with any other personal item brought into the workplace, the Center is not responsible for loss or damage to the personal property.

2. Non Paid Breaks and Emergency Use

- Employees may access their cell phones during non-paid breaks
- Employees may access their cell phones in the event they need to make an emergency call.
- In the event of a situation or anticipated emergency that may require regular contact or immediate attention, the employee should discuss this with their supervisor who may authorize the employee to maintain their cell phone on their person in the silent/vibrate mode.

C. Personal Cell Phone or Similar Device While Driving

1. The following guidelines will apply to employees who drive on behalf of the Center, either in a Center supplied vehicle or their personal vehicle:

a. The Center prohibits employee use of Center issued or personal cellular phones, either hands on or hands free, or similar devices while driving.

b. This prohibition of cell phone or similar device use while driving includes:

- Receiving or placing calls
- Text messaging
- Surfing the Internet
- Receiving or responding to email
- Checking for phone messages
- Any other purpose related to your employment

c. The cellular phone voicemail feature should be on to store incoming calls while driving and all message retrievals and calls should be made after the vehicle is safely parked.

d. Employees are required to stop the vehicle in a safe location to safely use a cell phone or similar device.

e. Under no circumstances are employees required to place themselves at risk to fulfill business needs.

D. Disciplinary Action

1. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment.

2. Employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of their phone while driving will be responsible for all financial liabilities that result from such actions.

TELEPHONE COURTESY - Employee courtesy in using the telephone is of great importance, and projects a favorable image for both the facility and the employee. In using the telephone, please keep in mind the following:

1. Answer properly and promptly.
2. Identify yourself by name and department.
3. Give accurate and careful answers.
4. Take messages carefully.
5. Transfer calls tactfully.
6. Always say "please" and "thank you".
7. Speak clearly and use a helpful and pleasant tone of voice at all times.
8. If information requested is not available, offer to return the call rather than to keep the caller waiting.

TERMINATION - Since employment at the facility is based upon continuing mutual consent, either the employee or the employer may terminate employment at any time with or without a reason or notice. It is important for the employee's record that termination is brought about properly. There are three types of termination procedures.

A. Voluntary Resignation - An employee who voluntarily terminates service with the Center is requested to provide a written notice to the immediate supervisor.

1. Employees who are exempt salaried or non-exempt but function in a supervisory or professional position are expected to provide and work a four week notice.
2. Non exempt non professional employees are expected to provide and work their regular schedule over a two week notice period.
3. Employees who fail to give adequate notice of resignation may be ineligible for re-hire.

Note: Professional employees are defined as having an educational level which includes a bachelors degree or above or professional license or function as a supervisor.

Employees should clarify this notice requirement with their supervisor upon submitting their resignation.

4. Supervisor's Option Regarding Notice

1. Supervisors have the option to waive the minimum notice requirement and terminate employment upon receipt of the verbal or written notice of resignation.
2. The Center has no obligation to compensate the employee beyond the last day worked. The employee will be eligible for a vacation payout if the notice is waived.

B. Resignation without Notice – This is the term applied when an employee voluntarily leaves without notice, with less than the requested notice, or fails to complete the requested notice.

Employees who fail to give adequate notice of resignation may be ineligible for re-hire and will not be paid accrued vacation.

C. Discharge - An involuntary termination initiated by the facility. Discharged employees are generally not considered for re-employment.

When employment is involuntarily terminated the employee will not be paid for all earned and unused vacation. The employee will be paid for any holidays, which occurred in the last sixty (60) days prior to termination and remain untaken.

Under no circumstances will any employee be paid for unused sick leave upon termination.

THEFT - Employees are urged to be alert to the entry of unauthorized persons in any area. Inquiries should be made of anyone who does not appear to be an employee or even an employee who might be outside his/her regular working area.

The cooperation of all employees is essential if the problem of theft is to be minimized. Be sure supplies and equipment are stored in approved areas and that maximum-security measures are observed. Employees should not bring excessive amounts of money or valuables with them to the Facility. The facility cannot be responsible for loss or theft of personal items.

Facility property may not be removed from the premises except by written authorization in advance from the office of the Facility Executive Director or his/her designee.

TIME RECORDS - The following guidelines are not to be considered all-inclusive:

1. Each employee is responsible for recording their worked time. They may never enter information on another employee's timesheet or allow another employee to enter his/her timesheet. This also applies to those locations utilizing electronic timekeeping.
2. Each employee is expected to follow their work schedule. Employees should not report to work earlier than is normally needed to reach their workstations in a timely manner. At the conclusion of the work shift, employees must leave work and record their time out in the same reasonable time frame. The department head or supervisor should specifically approve any deviation.
3. An employee should not leave the general work area except for meal periods and rest breaks, which may be taken if workload permits.
4. It is expected that an adequate number of employees are available to do the work of the Facility without regularly scheduled overtime. However, each employee will be expected to work such overtime as assigned. When overtime becomes necessary, the supervisor or department head must specifically approve it and be responsible for it. The Executive Director must specifically approve regularly scheduled overtime.
5. Each employee is responsible for entering their worked time, either by timesheet or electronically.
6. Delays in completing this process may result in processing the work time on the next payday.

TRAINING / INTRODUCTORY PERIOD All new employees and all present employees transferred or promoted to a new job are to be carefully monitored and evaluated for an initial training period.

1. The initial training period is six months
2. Supervisors are to observe carefully the performance of each employee in a new job position. Appropriate weaknesses in performance, conduct, or behavior are to be brought to the employee's attention for correction.
3. Supervisors are to complete an evaluation of the employee's job performance by the end of the first six months.
4. Employees will be allowed to continue in their new positions if they are given a satisfactory evaluation by the end of their six-month employment period and receive their supervisor's endorsement to continue in the job.
5. Employees not receiving a satisfactory evaluation and endorsement may be given additional time as warranted in order to achieve acceptable job performance.

TRANSFERS - The Center supports transferring and promoting qualified employees to positions of increased responsibility whenever that action is most appropriate. Transfer and promotion decisions are based on long-term business goals, employee performance, and the employee's potential for success in the new position.

To be eligible, employees must have been in their present position for a minimum of six months and are not currently engaged in a performance improvement plan or under disciplinary action which occurred within the previous 12 months.

If interested in transferring to another position, employees should complete a Transfer Request Form and forward to the Human Resources Department. Human Resources will determine eligibility and forward to the Director who has an opening.

Transferred Employees will be placed in a training status and evaluated during their first six months in the new position.

VACATION- The Center provides a program to allow full-time employees to accrue vacation leave time and to receive compensation when taking approved time off.

A. Accruals

1. Vacation leave accrual begins with the first pay period of regular full-time employment and may be used at anytime following 6 months of employment.
2. Vacation leave hours are accrued, per pay period, or earned based on the employee's length of service according to the following schedule:

Note: See Section F for employees hired on or after October 1, 2014

Service Period	Prior to Jan 2004	After Jan 2004
Up through 5 years	6.00 hours	3.33 hours
6 through 10 years	7.00 hours	5.00 hours
11 years and beyond	8.00 hours	6.66 hours

3. Vacation leave hours will not accrue beyond 240 hours.

4. Vacation leave hours will not accrue while on unpaid leave of absence.

B. Compensation

1. Vacation leave pay for full-time employees will consist of the employee's regular rate of pay for the vacation period.
2. Holidays that occur during the paid vacation leave period will not be deducted from accrued vacation leave hours.
3. Employees may elect to take time off with or without pay. (Except FMLA Leave)
4. Vacation leave hours are not included in the computation of overtime.

C. Scheduling Vacation Leave

1. Employees must submit vacation leave requests to their supervisor as early as practical.
2. Supervisors may require a postponement of approved vacation leave and may require staff to return prior to the completion of their vacation leave to ensure adequate staffing levels.

D. Termination

1. Upon termination, employees shall receive compensation for unused vacation leave hours up to the maximum of 240 hours as provided below.
2. To be eligible for a vacation payout, an employee must satisfy all of the following:
 - complete 1 year of service
 - termination is voluntary
 - the minimum termination notice is given and completed
3. Employees who are involuntarily terminated / discharged will forfeit accrued vacation. This applies to employees who are offered the option to resign in lieu of involuntary termination.

E. Leave of Absence- Employees who exhaust their sick leave accruals may elect to access their accrued vacation hours while on approved leave.

F. Employees Hired on or after October 1, 2014

1. Vacation leave accrual begins the first pay period following completion of six (6) months of employment. A combination of full and part time service will apply.
2. Vacation accruals may be accessed after completing 1 year of service. A combination of full and part time service will apply.

Example: 4 months Part Time + 2 months Full Time = Eligibility to begin accruing.
4 months Part Time + 8 months Full Time = Eligibility to access

VACATION DONATION- The Center recognizes that employees may have an illness, family emergency or a personal crisis resulting in a need for additional time off in excess of their available accrued time. To address this need, all full time employees who have completed 6 months of employment, will be allowed to voluntarily donate accrued time to their co-workers.

To receive donated time an employee's situation should meet one of the following criteria:

1. Family or Health Related Emergency-

- A critical or catastrophic illness or injury of the employee or an immediate family member that poses a threat to life requires inpatient and / or long term care, or hospice health care.
- Immediate family member is defined as spouse, child, parent or other relationship in which the employee is the legal guardian or sole caretaker.

2. Personal Crisis-

- A personal crisis of a severe nature that directly impacts the employee.
- This may include a natural disaster impacting the employee's primary residence such as a fire or severe storm.

Donor Guidelines

1. Employees may donate a minimum of 4 hours vacation.
2. The maximum donation is unlimited provided the donor's remaining balance is at least 80 hours after the donation is deducted.
3. Employees currently on an approved leave of absence are restricted from donating.

Recipient Guidelines

1. Eligible employees may receive up to 120 donated hours in a calendar year.
2. To receive donated hours, the recipient must have exhausted both sick and vacation accruals.
3. The recipient may be required to submit documentation to support the need for additional leave hours.
4. The lifetime limit a recipient may receive is 240 hours including all periods of employment and re-employment.

VACATION SELL BACK- All full time staff may elect the option to sell back accrued vacation hours. The option to sell back will be evaluated on an annual basis.

To be eligible, your vacation accruals should reflect a minimum vacation balance of 120 hours. Employees may elect to sell back up to 40 hours of vacation and must maintain a minimum of 80 hours of vacation after sell back.

Vacation will be paid at the employee's current rate of pay when form is processed.

The sell back option is evaluated annually and will be announced upon approval.

VIDEO/AUDIO SURVEILLANCE- Video/audio surveillance may be used in order to monitor the safety and well-being of individuals served, to improve the services and support provided by NWAMHC, and in conjunction with other information gathered during an investigation.

A. Access to Viewing

Access to viewing of live video/audio and/or of video/audio recordings is determined by the Division Director of ID Services, the Clinical Director, or the Executive Director.

B. Reporting and Storing Surveillance information

1. If, during viewing of live surveillance, any significant incident is observed, the observer will follow appropriate reporting policies.
2. All content of any observations will remain confidential.
3. All Center staff is strictly prohibited from tampering with surveillance equipment.

C. Notification of the Presence of Surveillance Equipment

1. All affected staff will sign a form acknowledging the presence of surveillance equipment including the policy, purpose and location.

2. Video/audio cameras will not replace live, on-site monitoring, nor will they be used in private areas such as bedrooms and bathrooms.

D. Disciplinary Action

1. Persons under investigation will be provided an opportunity to view any surveillance recordings relevant to the investigation.
2. Information obtained through the use of video/audio surveillance may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

VOTING TIME – Adequate non-paid time will be granted for voting during public elections at the discretion of the supervisor.

The employee should schedule this time off with his department head or supervisor, realizing that in all circumstances the needs of the clients come first during working hours.

WEATHER – In order to ensure the safety of staff and clients due to the loss of power or dangerous inclement weather, it may become necessary to temporarily close or suspend facility operations.

- In some extreme situations, on coming staff may not be able to reach their work locations due to weather and/or travel conditions. The staff on duty may be required to remain beyond their work shift to assist clients.
- Full-time non-exempt staff may substitute vacation hours only for scheduled hours missed due to facility closing.
- Both non-exempt and exempt staff may be temporarily re-assigned to another work location due to their facility closing or during suspended operations.

WILLFUL ABANDONMENT- Northwest Alabama Mental Health will comply with all rules/regulations found in the Alabama Board of Nursing (ABN) Alabama Administrative Code Nurse Practice Act related to Willful Abandonment of patients by nurses.

Registered Nurses (RN) who have chosen to leave Northwest Alabama Mental Health employment shall be required to work out a 30 day notice of exit. The only exception is by authorization by the Director to accept early resignation.

Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN) who have chosen to leave Northwest Alabama Mental Health employment shall be required to work out a 14 day notice of exit. The only exception is by authorization by the Director to accept early resignation.

Failure to work out an acceptable notice will result in Reporting of the nurse's actions to the Alabama Board of Nursing (ABN).

WORKER'S COMPENSATION - Employees are covered against partial loss of earnings due to injuries on the job by a Worker's Compensation insurance policy furnished by the Facility. In all instances, the employees must report any injury, no matter how slight, that occurs while on the job to the immediate supervisor. Failure to do so may jeopardize eligibility for Worker's Compensation at a later date. (See also FMLA)

There is no compensation for the first 3 days of absences following a job related injury or illness. Full time staff may access sick leave hours for the first three days.

Our Transitional Duty Program provides a means to return an injured worker in a position based on the healthcare provider's recommendation. The employee in most cases does not experience a reduction in earnings.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE –Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center expressly prohibits any acts or threats of violence by any employee or business associate against any other employee or business associate in or about NWAMHC's facilities or elsewhere at any time.

It includes, but is not limited to, verbal threats, physical intimidation or actual harm, obscene or threatening telephone calls, stalking, or harassment. NWAMHC's will not condone any acts or threats of violence against its employees or business associates on NWAMHC's premises at any time or while they are engaged in business with, or on behalf of NWAMHC, on or off NWAMHC's premises.

Employees who display a tendency to engage in violent, abusive, or threatening behavior, or who otherwise engage in behavior that is deemed offensive or inappropriate will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Employees who observe or are aware of any suspicious workplace activity should report the incidents to their supervisors immediately.

In compliance with the Alabama Act SB 286, the Center prohibits the possession or use of weapons on Center property.

A. Weapons and Firearms

1. Weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, explosives, knives and other weapons that might be considered dangerous or that could cause harm.

2. Employees are responsible for understanding and complying with all federal and state statutes regarding weapons and firearms in the workplace.

B. Center Property

1. Center property is defined as all Center owned or leased buildings, Center owned or leased vehicles and surrounding areas under the company's ownership or control.
2. Possession of firearms in personal vehicles in Center designated parking areas will comply with Alabama Act SB 286.
3. The Center reserves the right at any time and at its discretion to determine the need to search all company-owned or leased vehicles, packages, containers, briefcases, purses, lockers, desks, enclosures and persons entering its property, for the purpose of determining whether any weapon has been brought onto its property or premises in violation of this policy.