



Portland VA  
Research Foundation

Employee Handbook



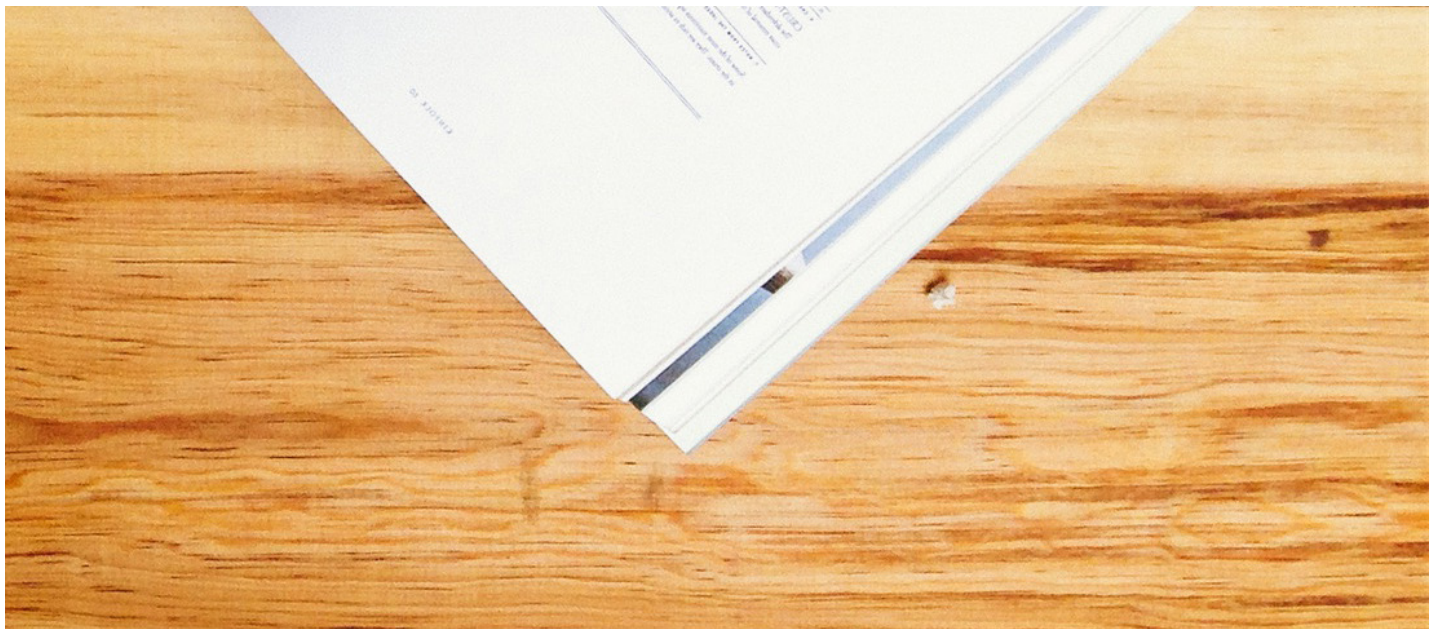
“We are what we  
repeatedly do.

Excellence then,  
is not an act,  
but a habit.”

– ARISTOTLE


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# Let's Get Started





## Let's Get Started

Welcome to the Portland VA Research Foundation. Whether you have joined us for a part-time job or a career, we want your experience at the Foundation to be a rewarding one. The Portland VA Research Foundation (PVARF) prides itself on its reputation as both a research and an employee-oriented organization.

As a Portland VA Research Foundation employee, you may be eligible to participate in several benefit options offered by the Foundation. This handbook is designed to be a resource for answering questions relating to employment at PVARF. For any issues not addressed in this handbook, please feel free to contact the HR office.

We are sure you will find our organization to be an open, supportive place to work with a challenging environment that provides opportunities for personal and professional growth. This handbook supersedes all previous statements, memos, policies and practices that are in conflict with its provisions.

We are glad to have you on the team!

### Mission

The Portland VA Research Foundation's mission is to facilitate and enhance the research and education programs conducted at the VA Portland Health Care System

PVARF strives to provide outstanding support to scientists and staff in their research, education and training endeavors fostering progress in biomedical, clinical, rehabilitative and health care services programs that benefit our nation's veterans.

### About This Handbook

This Handbook is designed to provide you with general information about working for PVARF... and to do so in a way that won't make you wish you were sitting on a plane stuck on the runway or listening to tech support elevator music. You should keep this handbook handy as an ongoing reference.

If you need to know something that isn't covered here, or if you have questions about anything you are about to read, just ask. Reach out to your supervisor or to Human Resources.

Ready? Let's get started.

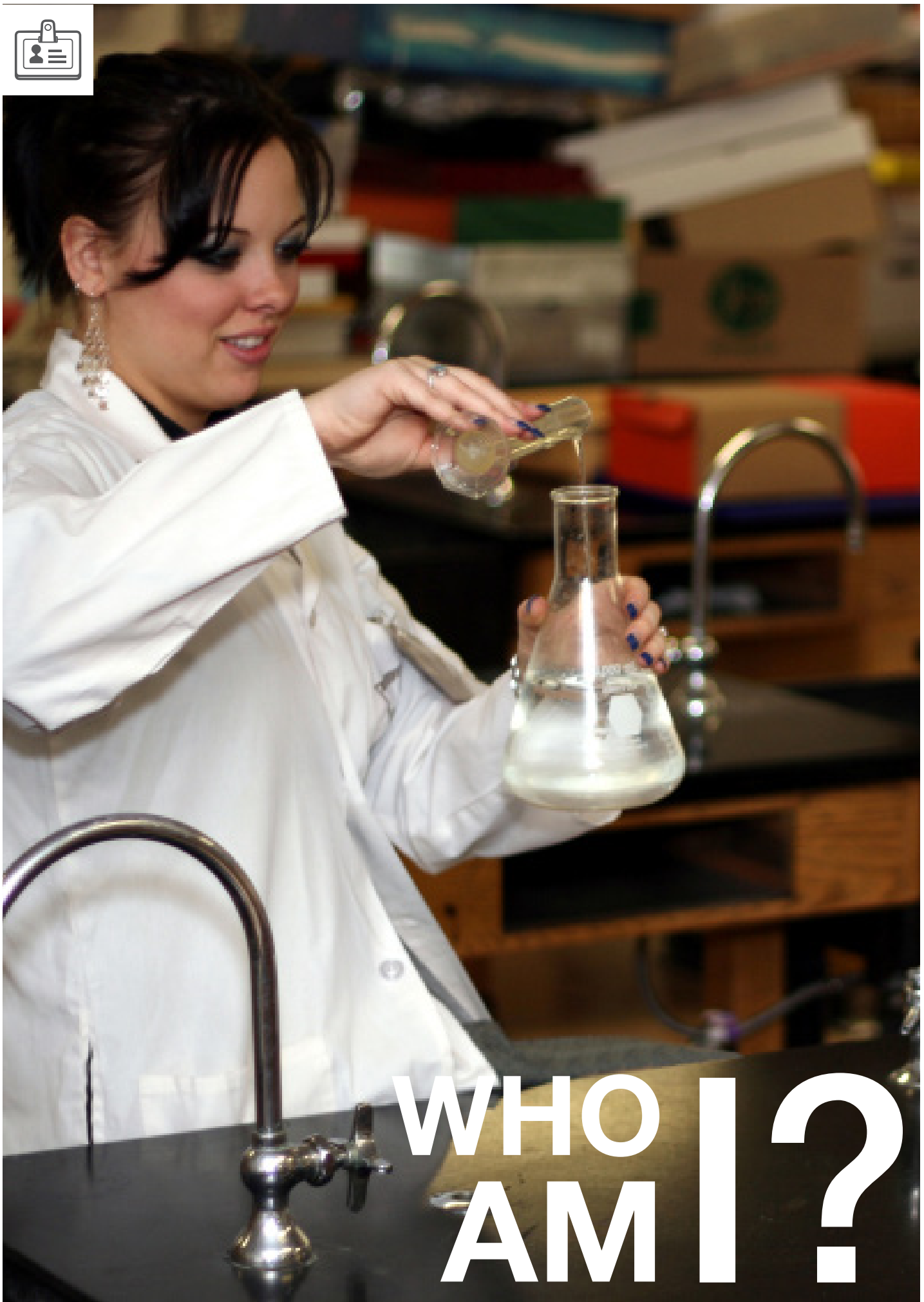
*PVARF*

A close-up photograph of a person wearing blue nitrile gloves using a pipette to transfer a small amount of yellow liquid into a multi-well plate. In the background, there is a rack of test tubes containing liquids of various colors (blue, pink, yellow) and a blurred laboratory setting. The overall lighting is bright and clinical.

**SETTLING IN**







WHO  
AM I?



## Who Am I?

### Employment Basics

The mission of the VA Portland Health Care System is to provide health care services to veterans, conduct research that enhances the quality of patient care, and offer education to health care providers. The medical center's Research and Development (R&D) Service consists of over 100 investigators who have active research projects in the areas of biomedical research, health services research, rehabilitation research, and other clinical areas.

The Portland VA Research Foundation, Inc. (PVARF) is a non-profit corporation formed to work in conjunction with R&D Service to support the activities of research and education. Foundations, private citizens, private industry, and other non-profit organizations contribute funds to support various research and education initiatives. The R&D Committee must review and approve all research conducted at the VA Portland Health Care System. Prior to administration of funds by the PVARF the project must have R&D committee approval.

As a member of our research community, you will need some basic information to feel comfortable and confident about your employment in the PVARF. This handbook describes the medical center's organization, including the various areas of research, and how the PVARF staff can assist you with problems, information, and/or suggestions. This is a reference handbook that you should keep at work. It covers work safety, injury reporting, time and attendance, and benefits. The handbook also briefly describes the grant submission process, funding sources, and your salary source. You will receive separate documents describing your position and expected performance from your supervisor.

PVARF employees are not state or federal employees, but they often work side by side with employees of the VA Portland Health Care System and Oregon Health & Science University. Work policies of these employers differ slightly from the PVARF. If questions arise in the course of your employment because of differences in treatment of employees, please refer these questions to the human resources department of your designated employer.

Most PVARF employees work on the premises of the VA Portland Health Care System, but the work site for some employees may be on the campus of the Oregon Health & Science University or in other locations. This

information is not all-inclusive; you will receive additional training throughout your employment at PVARF. Your supervisor will provide training on the various procedures and safety issues that are specific to your assigned research project. The administrative staff of R&D Service also schedules various mandatory training seminars throughout the year.

### VA Without Compensation Appointment (WOC)

Because PVARF employees work in a federal facility they must secure a VA Without Compensation (WOC) appointment. The WOC appointment will be facilitated by the Principal Investigator, and processed through the R&D office.

The VA considers WOC's to be federal employees for most purposes except pay and benefits. A WOC appointment allows PVARF employees to have access to VAPORHCS facilities. Since PVARF employees work in a VA facility, employees receive the same mandatory yearly training required of VA employees. PVARF employees must complete all required training as a condition of their continued WOC appointment at the VAPORHCS

VA employees who work for PVARF during their non-VA duty hours must also have a WOC appointment. Such work must be different from the VA employee's official VA duties.

### Employment Classifications

Each employee is designated as either NONEXEMPT (typically hourly) or EXEMPT (typically salaried) according to federal and state wage and hour laws. NONEXEMPT employees are entitled to overtime pay under the specific provisions of federal and state laws. EXEMPT employees are excluded from specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws. An employee's EXEMPT or NONEXEMPT classification may be changed only upon written notification by PVARF Management.

In addition to the above categories, each employee will belong to one other employment category:

REGULAR FULL-TIME employees are those who are not in a temporary or introductory status and who are regularly scheduled to work PVARF's full-time schedule of 30-40 hours per week. Generally, they are eligible for PVARF's benefit package, subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefit program.



REGULAR PART-TIME employees are those who are not assigned to a seasonal or intermittent status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than 30 hours per week. While they do receive all legally mandated benefits (such as workers' compensation insurance, Oregon Sick Leave and Social Security), they are eligible for some of PVARF's other benefit programs:

INTERMITTENT employees do not work a set number of hours each week but will work as needed and are not eligible to participate in most of PVARF's benefit programs with the exception of Oregon Sick Leave.

SEASONAL employees are those who are hired as interim replacements, to temporarily supplement the work force or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Employment assignments in this category are of a limited duration not to exceed 90 days. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status. Seasonal employees retain that status until notified of a change. While seasonal employees receive all legally mandated benefits (such as workers' compensation insurance, Oregon Sick Leave and Social Security), they are ineligible for all of PVARF's other benefit programs with the exception of 401(K) benefits.

## Introductory Period

The introductory period for all employees is 90 days of actual work within a 12 month period. During the introductory period, you will have an opportunity to evaluate whether the work for which you were hired, the people with whom you work, and the general atmosphere and conditions at Portland VA research foundation meets your expectations. At the same time, we will evaluate your performance. The attitude and aptitude you show in your work habits during the introductory period, including your attendance, punctuality, ability to learn, and ability to get along with people, will be primary factors used in determining whether you will be retained beyond the introductory period.

Portland VA research foundation has no obligation to retain you as an employee for the entire introductory period if, in our determination, your performance or other business considerations warrant termination of your employment. The organization also reserves the right to extend an employee's introductory period by giving written notice of the intent to do so. Although successful completion of the introductory period may result in

eligibility for benefits as outlined in this Handbook, it is not intended to provide you with any guarantee of continued employment.

## New Employee Orientation

As a new employee of PVARF, you will receive general information by reviewing this handbook. An appointment will be scheduled for you within the first three days of work to meet with PVARF Human Resources. At this time you will be given an overview of benefits available and review PVARF policies and procedures. Your supervisor, the Principal Investigator, will work with you and the VA's Research and Development department to obtain your VAPORHCS WOC appointment, for your appointment at the PVARF, which may include a background check, physical and several training requirements.

Your PI is responsible for covering the following items that are pertinent to your employment at PVARF:

- Lab clothing: Lab coats, lab shoes, aprons, masks, glasses or goggles, and respirators.
- Laboratory sanitation: Overall neatness, regular trash, red bag wastes, separation of glass, and sharps disposal.
- Regulatory organizations.
- Location of safety, chemical hygiene, emergency preparedness, infection control manuals and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).
- Lifting, handling of dangerous materials and disposal through the drain or special methods, and bottle protection and labeling.
- Safety in the proper use of hoods, and other laboratory equipment.
- Safety in chemical or acid disposal and storage.
- Chemical labeling, liquid transfer, and gas tank safety.
- Accidents: How to report medical emergencies through the use of employee health, emergency room, and first aid.
- Use of safety equipment such as showers, eye washes, and spill stations.



- How to complete an accident report and who needs to process it.
- Fire safety: Location of alarms, extinguishers, exits, fire bell codes, and fire drills.
- Security of doors to the laboratory through the key system, security of the laboratory areas through proxy card readers, and how to report a problem.

## Personnel Files

Your contributions and records are captured within your personnel file. This file includes such information as your job application, resume, records of training, documentation of performance appraisals, salary increases and other employment records.

Personnel files are the property of PVARF. Only supervisors and management personnel of PVARF who have a legitimate reason to review information in a file are allowed to do so.

With reasonable advance notice, you may review your own personnel files in PVARF's offices and in the presence of an individual appointed by PVARF to maintain the files.

## Reference Checks

All inquiries pertinent to verification of your employment should be referred to Human Resources. This will help expedite the verification more effectively and efficiently.

## Personnel Data Changes

Please promptly notify PVARF of any changes in personnel data. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, marital status, number and names of dependents and individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency, should be accurate and current at all times.

## Performance Evaluation

As you know, performance management is an ongoing process and supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis.

### What You are Encouraged to Do at Any Time:

- Inquire about your performance. Ask questions. Raise concerns.
- Accept additional responsibilities and show initiative

- Ask for assistance in setting goals
- Learn about additional training opportunities that might be available
- Let your manager know if something isn't working from your perspective.

## Resignation/Termination

Resignation is a voluntary act initiated by you to terminate employment. We hate to lose you but if you really must go, we ask that you notify your supervisor immediately with at least two weeks written notice. Leaving a job on great terms can open doors for you in the future and build profitable relationships.

Your supervisor will notify the PVARF Human Resources office and let them know what your last day of employment will be. The PVARF Human Resources will in turn notify you when you will need to submit your final timesheet. You will also need to obtain an "VA R&D WOC Employee Clearance From Indebtedness" form from the VA R&D office listing the various medical center departments to visit and "clear" from indebtedness. These signatures are a necessary part of the termination process. When they have been obtained, you will be able to pick up your final paycheck from the PVARF Human Resources office on your last day of work. Prior to your departure, an exit interview will be scheduled to discuss the reasons for resignation. At that time you will also be given information on the status of your employee benefits. We value your honest feedback.

## Return of Property

Employees are responsible for all PVARF and/or VAPORHCS property, materials, or written information issued to them or in their possession or control. On or before their last day of work, employees must return all PVARF and/or VAPORHCS property. PVARF and/or VAPORHCS may take all action deemed appropriate to recover or protect its property.



# Your Benefits





## Your Benefits

We are proud to offer a comprehensive and competitive benefits package to promote work/life balance and overall wellness.

Annual leave, sick, jury duty, and bereavement benefits are paid at your base pay rate at the time of absence. Paid time off does not include overtime or any special forms of compensation such as incentives, commissions, bonuses or shift differentials. You must complete a minimum of 30 calendar days of service in an eligible employment classification to request annual leave, sick, jury duty or bereavement benefits.

### Sick Leave

We hope you don't get sick. But if you do, we happily comply with Oregon Sick Leave law so you can take time off to get better.

All employees are eligible for sick leave and begins accruing immediately.

All employees accrue sick leave at the rate of 5% for each hour worked (approximately 2 hours of sick leave for 40 hours worked) beginning with their date of employment. Any unused sick leave may be carried over indefinitely, however upon termination unused sick leave will not be paid.

Exempt employees are presumed to work 40 hours in each workweek for purposes of sick time accrual unless their normal workweek is less than 40 hours, in which case paid sick time is accrued based upon your normal workweek.

You will be paid at the rate you would have earned during your leave. You will not accrue sick time during paid or unpaid absences.

### Qualifying Absences

Paid sick leave may be used to cover time you are unable to work for one of the following reasons:

- For your mental or physical illness, injury or health condition, need for medical diagnosis, care or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury or health condition or need for preventive medical care;
- Care of a family member for the above reasons;
- For any of the purposes covered under the Oregon Family Leave Act (OFLA), including the employee's serious health condition; to care for

a family member with a serious health condition; to bond with and care for a new child (parental leave); to care for a child with a non-serious injury or illness requiring home care (sick child leave); or bereavement leave to deal with the death of a family member;

- For leave related to domestic violence, harassment, sexual assault or stalking of the employee or dependent child of the employee;
- Public health emergency, including closure of the employee's place of business, or the school or place of care of the employee's child, by order of a public health authority or health care provider that the presence of the employee or the family member of the employee in the community would jeopardize the health of others; or
- Exclusion of the employee from the workplace under any law or rule that requires the employer to exclude the employee from the workplace for health reasons.

For purposes of this policy, PVARF defines "family member" as an employee's spouse or domestic partner, the biological, adoptive, or foster parent or child, the grandparent or grandchild, a parent-in-law or a person with whom the employee was or is in a relationship of in loco parentis.

### Use of Sick Leave

Sick leave can be used in minimum increments of one quarter hour and may be used to cover all or part of a shift.

For planned sick leave, please notify HR or your supervisor at least 10 days prior to the date the leave will commence, or as soon as practicable. When leave is unforeseeable, please verbally notify your supervisor of the need for sick leave before the start of your scheduled work shift, or as soon as practicable.

You are responsible for making a reasonable effort to schedule leave to avoid unnecessary disruption to the Organization or your work, including, by way of example, attempting to schedule a routine visit outside peak hours or mandatory meetings.

### Concurrent Leave

Your use of sick leave may run concurrent with other leave under state or federal law. For example, sick leave may run concurrently with family medical leave under



the Oregon Family Leave Act or the federal Family and Medical Leave Act. You may not use paid sick leave while receiving workers' compensation time loss benefits.

## Employee Documentation

If you use more than three consecutive sick days, we may request reasonable documentation showing you are out for a qualifying reason.

No employee will suffer discrimination or retaliation for requesting, using, or complaining that they are not receiving sick leave. You may file a complaint if you feel sick leave has been denied or if you believe you have suffered retaliation for requesting or taking sick leave. You are also encouraged to bring any concerns to HR or your supervisor about the use of sick leave or possible retaliation.

In the event of any conflict between this policy and applicable law, applicable law will be followed. For any questions about sick leave, please see HR, your supervisor or the posted Notice.

Unused sick time will not be paid to you upon termination, resignation, retirement or other separation from employment.

## Annual Leave Benefits

Regular employees who work 15 hours per week or more are eligible to earn and use annual leave.

The amount of paid annual leave you receive each year increases with the length of your employment.

- During the first 3 years of employment, employees will earn annual leave at a rate of 5% for each hour worked.
- During the 4th through 14th year of employment, employees will earn annual leave at a rate of 7.5% for each hour worked. Employees with 3 years combined service between VAPORHCS and PVARF will accrue at the 4th - 14th year rate.
- Employees with 15 years or more years of employment with PVARF will earn annual leave at a rate of 10% for each hour worked.

The length of eligible service is calculated on the basis of a benefit year. This is the 12-month period that begins when you start to earn annual leave. Once you enter an eligible employment classification, you begin to earn paid annual leave according to the schedule above. Paid annual leave can be used in minimum increments of one quarter hour. To take annual leave, you should request advance approval from your supervisor. Requests will

be reviewed based on a number of factors, including business needs and staffing requirements. Employees may not use the annual leave in the same pay period in which it is accrued. You will continue to accrue annual leave when you are on paid leave (e.g. annual leave).

You are encouraged to use available paid annual leave time for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits. In the event that available annual leave is not used by the end of the benefit year, you may carry up to 240 hours of unused time forward to the next benefit year.

Upon termination of employment, you will be paid for unused annual leave that has been earned through the last day of work. However, if PVARF, in its sole discretion, terminates employment for cause, forfeiture of unused annual leave time may result.

## Jury Duty

We encourage you to fulfill your civic responsibilities by offering paid leave for required jury duty.

Employees who have completed a minimum of 30 calendar days of service as a regular full-time employee may request paid jury duty leave.

Unless otherwise permitted by applicable law, exempt employees will receive their full salaries for any workweek in which they perform jury duty and also work.

Please show the jury duty summons to your supervisor and the PVARF Human Resources office as soon as possible so that they may make arrangements to accommodate your absence. The PVARF Human Resources office will prepare the timesheet for the period of jury duty. The employee is required to submit their jury stipend to the PVARF Human Resources office. Of course, you are expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits.

Either PVARF or you may request an excuse from jury duty if, in PVARF's judgment, your absence would create serious operational difficulties. We recognize your right to serve on a jury as an important civic duty, and will not retaliate or discriminate against employees taking paid or unpaid jury duty leave.

Annual leave, sick leave and holiday benefits will continue to accrue during paid jury duty leave.





## Holidays

We will grant holiday time off to all regular employees working at least 15 hours per week on the holidays listed below:

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

Holiday pay will be calculated based on 20% of the employee's usual weekly hours. For example, an employee who works 40 hours per week would receive 8 hours of paid leave for a holiday, while an employee who works 15 hours per week would receive 3 hours of paid leave for a holiday. Intermittent employees will not receive any paid leave for holidays. Should a holiday fall on a weekend, the holiday will be observed on the work day closest to the holiday.

If a recognized holiday falls during your paid absence (such as annual or sick leave), holiday pay will be provided instead of the paid time off benefit that would otherwise have applied.

If eligible nonexempt employees work on a recognized holiday, they will receive holiday pay plus wages at half of their straight-time rate for the hours worked on the holiday.

Paid time off for holidays will not be counted as hours worked for the purposes of determining overtime.

## Health Insurance

We are pleased to provide regular full-time employees and their dependents access to medical, dental and vision care insurance benefits. You may participate in the health insurance plan on the first of the month following 30 days of employment.

Eligible employees and their eligible dependents may participate in the health insurance plan subject to all terms and conditions of the agreement between PVARF and the insurance carrier.

Details of the health insurance plan are described in the Plan Overview and Summary Plan Description (SPD). An SPD and information on cost of coverage will be provided to you in advance of enrollment. Contact Human Resources for more information about health insurance benefits.

## Short-term Disability

PVARF has a short-term disability plan which provides participants an income equal to 50% of their salary for up to 90 days of certified disability. This coverage is provided free of charge to eligible employees who work 15 or more hours per week.

## Long-term Disability

PVARF has a long-term disability plan which provides participants an income equal to 60% of their salary, up to \$4,000 upon the 91st day of certified disability. This coverage is provided free of charge to eligible employees. This coverage is provided free of charge to eligible employees who work 15 or more hours per week.

## Life and Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance

PVARF also offers life and AD&D insurance. The first \$50,000 of coverage is provided to employees working at least 15 hours per week, free of charge.

## Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA)

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

Under COBRA, you or your beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage at our group rates plus an administration fee. Contact the Human Resources office for more information about COBRA.



## 401(k) Savings Plan

Our employees (except seasonal or intermittent employees) who are age 21 and older can participate in a traditional 401(k) program and/or a Roth 401(k) program on the first day of any quarter following their date of hire.

We match employee contributions according to the schedule below. In addition, PVARF employees will receive an annual 2% contribution at year end.

Contact the Human Resources office to learn more about this awesome benefit. It's never too early to start planning for retirement.

Employee Deferral (gross wages)	Employer Contribution	Total
0%	0%	0%
1.0%	1.0%	2.0%
2.0%	2.0%	4.0%
3.0%	3.0%	6.0%
4.0%	3.5%	7.5%
5.0%	4.0%	9.0%

For all employee deferrals above 5.0%, PVARF will contribute 4.0%

## Bus Passes

PVARF endorses public transportation as a means of commuting to work. Employees who do not have parking privileges at the VAPORHCS may request reimbursement for the cost of Tri-Met bus passes. Employees who work three or more days per week and desire such reimbursement should purchase monthly bus passes from Tri-Met or C-Tran and submit the original receipt with a check request form to the Human Resources office.

Reimbursement will be made on a monthly basis for a pass covering the number of zones between the employee's home and the VAPORHCS. Employees who work less than 3 days per week should purchase daily bus passes and submit the receipts with a check request form to the Human Resources office.

Verification that the employee has neither a VA parking card or participation in a car pool will be performed prior to the reimbursement.

## Bicycle Commuter Reimbursement

The Portland VA Research Foundation will reimburse up to the IRS suggested amount per calendar year toward bicycle commuting expenses for active benefits-eligible employees, effective January 01, 2016.

Employees who regularly use a non-motorized bicycle for a substantial (50% or greater) portion of travel between the employee's residence and their work site can receive assistance offsetting some of the costs of bicycle commuting. These costs may include the purchase of a commuter bicycle, helmet, gloves, bike lock, bike upgrades (lights, racks), repairs and general maintenance. These are considered reasonable expenses as long as the bicycle and equipment is regularly used for travel between the employee's residence and place of employment.

Employees will log bicycle commuting sessions and receive up to \$20 reimbursement per month for covered expenses during months in which they commute to and from work at least ten times. Employees will provide receipts for covered expenses and applications for reimbursement must be received by March 31 of the year after the employee incurred the expense.

Employees applying for bicycle commuter reimbursement are ineligible for other transportation benefits (transit pass or qualified parking benefits) during the months they receive funds for bicycle commuting.



# Compensation and Timekeeping



## Compensation and Timekeeping

### Pay Schedule

All employees are paid biweekly, every other Friday. Our workweek is from Sunday to Saturday. Timesheets are due by noon the Tuesday preceding payday. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period.

In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a day off such as a holiday, you will receive pay on the last day of work before the regularly scheduled payday.



“All I’ve ever wanted was an honest week’s pay for an honest day’s work.”

—Steve Martin

PVARF encourages employees to sign up to be paid electronically via direct deposit. This means your money will be in your bank account on pay day (times may vary depending upon banking systems). If you choose not to be paid by direct deposit, you will need to make arrangements to pick up your check at the PVARF Human Resources office otherwise it will be mailed to your home.

### Work Schedules/Rest & Meal Periods

Your brain performs better when in a positive vs. neutral or stressful state. So we DON'T want you to work all the time. Supervisors will advise employees of the times their schedules will normally begin and end. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate variations in starting and ending times, as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week.

Each workday, nonexempt employees who work six or more hours in one work period are provided with two rest periods of ten minutes in length. To the extent possible, rest periods will be provided in the middle of

work periods. Since this time is counted and paid as time worked, you must not be absent from your work station beyond the allotted rest period time.

All regular full-time employees are provided with one meal period of 30 minutes in length each workday. You will be relieved of all active responsibilities and restrictions during meal periods and will not be compensated for that time.

### Break Time for Nursing Mothers

We support and recognize the importance of breastfeeding. We also support nursing mothers with a flexible schedule for nursing or pumping. Nursing mothers are entitled to one unpaid rest period of 30 minutes during each four-hour work period. Insofar as feasible, the rest period should be taken approximately midway through the four-hour work period and at the same time as the rest or meal breaks otherwise provided to you.

We will make reasonable efforts to provide a room in close proximity to your regular work area to allow you to express milk in private.

We ask that mothers who intend to express milk give reasonable advance notice to their supervisor or the Human Resources office before returning to work.

### Attendance and Punctuality

Being on time, every time, conveys far more than just a good sense of timing. It tells people that you're on top of things, that you're organized, that you can be counted on, that you value them and your work, and, ultimately, that you value yourself. In the rare instances when you cannot avoid being late to work or are unable to work as scheduled, you should notify your supervisor as soon as possible in advance of the anticipated tardiness or absence. If your direct supervisor is unavailable, the employee should leave a voicemail stating the reason for being late or absent and a phone number where s/he may be reached. Your direct supervisor must also be contacted on each additional day of absence.

If you are absent for three or more consecutive days due to illness or injury, a physician's statement may be requested verifying the reason and its beginning and expected ending dates. Such verification may be requested for other paid and unpaid leaves that are used for illnesses and injury as well and may be required as a condition to receiving paid leave benefits. Additionally, before returning to work from an absence of three calendar days or more, you may be asked to provide a physician's verification that you can safely return to work.



If an employee fails to report to work for three (3) consecutive workdays without notification to the supervisor, s/he will be deemed to have voluntarily resigned.

## Timekeeping

Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every nonexempt employee. It is our intent to pay each employee, exempt or nonexempt, the proper and appropriate pay.

We encourage every employee to immediately report any pay or benefit inaccuracies to your supervisor or the Human Resources office. We will not tolerate retaliation against those who report pay or benefit inaccuracies in good-faith.

The following essential information must be included on all timesheets:

- Your full name – printed legibly
- Account number(s) and labor allocation
- The pay period worked
- Actual hours worked
- Time rounded to the nearest ¼ hour and totaled
- Your signature
- Your supervisor's signature

## Nonexempt Employees

Nonexempt (typically hourly) employees should accurately record the time they begin and end their work, as well as the beginning and ending time of each meal period. You should also record the beginning and ending time of any departure from work for personal reasons. You are also responsible for accurately recording whether you have received all paid rest breaks.

## Exempt Employees

In general, salaries of exempt (typically salary) employees are not subject to reduction because of the quality of work performed or the quantity of work performed. An exempt employee will usually receive his or her full salary (including any annual leave or other accrued leave taken during that week) for any week in which they perform any work. There are certain exceptions to this rule. If you have a concern of an improper deduction please contact your supervisor immediately.

## Overtime

Occasionally, we all need to chip in. There will be busy seasons when operating requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours. This means employees may be required to work overtime. All overtime work must be approved by your supervisor in advance.

Overtime compensation is paid to all nonexempt employees who work more than 40 hours in a workweek in accordance with federal and state wage and hour laws. Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Time off on sick leave, annual leave, or any leave of absence will not be considered hours worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations. Certain administrative, professional, executive and outside sales personnel are exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. If you have any questions regarding your status, discuss this with your supervisor.



# Facts that Matter





## Facts that Matter

### Employment At-Will

Your Handbook is a general guide to PVARF's current employment policies, forms, procedures and your benefits as an employee of PVARF at time of publication. It is informational only, and is not intended to be, and should not be, construed as a contract of employment or a promise of specific treatment in specific situations. From time to time, we review our policies, procedures and benefits and make revisions based on the need for and desirability of changes, so be sure your copy is updated and maintained. We may at any time change, alter, modify, interpret, apply, add to or delete any provision of this Handbook.

Employment with the PVARF is at-will which means the employment relationship may be terminated with or without cause and with or without notice at any time by you or PVARF. In addition, PVARF may alter an employee's position, duties, title or compensation at any time, with or without notice and with or without cause. Nothing in this Handbook or in any document or statement and nothing implied from any course of conduct shall limit PVARF's or employee's right to terminate employment at-will.

### Equal Employment Opportunity

In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at PVARF will be based on merit, qualifications and abilities. PVARF does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, religion, gender (sex), national origin, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.

PVARF will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship. This policy governs all aspects of employment including: selection, job assignment, compensation, discipline, termination and access to benefits and training.

Any employees with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of their immediate supervisor or Human Resources. Our anti-harassment policy is described in more detail later in this handbook.

### Pay Transparency

PVARF will not discharge or in any other manner discriminate against employees or applicants because they have inquired about, discussed, or disclosed their own pay or the pay of another employee or applicant. However, employees who have access to the compensation information of other employees or applicants as a part of their essential job functions cannot disclose the pay of other employees or applicants to individuals who do not otherwise have access to compensation information, unless the disclosure is (a) in response to a formal complaint or charge, (b) in furtherance of an investigation, proceeding, hearing, or action, including an investigation conducted by the employer, or (c) consistent with the Organization's legal duty to furnish information.

### Immigration Law Compliance

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 prohibits PVARF from employing any person not legally authorized to work in the United States. As a condition of employment, you must complete the USCIS Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. PVARF also utilizes E-Verify to confirm eligibility for employment.

### Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment

Our desire is to create a work environment where every employee feels productive and comfortable. It's our policy that all employees be able to work in a setting free from all forms of unlawful discrimination including; harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender (sex), national origin, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, genetic information or retaliation.

### Harassment

Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that demeans or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, religion, gender (sex), national origin, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, genetic information or that of his/her relatives, friends or associates and that:

- Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment
- Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance



- Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to the following: (1) epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, demeaning comments or labels, or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to race, color, religion, gender (sex), national origin, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, genetic information; and (2) written or graphic material that demeans or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of race, color, religion, gender (sex), national origin, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, genetic information and that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, computers or elsewhere on the employer's premises, or circulated in the workplace.

## Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of gender (sex) discrimination. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has defined sexual harassment as follows:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual;
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance;
- Creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Prohibited sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to: sexual jokes, calendars, posters, cartoons, magazines, derogatory or physically descriptive comments about or toward another employee; sexually suggestive comments; inappropriate use of organization communications including E-mail and telephone; unwelcome touching or physical contact; punishment or favoritism on the basis of an employee's sex; sexual slurs; negative sexual stereotyping.

Harassment will not be tolerated in our workplace. It is against the policies of PVARF for any employee to harass another employee. This includes acts between supervisors and employees; it also includes acts between one employee and another, or inappropriate workplace conduct between a third party (such as a visitor, vendor, client or independent contractor) and an employee.

## Complaints of Harassment

If you believe that you have been harassed, report the harassment immediately. The report should be either:

1. To your Supervisor
2. To Human Resources
3. The Executive Director

You may report harassment to Human Resources without first contacting your supervisor. PVARF will take no action against an employee who in good faith reports harassment to the Organization or participates in an investigation. Such retaliation will not be tolerated in our workplace.

Reports of harassment or retaliation will be investigated fairly. PVARF will attempt to maintain confidentiality, consistent with the Organization's need to conduct an adequate investigation and to take prompt corrective action in response to any harassment or retaliation.

Our desire  
is to create a work  
environment where  
every employee  
feels productive &  
comfortable.



## Domestic Partner Statement and Policy

PVARF seeks to promote acceptance of diversity in all its dimensions. In light of this goal, the benefits provided to domestic partners, as much as possible, are the same benefits as provided to spouses of legally married employees.

Registration of a domestic partnership is not required in order for the employee to be able to take advantage of this policy's provisions, with the exception of insurance benefits, including medical, dental and vision.

Domestic partners are persons who:

- Are at least 18 years of age.
- Are competent to contract at the time the domestic partnership statement is completed.
- Are not legally married to or legally separated from any person.
- Are not related in any way that would prohibit marriage in Oregon State.
- Have been each other's sole domestic partner for the past six months and intend to remain so indefinitely.
- Are engaged in a committed relationship of mutual caring and support and are jointly responsible for their common welfare and living expenses.
- Share permanent residence.

Completion of an Affidavit of Domestic Partnership (ADP) will be required for coverage under the group medical, dental, and vision insurance benefits. Please see Human Resources for information and the ADP form.

Upon receipt of a properly completed ADP form, PVARF will consider the partnership registered as of the date on the signature on the form. Children of domestic partners are eligible for benefits under the same conditions as are the children of employees' legal spouses.

Enrollment of domestic partners and eligible dependent children is subject to the same rules as enrollment of other dependents.

Under the current medical, dental, and vision plans, domestic partners and their enrolled dependents receive the same or equivalent benefits as spouses and their enrolled dependents receive

for group continuation health coverage through the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) and/or individual conversion.

An employee may terminate a domestic partnership by notifying Human Resources in writing of the termination of the domestic partnership within 30 days of its termination. (The same guideline exists for married couples that divorce.) The employee must then wait six months from the date of the notice before registering another domestic partnership, except in either of the following cases:

- The employee is registering the same domestic partnership within 30 days of notification of the termination of that domestic partnership, or
- The employee's former domestic partnership was dissolved through the death of the employee's domestic partner.

The tax consequences of a domestic partnership are the responsibility of the employee, not the company. Under the Internal Revenue Code (IRC), an employee is not taxed on the value of benefits provided by an employer to an employee's spouse or dependent. However, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has ruled that a domestic partner does not qualify as a spouse. The value of benefits provided to an employee's domestic partner (and the domestic partner's eligible children, if any) is therefore considered part of the employee's taxable income, unless the employee's domestic partner qualifies as a dependent under Section 152 of the IRC.



Keeping it  
**Real**



## Keeping it Real

### Reporting of Workplace Concerns

When we say we want to hear from you, we really mean it. Our Reporting Procedure has been developed to assist employees in resolving all types of disputes no matter how small. Use this procedure to voice concerns regarding work rules, working conditions, disputes with other employees, unfair practices and any type of harassment. Concerns filed will be held in confidence and information will only be released on a “need to know” basis for the purpose of conducting an investigation.

#### Step 1:

Bring your concern to your immediate supervisor. This should be done within 72 hours of the situation causing the concern. Explain the complaint in detail and offer any solutions you may have. If applicable, outline what actions you would like management to consider to correct the situation. Your supervisor will provide an answer to you immediately or within ten calendar days (depending on the severity of the complaint) from the date the complaint was filed.

*Note: If for some reason you feel that you cannot take your complaint to your immediate supervisor, take it to Human Resources. Again the complaint should be presented within 72 hours.*

#### Step 2:

You have the right to appeal the decision to Human Resources. All appeals must be filed in writing within ten calendar days of the date you received your supervisor’s decision. Human Resources will respond to your appeal within ten calendar days of receipt of your appeal. If it is found that a organization policy has been violated, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

#### Step 3:

If you are still not satisfied with the results from Step 2, you may appeal to the Executive Director. To appeal, you must present the grievance in writing to the Executive Director within ten calendar days after the Step 2 discussion. PVARF will answer your appeal within ten calendar days of receipt. All decisions made at this level are final and binding upon both the Organization and employees.

### Whistleblower Protection

A whistleblower is an employee of PVARF who reports an activity that he/she considers to be illegal or dishonest to one or more of the parties specified in this policy. The whistleblower is not responsible for investigating the activity or for determining fault or corrective measures; appropriate management officials are charged with these responsibilities.

Examples of illegal or dishonest activities are violations of federal, state or local laws; billing for services not performed or for goods not delivered; and other fraudulent financial reporting.

If you have knowledge of or a concern of illegal or dishonest fraudulent activity, you should contact your supervisor or Human Resources. Please exercise sound judgment to avoid baseless allegations.

Whistleblower protections are provided in two important areas—confidentiality and anti-retaliation. Insofar as possible, the confidentiality of the whistleblower will be maintained. However, identity may have to be disclosed to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law and to provide accused individuals their legal rights of defense.

We will not retaliate against a whistleblower who makes a report in good faith. Any whistleblower who believes he/she is being retaliated against must contact Human Resources immediately. The right of a whistleblower to protection against retaliation does not include immunity for any personal wrongdoing that is alleged and investigated.

All reports of illegal and dishonest activities will be promptly submitted to Human Resources who will be responsible for investigating and coordinating corrective action.

*Don't be shy...when we say we want to hear from you, we really mean it!*

A photograph of a woman in a white lab coat smiling warmly at an elderly man in a blue checkered shirt. The man is also smiling and looking towards the woman. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

What We Ask of You  
& What We Believe



## What We Ask of You & What We Believe

### Identification Badges

All PVARF employees are required to wear their VA issued identification badges. This badge is particularly important to employees who work non-traditional hours, as the need may arise to request assistance from Medical Center Security to access certain areas. They will always request to see identification.

### Emergency Closings

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, power failures, or earthquakes, can disrupt organization operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of a work facility.

When operations are officially closed due to emergency conditions, the time off from scheduled work will be unpaid if the decision to close is made before the workday has begun. However, with management approval, you may use available paid leave time, such as unused sick leave. If you are instructed to leave work because of an emergency closing, the time off is paid.

In cases where an emergency closing is not authorized, employees who fail to report for work will not be paid for the time off. You may request available paid leave time such as unused annual leave benefits. Non-exempt employees who are late because of weather conditions will be given a chance to make up their missed time if work schedules and conditions permit.

Employees in essential operations may be asked to work on a day when operations are officially closed. In these circumstances, those who work will receive regular pay.

### Performance Improvement & Corrective Action

We seek to manage and administer equitable and consistent corrective action and coaching for unsatisfactory performance in the workplace. The best corrective measure is one that does not have to be enforced and comes from good leadership at all employment levels.

PVARF's own best interest lie in ensuring fair treatment of all employees and in making certain that corrective actions are prompt, uniform and impartial.

The major purpose of any corrective action is to correct the problem, prevent recurrence and prepare you for success.

Although employment with PVARF is based on mutual consent and both the employee and employers have the right to terminate employment at will, with or without cause or advance notice, PVARF may use corrective action and coaching at its discretion.

Corrective action may call for any of four steps - verbal warning, written warning, suspension with or without pay or termination of employment—depending on the severity of the problem and the number of occurrences. There may be circumstances when one or more steps are bypassed and management at their discretion may use any corrective step they determine is warranted.

Corrective action means that, with respect to most disciplinary problems, these steps will normally be followed: the first offense may call for a verbal warning; the second offense may be followed by a written warning; the third offense may lead to a suspension; and the fourth offense may then lead to termination of employment.

PVARF recognizes that there are certain types of employee problems that are serious enough to justify either a suspension, or depending on the circumstances, termination of employment, without going through the usual progressive discipline steps.

By using corrective action, we hope that most employee problems can be corrected at an early stage, benefiting both the employee and PVARF.

*We base our work culture on a foundation of mutual trust & respect.*

### Work Conduct

We base our work culture on a foundation of mutual trust and respect. As such, we expect employees to conduct themselves with a high regard of professionalism and respect in all workplace interactions. If we feel that your conduct or behavior is not reflective of our cultural values, we will discuss our concerns with you and outline necessary behavior shifts for alignment with our organization values.



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

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

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property
- Falsification of timekeeping records
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal (under either state or Federal law) drugs
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer-owned or client-owned property
- Insubordination or other such disrespectful conduct
- Violation of safety or health rules
- Smoking in prohibited areas
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms in the workplace
- Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice
- Unauthorized absence from your work station during the workday
- Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, or other employer-owned equipment
- Unauthorized disclosure of business “secrets” or proprietary business information (as defined elsewhere in this Handbook)
- Violation of personnel policies
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct.
- Excessive personal conversations or “gossip” which negatively impacts civility and decorum in the workplace.

Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent employees from discussing their wages, hours, and working conditions and is not intended to prohibit any communication otherwise allowed by law.

## Clinical Work Performed by PVARF Employees

While PVARF administers clinical research projects, it does not serve as a provider of medical care. All clinical care administered by PVARF employees as part of their duties on clinical research projects must be through the auspices of the VA Portland Health Care System. This coordination is accomplished by:

- Review and approval of the clinical protocol by the medical center’s institutional review board (IRB), or the OHSU-VA joint IRB if warranted, and research & development committee.
- Completion by research staff of all necessary credentialing and privileging requirements by the appropriate medical center offices. Service Chief approval for the proposed project is required.
- Coordination of the project’s clinical activities with the clinical units at which the clinical care will be performed (such as outpatient clinic sites, the medical center’s short-stay care unit, or inpatient bed services).

Malpractice coverage for clinical care delivered as part of a research project is provided by the federal tort claims system. If appropriate approval of clinical activities for research projects has not been obtained from the VA Portland Health Care System then this coverage may not apply.

No clinical care of any kind may be provided by a PVARF employee if the recipient of the care is not an enrolled subject in a research project approved by all applicable committees/subcommittees of the VA Portland Health Care System. If clinical care related to an approved research project will be performed at a location other than the premises of the VA Portland Health Care System prior approval and appropriate credentialing at the other site must be obtained prior to initiating the clinical care.

## Veterinary Medical Unit (VMU)

The Veterinary Medical Unit is an important part of conducting research. Use of animals to test theories and behavior has important applications for subsequent trials in humans. A full time veterinarian supervises the



activities in the VMU. There is a staff of employees who care for the animals to ensure proper and humane treatment.

If you are assigned to work in a laboratory that uses animal models, the veterinarian will provide you with special training, before you will be allowed access to the VMU. Your PI is responsible for your training in the ethical and humane treatment of animals in your research.

## Computer and E-mail Usage

VA Portland Healthcare System and OHSU are the owners of the Organization's computer system, software and Internet account. Any material or message put into the system should not be considered a private communication. We retain the right to access and review any E-mail activity or documents utilizing organization property at any time, with or without notice.

We caution that all communications via our electronic communications network systems, as well as any other document or file created or stored via the Organization's computer systems, may be subject to discovery in connection with legal proceedings involving the Organization or its employees. Communications systems should not be used to solicit or proselytize for commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations, or other non-job related solicitations. Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent employees from discussing their wages, hours, and working conditions and is not intended to prohibit any communication otherwise allowed by law.

In the event that you perceive a potential of a violation of this policy, you may contact Human Resources.

## Telecommuting

PVARF considers telecommuting to be a possible alternative work arrangement in cases where individual, job and managerial considerations are best suited to such an arrangement. Telecommuting allows an employee to work at home, on the road, or in a satellite location for part of their regular workweek. Working off-site is a voluntary work alternative that may be appropriate for some employees and some jobs as determined by the PVARF management. It is not an entitlement; it is not a PVARF-wide benefit; and it does not change the terms and conditions of "at-will" employment with PVARF. Please contact your manager and the PVARF HR department to discuss the feasibility and telecommuting arrangement.

## Internet Access on PVARF Equipment

Internet access is provided by VA Portland Healthcare System and OHSU to assist employees in communication and accessing work related information. While Internet usage is intended for job-related purposes, incidental and occasional brief personal use are permitted within reasonable limits.

Data that is composed, transmitted, accessed, or received via the Internet must NOT contain content that is malicious, obscene, threatening, intimidating, or that constitutes harassment.

Examples of activities that fall outside acceptable use of the Internet at PVARF include:

- Downloading or viewing material containing sexually explicit or obscene comments or images.
- Sending or posting material that violates our harassment policy or offensively addresses someone's age, sexual orientation, race, disability, or any other protected status under applicable law.
- Sending or posting material that is obscene, threatening, or maliciously false and meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation.
- Copying, pirating or downloading software and electronic files without permission.

## Social Media, Networking & Electronic Communications

We recognize the immense potential of social media to facilitate and enhance the performance of our business. We also realize that social media presents a significant opportunity for abuse, reduced employee productivity and potential liability for both PVARF and individual employees. In general, the same principles and guidelines found in our other policies apply to your activities online, and each employee is ultimately responsible for ensuring that your social media activity is consistent with these policies.

"Social Media" includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal web site, social networking or affinity web site, web bulletin board or a chat room.



## Employees' Use of Social Media at Work

Please refrain from using social media during working time or on equipment provided by PVARF, unless such use is work-related as authorized by your supervisor. Do not use PVARF's email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use.

## Employees' Personal Use of Social Media

Personal use includes your use outside of working time and/or on personal technology and/or personally obtained Internet service providers.

Employees making use of social media to discuss matters via social media related to PVARF, and who identify themselves as PVARF employees, should be clear that the employee's statements do not represent the views of PVARF. One way to make this clear is to include a disclaimer such as: "The postings on this site are strictly my own and do not necessarily represent PVARF's positions, policies, strategies, and/or opinions."

Employees are reminded that as employees of PVARF they are professionals. Always be fair and courteous to fellow associates, clients, members, or suppliers. If posting comments on a social media site, please avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that are malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, or that constitute harassment. Examples of such conduct would include maliciously false posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that violate our harassment policy.

No employee should suggest or represent that the employee is authorized to comment on a organization legal matter on behalf of PVARF unless the employee has been specially designated in writing by PVARF's President to do so. Employees may not post on social media information regarding PVARF that is protected by the attorney-client privilege, or that constitutes a trade secret, protected proprietary or confidential information about the organization's business (e.g. marketing plans and strategies, product preparation or client service techniques, or non-public organization financial data), or confidential client information.

Electronic information is increasingly being collected, aggregated, stored and used in various ways, including through electronic discovery in legal actions. There may be legal implications to an employee's social media use that outlast the employee's viewpoint, and the effects of a particular social media statement may not be felt for

months or even years. As such, please consider some of the risks and consequences that are involved in social media use before creating online content.

Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent employees from discussing their wages, hours, and working conditions and is not intended to prohibit any communication otherwise allowed by law.

## Workplace Monitoring

Workplace monitoring of E-mail, Internet use, telephone calls and voice mail may be conducted with or without notice at any time by VAPORHCS to ensure quality control, employee safety, security and client satisfaction. We will conduct workplace monitoring consistent with system and applicable law. We are not obligated to monitor employee communications.

For more information, please refer to Human Resources.

## Solicitation

In an effort to ensure a productive and harmonious work environment, persons not employed by PVARF may not solicit or distribute literature in the workplace at any time for any purpose.

We recognize that employees may have interests in events and organizations outside the workplace. However, you may not solicit or distribute literature concerning these activities during working time. (Working time does not include lunch periods, work breaks or any other periods in which employees are not on duty.)

## Organization/Personal Property

You are expected to treat any and all organization property, property belonging to fellow employees, or any other third-party property with care and respect. Be a good friend - theft, misappropriation, misuse or willful destruction of property or unauthorized removal of such is prohibited.

You are responsible for the custody and care of any organization property that has been issued or assigned to you. If you are terminated, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, you are required to return such property immediately.

In accordance with applicable law, PVARF at its sole discretion, may request that you consent to and permit an inspection of including, but not limited to: personal property brought onto or taken from the premises, any





work, rest or storage area, all organization vehicles, desks, lockers, computers, etc. that are within your possession or control.

Before you remove organization products, samples or any other items belonging to the Organization from the premises, you must obtain a signed receipt or an authorization form from your supervisor.

## Confidentiality/Non-Disclosure

As Portland VA Research Foundation employees, it is our responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of information obtained in the performance of our duties. This responsibility extends to all employees and not only to those who provide actual patient care or maintain medical records. Any patient information, whether overheard, noticed at a copy machine or desk, read during hand-carry, seen in correspondence, etc., must be kept confidential by all employees. Our patients and research subjects have a legal right to privacy and we, as their caregivers, have a legal and moral responsibility to protect that right.

We may not discuss patient or research subject information with anyone when off-duty. When on-duty, we must refrain from discussing our patients or research subjects with anyone, including other patients, research subjects, visitors, and other employees who do not need to know the information in order to carry out their official duties. Increased diligence must be exercised in protecting patient and/or research subject information in cases where patients and/or research subjects have sensitive medical conditions where the inappropriate disclosure of information could be medically, psychologically, socially or economically harmful.

The Privacy Act and other Federal statutes provide penalty and fine provisions for the knowing and willful misuse or disclosure of confidential information to any person or agency that is not entitled to receive it.

Such confidential information includes; but is not limited to, the following examples: computer programs and codes, intellectual property, pending projects and proposals, proprietary production processes and research and development strategies.

Employees who improperly use or disclose trade secrets or confidential business information will be subject to potential disciplinary action, even if they do not actually benefit from the disclosed information.

Inappropriate disclosure of information to people outside the Organization could cost us competitive advantage and thousands of dollars. As you work at

PVARF, you may become aware of information that is considered proprietary to PVARF. Because of this new PVARF employees will be provided a copy of PVARF's Non-Disclosure policy and asked to sign a Non-Disclosure agreement as part of their orientation process.

## Business Ethics & Conflicts of Interest

PVARF will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects its Directors, Officers and employees to conduct business in accordance with the letter, spirit and intent of all relevant laws and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest or unethical conduct.

In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide you with respect to lines of acceptable conduct.

Transparency is the key to avoiding conflicts of interest. When in doubt, ask your supervisor for guidance to assess the potential for a conflict of interest and determine how it can be resolved.

Business dealings with outside firms should not result in unusual gains for those firms. Unusual gain refers to bribes, product bonuses, special fringe benefits, unusual price breaks and other windfalls designed to ultimately benefit the employer, the employee or both. Promotional plans that could be interpreted to involve unusual gain require specific executive-level approval.

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when you are in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for an employee or for a relative as a result of PVARF business dealings. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with you is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

No "presumption of guilt" is created by the mere existence of a relationship with outside firms. However, if you have any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts or leases, it is imperative that you disclose to an Officer of PVARF as soon as possible the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

## Relatives and Individuals Involved in Dating Relationships

For purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by ancestry, or whose relationship with you is similar to that of persons who are related by ancestry or marriage and includes roommates. A dating relationship is defined as a relationship that may be reasonably

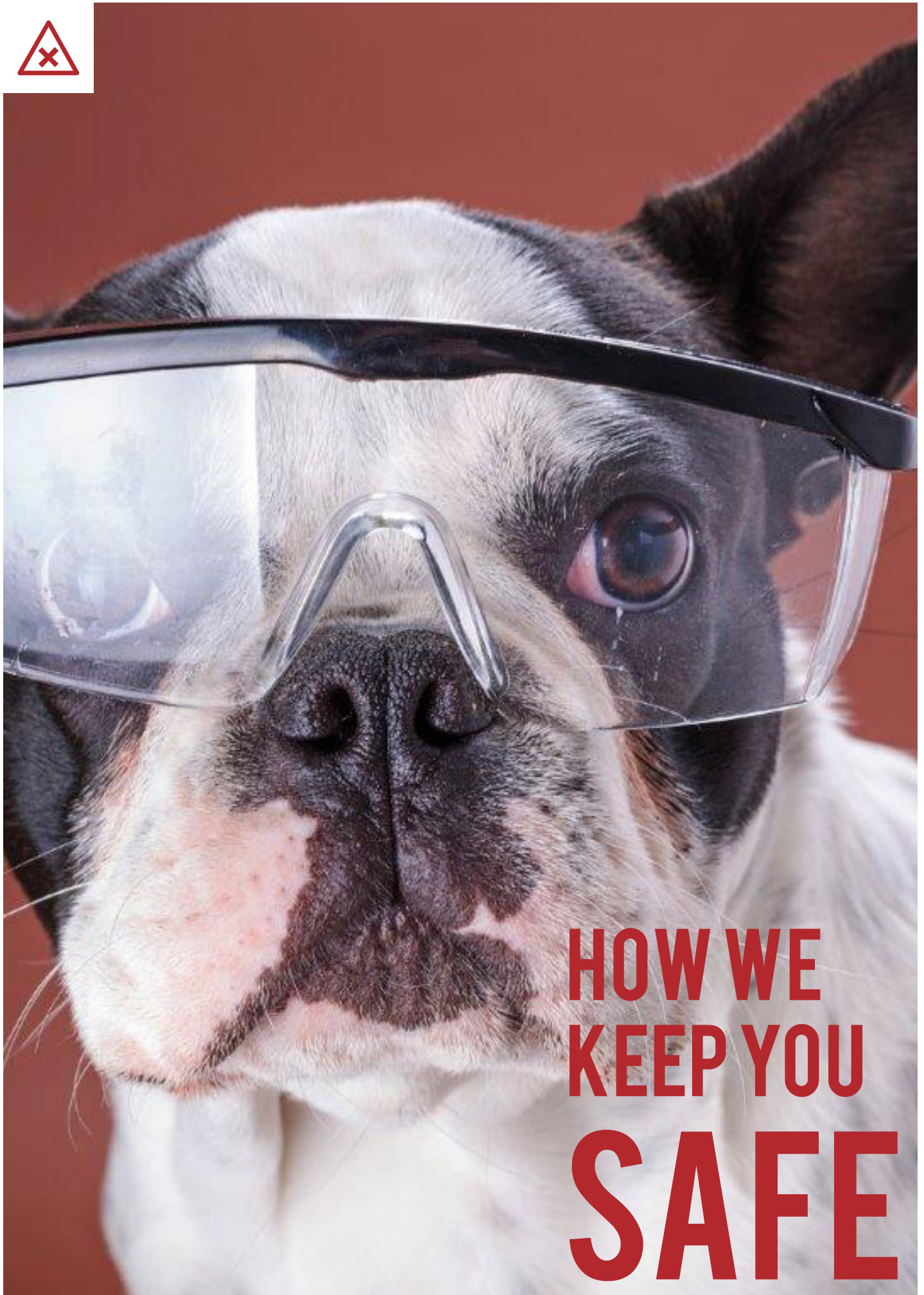


expected to lead to the formation of a consensual “romantic” or sexual relationship. This policy applies to all employees without regard to the gender (sex), gender identity or sexual orientation of the individuals involved.

Relatives of current employees and individuals involved in dating relationships may not occupy a position that will be working directly for or supervising their relative or the individual with whom they have a dating relationship.

If a relative or dating relationship is established after employment between employees who are in a reporting situation described above, it is the responsibility and obligation of the supervisor involved in the relationship to disclose the existence of the relationship to management. The individuals concerned will be given the opportunity to decide who is to be transferred to another available position. If that decision is not made within 30 calendar days, management will decide who is to be transferred or, if necessary, terminated from employment.

Employees involved in a close personal relationship should refrain from public workplace displays of affection and excessive personal language.



**HOW WE  
KEEP YOU  
SAFE**



## How We Keep You Safe

**S**afety is based on knowledge, skill and an attitude of care and concern. Each employee must:

- Comply with safety policies and supervisor instructions
- Report unsafe conditions or equipment
- Report all injuries and “close calls” to their supervisor immediately
- Refrain from unsafe behavior or endangering other employees
- Assume responsibility for their conduct and actions
- Ask questions when unsure of safe work procedures
- Use all safety equipment/devices provided for their protection
- Report activities occurring in the workplace when considered unsafe or illegal
- Not jeopardize their safety through drug or alcohol use
- Demonstrate a positive verbal and visual example for other employees to follow.

All accidents, including those resulting in injury, must be reported to your supervisor or to PVARF immediately. In most cases this must be done in writing using the appropriate state-required form.

Please properly notify your supervisor of any job-related illness or injury, otherwise your workers' compensation claim could be jeopardized. Notify your supervisor promptly of any job-related accident or injury to you or to any of your teammates. In all cases, do this on the day the accident occurs; never wait until the next day!

### Work Related Injuries

Work-related injuries and/or illnesses are covered under PVARF's workers' compensation insurance policy. Any on-the-job injury involving an employee must be reported immediately to the PVARF Human Resources office, regardless of severity.

For any life, limb or “sensory” (e.g. eye) threatening work related emergencies, PVARF employees should go directly to the VA Emergency Department.

Exposure to human blood or body fluid is an emergency requiring stabilizing care and is time sensitive. During business hours, from M-F 7:30-4:00, PVARF employees suffering an exposure should go directly to VA Employee Health. At all other times, after business hours and on the weekend, employees should report to the VA Emergency Department.

For a work-related urgent injury that is not life/limb/sensory threatening or an exposure, all Research Service employees have the option of going to the provider/location of their choice, or to VA Employee Health (during business hours), or to the VA Emergency Department (after business hours).

An employee returning from an absence due to a work-related injury and/or illness must present a doctor's certificate showing clearance to return to work.

### Safety Issues

Research Service has many unique safety issues that include chemical safety, air quality, radiation safety, infection control, and hazardous materials use and disposal. The safety staff within the Facilities Safety office, the Facilities Management Service and the Engineering team work very closely with Research Service to monitor, educate, and correct safety violations.

Facilities management, the Safety Office and the Engineering Service have staff that deal with the many issues facing a large medical center in creating a safe work environment. They may also provide protective devices and training to teach employees safe practices.

Employees who will handle radioactive materials will receive additional training on these substances by their PI, and must complete research service radiation safety training. The training is mandatory, and before work can begin with radioactive material the Radiation Safety Officer must enroll the employee in the radiation monitoring program and must issue a radiation badge.

### Safety Equipment

In order to assist in providing a safe and healthy work environment, we provide safety equipment and training programs necessary to perform your job effectively. It is the responsibility of your PI to ensure you are appropriately trained to use and operate lab equipment.



It is your responsibility to ensure you are using all equipment properly and to notify your supervisor if you need additional training or replacement of equipment. Your PI will provide detailed information on specific safety procedures that apply to his/her scientific project. Additional information is available on videotapes, handouts and manuals.

### **Orientation Videos and Annual Training**

The PI is responsible for ensuring that the employee receives orientation to the assigned research area and that the employee completes the applicable safety training modules available through the Research and Development office prior to beginning work. Annual safety training is mandatory for all research personnel.

The R&D administrative office maintains staff training records, and will notify staff and their supervisors of training module due dates via email.

### **Laboratory Security**

The laboratory contains many hazardous materials including chemicals and radioisotopes that must be secured from the patients and the public. Laboratory security is also critical since PI's store confidential information in laboratories and offices. The VA ID badge is to be used to gain access to the prox doors for entrance into bldg. 6, 101, 103 and 104. Laboratory/office keys will be provided to you by your PI, and you will be expected to take responsibility for the keys and return them to your PI when you leave your position. You may be charged a fee if the keys are lost or stolen. If your keys are lost or stolen you are responsible to immediately notify your PI. Your PI will train you on their expectations for locking of lab and/or office doors when you are not present.

### **Workplace Violence Prevention**

All employees should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. You are expected to refrain from fighting, "horseplay" or other conduct that may be dangerous to others. Firearms, weapons and other dangerous or hazardous devices or substances are prohibited from the premises of PVARF without proper written authorization.

Conduct that threatens, harasses or bullies another employee, a client or a member of the public at any time, including off-duty periods, will not be tolerated.

All threats of, or actual violence, (both direct and indirect) should be reported as soon as possible to your immediate supervisor or any other member of management. This includes; threats by employees, as well as threats by clients, vendors, solicitors or other members of the public. When reporting a threat of violence, please be as specific and detailed as possible.

All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported to a supervisor as soon as possible. Do not place yourself in peril. If you see or hear a commotion or disturbance near your work station, do not try to intercede or see what is happening.

PVARF will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of, or actual violence, and of suspicious individuals or activities.

PVARF encourages employees to bring their disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of their supervisors before the situation escalates into potential violence. PVARF is eager to assist in the resolution of employee disputes and will not discipline employees for raising such concerns.

### **Smoking**

In keeping with state law and our intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment, smoking is prohibited throughout the workplace. Smoking is also prohibited outside of the buildings within ten feet of all entrances, exits, ventilation systems and windows that can open.

This policy applies equally to all employees, clients and visitors.

### **Weapons**

Possession of dangerous or deadly weapons including, but not limited to, any firearms or other weapons; explosive devices and/or hazardous materials on organization premises or off organization premises while performing job-related duties is strictly prohibited.

*and an attitude of  
care and concern.*



## **Alcohol & Drug-Free Workplace**

We are committed to maintaining an alcohol and drug-free workplace and have a zero-tolerance policy with respect to drugs and alcohol impacting work performance. Drug and alcohol abuse impairs an employee's ability to perform his or her job, as well as to provide the highest quality of service the members, clients and clients of PVARF have learned to expect. Employees who work under the influence of intoxicating beverages or controlled or illegal substances or who are impaired by such beverages or substances in the workplace may also be a danger to themselves and others.

Accordingly, while on our premises or work time, including breaks and lunch periods, you are prohibited from being under the influence of alcohol or any substance that is controlled or illegal under federal or state law (including marijuana, which is illegal under federal law). For purposes of this policy, under the influence means (a) having any detectable level of alcohol or an illegal or controlled drug under federal or state law in one's system while covered by this policy, or (b) a noticeable or perceptible impairment of your mental or physical faculties while covered by this policy.

This policy also prohibits the sale, possession, use, consumption or distribution of alcohol or illegal or controlled drugs on PVARF premises or while on duty or in a PVARF vehicle or engaged in PVARF activities. Where we have a reasonable basis to believe that an employee is in violation of this policy, the employee will be required to submit to testing to determine presence of, use of, or involvement with alcohol or drugs. We reserve the right to determine whether a reasonable basis exists.

Employees medically authorized to use prescription drugs or over-the-counter medications in the workplace are responsible for ascertaining from a physician whether such use can impair workplace safety. If it can impair workplace safety, you must report the use to your immediate supervisor and provide proper written medical authorization from a physician to work while using such drugs.

Employees who voluntarily request assistance in dealing with a personal drug and/or alcohol problem may do so without jeopardizing employment as long as this assistance is requested before work performance

is affected or disciplinary problems have begun or a violation of this policy occurs. Treatment programs may be available through our insurance coverage. Employees are responsible for any treatment costs not covered through health insurance. No employee will be discriminated or retaliated against for seeking assistance; however, performance issues that arose before assistance was requested will continue to be addressed.



# Time Away





## Time Away

### FMLA/OFLA Leave

PVAREF recognizes that there are times when you may require a leave of absence from work. Certain reasons for absence will qualify for job protection and benefit continuation under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Oregon Family and Medical Leave Act (OFLA). Even though these legal leaves are an unpaid benefit, you will be eligible to access your sick, annual leave and other accruals to continue your pay. Even if you run out of sick or annual leave pay, PVAREF paid health and life insurance coverage may continue:

Please see the Human Resources bulletin board for more information regarding FMLA and OFLA benefits (a copy of the FMLA/OFLA poster is provided at the end of this handbook). A FAQ guide explaining these benefits in more detail is also available from Human Resources.

To apply for one of these leaves, please submit the Leave Request form at least 30 days before your leave begins unless it is an emergency situation. Depending on the type of leave, you may be required to submit one of the applicable certification forms from your healthcare provider.

We use a “rolling forward year” to determine an employee’s FMLA and OFLA leave entitlement. This means that we look forward on the calendar for one year from the first day of your leave. This method tells us if you are eligible for FMLA and/or OFLA leave and how much of this job-protected time you have available to use. If you are entitled to paid leave under another benefit plan or policy, you must take the paid leave first and your FMLA/OFLA leave entitlement will run concurrently.

If you are on an unpaid leave of absence, you will not accrue annual leave, sick and holiday benefits during your leave. Your accrual will resume when you return to work. You will continue to accrue these benefits when you are on paid leave (e.g. annual leave, sick leave and holidays).

We understand that all this information is complicated and sometimes is difficult to understand. Please do not hesitate to contact Human Resources if you have questions, for the applicable forms or to help you through the process.

## Family and Medical Leave of Absence

### FMLA General Provisions

We will provide a leave of absence for up to 12 workweeks (or up to 26 workweeks of military caregiver leave) to eligible employees for certain family or medical reasons and in accordance to the Family and Medical Leave Act. The function of this policy is to provide you with a general description of your FMLA rights. In the event of any conflict between this policy and the applicable law, you will be afforded all rights required by law.

### FMLA Eligibility

Employees eligible for leave of absence under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) must have worked for the Organization for 12 months (or 52 weeks) or more and have at least 1250 hours of service during the 12 months immediately preceding the leave of absence.

The 12 months or 52 weeks need not have been consecutive. Separate periods of employment will be counted, provided that the break in service does not exceed seven years. Separate periods of employment will be counted if the break in service exceeds seven years due to National Guard or Reserve military service obligations or when there is a written agreement, including a collective bargaining agreement, stating the employer’s intention to rehire the employee after the service break.

The provisions of this policy shall apply to all FMLA leaves; however, if you are entitled to paid leave under another benefit plan or policy, you must take the paid leave first, before taking unpaid leave. Your total available leave time may still be limited to 12 workweeks (or 26 workweeks to care for an injured or ill service member) in the given 12-month period, unless the you are entitled to state family leave.

### Types of Leave Covered Under FMLA

You may request federal Family and Medical Leave for:

- The addition of a child to the family through birth, adoptions or placement by foster care
- A serious health condition of your spouse, child or parent
- A serious health condition that prevents you from performing your job
- Qualifying exigency leave for families of active duty service members





- Military caregiver leave (also known as covered service member leave) to care for an ill or injured service member, including veterans who were injured any time during the five years preceding the date of treatment.

You may take leave because of a serious health condition that makes you unable to perform the functions of your position.

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents you from performing the functions of your job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

An employee whose spouse, son, daughter or parent either has been notified of an impending call or order to active military duty or who is already on active duty may take up to 12 workweeks of leave for reasons related to or affected by the family member's call-up or service. The qualifying exigency must be one of the following: 1) short-notice deployment, 2) military events and activities, 3) child care and school activities, 4) financial and legal arrangements, 5) counseling, 6) rest and recuperation, 7) post-deployment activities and 8) additional activities that arise out of active duty, provided that the employer and employee agree, including agreement on timing and duration of the leave.

The leave may commence as soon as the individual receives the call-up notice. (Son or daughter for this type of FMLA leave is defined the same as for child for other types of FMLA leave except that the person does not have to be a minor.) This type of leave would be counted toward your 12-week maximum of FMLA leave in a 12-month period.

Military caregiver leave may extend to up to 26 workweeks in a single 12-month period for an employee to care for a spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin covered service member with a serious illness or injury incurred in the line of duty or on active duty.

This caregiver leave also includes veterans who are undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy for serious injury or illness that occurred any time during the five years preceding the date of treatment. Next of kin is defined as the closest blood relative of the injured or recovering service member.

### **Amount of Leave While on FMLA**

An eligible employee can take up to 12 weeks for any FMLA circumstance under this policy during any 12-month period. We will measure the 12-month period as a rolling 12-month period measured forward from the date you use any leave under this policy. Each time you take leave, we will compute the amount of leave you have taken under this policy in the last 12 months and subtract it from the 12 weeks of available leave, and the balance remaining is the amount you are entitled to take at that time.

An eligible employee can take up to 26 weeks for military caregiver leave during a single 12-month period. For this military caregiver leave, we will measure the 12-month period as a rolling 12-month period measured forward. FMLA leave already taken for other FMLA circumstances will be deducted from the total of 26 weeks available.

### **Employee Status and Benefits During FMLA**

Employees on leave are entitled to continue health benefits on the same terms and conditions as active employees for up to 12 workweeks in a leave calculation year. We will recover premiums paid on behalf of an employee who does not return to work for reasons other than a serious health condition of the employee or family member or other circumstances beyond the control of the employee.

If you pay a portion of the premium for your group insurance coverage, you are advised to continue paying these contributions during the period of unpaid leave in order to retain your group insurance coverage. You shall make these arrangements with your supervisor. The payment must be received in a timely manner. If the payment is more than 30 days late, your health care coverage may be dropped for the duration of the leave. We will provide 15 days' notification prior to your loss of coverage.

### **Employee Status After FMLA**

An employee who takes leave under this policy may be asked to provide a fitness for duty (FFD) clearance from the health care provider. This requirement will be



included in our response to the FMLA request. Generally, an employee who takes FMLA leave will be able to return to the same position or a position with equivalent status, pay, benefits and other employment terms. The position will be the same or one which is virtually identical in terms of pay, benefits and working conditions. We may choose to exempt certain key employees from this requirement and not return them to the same or similar position.

### **Use of Paid and Unpaid Leave on FMLA**

An employee who is taking FMLA leave because of their own serious health condition or the serious health condition of a family member must use all paid annual leave or sick leave prior to being eligible for unpaid leave. Sick leave may be run concurrently with FMLA leave if the reason for the FMLA leave is covered by the established sick leave policy.

Disability leave for the birth of the child and for your serious health condition, including workers' compensation leave (to the extent that it qualifies), will be designated as FMLA leave and will run concurrently with FMLA. For example, if we provide six weeks of pregnancy disability leave, the six weeks will be designated as FMLA leave and counted toward your 12-week entitlement. You may then be required to substitute accrued (or earned) paid leave as appropriate before being eligible for unpaid leave for what remains of the 12-week entitlement. An employee who is taking leave for the adoption or foster care of a child must use all paid annual leave or family leave prior to being eligible for unpaid leave.

An employee who is using military FMLA leave for a qualifying exigency must use all paid vacation and personal leave prior to being eligible for unpaid leave. An employee using FMLA military caregiver leave must also use all paid vacation, personal leave or sick leave (as long as the reason for the absence is covered by our sick leave policy) prior to being eligible for unpaid leave.

Annual leave, sick leave, and holiday benefits will not accrue during the unpaid portion of leave and will resume upon return to active employment

### **Intermittent Leave or a Reduced Work Schedule for FMLA**

You may take FMLA leave in 12 consecutive weeks, may use the leave intermittently (take a day periodically when needed over the year) or, under certain circumstances, may use the leave to reduce the workweek or workday, resulting in a reduced hour

schedule. In all cases, the leave may not exceed a total of 12 workweeks (or 26 workweeks to care for an injured or ill service member over a 12-month period).

We may temporarily transfer an employee to an available alternative position with equivalent pay and benefits if the alternative position would better accommodate the intermittent or reduced schedule, in instances when leave for the employee or employee's family member is foreseeable and for planned medical treatment, including recovery from a serious health condition or to care for a child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care.

For the birth, adoption or foster care of a child, the Organization and the employee must mutually agree to the schedule before the employee may take the leave intermittently or work a reduced hour schedule. Leave for birth, adoption or foster care of a child must be taken within one year of the birth or placement of the child.

If you are taking leave for a serious health condition or because of the serious health condition of a family member, you should try to reach agreement with the Organization before taking intermittent leave or working a reduced hour schedule. If this is not possible, then you must prove that the use of the leave is medically necessary.

### **Certification for a FMLA Serious Health Condition**

We will require a medical certification of serious health conditions. You will be required to provide the certification in a timely manner. We will require returning employees to provide a certification of fitness to return to work.

The Organization will require certification of the qualifying exigency for military family leave and for the serious injury or illness of the covered service member.

You must respond to such a request within 15 days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of leave.

### **Requesting FMLA Leave**

When the need for leave is foreseeable, such as the birth or adoption of a child, or planned medical treatment, you must provide reasonable prior notice of 30 days. In cases of planned medical treatment, you must make every effort to schedule leave so as not to disrupt organization operations. For emergency treatment or hospitalization, you or your family member



is to notify your supervisor as soon as possible. In cases of illness, you will be required to report periodically on your leave status and intention to return to work. If during FMLA leave you decide not to return to work, you must immediately notify your supervisor.

Contact your supervisor or Human Resources for further information about your eligibility for this, or any other form of family leave. If there are greater rights under state law, they will apply.

## Oregon Family Medical Leave of Absence

The Oregon Family Medical Leave Act is a state law which allows you to take up to 12 workweeks of unpaid, job-protected leave within a 12-month period. To be eligible for OFLA, you must have been employed by the Organization for at least 180 days and worked an average of 25 hours per week in the previous 180 days. The minimum of 25 hours worked requirement does not apply to OFLA used for the birth, adoption or foster placement of a child. Only an average of 20 hours worked per week needs to be met to qualify for Military Family Leave.

In addition to leave for the reasons provided by FMLA, OFLA may be granted for any of the following reasons (OFLA-qualifying event):

- For your own serious health condition (includes pregnancy disability)
- To care for a family member with a serious health condition
- To care for a minor child who is ill and requires home care, even if the child does not have a serious health condition, provided another family member is not willing and able to care for the child (sick child leave). Employees who use sick child leave on more than three occasions in a 12-month period may be required to provide medical documentation from the child's doctor to verify that the child was ill and required home care for all subsequent uses of sick child leave in the 12-month period
- To deal with the death of a family member by attending the funeral (or alternative type of service) of the family member, make arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member or to grieve the death of a family member
- The addition of a child to the family through birth, adoption or placement by foster care (parental leave)

During times of military conflict, an employee with a spouse in the military may take up to 14 days of unpaid leave to spend with their spouse while their spouse is on leave from deployment, or prior to and up to the time of deployment (Oregon military leave) "Family member" means the spouse, same-gender domestic partner, custodial parent, non-custodial parent, adoptive parent, foster parent, biological parent, parent-in-law, parent of same-gender domestic partner, grandparent or grandchild of the employee, or a person with whom the employee is or was in a relationship of in loco parentis. It also includes the biological, adopted, foster or stepchild of an employee or the child of an employee's same-gender domestic partner.

## OFLA Notice and Certification Requirements

In addition to the basic 12-week family leave entitlement, Oregon employees may qualify for additional state family leave in the following circumstances:

- 12 weeks of leave for an illness, injury or condition related to pregnancy or child birth that disables the employee
- Employees who take 12 weeks for parental leave are entitled to an additional 12 weeks of leave to care for a sick child; and
- A maximum of two weeks of leave per death of a family member, up to a maximum of 12 weeks per leave year and must be completed within 60 days after the date on which the employee receives notice of the death of the family member.

You may be required to give a 30 day written notice in advance of leave, unless the leave is taken for an emergency. In an emergency, you must give verbal notice within 24 hours of starting a leave. You can provide oral notice by having someone else provide the notice on your behalf. However, you must provide written notice within three days of returning to work.

An employee who intends to take military family leave must provide the Organization with notice of their intention within five business days of receiving official notice of an impending call or order to active duty or of a leave from deployment.

OFLA runs concurrently with FMLA in most circumstances. We use a "rolling forward year" to determine an employee's OFLA leave entitlement. This means that we look forward on the calendar for one year



from the first day of your leave. This method tells us if you are eligible for OFLA leave and how much of this job-protected time you have available to use.

In the event of any conflict between this policy and the applicable law, you will be afforded all rights required by law.

### **OFLA Pay**

The provisions of this policy shall apply to all OFLA leaves; however, if you are entitled to paid leave under another benefit plan or policy, you must take the paid leave first. Your total available leave time may still be limited to 12 weeks in the given 12-month period. In the event of any conflict between this policy and the applicable law, you will be afforded all rights required by law.

### **OFLA Benefits Continuation**

Annual leave, sick leave, and holiday benefits will not accrue during the unpaid portion of leave and will resume upon return to active employment.

Effective January 1, 2016, employers must continue an employee's group health insurance coverage while the employee is on leave under OFLA, on the same terms as when the employee is not on leave. The employee must continue to make any regular contributions to the cost of the health insurance premiums. This has already been the requirement for leave covered under FMLA, but as of 2016 the requirement applies even to leaves that are covered under OFLA only.

### **Worker's Compensation Leave**

Time off for a workers' compensation injury or illness does not reduce your OFLA leave entitlement. Generally, reinstatement following OFLA is to your former position, unless the position has been eliminated, in which case you may be entitled to reinstatement to an available equivalent job. An employee who takes leave under this policy may be asked to provide a release for duty clearance from the health care provider.

Please consult Human Resources for other information regarding leaves of absence, or you may contact your supervisor.

### **Oregon Domestic Violence Leave**

We provide a domestic violence leave of absence without pay to Oregon employees who wish to take time off from work duties if he/she is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking or is a parent or

guardian of a minor child or dependent who is a victim. Eligible employees may choose to use accrued PTO or sick during this leave so the leave will be paid.

All information and documentation pertaining to the leave, including the fact you requested or obtained leave, will be kept strictly confidential.

We also provide reasonable safety accommodations to employees who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking, including but not limited to transfer, reassignment, a modified schedule or unpaid leave, unless to do so creates an undue hardship for us.

Please see the posted requirements on the employee bulletin board or contact your supervisor for further details or to request leave.

### **Oregon Crime Victims' Leave**

Employees who are the victim of a crime may be eligible for unpaid leave in order to assist in the prosecution and trial of the accused. Employees taking qualifying Crime Victims' Leave may choose to use annual leave during this leave so the leave will be paid.

In order to be eligible to take this leave, you must have worked for the Organization at least 25 hours per week for the 180 days immediately preceding the leave. You must also be the victim of the crime.

Please provide no less than three days notice of the intention to take leave to attend a court hearing. Please also provide a copy of any hearing notice prior to taking the leave.

### **Military Leave**

A military leave of absence will be granted to employees who are absent from work because of service in the U.S. Uniformed Services in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Advance notice of military service is required, unless military necessity prevents such notice or it is otherwise impossible or unreasonable. Discrimination and retaliation in employment based on your military service is prohibited, and you will retain all your legal rights for continued employment under USERRA.



## Witness Duty

We encourage employees to appear in court for witness duty when subpoenaed to do so.

If you have been subpoenaed or otherwise requested to testify as a witness by PVARF, you will receive paid time off for the entire period of witness duty.

You will be granted unpaid time off to appear in court as a witness when requested by a party other than PVARF. You are free to use any available paid leave benefit (such as annual leave) to receive compensation for the period of this absence.

The subpoena should be shown to your supervisor immediately after it is received so that operating requirements can be adjusted, where necessary, to accommodate your absence. You are expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits.

## Bereavement Leave

One of the difficult certainties of life is that, at various times, we are touched by loss. Employees who wish to take time off due to the death of an immediate family member should notify their supervisor immediately. The use of sick leave, annual leave or unpaid leave will be granted to allow you to attend the funeral and make any necessary arrangements associated with the death.

Bereavement leave will normally be granted unless there are unusual business needs or staffing requirements. For employees eligible for Oregon Family Leave, up to two weeks of bereavement leave per family member may run concurrently with, and qualify as, OFLA. You may, with your supervisors' approval, use any available paid leave for additional time off as necessary.

For purposes of bereavement leave, we define "immediate family" as the employee's spouse, parent, child, sibling; the employee's spouse's parent, child, or sibling; the employee's child's spouse; grandparents or grandchildren. Special consideration will also be given to any other person whose association with the employee was similar to any of the above relationships.

## Personal Leave

We recognize that there will be times when an employee needs extended time off due to personal matters. Regular full-time employees are eligible to request an unpaid personal leave as described in this policy.

As soon as you become aware of the need for a personal leave of absence, you should request a leave from your supervisor.

Personal leave may be granted for a period of up to 30 calendar days every one year. With a supervisor's approval, you may take any available sick leave or PTO as part of the approved period of leave. Consideration will be given to requests for extensions to the maximum period for a personal leave of absence.

Requests for personal leave will be evaluated based on a number of factors, including anticipated work load requirements and staffing considerations during the proposed period of absence.

Subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of the applicable plans, health insurance benefits will be provided by PVARF until the end of the month in which the approved personal leave begins. At that time, you will become responsible for the full costs of these benefits if you wish coverage to continue. When you return from personal leave, benefits will again be provided by PVARF according to the applicable plans.

Benefit accruals, such as annual leave, sick leave or holiday benefits, will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon return to active employment.

When a personal leave ends, every reasonable effort will be made to return you to the same position, if it is available, or to a similar available position for which you are qualified. However, we cannot guarantee reinstatement in all cases.

If you fail to report to work promptly at the expiration of the approved leave period, we will assume you have resigned.



## Commonly Used Abbreviations

AO	Administrative Officer
ACOS	Associate Chief of Staff
A&MM	Acquisition & Material Management
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
ECU	Emergency Care Unit
HRMS	Human Resources Management Service
HSR&D	Health Services Research & Development Service
IMP	Injury Management Program
JCAHO	Joint Commission Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations
OPC	Outpatient Clinic
OHSU	Oregon Health & Science University
OSHA	Occupational Safety & Health Administration
PI	Principal Investigator
PVARF	Portland VA Research Foundation,
RR&D	Rehabilitation Research & Development Service
R&D	Research & Development
VACO	Veterans Administration Central Office
VAPORHCS	VA Portland Health Care System
VMU	Veterinary Medical Unit

# EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

## Basic Leave Entitlement

FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:

- for incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
- to care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- to care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

## Military Family Leave Entitlements

Eligible employees whose spouse, son, daughter or parent is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered servicemember during a single 12-month period. A covered servicemember is: (1) a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness\*; or (2) a veteran who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable at any time during the five-year period prior to the first date the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered veteran, and who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness.\*

**\*The FMLA definitions of "serious injury or illness" for current servicemembers and veterans are distinct from the FMLA definition of "serious health condition".**

## Benefits and Protections

During FMLA leave, the employer must maintain the employee's health coverage under any "group health plan" on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

## Eligibility Requirements

Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least 12 months, have 1,250 hours of service in the previous 12 months\*, and if at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles.

**\*Special hours of service eligibility requirements apply to airline flight crew employees.**

## Definition of Serious Health Condition

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and

a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

## Use of Leave

An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

## Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave

Employees may choose or employers may require use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, employees must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

## Employee Responsibilities

Employees must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with an employer's normal call-in procedures.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the employer to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform the employer if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

## Employer Responsibilities

Covered employers must inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice must specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for the ineligibility.

Covered employers must inform employees if leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the employer determines that the leave is not FMLA-protected, the employer must notify the employee.

## Unlawful Acts by Employers

FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

- interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under FMLA; and
- discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

## Enforcement

An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement which provides greater family or medical leave rights.

**FMLA section 109 (29 U.S.C. § 2619) requires FMLA covered employers to post the text of this notice. Regulation 29 C.F.R. § 825.300(a) may require additional disclosures.**



For additional information:  
1-866-4US-WAGE (1-866-487-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627  
[WWW.WAGEHOUR.DOL.GOV](http://WWW.WAGEHOUR.DOL.GOV)

U.S. Department of Labor | Wage and Hour Division



WHD Publication 1420 - Revised February 2013



Oregon

Brad Avakian, Commissioner



# FAMILY LEAVE ACT

## NOTICE TO EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES

The Oregon Family Leave Act (OFLA) requires employers of 25 or more employees to provide eligible workers with protected leave to care for themselves or family members in cases of death, illness, injury, childbirth, adoption and foster placement. ORS 659A.150-659A.186

### When can an Employee take Family Leave?

Employees can take family leave for the following reasons:

- **Parental Leave** during the year following the birth of a child or adoption or foster placement of a child under 18, or a child 18 or older if incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability. Parental leave includes leave to effectuate the legal process required for foster placement or adoption.
- **Serious health condition leave** for the employee's own serious health condition, or to care for a spouse, same-gender domestic partner, custodial parent, non-custodial parent, adoptive parent, foster parent, biological parent, step parent, parent in law, parent of same-gender domestic partner, grandparent, grandchild, a person whom the employee is or was a relationship of in loco parentis, biological, adopted, foster or step child of an employee or the child of an employee's same-gender domestic partner.
- **Pregnancy disability leave** (a form of serious health condition leave) taken by a female employee for an incapacity related to pregnancy or childbirth, occurring before or after the birth of the child, or for prenatal care.
- **Sick child leave** taken to care for an employee's child with an illness or injury that requires home care but is not a serious health condition.
- **Bereavement leave** to deal with the death of a family member.
- **Oregon Military Family Leave** is taken by the spouse or same gender domestic partner of a service member who has been called to active duty or notified of an impending call to active duty or is on leave from active duty during a period of military conflict.

### Who is Eligible?

To be eligible for leave, workers must be employed for the 180 day calendar period immediately preceding the leave and have worked at least an average of 25 hours per week during the 180-day period.

**Exception 1:** For parental leave, workers are eligible after being employed for 180 calendar days, without regard to the number of hours worked.

**Exception 2:** For Oregon Military Family Leave, workers are eligible if they have worked at least an average of 20 hours per week, without regard to the duration of employment.

**Exception 3:** For compensable Workers Compensation injuries, for certain Workers Compensation injuries involving denied and then accepted claims and for certain accepted claims involving more than one employer.

**Exception 4:** When an employee is caring for a family member with a serious health condition and the same family member dies, the employee need not requalify with the 25 hour per week average to be eligible for bereavement leave.

### How much Leave can an Employee take?

- Employees are generally entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks of family leave within the employer's 12-month leave year.
- A woman using pregnancy disability leave is entitled to 12 additional weeks of leave in the same leave year for any qualifying OFLA purpose.
- A man or woman using a full 12 weeks of parental leave is entitled to take up to 12 additional weeks for the purpose of sick child leave.
- Employees are entitled to 2 weeks of bereavement leave to be taken within 60 days of the notice of the death of a covered family member.
- A spouse or same gender domestic partner of a service member is entitled to a total of 14 days of leave per deployment after the military spouse has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty and before deployment and when the military spouse is on leave from deployment.

### What Notice is Required?

Employees may be required to give 30 days notice in advance of leave, unless the leave is taken for an emergency. Employers may require that notice is given in writing. In an emergency, employees must give verbal notice within 24 hours of starting a leave.

### Is Family Leave paid or unpaid? Benefits?

- Although Family Leave is unpaid, employees are entitled to use any accrued paid vacation, sick or other paid leave.
- Employees are entitled to group health insurance benefits during family leave as if they continued working.

### How is an Employee's job Protected?

Employers must return employees to their former jobs or to equivalent jobs if the former position no longer exists. However, employees on OFLA leave are still subject to nondiscriminatory employment actions such as layoff or discipline that would have been taken without regard to the employee's leave.

### FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Employer Assistance . . . 971-673-0824  
 Portland . . . . . 971-673-0761  
 Eugene . . . . . 541-686-7623  
 Salem . . . . . 503-378-3292

BOLI  
 Civil Rights Division  
 800 NE Oregon, #1045  
 Portland, OR 97232

[www.oregon.gov/BOLI](http://www.oregon.gov/BOLI)

**Employees who have been denied available leave, disciplined or retaliated against for requesting or taking leave, or have been denied reinstatement to the same or equivalent position when they returned from leave, may file a complaint with BOLI's Civil Rights Division.**

This is a summary of laws relating to Oregon Family Leave Act. It is not a complete text of the law.

January 2016

**THIS INFORMATION MUST BE POSTED IN A CONSPICUOUS LOCATION**



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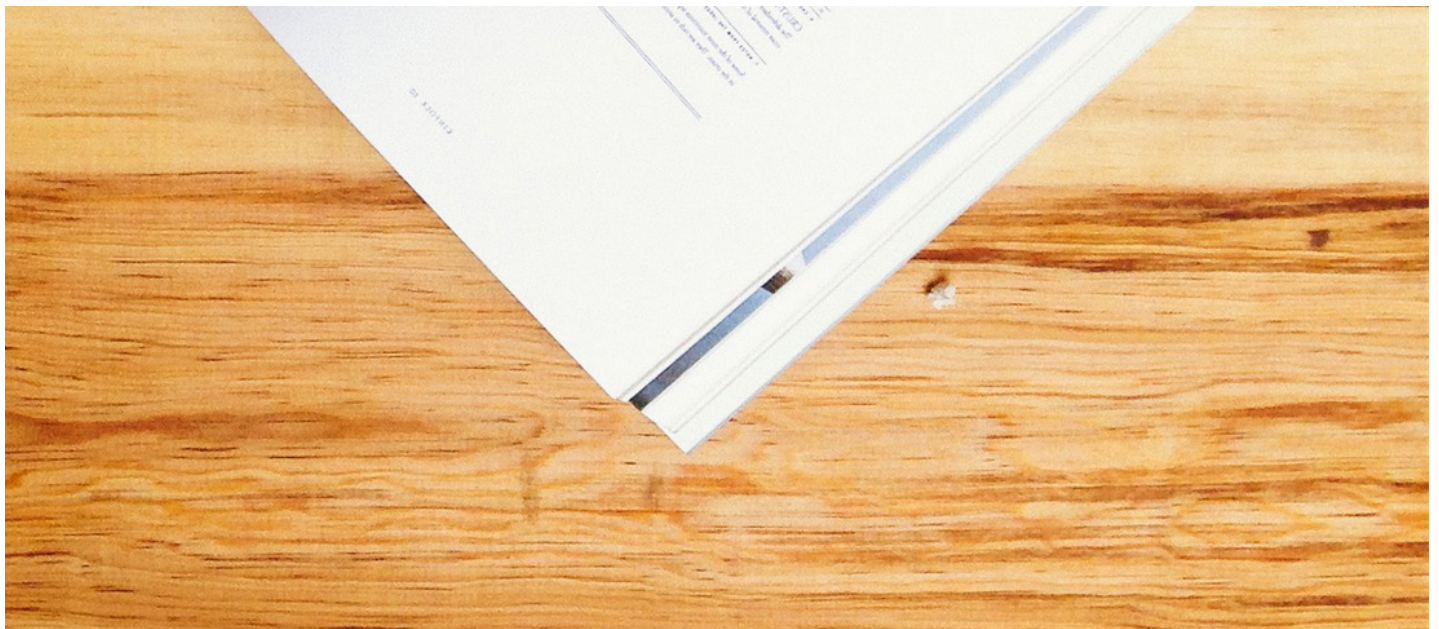
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## Receipt of Employee Handbook

This acknowledges I have received a copy of the PVARF) Employee Handbook and Alcohol & Drug Free Workplace Policy. As an employee of PVARF, I agree to read this Handbook, and to ask my supervisor about any portion of this Handbook I do not understand. I understand and agree that PVARF has the right to add, delete or otherwise modify the policies, procedures or other information provided in this Handbook at any time. I also understand and agree that PVARF has the right to interpret and apply the policies and procedures in this Handbook in their discretion. I agree to abide by these policies, procedures and other requirements of this Handbook. I understand that my failure to do so will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination for the first offense.

I understand that neither this Employee Handbook nor any verbal statements made by PVARF constitute an agreement or promise of continued employment and that the provisions of this Handbook may be changed at any time. I understand that I am employed at will and that PVARF reserves the right to terminate my employment at any time for any reason, with or without cause or notice, and that I also reserve the right to terminate my employment at any time for any reason, with or without cause or notice. Only the President of PVARF is authorized to modify this at-will employment policy or enter into an agreement contrary to this policy. Any such modification must be in writing and signed by me and the President.

If I have any questions about this employment relationship, I understand that I can contact my supervisor.

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**Print name**

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**Employee's signature**

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**Date**