

# Tahlequah Area Chamber of Commerce

## **Employee Handbook**

**Approved October 26, 2015**

## **INTRODUCTION**

These policies and procedures are intended to be used as a guide for the consistent implementation and communication of personnel practices for the Tahlequah Area Chamber of Commerce, hereafter referred to as TACC. Situations may arise that are not specifically covered by this manual and in such situations, decisions by the Executive Director and/or TACC President shall be binding.

The policies stated in this manual are subject to change without notice and at the sole discretion of the TACC's Board of Directors. Policy set forth in the manual supersedes all previous policy statements. Once any changes to the manual are approved by the Board of Directors, the Executive Director shall immediately distribute the revision to TACC staff. The Board Secretary will maintain a master copy of these personnel policies along with any superseded policies. The Executive Director shall maintain a master copy of these personnel policies for the office.

This document does not express conditions of employment, nor does it create a contract between employees and the TACC.

### **Distribution and Maintenance**

Each TACC employee shall receive a current copy of the TACC Employee Handbook and verify receipt of that handbook by signing the Employee Handbook Acknowledgement Form. Each employee is responsible for maintaining his/her assigned copy of the handbook and any approved changes made to the handbook.

## **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

It is the policy of the TACC to grant equal opportunity to all qualified persons without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability or veteran status. To deny one's contribution to our efforts for any reason other than his or her capability of performing the job is an injustice not only to the individual, but to the TACC and community as well. It is the intent and desire of the TACC that equal opportunity be provided in employment, wages, probation, benefits and all other privileges, terms and conditions of employment.

### **At Will Employment**

TACC employees have the right to leave their employment at any time, for any reason, with or without notice. The TACC has the right to terminate employees at any time, for any non-discriminatory reason, with or without notice. Compliance with the policies specified herein does not imply any contractual agreement regarding employment or conditions of employment.

### **Immigration Law Compliance**

The TACC is committed to employing only people who are United States citizens or who are aliens legally authorized to work in the United States. For compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, every new TACC employee is required to complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and show documents that prove identity and employment eligibility.

### **Employees with Disabilities**

TACC is firmly committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other federal and state legislation designed to ensure equal employment opportunities to persons with disabilities. TACC prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in regard to all employment practices or terms, conditions and privileges of employment. Consistent with this policy and applicable law, the TACC will make reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of qualified applicants or employees, unless to do so would cause an undue hardship on the operation of its organization.

### **Religious Accommodation**

The TACC will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the religious practices of our employees. Whenever an employee requests an accommodation, the TACC will consider such possibilities as time off or change in job assignment. The requested accommodation, however, must be reasonable. Accommodations will not be made that would create an undue hardship on the conduct of the TACC. Based on the facts in each case, the Executive Director and/or Board of Directors will determine whether a requested accommodation would create an undue hardship.

## **EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**

### **Hiring**

The Executive Director has the responsibility for hiring staff members to conduct business of the TACC. In the event a vacancy exists with the Executive Director, the President shall establish a Search Committee comprised of board members and members of the TACC in good standing for the purpose of finding a suitable candidate for the vacancy. The Search Committee shall make a recommendation to the entire Board of Directors for consideration of the candidate. The Board of Directors must approve the hiring of an Executive Director for the TACC.

### **Full Time Status Employee**

A TACC employee who works 35 hours or more per work week on a regular year round basis is considered full time. Employees may be exempt or non-exempt as defined in this policy.

### **Part Time Status Employee**

A TACC employee who works less than 35 hours per work week on a regular year round basis is considered part time.

### **Exempt Employee**

An exempt employee is one who, because of their positional duties, responsibilities and level of decision making authority, is exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). An exempt employee is expected to work whatever hours are necessary to accomplish the goals and deliverables of the TACC in their exempt position and are not eligible for overtime pay.

### **Non Exempt Employee**

An employee who is required to be paid overtime at the rate of time and one half for any hours physically worked over 40 hours in a work week. The Executive Director must approve all overtime prior to the employee working overtime.

### **Orientation**

It is the policy of the TACC to conduct an Orientation Program for newly hired employees. During the orientation, new employees are provided an opportunity to become familiar with the TACC various policies, procedures and employee benefits. New employees are encouraged to ask any questions that will help them better understand the organization and the policies that will affect and govern their employment relationship with the TACC. The orientation shall include pertinent information including performance requirements of the employee's position, all applicable policies and procedures, compensation policy, benefit programs, other information necessary to acquaint the new employee with TACC. As a condition of employment, the new employee is required to present the TACC with information verifying identity and eligibility to work in the United States.

### **Introductory Period**

New or rehired employees of the TACC must complete a 90 calendar introductory period. The successful completion of the introductory period should not be construed as creating a contract or as guaranteeing employment for any specific duration.

### **Employee Reviews**

#### **Probationary**

Each new employee shall be evaluated with a written performance review prior to 90 calendar days of employment. Evaluations will be completed by the Executive Director after review by the President. If the new employee is the Executive Director, a 120 day evaluation will be completed by the President with input from the Board.

### Annual

Each employee will be reviewed annually prior to their perspective anniversary date of hire. TACC employees will be completed by the Executive Director after review by the President. The Executive Director's evaluation will be completed by the President with input from the Board.

### **Paydays**

Employees are paid bi-weekly, the Wednesday following the pay period end. In the event that a regularly schedule payday falls on a holiday, paychecks will be distributed the immediate preceding business day.

### **Disbursement of Pay**

#### Pay Scale/Salary

Salaries are based on job content, responsibility and skills. Decisions as to base pay, increases or decreases in pay, bonuses, retirement, and other benefits are recommended by the Executive Director for Board approval. The Executive Director's base pay, increases or decreases in pay, bonuses, retirement and any other benefits, will be recommended by the President with final approval by the Board.

#### Pay Increases

The TACC will take into consideration the results of the performance appraisal when making decisions on merit pay increases. A positive performance appraisal does not guarantee a raise. Other factors, such as the organization's financial performance, the economy and projected cutbacks, can have an effect on the ability of the organization to provide financial rewards to our employees.

#### Pay Deductions

Standard deductions are taken from pay including federal income tax, social security and state income tax.

### **Record of Work Time**

Time worked shall be recorded on the TACC Time Sheet. Each time sheet should reflect the employees first and last name, hours worked each day as well as any PTO used during the pay period. Both the employee and the employee's supervisor must sign the time sheet to ensure accuracy of time worked.

Falsification of your time sheet may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **Notice of Termination**

In the event any employee wishes to terminate their employment relationship, he/she is requested to notify the Executive Director at least two weeks in advance. Such notice should be given in writing. Proper notice generally allows sufficient time to calculate all accrued pay and benefits as well as other monies to which the employee may be entitled, and include such monies in their final paycheck. All TACC property including, but not limited to phones, keys, materials, etc. must be turned in to the Executive Director upon termination. If the employee is the Executive Director, he/she will need to follow the same process with notification made to the President.

### **Dismissal**

Please refer to the At-Will Employment Section.

## **BENEFITS**

### **Workers Compensation**

Each employee is covered by Workers Compensation Insurance in accordance with Oklahoma law. In the event that an employee is injured on the job, it is his/her responsibility to immediately complete an incident report and give it in writing to the Executive Director. In the event the Executive Director is injured the report needs to be made to the President.

### **Social Security**

The TACC participates in the Federal Social Security program in the manner required under federal law.

### **Group Health Insurance**

The TACC provides a health insurance plan for full time employees and pays a percentage based on the current year's budget. An employee becomes eligible for coverage after completion of 90 days of employment. Optional coverage for dental, vision, hearing, cancer, disability and life insurance may be available with employees responsible for the premiums.

### **Annual and Sick Leave (Paid Time Off - PTO)**

The TACC provides all full-time, full-year employees with paid time off (Paid Time Off, also known as PTO) in lieu of traditional benefits of paid vacation, personal days, and sick days. PTO may be taken by eligible employees, with prior approval from the Executive Director. The Executive Director must obtain prior approval from the President of the Board. PTO is to be used at such times and in such increments as best accommodates each employee's schedule and the demands of the current scope of work of the TACC. Each employee will complete a Projected Vacation Form at the beginning of each service year they are employed with the TACC.

### **PTO Accrual**

PTO is intended to allow employees paid time off from work for reasons such as vacation, personal illness, family illness, medical appointments, religious or ethnic

holidays, or personal or family commitments. An employee who is absent from work for any reason is required to take any accrued but unused PTO before taking unpaid time off.

All full-time, regular employees are eligible for PTO, which is earned at a rate ranging from 117 hours per year to 195 hours per year, depending upon years of service. Leave accrual for part-time employees is calculated on a prorated basis.

Employees with three years of service or less are eligible to accrue 117 hours of PTO per year, at a rate of 4.5 hours of PTO per pay period.

Employees with more than three years but less than seven years of service are eligible to accrue 156 hours of PTO per year, at a rate of 6 hours of PTO per pay period.

Employees with more than seven years of service are eligible to accrue 195 hours of PTO per year, at a rate of 7.5 hours of PTO per pay period.

Employees that are regular part time may earn PTO at half the rate of a regular full time employee.

PTO cannot be used until it is accrued. Employees are responsible for monitoring and taking their PTO over the course of the fiscal year so that they do not lose time accrued when the current fiscal year ends.

If any unused PTO hours remain at the end of the service year, the TACC will pay to the employee for up to 40 hours of unused PTO. All hours above 40 hours will be forfeited at the end of the service year.

#### Use of PTO

PTO should be requested in 4 hour increments with at least five consecutive days of use being used each service year.

Where your need for PTO is foreseeable (such as for a vacation, school function, or previously scheduled doctor's appointment), you are required to provide your supervisor with reasonable advance notice, typically two weeks, and obtain approval prior to using PTO. This allows for you and your supervisor to prepare for your time off and assure that all staffing needs are met.

There may be occasions, such as sudden illness, where your need for PTO is unforeseeable. In those situations, you must comply with the notification procedures set forth in the Attendance Policy in order to request PTO. If the absence is due to illness, the TACC reserves the right at any time to require medical verification of the illness, regardless of its duration. Additionally, if you are absent for three consecutively scheduled work days or more, you may be required, upon returning to work, to provide your supervisor with a written statement signed by a physician verifying the absence was due to illness and that you are able to return to work. The TACC has discretion

whether to approve the use of PTO for an unforeseeable or unscheduled absence, whether due to illness or otherwise. Excessive use of unforeseeable or unscheduled PTO may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

When a TACC holiday falls during a scheduled vacation, that day is not counted as a PTO day.

#### PTO and Leave of Absence

PTO accrued prior to the start of a requested and approved unpaid leave of absence must be used to cover hours missed before the start of the unpaid leave. Under the TACC's Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Policy, all accrued PTO time must be taken concurrently with FMLA leave; once PTO is exhausted, any remaining FMLA leave is unpaid.

PTO will continue to accrue during the following paid leaves of absence: PTO, bereavement leave, and jury duty leave. It will not accrue during other paid and unpaid leaves of absence, including Short Term Disability, Long Term Disability, Military Leave, Child Care leave, and unpaid Family and Medical Leave.

#### PTO and Separation from the TACC

Employees are not entitled to pay in lieu of taking PTO, either before or when their employment is terminated for any reason.

Upon termination or separation from employment, any accrued, unused PTO hours remain; the TACC will pay up to 40 hours of unused time. Any hours above 40 will be forfeited.

#### Leave of Absence

Upon written request, the TACC may grant an employee a leave of absence without pay for a specified period of time. The employee making the request must have one year of service and have worked 1,250 hours to be considered for a leave of absence. The request should be made in advance. The TACC will not be required to hold open the position held by the employee on leave. When the employee returns pay will be according to the position assumed after the leave and not the pay before the leave.

If your leave request is for your own serious health condition, or that of a family member, medical certification will be required within 10 days from the start of the absence. Periodic recertifications may also be required.

If you are on an approved leave of absence, you can continue health insurance coverage by arranging to pay an amount equal to the administrative cost of insurance coverage to the TACC. You do not earn paid time off during an unpaid leave.

#### Bereavement

Full-time, regular and part-time, regular employees are granted up to three consecutive days of paid leave, one of which should be utilized to attend the funeral of the

deceased, at full salary for a death in their immediate family. Immediate family includes the employee's spouse, life partner, children, parents, siblings, and grandparents, member of the employee's household, and a spouse's parents and siblings. The Executive Director or President of the Board may require verification of death and the relationship of the deceased to the employee.

Other arrangements may be made based on need with the approval of the Executive Director or the President of the Board.

### **Jury Duty**

If an employee is summoned for jury duty, it is the employee's responsibility to notify the Executive Director promptly with a copy of the summons. In the event the Executive Director is summoned, notification should be made to the President. All compensation received for jury duty services shall be remitted to the TACC. The TACC shall pay the employee their regular rate of pay during the service period.

### **Holidays**

Employees will be compensated at their normal rate of pay for the following holidays...

New Years Eve  
New Years Day  
President's Day  
Memorial Day  
Independence Day  
Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Day (Thursday)  
The day after Thanksgiving (Friday)  
Christmas Eve  
Christmas Day

Those holidays falling on a Saturday will be observed on Friday. When a holiday falls on Sunday, it will be observed on Monday.

### **Military Training Leave**

Full-time, full year employees are granted up to ten days leave for annual military training programs for the National Guard, the regular armed forces, or reserves. The TACC will pay such an employee the difference between the compensation for military duty and his or her regular rate of pay, if military compensation is less than the employee's regular rate of pay. If an employee is conscripted or enlisted for an extended military obligation, the employee will not continue to receive compensation from the TACC.

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) protects the job rights of individuals who voluntarily or involuntarily leave employment positions to undertake military service. The law also prohibits employers from discriminating against past and present members of the uniformed services and

applicants to the uniformed services. In compliance with USERRA, the employee will be returned to their former job or a similar position at the completion of their military service if: 1) the employee reapplies for their job within 90 days of separating from service; and 2) the employee is qualified to perform the job.

Under the Uniform Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), an employee who takes a military leave of absence must meet six eligibility criteria in order to be entitled to the reemployment rights and benefits of USERRA. In compliance with USERRA, the employee will be returned to your former job or a similar position at the completion of the employee's military service, provided:

1. The employee was absent from civilian employment due to service in the uniformed services;
2. The employee gave timely advance written or verbal notice of his/her intention or obligation to serve, unless that notification was impossible due to military necessity or another reason outside his/her control;
3. The employee's cumulative absence(s) from the TACC due to military service does not exceed a total of five years. However, this five-year period does not include:
  - service that is required beyond five years to complete an initial period of obligated service
  - service during which the employee was unable to obtain discharge orders through no fault of his/her own
  - service required by the military for drills, annual training or completion of skills training
  - involuntary active duty during domestic emergency, national emergency, war or national security situations
  - service under an order to active duty, or to remain on active duty, during a war or national emergency declared by the President of the United States or Congress
  - active duty (other than for training) by volunteers supporting "operational missions" for which selective reservists have been ordered to active duty without their consent
  - federal service by members of the National Guard when called by the President to suppress an insurrection, repel an invasion or execute federal law.
4. The employee was honorably discharged from service;
5. The employee must report for work or submit an application for reemployment within the following time periods:
  - Military leave of less than 31 days: The employee must **report** for work by the beginning of the first full regularly scheduled work period on the first regularly scheduled work day that would fall 8 hours after the employee returned home from military service, allowing a reasonable time to commute home from service.
  - Military leave of 31 to 180 days: the employee must **apply** for reemployment not later than 14 days after completion of military service.

- Military leave of more than 180 days: the employee must **apply** for reemployment not later than 90 days after completion of military service.

6. The employee is qualified to perform the essential functions of his/her position.

Upon request from the TACC, an employee who has been absent from work for more than 30 days must provide documentation from the relevant branch of the uniformed services establishing the preceding criteria for reinstatement.

The employee will receive any other benefits to which you are entitled to by law.

### **Retirement**

The TACC maintains a Defined Contribution Retirement Plan under an IRA. Employees are not required, but strongly encouraged to participate in the Plan. Full Time and Regular Part Time employees are eligible that meet the qualifying factors of the Plan. Participating employees are fully vested in the Plan when you begin your contributions. Eligible employees may enroll in the retirement plan any time in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the plan.

Participants must elect to contribute a percentage of their salary to the plan on a pretax basis in order to receive any matching contribution from the TACC. Per the current plan, participants must elect to contribute up to 3% percent of their salary to the plan on a pretax basis in order to receive the TACC's matching contribution of an amount equal of up to 3% percent of the employee's salary. The participating employee may elect to contribute more than the TACC's matching contribution, but the TACC shall only match up to 3% of the employee's salary. Participants cannot exceed the maximum contribution limits imposed by the IRS.

### **Professional Development**

The TACC may, at its discretion, and on a case by case basis, as approved by the Executive Director and/or President, ask an employee to attend continuing education courses.

### **Benefit Options at Termination**

An employee terminating employment with the TACC, voluntarily or not, is entitled to conversion of medical insurance to individual or family coverage through COBRA, if the employee qualifies for COBRA benefits; and vested funds in the TACC's retirement plan.

# **WORKPLACE STANDARDS**

## **Hours of Employment**

The work week begins Sunday and ends Saturday. The TACC office itself operates on a thirty-five hour week with regular office hours of 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Lunch periods, not to exceed an hour, are generally taken between the hours of 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Because we serve the public, lunches are to be staggered so every effort is made for an employee to be at the TACC office during business hours. Employees are expected to observe these hours unless they have obtained prior approval from the Executive Director for any variation to these hours.

The Executive Director has the option to alter the work week to meet the needs of the TACC's scope of work and should only be administered when absolutely necessary.

## **Absenteeism and Tardiness**

An employee who expects to be absent from work, including tardiness, for any reason must notify the Executive Director as soon as possible. If the Executive Director expects to be absent from work including tardiness, for any reason, must notify the President as soon as possible. In the event of an unforeseen circumstance (i.e severe health issue, emergency) which requires an employee to be absent or tardy from work, that employee is required to notify the Executive Director of the intent to miss work within the first ten minutes of scheduled work hours. If the circumstance involves the Executive Director, he/she must notify the President within the same time frame. Absences should be personally reported. Only when uncontrollable circumstances dictate, notification may be made by a third party; provided, the employee shall give personal notice as soon as circumstances permit. An employee who has been absent from work due to an injury, surgery or serious illness may be required by the Executive Director or if applicable, the President of the Board to provide a "full" release "with no restrictions" from their physician prior to returning to work. An employee may be required by the Executive Director or if applicable, the President of the Board to produce a physician's statement or other evidence of illness or injury when an absence is prolonged or of a suspicious nature.

## **Smoking and Tobacco Use**

To protect the health and safety of all employees, the use of any tobacco product is prohibited within the confines of the office building as well as TACC's property used for TACC business. This includes, but is not limited to cigarettes including vapor cigarettes and electronic cigarettes as well as chew tobacco.

## **Weapons**

The TACC prohibits employees and non-employees, whether licensed to carry concealed handguns or not, from carrying weapons on the premises of the TACC or while performing services for the Organization. This prohibition is extended to employees who have licenses to carry concealed weapons from keeping such weapons in personally owned vehicles parked on the employer's premises.

### **Inclement Weather**

When inclement weather occurs it will be determined by the Executive Director if the TACC offices will close, if the Executive Director is unavailable the President will make the determination. The Executive Director, or President, will notify the staff as soon as possible. Furthermore, the TACC membership will be notified in the best possible manner.

### **Personal Appearance**

The need for proper appearance and personal hygiene and grooming from all employees is expected and the following guidelines should be adhered to:

- Maintain appropriate personal hygiene and grooming to alleviate any offensive body odors.
- Grooming should take place prior to arrival at work, i.e., initial application of make-up, hair grooming, nail grooming, and any other related activity.
- Aftershaves, colognes, perfumes and any other fragranced product should be used in a conservative manner and should not be overbearing to others.
- Clothing should be worn and fit in such a manner that that does not expose the abdomen (belly or lower back), chest, or buttock areas.
- Clothing should be free of sexually related references, foul language, nor suggest or promote any drug including alcohol and tobacco.
- All clothing should be neat and clean in appearance and without tears, holes or stains.
- Body piercing jewelry will only be worn on the ear. No other areas of the body should be visible with body piercing jewelry.
- Sleeveless tops and sleeveless dresses should be worn as to not show personal undergarments.
- Skirts and dresses should have professional length at all times including during sitting positions.
- Appropriate undergarments should be worn when wearing clothing that is thin, sheer or may be revealing through the fabric.

The dress standard for the TACC will be casual business dress. The following expectations and guidelines will help define acceptable casual business attire:

- All body types are different. Employees need to take into consideration their particular body type when dressing for work.
- Choose business casual clothing that communicates professionalism.
- Employees need to take their workday schedule into account when they are dressing.
- Casual business attire means clothing that allows the employees to feel comfortable at work, yet appropriate for an office environment, working with the public, attending meetings and overall representing the Tahlequah Area TACC of Commerce in a positive and professional manner at all times.
- Casual business attire includes, but is not limited to. Slacks, khakis, crop pants, polo and cotton shirts, collared shirts, skirts, dresses, sweaters, blouses, loafers, and sandals.

Clothing not considered business casual are:

Jeans, denim crop pants, tee-shirts, shorts, bib overalls, skirts, halter tops, crop tops, beachwear, athletic wear, sweat pants, sweat shirts, wind suits, tank tops, spandex, low cut tops, spaghetti straps and any distracting, offensive, derogatory or revealing clothing. Thongs, flip-flops, beach shoes (especially plastic and rubber varieties) and house slippers are also not allowed. Leather between the toes shoes are allowed as long as they are professional in appearance.

At times a project, event or other activity may require an employee to “dress down” in order to perform the objectives. Examples can include clean up days and setting up for outdoor events. Jeans, shorts, t-shirts, sweatshirts etc may be worn for “dress down” purposes and should be kept at professional as possible.

### **TACC Property**

An employee is responsible for any item that is issued to them to perform their job duties as an employee of the TACC. These items can include, but it not limited to (a) keys, (b) computers and equipment (c) cameras and equipment. (d) credit cards (e) phones (e) all other office/job-related property. The employee must maintain the proper working order of any issued work related item. The employee must immediately report any substandard performance issues of any issued item immediately to the Executive Director so measures can be taken as needed to address the issue. TACC property should in no way be used for personal use.

Upon leaving the employment of the TACC, the employee must immediately return these items to the Executive Director.

### **Confidentiality**

Employees of the TACC deal with both confidential and sensitive information. Employees shall adhere to the requirement to hold confidential and sensitive any information that is presented to them as such. Each employees of the TACC is required to complete a Confidentiality Agreement Form.

When discussing or transmitting confidential information, please follow these guidelines:

- Do not reveal any confidential information except under the direction and with the approval of the Executive Director;
- Make sure that confidential information is properly marked and secured before transmittal;
- Ensure that the recipient of the confidential information has a legitimate need to know the information;
- Avoid displaying confidential data where it can be easily observed, including on your computer screen when you are not at your desk;
- Immediately inform the Executive Director of the loss of any confidential data. The Executive Director is to immediately inform the President;
- Limit reproduction and distribution of such information;

- Secure confidential documents in locked cabinets or containers when not in use; and
- Make sure that you properly dispose of all confidential information as needed.

Do not remove any confidential information from the organization's office without specific authorization to do so. Before you leave employment at the Tahlequah Area TACC of Commerce, return all confidential and sensitive information directly to Executive Director and in the case of the Executive Director, to the President.

### **Authorizing Expenditures/Contracts/Obligations**

No employee shall authorize any expenditure, obligate the TACC or sign any contract without approval of the Executive Director and in accordance with the TACC By-Laws and any other applicable TACC policies including the TACC Financial Policies.

### **Solicitation and Distribution**

Employees shall not engage in solicitations for non-TACC related causes or organizations during working hours. TACC equipment shall not be used for non-TACC solicitations unless specifically approved in advance by the Executive Director and/or the President. Distribution of literature for non-TACC purposes is prohibited at all times. This policy is not meant to discourage or inhibit employees' involvement in community, civic, political or religious organizations during non-working hours.

### **Intellectual Property Rights**

Any trademark, copyright, patent, trade secret or any other intellectual property that is developed by TACC employees on TACC property or with TACC equipment shall belong exclusively to the Tahlequah Area TACC of Commerce and can be accessed at any time.

### **Nepotism**

No employee shall be employed in a position in which the employee must report directly or indirectly to a closely related family member. "Closely related" is generally interpreted to mean spouse, life partner, parents, children, siblings, grandparents, in-laws, relatives through marriage, or members of the same household.

### **Accepting Items of Value**

Receipt by an employee of any item or service with a value exceeding \$25 in connection with his or her work for the TACC is strictly prohibited without direct authorization from the Executive Director.

### **Outside Employment**

It is the policy of TACC that when a person accepts employment with the Tahlequah Area TACC of Commerce, his/her first responsibility is to the TACC and to efficiently performing assigned duties. However, the TACC does not object to an employee accepting outside employment, including volunteer work, provided that the outside employment/volunteer service does not represent a conflict of interest or an appearance of a conflict of interest with the mission or purpose of the Tahlequah TACC or detracts

from the employee's effectiveness on the job. Under no circumstances shall TACC equipment or resources be used in any outside employment, nor shall any employee engage in outside employment or business affiliations during the employee's working hours. An employee must request prior approval from the Executive Director prior to any outside employment thru completion of the Outside Employment Authorization Form. In the case of the Executive Director the request for approval must be made to the President.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when the employee is in a position to influence a decision or have business dealings on behalf of the TACC that might result in a personal gain for the employee or one of their relatives. The TACC does not assume there is a conflict of interest if the employee has a relationship with another company. However, if the employee has influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts or leases, the employee must tell the President as soon as possible. Personal gain can also result from situations in which an employee or a relative receives a substantial gift or special consideration as a result of a transaction or business dealing with the TACC.

### **Grievance Procedures**

Whenever a number of people work together, personal problems or differences may occasionally arise. Normally, these concerns can be resolved informally. The first step toward a solution of a problem is a frank and early discussion with your immediate supervisor.

In exceptional cases, a need may arise for a more formal approach to the problem. In such a case, an employee may file a written grievance with the Executive Director. If the grievance involves the Executive Director, you may file the grievance directly with the President. The grievance shall be submitted using the Grievance Report Form. The individual receiving the complaint shall investigate the grievance and inform the employee of the resolution, both verbally and in writing as promptly as possible, unless exceptional circumstances delay the consideration or investigation of the grievance.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Electronic Communications**

The TACC maintains an e-mail, voice-mail, telephone system, computers, internet access, fax and other business equipment (collectively called the "Systems") for the purpose of conducting the business of the organization. The devices and the data stored on these Systems, as well as the specialized software programs and systems developed for TACC's use, are the sole property of TACC and must be protected appropriately.

In general, access to any Systems component is restricted to authorized users. An authorized user is someone, who in the sole opinion of the TACC requires access in

order to support business activities. An employee may not use an unauthorized access code or password, or access files that the employee has no right to access, or disseminate confidential information that is derived from electronic or other sources, including stored communications. All passwords must be kept strictly confidential. Each employee will be held accountable for work performed with their individual user ID and password. An employee may not use a password that is unknown to the TACC, nor may an employee share their password with any individual or entity not employed by the TACC. The existence of a password does not mean that any messages an employee sends using a password will be confidential. The TACC may monitor use of the Systems as needed to see that the Systems are being used for proper purposes.

An employee may not use any of these Systems for non-job related solicitations, organizational campaigns, political or religious causes, or other non-business purposes during working time. The Systems may not be used to transmit, retrieve or store any communications of a defamatory, discriminatory or harassing nature, or materials that are abusive, profane or offensive, obscene or x-rated, including, but not limited to, messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual's race, age, disability, religion, national origin, physical attributes, or sexual preference. Harassment of any kind is absolutely prohibited.

The Systems may not be used for any purpose, which is illegal, against TACC policy, or contrary to the TACC's best interest.

The TACC reserves the right to retrieve and read any messages sent or received via its communications systems. All messages created, sent, or retrieved over the Systems and any information of any type in any Systems component, including but not limited to, all information stored on personal computers, diskettes, and voice mail, are the property of the TACC and may be saved, accessed and reviewed by the organization. You cannot consider any message sent, received, or stored via these systems as your private property. The TACC reserves the right to monitor, or download and read any electronic or telephone communication sent, received, or stored during the ordinary course of business. You are not permitted to read e-mail messages that are not sent to you unless you have obtained permission to do so from both your supervisor and the supervisor of the intended e-mail recipient.

You shall not transmit over the Systems any copyrighted materials belonging to any individual or entity other than the TACC. When obtaining access to another organization's or individual's materials, you must respect all copyrights and may not copy, retrieve, modify or forward copyright materials, except with permission of the holder of the copyright, or as a single copy to reference only. You may not violate any software licenses, including, but not limited to, by making illegal copies of software. All software licenses, manuals and documentation must be available for inspection in the event of a software inventory or audit. Failure to observe copyright or license agreements may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Upon orientation, you will be required to sign our Communications Systems Policy Agreement. The TACC also reserves the right to advise appropriate legal officials of any illegal violations.

### **Mass Communications with Members and Nonmembers**

Any mass mailings or other communications beyond normal correspondence with a staff member's committees must be approved in advance by the Executive Director.

### **News Media and Press Releases**

All inquiries from or contacts by the media should be referred to the Executive Director. Any incident or issue that could have a negative impact on the TACC's public image should be reported immediately to the Executive Director or President.

### **Employment References**

All employment references for current and former employees are to be referred to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will provide confirmation that the individual was or is an employee of the organization, the dates of employment and confirmation of the employee's salary and job title.

If the employment reference is for a current or former Executive Director then that reference request should be referred to the President.

## **EMPLOYEE CONDUCT POLICIES**

### **Policy Against Harassment**

The TACC expects that all employees will treat each other with fairness and respect. Harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, gender, age, national origin, sexual orientation or disability or as otherwise provided under state or local law, will not be tolerated and is strictly prohibited. Harassment of this type is illegal and contrary to the policy of the TACC. The organization strives to foster a work environment free of harassment, discrimination, intimidation and insult.

Harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines both personal and professional relationships in the workplace. Every staff member must be assured that he or she can work in an environment that is free from unwanted and unwelcome harassment and discrimination.

Harassment creates unacceptable stress for the entire organization, adversely affecting morale, demeans the individual so treated, and could cause potentially devastating costs to the organization. The TACC believes that courteous, mutually respectful, pleasant, non-coercive interactions between employees, board members, and members will best serve the well-being of each individual and the TACC.

Any person, who believes that he/she is the victim of any type of discriminatory conduct, should bring that conduct to the immediate attention of the Executive Director or any

Board Director. The organization will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of all the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident in a confidential manner. If the investigation discloses that an individual has committed an act of discrimination, that individual will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Retaliation in any form against an employee who complains of discrimination or harassment is strictly prohibited and will result in appropriate disciplinary action. Any supervisory employee to whom an employee brings a complaint of harassment but who fails to take appropriate action to resolve it will also be disciplined.

### **Drug Free and Alcohol Free Workplace**

The purpose in implementing this policy is to provide a drug-free and alcohol-free workplace in order to ensure a safe, healthy, and productive work environment for all employees. In addition to being concerned about your well-being, there is equal concern that the TACC's reputation and image is not compromised in any way. Our policy concerning drug and alcohol use and abuse is as follows:

You must report to work in a fit condition to perform your duties. Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol is not acceptable. The TACC prohibits the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use or abuse of illicit drugs, alcohol, or prescription drugs if used in a way that is illegal or counter to published policy on controlled substances in the workplace. The workplace includes the TACC offices and all premises used to further our programmatic objectives.

If you are taking physician-prescribed medication, you must notify your supervisor if there is likelihood that such medication could affect your job performance and safety. However, you are not required to give specific details about your medical condition. Additionally, all such information will be maintained in the strictest confidence.

A conviction for drug or alcohol abuse crimes will be considered to be in violation of our substance abuse policy. If you are convicted of such a crime, you are required to report any such conviction to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is convicted, he/she must report the information to the President of the Board of Director's. You may be subject to termination or required to submit to a bona fide drug or alcohol abuse rehabilitation program. The TACC will inform appropriate law enforcement authorities of any drug-related crime that occurs in the workplace.

"Drugs" means any substance taken into the body, other than alcohol, which may impair one's mental faculties and/or physical performance.

"Abuses" means any use of any illegal drug, or use of any drug, including alcohol, over-the-counter or prescription drugs when use is not in conformance with prescription requirements or in circumstances where use is not permitted.

### **Inappropriate or Ineffective Workplace Behavior**

Employees are expected to adhere to the following guidelines concerning workplace conduct. Failure to adhere may result in disciplinary action up to and including

termination. The guidelines listed below are not all inclusive, but rather provide some examples regarding appropriate behavior.

(a) Employees are expected to conduct themselves professionally and maintain good work performance.

(b) In general, employees are expected to

- (1) conduct themselves reasonably in the workplace
- (2) adhere to traditional standards of honesty and cooperation,
- (3) demonstrate a constructive attitude,
- (4) avoid insubordination,
- (5) avoid excessive absenteeism,
- (6) not be intoxicated in the workplace,
- (7) not be guilty of unlawful use, or being under the influence of drugs and
- (8) not create other problems at work. On occasion, however, individual conduct or particular situations may require disciplinary action which may include reprimands, warnings, suspensions, or if the situation warrants, termination.

(c) As a general rule, any conduct that interferes with an employee's work, or impedes the operation of the TACC may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. The action taken shall reflect the individual circumstances surrounding the incident(s).

# **Employee Handbook Acknowledgement Form**

I have read and received a copy of the Tahlequah Area Chamber of Commerce Employee Handbook on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ (month), 20\_\_\_\_.

I agree that it is my responsibility to understand the policies contained in it, and that I may, at any time during my employment at the Tahlequah Area Chamber of Commerce ask questions about this Handbook of my supervisor or another representative of the Tahlequah Area Chamber of Commerce. I understand that these policies govern my employment with the Tahlequah Area Chamber of Commerce and I agree to abide by these policies.

I also understand that my employment is not for a definite period of time and that nothing in this Handbook creates or implies an express or implied contract for employment or in any way guarantees any benefits described herein. I agree that the Tahlequah Area Chamber of Commerce or I can terminate my employment at-will at any time, with or without cause or notice.

I further understand that the Tahlequah Area Chamber of Commerce may at any time, with or without notice, unilaterally amend, modify, reduce, or discontinue any and all of the rules, policies, wages and benefits referred to in this Handbook. I also understand that this Handbook contains summaries of the benefits offered by Tahlequah Area TACC of Commerce, and an overview of the workplace policies and practices.

I understand my position with this organization is as follows:

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Pay Rate \_\_\_\_\_

Employment Status \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
EMPLOYEE Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
EMPLOYEE Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
WITNESS Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
WITNESS Signature