



# Hope Haven Children's Advocacy Center

PERSONNEL POLICIES AND  
PROCEDURES MANUAL

## **PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL**

This Policy and Procedure Manual has been prepared to promote and maintain an atmosphere of harmony, cooperation, and understanding among all employees. It is intended to familiarize employees with the methods and operations of our personnel policies and practices.

The benefits and policies covered in this Manual are presented in summary form and are not all inclusive. No manual can anticipate every circumstance or question about policy. Hope Haven CAC reserves the right to use its sole and absolute discretion to revise, supplement, or rescind any policy or portion of the handbook, as it deems necessary. The only exception to any changes is our employment-at-will policy permitting you or the Company to end our employment relationship for any reason at any time with or without notice.

No one other than the Executive Director has any authority to enter into any agreement for employment or benefits for any specific period of time, or to make any agreement contrary to the foregoing.



This Manual is not a contract, expressed or implied, guaranteeing employment for any specific duration. Although we hope that your employment relationship with us will be long term, either you or Hope Haven CAC may terminate this relationship at any time, for any reason, without cause or notice. Please understand that no supervisor, manager, or representative of this Company other than the Executive Director has the authority to enter into any agreement with you for employment for any specified period or to make any promises or commitments contrary to the foregoing. Further, any employment agreement entered into by the Executive Director shall not be enforceable unless it is in writing.

Employees found to be in violation of Hope Haven CAC policies outlined in this handbook or any other Hope Haven CAC policies may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.



## MISSION STATEMENT

Mission Statement Hope Haven Children's Advocacy Center is dedicated to helping children who are victims of sexual abuse and trauma. Hope Haven supports children and families each year through family advocacy programs that provide the necessary tools to respond to each child's unique needs following sexual abuse, severe physical abuse and neglect. Hope Haven collaborates with Law Enforcement, Child Protective Services and the District Attorney's office in the investigation and prosecution of child sexual and physical abuse cases.

## VISION STATEMENT

It is our vision to be a haven of recovery and a path to justice for children and their families who are victims of sexual and severe physical abuse.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

### **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

To the extent our organization is covered by and subject to the Americans with Disabilities Act, Hope Haven CAC not only will provide equal employment opportunity to individuals with a documented need, but will, upon request and evaluation of the facts and circumstances, make reasonable accommodations to otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities so they can perform the essential functions of the employment position the individual holds or desires.

Reasonable accommodations may take many forms, such as: physical access to work sites, technological aids for performing work duties, restructuring of jobs to eliminate marginal tasks that disabled individuals cannot perform, or adapting work hours to address specific disability-related needs.

Employee request for accommodation should be directed to the Executive Director who, in turn, will review the unique facts and circumstances of the case prior to rendering a decision.

### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

Hope Haven CAC is committed to a policy of equal employment opportunity to all qualified persons without regard to age, race, creed, color, national origin, sex, marital status, religion, physical or mental handicap (if unrelated to the performance of essential functions of the job after reasonable accommodation is provided), sexual orientation, or veteran status. It is our intent and desire that equal employment opportunity will be provided in all activities related to recruiting, hiring, transfers, promotions, compensation, benefits, training, Hope Haven CAC sponsored social and recreational programs, and all other privileges, terms, and conditions of employment.

Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination or harassment in the work environment should feel free to discuss these issues with their immediate supervisor. Employees can report discrimination or harassment without fear of reprisal or retaliation. Retaliation against any person who has complained about harassment or discrimination, filed a charge of harassment or discrimination or who otherwise participated in an investigation will not be tolerated, and will lead to corrective action up to and including termination.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Hope Haven CAC strives to communicate with all its employees through utilities, meetings, email, newsletters, posting, and through one-on-one meetings, as necessary. We expect and anticipate that all communications will be delivered in a professional manner. All communications, both formal and informal are to be conducted in a professional manner, with courtesy, respect, and self-control. Should you have any question to a particular policy, procedure, or issue, please consult with the Executive Director.

## **TOBACCO FREE ENVIRONMENT**

Hope Haven CAC is a tobacco free environment. The rights of others must be a consideration at all times. Smoking must be confined to designated areas outside of the Hope Haven CAC offices.

## **DRUG POLICY**

Hope Haven CAC is committed to a drug free environment. The unlawful possession, use, distribution, sale, manufacturing or illicit drugs on Hope Haven CAC grounds while conducting business or representing Hope Haven CAC is strictly prohibited. Any violation of this policy will result in immediate disciplinary actions. Drugs prescribed by a medical professional and taken for legitimate medical reasons are excluded from this policy, provided such use does not impair an employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the job in a safe manner and does not endanger themselves or co-workers in the workplace. If prescribed medication is expected to, or believed to impair your ability to perform your daily tasks, you will be excused from work until you are able to perform your tasks in the manner expected.

All Hope Haven CAC personnel are subject to pre-employment drug screening and random drug screening after employment.

## **HIRING**

1. Recruitment for applicants will take place through, but not restricted to, advertisements in community newspapers and/or notification to professional magazines and or through an agency wide employment opportunity posting system.
2. The method(s) used to recruit for any given position shall be to attract candidates who are qualified for the position and best fulfill the needs of the clients being served. Final decision for the recruitment methods to be used shall be at the discretion of the management
3. Prospective employees shall complete a resume along with a cover letter. A personal interview may be arranged.
4. Pertinent reference information shall be obtained and verified.
5. The appointed employee shall be given a copy of Hope Haven CAC's Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual within ten days of employment. The employee will sign an agreement that he/she has received, read, and understood the manual, no later than ten days after receipt of manual.

## **EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATIONS**

The following categories of employment are maintained within Hope Haven CAC:

**Full-time Employee** - An employee who normally works 32.0 or more hours per week shall be designated as a full-time employee.

**Part-time Employee** - An employee who normally works less than 32.0 hours per week shall be designated as a part-time employee.

**Contract Employee** - An employee scheduled to work for a defined period of time which may be seasonal or intermittent.

## **PERSONAL FILES**

A personnel file will be maintained for each employee and may contain the following:

- Original resume and cover letter
- Job description
- Background check results
- Employee evaluations.
- School transcript, if necessary.
- Copy of any certification or license necessary for the employee's position.
- All necessary payroll forms.
- All necessary enrollment forms for participation in agency benefits.
- A copy of proof of vehicle insurance, if employee uses their personal vehicle in the performance of the position.
- All disciplinary records, if and when applicable.
- Any documentation needed in relation to funding
- Source requirements for the position.

Access to the employees personnel file is limited. It is available to the employee upon request to the Executive Director, payroll representatives (only as needed), the Executive Director and Hope Haven CAC Board of Directors.

No employee shall share information concerning another employee's personnel file without prior consent from the employee.

The employee's personnel file is the property of Hope Haven CAC. An employee may review their personnel file in the presence of the Executive Director by requesting to do so.

## **EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION**

The Company will use its best efforts in an affirmative manner to maintain and preserve the confidentiality of employment records for current and former employees. It is the Company's policy that all requests for employment verification are responded to by the Executive Director.

The Executive Director will respond only to those reference check inquiries that are submitted. Responses to such inquiries will confirm only dates of employment and position(s) held. No employment data concerning compensation will be released without written authorization from the employee in question.

## **NO SOLICITATION POLICY**

Hope Haven CAC's policy against solicitation prevents unnecessary disruption of employees' work during the workday. Non-employees are prohibited from selling merchandise or distributing literature of any kind on Hope Haven CAC property or through Company e-mail. Further, employees shall not conduct solicitations through Hope Haven CAC bulletin boards, list serves, intranet, email or like means without the prior, written approval of the Executive Director.

## **CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

### **Statement of Policy**

It shall be the policy of Hope Haven CAC that any information obtained as a result of employment or service with Hope Haven CAC will be treated as confidential and released only to authorized personnel. This policy covers information obtained through the use of or access to reports or automated data processing systems or any other source of information.

### **Introduction**

Information subject to confidentiality includes anything relating to clients, utilities, project bills, personnel, salaries and other business data that is often obtained by employees or volunteers due to the nature of their employment or service. The information may be compromised by unintended discussions with other employees, other volunteers, friend, family members or other outside parties. In order for Hope Haven CAC to maintain the trust of clients, utilities, work sites and employees, it is imperative that sensitive information remain confidential.

Conversation with members concerning business or financial matters must be conducted in such a manner as not to be overheard by others.

Management information obtained as a result of employment or service with Hope Haven CAC may not be released to any outside agency except as specifically authorized. Information regarding billing, personnel, payroll, accounting data, planning data, or any other data related to the affairs of Hope Haven CAC is considered management information.

While it is the right of an employee or volunteers to express personal opinions in the media, that right does not allow employees or volunteers to speak as representatives of Hope Haven CAC. Employees or volunteers who express opinions to news media may not do so as representatives of Hope Haven CAC and may not use titles associated with their employment or service at Hope Haven CAC.

Employees should refrain from discussing confidential Hope Haven CAC business with outsiders and with anyone else who does not have a legitimate need to know the information. Employees should refer outside inquiries regarding Hope Haven CAC to the Executive Director.

Any breach of confidentiality will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

### **ACCIDENT, INCIDENT REPORTS, AND EMERGENCIES**

Should an accident or injury happen to you while at work, you must notify the Executive Director immediately. This procedure is to be followed regardless of whether or not you are experiencing any pain or discomfort at the time of the incident. An official incident report of any accident, injury, or incident must be completed as soon as possible and be turned in to the Executive Director.

### **NEWS RELEASES**

All news releases concerning any policies, information, etc. relating to Hope Haven CAC or its relationship to other agencies must be approved by the Executive Director. If necessary, Hope Haven CAC Board of Directors may release a position statement and no further statements by employees should be made.

### **FEES AND HONORARIA**

Employees who have been given a fee, honoraria, or other monetary reimbursement for being a representative of Hope Haven CAC shall forfeit the fee, honoraria, or monetary reimbursement to Hope Haven CAC. No employee shall misrepresent themselves to another agency or person and accept fees, honoraria or other monetary reimbursement on behalf of the agency.

Hope Haven CAC will require a fee for testimony on cases presented in courts outside Hope Haven CAC's counties of services\*. The rate is set as follows:

\$250.00 for half-day

\$500.00 for full day

Additionally, Hope Haven CAC will submit for mileage reimbursement according to the federal reimbursement rate. Mileage reimbursement will be required of counties inside and outside of Hope Haven CAC's counties of service.

Invoices for mileage and/or testimony fees will be submitted to the requesting county at the time the subpoena is received.

Payment should be submitted to: Hope Haven CAC

P.O. Box 3777

Bay St Louis, MS 39521

If a Hope Haven CAC employee is required to travel overnight, the county should either make hotel accommodations for the employee or they will be responsible for reimbursing Hope Haven CAC for the hotel expenses.

\*Hope Haven CAC's counties of service are Hancock and Pearl River.

## **USE OF EQUIPMENT**

Equipment essential in accomplishing job duties is expensive and may be difficult to replace. Hope Haven CAC expects employees to exercise care, perform required maintenance and follow all operating instructions, safety standards and guidelines when using Hope Haven CAC property.

Notify your immediate supervisor or the Executive Director if any equipment, machines, or tools appear to be damaged, defective or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of damages, defects and general maintenance needs can prevent deterioration of equipment. If you have questions about employee responsibility for maintenance and care of equipment used on the job, ask your supervisor or the Executive Director.

Anything you do using Hope Haven CAC's electronic facilities (e.g., our computers, mobile devices, network, etc.) or store on our premises (e.g., letters, memos and other documents) might be disclosed to people inside and outside the agency. For example, Hope Haven CAC may be required by law (e.g., in response to a subpoena or warrant) to monitor, access and disclose the contents of corporate email, voicemail, computer files and other materials on our electronic facilities or on our premises. In addition, Hope Haven CAC may monitor, access and disclose employee communications and other information on our corporate electronic facilities or on our physical premises where there is a business need to do so, such as protecting employees and users or maintaining the security of resources and property.

## **TELEPHONE USAGE**

Our telephones are an important asset of Hope Haven CAC and must be free for our clients and staff to conduct the work of the Agency at all times. Employees should avoid using the phone for personal calls or making an excessive number of personal calls on their cell phones during work hours.

At times emergencies may arise where you receive a personal phone call while you are working, please limit the amount of time for this call. Long Distance calls should not be made from work unless it is an emergency.

## **COMPUTER USAGE**

Computers, computer files, the e-mail system, and software furnished to employees are Hope Haven CAC's property. Employees should not use a password, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication without authorization. All software purchased or developed for use in connection with Hope Haven CAC computers (or products) is proprietary and may not be copied without the owner's permission. Hope Haven CAC's policy includes strict compliance with the federal Copyright Act, which prohibits copying, and distribution of software to non-licensed users. Misuse or abuse of computers may result in revoked privileges.

### **Waiver of Privacy**

Employees waive their right of privacy in anything they create, store, send, or receive on the Company's computer or telecommunications system. Employees consent to management or supervisory personnel of the Company accessing and reviewing all material employees create, store, send, or receive on the computer or telecommunications system.

### **Prohibited Uses**

Use of the Company's computer or telecommunications system for any of the following activities is strictly prohibited:

- Sending, receiving, displaying, printing, or otherwise disseminating material that is fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, sexually explicit, obscene, intimidating, or defamatory;
- Sending, receiving, displaying, printing, or otherwise disseminating confidential, proprietary business information or trade secrets in violation of company policy or proprietary agreements;
- Transmitting, storing, or otherwise disseminating commercial or personal advertisements, solicitations, promotions, destructive programs (such as viruses), or political material;
- Violating any state, federal, or international law governing intellectual property (for example, copyright, trademark, and patent laws) and online activities; and
- Violating any license governing the use of software.

These policies are in addition to the policies on Internet and Email Usage set forth below.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment, legal action, and criminal liability.

## **SOFTWARE, INTERNET USAGE AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

Voice mail, email, and Internet usage assigned to an employee's computer or telephone extensions are solely for the purpose of conducting Hope Haven CAC's business. Some job responsibilities at the agency require access to the Internet and the use of software in addition to the Microsoft Office suite of products (the "Additional Software"). Only people appropriately authorized, for Company purposes, may use the Internet or access Additional Software.

### **Internet Usage**

Internet use, on Hope Haven CAC time, is authorized to conduct agency business only. Internet use brings the possibility of breaches to the security of confidential Company information. Internet use also creates the possibility of contamination to our system via viruses or spyware. Spyware allows unauthorized people, outside the Company, potential access to Company passwords and other confidential information. Removing such programs from the Hope Haven CAC equipment/network requires staff to invest time and attention that is better devoted to progress. For this reason, and to assure the use of work time appropriately for work, we ask staff members to limit Internet use. Additionally, under no circumstances may Company computers or other electronic equipment be used to obtain, view, or reach any pornographic, or otherwise immoral, unethical, or non-business-related Internet sites. Doing so can lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment

Care must be taken to make certain that agency has appropriate authorization to use information and materials obtained from on-line services, subscription services, electronic bulletin boards and the Internet. Because the Internet is neither private nor secure, every user is responsible for protecting the integrity of Hope Haven CAC's information and resources. Proprietary, private or confidential information, data or programs may not be exported or copied through the Internet.

### **LOCKED FILES. USB DRIVES AND EXTERNAL DRIVES PROHIBITED**

Excluding only access restrictions created by the Executive Director which limit access to the Hope Haven computers or servers, all employees are prohibited from creating or using any limited access files on any computer, server, or other device owned by Hope Haven CAC. Limited access files shall include any and all folders, files, sub-files, documents, videos, jpeg's, wav's, pdfs, or any other case materials to which access is or has been restricted by said employee or by any other person or entity whether by password or any other type of lock or access restricting device or software.

Employees are prohibited from storing any personal or other non-Hope Haven CAC related documents or information on any computer, server, or other device owned by Hope Haven CAC. Employees are prohibited from accessing public Wi-Fi with Hope Haven CAC laptops or other devices (e.g., Wi-Fi at McDonalds, Starbucks, etc.). Employees are also prohibited from using any encrypted email service provider (e.g., Proton Mail, Tutanota, Mailfence, or Websense) without specific written authorization from the Executive Director.

Additionally, excluding only devices provided by the Executive Director for the purpose of providing copies of forensic interviews or documents to law enforcement, all employees are prohibited from bring into or onto the Hope Haven CAC facilities any USB Drives, DVD or CD discs, or any other external drive or memory of any type. All employees are also prohibited from connecting in any manner any computer or server or other device owned by Hope Haven CAC, whether at the facility or elsewhere, with any computer, server, or other device which is NOT owned by Hope Haven CAC, including but not limited to any such device owned by said employee. All employees are also prohibited from downloading in any manner any file, sub-file, document, videos, jpeg's, wav's, pdf s, or any other case materials in any computer, server, or other device owned by HHCAC to any computer, server, or any other device not owned by Hope Haven CAC.

\*\*Any violation of any part of the preceding three paragraphs concerning locked files, USB drives, & external drives is grounds for immediate termination of employment at Hope Haven CAC.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

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 podcasts, RSS feeds, social networking websites, and blogs, whether or not associated or affiliated with Hope Haven CAC, as well as any other form of electronic communication. Social media tools currently include, but are not limited to, the following: Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, Pinterest, Myspace, Google Plus+, Foursquare, Instagram, YouTube, Tumblr, etc.

Any of your conduct that adversely affects your job performance; the performance of fellow employees, clients, partners, suppliers, volunteers or any other people who work on behalf of Hope Haven CAC; or Hope Haven CAC's legitimate business interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

When utilizing social media, staff should conduct themselves in such a way as to ensure that their speech, which includes all written, spoken or other multimedia material does not reflect poorly on the organization or any of its partner agencies.

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

Ensure your postings are consistent with the following guidelines. Violation of these guidelines may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

1. Be truthful, fair and courteous with fellow employees, clients, partners, volunteers, suppliers or any other people who work with Hope Haven CAC.

2. Avoid inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct. They will not be tolerated.
3. Maintain the confidentiality of Hope Haven CAC and client's private or confidential information such as internal agency planning; development of systems, processes and know-how; and especially the identification of clients. Do not post internal reports, policies, procedures or other internal agency or client-related confidential communications.
4. Keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work-related complaints by speaking directly with your co-workers or supervisors than by posting complaints to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, if you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparage clients, partners, associates or suppliers, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion or any other status protected by law.
5. Make it clear that your opinions are your own and not those of Hope Haven CAC. If Hope Haven CAC is a subject of the content you are creating, it is best to include a disclaimer such as "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Hope Haven CAC."
6. Do not create a link from your blog, website or other social networking site to a Hope Haven CAC website without identifying yourself as a Hope Haven CAC associate.
7. Do not post material that is obscene, vulgar, defamatory, threatening, discriminatory, harassing, abusive, hateful, or embarrassing to another person or entity.
8. Do not use Hope Haven CAC email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use.
9. Using social media at work - Employees should refrain from personal use of social media while on work time (during business hours, attending events, conferences, trainings, meetings, etc.) using their computer or cellphone. Internet use, on Hope Haven CAC's time, is authorized to conduct agency business only. This does not apply to work-related use of social media.
10. Retaliation is prohibited - Hope Haven CAC prohibits taking negative action against any associate for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any associate who retaliates against another associate for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

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

### **Electronic Communications at Hope Haven CAC**

For purposes of this handbook, the term "Electronic Communications" shall refer to email, instant messaging and text messaging, including Electronic Communications sent via personal cell phone while at Hope Haven CAC's premises or on Company time. Hope Haven CAC recognizes that Electronic Communications can be a productivity enhancing tool for expeditious business communications with co-workers, clients, customers, vendors, and the like. On the other hand, productivity may be adversely affected by employee abuse or overindulgence in personal Electronic Communications during business hours, resulting in the loss of valuable employee productivity.

Electronic Communications at Hope Haven CAC premises (or while on Company time) should be limited to agency business only. Company confidential information must not be shared outside of the agency, without authorization, at any time. You are also not to conduct personal business using Hope Haven CAC equipment.

Please keep this in mind, also, as you consider forwarding non-business Electronic Communications to associates, family or friends. Non-business-related Electronic Communications can waste company time and attention.

Viewing pornography, or sending pornographic jokes or stories via Electronic Communication, is considered sexual harassment and will be addressed according to our sexual harassment policy.

### **Electronic Communications That Discriminate**

Any Electronic Communication that discriminates against employees by virtue of any protected classification including race, gender, nationality, religion, and so forth, will be dealt with according to the harassment policy. These types of Electronic Communications are expressly prohibited at the agency. Sending or forwarding non-business Electronic Communications will result in disciplinary action that may lead to employment termination.

### **Company Owns Employee Email**

Keep in mind that Hope Haven CAC owns any Electronic Communication that is sent by and/ or stored on Hope Haven CAC equipment. The Executive Director and other authorized staff have the right to access any material in your email or on your computer at any time. Please do not consider your electronic communication, storage or access to be private if it is created or stored at work.

## **EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES**

### **WORK HOURS**

Hope Haven CAC has established specific working hours (8:00 am - 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday) in order to provide services according to member and operational needs; however, this schedule is subject to change based upon work load, project demands, and special events per the Executive Director. Any additional required hours will be determined, scheduled and assigned among staff in a fair and equitable manner.

As occasional work breaks are important to an employee's efficiency, you may take periodic coffee breaks during the course of a normal business day with approval of the Executive Director. In addition, employees are entitled to an hour lunch period.

### **PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

Employment with Hope Haven CAC shall be probationary for a period of ninety (90) days. Any time during the probationary period or thereafter, the employment relationship is terminable at will for any reason by either party. The foregoing does not limit, modify, alter or restrict Hope Haven CAC's employment at-will policy.

### **NEW EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTEER MANDATORY SCREENING REQUIREMENTS**

1. No person known to have committed physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect or a felony involving crimes against any persons shall be hired or allowed to volunteer for Hope Haven CAC.
2. Upon acceptance of employment by a new employee or volunteer, the Executive Director will immediately initiate the following Criminal background checks and actions:
  - FBI Criminal History Check (will require fingerprinting)
  - An MDCPS Central Registry Check
  - Employment Verification
  - Drug Screens
3. The applicant or volunteer will be informed during the interview process that employment is contingent on the results of these screenings. These actions are not negotiable and are mandatory for any new employee or volunteer.

### **STEWARDS OF CHILDREN**

It is mandatory that all Hope Haven CAC employees take the Stewards of Children training during their first week of employment.

## **OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT**

Employees are representatives of Hope Haven CAC and need to devote time to the position as stated in their job description. Part time employees are also considered to be representatives and must be available for work. All employees are representatives of Hope Haven CAC and agree to devote their professional time and interests to the organization. Therefore, you must avoid participation in outside activities which interfere, compete or conflict with the interests of Hope Haven CAC, or which might, in any way, have an adverse effect on an individual's performance of assigned responsibilities and duties. Accordingly, outside employment or business interests should not be undertaken or engaged in by a member of the staff without prior written notice to and approval of the Executive Director.

## **SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT**

An employee who resigns his/her position is expected to give at least two weeks advance written notice to the Executive Director. Your resignation may be accepted immediately in which case pay for the notice period may or not be granted.

You will be responsible for returning all Company property on or before the effective date of your separation from employment.

## **EMPLOYEE CONDUCT & CORRECTIVE ACTION**

### **Professional Conduct**

As an employee of Hope Haven CAC, your primary responsibility is to perform your job in an efficient and productive manner. You are expected to meet reasonable standards of work performance and personal conduct, including following Hope Haven CAC rules, adhering to safe working practices and cooperating with the Executive Director and fellow employees. All employees are representatives of Hope Haven CAC when not at the workplace and should conduct themselves appropriately and professionally.

It is not possible to create an exhaustive listing of behaviors that are unacceptable in the workplace. Listed below are some examples of the types of conduct that may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Misconduct not specifically described in these guidelines will be handled as warranted by the circumstances involved. All employees of the Company are employed at will and either the Company or the employee may terminate employment at any time with or without notice.

- Violations of Federal/State/Local laws;
- Violations of Company policies;
- Sexual or other forms of harassment and discrimination;
- Gambling on Company property or at client work sites; Working under the influence of alcohol, prescribed or over the counter medications that inhibit work performance or drugs;
- The use, sale or possession of alcohol, drugs or weapons;

- Workplace violence including: Fighting, threatening, intimidating, assaulting or attempting to assault another person or provoking another person to engage in an assault or fight;
- Profane or abusive language (including negative comments regarding customers or coworkers);
- Insubordination or other discourteous behavior to co-workers and customers;
- Sabotage, negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer- owned or customer-owned property including the reputation of the employer or customer;
- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of Company property;
- Unauthorized use of Company material, time, equipment or property;
- Falsification of Company records and time sheets;
- Creating an unsafe work environment by not following safety policies or through horseplay;
- Excessive absenteeism, tardiness or absenteeism without notice;
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct;
- Other unprofessional conduct during work hours or on Company premise.

### **Corrective Action**

Hope Haven CAC has high performance expectations because we strongly believe that everyone benefits when we all work together and conduct ourselves in a manner that mutually reflects the best interests of coworkers and the organization. The agency's own best interest lies 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 the employee for satisfactory service in the future.

Corrective Actions may be taken at the discretion of management and may include any of the following:

- Verbal counseling, which may be confirmed in writing by the immediate supervisor
- Written warning
- Reassignment
- Suspension, which will be confirmed in writing. Suspension is normally used to remove an employee from an organization's premises during an investigation, or
- as a disciplinary action. This may be paid or unpaid.
- Discharge

All corrective actions will be fully documented and placed in the employee's personnel file. The corrective action process will not always commence with a verbal counseling or include every step. The above options are not to be seen as a process in which one step always follows another. Some acts, particularly those that are intentional or serious, warrant more severe action on the first or subsequent offense. Consideration will be given to the seriousness of the offense, your intent and motivation to change the performance, and the environment in which the offense took place.

## **PAY PRACTICES**

### **DEDUCTIONS FROM PAY**

Certain deductions from your paycheck may be voluntary or mandatory for those deductions that are required by law. Mandatory deductions include federal income taxes; Social Security (the Company also makes a contribution on your behalf); garnishments or child support orders, state income taxes; and various county and city taxes, if applicable.

Your pay stub itemizes all deductions, lists year-to-date deductions for taxes and year-to-date earnings. Ask your Executive Director if you have questions about these deductions.

#### **What to do if an Improper Deduction Occurs**

If you believe that an improper deduction has been made to your salary, you should immediately report this information to the Executive Director. Reports of improper deductions will be promptly investigated. If it is determined that an improper deduction has occurred, you will be promptly reimbursed for any improper deduction made.

### **PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

This policy applies to all Hope Haven CAC employees with the exception of those management personnel who are evaluated on quantifiable goals and objectives.

Regular ongoing feedback and guidance is essential to improving performance and establishing effective communication between the employee and Executive Director. Regular informal guidance should be provided on as needed basis.

The first 90 days of employment shall be considered a probationary time period. Performance issues can be discussed at any time within this time period as necessary. However, a formal review shall be conducted with the employee and his/her immediate supervisor at the conclusion of the probationary time period.

Following the Probationary Period, all performance reviews shall occur at 12-month intervals coinciding with the employee's anniversary date.

A critical factor in the performance appraisal program is the discussion of the performance review with the employee. The Executive Director may discuss some or all of the following information with each employee:

- Employee's job performance over the previous 12-month period as well as current level of performance
- Opportunities for improvement
- Continued performance expectations and goals for the next 12 months

When the Executive Director has completed the discussion with the employee the appraisal should be signed and dated by both the Executive Director and the employee verifying that the evaluation has been completed. The original signed appraisal should be placed in the employee's personnel file.

## **PROMOTIONS**

Promotions from within shall be considered whenever an employment vacancy occurs.

The Executive Director shall post notice of all available positions. Staff members are encouraged to indicate their interest in being considered for any promotional vacancy, or for transfer to another position, by notifying the Executive Director.

When a transfer of staff permits more effective and efficient operation, the agency reserves the right to transfer personnel to positions of equal or similar responsibility within the agency.

Staff accepting a promotion and/or transfer is placed on probationary status for a period of 90 days.

Procedures apply as though newly hired.

## **GARNISHMENTS AND COURT ORDERS**

The indebtedness of an employee and the actions of creditors are confidential matters that are primarily the concern of the employee and not of the Company. However, wage garnishments and court orders for deductions create a legal obligation and potential liability. To comply with the federal and state statutes regarding wage garnishments, court orders, or any other wage deduction claim submitted by a federal, state or municipal taxing authority, the Company is required to deduct amounts appropriate to the state's statutes and regulations. When an order is received, the Company will notify the employee as necessary.

## **REIMBURSEMENT FOR EMPLOYEE EXPENSES**

### **Allowable Expenses**

In the event that Hope Haven CAC requests that employees travel on Hope Haven CAC business or commute to a work site necessitating overnight accommodations, Hope Haven CAC will provide an amount equal to the federal per diem rates for the required transportation, meal, and lodging expenses. The employee will need to fill out the appropriate travel vouchers with the dates of travel and have his/her supervisor approve travel request. All travel and accommodations must receive prior approval by the Executive Director.

### **Travel Expenses**

In the event that Hope Haven CAC requests that the employees utilize their personal vehicle for business purposes, other than normal commuting to and from work sites, employees will be reimbursed at the federal per diem rate per mile and for related costs, such as tolls and parking. Employees must travel a minimum

of 20 miles in order to submit for mileage reimbursement. The employee will need to fill out the appropriate travel vouchers with the dates of travel and have his/her supervisor approve travel request. All travel and accommodations must receive prior approval by the Executive Director.

- Parking or driving violations incurred by the employee on agency business are the sole responsibility of the employee,
- A copy of the employee's notification of insurance must be provided to the agency prior to the employee utilizing his or her own vehicle for company business. The employee must maintain adequate insurance coverage at all times and provide documentation of said insurance when asked to do so by the management.
- By accepting mileage as reimbursement, the employee agrees to bear personally any and every loss to their car and contents sustained while their car is used for agency business.
- Employees shall keep an accurate record of miles driven. This record shall be submitted monthly.

## **BENEFITS**

Currently, Hope Haven CAC does not offer benefits to any employees.

## **LEAVE PLANS**

The Leave Plan includes mental health, sick days, holidays, vacation days, bereavement days, etc. The term "day" is defined as that number of hours that are regularly scheduled as the employee's work day.

### **a. Mental Health Leave**

Upon discretion of the Executive Director, mental health hours or days may be offered to employees to help reduce the risk of burnout. These days do not count against the employees accrued leave times, but must be appropriately documented on employee time sheets.

### **b. Sick Leave**

Hope Haven CAC recognizes that an employee may require time off due to illness or the illness of a family member. Full time employees with at least 30 days of service will receive up to eight (8) days per year of sick leave. Sick leave will be prorated for a partial year worked. Employees cannot carry over unused sick leave into the next year. Employees who leave employment with Hope Haven CAC for any reason will not be entitled to be paid for any unused sick leave.

Time consumed by appointments with doctors and dentists shall be considered sick leave.

If more than 3 days are missed, a doctor's (or other medical or mental health professional's) excuse may be requested. In the event of excessive absences, the Executive Director may request verification of medical necessity.

### **c. Legal Holidays**

Legal holidays should be at the discretion of the Executive Director and/or Board of Directors if the holiday is not in the list below. When staff is gone for an extended length of time, an on-call schedule will be created by the Executive Director. All staff will be made aware of this schedule prior to extended leave being granted for holidays.

All full-time employees will be paid their regular salary for legal holidays. When paid holidays fall on Saturday, the previous day shall be observed as the holiday. When any holiday falls on Sunday, the following day shall be observed. The Executive Director may also decide on any changes to holidays. Employees must take the designated holidays unless approval is received from the Executive Director. Hope Haven CAC recognizes the following legal holidays:

- New Year's Day
- MLK Day
- President's Day
- Mardi Gras Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday following Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve

### **d. Vacation**

Vacation time off with pay is available to full-time employees once sufficient PTO has been earned by the employee. Vacation time is based upon the employee's anniversary date, not on the calendar year.

Every fulltime Hope Haven employee earns 16 hours of PTO (Paid Time Off) per month. Paid time off can be used for sick leave or vacation leave at the discretion of the employee. Employees can earn a maximum of 320 hours of PTO and can carry over any balance remaining at the end of a calendar year into the next year as long as it does not exceed 320 hours. PTO earnings are capped at 320 hours.

Vacation pay is paid at the employee's normal rate of pay and the normal number of hours in the regular work week. Vacation days may be taken any time after the time is earned.

Employees are encouraged to turn in their vacation requests at least 2 weeks prior to the requested date(s), or as early as possible. Vacation requests will be approved at the discretion of the Executive Director. The Executive Director reserves the right to refuse vacation request based on staffing needs, employee's length of service, and employee preferences, in the order listed.

Part-time employees are not eligible for vacation leave.

The Hope Haven Director is granted 4 weeks of vacation leave per year.

**e. Bereavement Leave**

A bereavement leave of absence (with pay for Full-time employees) may be arranged with the Executive Director. Hope Haven CAC will allow full-time employees up to five (5) days' pay at their regular wages due to the death of a spouse or child, and up to three (3) days' pay at the regular rate in the event of the death of a brother, sister, parent, or spouse's parent.

In addition, with prior approval of the Executive Director, employees may be allowed a maximum of four hours pay to attend the funeral of other relatives or friends.

**f. Jury Duty**

Employees summoned to report for jury duty on a regularly scheduled workday will receive their regular wages for each day they serve, minus the amount per day they receive for jury duty, up to a maximum of two (2) weeks per year. An employee who receives a jury duty summons is expected to consult with the Executive Director as soon as possible to discuss scheduling issues.

**g. Voting Leave**

All employees may take up to three hours paid leave off to vote in an official local, state, or federal election.

**h. Severe Weather**

Hope Haven CAC intends to protect employee safety and does not wish for any employee to travel to work during unsafe periods of severe weather. Mississippi is not unfamiliar with violent weather, such as hurricanes and tornadoes. Hope Haven CAC seeks to honor employee comfort and safety and expects employees to put forth a good-faith effort to work when possible. Hope Haven CAC will work with employees on alternative work options when possible, including working from home, compensatory time, etc. The employee should contact the Executive Director if there is a question about the ability to travel to work during regular work hours due to severe weather.

**i. Maternity/Paternity Leave**

All Full-time employees may take 6 weeks paid maternity /paternity leave upon the birth or adoption of a child. An additional 6 weeks of leave may be granted upon the approval of the Executive Director (or the Board of Directors in the case of the Executive Director); however, the employee must use sick leave, vacation leave or leave without pay for the additional time off.

**j. Short Term Disability**

A full-time employee may request, and receive, up to 3 weeks of paid leave for any disability after accrued personal and vacation days are used. A written request for such leave should be submitted one month prior to the date of the proposed leave, giving an expected date of return. A doctor's statement regarding the nature of the disability must be submitted prior to approval. A doctor's statement clearing the individual to return to work must be submitted before the individual can return to work.

**k. Long Term Disability**

Hope Haven CAC, due to its size and the need to maintain operations, does not offer any long-term disability program. Individuals who have used up their 3 weeks paid leave and personal and vacation days may be terminated with no ill will by the Executive Director.

## **I. Unpaid Leaves of Absence**

Unpaid leaves of absence may be granted to full-time employees who have worked for Hope Haven CAC for at least one (1) year to enable them to obtain job-related education, respond to family needs, fulfill military obligations, or to perform special outside assignments. Hope Haven CAC will review and act in its sole discretion on

a request for leave of absence on an individual basis and in consideration of the effect the absence will have on the organization.

All employees starting a leave of absence of one (1) week or more will be required to utilize accrued and unused vacation time and personal time/sick leave.

Hope Haven CAC may be obliged to hire another person to replace an employee on unpaid leave, in which case the employee will be considered for re-employment on an individual basis.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

Every employee is an important member of our team. From time to time, it is necessary and understandable for an employee to be tardy or absent from work due to illness or a serious personal problem. It is important to recognize that excessive tardiness or absence impairs the effectiveness of good client services.

- It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to inform each employee of the procedure and telephone number to be used to report tardiness or absence.
- The employee must notify the Executive Director of anticipated tardiness or absence according to department policy before the work day begins. Notification is necessary each day unless the absence for a specified period of time has been approved in advance.
- Habitual or excessive tardiness or absenteeism will be cause for corrective action and/or immediate termination.
- Employees who are absent from work for illness for more than three consecutive days, may be requested to bring a return-to-work notice from their physician. As a part of the corrective action process for excessive absenteeism, employees may be required to submit a return-to-work notice from their physicians for any sick day occurrence.
- Any employee who is absent from work without notification for three or more consecutive scheduled working days will be considered as having voluntarily terminated due to job abandonment.

## **RULES OF CONDUCT (EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY)**

Employees are considered representatives of Hope Haven CAC and agree to devote their professional time and interests to the organization. Therefore, you must avoid participation in outside activities which interfere, compete or conflict with the interests of Hope Haven CAC, or which might, in any way, have an adverse effect on an individual's performance of assigned responsibilities and duties.

## **HARASSMENT FREE ENVIRONMENT**

Hope Haven CAC is committed to providing a work environment that is free of sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious harassment. Such behavior undermines the integrity of the employment relationship and is inconsistent with the philosophy in any form. including verbal, physical, and visual. No sexual, racial, or ethnic slurs will be tolerated.

Any incident of discrimination or harassment should be reported immediately to the Executive Director. If you cannot do that, notification should be made to the President of the Board of Directors. In all cases, reasonable measures will be taken to protect the complaining employee from any retaliatory harassment or abusive behavior by other employees, by members, vendors, or suppliers.

All complaints will be investigated promptly. Employee conduct which results in discrimination or harassment against other employees, members, vendors, or suppliers is illegal and will result in corrective disciplinary action, including possible discharge.

## **GRIEVANCES**

Occasions may arise when employees wish to express a grievance. Should this occur, employees should discuss the issue with the Executive Director.

If an employee wishes to express a grievance regarding the Executive Director, the employee should first address the issue directly with the Executive Director. If the issue persists, the employee should discuss the issue with the Hope Haven CAC Board President.

Although Hope Haven CAC encourages employees to use the grievance procedure, Hope Haven CAC reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to terminate that procedure at any step, or eliminate it entirely, under circumstances where it deems such action is necessary and appropriate.

## **WHISTLEBLOWER**

Hope Haven CAC expects employees to practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling job responsibilities. It is the intent of Hope Haven CAC to comply with all applicable laws. If any employee reasonably believes that some policy, practice or activity of Hope Haven CAC is in violation of law, a written complaint must be filed with the Executive Director or Board President or other Board officer.

No employee who in good faith reports alleged unlawful activity, policy or practice shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment consequence. Employees are protected from retaliation only if the employee brings the allegations to the attention of Hope Haven CAC and provides Hope Haven CAC with a reasonable opportunity to investigate and correct the alleged unlawful activity. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense. This policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns within the organization prior to seeking resolution outside the organization.

## **MEMBER RELATIONS**

Employees are required to treat everyone in a courteous and respectful manner at all times. All employees have an obligation to represent Hope Haven CAC in a positive fashion and to make others feel as comfortable as possible in dealing with this organization.

Employees should be particularly careful to exercise courtesy and thoughtfulness in using the telephone. A positive contact with someone can enhance goodwill while a negative experience can destroy a valued relationship. Employees are encouraged to report recurring problems to the Executive Director and/or make suggestions for changes in Hope Haven CAC policies or operating procedures to solve problems.

## **CHANGE OF ADDRESS/STATUS**

Certain information regarding each employee must be kept current for the purposes of ensuring proper benefit coverage, complying with State and Federal law, and enabling us to contact an individual of your choosing in case of emergencies. Therefore, you are expected to immediately report to management any of the following:

4. Change of residential address
5. Change of residential phone number
6. Change of marital status
7. Change in the number and/or status of dependents; and
8. Change of name, address, or phone number of a person who is expected to be notified by Hope Haven CAC in case of emergency.

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

For security reasons, personal effects should never be left or stored on Hope Haven CAC premises. Hope Haven CAC will not be responsible for any losses that may occur if your personal property is left on Hope Haven CAC premises.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF THE**

**POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL**

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Hope Haven Children's Advocacy Center Policy and Procedure Manual. That you, the employee, understand that it contains important information on the general personnel policies of the Hope Haven CAC and on your privileges and obligations as an employee.

I have familiarized myself with the material in the Manual and understand its contents, as well as other material and data to which it refers.

I understand this Manual is not a contract or offer of a contract, and does not in any way alters my status as an employee at-will.

I further understand and agree that Hope Haven CAC may change, rescind, or add to any policies, benefits or practices described in the Manual from time to time in its sole and absolute discretion, with or without prior notice.

Printed Name of Employee

Signature of Employee

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DATE

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