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**[YOUR COUNCIL] RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

**Employee Policy Handbook**

**DRAFT**

*Property of:  
[Your Council] RC&D Council*

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**Employee Policy Handbook**

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## Welcome Message

Dear Employee:

Welcome to [Your Council] Resource Conservation and Development, Inc. We are happy to have you here.

This handbook sets forth the general administrative policies of [Your Council] RC&D, Inc. It applies to all employees. The policies and processes of this handbook are current as of the date presented to you. When there is a change in a policy, we will update this handbook as soon as we can. Feel free to consult us whenever you have questions.

The material in this handbook is not exhaustive. Although we have attempted to cover matters of general applicability to employees, we know that it doesn't cover every situation which may arise from day to day. We reserve the right to make changes at any time; with or without notice, and to interpret these policies and procedures at the discretion of the company.

NO PROVISION IN THIS HANDBOOK IS INTENDED TO CREATE A CONTRACT BETWEEN [YOUR COUNCIL] RC&D, INC., AND ANY EMPLOYEE, OR TO LIMIT THE RIGHTS OF THE COMPANY AND ITS EMPLOYEES TO TERMINATE THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP AT ANY TIME, WITH OR WITHOUT CAUSE. THIS HANDBOOK IS A GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY, TO BE MODIFIED AND APPLIED BY THE COMPANY AT ITS DISCRETION.

These policies have been written with the understanding that the strength and future growth of the Council depends directly upon the individual contributions made by every employee. These policies recognize that high productivity and efficiency result from individual job satisfaction.

The policy of the Council is to be frank, fair, and honest, and to respect the individual rights of all employees. The Council, individually and collectively, will strive to achieve mutual respect in all employment relationships. Each employee and Council member must realize that harmonious relationships are not entirely a matter of rules but are the outgrowth of daily decisions and cooperative attitudes.

We wish you a successful career at [Your Council] RC&D, Inc.

NAME, President

## **Equal Employment Opportunity Policy**

The Council acknowledges that equal opportunity for all persons is a fundamental human right. It is the policy of the Council to provide equal opportunity in the employment and personnel management of all employees on the basis of merit without discrimination because of race, color, creed religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation, membership or activity in a local commission, veteran status, or age.

[Your Council] RC&D will comply with all applicable laws governing equal employment opportunity. This policy extends to all applicants and employees and to all aspects of the employment relationship including, but not limited to, recruiting, hiring, promotion, transfer, and compensation.

Specifically, the company will provide equal employment and advancement opportunity on the bases of merit within the context of its unique business environment, and without regard to the protected status's listed above.

## **Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy**

Harassment of employees occurring in the workplace or in other settings connected with work activities will not be tolerated in this organization. Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is based upon a person's protected status, such as sex, color, race, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability, or other protected group status. [Your Council] RC&D, Inc. will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects tangible job benefits, that interferes unreasonably with an individual's work performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment is a concern that deserves special mention. Federal guidelines define sexual harassment as including "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature" not only when the conduct is made as a condition of employment ("quid pro quo" harassment), but when the conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Harassment of any kind is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. Likewise, retaliation against an employee who makes a charge of harassment will not be tolerated. Employees and supervisors may not retaliate against someone who has filed a complaint of harassment. Retaliation is illegal.

If you believe you have been a victim of harassment, discuss the matter with the Council President, Executive Director, or any Council Director immediately.

All allegations of offensive behavior and harassment will be investigated promptly, fairly, and completely. The facts shall determine the response to each complaint.

## **Drug Free Work Place**

Use of illegal or illicit drugs by employees is not allowed. The use of illegal or illicit drugs can impair the ability of those employees perform tasks that are critical to carrying out the Council's mission. Use of illegal or illicit drugs can also result in increasing the potential for accidents and other failures that pose a serious threat to health and safety. Employees caught using illegal or illicit drugs will be subject to personnel action as deemed appropriate by the Council. This could include, but is not limited to leave without pay, termination, or other. Federal Drug Free Workplace rules apply.

## **Weapons Are Prohibited**

[Your Council] RC&D does not allow employees to possess guns while working – while on company premises, or while representing the company off-site. We also do not allow visitors (vendors, customers, temporary workers, etc.) to our premises to possess guns. Consistent with Minnesota law, notices are posted at all company entrances advising that we ban gun possession. A violation of this work rule may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

This ban does not apply to any company parking lot or other parking facility.

## **Confidentiality**

As a result of your employment at [Your Council] RC&D, Inc., you will acquire and have access to confidential information belonging to the company of a special and unique nature and value, relating to such matters as the company's personnel and compensation information; accounts; trade secrets; procedures; manuals; financial cost and sales data-supply sources and resources; accounting and bookkeeping practices; office policies and practices; financial information, data, records, and reports; business plans, general and specific; prospect names and lists; existing and potential business opportunities; confidential reports; customer lists and contracts; litigation and other legal matters, as well as information specific to the company's products or services.

As a condition of employment, you must agree that all such information is the exclusive property of the company, and that you will not at any time divulge or disclose to anyone, except in the responsible exercise of you job, any such information, whether or not it has been designated specifically as "confidential."

## **Use of Internet, Phone, E-Mail, and Office Equipment**

As an employee of the Council, your duty during the workday is to attend to Council business. Use of internet, phone, e-mail, computers and other office equipment available should be confined to Council business.

All employee use of company-provided computer resources must be appropriate and in accordance with policy. Inappropriate use, which may be defined from time to time in the discretion of management, may subject you to discipline, up to and including termination. Inappropriate use includes, for example:

- Use of the systems in violation of any company policy, including the Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy.
- Use of the systems to create, send, or receive messages, pictures, or computer files which are fraudulent, illegal, pornographic, obscene, sexually suggestive, insulting, sexist, racist, discriminatory, or harassing. If you receive such material you must immediately notify your supervisor.
- Use of the resources to conduct illegal activities.
- Loading software which is not approved in advance by management.
- Making illegal copies of licensed software.
- Using software that is designed to destroy data, provide unauthorized access to the company's computer or communication equipment in any way.
- Using the company e-mail and voicemail systems for personal business.

Any message or file created, stored, and/or sent using the company's computer or communications equipment is the property of the company. Therefore, employees should have no expectation of privacy in any message that you store or send using the equipment.

## **Employee Status**

The Executive Committee and/or Council will identify and interview the most qualified candidates for any open positions. The Council will give final approval of employees hired. The Council will provide a letter of hire to each paid employee which includes start date, job title, employee classifications, work schedule, salary, and whom they report to.

The following definitions are provided to enable you to understand the Employee Handbook policies that follow regarding time off and employee benefits:

### **Full -Time Employee**

- An employee hired to fill a Council-approved, full-time position and who works 80 hours per pay period, fifty-two weeks per year, less earned Personal Time Off (PTO), and is entitled to all fringe benefits provided by the Council.

### **Part-Time Employee**

- An employee hired to fill a Council-approved, part-time position and who works less than 80 hours per pay period, but more than 40 hours per pay period, and is eligible for prorated Personal Time Off (PTO) and other prorated benefits provided by the Council.

### **Temporary Employee**

- An employee hired to fill a Council-approved position for a specific job and specific period of time. This employee is compensated at an hourly rate for the actual number of hours worked and may receive fringe benefits available as negotiated in advance.

### **Probation (All employees)**

- All employees will be on probation for six (6) months upon starting. They can be terminated without cause during that probation time if the Council so chooses. A review of performance will be given after six months, provided the employee is still working for the Council.

## **Job Descriptions**

A job description shall be established for each position and may be reviewed by the Council prior to staffing the position. Job descriptions will be maintained on file in the Council Office. This should include if this is exempt or non-exempt position (as defined in Department of Labor regulations) those who are paid on a salary basis are exempt from both the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Each employee will be provided with a copy of the current job description of his/her position. As the need arises, the Executive Committee may review and draft revised job for Council action. As Job Position Descriptions may change throughout the course of an employee's relationship with the Council, these Descriptions may change to reflect the actual work and mission of the Council.

The job description will include the following at a minimum:

- Organization information: title, department title, supervisors, full time/part time and exempt/non-exempt designation
- Job summary
- Essential job functions
- Working conditions
- Specifications: requirements for education, experience, knowledge and other requisite skills

## **Employee Personnel Files**

The Council will retain in the employee personnel files all time sheets, evaluation forms, correspondence between the Council and employee, training plans, references, and resignation letter.

The Council recognizes the right to privacy for all employees. The personnel files will be kept in the Council office. The files will only be released to the employee and/or other persons as required by law.

Information from the personnel files will be available to the Executive Committee and the Council, as is necessary, to make personnel decisions and to conduct Council business. The employee (or former employee) may review their file at any time (appointment required). The Council reserves the right to have a Council representative present with the employee to monitor the review.

If, after receiving and/or reviewing the requested file/materials, the employee disagrees with specific information in the personnel file, the employee may ask the Council, verbally or in writing, to remove the specific information. If the Council refuses to remove or revise the disputed material, the employee can submit a written response to the disputed information not to exceed five pages. The response must be included with the disputed information and must be provided to any other party receiving the disputed information.

The Council will not reveal the contents of any employee's personnel file unless required to do so by law, or under compelling circumstances and only after consultation with legal counsel.

## Hours

All probationary and full-time employees are expected to work the equivalent of an eighty (80) hour, two week work period. Employees may use the maxi-flex tour of duty, which allows employees to vary their starting and ending times and earn and use credit hours as long as they do not disrupt normal business hours. Credit Hours are earned and used in 15 minute increments and up to 20 hours can be carried from pay period to pay period (not to exceed 20 hours). A flexible working schedule may be arranged with the approval of the Executive Director. The employee is expected to work fifty two (52) weeks per year less approved leave.

At times, it may be necessary for the Council to request employees to work at times other than their regularly scheduled times. In exchange, the Council will also try to accommodate individual needs as much as possible while trying to meet the needs of the organization. The core (base) hours will be from 8 AM to 4 PM.

Should it be necessary for you to be absent from or late for work for any reason, please notify the office as soon as possible. Unreported or excessive tardiness or absences may, at the Council's discretion, affect your pay or result in discipline or termination of employment.

**Credit Leave:** The Council will allow an employee to track Credit Leave for time in excess of 80 hours per two-week pay period. Credit Leave can be used by the employee at any time (excess of three days requires Executive Director). Credit Time accrual is limited to a maximum of 20 hours, beyond that the time will be lost.

Employees will receive lunch breaks of at least one-half (1/2) hour per day of unpaid time. Lunch breaks should be scheduled at a time that will not inconvenience other employees or customers. In addition, full-time employees are allowed two 15-minute breaks for each full workday.



## Compensation

**Pay Compensation:** Pay periods are two weeks in length, and pay checks will be issued within six business days after the last work day of the pay period. Pay periods begin on Sunday and end 14 days later on Saturday. All employees must track their time on Council Time Sheets. Time sheets will be submitted on or before the Monday of the next pay period. All time reports will be signed by the employee and the Executive Director and/or Treasurer. If an employee delivers his/her time sheet late, pay may be held until the following pay date.

**Medical/Dental Insurance Benefits:** The Council shall provide a stipend for the employee to use for health/dental/other benefits in the amount of \$2.00 per hour above the base pay rate, not to exceed \$3,600/year. This will only be offered to full time employees, part time employees (at a prorated basis).

**Worker's Compensation:** The Council will carry workers compensation insurance.

## Employee Training and Development

The Council believes that employees training and development is an essential, ongoing function needed by employees to maintain and enhance their job expertise, and to improve the quality of service to customers. Through training, employees are provided with opportunities for job enrichment and mobility, as well as opportunities to develop and maintain skills necessary for effective job performance.

Individual employee training and development plans may be developed by the Executive Committee and the employee through a process in which the employee's and the organization's needs are assessed. Objectives will be monitored at the annual performance evaluations.

All job-related training, including short-term academic courses, seminars, workshops, institutes, or conferences may be reimbursed up to 100%, provided funds are available and training is approved. All requests for training must first be approved by the Executive Committee and/or Council. See travel policy for specific guidelines on travel reimbursement and allowable expenses.

## Travel Policy

This policy applies to all Council employees and is designed to provide for travel for meetings, conferences, and education if the travel is necessary for the functions of the Council. Should there be any conflict between this policy and any state or Federal Law, the latter shall control. This policy shall be interpreted by the executive director and administered by the Executive Committee, under the supervision of the Council.

**Travel Requests and Approval:** Employees who need to travel to conduct Council business must present their travel needs, costs, and plans to the executive director for approval.

All overnight travel requires the approval of the Executive Director and/or Council President. In determining travel approval, the following guidelines should be used:

- All travel and training expenses should remain within the travel and training budget approved by the Council.
- Expenses will be reimbursed on a direct cost basis and receipts are required for all reimbursements.
- Authorization of travel should show the need for obtaining essential contacts or significant information important to Council functions.
- A Travel Reimbursement form must be filled out upon return with receipts for reimbursement.

Whenever possible, travel and accommodation arrangement should be made in advance with the request to have the Council billed. All authorized travel expenses that are not billed directly to the Council are to be paid by the employee. Reimbursement will be made to the employee upon presentation of receipts and approval of a travel expense form signed by the employee. Reimbursement for missing bills and receipts will be at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

In limited situations, the Executive Director and the Council Treasurer may approve the issuing of a cash advance for travel and accommodation expenses. Requests for cash advance should detail the nature of the situation, the purpose of the travel, and the amount needed. Presentation of receipts will be required after completion of travel. **See the Councils Policy and Procedure Handbook for specifics on advances.**

**Travel by Privately-Owned Vehicle:** Employees may be reimbursed for travel on official Council business with a private vehicle at the federal mileage rate. If Federal Law is found to be in contrast with this policy, the Federal Law shall apply.

**Parking:** Employees using private and Council vehicles shall be reimbursed on an actual basis for parking while on Council business. Receipts are required for reimbursement.

**Commercial Transportation and all Transpiration/Accommodation Needs:** Employees who need to travel to conduct Council business must present their travel needs, costs, and plans to the Council for approval. Upon consideration of the request, the Council will negotiate with the employee and will set up the guidelines for the authorized travel and time reimbursements. After approval by the Council, the employee will submit travel receipts and/or travel expense claim upon conclusion of the travel.

**Travel Expenses of Family Members:** If any employee's family accompanies him/her on a Council business trip, any portion of the expenses attributable to the family member's travel, meals, lodging, etc., will not in any circumstance be reimbursable by the Council.

**Report of Conference/Educational Seminar:** In order to maximize the benefit of the conference, seminar, etc., the attendee may be asked to provide a written report highlighting the educational benefits and new skills/techniques acquired. The report may be used for Council or employee training sessions and will become a part of the Council's training aids.

### **Performance Evaluations**

The primary objective of performance evaluations is to provide information to employees regarding their success in accomplishing the responsibilities of their jobs. To meet his/her objective, the Council encourages open and ongoing communication between the employees and the Council.

In general, the Council's goal is to conduct a performance evaluation with each new employee on the sixth month of employment, after one year of employment, and once a year thereafter. Performance evaluations will be conducted by the supervisors, or the case of the executive director, by the executive committee of the Council. In addition, the Council or the employee may request a performance evaluation at any time. Annual Performance reviews shall take place in February.

All performance evaluations will reflect actual performance on the job. Performance evaluations will be made in writing, reviewed with the employee, and made a part of the employee personnel file. A copy of the performance evaluation will be given to the employee.

After the first six months of employment, and upon completion of a satisfactory performance evaluation of abilities and skills, a salary increase may be recommended by the Executive Director. This salary increase must be approved by the Council based on the Council's discretion and the Council's financial ability to afford an increase.

### **Attendance, Time Off and Leaves of Absence**

**Attendance:** Employees must observe designated work hours, and use official time for official business. They shall have prior authorization for absence from work. When illness or an emergency situation does not permit prior authorization, employees must contact the office or Council President as soon as possible.

**Personal Time Off:** Employees are credited with PTO at the end of each two-week pay period. PTO accrual based on 80 hours worked is as follows:

0 – 3 years, .....	6 hours
4-14 years, .....	8 hours
15 years or more of employment, .....	10 hours

Only regular employees will receive paid time off. Temporary employees will not receive pay for time not worked. Regular part-time employees will accrue vacation time on a pro-rated basis.

Employees' wages are funded at a high percentage rate by grants. The accrued PTO hours are tracked by grant activities, and assigned to the specific grants and/or Council general work activities. A percentage of PTO earnings are part of the direct costs of a grant and RC&D will request and retain earnings for employee's future use as long as it is with 60 days after the grant deadline. Employee must take Personal Time Off within that 60 days or lose this earnings.

PTO can be used for the following purposes:

- 1) vacations;
- 2) for illness, temporary physical disability, quarantine, or for medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment, in cases of emergencies involving immediate family members of employees; to care for a sick or medical need of an immediate family member (spouse, child, parents, spouses' parents, brothers and sisters, brothers and sisters of spouse, grandparents, or grandparents of spouse). This may include physical or mental illness, injury, pregnancy, childbirth, or medical dental or optical examination or treatment;
- 3) for inclement weather or hazardous driving conditions;
- 4) Funerals: For the death of an immediate family member (as defined above); PTO or credit time may be used for funeral leave up to 3 days, unless special permission is given by the Council.

Leave requests for three consecutive days (Including PTO Leave and Credit Leave) or longer should be submitted as far in advance as possible with at least two weeks advance notice. Every effort will be made to honor Annual Leave requests, but the Council and Executive Director reserve the right to limit PTO in order to take workload and customer needs into account. Annual leave may not be used during the same pay period that it is earned.

In the event of a scheduling conflict involving two or more employees seeking the same Annual Leave days, seniority shall prevail. Not more than 240 hours (30 days) shall be carried over from one year to the next.

**Holidays:** All full-time and part-time employees will receive the following holidays as paid days off:

Date	Holiday Celebrated
January 1	New Years Day
Third Monday in January	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Third Monday in February	President's Day
Last Monday in May	Memorial Day
July 4	Independence Day
First Monday in September	Labor Day
Second Monday in October	Columbus Day
November 11	Veteran's Day
Fourth Thursday in November	Thanksgiving Day
December 25	Christmas Day

If the legal holiday falls on a Sunday, Monday will be the observed Council holiday.  
If the legal holiday falls on a Saturday, Friday will be the observed Council holiday.

**Military and Court duty:** All leave requests for Military, Court, or Jury Duty shall require two weeks advance notice to the Council, when possible. Federal and state laws shall dictate the use of leave for these aforementioned instances. In the case of jury duty the employee will be paid the difference in what was received for jury pay and regular wages. Proof of jury pay must be presented to the Council.

**Emergency Closure of Office:** If the Council office is closed due to a weather emergency, administrative leave shall be granted as per the discretion of the executive director. Other items for weather related office closures are: Employees who desire to leave work early because of inclement weather may do so by utilizing accumulated earned Personal Time Off (PTO), Credit Leave, or leave without pay.

**Parenting Leave:** [Your Council] RC&D, Inc. will grant an unpaid leave of absence for up to six weeks in conjunction with the birth or adoption of a child. This leave will be granted to any regular employee who works 20 hours or more per week and has been employed by [Your Council] RC&D, Inc. for 12 months and becomes a biological or adoptive parent. (Note: Parenting leave is required for employers with 21 or more employees.)

**Other Leave:** Leave of less than 4 hours may be granted on special occasions at the discretion of the executive director or Council, as long as it does not put undue hardship on the work of the council.

In accordance with Minnesota law, unpaid time off, up to a maximum of 16 hours annually, is available to all employees who have worked at least one-half time for the previous 12 months, for attendance at school conferences, classroom activities and preschool activities which cannot be scheduled during nonworking hours.

## Termination

**Voluntary Termination:** We recognize that you may choose to terminate your employment with [Your Council] RC&D, Inc. If you elect to terminate your employment, please make every effort to give the company two weeks' notice. At the discretion of the company, we may ask you to leave before the expiration of the notice. IN this event, you will be paid as if you had worked during the entire notice period, and the effective date of termination will be the last paid day.

**Involuntary Termination:** In accordance with the "at-will" status of all [Your Council] RC&D, Inc. employees, [Your Council] RC&D retains the right to discharge or release any employee at any time. When an employee is discharged or released, [Your Council] RC&D, Inc. will provide either two weeks advance notice or severance pay equal to two weeks. [Your Council] RC&D, Inc. has complete discretion as to which of these options it will provide to a terminated employee.

**Layoffs / Recall:** From time to time it may be necessary for management to reduce staff at [Your Council] RC&D, Inc. due to business conditions beyond our control. In such an event we will make decisions on the basis of business needs related to employee job functions and performance, and your supervisor will speak to you personally about your employment status.

**Severance Pay:** All employees who resign or retire, or whose employment is terminated, shall be entitled to payment for accumulated PTO at a maximum of 50% of accrued Leave.

**Death Benefits:** Upon the death of an employee of the Council severance pay shall be made available upon demand by the employee's surviving spouse, dependents, or personal representative, in the form of a check made payable to the decedent for the purpose of deposit into the decedent's estate. Severance pay shall include all wages earned but not received by the deceased employee and accumulated PTO at a maximum of 50% of accrued Leave

## Work Rules

**Discipline:** The Executive Committee and/or Council strive to act fairly to give employees advance notice of performance deficiencies and the opportunity to improve. The Executive Committee and/or Council retain the right to take whatever disciplinary action is appropriate under the circumstances.

**Step 1:** Verbal Reprimand - The nature of the warning specifying reasons must be recorded and written in the employees personnel file. A verbal reprimand written notice must be issued within five (5) working days after the Council Chair or a Chair appointed Council member become aware of the infraction or incident.

**Step 2:** Warning Notice - If an employee's conduct or performance continues to be unsatisfactory following a verbal reprimand, he/she will receive written notice (specifying reasons) from the Council Chair or a Chair appointed Council member. A copy signed by the affected employee and the Council Chair will be retained in the employee personnel file.

**Step 3:** Written notice of Action - Should it be necessary to discipline the employee for any reason within six (6) months after he has received the warning notice, the employee shall receive a written notice of action which shall again contain the specific reasons for dissatisfaction and be signed by the Council Chair. This requires formal Council action. A three (3) day suspension without pay may also be imposed at this time. A copy of this written notice of action signed by the affected employee and the Council Chair or a Chair appointed Council member shall be retained in the employee's file.

**Step 4:** Dismissal - If dismissal is warranted any time within twenty-four (24) months following the receipt of a warning notice, (Step 2) the employee may be dismissed by the Council. The employee will receive written reasons for the dismissal. A copy of this written notice of dismissal shall be retained in the employee's file. Notification of dismissal will be signed by the employee and Council Chair or a Chair appointed Council member or by certified letter which will be sent (return receipt requested) to the affected employee.



**Cause of Dismissal:** No employee, after having successfully completed his/her probationary period, will be dismissed from employment without cause. Evidence of the following will be sufficient cause for immediate dismissal if warranted; however, the Council may use Steps 1 and 2 for minor infractions. Others such as incompetence or insufficiency in performance of duties will be handled under Steps 1, 2, and 3. (1) Willful misconduct or insubordination; (2) Carelessness and negligence in the handling or control of Council property or the appropriation of such property for personal use without adequate payment; (3) Unapproved absence from duty; (4) Acceptance of a gift under circumstances where an employee would reasonably infer that the giver expected or hoped for preferred or favored treatment in an official manner; (5) Proven dishonesty in performance of duties; (6) Theft, gross insubordination, graft and other flagrant acts of misconduct shall be grounds for immediate dismissal; (7) Intoxication during working hours (drugs or alcohol); and (8) Conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude.

**Smoking:** The Council cannot refuse to hire an applicant because he/she is a smoker. However, under the Minnesota Clean Indoor Air Act, the Council or Executive Committee prohibits smoking in the Council office or vicinity

**Political Activities of Employees:** Employees who are recipients of Public Funds, while so employed by the Council, may not be a candidate for or accept any partisan public office. The employee must follow state and federal regulations on using public funds for political activities.

**Right to Privacy:** [Your Council] RC&D Council employees have no right to privacy (exceptions include personal effects, such as a purse or briefcase). Council Directors shall have the authority to search an employee's desk, files, office space, computer and all other Council owned, rented or donated equipment and property.

### **Employee Concerns and Grievances**

The Council realizes that effective communication between employees and the Council is essential to maintain a productive working relationship. This is especially true with employees' concerns and grievances. Grievances are dissatisfactions that arise because an employee does not know, understand, or agree with the certain policy interpretations or management decisions.

An employee who has a concern or grievance is urged to discuss the matter immediately with the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will investigate the grievance and provide a response or decision within a reasonable period of time. This investigation may consist of, but is not limited to, gathering information from the personnel involved, reviewing Council policy, and any other action necessary to become familiar with the situation.

If the employee is not satisfied with the response/decision from the Executive Committee, he/she is encouraged to contact a member of the Council orally or in writing. This Council member will investigate the issue and respond to the employee in writing within a reasonable period of time. There will be no adverse action taken against any employee making a complaint, regardless of the outcome of the investigation.

Concerns and grievances that are expressed only to persons outside the Council and/or Council office are not likely to be given deserved attention and may negatively impact the public's view of the Council.

### Suggestions

The Council recognizes that on-the-job work experience is the best source of suggestions for improvement in the workplace. The Council and the Executive Committee welcome ideas for improvement from all employees. Ideas and suggestions concerning projects and office work should be made to the Executive Director who will forward appropriate ideas and suggestions to the Council.

All Federal and State laws shall prevail if a discrepancy is noted between those laws and this policy handbook. The Council reserves the right to amend and/or change this policy handbook at any time with a written notice to the employee of such action.

The Handbook was originally adopted by [Your Council] RC&D Council on October 6, 2003. It was signed by Denny Cole, Chair, and Gerald Boler, Secretary-Treasurer.

The revised handbook was adopted by [Your Council] Resource Conservation and Development on XXXXX

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Name - Chair

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Name - Secretary

All [Your Council] RC&D Council programs and services are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, nation origin, religion, sex, age or handicap.

[Your Council] RC&D is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing below I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to have read and understood the policies outlined in this employee handbook. I understand that the handbook is intended only as a general reference, and not as a full statement of company procedure or a legal contract.

I agree to keep this book in my possession during my employment and to update it whenever provided with materials to do so. I understand that it supersedes and replaces any and all manuals, handbooks and other policies which have previously been provided to me.

I further understand that each handbook is the property of [Your Council] RC&D, Inc. and that copying any section of the book is against company policy. I agree to return the book upon the termination of my employment.

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Employee Signature

Date

DRAFT

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