

NCIRE – NORTHERN CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE
FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Revised as of January 2021



NCIRE

Northern California Institute
for Research and Education

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction.....	1
Employee Handbook Acknowledgement Receipt	1
Welcome	2
About NCIRE.....	3
The NCIRE Human Resources Department	3
About This Employee Handbook	3
Nature of the Employment Relationship	4
NCIRE Background Check Policy.....	4
Without Compensation Appointment/Federal Background Check Requirements.....	5
Licensure, Certification or Registration	5
Employment At-Will	5
Open Door Policy	6
Internal Complaint Procedure	6
Arbitration Agreement.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Equal Employment Opportunity	7
Reasonable Accommodation For Persons With Disabilities	7
Work Rules and Standards of Conduct.....	8
Policy Against Discrimination and Other Workplace Harassment	8
Policy Against Sexual Harassment	8
Policy Against Retaliation	10
Policy Against Workplace Violence.....	10
Policy Against Workplace Gambling	11
Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace Policy.....	11
Attendance and Punctuality	13
Conflicts of Interest.....	13
Consensual Relationships and Non-Fraternization	14
Dual Employment with UCSF or VA	15
Professional Dress Standards	15
Standards of Conduct.....	15
The Standards of Ethical Conduct	16
Driving for Work Policy	17
Whistleblower Policy.....	18
NCIRE Confidential Hotline –1-844-904-1770	20
Pets in the Workplace Policy	20
Safe and Healthy Working Conditions	21
Safety 21	21
Smoking	21
Property Belonging to NCIRE	22
Confidential and Proprietary Information.....	22
Work Areas, Equipment and Property	22
Electronic Mail (E-Mail) and Voicemail.....	23
Duplication of Software.....	24
Company Communication	24
Social Media Policy	24

Employment Status and Records	26
Employment Records	26
Performance Evaluations.....	27
Compensation and Adjustments	27
Resignation	28
Employment References	28
Payroll and Timekeeping.....	28
Paydays	28
Direct Deposit.....	28
Wage Garnishments.....	28
Office Hours	28
Work Day and Work Week Defined	29
Alternative Work Schedules.....	29
Emergency Dismissal	29
Effort Reporting and Electronic Timesheets.....	29
Meal Periods	29
Rest Periods.....	30
Overtime.....	31
Making up Time Taken off for Personal Reasons	31
Employment Classifications.....	32
Time Off and Leaves of Absences.....	32
Holidays	32
Vacation	33
Sick Leave & Kin Care.....	34
Bereavement and Emergency Leave.....	36
Family Care/Medical Leave	36
Pregnancy and Childbirth Related Disability Leaves and Accommodations.....	40
Other Disability Leaves.....	42
Other Legally Required Leaves of Absences.....	42
Employee Benefits.....	46
Overview	46
Paid Family Leave (PFL) and Family Temporary Disability Insurance (FTDI)	46
Paid Parental Leave	47
Short Term Disability Benefits	48
Long-Term Disability Benefits.....	48
Group Term Life Policy.....	48
Employee Assistance Program.....	48
Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconsideration Act (COBRA).....	49
Workers Compensation	49
Retirement Plans.....	49
Transit and Parking Benefit Plan	50
Ergonomics Evaluations	50

INTRODUCTION

Employee Handbook Acknowledgement Receipt

**Please Sign and Return This Acknowledgment to the Manager of Human Resources
Within One Week of Receipt of this Employee Handbook**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Northern California Institute for Research and Education (NCIRE) Employee Handbook. I understand that the Employee Handbook contains important information about the company's personnel policies and my privileges, benefits and obligations as an employee. I understand and agree that as a condition of my employment, I am required to read and comply with the policies and procedures as set forth in the Employee Handbook. I further understand and agree that NCIRE may change, rescind, or modify this Employee Handbook, at their sole discretion, at any time, with or without prior notice.

I understand that the policies contained in the Employee Handbook are guidelines only and are not intended to create any contractual rights or obligations, express or implied. I understand and agree that I have no express or implied employment contract for any specified term with NCIRE and that any benefits, policies, or procedures extended or implemented by NCIRE are not intended to and do not create an express or implied contract of employment. I further understand that my employment relationship with NCIRE is at-will, which means that my employment is for no definite period and my employer or I may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice, with or without cause, for any reason. NCIRE reserves discretion to demote or discipline me or otherwise alter the terms of my employment at any time at its sole discretion, with or without cause or advance notice.

I understand and agree that during the period of my employment, no representative of NCIRE has the authority to enter into any agreement for employment for any specified period of time, or to make any agreement contrary to the terms of this Acknowledgment, and that any such agreement must be in writing and signed by both the Executive Director and me.

I further understand and agree that this Acknowledgment and Employee Handbook together contain a full and complete statement of the agreements and understandings that they recite, and that this Employee Handbook supersedes and replaces any earlier handbooks, manuals, policies, practices, guidelines, written or oral descriptions of the terms or conditions of my employment, and any previous agreements, whether written or oral, express or implied, relating to the subjects covered in this Employee Handbook.

Employee Printed Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

Welcome

It is my pleasure to welcome you as a new employee to the Northern California Institute for Research and Education (NCIRE). NCIRE is a leading medical research institute, managing funded studies and industry sponsored clinical trials. NCIRE operates on the beautiful campus of the San Francisco Veterans Affairs Health Care System (SFVAHCS) as well as a site in the vibrant Mission Bay district of San Francisco. We are proudly affiliated with the University of California San Francisco (UCSF).

Even though we celebrate almost 30 years of research innovation we are truly at the threshold of discovery, entering a new era in biomedical research and innovation. Our mission continues to focus on improving the health and wellbeing of Veterans and the public by supporting a world-class biomedical research program.

NCIRE is the research home of nearly 200 scientists and their teams whose work translates to improved health for our Veterans—and ultimately better healthcare for our nation. We are proud of NCIRE's tradition, encouraging collaboration and a sense of community, which in turn fosters scientific discovery and speeds the translation of research to clinical care. We are extraordinarily proud of our employees.

NCIRE recognizes the fact that our employees really are a unique resource and we are committed to their wellbeing.

I certainly hope your new position will fulfill your professional goals and provide the personal satisfaction of being part of our dynamic organization. Once again, welcome aboard!

Sincerely,

Rebecca Rosales
Executive Director

About NCIRE

Welcome to the largest non-profit research institute affiliated with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in the United States. Northern California Institute for Research and Education (NCIRE) is a team of physician scientists and scientists working in partnership with the University of California San Francisco (UCSF) and the San Francisco Veterans Affairs Health Care System (SFVAHCS) to integrate research interests with the needs of Veterans.

NCIRE research is organized around focus areas consisting of scientists, postdoctoral researchers and research associates. Interactions and collaboration among the research groups are encouraged, creating a stimulating environment.

Medical research is conducted in such diverse areas as aging, cardiovascular disease, neurodegenerative diseases, cancer, hepatitis and other infectious diseases, health services research, and mental health diseases. Some of these scientists are engaged in research that will help us understand the function of certain human cells, genes, proteins and other fundamental structures within our bodies.

Since NCIRE's founding in 1988, the institute has made a home for some of the most outstanding biomedical researchers in the country. Every day, our scientists collaborate at the threshold of discovery to explore new ideas and find the answers that will improve the health of our Veterans.

The NCIRE Human Resources Department

It is the mission of NCIRE's Human Resources Department to continue to attract, develop, motivate and retain a successful workforce to support NCIRE's mission of providing the finest research environment for our researchers in their quest to cure human diseases and afflictions.

Your Human Resources Team welcomes you as part of the research team and encourages valuable contributions by employees.

This Employee Handbook as well as many other HR documents can be found at: <https://app.strivebenefits.com/ncire>

You can also reach the HR Team at (415) 750-6954.

About This Employee Handbook

This Employee Handbook is designed to acquaint employees with NCIRE and to provide information about NCIRE's policies, work rules and employee benefits. As an NCIRE employee, it is expected that you read, understand and comply with the provisions of this handbook. No handbook can anticipate every circumstance or questions about policies. Therefore, if you have questions, you are urged to discuss them with your immediate supervisor, or the Human Resources Department personnel who will be more than willing to answer your questions.

The policies and practices set forth in this handbook are not intended to create any legally enforceable obligations on the part of NCIRE with respect to your employment. This handbook supersedes and replaces any earlier handbooks, manuals, policies, practices, guidelines, or descriptions of the terms and conditions of your employment, as well as any previous

agreements, whether written or oral, expressed or implied, related to the subjects covered in this Employee Handbook. Except for the policy of at-will employment, the provisions of this handbook may be amended or canceled in whole or in part at any time, with or without notice, at the sole discretion of NCIRE or because of changes in local, state or federal law.

NATURE OF THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP

NCIRE Background Check Policy

NCIRE considers the information obtained through the employment application, references and background checks an essential part of the application process for determining a candidate's eligibility for employment, transfers or promotions within NCIRE.

NCIRE utilizes the services of an investigative consumer reporting agency to conduct criminal background checks and to verify education and employment history, credit history, identity, character, general reputation personal characteristics, and mode of living of all candidates for employment, company officer, and Board Member positions, as permitted by law. Information about candidate's personal credit history and any professional licenses held are verified when pertinent to the position applied for. All background information obtained by NCIRE is maintained confidentially and secured in encrypted computer files or locked cabinets.

A notice including the name and address of the investigative consumer reporting agency conducting the investigation, the nature and scope of the investigation and a summary of rights are provided to all applicants and employees subject to background checks.

If NCIRE discovers that an applicant or employee has falsified or provided misleading information or omitted material facts on their resume, employment application or on any document used to secure employment, NCIRE may withhold or withdraw an offer of employment or terminate employment immediately if the person is employed.

NCIRE will not consider (1) any arrests that do not lead to convictions, (2) offenses other than felonies or misdemeanors, (3) convictions more than seven years old, (4) an applicant's participation in or completion of a diversion or deferral of judgment program, and (5) sealed, inoperative or juvenile convictions.

If an applicant or employee's background check reveals a criminal conviction that did not result in a referral to or participation in a pre-trial or post-trial diversion program, NCIRE may take into account the following factors in rendering a decision about severing employment:

- Seriousness, timing, frequency, and likelihood of reoccurrence of the offenses, convictions, and sanctions;
- Relevancy of the offenses, conviction or sanctions to the position, department and NCIRE's business;
- Potential risk to the health, safety and welfare of NCIRE employees, subjects, patients, data, equipment and property as well as the SFVAMC campus;
- Potential risk to NCIRE's business interests if the individual is hired or remains employed by NCIRE; and
- Credibility and character of the candidate.

Without Compensation Appointment/Federal Background Check Requirements

All NCIRE employees are required to have completed and been approved for a Without Compensation Appointment (WOC) with the San Francisco VA Health Care System (SFVAHCS). A Research Without Compensation (WOC) appointee is an individual who performs research-related duties on a VA research project without any direct monetary compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Most NCIRE research projects are intrinsically tied to both the San Francisco VA Health Care System (SFVAHCS) Research program and the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). As such, NCIRE employees must also submit to a Federal background investigation performed by the SFVAHCS and be cleared to obtain what is known as a WOC appointment. The WOC appointment consists of background clearance, online trainings, fingerprinting, TB tests, education verification, and other components. The WOC appointment is managed in by the SFVAHCS Human Resources Department. The Federal VA background check may have different criteria than NCIRE regarding:

- (1) any arrests that do not lead to convictions, (2) offenses other than felonies or misdemeanors, (3) convictions more than seven years old, (4) an applicant's participation in or completion of a diversion or deferral of judgment program, and (5) sealed, inoperative or juvenile convictions.

Your need to report certain incidents may differ for the SFVAHCS Federal Government background investigation vs. what you are required to report for NCIRE, a California employer. Please check with your SFVAHC Human Resources Representative if you have questions regarding reporting requirements on your Federal Background forms.

NCIRE is allowed to operate on the SFVAHCS campus, but we are subject to the regulations that are mandated to protect VA research. If at any point during your employment, the SFVAHCS does not grant, revokes or fails to renew your WOC appointment, you may not be allowed to continue your employment with NCIRE.

Licensure, Certification or Registration

Some positions may require a valid license, certification or registration to carry out the essential functions of the position by law and as a condition of employment, and, may also require credentialing privileges in order to perform research for the San Francisco Veteran's Affairs Medical Center (SFVAMC). It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that all documents are valid and in good standing with the issuing party. Employees whose documents can-not be verified by the NCIRE HR Department, are expired or revoked for misconduct will be placed on a leave of absence without pay until the required document has been renewed or may be terminated from employment.

Employment At-Will

Employment with NCIRE is at-will, which means that both the employee and NCIRE may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice, with or without cause, for any reason whatsoever. NCIRE does not promise that your employment relationship will continue for a set period of time or specific term, or that your employment relationship can be terminated only under particular circumstances. NCIRE reserves the right to exercise its

discretion to change your rate of pay, hours of work, benefits, and job duties, and to impose disciplinary action when warranted.

Only the Executive Director has the authority to enter into any agreement for employment for any specified length of time or that is contrary to the policy of at-will employment. Any such agreement must be in writing, signed by the Executive Director, and express a clear and unambiguous intent to alter the at-will nature of the employment relationship in order to be valid. Nothing in this handbook or in any oral or written statement shall limit the right to terminate employment at-will.

Open Door Policy

NCIRE believes in fostering a positive working environment in which all employees will be able to achieve their highest potential and accordingly maintains an open door policy. The open door policy is designed to encourage employees to discuss work-related concerns or problems with management. Employees are encouraged to express any constructive concerns, raise questions and make suggestions for improvement.

Internal Complaint Procedure

- a) Employees Should Report Any Concerns To Their Supervisor Or Manager. Any employee with concerns about work-related issues including complaints of discrimination and harassment are encouraged to speak directly with their supervisor or manager. Failing resolution at that level or if the complaint concerns conduct by an employee's supervisor or manager, then the employee should submit a complaint to the Human Resources Department.
- b) Submit A Complaint To The Human Resources Department. The complaint should set forth in detail the basis for the employee's complaint and the specific relief requested. A representative from the Human Resources Department will meet with the employee and investigate the complaint, (including interviewing witnesses and reviewing any evidence and documents) as necessary. As soon as practicable after the conclusion of the investigation, the Human Resources Department will notify the employee of the outcome of the investigation and any action taken to resolve the issue. If the complaint concerns conduct by the Human Resources Manager or any related Human Resources Department personnel, an employee may report the matter directly to the Executive Director using this same process.
- c) Appeal Decision To The Executive Director. If the complaint is not resolved to the employee's satisfaction, the employee may submit a written request for review by the Executive Director. The employee should submit a written request for review within ten (10) working days after receiving the decision from his or her manager or Human Resources Department. The written request for review should state the basis for disagreement with the decision and the specific relief that the employee is seeking. The Executive Director will investigate each complaint received, and may interview any witnesses and arrange to meet with the parties involved. As soon as practicable after the conclusion of the investigation, the Executive Director will notify the employee of the outcome of any investigation and his or her decision, which will be considered final.

This policy does not require reporting harassment or discrimination to any individual who is allegedly creating the harassment or discrimination.

NCIRE will maintain confidentiality to the extent possible. However, NCIRE cannot promise complete confidentiality. NCIRE's duty to investigate and take corrective action may require the disclosure of information to individuals with a need to know.

If an employee files a complaint in good faith, the employee will not be disciplined or otherwise penalized for lodging the complaint. If an employee believes that he or she is being retaliated against for lodging a complaint, the employee should immediately notify the Human Resources Department.

Equal Employment Opportunity

NCIRE is an equal opportunity employer that believes in promoting a diverse workplace in order to create a working environment in which all employees are provided with equal employment opportunities. NCIRE will not discriminate against qualified applicants or employees with respect to any term or condition of employment based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, sex (including pregnancy, perceived pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or related medical condition), sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, transgender status, age, religion (including religious dress and religious grooming practices), genetic information, creed, physical or mental disability, legally protected medical condition or information, family care status, domestic partner status, marital status, military or Veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.

This policy applies to all areas of employment, including recruitment, hiring, training, promotion, compensation, benefits, transfer, and disciplinary action. The spirit and intent of this policy also applies to all of our client, vendor and professional relationships.

Reasonable Accommodation For Persons With Disabilities

NCIRE is committed to providing equal opportunity in employment to qualified individuals with disabilities. All employment practices, employment decisions and activities are conducted on a non-discriminatory basis. NCIRE provides reasonable accommodations for employees and job applicants with disabilities to enable them to apply for positions and to perform the essential functions of their jobs, unless it would result in an undue hardship for NCIRE, or such individuals pose a direct threat to the health and safety of themselves or others. Employees who have a disability that affects their ability to perform their job and who feel that they need an accommodation are encouraged to contact the Human Resources Department for additional assistance.

NCIRE may request medical certification to verify the existence of a disability or work restrictions, to identify potential accommodations, or to determine any safety or health risks. In addition, NCIRE may contact an employee's health care provider(s) in appropriate situations. NCIRE will treat information regarding an employee's medical condition and restrictions as confidential, except to the extent that his or her supervisor or manager or other individuals need to know about the employee's medical condition to help with the reasonable accommodation process.

WORK RULES AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Policy Against Discrimination and Other Workplace Harassment

NCIRE believes in respecting the dignity of each employee and expects every employee to show respect for all coworkers, customers, and vendors. Respectful, professional conduct furthers NCIRE's mission, promotes productivity, minimizes disputes, and enhances our reputation. Accordingly, this policy prohibits discrimination or harassment that is based on an individual's race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex (including pregnancy, perceived pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding or related medical condition), sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, transgender status, age, religion (including religious dress or religious grooming), creed, physical or mental disability, legally protected medical condition or information, family care status, domestic partner status, marital status, military or Veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws. NCIRE is committed to providing a work environment that is free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment that is based on any legally protected characteristic.

Scope of Coverage

These policies prohibit employees, supervisors, managers, officers, directors, vendors, Principal Investigators, research subjects, independent contractors or consultants or agents of NCIRE from engaging in discrimination or harassment of any NCIRE employee or applicant. Similarly, NCIRE will not tolerate harassment by its employees of non-employees with whom NCIRE employees have a business, service, or professional relationship. NCIRE also will attempt to protect employees from harassment by non-employees in the workplace.

Prohibited Conduct

The conduct prohibited by this policy, whether **verbal, written, physical, or visual**, includes any discriminatory employment action and any unwelcome conduct that affects someone because of that individual's protected characteristics and that:

- affects an employee's tangible job benefits;
- unreasonably interferes with work performance; or
- creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Among the types of unwelcome conduct prohibited by this policy include, but are not limited to: epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, intimidating acts, and the circulation or posting of written or graphic materials that show hostility toward individuals because of their protected characteristics. Even where the conduct is not sufficiently severe or pervasive to constitute a violation of the law, NCIRE prohibits any such conduct in the workplace. In addition, conduct prohibited by this policy is unacceptable in any work-related setting outside of the workplace, such as during business trips, business meetings or business-related social events. Employees engaging in such conduct in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Policy Against Sexual Harassment

NCIRE's policies prohibit employees, supervisors, managers, officers, directors, vendors, Principal Investigators, research subjects, independent contractors or consultants, or agents of

NCIRE from engaging in sexual harassment. Sexual harassment generally consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other **verbal, written, physical or visual** conduct of a sexual nature when:

- submission to such conduct becomes an implicit or explicit term or condition of employment;
- submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for any employment decision; or
- it creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Examples of sexual harassment prohibited by this policy include, but are not limited to:

- 1) **Verbal harassment:** requests for sexual favors, unwelcome sexual advances, graphic or degrading conversation containing sexual comments, derogatory comments or slurs about someone's body;
- 2) **Written harassment:** sending sexually suggestive, obscene or offensive memos, letters, notes, e-mails, or cards;
- 3) **Physical harassment:** offensive physical contact, including grabbing, pinching, patting, or brushing up against another person's body; or
- 4) **Visual harassment:** leering, making sexual gestures, displaying or distributing sexually suggestive cartoons, drawings, pictures, posters, or websites on the Internet.

Sexual harassment does not need to be motivated by sexual desire to be unlawful or to violate this policy. For example, hostile acts toward an employee because of his/her gender can amount to sexual harassment, regardless of whether the treatment is motivated by sexual desire.

Complaint Procedures, Investigation and Corrective Action

Employees at NCIRE can help assure that our workplace is free from discrimination and harassment. Employees are expected to avoid any behavior or conduct that could reasonably be perceived as offensive or harassing.

Employees who feel that they are a victim of discrimination or harassment should report the matter immediately to:

- Their supervisor or manager; or
- the Human Resources Department; or
- the Executive Director.

These are the individuals who are authorized by this policy to receive and act upon complaints of discrimination and/or harassment on behalf of NCIRE.

When NCIRE receives allegations of misconduct, it will immediately undertake a fair, timely, thorough and objective investigation of the allegations in accordance with all legal requirements.

In addition and consistent with this policy, NCIRE maintains posters on bulletin boards that provide information about your right to a workplace free of discrimination and harassment. These posters also identify governmental agencies such as the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing and the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC),

either of which an employee may contact directly for information on how and when to file a complaint.

Consistent with applicable law, all supervisors and managers will be required to attend regular training on how to address and prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. Supervisors must refer all complaints involving harassment, discrimination, retaliation or other prohibited conduct to the Human Resources Department so NCIRE can try to resolve the complaint. Any supervisor or manager who witnesses or becomes aware of discrimination and/or harassment and who fails to take immediate action may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

NCIRE will investigate any reports of inappropriate conduct and will enforce appropriate and effective disciplinary action in accordance with the circumstances involved. NCIRE will maintain confidentiality to the extent possible. However, NCIRE cannot promise complete confidentiality. NCIRE's duty to investigate and take corrective action may require the disclosure of information to individuals with a need to know.

Prompt, corrective action will be taken when appropriate. Any employee determined by NCIRE to be responsible for harassment, discrimination, retaliation or other prohibited conduct will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to, and including termination.

Policy Against Retaliation

NCIRE prohibits retaliation against any employee for reporting discrimination or harassment, for assisting another employee or applicant in making a report, for cooperating in an investigation of such a complaint, or for filing an administrative claim with the EEOC or a state governmental agency. Employees who experience or witness any conduct they believe to be retaliatory should immediately follow the reporting procedures as described above.

Policy Against Workplace Violence

NCIRE strictly prohibits employees, supervisors, managers, officers, directors, vendors, Principal Investigators, research subjects, independent contractors or consultants, or agents of NCIRE from behaving in a violent or threatening manner. To prevent workplace violence, NCIRE reserves the right to deal with behavior that suggests a propensity towards violence even prior to any violent behavior occurring.

Prohibited Conduct

Conduct prohibited by this policy includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) Threats of any kind;
- 2) Intimidating, menacing, hostile, physically aggressive, or violent behavior, including stalking and surveillance;
- 3) Behavior that suggests a propensity towards violence;
- 4) Defacing or causing physical damage to company property;
- 5) Possession, use, sale or purchase of weapons or firearms of any kind on work premises, whether during working hours or work-related functions, or while conducting company business; or

- 6) Any conduct that adversely affects legitimate business interests and which could potentially result in violation of any criminal laws relating to threats of violence or violent acts.

Reporting Procedures, Investigation and Corrective Action

Employees who become aware of any conduct that violates this policy should immediately report it to their supervisor, manager or the Human Resources Manager. If an employee is aware of any conduct that creates a potentially violent or dangerous situation, the employee should immediately call VA Security at x22003 for help. Employees are expected to cooperate fully with security, law enforcement, emergency and medical personnel that respond to a call for help. Employees must not put themselves in peril, but if qualified, may provide first aid to injured persons.

All reports of workplace violence will be taken seriously and will be investigated. Workplace violence will not be tolerated and could be the basis for immediate disciplinary action, even if not sufficiently serious to constitute a violation of any law. NCIRE will take appropriate corrective action and impose disciplinary action on offending employees, up to and including termination of employment. NCIRE will not tolerate retaliation or intimidation against any employee for making a legitimate report of workplace violence, or for participating in an investigation of such a complaint.

Policy Against Workplace Gambling

Gambling is prohibited on NCIRE or VA premises and is cause for disciplinary action. This includes, but is not limited to, playing cards, dice, betting on horses or any other wagering. Any employee who is involved with selling or attempting to run betting pools will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace Policy

NCIRE has a strong commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy work environment for its employees. Employees who work under the influence of drugs and alcohol compromise these interests by endangering the health and safety of themselves and other employees. Alcohol and substance abuse in the workplace can cause a number of work-related problems, including absenteeism and tardiness, poor productivity and substandard job performance, an increased workload for co-workers, and inferior quality of service to clients and customers. To further its interest in maintaining a safe and healthy working environment, and preventing accidents and injury to its employees and others, NCIRE has a policy against working under the influence of drugs and alcohol. As a condition of continued employment with NCIRE, each employee must abide by this policy.

Scope of Policy Against Drugs and Alcohol

This policy applies whenever an employee's conduct may adversely affect NCIRE's interests by:

- 1) Endangering the health or safety of the employee or other employees, supervisors, managers, officers, directors, vendors, Principal Investigators, research subjects, independent contractors or consultants or agents of NCIRE;
- 2) Posing a risk of damage to NCIRE or VA property or equipment;
- 3) Interfering with employee's own performance or others' job performance; or

- 4) Impeding the safe and efficient operation of NCIRE business.

This policy is not limited to employee conduct on the job, but also covers activities that occur:

- 1) On the work premises or facilities;
- 2) While an employee is conducting or performing work on behalf of NCIRE, regardless of the location, even if it is off work premises;
- 3) In any work-related setting outside of the workplace, such as during business trips, business meetings or business-related social events; or
- 4) While an employee is operating or responsible for the operation, custody, or care of facilities, equipment, property or vehicles owned or leased by NCIRE or VA; or
- 5) While an employee is responsible for the safety of others in connection with, or while performing, NCIRE-related business

Prohibited Conduct

No employee may use, abuse, possess, transfer, share, distribute, manufacture, sell, or be under the influence of any illegal drugs, controlled substances or alcohol, during working hours, on work premises, while conducting business for NCIRE or in any manner inconsistent with the law. In cases of reasonable suspicion of possession of illegal or unauthorized drugs, alcohol, or in cases otherwise involving some risk or harm, NCIRE reserves the right to search all NCIRE property including an employee's personal belongings, with or without notice. Such belongings might include, but are not limited to any bags, purses, briefcases, and clothing. In addition, NCIRE may request the assistance of law enforcement officials in order to search an employee's vehicle as appropriate.

No employee may abuse, sell, purchase, manufacture, distribute, transport, dispense, or possess any legal prescription drug in a manner inconsistent with law. Additionally, working while impaired by the use of a legal drug is prohibited whenever such impairment might (1) endanger the safety of the employee or some other person, (2) pose a risk of significant damage to NCIRE property or equipment, or (3) substantially interfere with the employee's job performance or the efficient operation of NCIRE's business or equipment.

If an employee is so impaired by the appropriate use of legal drugs, he or she may not report to work. To accommodate the absence, the employee may use accrued sick leave or vacation time. The employee may also contact their Human Resources Generalist to determine whether or not he or she qualifies for an unpaid leave of absence, such as family care or medical leave. Nothing in this guideline is intended to diminish NCIRE's commitment to employ and reasonably accommodate qualified disabled individuals. NCIRE will reasonably accommodate qualified disabled employees who must take legal drugs because of their disability. The employee is not required to identify the medication or the underlying illness. NCIRE respects the rights of individuals with disabilities with regard to the confidentiality of medical information, medical treatment, and the use of prescription drugs and substances taken under medical supervision. Nothing contained in this policy is intended to violate or interfere with individual rights under these laws.

Any employee found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. A violation of this policy can be found even if the conduct at issue does not violate any laws or the employee is not criminally prosecuted or convicted for such conduct. As an on-going condition of employment, employees are required to

notify, in writing and within five (5) days of the violation, her/his supervisor of any criminal drug statute conviction they receive.

Attendance and Punctuality

NCIRE's ability to effectively operate depends upon the cooperation and commitment of each employee. Regular attendance and consistent punctuality is required, as co-workers must inevitably bear the impact of an employee's absence and tardiness. Employees are expected to report and be ready to begin work at their scheduled starting time and should not leave the work premises without prior approval during work hours or prior to the end of a scheduled work shift, except for meal periods and rest breaks as discussed below.

Employees who expect to be absent or late must notify their supervisor as soon as practicable, usually before their scheduled workday for each day they will be absent. Failure to properly notify your supervisor in advance of an absence, late arrival or early departure from work, frequent or prolonged unexcused absenteeism or tardiness after an employee has exhausted his or her accrued sick leave, or falsification of time records may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

An employee who is absent due to a non-work-related illness or injury for eight (8) or more consecutive calendar days may apply for state disability benefits. An employee who is absent due to a work-related illness may apply for workers' compensation benefits.

Conflicts of Interest

Employees are expected to devote their best efforts, time and attention to the performance of their work duties. Employees are also expected to adhere to high ethical standards, and to avoid situations that create an actual or potential conflict of interest. A conflict of interest exists when:

- employees' loyalties or actions are divided between the interests of NCIRE and employees' own personal interests or outside activities;
- employees' loyalties or actions are divided between the interests of NCIRE and those of a competitor, supplier, customer, client, or other party; or
- employees' financial investments or activities adversely affect their ability to carry out their responsibilities to NCIRE or its clients.

Employees who are unsure as to whether a certain transaction, activity, or relationship constitutes a conflict of interest should discuss it with the Human Resources Manager, who must approve in writing any exceptions to this policy.

While it is not feasible to describe all possible conflicts of interest that could develop, employees should avoid the following examples of situations that may give rise to a conflict of interest:

- 1) Soliciting or accepting personal gifts, entertainment or payments from competitors, clients, vendors or suppliers that conduct business with NCIRE;
- 2) Simultaneously working for a competitor, customer, client, supplier or vendor while making business decisions on behalf of NCIRE;
- 3) Having a direct or indirect financial or ownership interest in a competitor, customer, client, supplier or vendor, that could potentially conflict with business decisions made on behalf of NCIRE;

- 4) Engaging in self-employment in direct competition with NCIRE;
- 5) Misusing or improperly disclosing confidential or proprietary information belonging to NCIRE;
- 6) Using NCIRE's property or labor for personal or third party use;
- 7) Committing NCIRE's financial resources or other forms of support to any outside activity or organization without prior approval from the Executive Director;
- 8) Developing a personal, familial or intimate relationship with an employee of a competitor, customer, client, supplier, or vendor that might interfere with the exercise of impartial judgment in decisions affecting NCIRE; or
- 9) Using NCIRE's letterhead or stationery for correspondence for personal purposes unrelated to firm business.

If an employee or someone with whom an employee has a close relationship (e.g., a family member or close companion) has a financial or employment relationship with a competitor, customer, client, supplier, or vendor with whom the employee is transacting business on behalf of NCIRE, the employee must disclose this fact in writing to the Executive Director.

Failure to comply with this policy, including failure to disclose any conflicts or to seek an exception, may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Consensual Relationships and Non-Fraternization

Non-Fraternization Policy

Although personal relationships between employees may develop in the workplace, employees are prohibited from being involved in an intimate, marital or familial relationship with a client or an employee who is directly or indirectly under their supervision. Any intimate, marital or familial relationships between employees may impose difficulties for supervision, security, safety or morale within the organization. Therefore, NCIRE may, in its sole discretion, modify reporting relationships and reassign job duties to prevent a conflict of interest.

For the purposes of this policy, a familial relationship is any relationship where persons are related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is like that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

Consensual Relationships in the Workplace Policy

No person in a management or supervisory position shall have a romantic or dating relationship with an employee whom he or she directly supervises or whose terms or conditions of employment he or she may influence (examples of terms or conditions of employment include promotion, termination, discipline and compensation).

Individuals involved in a relationship covered by this policy may be asked to sign a document acknowledging that their relationship is entirely consensual and free from coercion and harassment.

Employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professionally at all times. Workplace dating or romantic relationships must not interfere with any employee's professionalism, including treating others with respect and refraining from behavior that may make others feel uncomfortable (for example, overt physical displays of affection and using sexual language). In

particular, management personnel are expected to set a high standard of professional conduct both at work and in any social setting or events sponsored by NCIRE.

NCIRE retains discretion in its enforcement of this policy. Decisions made under this policy will be made based on operational and business reasons and without regard to race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age for individuals over forty years of age, military and veteran status, and sexual orientation, or any other characteristic status protected by law under federal, state or local law.

Dual Employment with UCSF or VA

VA or UCSF employees can be hired by NCIRE to work on NCIRE administered projects if the work is performed outside of their tour of duty (i.e., regular workweek) and outside their scope of employment with the VA or UCSF. Prior to commencement of any work, VA or UCSF employees must notify their appropriate human resources department and submit the applicable documentation to NCIRE's Human Resources Department as follows:

- **VA Employees:** Must submit an approved Intergovernmental Personnel Agreement (IPA). VA employees working under an IPA are hired by NCIRE, but are paid through VA funding.
- **UCSF Employees:** Must submit an approved Joint Personnel Agreement (JPA). JPAs are for UCSF faculty and staff who perform research services for NCIRE and are paid through NCIRE administered grants.

Proper authorization must be obtained in advance of hiring a current VA or UCSF employee due to NCIRE's contractual relationship with these entities. Furthermore, current NCIRE employees are required to inform the Human Resources Department if they are considering accepting employment with the VA or UCSF while remaining an NCIRE employee.

Professional Dress Standards

NCIRE strives to provide superior scientific research services that adhere to the highest professional standards. Employees are required to dress in appropriate business casual attire and to behave in a professional, business-like manner at all times. Employees should exercise good judgment in their choice of work clothing and should remember to conduct themselves in a manner that best represents the employee and NCIRE at all time.

Standards of Conduct

To ensure the best possible work environment, NCIRE expects employees to observe certain standards of job performance and follow rules of conduct. The rules of conduct set forth below and elsewhere in this Employee Handbook are intended to provide employees with examples of prohibited conduct, but are not meant to be comprehensive of all conduct which is in violation of company policy. Violation of any company policy or procedure, including any of the policies set forth in this handbook, as revised from time to time, can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. This policy does not alter the at-will nature of employment.

When job performance or conduct does not meet acceptable standards, NCIRE will endeavor, in its sole discretion, to provide employees with a reasonable opportunity to correct the

deficiency. If an employee fails to correct the conduct or improve performance, he or she will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Moreover, misconduct not specifically listed below, but which adversely affects the interests of NCIRE, may also lead to disciplinary action, including immediate termination of employment.

Examples of conduct warranting disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:

- Harassment or discrimination against employees, clients, vendors, visitors or third parties;
- Providing false information or omitting material facts on any documents in connection with NCIRE employment including, but not limited to job applications, resumes, employment, medical, payroll, financial or time keeping records;
- Violation of the Policy Against Workplace Violence, including engaging in violent or abusive or conduct that disrupts the workflow or work of others, or possession, use, sale or purchase of weapons on work property, during work hours, or while performing work-related functions;
- Violation of the Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace Policy, including possession, use, sale or purchase of illegal drugs or controlled substances on work property, during working hours, or while performing work-related functions;
- Poor performance, unsatisfactory work quality or quantity;
- Unauthorized use, theft or damage of any NCIRE or VA property or the property of any employee or client;
- Removing or borrowing NCIRE/VA property without prior authorization;
- Being convicted of a crime that indicates unfitness for the job or raises a threat to the safety or well-being of NCIRE, its employees, customers, and property;
- Failing to report to NCIRE, within five business days, any conviction under any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace
- Insubordination, including but not limited to failure or refusal to obey the lawful order or instruction of any supervisor, Principal Investigator, or management official;
- Violation of the applicable policies regarding use of office's computers, e-mail, Internet, phones and voicemail systems;
- Failing to notify the appropriate immediate supervisor as soon as practicable when unable to report for work;
- Failing to obtain permission to leave work for any reason during normal working hours;
- Failing to observe work schedules, including rest and meal periods;
- Failing to provide a doctor's certificate when requested or required to do so;
- Sleeping or malingering on the job;
- Violating any safety, health, or security policy, rule, or procedure of NCIRE; or
- Committing a fraudulent act or a breach of trust, including but not limited to breaches of ethical conduct or unauthorized disclosure of business "secrets" or other confidential obligations in any circumstances.

The Standards of Ethical Conduct

NCIRE is a federal research institute subject to the Federal Standards of Ethical Conduct. NCIRE and its employees must follow VA policy and guidelines as well as Ethical Practices and Procedures in all research practices and when addressing alleged violations of ethical

standards in research. Employees who have questions or need additional information pertaining to these regulations should consult the Human Resources Department.

Driving for Work Policy

NCIRE is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its employees. When driving for work-related activities, NCIRE requires employees to take measures to protect themselves and others from risk of injuries or accidents.

Responsibilities

Employees whose work responsibilities require them to drive must produce and maintain a valid driver's license and automobile insurance for minimum liability coverage in the state where they work. Employees must use their own vehicle and in doing so assume full responsibility and risk of driving.

Employees whose work responsibilities require them to drive will also be required to submit to a Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) background check, which may be performed periodically or as necessary as determined by the NCIRE HR Department. Information obtained in the DMV check will be used to assess the current license status and safe driving record of the driver and any potential liability for NCIRE. This may result in an adverse employment action to be taken or job duties may need to be modified.

The safety of the driver and others are of utmost importance. It is the employee's responsibility to notify their supervisor if they are unable to drive safely due to any internal or external conditions that may impair their ability to drive.

Car Rentals

Employees who rent a vehicle for work through a private rental company or city care share program, must confirm that their own automobile insurance policy can provide coverage for the rented vehicle. If this is not an option, the employee will be required to purchase Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) or Loss Damage Waiver (LDW) coverage offered by the rental car company.

Safety

The employee is required to take all safety precautions and adhere to all driving and traffic laws.

- 1) All occupants, as required by law, must wear seat belts, whenever the vehicle is in motion.
- 2) Regular preventative maintenance should be performed on the vehicle as suggested by the vehicle owner's manual.

No alcohol or drugs (illegal and/or prescription that could impair abilities) should be consumed prior to, or while operating the vehicle.

The use of all handheld mobile devices including cell phones, smart phones, tablets, personal organizers, or other devices for work purposes while driving or for personal purposes while driving during work hours or on NCIRE business is strictly prohibited, except in emergency situations, when a "hands free" device such as a headset or car kits, must be used. Special care

should be taken in situations where there is heavy traffic, inclement weather, or the employee is driving in an unfamiliar area. Employees must adhere to all federal, state, and local rules and regulations regarding the use of mobile devices while driving. Under no circumstances are employees allowed to use text devices to type or review text messages for work purposes while driving or for personal purposes while driving during work hours or on NCIRE business.

In the unfortunate event of an accident, employees are required to alert the police, seek medical attention if necessary, report the incident to their insurance company and file any DMV reports. Employees must also report the accident to their Principal Investigators/Managers and the NCIRE HR Department as soon as possible. The NCIRE HR Department will assist the employee with applicable leave as necessary.

Travel Reimbursement

Employees whose work responsibilities require them to drive and use their own vehicle will be reimbursed at a standard rate per mile as set by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), which may be subject to change from time to time. The cost of routine repairs to employee's vehicles, replacement tires, gasoline, or other auto expenses including fines resulting from violations of motor vehicle regulations **are not subject to reimbursement.**

Employees who receive prior approval to rent a car will be reimbursed for expenses associated with the car rental (including gas), but will not receive mileage reimbursement.

For current information about travel reimbursement, please refer to NCIRE's Accounting Policies & Procedures Manual, Chapter 2 on the NCIRE Intranet.

Whistleblower Policy

NCIRE is committed to the highest standards of corporate ethics and legal compliance. This Whistleblower Policy establishes a system to provide all individuals associated with NCIRE a means to report concerns about financial reporting or suspected violations of its policies and procedures, or national, state, or local laws and regulations.

Scope

This policy applies to all Board members and staff, and with laboratories that are organizationally related or affiliated with NCIRE. Any employee, supervisor, manager, partner, officer, director, vendor, subject, independent contractor or agent of NCIRE.

Directors, managers, supervisors, employees and anyone contractually working for NCIRE have an ethical responsibility to report any violations or possible violations of NCIRE's policies and procedures, or national, state or local laws and regulations.

Examples of compliance issues that require reporting include but are not limited to:

- perceived systematic problems with NCIRE programs or operations
- improper use or storage of chemicals
- violations of research protocols
- theft, bribes or kickbacks
- fraudulent transactions
- conflicts of interest

- computer tampering
- improper political activity within the workplace
- improper or unauthorized expenditures of grant funds or NCIRE funds
- any action to fraudulently influence, coerce, manipulate or mislead authorities
- lack of compliance to VA established standards

How Complaints May Be Made

NCIRE believes in fostering a positive working environment in which all individuals are empowered and encouraged to come forward with information to express any constructive concerns or issues. To that end, NCIRE has adopted an “Open Door Policy”, and we have implemented several ways that an individual may report concerns. An individual may report their concerns via:

- their supervisor or Manager
- NCIRE Confidential Hotline –
- contacting the Manager of Human Resources x26109
- contacting any member of NCIRE’s Executive Management Team
- contacting the Compliance and Business Integrity office of the SFVAHC system

Anonymity

When employees report an issue, they may choose whether to identify themselves or not. If anonymity is requested, then the employee will be assigned a unique, confidential identifier for the purposes of further communication. Should the whistleblower self-disclose his or her identity, NCIRE will no longer be obligated to maintain such confidence.

Nature of Report

Submissions should be factual. Reporting persons should avoid speculation and be as specific as possible. This will help others better assess the nature, extent and urgency of preliminary investigation procedures. The submission should, to the extent feasible, contain at least the following information:

- the alleged event, matter or issue that is the subject of the submission
- the names of the persons involved and their department or departments
- if the submission involves a specific event or events with relevant date(s)
- the location where such event occurred
- additional information, documentation or other evidence available

Post-Submission Procedures

Information provided by the Whistleblower is treated confidentially and as privileged to the extent permitted by applicable law. Reporting persons should be aware if the incident requires government authority or SFVAMC involvement, the reporting person may have to reveal his or her identity per the course of the investigation.

Rights of Employees Under the Whistleblower Policy

NCIRE will not retaliate against an employee in the terms and conditions of employment because that employee: (a) reports to a supervisor, senior management of NCIRE, Human Resources, the Board of Directors or to a federal, state or local agency what the employee believes in good faith to be a violation of the law; or (b) participates in good faith in any resulting investigation or proceeding, or (c) exercises his or her rights under any state or federal law(s) or regulation(s) to pursue a claim or take legal action to protect the employee's rights.

NCIRE will swiftly and thoroughly investigate any action against an employee that believes they have been the target of retaliatory conduct in violation of this policy. In addition, NCIRE will not, with the intent to retaliate, take any action harmful to any employee who has provided to law enforcement personnel or a court truthful information relating to the commission or possible commission by NCIRE or any of its employees of a violation of any applicable law or regulation.

NCIRE Confidential Hotline – 1-844-904-1770

NCIRE's confidential hotline is provided so that employees can report work-related concerns on a confidential and anonymous basis. Complaints will be reviewed, investigated and addressed. Examples of work-related concerns which could be referred to the hotline include:

- Violation of the Policy Against Discrimination and Other Workplace Harassment;
- Employee misconduct;
- Supervisor/Manager issues;
- Health or Safety Violations;
- Theft or misuse of NCIRE or VA property;
- Systematic problems with NCIRE programs or operations; or
- Fraud, waste, mismanagement or abuse of research grant or NCIRE funds.

Employees should include sufficient information that will allow a thorough review or investigation of the issue. This information should include the following:

- The particular NCIRE office or department involved;
- The identity of the alleged wrongdoer(s) and related parties;
- The alleged misconduct at issue;
- The effect of the alleged wrongdoing;
- The date(s) when the misconduct occurred; and
- The identity of any witness to the misconduct.

Employees may also elect to provide their contact information including address, phone number, and e-mail address. If identifying information is provided, the caller should advise if they wish to remain anonymous.

Pets in the Workplace Policy

NCIRE is responsible for assuring the health and safety of all employees. In keeping with this objective, NCIRE does not permit employees to bring their household pets to work. Our policy is aligned with the San Francisco VA Health Care System, which prohibits pets of any kind, except for service animals.

Animals may pose a threat of infection and may cause allergic reactions in other employees. Some employees may feel threatened or be distracted by the presence of animals, particularly dogs.

An employee who requires the help of a service animal (defined by 28 CFR 36.104 as "any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability") will be permitted to bring a service animal to the office, provided that the animal's presence does not create a danger to others and does not impose an undue hardship upon the company. For questions regarding this policy please contact Human Resources.

SAFE AND HEALTHY WORKING CONDITIONS

Safety

NCIRE is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace and follows the established San Francisco Veterans Affairs Health Care System (SFVAHCS) procedures to prevent personal injury to employees and damage to office property that may result from a potentially unsafe situation. In keeping with this commitment, NCIRE's established Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) is part of the existing SFVAHCS hospital program.

Employees may be required to attend safety trainings specific to their laboratory and area of research as part of the comprehensive IIPP at the SFVAHCS. An employee is required to follow NCIRE and SFVAHCS lab safety procedures and policies at all times. NCIRE also provides information to employees about workplace safety and health issues through periodic electronic mailings, bulletin board postings, memos, and other written communications.

Although the Human Resources Manager is responsible for implementing, administering, monitoring and evaluating the program, the success of the program depends on the commitment of all employees. Because some of the best safety improvement ideas come from employees, those with ideas, concerns or suggestions for improved safety in the workplace are encouraged to raise them with their supervisor or the Human Resources Manager.

Employees are expected to obey health and safety rules and must immediately report any unsafe condition to their supervisor or the Human Resources Manager. Employees who violate safety standards, who cause hazardous or dangerous situations, or who fail to report or remedy an unsafe condition, may be subject to immediate disciplinary action, including termination of employment. All reports of unsafe working conditions will be taken seriously and will be investigated.

Any employee who engages in unsafe work practices or disregards safety rules will be subject to disciplinary action, even if the conduct is not sufficiently serious to constitute a violation of any health and safety laws. NCIRE will take appropriate corrective action and impose disciplinary action on offending employees, up to and including termination of employment. NCIRE will not tolerate retaliation or intimidation against any employee who makes a legitimate report concerning workplace safety or participates in an investigation of such a complaint.

Smoking

In compliance with state law and in keeping with NCIRE's intent to provide a safe and healthy work environment, smoking inside work facilities is strictly prohibited. Smoking is restricted to

authorized rest breaks and meal periods and may take place only outside of work premises at designated outdoor areas and smoking shelters.

PROPERTY BELONGING TO NCIRE

Confidential and Proprietary Information

The protection of confidential and proprietary information pertaining to NCIRE, employees, clients, customers, business, and operations is vital to the interests and success of NCIRE and therefore constitutes one of its most vital assets. Confidential and proprietary information includes, but is not limited to trade secrets, research, research protocols, patient files, personnel files, employee compensation information and identifying data, computer records, financial data, pricing policies, marketing and business plans, strategies, forecasts, method of operations, process descriptions, research plans, formulas; electronic codes, computer programs, software developed or customized by NCIRE to store and sort client, customer, research data, or business information. This confidential and proprietary information remains at all times the property of NCIRE.

As a condition of employment with NCIRE, employees must keep this information strictly confidential. Employees shall not during the course of their employment or at any time after termination of employment, use or disclose any confidential and proprietary information to any person or entity for any reason or purpose whatsoever, directly or indirectly, except as may be required to perform work for NCIRE.

Nothing in this guideline restricts an employee from discussing his or her wages or other terms and conditions of employment with coworkers or others, to the extent protected by law.

Upon termination of employment, employees must return to the Human Resources Department, all originals and copies of all documents containing such confidential and proprietary information, whether contained in documents, diskettes, computer records, and/or recorded in written or electronic form.

Employees who improperly use or disclose confidential or proprietary information or fail to take proper precautionary measures to guard against disclosure of such information, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, even if they do not actually benefit from the information that is improperly used or disclosed.

Work Areas, Equipment and Property

NCIRE provides their employees with the use of equipment, property and facilities that are necessary for the performance of their work. NCIRE retains full title and control, including the right of inspection, over such equipment, property and facilities. Employees must obtain prior written authorization before any property is removed from work premises. Employees who willfully lose or damage work equipment or property will be responsible for reimbursing the actual cost or replacement value of the item.

Employee privacy rights do not extend to work-related conduct or the use of work areas, company-owned equipment or supplies. All offices, work areas, furniture, desks, lockers, file cabinets, files, computer disks and files, and other storage devices for employees, remain the property of NCIRE. Therefore, any agent or representative of NCIRE can inspect any articles found within them at any time, with or without prior notice. In addition, in cases of reasonable

suspicion of the possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, firearms, weapons or stolen property, or in cases otherwise involving some risk or harm, NCIRE reserves the right to search an employee's personal belongings, including any bags, purses, briefcases, and clothing. Furthermore, NCIRE may request the assistance of law enforcement officials in order to search an employee's vehicle as appropriate. In emergencies or other appropriate circumstances involving suspected misconduct, NCIRE reserves the right to conduct an inspection without the presence of the employee involved. A refusal to permit a search may result in immediate disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Electronic Mail (E-Mail) and Voicemail

NCIRE's computer system and telephone systems allow employees to create, send, receive, and transfer e-mail and voice mail communications. These systems are operated through and maintained by the VA for NCIRE's benefit. NCIRE is required to comply with all SFVAMC information e-mail and systems security rules and policies which limits employee use of these systems for company business only. Furthermore, employees must not attempt to gain access to another employee's personal files or e-mail messages. The use of any NCIRE resources for electronic mail must be related to NCIRE business, including research pursuits.

NCIRE's policy against unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment, anti-discrimination, or commitment to equal employment opportunity extends to the use of computers, the Internet, and any component of the communications systems. Under no circumstances shall employees use NCIRE's computer system and telephone system to transmit, receive, or store any information that is discriminatory, harassing, defamatory, obscene, indecent, threatening, or that otherwise could adversely affect any individual, group, or entity (e.g., sexually explicit or racial messages, slurs, jokes, or cartoons).

Other prohibited uses of electronic mail include but are not limited to:

- Using NCIRE's electronic mail resources for personal monetary gain or for commercial purposes that are not directly related to NCIRE business or that are contrary to the best interests of NCIRE
- Unlawful activity
- Copying, retrieving, forwarding, or sending copyrighted materials unless the employee has the author's permission or is accessing a single copy only for the employee's reference
- Sending or forwarding chain letters or their equivalent such as spam
- Violating any NCIRE policy
- Disclosing confidential or proprietary information of NCIRE or third parties
- Attempting unauthorized access to electronic mail or attempting to breach any security measures on any electronic mail system

All messages sent and received, including personal messages, and all data and information stored on NCIRE's computer systems (including on its electronic mail system or voicemail system) are NCIRE property regardless of the content. NCIRE reserves the right to review messages to ensure compliance with NCIRE and VA rules, at any time, in its sole discretion, without notice to the employee and/or in the employee's absence.

On occasion, NCIRE may need to access its computer systems including computer files, electronic mail messages, and voicemail messages. Employees should understand, therefore, that they have no right of privacy with respect to any messages or information created,

collected, or maintained on NCIRE's computer systems, including personal information or messages. NCIRE may, at its discretion, inspect all files or messages on its computer systems at any time for any reason. NCIRE may also monitor its computer systems at any time in order to confirm compliance with its policies, for purposes of legal proceedings, to investigate misconduct, to locate information, or for any other business purpose.

Duplication of Software

NCIRE prohibits the duplication of purchased software for use on other personal computers internally or externally, without the appropriate license agreements. NCIRE further and prohibits adding personally owned software to company machines. You must have written authorization from your manager and the Information Systems Department prior to adding any personal software or altering existing software on NCIRE computers.

Company Communication

NCIRE provides all employees with an NCIRE.org electronic mail account upon hire. This web-based electronic system allows employees the flexibility to use or read electronic mail any time and from any location. All official company communication will be sent to this account only. Official company communications may consist of corporate policy changes, benefits information, NCIRE events, NCIRE newsletters, etc. Employees are responsible for checking this account often and for reading all company communication. Employees are expected to adhere to the electronic mail policy.

Social Media Policy

Use of social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Linked-In, etc.) presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. To assist you in making responsible decisions about your use of social media, NCIRE has established these guidelines for appropriate use of social media.

This policy applies to all employees who work for NCIRE.

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal web site, social networking or affinity web site, web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with NCIRE and the San Francisco Veterans Affairs Health Care System (SFVAHCS), as well as any other form of electronic communication.

The same principles and guidelines found in NCIRE and SFVAHCS policies apply to your activities online. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for what you post online. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. Keep in mind that any of your conduct that adversely affects your job performance, the performance of fellow associates or otherwise adversely affects members, customers, suppliers, people who work on behalf of NCIRE or NCIRE's legitimate business interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Know and follow the rules

Carefully read these guidelines, the NCIRE computer use policy, and the NCIRE Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and Policy Against Harassment, and ensure your postings are

consistent with these policies. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject you to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Likewise, postings that disclose confidential/proprietary information, trade secrets, or employee/resident information protected from disclosure by law will not be tolerated.

Be respectful

Always be fair and courteous to fellow associates, customers, residents, suppliers or people who work on behalf of NCIRE and the SFVAHCS. Also, keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work-related complaints by speaking directly with your co-workers or by utilizing policies set forth in this Handbook 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 customers, residents, 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 or company policy.

Be honest and accurate

Make sure you are always honest and accurate when posting information or news, and if you make a mistake, correct it quickly. Be open about any previous posts you have altered. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. Never post any information or rumors that you know to be false about NCIRE, fellow associates, residents, customers, suppliers, people working on behalf of NCIRE or competitors.

Post only appropriate and respectful content

Maintain the confidentiality of NCIRE trade secrets and private or confidential information. Trades secrets may include information regarding the development of systems, processes, products, know-how and technology. Do not post internal reports, policies, procedures or other internal business-related confidential communications.

Do not create a link from your blog, website or other social networking site to a NCIRE website without identifying yourself as an NCIRE employee.

Express only your personal opinions. Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for NCIRE. If NCIRE is a subject of the content you are creating, be clear and open about the fact that you are an employee and make it clear that your views do not represent those of NCIRE, fellow employees, residents, customers, suppliers or people working on behalf of NCIRE. If you do publish a blog or post online related to the work you do or subjects associated with NCIRE, make it clear that you are not speaking on behalf of NCIRE. 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 NCIRE."

Using social media at work

Refrain from using social media while on work time or on equipment we provide, unless it is work-related as authorized by your manager or consistent with our policies. Do not use your

NCIRE email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use.

Retaliation is prohibited

NCIRE prohibits taking negative action against any employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any employee who retaliates against another employee 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.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND RECORDS

Employment Records

NCIRE maintains personnel files for each employee. These files include confidential information such as the employee's job application, resume, documentation of performance appraisals and salary increases, and other employment records.

Employee's Duty To Report Accurate Information And Any Changes To Personnel Data

NCIRE relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented during the hiring process and throughout your employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in your employment records may result in termination of employment.

Employees are responsible for informing the Human Resources Department of any changes in their personnel data (including name changes, home addresses, telephone numbers, marital status, number of dependents, and individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency). Such information should be accurate and current at all times.

Access To Employment Records

Personnel files are the property of NCIRE, and access to the information contained therein is restricted. Generally, only those who have a legitimate need to review the information are allowed to do so. Employees who wish to review their own files should provide the Human Resources Manager with reasonable advance written notice. The Human Resources Department will arrange a mutually convenient time within twenty-one (21) days of the employee's request, to allow the employee or his or her representative review his or her own personnel files in the office and in the presence of an employee designated by NCIRE to maintain its personnel files.

Confidentiality of Medical Information

Medical information about employees is treated with strict confidentiality and only those with a legitimate business need to know such information will be given access. NCIRE will take reasonable precautions to protect such information from inappropriate disclosure and maintain the confidentiality of employee medical information. Anyone who inappropriately discloses such information will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Performance Evaluations

NCIRE conducts performance reviews to provide feedback about an employee's performance, cooperation, diligence, accuracy, and attendance, and also to discuss job tasks, identify opportunities, and recognize strengths. These reviews are designed to examine the progress made since the last review and to set goals for future development. Employees will have an opportunity to meet with their supervisor or manager to discuss their performance evaluation.

Although employees may be coached, evaluated or disciplined at any time during the year, performance reviews generally are conducted for all employees annually in April. These performance reviews may consist of an evaluation of the employee's work progress throughout the year, and may include commendations, future goals and suggestions for improvement. A poor evaluation may result in corrective action or termination of employment.

Compensation and Adjustments

NCIRE makes pay adjustments in its sole discretion. The decision to award such an adjustment is dependent upon a number of factors, including the information documented by the formal performance evaluation process and NCIRE's evaluation of outside market data and business conditions.

Merit Increase

Eligibility for a merit increase requires that the employee successfully meet all the performance standards for the position they occupy at the end of the annual performance review. Employees must be on the payroll at least ninety (90) days prior to the end of the rating period (March 31st) to be eligible for a merit increase. However, successfully meeting the performance standards alone does not entitle an employee to a merit increase.

Promotions

Employees may be eligible for a promotion when they transfer to a different job classification with a higher salary range; however, employees transferring laterally into a new position with an equivalent salary range will not receive a change in salary. Promotion salary increases shall be at least the minimum of the new salary range and are limited to one (1) promotion in any six-month period. Promotion salary increases greater than 15% must be approved by the Executive Director. Furthermore, requests for retroactive promotion will not be accepted.

Special Contribution Awards – Discretionary Cash or Time Off

Special Contribution Awards are one-time discretionary cash and/or time-off awards that are given to recognize outstanding achievement above and beyond position requirements (e.g., work on a special project or performance exceeding job requirements on a particular assignment or task). Supervisors and managers can nominate employees within their own departments for a maximum benefit of 6% during the same fiscal year up (October 1st to September 30th).

Discretionary cash awards do not increase the base salary of employees. Furthermore, time-off awards are not designed to provide compensatory time off in lieu of overtime pay. For more information regarding eligibility and guidelines for these awards, please contact the Human Resources Department.

Resignation

Resignation is a voluntary act initiated by the employee to terminate employment with NCIRE. Although advance notice is not required, NCIRE requests at least two (2) weeks' notice from employees to allow for a smooth transition of work and for any workload adjustments to be made. All departing employees are required to return all office supplies, equipment, keys and property belonging to NCIRE to the Human Resources Department or their research lab on or before their last day of employment.

Employment References

NCIRE endeavors to limit its response to employment reference inquiries about present and former employees to confirming the position held and dates of employment. Information regarding salary or wages earned will be provided if the employee consents in writing or if compelled by law. NCIRE will also provide further information if it is legally required to do so.

Employees who receive a request for information about a former employee must refer the person making the request to the Human Resources Department. Only the Human Resources Manager and persons designated by him or her may provide information regarding employees to any outside person or entity. Any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

PAYROLL AND TIMEKEEPING

Paydays

Pay periods are biweekly, every other Friday, resulting in 26 pay periods in a calendar year. Paydays will be the Friday following the end of the pay period. If a payday falls on a holiday, employees will be paid on the preceding workday.

Direct Deposit

Employees can designate a banking institution or credit union for automatic direct deposit of their paychecks. They may direct set amounts to savings, with the balance deposited into their checking account. Required enrollment and consent forms must be completed before an employee can be paid by direct deposit.

Wage Garnishments

NCIRE encourages all employees to meet their financial obligations to avoid NCIRE incurring the administrative costs of garnishments and wage assignments. Nonetheless, NCIRE will adhere to legally imposed wage assignments and garnishments, and will not modify the terms of those legal arrangements unless ordered to by a court of competent jurisdiction. NCIRE will deduct the administrative costs of complying with wage assignment and garnishment orders to the amount allowed by law.

Office Hours

NCIRE's standard business hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The following schedules are available to employees with the written approval of their supervisor:

First:	7:30 am to 4:00 pm	Third:	8:30 am to 5:00 pm
Second:	8:00 am to 4:30 pm	Fourth:	9:00 am to 5:30 pm

Staffing needs and operational requirements for individual units may necessitate variations in starting and ending times as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week. Employees will be informed by their supervisor of their expected schedule.

Work Day and Work Week Defined

For purposes of preparing timesheets, daily logs, or for payroll purposes, the *Work Day* is defined as the 24-hour period which runs from 12:01 a.m. until 12:00 midnight and the *Work Week* is defined as Sunday at 12:01 a.m. to Saturday at 12:00 a.m. (midnight).

Alternative Work Schedules

Alternative work schedules (flextime, compressed work week, telecommuting, etc.,) are not permitted without advance written approval from the Executive Director and Human Resources Manager. Requests for alternative work schedules must be in writing and must be based on a legitimate business reason.

Emergency Dismissal

At times, emergencies such as power failures, road closings, earthquakes, fires, or severe weather may interfere with NCIRE's operations. In such an event, NCIRE may order a temporary shutdown of part or all of its operations and will notify you as soon as possible

Effort Reporting and Electronic Timesheets

Employees must submit timesheets that document time at work and hours away from work due to illness, holiday, vacation, etc. In addition to time worked, it is necessary for all non-exempt (hourly) employees, to record all meal periods. Employees must submit timesheets via our Ultipro payroll system (or via paper timesheet by approval) on a biweekly basis to their supervisors/managers for review and approval before submission to the Payroll Department for processing.

Timesheets are due at the NCIRE Human Resource Department in Building 14 by 10:00 a.m. on the scheduled Friday preceding the end of the pay period. Failure to submit completed timesheets on time may lead to corrective action. To amend your timecard you must contact the Payroll department no later than one business day after the deadline. Employees must verify the accuracy of the time recorded by signing each timesheet before submission.

No one may record hours worked on another's timesheet. Tampering with another's timesheet is cause for disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination, of both employees. In addition, employees who falsify a timesheet will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Time sheets are available on the company intranet.

Meal Periods

Employees who work in excess of five (5) hours in a workday are provided an unpaid duty-free meal period. Meal periods are a minimum of thirty (30) minutes, but generally no longer than one (1) hour in duration, to be taken starting no later than the end of the fifth hour of work.

Employees must make arrangements for scheduling their lunch period with their supervisor and advise the receptionist, if applicable, when leaving and returning from lunch.

If an employee does not work more than six (6) hours on a given workday, the meal period may be waived by mutual consent of the employee and his or her supervisor, by signing an Agreement to Waive Meal Period form.

A second unpaid, uninterrupted meal period of not less than thirty (30) minutes is provided when working more than ten (10) hours, starting no later than the tenth hour of work. This may also be waived by mutual consent of the employee and his or her supervisor if the first meal period has not been waived and must be in writing. Employees working more than twelve (12) hours are not permitted to waive the second meal period.

Employees are entitled, encouraged, and expected to take all meal periods provided under this policy and not waived. During meal periods, NCIRE will relieve employees of all duty and will not exercise control over employees' activities. Employees are free to spend their meal period time as they choose (consistent with any other NCIRE policies that may apply during off-duty time) and are free to leave the worksite. No supervisor or manager may impede or discourage employees from taking meal periods provided under this policy.

Rest Periods

NCIRE authorizes and permits nonexempt employees working at least three and one-half hours in a day to take a fifteen-minute, off-duty paid rest period for each four hours worked or major fraction thereof. Employees who work more than six hours in a day may take a second rest period. Employees who work more than 10 hours in a day may take a third rest period. Employees should take their rest periods in the middle of each work period to the extent it is practicable to do so, and not combine them with meal periods or skip them to leave work early or arrive late.

During rest periods, NCIRE will relieve employees of all duty and will not exercise control over employees' activities. Employees are free to spend their rest period time as they choose (consistent with any other NCIRE policies that may apply during off-duty time) and are free to leave the worksite.

Lactation Accommodation

NCIRE provides a reasonable amount of break time to accommodate a female employee's need to express breast milk for the employee's infant child. NCIRE will also make a reasonable effort to provide the employee with the use of a room or other location in close proximity to the employee's work area for the employee to express milk in private.

The employee should contact the Benefits Manager to request designation of a location and time to express breast milk under this policy. NCIRE will respond to the request within 5 business days.

The requested break time should, if possible, be taken concurrently with other provided break periods. Nonexempt employees should clock out for any lactation breaks that do not run concurrently with normally scheduled rest periods. Any such breaks will be unpaid.

Overtime

At the time of hire, employees will be informed of their status as Exempt or Non-exempt employees:

- **Exempt:** employees who are exempt from earning overtime pay.
- **Non-exempt:** employees who are eligible to be paid for overtime work in accordance with the provisions of applicable wage and hour laws.

Non-exempt employees will receive overtime pay as follows:

Overtime received at....	For all hours worked....
Time and a half (1^{1/2}x)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 8 hours in a day • Over 40 hours in a workweek • Up to 8 hours on the 7th consecutive workday
Double time (2x)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 12 hours in a workday • All hours in excess of 8 hours on the 7th consecutive workday

Employees are sometimes asked to work additional time to complete rush work or to meet operational needs and emergencies. Therefore, employees' cooperation in performing overtime work is expected. However, overtime may not be worked without advance approval by a supervisor, except in emergency situations. In addition, NCIRE does not allow non-exempt employees to work "off the clock."

As required by law, overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Therefore, time off for meals, time spent commuting to and from the initial site of work, approved paid absences (i.e., time off for sick leave, vacation leave, etc.), or any holiday or leave of absences will not be considered time worked for the purpose of overtime pay calculations.

Making up Time Taken off for Personal Reasons

Employees may be permitted to make up work time that would be lost as a result of a personal obligation of the employee, so long as the work is performed in the same workweek in which the work time was lost. NCIRE has full discretion to grant or deny any request to make up work time.

Make up work time will not be counted toward computing the total number of hours worked in a day for purposes of overtime requirements, except for hours in excess of eleven (11) hours of work in one day or forty (40) hours of work in one workweek.

A separate Request For Makeup Work Time Form must be signed by both the employee and approved by his or her supervisor before any make up work is performed.

Employees who know in advance that they will be requesting makeup time for a personal obligation that will recur at a fixed time over successive weeks may request to make up work time for up to four (4) weeks in advance; provided however, that the makeup work must be performed in the same week that the work time was lost.

Employment Classifications

Each position at NCIRE is broadly classified by the hours an employee is regularly scheduled to work. Each position falls into one of the following categories and will also determine eligibility for certain employee benefits.

Primary Categories

- **Full-time:** employees who are regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week.
- **Part-time:** employees who are regularly scheduled to work less than 30 hours per week.
- **Intermittent:** employees who work on sporadic work assignments and do not maintain a regular work schedule (i.e., work as needed).
- **Temporary:** employees who are hired on a temporary, short-term or project basis. Appointments are limited – generally not to exceed six (6) months.

Other Categories

- **Outsourced Workers:** Non-employees who provide services pursuant to a contract with specific parameters. Outsourced workers include temporary agency employees, vendors, independent contractors or consultants.

Outsourced workers are not considered NCIRE employees and therefore receive no employee benefits, unless required by law.

TIME OFF AND LEAVES OF ABSENCES

Holidays

NCIRE observes the following federal holidays:

- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (third Monday in January)
- Presidents' Day (third Monday in February)
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- Indigenous Peoples' Day (second Monday in October)
- Veterans Day (November 11)
- Thanksgiving (fourth Thursday in November)
- Christmas Day (December 25)

A schedule of NCIRE holidays will be published and distributed in January of each year. Temporary and Intermittent assignment employees will not be paid for these holidays.

Unless otherwise provided in this policy, all full-time and part-time employees will receive time off with pay at their normal base rate for each NCIRE-observed holiday.

Non-exempt employees who are required to work on holidays will be paid at 1 1/2 times their normal base rate for all hours worked or double time (2x) for work in excess of twelve (12) hours in the day or after eight (8) hours on the seventh (7th) consecutive work day in a work week.

Employees do not earn paid holiday time off while they are on any type of unpaid leave of absence or unauthorized absence on the day preceding or following a paid holiday. However, if a recognized holiday occurs during an eligible employee's vacation, or during the paid portion of an approved leave of absence, the employee will receive holiday pay instead of having to exhaust their accrued vacation time off.

Holidays falling on Saturdays will normally be observed on the preceding Friday. Holidays falling on Sundays will normally be observed on the following Monday. Holidays that occur during an eligible employee's vacation will not be counted as vacation days taken.

Presidential Closing of Agencies

Executive Orders are issued occasionally closing Federal departments or agencies for part or all of a workday. Employees may be excused from duty during such periods unless there is a pressing need as determined by their supervisor. NCIREs policy will be to follow the VA's directive when such orders are announced and will advise staff in advance.

Vacation

Eligibility For Paid Vacation Time Off

NCIRE provides paid vacation time off to be used for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits. Full-time and part-time employees are eligible to accrue paid vacation time off at the commencement of their employment. Temporary and Intermittent assignment employees do not accrue vacation and are not entitled to time off with pay.

Vacation Accrual Rate

Full-time employees who are regularly scheduled to work 40 hours a week will accrue vacation time as follows:

Years of NCIRE Service	Accrual Rate (per pay period)	Hours Accrued Per Pay Period (based on 40 hours worked per workweek)	Annual Maximum Accrual	Maximum Banked Hours
Less than 3	5.385%	4.3 hours	112 hours	240 hours
3 to 15	8.077%	6.46 hours	168 hours	252 hours
15 or more	10.385%	8.30 hours	216 hours	324 hours

Full-time employees who are regularly scheduled to work less than 40 hours per workweek and part-time employees will accrue vacation time on a prorated basis.

Accrued vacation time off can be carried forward from year to year, up to a maximum total accrual. Employees who reach the maximum accrual will not earn additional vacation time off until vacation time is taken and the balance is reduced below the maximum accrual.

Employees who are on a leave of absence regardless of the length of their employment cannot accrue any paid vacation time off. When employees are out on disability leave, vacation time will not accrue during any pay period in which they work less than at least one (1) full day of work, other than during periods in which they are using sick leave or vacation time. In addition, employees who voluntarily resign in good standing and are subsequently rehired within three (3) months from their last day of employment will be restored to their appropriate vacation accrual rate in effect at the time of termination.

Vacation Scheduling

Employees must provide as much advance notice as possible of their planned vacation time off and obtain advance approval by their supervisor or manager. NCIRE's approval of employees' requests for vacation time off will be subject to the discretion of management and will be based on a number of factors, including NCIRE's operational needs and staffing requirements. Employees should submit a Leave Request Form to NCIRE along with the time sheet.

Vacation time must be taken in increments of not less than thirty (30) minutes and employees may not borrow against unearned vacation time. In addition, NCIRE does not permit salary advances or loans against accrued vacation time. Upon termination of employment, employees will be paid for any unused accrued vacation time at their regular base hourly rate.

Sick Leave & Kin Care

In order to help prevent loss of earnings that may be caused by absences due to illness or injury, NCIRE provides paid sick leave for all employees. Paid sick leave is a form of income protection and is not intended to provide additional time off for reasons unrelated to injury or illness. Acceptable attendance is unrelated to and determined independent of an employee's use of paid sick leave.

Kin Care

Additionally, in any calendar year, eligible employees may use any or all of their sick leave to care for a sick child, spouse, domestic partner, parent, legal guardian or ward, grandparent, or grandchild. Employees are also able to designate one person for whom the use of sick leave will be used to provide care.

If an employee is absent for more than three (3) consecutive work days due to illness or injury of the employee or child, spouse, domestic partner, or parent, a health care provider's verification may be required to verify the illness or injury and its beginning and expected ending dates, and to verify that the employee is well enough to return to work, as permitted by law.

As an additional condition of eligibility for sick time off with pay, an employee who is absent due to a non-work related illness or injury for eight (8) or more consecutive calendar days must apply for state disability benefits, and an employee who is absent due to a work-related illness or injury for three (3) or more consecutive days must apply for workers' compensation benefits. Accrued sick leave can be used to supplement any payments that an employee is eligible to receive from disability or workers' compensation insurance. However, the combination of any

such insurance payments and sick leave pay cannot exceed the employee's normal weekly earnings.

Eligibility and Accrual

All employees are eligible to accrue sick leave. Eligible employees begin accruing sick leave at the commencement of their employment. Employees accrue sick leave at the following rates:

Employment Classification	Accrual Rate (per pay period)	Maximum Days Earned Per Year	Maximum Banked Hours
Full-time (based on a 40 hour workweek)	5% of total hours worked per pay period	13 days	480
Part-time Regular	5% of total hours worked per pay period	Varies by work schedule	480
Part-time Temporary/ Intermittent	1 hour of sick leave for every 30 hours worked	72 hours	480

Full-time employees who are regularly scheduled to work less than 40 hours per workweek and part-time regular employees will accrue sick leave time on a prorated basis.

Part Time Temporary and Intermittent employees are eligible to earn one (1) hour of sick leave for every 30 hours worked. For temporary and intermittent employees, there is a ninety (90) day waiting period before employees can begin using their paid sick leave. Sick hours will be capped at 72 hours per year.

Employees who are on an unpaid leave of absence regardless of the length of their employment cannot accrue any sick leave. In addition, employees do not earn sick leave for overtime premium pay.

Furthermore, employees will not be paid for unused sick days at the end of each year but are allowed to carryover any unused sick days from one year to the next with a maximum total accrual of 480 hours. Employees who reach the maximum sick time accrual rate will stop earning additional sick time. Sick leave accruals will recommence after the employee has taken sick leave and his or her accrued hours have dropped below the maximum. Upon termination of employment; employees will not be paid for any unused accrued sick time.

Use of Sick Leave

Sick leave is not for “personal” absences. Paid sick leave may be used for the diagnosis, care, or treatment of an existing health condition of, or preventive care for, an employee or an employee’s family member or designated person, or for an employee who is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. If the need for leave is foreseeable, employees must provide their supervisor with reasonable advance notification. If the need for leave is not foreseeable, employees must provide notice as soon as practicable. If their supervisor is not available, employees must leave a voice-mail message for their supervisor.

“Family members” include: spouses, registered domestic partners, grandparents, grandchildren, siblings, children, and parents as defined by state law. If an employee has no spouse or registered domestic partner, the employee may designate one person for whom he or she may

use paid sick leave to provide aid or care. This designation must be on file with NCIRE before the employee may use paid sick leave for this purpose.

Employees are encouraged to schedule routine appointments outside of regular working hours. Otherwise, paid sick leave may be used for medical and dental appointments when such appointments must be scheduled during working hours. Sick leave for routine medical, dental, or optical appointments for an employee or family member must be requested and approved in advance by your supervisor. Time off from work for any such appointments must be reported on timesheets.

Accrued sick time must be taken in increments of not less than thirty (30) minutes and employees may not use more sick time than has been accrued. In addition, no employee will receive pay in lieu of sick leave under any circumstances, and employees will not be paid for any accrued but unused sick leave upon termination of employment.

Bereavement and Emergency Leave

Employees suffering the misfortune of a death or serious accident of an immediate family member may be granted up to five (5) days off with pay. If additional time off is necessary, employees may request use of accrued vacation time off. Any additional unpaid time will be granted at the sole discretion of NCIRE.

“Immediate family member” is defined as:

- spouse, domestic partner and parents thereof;
- children, including adopted children, domestic partner’s children, step and foster children; and
- parents, legal guardians, grandparents, grandchildren, mother-, father-, sister-, brother-, son- or daughter-in-law, siblings and spouses thereof.

Family Care/Medical Leave

NCIRE provides leaves of absences for eligible employees under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and California Family Rights Act (CFRA), collectively referred to in this policy as “Family Care/Medical Leave”.

Eligibility

To be eligible for Family Care/Medical Leave, an employee must have:

- 1) worked for NCIRE for at least 12 months prior to the date on which leave is to commence;
- 2) worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12 months immediately preceding the start of the leave; and
- 3) be employed at a location where NCIRE employs at least 50 employees within a 75-mile radius.

An employee returning from fulfilling his or her National Guard or Reserve military obligation will be credited with the hours of service that would have been performed but for the period of military service in determining the 1,250 hours of service.

Qualifying Events or Reasons for Leave

Eligible employees may take a Family Care/Medical Leave for the following reasons:

- the birth of an employee's child and to bond with or provide care for that child;
- the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care and to bond with or care for the newly placed child;
- to care for the employee's parent, child, spouse or domestic partner with a serious health condition;
- the employee's own serious health condition that renders the employee unable to work at all or to perform the essential functions of his/her position;
- a qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the spouse, son, daughter or parent of the employee is on active duty or call to active duty status in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation.
- Qualifying exigencies may include short-notice deployment, attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, or attending certain post-deployment activities, such as reintegration briefings. (Leave for this reason is referred to as "Qualifying Exigency Leave".); and
- to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of the service member. (Leave for this reason is referred to as "Military Caregiver Leave."

Employees who misrepresent facts in order to be granted a Family Care/Medical Leave will be subject to immediate termination.

Definition of Serious Health Condition

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

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

Medical Certification

Any request for medical leave for an employee's own serious health condition, for family care leave to care for a child, spouse, domestic partner or parent with a serious health condition or for a serious injury, or for military caregiver leave, must be supported by medical certification from a health care provider. For military caregiver leave, the employee must provide confirmation of a family relationship to the seriously ill or injured servicemember. Employees generally must provide the required certification within fifteen (15) calendar days after NCIRE's request for certification.

The certification must state:

- 1) whether the child, parent, spouse, domestic partner or employee is suffering from a serious health condition;
- 2) the date, if known, of the onset of the serious health condition; and
- 3) the probable duration of the condition.

If the employee suffers from the serious health condition, the certification must also include a statement that due to the condition, the employee is unable to work at all or is unable to perform one of more of the essential functions of the position. If a family member suffers from the serious health condition, the certification must include an estimate of the time period the health care provider believes the employee needs to care for the family member, and a statement that the condition warrants the participation of the employee to provide care during a period of treatment or supervision of the family member.

Failure to provide the requested medical certification in a timely manner may delay approval of leave until it is provided. If certification is never received, the leave may not be considered family and medical leave. Under certain circumstances and as permitted by law, NCIRE, at its expense, may require a second and third medical examination of the employee. NCIRE also may require medical recertification periodically during the leave, and an employee will be required to present a fitness-for-duty certification upon return to work following a leave for his/her own serious health condition.

Notice of Leave

Employees must notify NCIRE of their request for family care, medical, military exigency, or military caregiver leave as soon as they are aware of the need for such leave. If the need for leave is foreseeable, employees must give NCIRE at least thirty (30) calendar days' prior written notice. Where the need for leave is not foreseeable, employees are expected to notify NCIRE in writing as soon as practicable, generally within 1 to 2 business days of learning of the need for leave, depending on the circumstances.

An employee should submit a written Request for Family Care/Medical Leave of Absence which includes the anticipated date(s) and duration of the requested leave. Employees are required to make a reasonable effort to schedule medical treatment so as not to disrupt the NCIRE's operations, subject to the approval of their health care provider, or the health care provider of their family member, as appropriate.

If an employee fails to provide the requisite 30-day advance notice for foreseeable events without any reasonable excuse for the delay, NCIRE reserves the right to delay the taking of the leave until at least 30 days after the date the employee provides notice of the need for family care or medical leave.

Length of Leave

Eligible employees may take up to a total of twelve (12) workweeks of unpaid family care, medical, or medical exigency leave during any 12-month period for a medical leave based on the qualifying events previously mentioned. Employees may take a maximum of twenty-six (26) weeks of military caregiver leave in a single 12-month period, inclusive of the time the employee takes for a family care, medical, or medical exigency leave during that period. NCIRE uses the "rolling backward" method of counting Family Care/Medical Leave.

To determine how much FMLA leave in a 12-month period the employee has used, NCIRE looks back in the 12 months preceding each leave request. For example, if an employee requests and is approved to take four (4) week of Family Care/Medical Leave beginning on July 1, he or she will only be eligible to take eight (8) additional weeks of Family Care/Medical Leave through June 30 of the next year.

Family Care/Medical Leave may be taken intermittently (in separate blocks of time due to employee's own or a family member's health condition) or on a reduced leave schedule (reducing the usual number of hours you work per workweek or workday) if medically necessary.

In addition, the basic minimum duration of a leave taken for the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of an employee's child is two (2) weeks. However, NCIRE shall grant a request for leave of less than two (2) weeks duration on two (2) occasions only. In addition, the employee must conclude the leave within one (1) year following the child's birth or placement.

Leave Is Unpaid

An employee who takes a leave due to his or her own serious health condition must apply accrued sick leave and accrued vacation time which will be applied at the beginning of the leave period.

An employee who takes a leave for the adoption or placement of a child for foster care, or leave to care for a spouse, parent, or child with a serious health condition may apply all accrued vacation time at the beginning of the leave period.

Any employee receiving State Disability Insurance (SDI), Paid Family Leave (PFL), or Workers' Compensation benefits during the Family Care/Medical Leave must coordinate their company time off with state benefits. An employee may not receive more than an amount equal to 100% of his or her salary from a combination of paid time off, disability or workers' compensation benefits. In addition, use of accrued sick or vacation time and receipt of SDI or PFL benefits will not extend the length of any leave taken under this section. Employees will not accrue paid time off benefits (e.g., sick, vacation, or holiday) while on unpaid leave.

Medical Benefits During Leave

During an approved Family Care/Medical Leave, NCIRE will maintain an employee's group health benefits as if the employee had continued to be actively employed, up to a total of twelve (12) weeks in a 12-month period. If an employee takes more than twelve (12) weeks of approved Family Care/Medical Leave in a 12-month period, then the employee may elect to continue coverage at the employee's sole expense for the remainder of the Family Care/Medical Leave.

If paid leave is substituted for unpaid Family Care/Medical Leave NCIRE will deduct the employee's portion of the health plan premium as a regular payroll deduction. If the leave is unpaid, an employee must pay his/her portion of the premium during the leave. NCIRE may recover health insurance premiums paid for maintaining the employee's group health insurance coverage if the employee:

- does not return to work at the end of the leave period; or

- works less than 30 days after returning from leave and if the employee's failure to return is caused by a reason other than a serious health condition or other circumstances beyond the employee's control.

Return to Work Following Leave

Employees who return to work before the end of their planned leave period should provide advance notice of their intended return date to allow sufficient time for management to make adjustments to employees' work assignments. If leave is taken because of an employee's own serious health condition, then the employee must provide medical certification that he or she is fit to resume work. NCIRE may delay restoring the employment to employment or terminate the employee without such certification.

Consistent with applicable law, employees who return from an approved Family Care/Medical Leave will be reinstated to the same or equivalent position. NCIRE may deny reinstatement to employees who are among the highest paid ten percent of all employees employed by NCIRE within 75 miles of the employees' worksite and whose reinstatement would cause substantial and grievous economic injury to NCIRE's operations. An employee has no greater right to reinstatement than if he or she had been continuously employed rather than on leave. NCIRE will comply with all applicable laws pertaining to reinstatement including where required, the reasonable accommodation of employees who have been on an approved leave of absence.

Pregnancy and Childbirth Related Disability Leaves and Accommodations

Any female employee disabled due to pregnancy, childbirth or a related medical condition is eligible to take an unpaid leave of absence of up to four (4) months for the period of such disability regardless of her scheduled hours worked or length of service with NCIRE.

Length of Leave

A pregnancy or childbirth disability leave of absence shall be for the period of time during which the employee is actually disabled due to the pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition, up to four (4) months per pregnancy. This would cover all time off needed for health care provider appointments, prenatal care, morning sickness, doctor-ordered bed rest, childbirth, and recovery from childbirth.

When medically required, a Pregnancy Disability Leave (PDL) may be taken intermittently or on a reduced work schedule.

When an employee is no longer deemed disabled due to pregnancy, the employee may be eligible to take twelve (12) weeks of time off for the purpose of bonding with her newborn baby. Please refer to the above section on Family Care/Medical Leave for eligibility and applicable rules and conditions.

Request for Transfer or Accommodation

A pregnant employee may be entitled to transfer to a less strenuous or hazardous position for the duration of her pregnancy upon request, where such transfer can be reasonably accommodated. An employee also may be entitled to reasonable accommodation for conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions upon request, where such

reasonable accommodation would not cause an undue hardship to NCIRE. A request for reasonable accommodation or transfer must be supported by the written certification of the employee's health care provider that such an accommodation or transfer is medically advisable.

Leave is Unpaid

Employees will be required to use any accrued sick leave and may elect to use any accrued vacation time while on PDL. In addition, an employee may be eligible for State Disability Insurance (SDI) benefits during the leave, although she may not receive more than an amount equal to 100% of her salary from a combination of paid time off and state disability benefits. The substitution of paid time for unpaid leave time and/or the receipt of disability benefits does not extend the maximum four-month PDL period.

Medical Benefits

During an approved PDL, NCIRE will maintain an employee's group health benefits as under the same conditions as if she had continued to be actively employed for up to maximum of four months regardless of eligibility for FMLA . If the employee is not eligible for FMLA coverage after PDL ends, she will receive notification of continuing medical benefits through COBRA during the leave.

Notice of Leave

Employees must notify NCIRE of their request for PDL as soon as they are aware of the need for such leave. For foreseeable PDL, the employee must provide 30 calendar days' advance notice to NCIRE of the need for leave. For events that are unforeseeable 30 days in advance, the employee must notify NCIRE as soon as is practicable and generally must comply with NCIRE'S normal call-in or notice procedures. If the leave is requested in connection with a planned, non-emergency medical treatment, the employee must make an attempt to schedule such treatment so as to avoid unduly disrupting NCIRE operations, and may be requested to reschedule the treatment so as to minimize disruption of NCIRE'S business.

An employee should submit a written Request for Family Care/Medical Leave of Absence when possible. A request for leave must be supported by a medical certification from a health care provider. Employees generally must provide the required certification within 15 calendar days after NCIRE'S request these documents. For foreseeable leaves, employees should make a reasonable effort to schedule medical treatment so as not to disrupt NCIRE operations when possible, subject to the approval of their health care provider, or the health care provider of their family member, as appropriate. In addition, NCIRE request that the appropriate documentation be submitted prior to the leave start date. When this is not possible, employees must provide the required certification within 15 calendar days after NCIRE'S request for certification, unless it is not practicable under the circumstances to do so, despite the employee's good faith efforts.

Return from Leave

Upon return from an approved PDL, an employee will be reinstated to the same or comparable position, if available, subject to any exceptions provided by law. Any right to reinstatement terminates if an employee fails to return to work at the end of an approved leave, in accordance with applicable laws. As a condition of returning from a PDL, an employee must provide the Human Resource Department with a certification from her health care provider that she is able to resume work.

Other Disability Leaves

Employees may take a disability leave of absence if necessary to reasonably accommodate a workplace injury or a disability as required by law. The duration of such leaves shall be consistent with applicable law, but in no event shall the leave extend past the date when an employee becomes capable of performing the essential functions of his or her position, with or without reasonable accommodation. An employee taking a disability leave may elect to apply accrued sick time for such leaves.

Medical certification may be required to initiate and continue a disability leave of absence. Upon return from a disability leave, the employee must submit medical certification that he or she is able to return to work and capable of performing the essential functions of the job, with or without restrictions. Any restrictions must be clearly stated in the medical certification.

Accrued sick time and accrued vacation time may be used to supplement any payments that an employee is eligible to receive from state disability or workers' compensation insurance. An employee may not receive more than an amount equal to 100% of his or her normal weekly earnings from a combination of paid time off, disability or workers' compensation benefits. Otherwise, disability leaves under this section will be unpaid unless an employee qualifies for Long-Term Disability benefits.

Other Legally Required Leaves of Absences

Employees will be granted a leave of absence that is required by law for the purpose of fulfilling any required legal, civic, military or parental obligation (e.g., jury duty, appearance as a witness in a legal proceeding, military reserve duty, voting, school activities, etc.). These policies will be interpreted and applied in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws, and to the extent that this policy may conflict with those laws, they are controlling over these policies.

Military Leave

Employees who must be absent from work for military service, including fitness for duty examinations, training, or active duty, will be granted a leave of absence.

Uniformed services refer to the U.S. Armed Services including:

- Army National Guard and Air National Guard (when engaged in active duty for training, inactive duty training, or full time National Guard duty);
- the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service;
- the Reserves of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard; and
- any other category of persons designated by the President in time of war or emergency.

Employees must notify their immediate supervisor as soon as they know the required dates of service (unless such notice is precluded by military necessity or is otherwise impossible or unreasonable). Notice can be in the form of military orders, training notices, or induction information. Subject to certain exceptions, the cumulative length of an employee's military leave of absences from work may not exceed five (5) years.

Exempt employees who work any part of a workweek in which they take such a leave will be paid for that workweek only. Otherwise, leaves taken for these purposes will be unpaid.

However, employees may elect to substitute accrued vacation time to receive pay for leaves taken for these purposes. Vacation and sick-leave benefits do not accrue during any unpaid period of military leave.

Employees who are on military leave for less than 31 days are entitled to continue their medical coverage on the same terms as he or she received prior to commencing military leave. They are required to continue to pay their portion of the medical premium. For service beyond 30 days, the employee has the ability to continue health benefits pursuant to applicable federal and state law.

Upon return from an excused military leave, the employee will be reinstated to his or her former position, or another position, to the extent required by applicable law. To be eligible to return to work, employees must:

- 1) Give notice prior to taking military leave;
- 2) Be released from military service under “honorable discharge” and provide a certificate of satisfactory completion of service;
- 3) Submit an application for reemployment based on particular length of leave; and
- 4) Report to work in a timely manner in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

Military Leave for Spouses and Registered Domestic Partners

Employees who work 20 hours or more hours a week and who have a spouse or registered domestic partner engaged in active military duty, may take up to 10 days of unpaid leave during their spouses’ or registered domestic partners’ leave from deployment in a time of military conflict. Employees may elect to use their accrued vacation time during the leave. If the employee has no accrued vacation, the employee must request time off without pay. Employees must submit the official government documentation along with the Military Spouse Leave Request Form to the HR department after speaking to their manager.

Voting Time Off

Employees will be allowed up to two (2) hours of paid leave to vote at a statewide election if they do not have sufficient time outside of working hours to vote. Employees must give their immediate supervisor at least two (2) days advance notice for the need to have time off to vote. The time off must be at the beginning or at the end of an employee’s workday, whichever allows the least amount of time off from work, unless otherwise mutually agreed.

Leave for School/Day Care Visits

Employees who are the parent, grandparent, guardian, stepparents, foster parents, and person who stands *in loco parentis* to a child enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 or attending a licensed child care provider, will be granted time off without pay for up to forty (40) hours per calendar year, but no more than eight (8) hours in any calendar month, to participate in the activities of the schools or licensed child care provider attended by their children; to find, enroll or reenroll a child in school or with a child care provider; or to address a child care provider emergency or a school emergency. In addition, parents who must take time off to attend a school disciplinary conference upon request of the school principal/administrator may do so upon reasonable advance notice.

Employees requesting time off for this purpose must provide the Human Resources Manager with reasonable notice of the planned absence. In addition, employees must substitute accrued vacation time to receive pay for leaves taken for these purposes. Otherwise, leaves taken for these purposes will be unpaid. NCIRE reserves the right to request that the employee furnish written verification from the school or child care provider as proof that the employee participated in school or daycare activities or conference on the specific date and at a particular time. Failure to provide written verification may be grounds for disciplinary action.

Jury Duty and Court Appearances

Employees will be granted time off to:

- 1) to serve on a jury or grand jury; or
- 2) to appear as a witness in court or other judicial proceeding, so long as reasonable notice is provided to the Human Resources Manager.

Employees are required to provide reasonable notice of the need for leaves taken under this section. NCIRE provides five days of paid jury duty leave. Beyond five days, the employee must use their own accrued vacation time to cover time missed from work.

Other Legally Required Leaves of Absences (continued) unless an emergency or unscheduled court appearance is required, in which case, they must provide the Manager of Human Resources with written evidence from the court or prosecuting attorney within fifteen (15) days of the absence that they have appeared in court.

Employees are provided with up to five (5) days of paid leave for jury duty or appearing as a witness in any formal legal proceeding. Any jury or witness duty that extends beyond five business days per year will be unpaid.

Exempt employees who work any part of a workweek in which they take such a leave will be paid for that workweek only. Employees may elect to substitute accrued vacation time to receive pay for leaves that extend beyond five (5) days. Employees are expected to return to work each day or portion of the day that they are not selected for jury duty or called as a witness in a legal proceeding.

Victims of Crime, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Full-time employees who are victims of crime, domestic violence or sexual assault will be provided with five (5) day of paid leave to:

- 1) obtain judicial relief, including a temporary restraining order;
- 2) obtain medical care for injuries;
- 3) seek psychological counseling or services from a domestic violence shelter, program or rape crisis center; or
- 4) to otherwise ensure the health, safety, or welfare of a victim of crime, domestic violence or sexual assault, where the employee is the victim or the immediate family member, domestic partner or child of the victim.

Employees are required to provide reasonable notice of the need for leaves taken under this section, unless an emergency or unscheduled court appearance is required, in which case, they must provide the following to the Human Resources Manager within fifteen (15) days of the absence:

- 1) a police report indicating that the employee was a domestic violence or sexual assault victim; or
- 2) a court order or other evidence from the court or prosecuting attorney verifying the employee's court appearance; or
- 3) documentation that the employee was undergoing treatment for physical or mental injuries or abuse. To the extent allowable by law, this information will be kept confidential.

Exempt employees who work any part of a workweek in which they take such a leave will be paid for that workweek only. Otherwise, leaves taken for these purposes will be unpaid. However, employees may elect to substitute accrued sick or vacation time, as appropriate to receive pay for leaves taken for these purposes.

Volunteer Fire Fighter Leave or Other Emergency Rescue Personnel Leave

Employees may also take time off to perform emergency duty as a volunteer firefighter, a reserve peace officer, or emergency rescue personnel. NCIRE requires documentation from the Fire Chief (or proper authority) that supports the emergency duty. Exempt employees who work any part of a workweek in which they take such a leave will be paid for that workweek only. Otherwise, leaves taken for these purposes will be unpaid. However, employees may elect to substitute accrued vacation time to receive pay for leaves taken for these purposes.

Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation Leave

NCIRE will attempt to reasonably accommodate employees who voluntarily enter into a drug or alcohol rehabilitation program, provided that it does not impose an undue hardship on NCIRE. Employees may request an unpaid leave of absence for that purpose through the Human Resources Department. If approved for such a leave, employees may apply their accrued vacation time to receive pay during such leave; otherwise such leaves are unpaid.

Employees who, because of their current use of alcohol or drugs, are unable to perform their job or who cannot perform their duties in a manner without endangering their health or safety of others may not be granted a leave or any other form of accommodation.

Further, NCIRE's support for treatment and rehabilitation does not obligate NCIRE to employ any person who violated NCIRE's Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace policy or whose job performance is impaired because of substance abuse. NCIRE is not obligated to re-employ any person who has participated in treatment or rehabilitation if that person's job performance remains impaired as a result of dependency.

California Organ and Bone Marrow Donor Leave

NCIRE will grant 30 days of paid leave within a one-year period to employees who are organ donors and five days of paid leave within a one year period to employees who donate bone marrow. Employees will be required to use up to two weeks of accrued sick or vacation time for organ donation leave and five days of accrued sick for bone marrow leave. NCIRE will maintain an employee's group health benefits as if the employee had continued to be actively employed during this leave. An employee must submit a request for leave on the Leave Request Form and submit it to their Principal Investigator and also inform the Human Resources Department. A request for leave must be supported by medical certification from a health care provider and must be submitted within fifteen (15) calendar days.

Leave taken under this policy will not run concurrently with any leave taken pursuant to the federal Family and Medical Leave Act or the California Family Rights Act.

Upon expiration of a leave of absence authorized by this policy, NCIRE will restore the employee to the position held by the employee when the leave began or to a position with equivalent seniority status, employee benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment. NCIRE may decline to restore an employee because of reasons unrelated to the exercise of rights under this policy by the employee.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Overview

At NCIRE we are committed to providing a comprehensive benefits program with the best value to protect you and your family. We understand the challenges you face in successfully managing your work, home and professional commitments and obligations in today's world. We sincerely hope that by offering a broad selection of both employer sponsored and elective benefit options, you will achieve a positive work/life balance that will suit your specific needs. Our Benefits Program reflects the appreciation we have for you, our employee and the vital contributions you make; as such, we continue to strive to be competitive in our industry and marketplace.

The terms on which benefits are made available to employees are set forth in the governing plan documents. In the event of a conflict between the following descriptions and the terms of the plan documents, the plan documents will control. This handbook is not a plan document and does not create any enforceable rights with respect to benefits or otherwise

Visit our website for more information about our benefit plans:

<https://app.strivebenefits.com/ncire>

Paid Family Leave (PFL) and Family Temporary Disability Insurance (FTDI)

Paid Family Leave (PFL), also known as Family Temporary Disability Insurance (FTDI) program, is a state-sponsored insurance program within the State Disability Insurance (SDI) program. It allows eligible employees to a partial wage replacement for up to six (6) weeks in any 12-month period to care for a new child (birth, adoption, or foster care) or a seriously ill or injured family member, which includes a parent, child, spouse, domestic partner, sibling, grandparent, grandchild or parent-in-law..

To qualify for this benefit NCIRE requires employees to:

- 1) Submit a Leave Request Form to the Human Resources Department with as much advance notice as possible;
- 2) use up to two (2) weeks of earned, but unused vacation time which will be applied at the beginning of the leave period; and
- 3) coordinate PFL with all available FMLA/CFRA leave.

Employees may apply for FTDI benefits in the same manner as SDI benefits; however, anyone already receiving SDI, workers' compensation, unemployment insurance or welfare payments cannot also receive FTDI benefits. Employees will be required to complete a claim form and provide medical documentation to support their need for a leave directly to the Employment

Development Department (EDD). Please check with the Human Resources Department for more specific information.

There is a 7-day waiting period before receipt of FTDI benefits. Employees are required to use up to two (2) weeks of accrued vacation time before receipt of FTDI benefits, applying one of those weeks of vacation time to cover the 7-day waiting period. NCIRE will coordinate all paid time off with FTDI benefits. FTDI must be taken concurrently with family care leave and does not entitle an employee to take any additional time off. Receipt of FTDI benefits will not enable employees to extend an authorized leave of absence or guarantee reinstatement upon return from leave, unless otherwise required by law.

Paid Parental Leave

Under the San Francisco Paid Parental Leave Ordinance an eligible San Francisco-based employee who receives Paid Family Leave benefits to bond with a newborn, adopted, or foster-placed child may be eligible for six weeks of Supplemental Compensation.

To be eligible, the employee must:

1. Have been employed by NCIRE for at least 180 days, including part-time and temporary employees;
2. Work at least eight hours per week (and at least 40% of total weekly hours) within San Francisco;
3. Be eligible to receive California Paid Family Leave (PFL) benefits to bond with a new child.

NCIRE will pay Supplemental Compensation equal to the difference between the eligible employee's current normal gross weekly wage and the amount being paid through PFL, subject to a weekly maximum benefit amount, for a period of up to eight weeks.

The California Paid Family Leave program places a cap on the weekly benefit amount. NCIRE's Supplemental Contribution obligation under the ordinance is proportionally capped by reference to the State maximum weekly benefit amount.

To receive Supplemental Compensation, the eligible employee must first file a claim for PFL benefits for new child bonding through the Employment Development Department (EDD). Then the eligible employee must notify NCIRE that the he or she is actually receiving PFL benefits by either providing NCIRE a copy of the Notice of Computation of California Paid Family Leave Benefits, or authorizing the state to disclose the weekly benefit amount to NCIRE. If the employee does not do so, NCIRE is not required to provide Supplemental Compensation.

If the employee works for more than one employer, the employee must supply NCIRE with a copy of the PPL Form, including Section 4 Multiple Employers. NCIRE has the right to request documentation to verify the wages earned from other employers. If notice is not provided, NCIRE is not required to provide Supplemental Compensation. If notice is provided, Supplemental Compensation is apportioned among employers based on the percentage of the employee's total gross weekly wages received from each employer.

In order to receive Supplemental Compensation, eligible employees must agree in writing to reimburse NCIRE if they voluntarily separate from employment within 90 days of the end of their leave period and NCIRE requests such reimbursement in writing. Failure to sign the San Francisco PPL Form Agreement renders the employee ineligible to receive Supplemental Compensation under the PPLO.

Under the California Paid Family Leave program, the eight week leave may be taken as eight consecutive weeks, or it may be spread out over up to a 12-month period (referred to as “intermittent leave”).

Short Term Disability Benefits

Employees who are absent due to disability or medical condition, including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, may be eligible for State Disability Insurance (SDI) benefits as well as payroll integration, a benefit provided by NCIRE for regular, full-time employees. NCIRE will coordinate SDI payments with the use of paid time off.

Long-Term Disability Benefits

NCIRE provides employees with a private long-term disability plan in the event an employee has a disabling condition for longer than three (3) months. Employees are encouraged to consult the Human Resources Department for literature and qualifying information.

Group Term Life Policy

All regular full-time employees working at least 30 hours per week are eligible to receive Group term Life Insurance valued at \$50,000.00, which includes an equal amount of Accidental Death & Dismemberment (AD&D) Insurance. Additional optional life insurance is also available at the employee’s own expense.

Employee Assistance Program

NCIRE provides employees with an Employee Assistance Program, a private counseling program designed to help employees cope with and resolve personal issues including:

- stress
- crisis
- eating disorders
- medical problems
- marital and family problems
- emotional problems
- relationship difficulties
- psychiatric disorders
- work related difficulties
- alcohol and drug issues
- smoking
- referral service for childcare, eldercare, pet, legal and financial services.

Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconsideration Act (COBRA)

Consistent with the requirements of federal and state laws, an eligible employee who was enrolled in a group health plan may have a right to choose to continue health benefits coverage on a self-pay basis, due to a reduction of the employee's hours of employment or the termination of employment (other than due to gross misconduct) for a period of up to 36 months. Dependents of an employee covered by group health plans may have a right to choose continuation coverage on a self-pay basis, for up to 36 months if they lose such coverage under certain circumstances, including the death of the employee, termination of employee's employment or reduction of hours of employment, divorce or legal separation or dissolution of domestic partnership, or the employee becomes entitled to Medicare.

Eligible employees and their qualified dependents will have sixty (60) days from the later of the date of their COBRA notification of the date health coverage will end to inform NCIRE or their third party administrator of their election of COBRA coverage. Otherwise, if the eligible employee and/or dependents do not file the COBRA election forms that are provided by NCIRE within this 60-day period, COBRA rights will be forfeited. A notice of COBRA rights and explanation of the qualifications for and length of coverage is available upon request from the Human Resources Department.

Workers Compensation

Employees who are injured while performing their job, regardless of their length of service, are covered by Workers' Compensation insurance, which provides coverage for medical and hospital treatment in addition to payment for loss of earnings that may result from work-related injuries. Employees who experience an occupational injury or illness should immediately seek medical treatment to ensure proper and timely medical care and notify their supervisor or manager as soon as possible.

NCIRE is not liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for any injury that arises from an employee's voluntary participation in an off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity that is not a part of the employee's work-related duties, unless these activities are a required part of the job. Please contact Human Resources for all work-related injuries.

NCIRE will not take any adverse employment action against an employee in retaliation for reporting a workplace injury claim.

Retirement Plans

NCIRE has established a two-part retirement savings plan to provide employees the potential for financial security upon retirement. The plan consists of a defined contribution plan with employer contributions, also known as the Profit Sharing Plan, and an elective 403(b) retirement plan.

Defined Contribution Plan 401(a)

The defined contribution plan allows employees to receive an allocation of NCIRE's contributions in proportion to the employee's base earnings for the tax year. This plan is non-contributory, meaning employees do not contribute to this plan; it is employer funded. The percentage rate is determined each year by the Board of Directors based on NCIRE's prior

year's performance. The plan year is a 12-month period beginning on October 1 each year and ending on September 30.

- Contributions for NCIRE project employees are paid from the funding of each Principal Investigator.
- All full-time and part-time employees are eligible for the defined contribution plan upon the completion of two years of service and 1000 hours of service per employment year.
- Loans are not available from the defined contribution plan.

403(b) Plan

NCIRE offers employees the option to participate in a 403(b) tax-deferred retirement savings plan whereby employee can contribute a percentage of the employee's eligible compensation each pay period in a pre-tax basis until the annual maximum ceiling is reached. For participants who are age 50 or older by the end of each calendar year you may contribute an additional amount to your savings plan (please see IRS guidelines for details). NCIRE will match your 403b contribution dollar for dollar (aka 100% match) up to 5%. For example, if you put in 5%, NCIRE will contribute 5%; if you contribute 2%, NCIRE will contribute 2%. If you put in 6%, NCIRE will contribute 5%, because this is our maximum match.

Transit and Parking Benefit Plan

NCIRE offers all regular full-time, part-time and temporary employees a Qualified Transit and Parking Fringe Benefit plan. The two plans are separate. You may enroll in one plan, both plans, or neither plan.

The transit plan is designed to reimburse participants for qualified transportation expenses incurred while taking mass transportation such as MUNI, BART or Cal Train to work.

The parking plan is designed to reimburse participants for employment related parking expenses such as BART or Cal Train parking lot fees or monthly VA parking passes.

Employees will pay for their own qualified transportation expenses through pre-tax payroll deductions. Reimbursements are handled through a third party administrator.

Ergonomics Evaluations

NCIRE is committed to providing our employees with a workplace that protects employees from occupational illness and injury by computer use or repetitive motion tasks and will provide an ergonomics evaluation to any employee who requests one to proactively identify and prevent musculoskeletal conditions.