



Employee Handbook

Effective May 2021

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
I. Mission	3
II. Overview.....	3
III. Voluntary At-will Employment	3
IV. Equal Employment Opportunity	4
V. Policy Against Workplace Harassment	5
VI. Solicitation	7
VII. Hours of Work, Attendance and Punctuality	8
VIII. Employment Policies and Practices	9
IX. Position Description and Salary Administration	10
X. Work Review	10
XI. Economic Benefits and Insurance	11
A. Education Reimbursement Policy	
XII. Leave Benefits and Other Work Policies	12
XIII. Reimbursement of Expenses	15
XIV. Seperation	16
XV. Return of Property	18
XVI. Review of Personnel Action	18
XVII. Personnel Records	18
XVIII. Outside Employment	19
XIX. Non-Disclosure of Confidential Information	19
XX. Computer and Information Security	20
XXI. Internet Acceptable Use Policy	22
A. Social Media Policy	

I. MISSION

The North Carolina Therapeutic Riding Center (NCTRC) empowers children and adults with physical, mental, emotional and social challenges to create more active, healthy and fulfilling lives through equine assisted activities and therapies.

II. OVERVIEW

The NC Therapeutic Riding Center Employee Handbook (the "Handbook") has been developed to provide general guidelines about NC Therapeutic Riding Center policies and procedures for employees. It is a guide to assist you in becoming familiar with some of the privileges and obligations of your employment, including NC Therapeutic Riding Center's policy of voluntary at-will employment. None of the policies or guidelines in the Handbook are intended to give rise to contractual rights or obligations, or to be construed as a guarantee of employment for any specific period of time, or any specific type of work. Additionally, with the exception of the voluntary at-will employment policy, these guidelines are subject to modification, amendment or revocation by NC Therapeutic Riding Center at any time, without advance notice.

The personnel policies of NC Therapeutic Riding Center are established by the Board of Directors, which has delegated authority and responsibility for their administration to the Executive Director. The Executive Director may, in turn, delegate authority for administering specific policies. Employees are encouraged to consult the Executive Director for additional information regarding the policies, procedures, and privileges described in this Handbook. Questions about personnel matters also may be reviewed with the Executive Director.

NC Therapeutic Riding Center will provide each individual a copy of this Handbook upon employment. All employees are expected to abide by it. The highest standards of personal and professional ethics and behavior are expected of all NC Therapeutic Riding Center employees. Further, NC Therapeutic Riding Center expects each employee to display good judgment, diplomacy and courtesy in their professional relationships with members of NC Therapeutic Riding Center's Board of Directors, committees, clients, volunteers, staff, and the general public.

III. VOLUNTARY AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT

Unless an employee has a written employment agreement with NC Therapeutic Riding Center, which provides differently, all employment at NC Therapeutic Riding Center is "at-will." That means that employees may be terminated from employment with NC Therapeutic Riding Center with or without cause, and employees are free to leave the

employment of NC Therapeutic Riding Center with or without cause. Any representation by any NC Therapeutic Riding Center officer or employee contrary to this policy is not binding upon NC Therapeutic Riding Center unless it is in writing and is signed by the Executive Director with the approval of the Board of Directors.

Any questions or comments related to this policy should be directed to the Executive Director.

IV. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

NC Therapeutic Riding Center is an equal opportunity employer. In accordance with anti-discrimination law, it is the purpose of this policy to effectuate these principles and mandates. NC Therapeutic Riding Center prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type and affords equal employment opportunities to employees and applicants without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, age, national origin, disability status, genetic information, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law. NC Therapeutic Riding Center conforms to the spirit as well as to the letter of all applicable laws and regulations.

SCOPE

The policy of equal employment opportunity (EEO) and anti-discrimination applies to all aspects of the relationship between NC Therapeutic Riding Center and its employees, including:

- Recruitment;
- Employment;
- Promotion;
- Transfer;
- Training;
- Working conditions;
- Wages and salary administration; and
- Employee benefits and application of policies.

The policies and principles of EEO also apply to the selection and treatment of independent contractors, personnel working on our premises who are employed by temporary agencies and any other persons or firms doing business for or with NC Therapeutic Riding Center.

The Executive Director shall act as the responsible agent in the full implementation of the EEO policy.

NC Therapeutic Riding Center determines that a violation of this policy has occurred, it will take appropriate disciplinary action against the offending party, which can include

counseling, warnings, suspensions, and termination. Employees who report, in good faith, violations of this policy and employees who cooperate with investigations into alleged violations of this policy will not be subject to retaliation. Upon completion of the investigation, NC Therapeutic Riding Center will inform the employee who made the complaint of the results of the investigation.

NC Therapeutic Riding Center is also committed to complying fully with applicable disability discrimination laws, and ensuring that equal opportunity in employment exists at NC Therapeutic Riding Center for qualified persons with disabilities. All employment practices and activities are conducted on a non-discriminatory basis. Reasonable accommodations will be available to all qualified disabled employees, upon request, so long as the potential accommodation does not create an undue hardship on the NC Therapeutic Riding Center. Employees who believe that they may require an accommodation should discuss these needs with the Executive Director. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please contact the Executive Director.

V. POLICY AGAINST WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

NC Therapeutic Riding Center is committed to providing a work environment for all employees that is free from sexual harassment and other types of discriminatory harassment. Employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and to show respect for their co-workers.

NC Therapeutic Riding Center's commitment begins with the recognition and acknowledgment that sexual harassment and other types of discriminatory harassment are, of course, unlawful. To reinforce this commitment, NC Therapeutic Riding Center has developed a policy against harassment and a reporting procedure for employees who have been subjected to or witnessed harassment. This policy applies to all work-related settings and activities, whether inside or outside the workplace, and includes business trips and business-related social events. NC Therapeutic Riding Center's property (e.g. telephones, copy machines, facsimile machines, computers, and computer applications such as e-mail and Internet access) may not be used to engage in conduct that violates this policy. NC Therapeutic Riding Center's policy against harassment covers employees and other individuals who have a relationship with NC Therapeutic Riding Center which enables NC Therapeutic Riding Center to exercise some control over the individual's conduct in places and activities that relate to NC Therapeutic Riding Center's work (e.g. directors, officers, contractors, vendors, volunteers, etc.).

Prohibition of Sexual Harassment: NC Therapeutic Riding Center's policy against sexual harassment prohibits sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or other physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature, when: (1) submission to such conduct is made an express or implicit condition of employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting the individual who submits to or rejects such conduct;

or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or offensive working environment.

While it is not possible to list all of the circumstances which would constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples: (1) unwelcome sexual advances -- whether they involve physical touching or not; (2) requests for sexual favors in exchange for actual or promised job benefits such as favorable reviews, salary increases, promotions, increased benefits, or continued employment; or (3) coerced sexual acts.

Depending on the circumstances, the following conduct may also constitute sexual harassment: (1) use of sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; (2) sexually oriented comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess; (3) displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons; (4) unwelcome leering, whistling, deliberate brushing against the body in a suggestive manner; (5) sexual gestures or sexually suggestive comments; (6) inquiries into one's sexual experiences; or (7) discussion of one's sexual activities.

While such behavior, depending on the circumstances, may not be severe or pervasive enough to create a sexually hostile work environment, it can nonetheless make co-workers uncomfortable. Accordingly, such behavior is inappropriate and may result in disciplinary action regardless of whether it is unlawful.

It is also unlawful and expressly against NC Therapeutic Riding Center policy to retaliate against an employee for filing a complaint of sexual harassment or for cooperating with an investigation of a complaint of sexual harassment.

Prohibition of Other Types of Discriminatory Harassment: It is also against NC Therapeutic Riding Center's policy to engage in verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his or her race, color, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability, or other protected category (or that of the individual's relatives, friends, or associates) that: (1) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or offensive working environment; (2) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or (3) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Depending on the circumstances, the following conduct may constitute discriminatory harassment: (1) epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, jokes, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts that relate to race, color, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, national origin, or disability; and (2) written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility toward an individual or group because of race, color, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, national origin, or disability and that is circulated in the workplace, or placed anywhere in NC Therapeutic Riding Center's premises such as on an employee's desk or workspace or on NC

Therapeutic Riding Center's equipment or bulletin boards. Please refer to Internet Acceptable Use Policy for more information about our Social Media Policy. Other conduct may also constitute discriminatory harassment if it falls within the definition of discriminatory harassment set forth above.

It is also against NC Therapeutic Riding Center's policy to retaliate against an employee for filing a complaint of discriminatory harassment or for cooperating in an investigation of a complaint of discriminatory harassment.

Reporting of Harassment: If you believe that you have experienced or witnessed sexual harassment or other discriminatory harassment by any employee of NC Therapeutic Riding Center, you should report the incident immediately to your supervisor or to the Executive Director. Possible harassment by others with whom NC Therapeutic Riding Center has a business relationship, including clients, volunteers, and vendors, should also be reported as soon as possible so that appropriate action can be taken.

NC Therapeutic Riding Center will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of harassment as discreetly and confidentially as practicable. The investigation would generally include a private interview with the person making a report of harassment. It would also generally be necessary to discuss allegations of harassment with the accused individual and others who may have information relevant to the investigation. NC Therapeutic Riding Center's goal is to conduct a thorough investigation, to determine whether harassment occurred, and to determine what action to take if it is determined that improper behavior occurred.

If NC Therapeutic Riding Center determines that a violation of this policy has occurred, it will take appropriate disciplinary action against the offending party, which can include counseling, warnings, suspensions, and termination. Employees who report violations of this policy and employees who cooperate with investigations into alleged violations of this policy will not be subject to retaliation. Upon completion of the investigation, NC Therapeutic Riding Center will inform the employee who made the complaint of the results of the investigation.

Compliance with this policy is a condition of each employee's employment. Employees are encouraged to raise any questions or concerns about this policy or about possible discriminatory harassment with the Executive Director. In the case where the allegation of harassment is against the Executive Director, please notify the board member designated as grievance officer.

VI. SOLICITATION

Employees are prohibited from soliciting (personally or via electronic mail) for membership, pledges, subscriptions, the collection of money or for any other unauthorized purpose anywhere on NC Therapeutic Riding Center property during work time, especially those of a partisan or political nature. "Work time" includes time spent in actual performance of

job duties but does not include lunch periods or breaks. Non-working employees may not solicit or distribute to working employees. Persons who are not employed by NC Therapeutic Riding Center may not solicit or distribute literature on NC Therapeutic Riding Center's premises at any time for any reason.

Employees are prohibited from distributing, circulating or posting (on bulletin boards, refrigerators, walls, etc.) literature, petitions or other materials at any time for any purpose without the prior approval of the Executive Director or his/her designee.

VII. HOURS OF WORK, ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

A. Hours of Work

The normal work week for NC Therapeutic Riding Center shall consist of five (5), seven (7) hour days. Ordinarily, work hours are from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, including one hour (unpaid) for lunch. Employees may request the opportunity to vary their work schedules (within employer-defined limits) to better accommodate personal responsibilities. Subject to NC Therapeutic Riding Center work assignments and Executive Director approval, the employee's supervisor shall determine the hours of employment that best suits the needs of the work to be done by the individual employee.

B. Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance is a key factor in your job performance. Punctuality and regular attendance are expected of all employees. Excessive absences (whether excused or unexcused), tardiness or leaving early is unacceptable. If you are absent for any reason or plan to arrive late or leave early, you must notify your supervisor as far in advance as possible and no later than one hour before the start of your scheduled work day. In the event of an emergency, you must notify your supervisor as soon as possible.

For all absences extending longer than one day, you must telephone your immediate supervisor prior to the start of each scheduled workday. When reporting an absence, you should indicate the nature of the problem causing your absence and your expected return-to-work date. A physician's statement may be required as proof of the need for any illness-related absence regardless of the length of the absence.

Except as provided in other policies, an employee who is absent from work for three consecutive days without notification to their supervisor or the Executive Director will be considered to have voluntarily terminated his or her employment. The employee's final paycheck will be mailed to the last mailing address on file with NC Therapeutic Riding Center.

Excessive absences, tardiness or leaving early will be grounds for discipline up to and including termination. Depending on the circumstances, including the employee's length of employment, NC Therapeutic Riding Center may counsel employees prior to termination for

excessive absences, tardiness or leaving early.

C. Overtime

Overtime pay, which is applicable only to Non-Exempt Employees, is for any time worked in excess of 40 hours in a work week. Only the Executive Director or his or her designee, upon the request of an employee's supervisor, may authorize overtime. Overtime rate is one and one-half time (1½) the employee's straight time rate, except in instances involving a Sunday or holidays when the rate is two times the regular rate. Payment of overtime will be provided in the pay period following the period in which it is earned.

VIII. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES

A. Definition of Terms

1. Employer: The NC Therapeutic Riding Center is the employer of all full-time, part-time and temporary employees. An employee is hired, provided compensation and applicable benefits, and has their work directed and evaluated by NC Therapeutic Riding Center.
2. Full-Time Employee: A Full Time Employee regularly works at least 35 hours per week.
3. Part-Time Employee: A Part Time Employee regularly works less than 35 hours per week but no less than 17 ½ hours per week.
4. Exempt Employee: An Exempt Employee is an employee who is paid on a salary basis and meets the qualifications for exemption from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act ("FLSA").
5. Non-Exempt Employee: A Non-Exempt Employee is an employee who is paid an hourly rate and does not meet the qualifications for exemption from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act ("FLSA"). For Non-Exempt Employees, an accurate record of hours worked must be maintained. NC Therapeutic Riding Center will compensate non-exempt employees in accordance with applicable federal and state law and regulations.
6. Temporary Employee: An individual employed, either on a full-time or part-time basis, for a specific period of time less than six months. Temporary employees are entitled only to those benefits required by statute or as otherwise stated in the *NC Therapeutic Riding Center Employee Handbook*.

All employees are classified as Exempt or Non-Exempt in accordance with federal and state law and regulations. Each employee is notified at the time of hire of his or her specific compensation category and exempt or non-exempt status. In the state of North Carolina the FLSA regulations state that the minimum wage is 7.25.

IX. POSITION DESCRIPTION AND SALARY / WAGE ADMINISTRATION

Each position shall have a written job description. In general, the description will include the: purpose of the position, areas of responsibilities, immediate supervisor(s), qualifications required, salary range, and working conditions affecting the job. The supervisor(s) or the Executive Director shall have discretion to modify the job description to meet the needs of the NC Therapeutic Riding Center.

Paychecks are distributed via direct deposit on the 5th and the 20th of each month, except when either of those days falls on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday, in which case paychecks will be distributed on the preceding workday. Timesheets are due to the Executive Director within two days of the end of each pay period. All salary deductions are itemized and presented to employees with the online paycheck stub. Approved salary deductions may include: federal and state income taxes; social security, Medicare, and state disability insurance; voluntary medical and group hospitalization insurance premiums (if in force and if paid by employee) and other benefits (e.g., life insurance, retirement).

X. WORK REVIEW

The work of each employee is reviewed on an ongoing basis with the supervisor to provide a systematic means of evaluating performance.

The annual performance review is a formal opportunity for the supervisor and employee to exchange ideas that will strengthen their working relationship, review the past year, and anticipate NC Therapeutic Riding Center's needs in the coming year. The purpose of the review is to encourage the exchange of ideas in order to create positive change within NC Therapeutic Riding Center. To that end, it is incumbent upon both parties to have an open, and honest discussion concerning the employee's performance. It is further incumbent upon the supervisor to clearly communicate the needs of NC Therapeutic Riding Center and what is expected of the employee in contributing to the success of NC Therapeutic Riding Center for the coming year.

Both supervisor and employee should attempt to arrive at an understanding regarding the objectives for the coming year. This having been done, both parties should sign the performance review form, which will be kept as part of the employee's personnel record and used as a guide during the course of the year to monitor employee progress relative to the

agreed upon objectives.

The Executive Director reviews the work of all supervisors. Performance reviews for other staff are the responsibility of the appropriate supervisor, subject to confirmation by the Executive Director.

XI. ECONOMIC BENEFITS AND INSURANCE

A. Health and Life Insurance

NC Therapeutic Riding Center does not provide insurance benefits at this time.

B. Social Security/Medicare/Medicaid

NC Therapeutic Riding Center participates in the provisions of the Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid programs. Employees' contributions are deducted from each paycheck and NC Therapeutic Riding Center contributes at the applicable wage base as established by federal law.

C. Workers' Compensation and Unemployment Insurance

Employees are covered for benefits under the Workers' Compensation Law. Absences for which worker compensation benefits are provided are not charged against the eligible employee's sick leave. To assure proper protection for employees and NC Therapeutic Riding Center, any accident that occurs on the job must be reported, even if there are no injuries apparent at the time. Forms for this purpose are available from NC Therapeutic Riding Center. NC Therapeutic Riding Center also participates in the North Carolina state unemployment program.

D. Retirement Plan

NC Therapeutic Riding Center does not provide a retirement plan at this time.

E. Education Reimbursement Policy

NC Therapeutic Riding Center will invest in an employee's education for continuing education through an accredited program that either offers growth in an area related to their current position or that may lead to promotional opportunities. This education may include college credit courses, continuing education unit courses, seminars and certification tests that are job-related.

ELIGIBILITY

All employees who have completed training are eligible under this policy with the intent of continuing employment after completion of the specified program, unless previously discussed with the Executive Director.

PROCEDURES

To receive reimbursement for educational expenses, employees should follow the subsequent procedures:

- Prior to enrolling in an educational course, the employee must provide their manager with information about the course for which they would like to receive reimbursement and discuss the job-relatedness of the continuing education;
- A tuition reimbursement request form should be completed by the employee, and the appropriate signatures obtained;
- A copy of the tuition reimbursement request form must be submitted to the Executive Director. The employee will maintain the original until they have completed the educational course;
- Once the course is successfully completed, the employee should resubmit the original tuition reimbursement request form with the reimbursement section filled out, including appropriate signatures, as well as receipts and evidence of a passing grade or certification attached; and
- The Executive Director will coordinate the reimbursement.

Any questions or comments related to this policy should be directed to the Executive Director.

NC Therapeutic Riding Center reserves the right to modify or terminate any employee benefits, at any time.

XII. LEAVE BENEFITS AND OTHER WORK POLICIES

A. Holidays

Full-Time and Part-Time Employees are eligible for 9 holidays per year as follows:

New Year's Eve
New Year's Day
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day
The Day After Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day

Salaried employees regularly scheduled for 20 hours + per week receive one (1) paid day off each full day of holiday time. Employees wishing to take religious holidays may substitute a religious holiday for one of those listed above, with advance approval from their supervisor and the Executive Director. Temporary employees are ineligible for holiday leave benefits. In those years when Independence Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, and New Year's Day fall on Saturday or Sunday, the Executive Director will designate the work day that will replace the weekend holiday. Due to the nature of work at the NC Therapeutic Riding Center, it is understood that some employees will have to work on holidays to provide care for animals; in those situations an appropriate alternative day will be arranged with approval of the Executive Director.

B. Paid Time Off

During the first 90 days of employment full and part-time employees will not earn paid time off benefits. During the remaining nine months of first year employment, a full-time employee will earn (10 days) of paid time off.

Paid time off benefits are prorated accordingly for part-time employees. Use of scheduled paid time off is subject to approval by the supervisor and Executive Director and must be requested in hourly increments, using the appropriate leave request form. Unscheduled paid time off may be used in case of illness, subject to approval by the supervisor and the Executive Director. If an employee's illness or injury requires a consecutive absence of five (5) days or more, physician documentation will be required.

Paid time off may be taken in advance of being earned, within the year it is expected to be earned. If the employee leaves within the fiscal year before accruing the time taken, the overage will be deducted from the employee's final paycheck. Unused paid time off will not carry over from one year to the next.

C. Military Leave

Employees who are inducted into or enlist in the Armed Forces of the United States or are called to duty as a member of a reserve unit may take unpaid leave in accordance with applicable law. The employee must provide advance notice of his or her need for a military leave and NC Therapeutic Riding Center will request a copy of the employee's orders, which will be kept on record by NC Therapeutic Riding Center.

The time an employee spends on military leave will be counted as continuous service for the purpose of determining eligibility and accrual for various benefit plans and policies.

D. Civic Responsibility

NC Therapeutic Riding Center believes in the civic responsibility of its employees and encourages this by allowing employees time off to serve jury duty when required.

Jury Duty: For time served on jury duty, NC Therapeutic Riding Center will pay employees the difference between his or her salary and any amount paid by the government, unless prohibited by law, up to a maximum of ten days. If an employee is required to serve more than ten days of jury duty, NC Therapeutic Riding Center will provide the employee with unpaid leave. Employees must provide NC Therapeutic Riding Center a copy of proof of service received by the court in which they serve.

E. Bereavement Leave

Employees shall be entitled to bereavement leave with pay of five (5) days in the event of a death in the employee's immediate family (spouse/life partner, child or parent) and three (3) days for grandparent, sister or brother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, or grandchildren. If an employee wishes to take time off due to the death of an immediate family member, the employee should notify the Executive Director immediately. Approval of bereavement leave will occur in the absence of unusual operating requirements. An employee may use, with the Executive Director's approval, available paid leave for additional time off as necessary and in accordance with operating needs.

F. Extended Personal Leave

Employees who have been employed by NC Therapeutic Riding Center for at least one year may apply for personal leaves of absence for up to eight weeks. Personal leaves are unpaid and are discretionary with the management of NC Therapeutic Riding Center. When considering a request for a personal leave, NC Therapeutic Riding Center will consider factors such as the employee's position, the employee's length of service, the employee's performance record including attendance, the purpose of the leave, the needs of the department in which the employee works, the effect of the leave on other employees, and NC Therapeutic Riding Center's general business needs.

Personal leaves generally are unpaid. However, accrued paid time off may be used to continue an employee's salary during the leave. Paid time off will not continue to accrue during the leave of absence.

NC Therapeutic Riding Center cannot guarantee reinstatement upon return from a personal leave. NC Therapeutic Riding Center will, however, make a reasonable effort to place the employee in an available position for which he or she is qualified. If such a position is not available, then the employee's employment will terminate. Even in that event, the employee may later apply for reemployment.

Employees who fail to report to work after an approved leave of absence are deemed to have voluntarily resigned. When an approved leave has been exhausted, the employee may request additional leave. The Executive Director must approve all unpaid leave.

G. Comp Time

Employees may, with the approval of their supervisor and the Executive Director, shift their working schedules temporarily to accommodate personal schedules, Riding Center events, etc.

H. Severe Weather Conditions

NC Therapeutic Riding Center closes as needed during severe weather conditions. Under NC Therapeutic Riding Center's liberal leave policy, paid time off may be taken without prior scheduling and approval if the employee is unable to reach the office due to severe weather conditions, and is unable to complete job tasks from their home. Comp time may be used in this situation, with the approval of the employee's supervisor and the Executive Director.

XIII. REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

Reimbursement is authorized for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in carrying out job responsibilities, with approval of the employee's supervisor or the Executive Director.

Employees are responsible for transportation costs between the office and home during normal work hours. Transportation costs are paid by NC Therapeutic Riding Center for work outside normal work hours if the employee is on official business for NC Therapeutic Riding Center. Employees authorized to use their personal cars for NC Therapeutic Riding Center business are reimbursed at the U.S. Internal Revenue Service approved rate.

Forms are provided to request reimbursement for actual expenses and advance payment for travel. Receipts must be provided for all expenditures made in order to claim reimbursement.

XIV. SEPARATION

Either NC Therapeutic Riding Center or the employee may initiate separation. NC Therapeutic Riding Center encourages employees to provide at least two weeks (10 days) written notice prior to intended separation. After receiving such notice, an exit interview will be scheduled by the Executive Director or his or her designee. The Executive Director has authority to employ or separate all other employees.

Circumstances under which separation may occur include:

1. Resignation. Employees are encouraged to give at least 10 business days of written notice. Since a longer period is desired, the intention to resign should be made known as far in advance as possible. Employees who resign are entitled to receive accrued, unused paid time off benefits.
2. Termination or Lay-off. Under certain circumstances, the termination or lay-off of an employee may be necessary. Employees who are terminated or laid off are not entitled to receive accrued, unused paid time off benefits.

The Executive Director has authority to discharge an employee from the employ of NC Therapeutic Riding Center. As stated above, all employment at NC Therapeutic Riding Center is "at-will." That means that employees may be terminated from employment with NC Therapeutic Riding Center with or without cause, and employees are free to leave the employment of NC Therapeutic Riding Center with or without cause. Reasons for discharge may include, but are not limited to:

- Falsifying or withholding information on your employment application that did or would have affected NC Therapeutic Riding Center's decision to hire you (this conduct will result in your immediate termination);
- Falsifying or withholding information in other personnel records including personnel questionnaires, performance evaluations or any other records;
- Performance at work below a level acceptable to NC Therapeutic Riding Center or the failure to perform assigned duties;
- Failure to complete required time records or falsification of such time records;

- Insubordination;
- Refusing to work reasonable overtime
- Negligence in the performance of duties likely to cause or actually causing personal injury or property damage;
- Fighting, arguing or attempting to injure another;
- Destroying or willfully damaging the personal property of another, including NC Therapeutic Riding Center's property;
- Breach of confidentiality;
- Using or appearing to use for personal gain any information obtained on the job, which is not readily available to the general public or disclosing such information that damages the interests of NC Therapeutic Riding Center or its clients, volunteers, or vendors;
- Placing oneself in a position in which personal interests and those of NC Therapeutic Riding Center are or appear to be in conflict or might interfere with the ability of the employee to perform the job as well as possible;
- Using NC Therapeutic Riding Center property or services for personal gain or taking, removing or disposing of NC Therapeutic Riding Center material, supplies or equipment without proper authority;
- Gambling in any form on NC Therapeutic Riding Center property;
- Dishonesty;
- Theft;
- The possession, use, sale or being under the influence of drugs or other controlled substances or alcoholic beverages during working hours or on the NC Therapeutic Riding Center premises at any time in violation of NC Therapeutic Riding Center's policies;
- Carrying or possessing firearms or weapons on NC Therapeutic Riding Center property;
- Excessive tardiness or absenteeism whether excused or unexcused;
- Unauthorized absence from work without proper notice; and

- Engaging in discriminatory or abusive behavior, including sexual harassment.

At the sole discretion of the Executive Director, the employee may be asked to leave immediately or be given a period of notice.

XV. RETURN OF PROPERTY

Employees are responsible for NC Therapeutic Riding Center equipment, property and work products that may be issued to them and/or are in their possession or control, including but not limited to:

- Telephone cards;
- Credit cards;
- Identification badges;
- Office/building keys;
- Office/building security passes;
- Computers, computerized diskettes, electronic/voice mail codes;
- and
- Intellectual property (e.g., written materials, work products).

In the event of separation from employment, or immediately upon request by the Executive Director or their designee, employees must return all NC Therapeutic Riding Center property that is in their possession or control. Where permitted by applicable law(s), NC Therapeutic Riding Center may withhold from the employee's final paycheck the cost of any property, including intellectual property, which is not returned when required. NC Therapeutic Riding Center also may take any action deemed appropriate to recover or protect its property.

XVI. REVIEW OF PERSONNEL ACTION

Employees may request a review of a personnel action or an unsatisfactory performance review. Employees are expected first to discuss their concern with their immediate supervisor. If further discussion is desired, the employee may then discuss the situation with the Executive Director. The decision of the Executive Director is final.

XVII. PERSONNEL RECORDS

Personnel records are the property of NC Therapeutic Riding Center, and access to the information they contain is restricted and confidential. A personnel file shall be kept for each employee and should include the employee's job application, copy of the letter of employment

and position description, performance reviews, disciplinary records, records of salary increases and any other relevant personnel information.

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify their supervisor in writing of any changes in personnel data, including personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, names of dependents, and individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency.

All employees must complete, within two days of the end of each pay period, their time and attendance record for review and approval by the Executive Director. Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every employee. Tampering, altering, or falsifying time records, or recording time on another employee's time record may result in disciplinary action, including separation from employment with NC Therapeutic Riding Center.

XVIII. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Individuals employed by NC Therapeutic Riding Center may hold outside jobs as long as they meet the performance standards of their job with NC Therapeutic Riding Center. Employees should consider the impact that outside employment may have on their ability to perform their duties at NC Therapeutic Riding Center. All employees will be evaluated by the same performance standards and will be subject to NC Therapeutic Riding Center scheduling demands, regardless of any outside work requirements.

If NC Therapeutic Riding Center determines that an employee's outside work interferes with their job performance or their ability to meet the requirements of NC Therapeutic Riding Center as they are modified from time to time, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if he or she wishes to remain employed with NC Therapeutic Riding Center.

Outside employment that constitutes a conflict of interest is prohibited. Employees may not receive any income or material gain from individuals or organizations for materials produced or services rendered while performing their jobs with NC Therapeutic Riding Center.

XIX. NON-DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Any information that an employee learns about NC Therapeutic Riding Center, or its volunteers, clients, or donors, as a result of working for NC Therapeutic Riding Center that is not otherwise publicly available constitutes confidential information. Employees may not disclose confidential information to anyone who is not employed by NC Therapeutic Riding Center or to other persons employed by NC Therapeutic Riding Center who do not need to know such information to assist in rendering services.

The protection of privileged and confidential information, including trade secrets, is vital to the interests and the success of NC Therapeutic Riding Center. The disclosure,

distribution, electronic transmission or copying of NC Therapeutic Riding Center's confidential information is prohibited. Such information includes, but is not limited to the following examples:

- Compensation data; and
- Program and financial information, including information related to donors, and pending projects and proposals.

Employees are required to sign a non-disclosure agreement as a condition of employment. Any employee who discloses confidential NC Therapeutic Riding Center information will be subject to disciplinary action (including possible separation), even if he or she does not actually benefit from the disclosure of such information.

Discussions involving sensitive information should always be held in confidential settings to safeguard the confidentiality of the information. Conversations regarding confidential information generally should not be conducted on cellular phones, or in elevators, restrooms, restaurants, or other places where conversations might be overheard.

XX. COMPUTER AND INFORMATION SECURITY

This section sets forth some important rules relating to the use of NC Therapeutic Riding Center's computer and communications systems. These systems include individual PCs provided to employees, centralized computer equipment, all associated software, and NC Therapeutic Riding Center's telephone, voice mail and electronic mail systems.

NC Therapeutic Riding Center has provided these systems to support its mission. Although limited personal use of NC Therapeutic Riding Center's systems is allowed, subject to the restrictions outlined below, no use of these systems should ever conflict with the primary purpose for which they have been provided, NC Therapeutic Riding Center's ethical responsibilities or with applicable laws and regulations. Each user is personally responsible to ensure that these guidelines are followed.

All data in NC Therapeutic Riding Center's computer and communication systems (including documents, other electronic files, e-mail and recorded voicemail messages) are the property of NC Therapeutic Riding Center. NC Therapeutic Riding Center may inspect and monitor such data at any time. No individual should have any expectation of privacy for messages or other data recorded in NC Therapeutic Riding Center's systems. This includes documents or messages marked "private," which may be inaccessible to most users but remain available to NC Therapeutic Riding Center. Likewise, the deletion of a document or message may not prevent access to the item or completely eliminate the item from the system.

NC Therapeutic Riding Center's systems must not be used to create or transmit material that is derogatory, defamatory, obscene or offensive, such as slurs, epithets or anything that might be construed as harassment or disparagement based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, or religious or political beliefs. Similarly, NC Therapeutic Riding Center's systems must not be used to solicit or proselytize others for commercial purposes, causes, outside organizations, chain messages or other non-job-related purposes.

Security procedures in the form of unique user sign-on identification and passwords have been provided to control access to NC Therapeutic Riding Center's host computer system,

networks and voice mail system. In addition, security facilities have been provided to restrict access to certain documents and files for the purpose of safeguarding information. The following activities, which present security risks, should be avoided.

There are a number of practices that individual users should adopt that will foster a higher level of security. Among them are the following:

- Additions to or modifications of the standard software configuration provided on NC Therapeutic Riding Center's PCs should never be attempted by individual users. Requests for such changes should be directed to the Executive Director.
- Individual users should never load personal software (including outside email services) to company computers. This practice risks the introduction of a computer virus into the system. Requests for loading such software should be directed to computer support or the Executive Director.
- Programs should never be downloaded from bulletin board systems or copied from other computers outside the company on to company computers. Downloading or copying such programs also risks the introduction of a virus.
- Users should not attempt to boot PCs from floppy diskettes. This practice also risks the introduction of a computer virus.
- NC Therapeutic Riding Center's computer facilities should not be used to attempt access or use of other organization's data.
- Company software (whether developed internally or licensed) should not be copied onto floppy diskettes or other media other than for the purpose of backing up your hard drive.

- Turn off your personal computer when you are leaving your work area or office for an extended period of time.
- Exercise judgment in assigning an appropriate level of security to documents stored on the company's networks, based on a realistic appraisal of the need for confidentiality or privacy.
- Remove previously written information from flash drives, etc before copying documents on such drives for delivery outside NC Therapeutic Riding Center.

XXI. INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

At this time, desktop access to the Internet is provided to employees when there is a necessity and the access has been specifically approved. NC Therapeutic Riding Center has provided access to the Internet for authorized users to support its mission. No use of the Internet should conflict with the primary purpose of NC Therapeutic Riding Center, its ethical responsibilities or with applicable laws and regulations. Each user is personally responsible to ensure that these guidelines are followed. Serious repercussions, including termination, may result if the guidelines are not followed.

NC Therapeutic Riding Center may monitor usage of the Internet by employees, including reviewing a list of sites accessed by an individual. No individual should have any expectation of privacy in terms of his or her usage of the Internet. In addition, NC Therapeutic Riding Center may restrict access to certain sites that it deems are not necessary for business purposes.

NC Therapeutic Riding Center's connection to the Internet may not be used for any of the following activities:

- The Internet must not be used to access, create, transmit, print or download material that is derogatory, defamatory, obscene, or offensive, such as slurs, epithets, or anything that may be construed as harassment or disparagement based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, medical condition, marital status, or religious or political beliefs.
- The Internet must not be used to access, send, receive or solicit sexually-oriented messages or images.
- Downloading or disseminating of copyrighted material that is available on the Internet is an infringement of copyright law. Permission to copy the material

must be obtained from the publisher. For assistance with copyrighted material, contact computer support or the Executive Director.

- Without prior approval of the Executive Director, software should not be downloaded from the Internet as the download could introduce a computer virus onto NC Therapeutic Riding Center's computer equipment. In addition, copyright laws may cover the software so the downloading could be an infringement of copyright law.
- Employees should safeguard against using the Internet to transmit personal comments or statements through e-mail or to post information to news groups that may be mistaken as the position of NC Therapeutic Riding Center.
- Employees should guard against the disclosure of confidential information.
- The Internet should not be used to send or participate in chain letters, pyramid schemes or other illegal schemes.
- The Internet should not be used to solicit or proselytize others for commercial purposes, causes, outside organizations, chain messages or other non-job related purposes.
- The Internet should not be used to endorse political candidates or campaigns.

If you have any questions regarding any of the policy guidelines listed above, please contact your supervisor, or the Executive Director.

Social Media Policy: At the NC Therapeutic Riding Center, we understand that social media can be useful when trying to share your experiences with your friends and family. The use of social media also brings forth certain risks and responsibilities that need to be taken into consideration. We ask that you abide by our social media guidelines to ensure that our clients, staff and horses are protected in this way.

GUIDELINES

We define *Social Media* as "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 website, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with NC Therapeutic Riding Center, as well as any other form of electronic communication."

All posts related to clientele, employees, Center facility, or Center horses must be approved by your supervisor or the Executive Director before posting. This is to protect you and our organization from being portrayed in a negative way, however unintentional that it may be.

You are responsible for what you post online. Not only do we ask that you consider the risks and the rewards that come with posting personally, we ask you to consider how you will reflect upon NC Therapeutic Riding Center. We ask that you be respectful and always consider your fellow coworkers, clients, and volunteers that are associated with the NC Therapeutic Riding Center.

We also ask that you refrain from using social media at work and on company time, unless permitted by your manager or a part of your job responsibilities, or for minimal use during breaks.

Refrain from posting negatively about fellow employees. Keep in mind that you are more likely to see resolved work complaints by bringing the issues to management. We have an open door policy at NCTRC and we ask that you utilize that when issues or complaints arise rather than post on social media outlets. The Internet provides access to many sites that charge a subscription or usage fee to access and use the information on the site. Requests for approval must be submitted to your supervisor. If you have any questions regarding any of the policy guidelines listed above, please contact your supervisor, or the Executive Director.