



Dartmouth  
Health

Valley Regional Hospital  
Human Resources

# Valley Regional Hospital

Compassion | Accountability | Respect | Excellence | Service

## **Scope & Purpose of This Handbook**

This employee handbook has been prepared to give you general information about the work environment, and some of the benefits, rules and policies under which we operate. More extensive information is available from your supervisor, human resources staff and on Valley Regional Hospital (VRH) intranet: <http://pulse/intranet/>. From time to time, you may receive updated information concerning changes in policy and benefits. For any questions please contact the Human Resources Department

This handbook is not an employment contract. You are an at-will employee. Your at-will status means both you and VRH may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. Your at-will status can be changed only through a written contract or agreement signed by you or an authorized representative acting on your behalf and the president of VRH, or the president's authorized representative. With the exception of written employment contracts or agreements, this handbook supersedes all prior agreements or statements regarding your employment at VRH. VRH may change its policies and procedures and any provision of this handbook at any time without advance notice.

The VRH handbook is available in alternate formats, including large print, or other forms (within reason) upon request.

## **VRH Philosophy on Communication**

We are committed to treating our employees with the equity and fairness they deserve and continue to believe that our employees themselves are best able to voice their concerns when they can do so directly and openly with their supervisors and/or Human Resources.

We believe that the best atmosphere is one of direct, open and honest communication between employees, their supervisors and the organization's leadership.

To keep our VRH community connected about our strategic plan, VRH news, policy changes, new programs and special events we use several communication methods.

- **Bulletin Boards/Notices**

Bulletin boards are located throughout the organization and provide valuable information that applies to our employees. The official employee bulletin board is located at the employee entrance.

- **United States Postal Service (mail)**

Notices of particular personal importance to you are mailed to your home. Information that cannot wait may be sent via the organizations e-mail and/or memo to your department and posted on a bulletin board.

- **Policies**

The employee handbook is reprinted periodically; however, policies may be revised more frequently. Policies which affect you as an employee are maintained and available on VRH's intranet (The Pulse). There are also hard copies of VRH policies located in the Human Resources Department as well as area Departments. Please remember that the handbook and policies are not an agreement or contract of employment, express or implied, or a promise of treatment in any particular manner in any given situation. To that end, VRH reserves the right to take immediate action, up to and including termination, based on the egregiousness of an act – therefore, forgoing progressive corrective action plan.

- **The Pulse**

The Pulse is an online intranet available to all employees. This reference tool is provided to employees as a resource with frequent updates including news, quick links, events, alerts, a phone directory, cafeteria menu, forms and much more.

- **Computers & Electronic Mail**

Computers, e-mail and the internet are accessible to all employees completing work within VRH. All computers, the data stored in them and communication via e-mail and/or another electronic format may be monitored. VRH utilizes a web filtering system that allows us to prioritize how we use the internet connection to support patient care and business operations. Certain sites may be blocked due to potential risks from viruses.

- **Employees and their Supervisor**

Questions and concerns relating to job activities should first be presented to your supervisor. Communication between you and your Supervisor should be ongoing and address concerns, duties and expectations. Supervisors can help employees achieve their professional goals by providing career development information.

- **Open Forums**

Members of the Senior Leadership Team meet throughout the year with employees to encourage open communication within the community. This is an opportunity to share information and topics of interest; answer questions and address concerns. Further details regarding the dates and location of the forums will be sent to all employees via e-mail as well as posted on our internal intranet, The Pulse.

- **Department and Supervisor Meetings**

Departments and units meet regularly to communicate goals, objectives and to discuss workplace issues of interest to employees. Employees should check with their supervisor to obtain a meeting schedule. Your supervisor should be your primary source of information whenever you are not clear or concerned about a situation.

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## Welcome Notes

**Welcome from  
Matthew Foster, MD, MMM  
President/Chief Executive Officer**

Dear Team Valley,

Welcome and thank you for choosing Valley Regional. We know you have a broad choice of healthcare providers to work for in the Upper Valley and are honored you chose us. Our goal is to provide the best possible work environment.

We take the word “team” very seriously here at VRH. It takes everyone working in harmony to ensure we provide the right care, in the right place, at the right time, every time.

Remember that our advantage is that we are a small hospital and we aim to provide exceptional customer service.

As such, it is critically important that every member of our team make every effort to ensure our patients, and their families, have the best possible experience. A simple yet challenging strategy that only works if we all pull together: ***We create value by providing exceptional service.***

Welcome aboard. I look forward to working with you!

**Welcome from  
Tim McNulty, MBA;  
Senior Director of Human Resources**

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of our staff, I welcome you to Valley Regional Hospital (VRH). We are excited about your choosing to pursue your career path with us.

We believe that each employee contributes directly to VRH’s growth and success, and we hope you will take pride in being a member of our Valley Team.

This handbook was developed to describe some of the expectations we have for employment as well as outlines the policies, programs, and benefits available to eligible employees.

Employees should familiarize themselves with the content of the handbook as soon as possible, for it will answer many questions about our organization and about being employed with us.

We hope that your experience with VRH will be an enjoyable and rewarding one as we work to serve our community together!

# **Valley Regional Hospital**

## **Our Mission**

Improve community health, patient  
experience and value

## **Our Vision**

Partner with the community to optimize  
health by ensuring access to high value  
healthcare

## **Core Values (CARES)**

Compassion, Accountability, Respect,  
Excellence, Service

## **WE CARE**

VRH cares about our community, patients and employees.  
We continue to develop a culture where integrity, excellence, accountability, and compassion are the guiding principles of the environment in which we work.

## **Values**

Employees of Valley Regional Healthcare (VRH) are expected to accept certain responsibilities, adhere to accepted business and professional principles in manners of personal conduct, and exhibit a high degree of personal and professional integrity at all times. This responsibility not only involves sincere respect for the rights and feelings of others, but also requires employees refrain from any behavior that might be harmful to the employee, co-workers, and/or the VRH organization.

## **APPEARANCE STANDARD**

VRH wants to ensure employees dress in a way that promotes a professional image and establishes respect for our patients, customers, and visitors. Therefore, employees are expected to exhibit good judgement in selecting work attire, as outlined below.

An important contributing factor to the success of VRH is our professional image and the appearance of its employees. A pleasant, professional, and neat impression is required to develop pride and confidence in our hospital and all employees contributing to VRH care.

All Valley Regional Hospital leaders will be responsible for the application and enforcement of this policy within their respective departments, as well as across the organization. Human Resources will be responsible for the interpretation of the application of this policy.

### **Guidelines:**

1. A clean, neat professional appearance is required of all employees. The requirements of the job are the main criteria used by the department to establish dress standards. All aspects of the dress code are applicable if an employee is performing any service in any work area of our campus. The wearing of ANY denim jeans, shorts, miniskirts, , tee shirts with large insignia or inappropriate sayings, pull-over sweatshirts, spandex/lycra type pants/leggings, cargo pants or cargo type capris, transparent or revealing clothing is not permitted. Hoods of any kind, on clothing or jackets, are not permitted. Hats of any kind are not permitted.
2. Employees who may come in on a day where they do not perform their regular duties or represent VRH in any business transactions but are paid to attend trainings, staff meetings, orientations, or competency days will dress in clean, neat, and conservative but casual clothing.
3. Name tags must be worn at all times during your work day or any time representing VRH; including trainings, orientations, and/or general town hall meetings.
4. If employees report to work improperly dressed or groomed, the Department leader or designee will take appropriate action, which may include instructing the employees to return



home, to address the issue. Employees will not be compensated during such time away from work and disciplinary action will be implemented.

Valley Regional Hospital dress code includes but is not limited to the following standards:

#### Hair

- Hair must be secured in a fashion that does not interfere with patient care, work function or safety. Culinary staff members are required to wear hair nets.
- Beards, mustaches, and sideburns must be neat, trimmed, and well groomed.
- Extreme hairstyles, those that distract from the professional culture are not permitted.

#### Jewelry

- Jewelry should be professional in appearance. If jewelry is worn it should not present any safety/risk hazard.
- Body piercings that distract from the professional culture are not permitted.
- Jewelry should not come in contact with patients, the work area or be such that it may cause a safety issue.

#### Cosmetics

- Make-up, if worn, should be worn in moderation.
- Fragrances can be worn if lightly applied due to sensitivity and allergies of internal and external customers. Perfume and/or scented lotion is not permitted in patient care areas due to the possibility of triggering a patient's severe allergies and/or asthma.
- Heavy scent of tobacco, food, or body odor may be offensive and is not permitted.

#### Fingernails

- Artificial nails are not allowed when providing patient care.
- Artificial Fingernails: nails or extenders that are attached to native nails have been shown to harbor bacteria and yeasts leading to hospital-acquired infections for patients. Examples of artificial nails include, but are not limited to, extenders, bonding, acrylic tips, appliques, wrapping (i.e. silk), tapes, inlays or jewelry (glued or pierced).
- Natural fingernails should be short and well-kept and no longer than ¼" in length over the tip of the finger.

#### Footwear

- Footwear must be clean, in good repair and appropriate for the work duties and responsibilities performed, meeting the safety needs of the environment.
- Flip flops, and/or slippers are not permitted. Open toed shoes of any kind are not allowed in clinical or other patient care areas or to be worn by clinical staff, environmental services, plant operations, or culinary services staff.
- Footwear may be worn without socks or hose, unless specified in this document under a specific department heading.

- Footwear selection must be determined by safety, comfort, uniform expectations and business appearance.

#### Other

- Tattoos in general are allowed with the following exceptions:
- Facial tattoos of any kind must be covered in full with flesh colored makeup.
- Vulgar, derogatory or discriminatory sayings or artwork must be covered at all times, either with clothing or flesh colored makeup.

#### Identification Badges

- All staff are required to wear VRH issued photo identification (ID) badges readily visible location while on duty.
- Taping over any information on the VRH issued photo ID is not permitted

#### Department Specific:

##### 5. Culinary

- Wear the approved uniform in a properly fitting size.
- Wear appropriate undergarments, including socks or hose.
- Wear a clean uniform daily. Replace soiled aprons as often as necessary.
- Wear the approved hair restraint when on duty.
- Long facial hair must be covered with a beard guard. Mustache and/or sideburns must be neatly trimmed.
- Wear closed-toe non-slip shoes.
- Jewelry should be limited to wedding rings, watches, or small earrings. Many pieces of jewelry collect soil and are potential safety hazards.

##### 6. Environmental Services/Facilities/Materials Management/Volunteers

- Wear the approved uniform in a properly fitting size
- Wear appropriate undergarments, including socks or hose
- Wear a clean uniform daily.

##### 7. Laboratory/Phlebotomy

- Wear the approved liquid impervious lab coats that cover to the wrist and below the knees; keeping coat buttoned at all times when processing specimens or running tests
- Wear only closed to shoes
- Wear the approved eye protection and/or face shield when performing procedures that may result in splashing or spilling
- When performing phlebotomy, wear scrubs or clean white lab coat
- Long hair must be secured behind the shoulders
- Approved gloves must be worn when drawing blood, processing specimens and/or working on instrumentation

##### 8. Patient Care Areas:

Staffing assigned to work in patient care areas (inpatient and outpatient) will subscribe to the following professional standards. Hoods of any kind, on clothing or jackets, are not permitted.

Scrubs or white uniforms, as directed by the department head, are required. Attire must be neat and clean, fit appropriately, and be free of stains and odor.

## 9. Operating Room

All persons entering restricted and semi-restricted areas of Operation Room must be dressed in surgical attire intended for use in that area only. Logoed scrubs from any other facility are not permitted. In addition, the below requirements must be followed:

- SCRUBS:

- a. Use freshly laundered scrubs on a daily basis or change if soiled or wet.
- b. Shirts need to be tucked into pants.
- c. Discard into laundry at the end of the day or when changing.
- d. Scrubs need to be changed if going outside of the building, even with a lab coat.

- COVER JACKETS:

- a. Are worn when in OR Hallway, Or Suites, and Central Sterile
- b. Hooks are provided at the scrub sinks to hang cover jackets when scrubbed for a case leaving them easily accessible for after the case is done.
- c. Discard in laundry at end of the day. Do not save them for the next day.

- HATS:

- a. Bouffant hats or internally laundered scrub hats must be worn within the restricted and semi-restricted areas.
- b. These MUST cover all hair – including nape of neck and sideburns.

- MASKS/HOODS:

- a. These must be worn to cover beards, goatees, and/or mustaches when in the OR hallway, suites or central sterile.

- SHOES & SHOE COVERS:

- a. Shoes should be closed toe and back, without holes or perforations.
- b. Covers are worn if there is a possibility of contamination by body fluids.

- JEWELRY:

- a. Earrings and Necklaces must be covered with scrub attire or removed.
- b. Rings and watches need to be removed.

- FINGERNAILS:

- a. Fingernails should be kept short and in good condition.

- b. Nail polish may be worn unless it is cracked or chipped and can be on no longer than 4 days. Polish should then be removed.
- c. Hand washing and scrubbing techniques will not be altered due to nail polish
- d. Artificial Nails – Gel nails are NOT to be worn.

\*Pharmacy Techs: when stocking Pyxis machines, sterile coveralls, shoe covers and hair nets are required.

Employees who are required to wear uniforms will either be given the first five (5) minutes and the last five (5) minutes of the shift to change from street clothes to uniform, or will be required to report to work in uniform.

#### 10. Request for Exception

A staff member may request an exception from this policy for specific individual circumstances (e.g. religious practice, medical need) by submitting a written request to Human Resources, who will determine if the exception is approved.

### **WORK ENVIRONMENT**

Employees are required to keep their work environment clean and orderly. Before departing at the end of their workday, employees should lock all files and cabinets and clear all work materials from desk surfaces, especially materials of a sensitive or confidential nature.

### **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES (ADA)/AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT AMENDMENTS ACT (ADAAA)**

Title I of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires an employer to provide “reasonable accommodation” to qualified individuals with disabilities who are employees or applicants for employment –unless such accommodation would cause the employer an “undue hardship.” The law requires reasonable accommodations so that employees with disabilities can enjoy the “benefits and privileges of employment” equal to those enjoyed by similarly situated employees without disabilities.

It is the policy of VRH to comply with all federal and state laws concerning the employment of persons with disabilities and to act in accordance with regulations and guidance issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Furthermore, it is VRH’s policy not to discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment. If an accommodation is needed, please follow the **REASONABLE ACCOMODATIONS** section of this handbook.

## REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

When an individual with a disability requests accommodation and can be reasonably accommodated without creating an undue hardship or causing a direct threat to workplace safety, the requesting individual will be given the same consideration for employment as any other applicant. Applicants who pose a direct threat to the health, safety and well-being of themselves or others in the workplace when the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation will not be hired.

Valley Regional Healthcare (VRH) will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of a job unless doing so causes a direct threat to these individuals or others in the workplace and the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation or if the accommodation creates an undue hardship to VRH. Contact Human Resources (HR) with any questions or requests for accommodation.

All employees are required to comply with the organization's safety standards. Current employees who pose a direct threat to the health or safety of themselves or other individuals in the workplace will be placed on leave until an organizational decision has been made in regard to the employee's immediate employment situation.

Individuals who are currently using illegal drugs are excluded from coverage under the organization's ADA policy.

The Human Resource (HR) department is responsible for implementing this policy, including the resolution of reasonable accommodation, safety/direct threat and undue hardship issues.

### ***Terms used in this policy***

As used in this ADA policy, the following terms have the indicated meaning:

- **Disability:** A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of the individual, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment.
- **Major life activities:** Term includes caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, living, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating and working.
- **Major bodily functions:** Term includes physical or mental impairment such as any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement or anatomical loss affecting one or more body systems, such as neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory (including speech organs), cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, immune, circulatory, hemic, lymphatic, skin and endocrine. Also covered are any mental or psychological disorders, such as intellectual disability (formerly termed "mental retardation"), organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness and specific learning disabilities.
- **Substantially limiting:** In accordance with the ADAAA final regulations, the determination of whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity requires an individualized

assessment, and an impairment that is episodic or in remission may also meet the definition of disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active. Some examples of these types of impairments may include epilepsy, hypertension, asthma, diabetes, major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia. An impairment, such as cancer that is in remission but that may possibly return in a substantially limiting form, is also considered a disability under EEOC final ADAAA regulations.

- Direct threat: A significant risk to the health, safety or well-being of individuals with disabilities or others when this risk cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation.
- Qualified individual: An individual who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the employment position that such individual holds or desires.
- Reasonable accommodation: Includes any changes to the work environment and may include making existing facilities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, job restructuring, part-time or modified work schedules, telecommuting, reassignment to a vacant position, acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, appropriate adjustment or modifications or examinations, training materials or policies, the provision of qualified readers or interpreters, and other similar accommodations for individuals with disabilities.
- Undue hardship: An action requiring significant difficulty or expense by the employer. In determining whether an accommodation would impose an undue hardship on a covered entity, factors to be considered include:
  - The nature and cost of the accommodation.
  - The overall financial resources of the facility or facilities involved in the provision of the reasonable accommodation, the number of persons employed at such facility, the effect on expenses and resources, or the impact of such accommodation on the operation of the facility.
  - The overall financial resources of the employer; the size, number, type and location of facilities.
  - The type of operations of the organization, including the composition, structure and function of the workforce; administrative or fiscal relationship of the particular facility involved in making the accommodation to the employer.
- Essential functions of the job: Term refers to those job activities that are determined by the employer to be essential or core to performing the job; these functions cannot be modified.

The examples provided in the above terms are not meant to be all-inclusive and should not be construed as such. They are not the only conditions that are considered to be disabilities, impairments or reasonable accommodations covered by the ADA/ADAAA policy.

## **ANTI-DISCRIMINATION**

VRH embraces and encourages diversity and therefore, seeks to comply with all anti-discrimination laws, regulations, and executive orders. It is the policy of VRH not to discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, gender identity and expression, familial or

parental status, genetic information, veteran status, or any other legally protected classification. It is also the policy of VRH not to discriminate against those who have an association with a member of a protected class.

## **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

VRH, in accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex age, or disability. As such, VRH provides equal employment opportunity to all employees and applicants without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, gender identity and expression, familial or parental status, genetic information, veteran status, or any other legally protected classification. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment. Any incident or situation that you believe involves illegal discrimination should be brought to the immediate attention of your supervisor, director, senior leader and/or Human Resource Department of VRH.

## **WORKFORCE DIVERSITY**

VRH is committed to ensuring that the value of diversity is demonstrated in everything that we do for our patients, families, visitors, customers, the broader community, employees, and all those individuals, groups and organizations that help us to achieve our mission. VRH is committed to ensuring that patient care, service, delivery, and the healing environment is designed in a way that respects the individuality of patients, visitors, and employees.

## **COMPLIANCE**

VRH is committed to following all applicable laws and regulations. In particular, we are committed to compliance with those laws and regulations that address health care fraud, waste, and abuse and the proper billing of Medicare, Medicaid, and other government funded health care programs, as well as other payers (insurance companies or self-pay patients). Examples of such laws include:

The Federal False Claims Act This law prohibits a person from knowingly filing a false or fraudulent claim for payment or knowingly using a false statement or representation in connection with filing a claim seeking reimbursement from Medicare, Medicaid, or other federally funded programs. A person acts "knowingly" if the person has actual knowledge of the falsity of the information in the claim, acts in deliberate ignorance of the truth or falsity of the information in the claim, or acts in reckless disregard of the truth or falsity of the information in the claim. Examples of potential violations of the False Claims Act include: billing for services not performed, falsifying, backdating, or altering entries in the medical record to obtain higher reimbursement and billing for services provided under an illegal contract (involving bribes or kickbacks).

The New Hampshire False Claims Act. This law allows whistleblowers to file "qui tam" lawsuits if

they know of violations of that state law. The New Hampshire False Claims Act imposes liability on persons who knowingly present false or fraudulent claims for payment to the state, misappropriate state property, or deceptively avoid binding obligations to pay the state, among other violations.

### **How You Can Help**

VRH relies heavily on you, our employees, to identify potential compliance problems and ask questions regarding our policy and practice for compliance with health care fraud and abuse laws. You should also be aware that we have a Compliance Program and various policies and procedures in place to detect and prevent fraud, waste, and abuse, and to protect those who report suspected incidences of fraud, waste, and abuse; which can be located on VRH's intranet.

To report suspected instances of fraud, waste, or abuse or to ask questions about a policy or procedure with regards to compliance, you may contact your supervisor or VRH's Corporate Compliance Confidential Hotline (603) 542-3462.

### **HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT (HIPAA) and CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, as supplemented by the HITECH Act of 2009 (collectively, HIPAA) are federal laws that apply to health plans, health care providers, and health care clearinghouses. The HIPAA legislation is complex and has many components. The three areas of legislation that are the major focus for VRH include:

- Privacy – provides rules in regard to how an individual's health information may be used and disclosed
- Transaction and Code Sets – requires the use of standard transaction formats and code sets when an individual's financial health information is transmitted electronically
- Security – requires specific security measures to be in place to protect an individual's health information that is sent or stored electronically

Employees will be asked to sign a statement of confidentiality at the time of employment and periodically throughout their term of employment to acknowledge their awareness of, and reaffirm their commitment to this policy.

Violations of HIPAA are extremely serious and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination; please see VRH **Sanction Policy**, located on the Pulse, for violation levels and associated disciplinary action.

VRH will maintain the confidentiality of "protected health information" ("PHI" as defined by HIPAA) and other information that is deemed to be confidential by other laws. This information may include, but is not limited to, information on patients, employees, students, other employees, donors, research, and financial and business operations. Such information is made confidential



by law (such as PHI under HIPAA) or by VRH policies. Confidential information may be information in any form: e.g., written, electronic, oral, overheard, or observed. Access to all information is granted on a “need to know basis.” A “need to know” is defined as information that is required in order to do your job.

During your daily work, you may be exposed to information that is considered strictly confidential. This information should not be discussed with anybody, except as necessary to do your job, including: other patients, co-workers, other families, your family, and friends. You must be alert to others overhearing your professional discussions regarding a patient’s condition or an employee’s behavior/performance. Any inquiries from the media concerning a patient should be referred to the Office of the CEO during normal working hours and to the Administrator On-Call at all other times. Disclosure of confidential information is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

All business records provided to you or in your possession must be returned to VRH upon termination of your employment.

## **OUR EXPECTATIONS**

In this section, you will find what VRH's expectations are in order to provide a safe and productive work environment.

### **COMPUTER, ELECTRONIC MAIL, TELEPHONE AND PERSONAL BUSINESS**

All electronic and telephonic communication systems and all communications and information transmitted by, received from, or stored in these systems are the property of VRH, and as such are to be used solely for job-related purposes. The use of any software and/or business equipment for private purposes, including, but not limited to, facsimiles, computers, pagers, and copy machines is strictly prohibited. VRH reserves the right, at its discretion, to review any employee's files or electronic communications to the extent necessary to ensure all electronic media and services are used in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations as well as Organization policies. Employees should structure all electronic communication with recognition of the fact that the content could be monitored, and that any electronic communication could be forwarded, intercepted, printed or stored by others.

All personal mail must be directed to your home. Personal business activities are not to be carried on during working hours.

Further, employees are not permitted to use a code, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication unless authorized to do so or unless they have received prior clearance from an authorized VRH representative. All pass codes are the property of VRH. No employee may use a pass code that has not been issued to that employee or that is unknown to VRH. Employees who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

To ensure that the use of any electronic and telephonic communications systems and business equipment are consistent with VRH legitimate business interests, authorized representatives of VRH may monitor the use of and/or audit such equipment from time to time.

Finally, some VRH employees may be provided with access to the World Wide Web portion of the Internet through the company's and/or personal computers in order to enhance their ability to perform their jobs. Employees should access the Internet for legitimate business purposes only. Moreover, VRH employees are prohibited from accessing adult-focused and/or obscene material from the World Wide Web.

Employees found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or contracts as well as possible criminal or civil penalties.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA – ACCEPTABLE USE**

At VRH, we understand that social media can be a fun and rewarding way to share your life and opinions with family, friends and co-workers around the world. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. To assist you in making responsible decisions about your use of social media, we have established these guidelines for appropriate use of social media.

**Guidelines:**

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 VRH, as well as any other form of electronic communication.

Each employee is 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 VRH or VRH's legitimate business interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**Know and follow the rules:**

Carefully read these guidelines, the **Ethics Policy**, and the **Anti-Harassment Policy**, 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.

**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 VRH, fellow associates, members, customers, suppliers, people working on behalf of VRH or competitors.

**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 Supervisor or consistent with the Company Equipment Policy. Do not use your VRH email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use, unless specifically authorized by VRH senior leadership.

**Retaliation is prohibited:**

VRH prohibits taking negative action against any associate for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any associate who retaliates against another associate for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

A conflict of interest is a situation whereby an employee's outside activities could negatively affect VRH. Employees should avoid engaging in any outside activity or financial interest that would create a conflict with the performance of their work duties. Employees should not benefit from activities that would improperly influence the conduct of their VRH duties. Employees should not knowingly use VRH property, funds, position or power for personal or political gain. VRH may ask employees to sign a conflict of interest statement depending on the position held in the organization.

## **SOLICITATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE**

In the interest of maintaining a professional business environment and preventing interference with work and inconvenience to others, employees may not distribute literature or printed materials of any kind, sell merchandise, solicit financial contributions, or solicit for any other cause during working time or in work areas. Off-duty employees may not solicit on-duty employees for any cause or distribute literature of any kind to them. VRH provides an employee bulletin board for the posting of general information. All materials must be approved by Human Resources in advance of posting. Material which is posted without such approval may be removed.

Non-employees are strictly prohibited from distributing material or soliciting employees on VRH premises at any time. Sales representatives and/or vendors are required to arrange sales visits in advance with appropriate department head. All vendors of VRH must follow the following requirements:

- Must obtain a vendor pass upon entering VRH premises.
- Each contractor/vendor/sales representative, before bringing in a chemical product, shall disseminate information concerning chemical hazards which includes a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). The MSDS is to be kept on file in the department for which the chemical is located as well as provided to the leader of the Facilities department.
- No equipment may be brought onto VRH property for trial or demonstration without a "No Charge" purchase order and Buyer's arrangement for Clinical testing.

## **SMOKING**

VRH is committed to providing a healthy, productive and safe environment for their patients, employees and visitors. Because of this commitment to health, VRH is a smoke-free work environment. Smoking is prohibited on the premises owned or leased by VRH. This includes but is not limited to: office spaces, laboratories, storage spaces, loading docks, corridors, dining areas, restrooms, common areas, entrances, and parking lots. Employees observed smoking on or in VRH owned and/or leased premises are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. VRH and the healthcare plans offered to employees support smoking cessation. Please contact Human Resources for more information regarding smoking cessation programs.

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

The use, possession, sale or distribution of non-medically prescribed controlled substances including alcohol, on VRH premises (including parking lots and recreation areas) or in any work environment (including patient premises) during work hours or meal breaks is prohibited. VRH will not permit any employee to report to work or perform their duties after having ingested illegal drugs, or while under the influence of alcohol. The presence of any detectable amount of any illegal drug/substance in an employee's system while performing VRH business or in a VRH facility is strictly prohibited.

In addition, VRH does not permit employees to report to work or perform their duties while under the influence of drugs that adversely affect their ability to safely perform essential job functions. The taking of any medication that causes drowsiness or otherwise affects job safety or performance must be made known to your supervisor to determine whether you may continue working while taking the medication. Any employee who violates this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Employees currently taking a medication prescribed by their own physician(s) must carry it in the container labeled by a licensed pharmacist. Finally, sharing of prescribed medication with anyone, including but not limited to peers, patients and families is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

See **Substance Abuse** policy, located on the Pulse, for further information and *Rules of Conduct*.

## **ATTENDANCE**

VRH provides opportunities for the employee and Supervisor to jointly manage attendance to meet VRH's operational needs. Work schedules should be established and maintained to assure quality patient care, the health of the employee, and the safe and efficient operations of the organization.

It is the responsibility of all employees to meet standards of attendance. Chronic, habitual, and/or excessive lateness or absenteeism, as determined by VRH, will not be tolerated. Supervisors schedule employees to work in order to meet quality and operational requirements. Your failure to report for work on time or not to report at all affects VRH's ability to provide patient services and places an undue burden on those who report for work as scheduled. It is, therefore, essential that you report to work on time at the start of your shift and when returning from all breaks in accordance with your work schedule.

Lateness, excessive absenteeism, and failure to follow call-in, break and lunch time procedures, are cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination. Your lateness and absenteeism record may be a significant factor in evaluating you for transfers and promotion requests, as well as for merit pay, when applicable.

VRH expects employees to be present and ready to work for all scheduled work shifts, to report to work on time, and to remain at work until the end of their scheduled work shift. Such dependability is an essential function of all jobs at VRH.

### Occurrence

An occurrence is the absence from a scheduled shift or multiple consecutive shifts. For the purpose of this policy, six (6) incidents of lateness and/or early departure in a rolling six (6) month period equal one (1) occurrence. Refer to policy **Attendance and Dependability**, located on the organization's intranet (The Pulse) further information.

- **Reporting Absence or Tardiness** – Employees must notify their supervisor or designee if they will be late or absent from work, or need to leave work early, with as much notice as possible. In the event of an emergency or accident, it is permissible for someone to call on behalf of the employee.

An employee who fails to report their absence or tardiness from work or to request leaving early in advance is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

- **Tardiness** – Employees must be at their work location and ready to begin working at the scheduled start of their shift and to remain at their work location until the end of their scheduled shift, except for meal and rest periods or as authorized by their supervisor.
  - An employee who is tardy more than three (3) times in a rolling six-month period or more than six (6) times in a rolling 12-month period is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**Unplanned Absence** – An employee who has more than three (3) occurrences of unplanned absence in a rolling six-month period or more than six (6) occurrences in a rolling 12-month period is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

No Call/No Show – Two no-call no-shows will result in termination of employment, whether on consecutive days or separate events. An employee who is absent from work for two (2) consecutive workdays without notification is considered to have resigned voluntarily. An employee who is absent for three or more days is required to provide proof of the employee's illness or injury and/or confirmation of the employee's fitness to return to work.

### **PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE**

Every employee has the duty and responsibility to be aware of and abide by existing guidelines and policies. Employees also have the responsibility to perform his/her duties to the best of his/her ability and to the standards as set forth in his/her job description or otherwise established.

VRH supports the use of progressive discipline to address issues such as poor work performance or misconduct. Our progressive discipline policy is designed to provide a fair and equitable process to improve and prevent a reoccurrence of undesirable behavior and/or performance issues. Our progressive discipline policy has been designed consistent with our organizational values, Human Resources best practices, and employment law.

However, VRH reserves the right to combine or skip steps in this process depending on the facts of each situation and the nature of the offense. The level of disciplinary intervention may also vary. Some of the factors that will be considered are whether the offense is repeated despite coaching, counseling, performance improvement plan (PIP), and/or training; the employee's work

record; and the impact the conduct and performance issues have on our organization. The Sr. Director of Human Resources will review all discipline recommendations. The CEO, Sr. Director of Human Resources, and when appropriate Senior Management will review all discharge decisions and discharge recommendations.

The following are examples of violations of conduct, which may result in disciplinary action up to, and including termination. This list is not all-inclusive and disciplinary measures will be invoked at the discretion of the Organization. The following is merely intended to provide examples of prohibited conduct:

- Failure or refusal to properly and competently perform assigned work
- Abuse of earned time, absenteeism or lateness
- Violation of any Organization Human Resources policy
- Unauthorized absence from work of one (1) or more days
- Use, manufacture, sale or possession of unlawful drugs or alcohol, or being under the influence of either while on Organization property
- Sexual harassment and/or intimidation
- Fighting or the use of profane, insulting, abusive or threatening language on Organization premises
- Gambling on VRH's property
- Malicious misuse, destruction, damage or theft of any VRH's property or the property of others
- Smoking in prohibited areas
- Carrying weapons on VRH property
- Soliciting or accepting tips or other gratuities from patients or vendors
- Purposely attempting to circumvent VRH's policy, practice, processes or regulations
- Threats or intimidation by any employee, including supervisors, toward any other employee
- Unauthorized use or dissemination of confidential information
- Failure to comply with the VRH's waste management policy, particularly as it applies to the responsibilities for proper waste disposal practices
- Failure to comply with the VRH's safety rules
- Falsification, misrepresentation or omission from VRH records, including, but not limited to, employment records, certification or licensure records, applications, time submissions, patient care records, etc.
- Falsification or misuse of employment or any other VRH policy or regulation
- Other conduct which violates any other VRH policy or regulation or interferes with the Organization's operation or provision of proper, effective and safe patient care
- Failure or refusal to follow a supervisor's instructions
- Sleeping on duty
- Failure to follow all rules, regulations and laws of state, federal, and local Healthcare authorities
- Failure to comply with the VRH's Compliance Policies and Procedures
- Failure to report conduct known to violate VRH's policies

Any and all discipline taken in a past or current position held at VRH may be relevant to future employment, including internal departmental transfer, decisions.

## **Discipline Process**

The discipline process, including the right to discharge employees, is an important management tool seriously affecting an employee's job.

As a matter of policy, VRH will consider the nature and gravity of the offense or deficiency and the past record of the employee with the Organization, and any other factors deemed relevant by the Organization in their sole discretion prior to taking corrective action on any employee.

A Discipline Form, or other approved written document, will be completed for all formal warnings, suspensions and discharges. The discipline documents are to be signed by both supervisor and employee, and sent to the Sr. Director of Human Resources for review and placement in the employee's personnel file. It is the right of the employee not to sign the document; however, the refusal to sign will be noted on form and witnessed by a third party.

## **Schedule of Action**

When any employee violates rules or regulations or renders unsatisfactory work, the following schedule of actions may be followed. However, this schedule of actions is intended to be a guide only and therefore is not an assurance of any particular treatment in any situation. Each situation is assessed on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of VRH.

### *Coaching Session*

When an initial infraction occurs which does not immediately create a serious situation, a Department Director or Supervisor may have a coaching session with the employee. The coaching session is intended to be informative and instructive and not focus on disciplinary action. A summary of the coaching should be documented as part of supervisory notes. Let the employee know what they need to improve and that failure to improve will result in further disciplinary action. A copy of the coaching session should be sent to Human Resources to file in the employee's personnel file.

### *Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)*

As part of ensuring success for a staff member, a supervisor may utilize a PIP prior to initiating a verbal/written warning. A PIP, as with a coaching session, is geared toward being informative and instructive and is a tool to document a plan of improvement. The PIP has a specific timeline and measurable associated with the document to clearly articulate areas in need of improvement within a specific timeframe as well as to ensure the staff member has access to the tools needed to succeed in their job.

### *Written Warnings (Verbal)*

Written warnings may be issued when an employee violates Organization rules or regulations, or renders unsatisfactory work. The written warning serves notice to the employee that a continuation of the behavior may result in further disciplinary action. A written warning may also include a plan for improvement. A written warning can be given without a coaching session if the infraction warrants that action. All warnings must be reviewed by the Sr. Director of Human Resources prior to issuing to an employee. The use of the Discipline Form is required.



### Suspension

Suspension of an employee can be used in cases of serious violations of rules of conduct or in other appropriate situations. An employee may be temporarily relieved of their duties, or suspended, for a period of one (1) to five (5) days, generally without pay by their Department Director or Supervisor, and instructed to leave the premises pending an investigation of the circumstances by the Sr. Director of Human Resources. If additional time is necessary to accumulate the facts and render a decision, the Department Director or Supervisor will instruct the employee to report back to the Organization at an appointed time for final disposition. The department Director or Supervisor and the Senior Manager in conjunction with the Sr. Director of Human Resources will determine the length of the suspension.

The Sr. Director of Human Resources along with your supervisor will outline the facts of the situation and the action taken on the Discipline Form. The Discipline Form must be signed by the supervisor, Sr. Director of Human Resources and may be signed by the employee, if he or she agrees to do so. If the employee refuses to sign, a refusal to sign note will be placed on their signature line, witnessed by a third party. A copy of the form will be distributed to the employee and the Sr. Director of Human Resources to be filed in the employee's personnel file.

### Final Written Warning

Final written warning may be issued upon continued violation of VRH policies, rules of conduct or continued performance of unsatisfactory work. Any final written warning will likely include a timetable for improvement and to state the consequences of continued inappropriate action. The Sr. Director of Human Resources along with your supervisor will outline the facts of the situation and the action taken on the Discipline Form. The Discipline Form must be signed by the supervisor, Sr. Director of Human Resources and may be signed by the employee, if he or she agrees to do so. If the employee refuses to sign, a refusal to sign note will be placed on their signature line, witnessed by a third party. A copy of the form will be distributed to the employee and the Sr. Director of Human Resources to be filed in the employee's personnel file.

A final warning can be given without any previous disciplinary steps (e.g., previous coaching or written warnings) if the infraction or situation warrants that action.

### Termination

Terminations can occur if an infraction or performance warrants. If it is found that a staff member does not meet the requirements of their job or a staff member acts in an egregious way placing others or the organization at risk, termination of employment may be necessary. In this case, supervisors must have prior approval from the Sr. Director of Human Resources and the CEO.

## GENERAL EMPLOYMENT

This section discusses general employment information. All employees, regardless of employment status, are governed by an at-will relationship which means that your employment is not for any specific time and may be terminated at will by you or VRH with or without cause and with or without prior notice

## RECRUITMENT

Valley Regional Healthcare (VRH) is committed to employing, in its best judgment, the most qualified candidates for approved organizational positions. VRH believes in promoting from within when possible, and engaging in effective recruitment and selection practices in compliance with all applicable employment laws. It is the policy of VRH to provide equal employment opportunity for employment to all applicants and employees.

To begin the recruitment process the appropriate authorization is required to initiate any action for an open position, including any recruitment efforts, advertising, interviewing and offers of employment.

### Recruitment Process

- The hiring supervisor/manager submits an electronic requisition to the senior leader of their department to start the approval process.
- Once approved, the Human Resource department will contact the hiring supervisor to determine the most cost-effective methods of recruitment and selection. Only the Senior Director of Human Resources, or their approved HR representative, is authorized to approve expenditures relating to the recruitment of potential employees.
- Potential recruitment sources include:
  - VRH.org website.
  - Internet advertising.
  - Internet sourcing.
  - Retained agency search.
  - Temporary agency.
  - Employee referral.
- The HR department will submit resumes of qualified candidates to the hiring supervisor/manager. The hiring manager will identify the most appropriate candidates for interviewing.
- The hiring supervisor/manager will conduct telephone pre-screens and face-to-face interviews of identified candidates.

### Selection Process

This process applies for external candidates only:

- Hiring managers are responsible for conducting timely, effective interviews of qualified candidates for open positions. The Human Resources department is available to advise hiring managers on interview techniques and final candidate selection.
- Upon the selection of the final candidate, Human Resources department will develop an appropriate offer of employment (including position title confirmation, compensation)

- Only the Human Resources department will extend the verbal offer of employment to the candidate selected. Once verbal offer is accepted, the Human Resources department will prepare a written offer of employment for the candidate.
- The Human Resources department will conduct reference checks and background checks on the selected final candidate.
- Upon receipt of an offer letter signed by the candidate, the Human Resources department will close out the requisition.

This process applies to internal candidates only. To be considered for an open position, you must:

1. Have worked for VRH for at least 6 months in your current position.
2. Have received a rating no lower than “Target” on your most recent performance review and must not currently be on a performance improvement plan or have disciplinary action within the last 12 months.
3. Meet the minimum requirements for the job and be able to perform the essential functions of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation.
4. Submit an application, via Human Resource’s applicant website.

All internal applicants will receive notice from the hiring manager as to whether they will be interviewed for the position. If hired for the position, the current and the new supervisor will work together to determine an appropriate transfer date.

### **Responsibility**

The Human Resources department is responsible for the overall management of the recruitment and selection processes, including employment-related agency relationships, contract negotiations and maintenance, and the processing of new requisitions, and offers of employment.

VRH reserves the right to post open positions externally or internally.

## **EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES**

Throughout this Handbook, you will see references to several employee categories with which you should become familiar. They are as follows:

### **Exempt/Non-Exempt**

Positions are determined to be Exempt or Non-Exempt based upon job responsibility, and in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Exempt: Those employees excluded from the overtime provisions of the FLSA.

Non-Exempt: Those positions eligible for overtime pay if more than 40 hours are worked in a work week.

## **Employment Status/Classification**

### Regular – Full time

A regular scheduled full time employee is one who is employed on a regular basis on a schedule of 30-40 hours a week. Regular full-time employees are fully eligible for all benefits.

### Regular – Part time

Employees scheduled for 20-29 hours per week are eligible for employee benefits on a pro-rated basis based on their scheduled hours; less than 20 hours per week are ineligible for benefits.

### Per Diem

Employees who have no regular scheduled hours and are called in on an “as needed” basis.

### Temporary, Seasonal, Interim – Full time

A temporary full-time employee is one who is employed on a schedule for thirty to forty (30-40) hours a week for a defined and limited period of time and is so informed at the time of hire.

### Temporary, Part time

A temporary part-time employee is one who is employed on a schedule of less than thirty (30) hours a week for a definite limited period of time and is so informed at the time of hire.

## **MEDICAL SCREENING**

As part of VRH employment process, an applicant is required to undergo a pre-employment health screening which minimally consists of a medical examination, urine drug screening, health questionnaire, flu vaccination, and tuberculosis test to qualify for employment. In addition, VRH requires submittal of immunization records for review by our Occupational Health Services. Any offer of employment that an applicant receives from VRH is contingent upon, among other items as outlined upon offer, satisfactory completion of this screening and testing. Additionally, VRH and Occupational Health Services will determine the applicant's ability to perform the essential functions for the position that has been offered, with or without reasonable accommodations.

As a condition of continued employment, employees are required to have, and show proof of, a yearly flu vaccination.

## **BACKGROUND AND REFERENCE CHECKS**

To ensure that individuals who join VRH are well qualified and to ensure that VRH maintains a safe and productive work environment, it is our policy to conduct pre-employment background checks on all applicants who accept an offer of employment. Background checks may include verification of any information on the applicant's resume or application form as well as a State of

New Hampshire Criminal Records check; although a criminal conviction does not automatically bar an applicant from employment.

All offers of employment, whether regular full-time, regular part-time, Per Diem, temporary, volunteer, or contracted are conditioned on the receipt of a background check report that is acceptable to VRH. All background checks are conducted in conformity with the Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and State and Federal privacy and antidiscrimination laws. Reports are kept confidential and are only viewed by individuals involved in the hiring process.

If information obtained in a background check would lead VRH to deny employment, a copy of the report will be provided to the applicant, and the applicant will have the opportunity to dispute the report's accuracy.

Additional checks such as a driving record or credit report may be made on applicants for particular job categories if appropriate and job related.

VRH requires all active employees complete and submit to Human Resources an **Annual Statement of Criminal Background Check**, per VRH policy located on the Pulse. In addition, VRH reserves the right to conduct a background check for current employees to determine eligibility for promotion or reassignment in the same manner as described above.

## **PERSONNEL RECORDS**

It is crucial that your personal information be kept up-to-date. This ensures what we can communicate with your family members in an emergency, and that your address, phone number, direct deposit, and tax information are kept current. Each employee is responsible for advising the Human Resources Department of status changes pertinent to their record.

For family status changes affecting your benefits please contact the Human Resources Department to complete the appropriate forms.

All employee information is confidential and will not be released without your permission or as required by law. Only the Human Resources Department or its official designee is authorized to provide employee information and employment verification. Verification of name, employment dates, most recent salary, and title will be released, upon request, to banks, credit bureaus, and other financial establishments when written approval from the individual employee is received. Under no circumstances will this information be given without prior written approval from the employee.

Requests from outside of VRH for letters of recommendations, on behalf of VRH, regarding any employee, past or present, are to be referred to Human Resources for response. In the circumstance of such a request, VRH will release what is allowable by governing law and/or best practice. Information that may be released includes but is not limited to: employment status, title, work location, date of hire, date of termination, rehire eligibility.

Each employee is permitted to review their personnel record by appointment with Human Resources. Requests to reproduce information located in one's own personnel file must be made in writing and may cost an employee up to \$10 to cover the cost of the copies and registered mail/return receipt mailing.

### **LICENSURE, CERTIFICATION, REGISTRATION**

Employees in occupations that are regulated by the New Hampshire State Licensing Board, other boards or professional societies are required to present proof of licensure, certification, and/or registration before beginning work. Employees are responsible for renewing their licenses, certifications and/or registrations when necessary and ensuring that the license, certification and/or registration are kept current. Fees associated with this requirement are the sole responsibility of the employee, unless specifically referenced in one's individual contract of employment.

An employee who fails to present or maintain a valid license, certification, and/or registration will not be allowed to work and will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION**

The VRH Employee Orientation Program is designed to welcome new employees into the spirit and culture of the organization, to clearly establish performance expectations, and to set the stage for success. Please use this orientation program to familiarize yourself with VRH and our policies and benefits. We encourage you to ask questions you may have during this program so that you will understand all guidelines that affect and govern your employment relationship with us.

Departmental orientation, which includes orientation to specific job, duties, responsibilities, expectations, and departmental policies and procedures, is provided by your specific department.

Employees who are promoted or transferred are not required to attend the VRH Employee Orientation Program, but must receive orientation from the new department to promote a timely adjustment to the new job.

### **EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION**

Photo identification badges, provided by Human Resources, must be worn by all employees at all times. These badges not only identify VRH employees, but also help put our patients and visitors at ease. If you lose your badge see Human Resources immediately to report the lost badge and to obtain a new badge. No alternation to a VRH badge is allowed, this includes tape to cover names that have been printed.

### **ASSESSMENT PERIODS**

The purpose of the assessment period is to give supervisors the opportunity to evaluate an employee's competency to fulfill the duties of the employee's position. It also gives the employee an opportunity to evaluate the new position.

New employees and rehires will be on a 90-day assessment period starting on the first day worked. In the case of senior leadership hires and/or rehires, a six (6) month assessment period will be utilized to evaluate performance. The assessment period may be extended for an additional 60 days if more time is required to assess an employee's performance completely.

During the assessment period, benefit eligible employees accrue Earned Time Off (ETO), but are not eligible to use this time until completion of the assessment period. However, if the assessment period is extended, employees will be able to use their accrued time off.

If the employee's performance is unsatisfactory after the extension, progressive discipline up to and including termination may result.

## **PERFORMANCE REVIEWS**

All VRH employees will be evaluated at periodic intervals based on their job description and agreed upon goals, no less than annually. A performance appraisal is intended to document an employee's performance by providing a means of measuring an employee's effectiveness on the job, to ensure strategic alignment, identify areas where an employee is in need of training or improvement and to perpetuate a high level of motivation through feedback, while making full use of the employee's skills, expertise and abilities.

Performance reviews are used for the following purposes:

- To foster an effective working relationship between supervisor and employee.
- To help keep the employee advised of what is and will be expected and how well these expectations are being met.
- To relate pay to performance.
- To stimulate improved work performance and commitment.
- To provide a basis for addressing employee needs for growth and development.
- To provide a basis for coaching, mentoring, and/or corrective measures in cases of inadequate/unsatisfactory job performance.

Performance reviews are a continuing process between the supervisor and the employee. Supervisors should note and recognize exceptional performance promptly. Similarly, poor performance should be noted, and the employee should be informed appropriately.

While informal performance reviews should be given continuously throughout the year, formal performance reviews are required on the following occasions:

- During or at the completion of the 90-day assessment period.
- At annual review.

Employees are responsible for working with their supervisors on an ongoing basis to develop and maintain a clear performance plan defining various performance expectations and their relative priority. Refer to VRH's **Performance Management** policy, located on the Pulse, for specific guidelines.

## **EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES**

VRH permits the employment of qualified relatives of employees in certain circumstances. No employee may be in a position directly supervising a relative; which applies to all employment statuses/classifications.

## **TRANSFERS – PROMOTION, LATERAL, DEMOTION**

VRH encourages its employees to achieve their professional goals by seeking promotions or transfers within the organization. A current resume is needed along with the completion of an on-line application in order to be considered for any job posting.

To be eligible to apply to a posted position, an employee must be in their current role for at least six (6) months and have documented performance levels of “Target” or higher within the last year.

Although preference will be given to internal applicants, VRH may concurrently advertise, recruit and hire qualified persons in the appropriate labor market; as VRH is committed to hiring the most qualified person for the job.

### **Definitions:**

- A promotional transfer is one where an employee moves to a position that is in a higher pay grade than the one he/she is currently in.
- A lateral transfer is one where an employee moves to a position that is in the same pay grade as the one he/she is currently in.
- A demotion transfer is one where an employee moves to a position that is in a lower pay grade than the one he/she is currently in.

### **Transfer Application:**

The transfer application process is the same as the application process for external applicants. IF the internal applicant is chosen, the guidelines below apply.

1. Coordination of Transfer Date:
  - a. Human Resources will coordinate the date of transfer with the department supervisors/managers involved.
  - b. The employee should generally be released for transfer within 3 weeks.
  - c. The employee will be contacted by Human Resources and informed of his/her transfer date.
2. Establishment of Rate of Pay:
  - a. Human Resources will establish the rate of pay for the transferring employee after consultation with the department hiring supervisor/manager. Generally, an employee will receive an increase for a promotional transfer, no increase for a lateral transfer, and a decrease for a demotion transfer. Factors in establishing the rate include, but are not limited to, pay grades, employee's current rate of pay and amount of education and/or experience, and the pay rates of other employees in like jobs.



### 3. Transfer Documentation:

- a. Human Resources will complete an offer letter outlining the transfer; employees new title, new department, new supervisor/manager, new rate of pay, new schedule, start date, etc., as well as stating that they are under a new 90-day assessment period. Human Resources will provide this letter to the employee and obtain their signature along with any other documentation needed for the new role.

VRH reserves the right to transfer employees to different positions, different departments, or different shifts in order to meet patient and/or staffing needs or due to performance concerns.

## **SEPARATION**

An employee wishing to resign in good standing shall submit to their supervisor a resignation letter dated and signed stating the effective date of the resignation. Non-exempt, non-clinical, employees are expected to give at least two (2) weeks' notice. Non-exempt clinical and all Exempt employees are expected to give at least four (4) weeks' notice of resignation. Employees are expected to work during the notice period. For the purpose of this policy, Earned Time Off (ETO) days cannot be counted as work days and therefore cannot be used to supplement an employee's notice period. An employee who fails to comply with this requirement shall have such failure documented in their personnel file and may be considered ineligible for rehire.

- Employees that do not give appropriate notice, as outlined above, do not qualify for ETO pay out.
- Employees terminated for "cause" (cause is considered an act against another employee or the organization) will not receive ETO pay out.
- Failure to work, with the exception of a mutually agreed upon and documented accommodation, for a period of twelve (12) weeks will be considered "cause" to discharge the employee from VRH. Exceptions include, approved educational leaves and/or leaves which may be governed or affected by legal statutes, e.g., military leave, FMLA.

An employee who is terminated for disciplinary reasons may be ineligible for rehire. The supervisor is responsible for the documentation relating to disciplinary action and when necessary, termination, working in conjunction with the Senior Director of Human Resources and the department's senior leader. Any formal documentation is to be kept in the Human Resource department only, specifically the employee's personnel file. No formal documentation may be kept by a supervisor/manager, relating to formal discipline or termination.

## **EXIT INTERVIEW**

Exit interviews are an integral part of the employment process and therefore Human Resources will conduct exit interviews for employees who are resigning from VRH when the employee agrees. The Human Resources Department will make every attempt to reach out and schedule an exit interview with all staff departing from the organization.

## YOUR BENEFITS

VRH provides employees with a comprehensive, competitive and cost-effective benefit program. Each year you will receive a comprehensive review of your benefits with your annual re-enrollment information.

### EARNED TIME OFF (ETO)

VRH provides regular full-time and part-time employees with an earned time program to allow for paid time off from work for a variety of reasons, including holidays, vacations, illnesses, medical, and other personal appointments. The minimum unit of allowable time taken is one-half hour.

The hourly accrual of Earned Time for Valley Regional Healthcare employees is based upon an employee's status and length of service. The program is designed as follows for both full and part-time employees:

#### Hourly Accruals/Years of Service

	Yrs 0 to 4	Yrs 5 to 9	Yrs 10 to 14	Yrs 15 to 19	20+ Years
Earned Time (hourly)	.096250	.115500	.127000	.134625	.146250
Earned Time (salary)	.115500	.123100	.134700	.142400	.153875

#### Annual Hourly Accruals/Years of Service (based on full-time 40 hours per week/pro-rated for employees who work less.)

	Yrs 0 to 4	Yrs 5 to 9	Yrs 10 to 14	Yrs 15 to 19	20+ Years
Earned Time (hourly)	200	240	264	280	304
Earned Time (salary)	240	256	280	296	320

\*In your first year of employment the amount shown above is prorated based on your start date.

Regular Non- Exempt employees (less than 40 hours per week) earn time based on a prorated formula that calculates their Earned Time Off (ETO) within the calendar year in which they work.

The maximum amount of ETO any employee can accrue is 320 hours. In this case, ETO will cease to accrue until the total amount is less than 320 hours.

Every reasonable effort will be made to grant requests for time off. However, the employee's supervisor may approve, deny, or modify time off schedules according to the needs of the department. Requests for vacation are to be made in writing to your immediate supervisor no later than two weeks prior to the requested vacation period. During unpaid leaves ETO will not accrue. In addition, ETO used cannot count towards the calculation of overtime pay.

VRH also provides employees the opportunity to cash out up to a maximum of 20% of their annual ETO accrual. Cash out options are made available during benefit open enrollment periods.

Designated holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

For details on how to qualify for ETO payout, please see the section heading **SEPARATION**.

## **FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)**

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requires employers to provide up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for certain family and medical reasons in a rolling 12-month period. FMLA defines family as a spouse, son, daughter or parent. For military family leave, next of kin is considered. Granted leaves will run along with any other paid or unpaid leave (such as short-term disability, workers' compensation and/or ETO). Reinstatement will result in the return to current position or an equivalent position within the FMLA guidelines. Certification by a physician is required by this type of leave. If you have additional questions, contact the Human Resources Department or review the **FMLA** policy for further explanation.

### Eligibility:

All employees are eligible for FMLA if they have worked for VRH for at least 12 months and have been employed for at least 1,250 hours of service during the 12-month period immediately preceding the start of the FMLA leave; in accordance with ***The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) – 29 CFR Part 825***.

### Criteria for Granting Leave:

Leave will be granted for:

- the birth of a son or daughter, and to care for their newborn child;
- the placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care, and to care for the newly placed child;
- to care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent — but not a parent "in-law") with a serious health condition; and
- when the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition.

A "serious health condition" means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involved a period of incapacity requiring absence for more than three calendar days from work under the supervision of a health care provider. Additional FMLA details may be found in the regulations **29 CFR Part 825**.

### Length of Leave:

Length of leave can be broken down in three ways: block of time, intermittently, or reduced hours.

### Notification:

An employee, whenever possible, should give thirty (30) days' notice, if the leave is expected through notification to the Human Resources Department.

Employees needing intermittent/reduced schedule leave for foreseeable medical treatment must work with their employers to schedule the leave so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations, subject to the approval of the employee's health care provider. In such cases, VRH may transfer the employee temporarily to an alternative job with equivalent pay and benefits that accommodate recurring periods of leave better than the employee's regular job.

If an employee is unable to return to work at the end of the 12-week period, employment may be terminated.

### **MILITARY LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

VRH appreciates the dedication a staff member and/or their family member(s) have made to serve our country. Leaves of absence for military or reserve duty are granted to full-time regular and part-time regular employees. If you are called to active military duty or to Reserve or National Guard training, or if you volunteer, you should notify your supervisor and submit copies of your military orders to him/her as soon as is practicable. If you are a Reservist or a member of the National Guard, you will be granted time off for required military training.

VRH, in support of our Military, offer our service members reduced compensation. This commitment to reduced compensation is eligible to employees serving in the military that have completed a minimum of one full year of employment with our organization. Upon return to work from service to our country, the employee must furnish receipts or other records provided by the Federal Government showing compensation provided for service. Compensation earned during a staff member's period of service will be reduced by monies earned for their service to our country.

Allowable time away from work, when calculating reduced compensation rate, is in accordance with ***The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) – 29 CFR Part 825*** specifically referencing length of leave.

### **JURY DUTY/SUBPOENAED WITNESS**

Employees whose regular work schedules are 20 hours or more per week and who are absent from work because of jury duty/subpoenaed witness must furnish their supervisor with a copy of the subpoena, jury certificate, or court order before leave will be granted; which needs to be turned in to Human Resources.

Upon return to work, the employee must furnish receipts or other records provided by the court showing the amount received as juror's fees, travel expenses or other compensation provided by the court. Jury duty/subpoena pay will be based on the number of hours the employee would normally be scheduled to work on each day absent. Overtime will not be paid. Compensation earned during this period will be reduced by monies earned from the court.

### **BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

It is the policy of VRH to provide bereavement leave for all full-time and part-time employees in the event of a death in the immediate family. Immediate family is defined as a spouse and/or partner, child, stepchild, parent, foster parent, legal guardian, parent-in-law, step-parent, grandparent, grandchild, brother, sister, step-brother and/or step-sister. Full-time employees may receive up to three days of paid leave within a reasonable timeframe of the death. One day of paid leave will be granted for the death of relatives not listed above.

### **VOTING TIME**

All employees should be able to vote either before or after regularly assigned work hours. However, when this is not possible due to work schedules, employees will receive up to 2 hours of ETO during the work day to vote. Time off for voting should be reported and coded appropriately on timekeeping records. Supervisors are to be notified and must approve, in advance, your time to vote hour(s) if taken within your scheduled work day.

### **LACTATION/BREASTFEEDING**

For up to one year after a child's birth, any employee who is breastfeeding their child will be provided reasonable break times as needed to express breast milk for their baby. VRH has a designated area located in the hallway on the second floor for this purpose. A small refrigerator reserved for the specific storage of breast milk is available. Any breast milk stored in the refrigerator must be labeled with the name of the employee and the date of expressing the breast milk. Any nonconforming products stored in the refrigerator may be disposed of. Employees storing milk in the refrigerator assume all responsibilities for the safety of the milk and the risk of harm for any reason, including improper storage or refrigeration and tampering. Employees who work off-site or in other locations away from Valley Regional Hospital will be accommodated with a private area as necessary.

Breaks for more than 20 minutes in length will be unpaid, and the employee should indicate this break period on their time record.

### **SHORT TERM DISABILITY**

Short-term Disability (STD) benefits are designed to provide employees with a continuing source of income during short periods of non-occupational illness or injury. Regular full-time employees will automatically receive STD benefits at no charge effective the first day of the month following their date of hire, provided the employee has completed their benefit enrollment process. STD covers a percentage of an employee's base wage; however, an employee may opt to utilize ETO, if available, to cover the balance of the uncovered wage – up to 100% of the employee's regular bi-weekly pay.

Employees must contact Human Resources for an STD application, complete the application in its entirety (including receiving physician information) and submit the completed STD claim forms to Human Resources within 90 days of the onset of the disability. The review and approval process is done by the STD insurance carrier and is not determined by Human Resources or VRH.

If STD claim is approved, STD benefits replace a portion of your regular weekly earnings (with a weekly monetary cap) for a specified duration of disability, after an elimination period, as long as you are under a doctor's care and the STD claim is approved by the STD insurance carrier.

For more information on STD and/or how to supplement the STD pay with ETO or to obtain disability paperwork, please contact the Human Resources Department.

## **LONG TERM DISABILITY**

Regular full-time employees have the option to purchase Long-term Disability insurance (LTD). For new hires, coverage is effective following a elimination period and completion the benefit enrollment process.

If LTD claim is approved, LTD benefits replace a portion of your monthly earnings (with a monthly monetary cap) to age 65, as long as you are under a doctor's care and the benefits are approved through the LTD insurance carrier.

For more information and to obtain disability paperwork, please contact the Human Resources Department.

## **WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

Workers' compensation is an insurance plan that pays employees their compensation while disabled due to a work-related injury or illness. VRH covers all employees for Workers Compensation benefits in compliance with New Hampshire state law, as appropriate. An employee on workers' compensation will receive pay every week from VRH's Workers' Compensation provider, when/if the claim is approved. The first three (3) days of lost time (out of work due to a work-related illness or injury) are considered a "waiting period". Worker's Compensation benefits begin on the fourth day of missed work. An employee may elect to use any available ETO for the first three (3) days and will need to alert Human Resources and/or their supervisor of their election to do so.

FMLA will run concurrently with any leave associated with a workers' compensation injury or illness.

For work related injuries/illnesses please contact your supervisor to complete an incident report as well as a first report of injury form. The first report of injury form must be done within 24 hours of the injury or illness.

For specific information regarding Workers Compensation and VRH's Return to Work Program, see **Workers' Compensation Plan and Return to Work Program** policy on the Pulse.

## **MEDICAL PLANS**

All regular full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible to enroll in one of VRH's contributory medical plans. Spouses and/or partners can be covered only after written proof is received by Human Resources (within 5 days of enrollment) documenting their inability to gain insurance coverage from their place of business (due to not being offered). All dependent children up to the age of 26 can be enrolled on your medical plan. Once a child reaches the age of 26, the first day of the month following their 26<sup>th</sup> birthday, they will automatically be removed from the plan. Handicapped children may be covered beyond age 26 when specified.

VRH uses an online benefits enrollment system for all qualified staff to enroll in VRH benefit programs. New hires and newly eligible employees have 30 days from the date of hire/eligibility to log into the system and enroll in their benefits or the system will automatically waive all benefits on their behalf. Although your Human Resources team is always available to answer questions you may have regarding your benefits, it is up to each staff member to understand all aspects of the plans and coverages chosen each year.

Once you have made your annual enrollment selections you may not make changes until the following plan year. The exception to this, according to the Department of Labor, is when you have had a qualifying life event. A qualifying life event can be a marriage, a divorce, a birth or adoption of a child, or any time you or a dependent loses or gains coverage. With any qualifying life event, you have a maximum of 30 days from the event to complete a change to your coverage.

For more comprehensive information on specific medical plan benefits and enrollment process contact the Human Resources Department.

### **DENTAL PLANS**

VRH offers all regular full-time, regular part-time employees, and their dependents dental insurance. The plans cover a wide range of dental benefits and differ primarily in the design of their provider networks and employee premium costs.

For more comprehensive information on specific dental plan benefits and enrollment process contact the Human Resources Department.

### **VISION PLANS**

VRH offers all regular full-time, regular part-time employees, and their dependents vision insurance. The plans cover a wide range of vision benefits and differ primarily in the design of their provider networks and employee premium costs.

For more comprehensive information on specific vision plan benefits and enrollment process contact the Human Resources Department.

### **BASIC TERM LIFE AND AD&D INSURANCE**

VRH offers all regular full-time employees Basic Term Life and AD&D insurance equal to 1x your basic annual earnings to a maximum of \$250,000 at no charge to the employee.

For more comprehensive information on specific plan benefits and enrollment process contact the Human Resources Department.

### **RETIREMENT SAVINGS PROGRAM**

Regular full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible to participate in VRH's 403(b) retirement savings plan if they meet the following criteria: are at least age 18 years of age and work a minimum of 1,040 hours paid per year – other qualifications/restrictions may apply, please view the Summary Plan Description (SPD) for details. This qualified tax-deferred savings plans allow employees to contribute pre-tax income, subject to yearly IRS maximums, to their choice of investment portfolios.

For more comprehensive information on eligibility, current IRS limits, and application procedures contact the Human Resources Department or view the SPDs located in the Human Resources Department or on VRH's benefits enrollment portal.

### **TUITION ASSISTANCE AND CONTINUING EDUCATION**

VRH encourages and supports the continuing education of our employees and provides reimbursement assistance to eligible employees for post-secondary courses that are directly related to their role within the organization. Any request for assistance must be made in advance of the start of the class to your immediate supervisor and be approved by the Human Resources Department, in order to be considered for reimbursement assistance. Reimbursement is contingent upon available funds in the Tuition Assistance Account.

#### **Eligibility:**

- Part-time and full-time employees who have been employed with VRH for a minimum of six (6) months prior to the time the course begins are eligible to apply for tuition reimbursement.
- The reimbursement rate is 75% of eligible expenses so long as an employee receives a satisfactory grade in the course (see Grade Requirements), has not exceeded the maximum amount of reimbursement, and funds remain available in the Tuition Reimbursement Account. The maximum amount of reimbursement allowed in a calendar year for part-time employees (working 20-29 hours per week) is one-thousand two hundred dollars (\$2,000). The maximum amount of reimbursement allowed in a calendar year for a full-time employee (working 30-40+ hours per week) is two-thousand dollars (\$4,000).

#### **Reimbursement Requirements:**

- The degree courses or certification exams should be directly related to the employee's present position or to prepare them for advancement within the organization.
- Grant, scholarships and G.I. Benefits must be utilized prior to tuition reimbursement monies.
- Courses must be taken during hours that do not conflict with established work schedules.

#### **Covered and Non-covered Costs:**



- Covered Costs – Tuition and/or required exam costs will be reimbursed. Examinations that are taken to allow an employee to waive a credit course applicable to a degree program are eligible for tuition reimbursement. Tuition reimbursement also covers 100% of book expenses up to the annual maximum.
- Non-covered Costs – Continuing education programs, in-service programs, review courses, workshops, conferences, etc., will not be reimbursed by the Tuition Reimbursement Account. Registration, enrollment fees, graduation fees, laboratory fees, licensure and registry fees will not be reimbursed.
- Grade Requirements – The employee must earn a grade of at least “C” (or its equivalent) if an undergraduate, or a grade of at least “B” (or its equivalent) if a graduate student to receive reimbursement. In courses using a Pass/Fail marking system, a grade of Pass will be acceptable for reimbursement.

### **EMPLOYEE REFERRAL PROGRAM**

All employee referrals are appreciated and help to make VRH a great place to work! A referral bonus may be awarded if you refer someone who is hired for a pre-approved “Hot Job”. “Hot Jobs” are found posted on Valley Regional Hospital’s bulletin board located at the employee entrance. The employee referral bonus will only be paid if both the new employee and the referring employee are employed at VRH at the time of the payout. If two employees refer a newly hired employee, the bonus will be equally divided to the two referring employees. The new employee must satisfactorily meet performance criteria set forth at the close of their assessment evaluation.

*Please note:* Directors, Sr. Leaders, the Human Resources Department and hiring supervisors/managers of department where new employee is being hired are excluded from the Employee Referral Bonus program. If you have additional questions, contact the Human Resources Department.

### **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)**

Through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), VRH provides confidential access to professional counseling services for help in confronting personal problems such as alcohol and substance abuse, marital or family difficulties, financial or legal troubles and emotional distress. The EAP is available to you and members of your household offering problem assessment, short-term counseling, and referrals to appropriate community and private services.

## **ADDITIONAL ANCILLARY BENEFITS**

- Medical and Dependent Flexible Spending Account
- Health Savings Account
- Voluntary Term Life Insurance
- Voluntary Spouse and Child(ren) Term Life Insurance
- Pet Insurance
- Identity Protection
- On-site Fitness Center
- Other Ancillary Benefits

## **COBRA COVERAGE**

Upon termination of employment, under provisions of Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), an employee may continue his/her previously elected medical, vision, and/or dental coverage, normally for a period up to eighteen months. The terminating employee is responsible for paying the full premium cost for their elected coverages and has up to 60 days to elect coverage under this Act. In addition, under the COBRA law a participant who becomes ineligible for coverage due to a loss of dependent status (a divorced spouse, for example, or a child reaching the maximum age) can continue coverage, normally for a period up to 36 months; paying the full premium cost for this coverage.

For more information regarding continuation of coverage please contact Human Resources.

## COMPENSATION

VRH recognizes the importance of attracting, retaining and motivating those who have the skills and abilities to make strong contributions to our organization. To this end, VRH is committed to maintaining a total compensation philosophy that is internally equitable and externally competitive.

### GENERAL PAY INFORMATION

A pay range is established for each of the organization's jobs and these ranges are **(a)** internally equitable, i.e., fair when compared with the ranges established from comparable VRH jobs, as well as **(b)** externally competitive when compared with the rates paid by other like employers for comparable jobs – based on available market surveys.

#### Regular Pay Procedures:

All VRH employees are paid bi-weekly on the Thursday following the end of each pay period. The pay period commences at 7:00 am on a Sunday and ends 14 consecutive days later. If a scheduled payday falls on a company observed holiday, you will usually be paid on the day preceding the holiday. All required deductions, such as federal, state, and local taxes, and all authorized voluntary deductions, such as health insurance contributions, will be withheld automatically from your paycheck.

#### The Work Week:

The work week begins with any regular shift scheduled to start Sunday and ends 7 consecutive days later; Saturday.

Since VRH is in operation twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week, both weekends and holidays are part of the normal work week, and employees in many positions are required to work on those days on a regularly scheduled basis.

Department supervisors/managers are responsible for advising employees of their schedule. Employees are responsible to know their schedule.

VRH reserves the right to change an employee's schedule, shift, and/or hours at its discretion with advance notice to the employee.

#### Hours of Work:

Designated hours of work will be agreed upon prior to your start date and will be based on several factors, including current hours of operation and staffing concerns. Employees are expected to be at their designated areas and ready for work at the beginning of their scheduled shift.

#### Overtime:

When a VRH employee is scheduled to work more than forty (40) hours in any given work week, the following applicable overtime pay policies will apply:

Non-exempt employees are to be paid one and one-half times their 'regular hourly rate' for all hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours in a work week (within a seven day period, commencing Sunday and concluding Saturday). All overtime hours worked must be pre-approved by the

employee's supervisor. Federal and state regulations do not consider hours of non-productive time, such as ETO, excused absence, jury duty, etc. as hours worked for the calculation of overtime.

Exempt employees are paid a salary commensurate with their job responsibilities regardless of the number of hours worked, and therefore are not eligible for overtime pay.

### **Bonus/Incentive Pay:**

Bonus and/or Incentive pay is compensation paid to an employee in addition to the normal rate of pay. This pay may be granted only under limited circumstances, which includes critical shortages in clinical areas or work load increases due to vacancies. Each case where bonus and/or incentive pay is offered to a staff member must be pre-approved by the CEO and Senior Director of Human Resources and in accordance with VRH **Incentive Pay** policy.

### **Shift Differentials:**

The Shift Differential Policy allows for extra compensation to nonexempt employees who are scheduled on a regular, rotating or sporadic basis to work during the evening or the night shift.

The manager must designate an employee to a specific shift at the time of hire. Non-exempt employees will be designated as day, evening, night, or split-shift for payroll purposes. Employees who are hired to work twelve-hour shifts are considered to be a split-shift employee. Shift differentials are paid for hours worked and are not paid for ETO.

If a manager changes the employee's designated shift on a permanent basis, it must be done so in writing using the Change of Status form to ensure complete understanding by the staff member, Department, HR, and Payroll.

Shift times may vary based on department schedules and needs and will be defined by VRH's needs, not by individual needs or desires.

#### Shifts are defined as follows:

Days (Shift 1): 7AM to 3 PM

Evenings (Shift 2): 3 PM to 11 PM

Nights (Shift 3): 11 PM to 7 AM

Split Shift (example of working into multiple shifts): 7 AM – 7 PM; 7 PM – 7AM; 10 AM – 10 PM

The organization levels (departments) that work traditional office hours (example 8-4:30) are not eligible for shift differentials. These departments include, but are not limited to:

Accounting/Finance

Administration

Audiology

Billing

Cardiac Rehab

Community Engagement/Development

Oncology

Pharmacy

Outpatient Physical/Occupational Therapy

Physician Practices/Support Staff

Purchasing

Quality

Education  
Health Information Management  
Human Resources  
Information Services  
Medical Staff Office  
Occupational Health

Risk/Compliance  
Social Services  
Outpatient Speech Therapy  
Social Services  
Volunteer Administration

### **Weekend Differential:**

VRH pays a weekend differential to non-exempt (hourly paid) employees eligible for shift differential. The weekend is a period of time beginning 11:00 PM Friday and ending 11:00 PM Sunday (Designated as Shift 4).

### **Holiday Differential:**

VRH pays a holiday differential to non-exempt (hourly paid) employees eligible for shift differential. The designated holidays that qualify for holiday differential can be found in this Handbook. The Holiday differential is a period of time beginning 11:00 PM the evening before the holiday and ending 11:00 PM the evening of holiday.

### **On-call:**

On-call status means the employee is responsible for the department for a set period of time. During this time the employee is required to carry a beeper or other electronic device in order to be notified of a need to report back to the department. The response time once notified of needing to return is one (1) hour. When an employee is on-call they receive on-call pay for this service.

- Restricted Call for non-exempt employees – The employee is restricted to the premises while on-call. On-call hours are paid at the federal minimum wage. Worked hours are paid in addition to on-call pay at the employee's rate of pay (or at an overtime rate and/or differential, or non-productive premium, if appropriate).
- Unrestricted Call for non-exempt employees – Employees must carry a pager at all times or leave word with their department as to where he/she may be reached. If called to work, and if an employee has not worked at least two (2) hours that day, the employee must be credited with enough time to reach the 2-hour state mandated requirement. Once the state requirement has been met, the employee should be credited and paid for only time worked. On-call hours are paid at the prevailing on-call rate. Worked hours begin when the employee reaches VRH. If an employee is called back to work, he/she will continue to receive on-call pay and will in addition be paid at their regular rate of pay (or at an overtime rate and/or differential and non-productive premium, if appropriate).

**Call-off for Non-exempt Employees:**

Call-off status, is determined through patient census. In the event of being called off, the employee has the option of replacing the call-off hours with either ETO (earned time off), LC (low census – meaning unpaid but allows for ETO accrual) or working in another (related or unrelated to their professional field) department where there may be a need for additional assistance at their current pay rate. This decision is the employee's choice and needs to be made at the time of call-off.

Once an employee has been called-off the employee is not obligated to be available to return to the department.

If an employee has not worked a minimum of two (2) hours prior to being called-off, the employee will be credited with enough time to reach the 2-hour state mandated requirement.

**Call back for Non-exempt Employees:**

The first (1st) call back is paid at a minimum of 2 hours; each additional call back within a 24 hour period from the first call back is paid for actual time worked. All call back is paid at 1.5 times the employee's regular rate. All call back time will be counted outside of the employee's regular budgeted hours and will not reduce any Earned Time hours entered in the pay period in which the call back falls.

Employees are expected to respond immediately to call back situations when deemed an emergency; e.g. broken critical equipment, pipes, electrical lines, snow/ice storms, natural disasters, man-made disasters, etc.

Employees on-call are not eligible for call back.

**MEAL BREAK / REST PERIODS**

Employees are entitled to a 30-minute unpaid meal break for every five (5) consecutive hours worked. These meal breaks are not considered time worked. Meal breaks may be scheduled by the department supervisor/manager to ensure departmental and customer/patient care coverage. Additionally, two (2) paid 15-minute breaks are permitted if working a minimum of an eight (8) hour shift. The additional two (2) paid 15-minute breaks cannot be combined with the 30-minute unpaid meal break.

If the employee is scheduled to work less than 8 hours, but five (5) or more hours, the employee will receive one 15-minute paid rest period, as well as their 30-minute unpaid meal break.

Based on the requirements of a department, supervisors/managers may schedule, at their discretion, a combination of both meal and break time for special situations, with prior approval. Meal breaks are not to be scheduled at the beginning or end of a shift.

**MISSED MEAL TIME**

Prior to missing your meal time, non-exempt employees should notify their supervisor so that a substitute meal time can be rescheduled that day. Non-exempt employees must report a missed

meal period to their supervisor and have management's approval before missing a scheduled meal period. Failure to do so may be grounds for disciplinary action, although payment will still be made for time worked. The supervisor will determine if extenuating circumstances prevented the employee from seeking approval. If a supervisor cannot schedule a substitute meal period during the same shift the employee will be compensated for all hours worked, including time worked during a missed meal period.

### **TRAVEL AND REIMBURSEMENT**

Employees will be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in connection with approved travel on behalf of VRH.

Travelers seeking reimbursement should incur the lowest reasonable travel expenses and exercise care to avoid the appearance of impropriety. If you have additional questions regarding the specific mileage reimbursement calculation and travel reimbursements review the **Business Travel Reimbursement** policy for further explanation.

### **RECORDING OF WORK HOURS**

VRH complies with all applicable Federal and State Laws with regard to workday recordkeeping. As such, VRH requires all non-exempt workers to record when the workday begins and ends as well as the start time and end time of your meal period. For exempt employees, VRH requires you to record when the workday begins and ends.

In addition, all employees, whether non-exempt or exempt are required to log their ETO hours/days.

### **DEDUCTIONS FROM PAY**

In accordance with Federal and State Laws, lawful deductions are made from each paycheck for Social Security (FICA), and for Federal, State and local taxes, and/or for other legally authorized deductions (such as child support, garnishments, etc.) Upon written authorization of the employee, additional voluntary deductions may be made for Direct Deposit, Health and Welfare Insurance, Life Insurance, United Way and other purposes as authorized by the employee. Any deductions from pay will be reflected on the employee's pay stub. Employees who have questions about deductions from their salary or believe that their salary has been subject to improper deductions, should contact VRH's Payroll department. Every report will be fully investigated and if a violation is found, corrective action will be taken, including but not limited to full reimbursement of inappropriately withheld amounts.

### **PAY DAY AND DIRECT DEPOSIT OR PRINTED PAYCHECKS**

Employees are paid every other Thursday for work performed in the pay period, which begins on Sunday and ends the preceding Saturday.

All employees will receive their paychecks on the Thursday of the pay week. Should a regular Thursday pay day falls on a recognized holiday, employees will be paid on the Wednesday of the pay week.

**Direct Deposit:**

Employee's paycheck can be deposited into the financial institution(s) of your choice, at no cost to you, and your money is available for use on VRH's pay day. Your deposit may be split between your checking, savings, money market or Individual Retirement Account(s) (IRA). You may obtain "Direct Deposit" instructions from the Payroll department.

**Printed Payroll Check:**

Employee's paycheck will be available on Thursday of the pay week. Employees can retrieve their paycheck from the Payroll department Thursday mornings after 8:00 am.

**Paystubs:**

Paystubs are available via the payroll vendor's cloud based website and can be accessed and/or printed at the employee's leisure. If an employee cannot print their paystub or needs assistance with printing and/or viewing, contact VRH's Payroll department.

**UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION**

You may be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits in the event you become laid off or unemployed through no fault of your own. The entire cost of this benefit is paid by VRH. For information regarding this benefit please contact New Hampshire Employment Security directly.



## **SAFETY**

It is the goal of VRH to provide a safe, functional, and effective environment for patients, employees, visitors, and other customers.

### **WORKPLACE ANTI-VIOLENCE**

VRH is committed to providing a safe and secure workplace and an environment free from physical violence, harassment, threats and intimidation. Therefore, it is expected that all employees will perform their jobs in a respectful, nonviolent manner. In addition, VRH believes that violence is a form of serious misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. Physical violence, threats, harassment or intimidation (whether sexual or non-sexual in nature) by an employee may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Any employee who believes they have been subjected to or witnessed conduct that may be considered workplace violence should report the incident to their immediate supervisor. If, for any reason, you believe it would be inappropriate to discuss the matter with your supervisor, please report the incident directly to Human Resources.

VRH will not permit retaliation against anyone who brings a complaint of workplace violence or who participates in the investigation of a complaint of workplace violence.

### **ANTI-HARASSMENT**

VRH strives to create and maintain a work environment in which people are treated with dignity, decency and respect. The environment of the organization should be characterized by mutual trust and the absence of intimidation, oppression and exploitation. Employees should be able to work and learn in a safe, yet stimulating atmosphere. The accomplishment of this goal is essential to the mission of VRH. For that reason, VRH will not tolerate unlawful discrimination or harassment of any kind. Through enforcement of this policy and by education of employees, the company will seek to prevent, correct, and discipline behavior that violates this philosophy.

All employees, including regular staff, students, volunteers, and/or contracted staff are covered by and are expected to comply with this policy and to take appropriate measures to ensure that prohibited conduct does not occur. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who violates this policy. Based on the seriousness of the offense, disciplinary action may include verbal or written reprimand, suspension or termination of employment.

VRH in compliance with all applicable federal, state and local anti-discrimination and harassment laws and regulations, enforces this policy in accordance with the following definitions and guidelines:

#### **Discrimination**

It is a violation to discriminate in the provision of employment opportunities, benefits or privileges; to create discriminatory work conditions; or to use discriminatory evaluative standards in employment if the basis of that discriminatory treatment is, in whole or in part, the person's race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, marital status or other discriminatory behaviors.

Discrimination of any kind may also be strictly prohibited by a variety of federal, state and local laws, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act 1964, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. This policy is intended to comply with the prohibitions stated in these anti-discrimination laws.

Discrimination will be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including termination.

## **Harassment**

VRH prohibits harassment, including sexual harassment, of any kind, and will take appropriate and immediate action in response to complaints or knowledge of violations of this policy. For purposes of this policy, harassment is any verbal or physical conduct designed to threaten, intimidate or coerce an employee, co-worker or any person working for or on behalf of VRH. Verbal taunting (including racial and ethnic slurs) that impairs his or her ability to perform his or her job function is included in the definition of harassment.

The following examples of harassment are intended to be guidelines and are not exclusive when determining whether there has been a violation of this policy:

- Verbal harassment includes comments that are offensive or unwelcome regarding a person's nationality, origin, race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, body, disability or appearance, including epithets, slurs and negative stereotyping.
- Nonverbal harassment includes distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material that ridicules, denigrates, insults, belittles or shows hostility, aversion or disrespect toward an individual or group because of national origin, race, color, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, appearance, disability, sexual identity, marital or other protected status.

## **Sexual harassment**

Sexual harassment is a form of unlawful employment discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and is prohibited under VRH's anti-harassment policy. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), sexual harassment is defined as "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature . . . when . . . submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions . . . or such conduct has the purpose or effect of . . . creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment."

*There are two types of sexual harassment:*

- "Quid pro quo" harassment, where submission to harassment is used as the basis for employment decisions. Employee benefits such as raises, promotions and better working hours are directly linked to compliance with sexual advances. Therefore, only someone in a supervisory capacity (with the authority to grant such benefits) can engage in quid pro quo harassment. Examples: A supervisor promising an employee a raise if she goes on a

date with him; a Supervisor telling an employee she will fire him if he does not have sex with her.

- “Hostile work environment,” where the harassment creates an offensive and unpleasant working environment. A hostile work environment can be created by anyone in the work environment, whether it be supervisors, other employees, or customers. Hostile environment harassment consists of language of a sexual nature, unwelcome sexual materials or even unwelcomed physical contact as a regular part of the work environment. Texts, e-mails, cartoons or posters of a sexual nature; vulgar or lewd comments or jokes; or unwanted touching or fondling all fall into this category.

Sexual harassment occurs when unsolicited and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature:

- Is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.
- Is used as a basis for an employment decision.
- Unreasonably interferes with an employee’s work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or otherwise offensive environment.

Sexual harassment may take different forms. The following examples of sexual harassment are intended to be guidelines and are not exclusive when determining whether there has been a violation of this policy:

- Verbal sexual harassment includes innuendoes, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, lewd remarks and threats; requests for any type of sexual favor (this includes repeated, unwelcome requests for dates); and verbal abuse or “kidding” that is oriented toward a prohibitive form of harassment, including that which is sexual in nature and unwelcome.
- Nonverbal sexual harassment includes the distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material, including calendars, posters and cartoons that are sexually suggestive or show hostility toward an individual or group because of sex; suggestive or insulting sounds; leering; staring; whistling; obscene gestures; content in letters and notes, facsimiles, e-mail, photos, text messages, tweets and Internet postings; or other form of communication that is sexual in nature and offensive.
- Physical sexual harassment includes unwelcome, unwanted physical contact, including touching, tickling, pinching, patting, brushing up against, hugging, cornering, kissing and fondling and forced sexual intercourse or assault.

Courteous, mutually respectful, pleasant, non-coercive interactions between employees, including men and women, that are appropriate in the workplace and acceptable to and welcomed by both parties are not considered to be harassment, including sexual harassment.

## **Retaliation**

No hardship, loss, benefit or penalty may be imposed on an employee in response to:

- Filing or responding to a bona fide complaint of discrimination or harassment.
- Appearing as a witness in the investigation of a complaint.
- Serving as an investigator of a complaint.

Retaliation or attempted retaliation in response to lodging a complaint or invoking the complaint process is a violation of this policy. Any person who is found to have violated this aspect of the policy will be subject to sanctions up to and including termination of employment.

## **Consensual Romantic or Sexual Relationships**

VRH strongly discourages romantic or sexual relationships between a Supervisor or other supervisory employee and his or her staff (an employee who reports directly or indirectly to that person) because such relationships tend to create compromising conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts. In addition, such a relationship may give rise to the perception by others that there is favoritism or bias in employment decisions affecting the staff employee. Moreover, given the uneven balance of power within such relationships, consent by the staff member is suspect and may be viewed by others or, at a later date, by the staff member as having been given as the result of coercion or intimidation. The atmosphere created by such appearances of bias, favoritism, intimidation, coercion or exploitation undermines the spirit of trust and mutual respect that is essential to a healthy work environment. If there is such a relationship, the parties need to be aware that one or both may be moved to a different department, or other actions may be taken.

If any employee of VRH enters into a consensual relationship that is romantic or sexual in nature with a member of his or her staff (an employee who reports directly or indirectly to him or her), or if one of the parties is in a supervisory capacity in the same department in which the other party works, the parties must notify the Sr. Director of Human Resources or other appropriate corporate officer. Because of potential issues regarding quid pro quo harassment, VRH has made reporting mandatory. This requirement does not apply to employees who do not work in the same department or to parties who do not supervise or otherwise manage responsibilities over the other.

Once the relationship is made known to VRH, the company will review the situation with human resources in light of all the facts (reporting relationship between the parties, effect on co-workers, job titles of the parties, etc.) and will determine whether one or both parties need to be moved to another job or department. If it is determined that one party must be moved, and there are jobs in other departments available for both, the parties may decide who will be the one to apply for a new position. If the parties cannot amicably come to a decision, or the party is not chosen for the position to which he or she applied, the parties will contact human resources, which will decide which party should be moved. That decision will be based on which move will be least disruptive to the organization as a whole. If it is determined that one or both parties must be moved, but no

other jobs are available for either party, the parties will be given the option of terminating their relationship or resigning.

### **Complaint Process**

VRH will courteously treat any person who invokes this complaint procedure, and the company will handle all complaints swiftly and confidentially to the extent possible in light of the need to take appropriate corrective action. Lodging a complaint will in no way be used against the employee or have an adverse impact on the individual's employment status. Because of the damaging nature of harassment to the victims and to the entire workforce, aggrieved employees are strongly urged to use this procedure. However, filing groundless or malicious complaints is an abuse of this policy and will be treated as a violation.

### **Confidentiality**

The employee assistance program (EAP) provides confidential counseling services to company employees. Individuals wishing to discuss an incident confidentially or seeking information and advice of a personal nature are encouraged to contact the EAP. The role of the EAP in such cases will be limited to personal counseling and treatment for the person who is then an EAP client. Contacting the EAP will not qualify as notification to VRH of a potential harassment or discrimination issue (see below complaint procedure for more on how to notify the company of an issue or complaint).

During the complaint process, the confidentiality of the information received, the privacy of the individuals involved and the wishes of the complaining person will be protected to as great a degree as is legally possible. The expressed wishes of the complaining person for confidentiality will be considered in the context of the company's legal obligation to act on the charge and the right of the charged party to obtain information. In most cases, however, confidentiality will be strictly maintained by the company and those involved in the investigation. In addition, any notes or documents written by or received by the person(s) conducting the investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible and according to any existing state or federal law.

### **Complaint procedure**

VRH has established the following procedure for lodging a complaint of harassment, discrimination or retaliation. The company will treat all aspects of the procedure confidentially to the extent reasonably possible.

1. An individual who feels harassed, discriminated or retaliated against may initiate the complaint process by filing a complaint in writing with the organization's Sr. Director of Human Resources. No formal action will be taken against any person under this policy unless HR has received a written and signed complaint containing sufficient details to determine if the policy may have been violated. The complainant (the employee making the complaint) may obtain the complaint form from the HR department. If a supervisor becomes aware that harassment or discrimination is occurring, either from personal observation or as a result of an employee's coming forward, the supervisor should immediately report it to the Sr. Director of Human Resources.

2. Upon receiving a complaint or being advised by a supervisor that a potential violation of the organization's anti-harassment policy may be occurring, the Sr. Director of Human Resources will notify VRH's senior leadership and review the complaint with that team and/or the organization's legal counsel.
3. Within five working days of receiving the complaint, the Sr. Director of Human Resources will notify the person(s) charged [hereafter referred to as "respondent(s)"] of a complaint and initiate the investigation to determine whether there is a reasonable basis for believing that the alleged violation has occurred.
4. During the investigation, the Sr. Director of Human Resources, together with legal counsel or other members of VRH's senior leadership team, will interview the complainant, the respondent, and any witnesses to determine whether the alleged conduct occurred.
5. Within 15 business days of the complaint being filed (or the matter being referred to the Sr. Director of Human Resources), the Sr. Director of Human Resources or other person conducting the investigation will conclude the investigation and submit a written report of his or her findings to the organization's senior leadership team.
6. If it is determined that harassment or discrimination has occurred, the Sr. Director of Human Resources will recommend appropriate disciplinary action. The appropriate action will depend on the following factors: **(a)** the severity, frequency and pervasiveness of the conduct; **(b)** prior complaints made by the complainant; **(c)** prior complaints made against the respondent; and **(d)** the quality of the evidence (e.g., first-hand knowledge, credible corroboration).
7. If the investigation is inconclusive or if it is determined that there has been no violation but potentially problematic conduct may have occurred, the Sr. Director of Human Resources may recommend appropriate preventive action.
8. Within five days after the investigation is concluded, the Sr. Director of Human Resources will meet with the complainant and the respondent separately, notify them of the findings of the investigation, and inform them of the action being recommended.
9. The complainant and the respondent may submit statements to the Sr. Director of Human Resources challenging the factual basis of the findings. Any such statement must be submitted no later than five working days after the meeting with the Sr. Director of Human Resources in which the findings of the investigation are discussed.
10. Within 10 days from the date the Sr. Director of Human Resources receives written challenges from the complainant and/or the respondent, a final-full review of the investigation report and any statements submitted by the complainant and/or respondent will occur. The Sr. Director of Human Resources will report the organization's decision to the complainant, the respondent, and the appropriate management assigned to the department(s) in which the complainant and the respondent work. The organization's decision will be in writing and will include findings of fact and a statement for or against

disciplinary action. If disciplinary action is to be taken, the respondent will be informed of the nature of the discipline and how it will be executed.

11. If the complaint is against the Sr. Director of Human Resources, it is only under this circumstance that the complaint and investigation will be done by the CEO of VRH.

## **WORKPLACE BULLYING**

VRH defines bullying as “repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, contacted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment”. Such behavior violates the company Code of Ethics, which clearly states that all employees will be treated with dignity and respect.

The purpose of this policy is to communicate to all employees, including supervisors, managers, and executives, that the organization will not tolerate bullying behavior. Employees found in violation of this policy will be disciplined up to and including termination.

Bullying may be intentional or unintentional. However, it must be noted that where an allegation of bullying is made, the intention of the alleged bully is irrelevant and will not be given consideration when administering discipline.

- **Verbal bullying:** Slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or his/her family; persistent name calling that is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as the butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks
- **Physical bullying:** Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault or threat of physical assault; damage to a person’s work area or property.
- **Gesture bullying:** Nonverbal threatening gestures or glances that convey threatening messages
- **Exclusion:** Socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities

## **WEAPONS IN THE WORKPLACE**

It is the policy of VRH to maintain a work environment that is safe for all persons, including the community, and conducive to attaining high work standards. To achieve these objectives, VRH is committed to a strong stand against firearms and weapons in the work environment.

It is VRH’s policy to maintain a firearms and weapons free work place and prohibit the possession of firearms and weapons regardless of any license or permit that an individual may have which would otherwise authorize the individual to carry firearms or weapons. VRH will strictly enforce this policy. For further information and definitions of firearms and/or weapons, please see Human Resources policy **FIREARMS, WEAPONS-FREE WORKPLACE** on the Pulse or request a copy from Human Resources Department.

Law Enforcement Officers (Local and State Police), while acting in an official capacity, are the exception to this policy, and are therefore permitted to have in their possession or bear into any

and all locations where VRH conducts business any firearm or weapon necessary to protect VRH staff, volunteers, patients, visitors and/or outside vendors/subcontractors.

### **WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION ACT**

Whistleblower as defined in this handbook is an employee of VRH who reports an activity that he/she considers to be illegal or dishonest. The whistleblower is not responsible for investigating the activity or for determining fault or corrective measures; appropriate management officials are charged with these responsibilities.

Examples of illegal or dishonest activities are violations of federal, state or local laws; billing for services not performed or for goods not delivered; and other fraudulent financial reporting.

If an employee has knowledge of or a concern of illegal or dishonest fraudulent activity, the employee is to contact his/her immediate supervisor or the Sr. Director Human Resources. The employee must exercise sound judgment to avoid baseless allegations. An employee who intentionally files a false report of wrongdoing will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

### **FIRE PREVENTION**

Safety is the responsibility of every VRH employee. Every reasonable precaution is taken to provide a safe environment for employees. Safety rules are for your protection and for the protection of our patients and co-workers. VRH needs your support and cooperation to maintain a good fire safety program.

To help prevent fires, you should:

- Keep work areas free from unnecessary combustible materials
- Be especially careful handling flammable materials
- Know the location of fire pull alarms and emergency exits
- Stay away from the fire scene if you are not directly involved in removing persons to safety
- Avoid using the telephone after the fire is reported. All telephone lines must be kept open for emergency calls
- Above all, be ready and know the special fire procedures in your work area. Know what you should do in the event of a fire

As an additional precaution, radiant heaters are not allowed at VRH. Any other personal electrical device, such as mini refrigerators, floor lamps and/or box fans, need to be approved by the Safety Officer prior to use.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

VRH is committed to providing patient care and all related patient care support services twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. It is the policy of the Hospital to remain open during extreme weather conditions, emergencies and other significant events. Employees are expected to work as scheduled, or if circumstances warrant, to extend work hours to meet operational needs. A



Hospital State of Emergency/Disaster may be declared due to an Internal or External Disaster or Severe Weather Condition as defined by the **Hospital's Emergency Preparedness Plan** located on the Pulse.

Circumstances covered by this policy include, but are not limited to:

- significant predicted or actual snowfall, icing, rain or flooding;
- events that result in a safety hazard at or near a worksite (such as a gas leak);
- events that result in power failures at or near a worksite;
- events that impede access to a worksite (such as a roadway or building closure).

### **Exceptions:**

It is unusual for the Hospital to declare a State of Emergency/Disaster and subsequently order a widespread closure of facilities or departments, regardless of a declaration by the Governor or City of Claremont. In accordance with the established Hospital Emergency/Disaster Preparedness Plan, the CEO or authorized designee is responsible for making the decision about widespread closure(s) and for initiating emergency communication plans and procedures.

The Hospital acknowledges that severe weather or other major disruptive events may require that individual practice sites and/or administrative/clinical departments, that do not have 24/7 patient care responsibilities, may need to close operations. During these circumstances, the CEO or authorized designee will be responsible for making "Site/Department" closure decisions. Site leadership, in conjunction with senior leadership, may decide to delay opening, close early, reduce staffing levels, supplement staffing levels or reassign staff as necessary to address safety issues and/or support patient care.

Senior Leadership in conjunction with Site Leadership or Clinical Area Leadership are responsible for making the decision to close site(s) or clinical area(s) and for communicating the decision to employees.

### **Site/Department Guidelines**

Site/Department Leadership is responsible for identifying staffing needed to maintain safe and viable operations and readiness during severe conditions.

Site/Department Leadership or authorized designee will notify clients of delayed schedule and/or closures.

### **Reporting to Work**

Employees are expected to report to work unless they have been notified by their supervisor of a different plan. Employees are expected to use sound judgment and make every reasonable effort to safely report to work.

Employees should contact their supervisors with any questions or concerns about reporting to work. Employees should not assume that their presence is not needed. Public service

announcements indicating a state of emergency and advising workers to stay home do not apply to health care and public safety workers.

### **Pay Practices**

For the purposes of this policy, employees will be paid as follows:

Employee late arrivals, early departures, closures, and absences

An employee who expects to be late reporting to work or leaves early because of the severity of the conditions should notify his or her Supervisor of the anticipated tardiness. The time out of work will be treated as an unscheduled absence. The employee will either use accrued ETO or be unpaid.

If the site /department remains open and the employee asks to leave early or is absent for the scheduled shift, the time out of work will be treated as an unscheduled absence. The employee will either use accrued benefit time or be unpaid; as per our Payroll Policy.

## **SECURITY**

### **Workplace Searches**

Employees should have no expectation of privacy with respect to VRH property. VRH property is subject to search at any time and at the discretion of VRH. Searches of VRH property may include, but are not limited to, all vehicles, computers, files, lockers, containers, desks, or offices.

Searches of an employee's personal property may be conducted to investigate violations of workplace policies or for any other business-related purpose. VRH may search personal property that is on VRH premises or that is located at a place the employee engages in VRH work. Searches of personal property may include, but are not limited to, vehicles, purses, briefcases, and packages.

Searches conducted by VRH, or its designated agents, will be conducted in a reasonable manner. Refusal to consent to a search may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **Security**

VRH is dedicated to maintaining a safe and secure workplace.

Employees are encouraged to be security-conscious and to help maintain a safe environment. For security concerns or services, please contact your supervisor or our security department.

## **ADDITIONAL REFERENCES**

For your convenience, phone numbers and department directories can be found on the PULSE.

# Valley Regional Hospital

## VRH EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK RECEIPT

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Last Name

First Name

My signature on this form is to acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the Valley Regional Healthcare (VRH) Employee Handbook.

I understand that it is my responsibility to contact my supervisor/manager or Human Resources if I have questions concerning the information herein. I understand that Human Resources can provide me with more detailed information regarding the policies and procedures of VRH, when requested.

I understand this handbook is not an employment contract. Unless I have a written employment contract with Valley Regional Healthcare (VRH) that states otherwise, I am an at-will employee. My at-will status means VRH or I may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. My at-will status can be changed only through a written contract signed by me, the Senior Director of Human Resources and/or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)/President of VRH. With the exception of a written employment contract, this handbook supersedes all prior agreements or statements regarding my employment at VRH.

I understand that VRH may change its policies and procedures and any provision of this handbook at any time without advance notice.

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Date

Employee Signature