



Employee Handbook

Effective as of April 5, 2024



Olympic Area Agency on Aging

2200 W. Sims Way, Unit #100
Port Townsend, WA 98368

www.o3a.org

Phone: 360-379-5064 or 1-866-720-4863 Fax: 360-379-5074

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Welcome to O3A!

I'm thrilled to welcome you on board. O3A is committed to supporting a flexible range of options that are readily accessible to older adults, people with disabilities and family caregivers. Every individual, including you, plays an important role in making this possible by managing caseloads, providing community outreach and education, establishing service contracts, developing resources, supporting staff, and finding solutions for people in need.

We created this Employee Handbook to help you get started, clarify your rights and responsibilities, keep track of our expectations, and to make sure that you know our official policies while you are employed. This handbook covers employment basics, workplace policies, code of conduct, compensations, benefits, working hours, and termination procedures.

This Employee Handbook gives employees access to O3A policies, procedures and guidelines that explain how O3A functions for employees. As a living document, it is regularly updated to reflect changes in regulations, labor laws or O3A policy.

I am glad you are here, and I can't wait to see what we accomplish together.

Best,

Laura Cepoi
Executive Director

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.01 MISSION, VISION & VALUES

Our Mission

The Olympic Area Agency on Aging (O3A) exists to help older adults, family caregivers, and persons with disabilities maintain their health and independence, and decide where they want to live and with whom through a comprehensive and coordinated system of home and community-based services.

Strategies identified in the O3A Area Plan, include:

- Advocacy, to represent the needs and concerns of older adults and persons with disabilities in the policy, program and budget development processes at the local, state and federal levels, as well as their needs and concerns arising from service delivery;
- Dissemination of consumer information and public education activities;
- Procurement of local services through performance-based contracts;
- Coordination with community-based entities and stakeholders to provide quality community services and programs;
- Planning and program development, based on local community assessment including the application of evidence-based program and service models that improve quality of life and enhance the delivery of health and human services at the community level; and
- The oversight of its programmatic and fiscal responsibilities.

Our Core Values

O3A is guided by a set of core values in developing and carrying out its mission that include:

- Supporting older individuals and persons with disabilities, family caregivers, and our partners who serve them by encouraging their participation in developing solutions that are reflective of their personal choice and independence;
- Incorporating an equitable lens while evaluating solutions;
- Working to build resources that support person-centered care and client choice;
- Providing efficient and effective systems, while reducing barriers to service access;
- Producing measurable outcomes that significantly impact the well-being of older adults, family caregivers, and persons with disabilities; and
- Valuing and developing our staff.

1.02 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This manual has been developed to cover all employees of the O3A and is intended to provide a general overview of the organization's policies, practices, and benefits.

The Council of Governments (COG) of the O3A has the ultimate responsibility for all personnel actions. The COG is made up of one representative from each county with

designated alternatives. The COG has vested the authority and responsibility in the Executive Director to act in its behalf regarding personnel matters. All policies, procedures, and practices in this manual supersede any previous policies, manuals, letters, memoranda and understandings.

Employment with the O3A is at-will and may be terminated by the employee or the organization at any time, with or without cause and with or without notice. No agent or representative of the Agency, other than the Executive Director, and then only in writing, has the authority to enter into any agreement for employment for any specified period of time, or to enter into an employment agreement that in any way modifies the at-will status of employment at O3A.

This manual sets out general guidelines for personnel policies and practices, rather than statements of specific treatment in specific situations. The manual is not intended to be a promise of specific treatment or contract of employment, should not be interpreted with this degree of specificity, and is not a contract promising specific treatment in a specific circumstance. Although we try to make decisions that are consistent with the manual, there may be times when it is not appropriate to do so, and the agency retains the right to deviate from the manual as circumstances warrant.

Please direct questions regarding this manual to your supervisor or to Human Resources.

1.03 POLICY CHANGES

The O3A reserves the right to interpret, change, or rescind policies within this manual. The O3A will communicate to staff changes in policies and procedures approved by the Executive Director that are of significant importance to be implemented before Employee Handbook updates.

SECTION 2: EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

2.01 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

O3A values the strengths that a diverse work force offers and is committed to developing an environment that respects differences and accepts varying perspectives and experiences. As an organization, we are committed to creating an environment that is equitable and inclusive in all of our employment practices.

O3A provides equal employment opportunity to all qualified applicants and employees, without regard to race, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, the presence of sensory, mental or physical disability, military or veteran status or any other status protected under federal, state or local law.

This policy of Equal Employment Opportunity applies to all policies and procedures relating to recruitment and hiring, compensation, benefits, termination and all other terms and conditions of employment.

2.02 DEFINITIONS

The following employment definitions are adopted by the O3A.

Trial Service Employee: The period of employment beginning with the date of hire and continuing for six (6) months is defined as the trial service period. The purpose of the trial service period is to allow the O3A the opportunity to review the work performance and conduct of new employees and employees who have been promoted or reinstated to ensure that the employee is meeting the O3A's expectations and standards. Successful completion of the trial service period does not change or alter the employee's status as an at will employee.

Anniversary Date: Employees will be assigned a new hire anniversary date based upon their date of hire. That date will be used for scheduling annual performance reviews, merit increases and for leave accruals. The anniversary date does not change during an employee's continuous service to the agency, even if there are changes to position assignment.

Per Diem Employee: An O3A employee who is hired on an hourly basis as needed. Per diem employees do not qualify for the O3A Benefit Package.

Regular Full-Time Employee: An individual appointed to a salaried or hourly position and regularly scheduled to work 40 hours per week.

Regular Part-time Employee: An individual appointed to a salaried or hourly position and regularly scheduled to work less than 40 hours per week.

Temporary Employee: An individual hired for a specific period of time, or for a job of limited duration, paid on an hourly basis, with the understanding that there is no guarantee or expectation of continuation of employment or eligibility for benefits.

Temporary appointments are limited to a maximum of twelve (12) months of continuous employment, with the exception of interns and work study students.

Student Intern/Work Study: A temporary work assignment which allows a student or on-the-job training agency individual to gain work experience in the field. Benefits are not available for these employees, except those required by law.

Volunteer: Non-paid staff assigned to assist with specific programs/services. Volunteers are not eligible for benefits, except those required by law.

Contractors and Subcontractors: An individual contracted for a specific program or service with specific scope of work for a designated time and who are responsible for their own supplies, taxes, etc. These individuals are not employees of the O3A and have no benefits or compensation other than those provided by their employer and/or outlined in their contractual agreement.

Employment Program Trainee/Participant: An individual in a trainee position qualified under an established state or federal employment training program (e.g., Title V or similar employment training program). The O3A employee personnel policies and procedures are adhered to as well as the particular program guidelines. Trainee/Participants may receive leave and other benefits only as allowed by the guidelines for the program in which they are enrolled or are required by law.

Exempt Employees: Employees in positions exempt from minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Exempt employees are paid on a salary basis.

Non-exempt Employees: Employees subject to the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Non-Exempt employees are paid on an hourly basis.

2.03 EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS & INFORMATION

To be considered a viable applicant, an individual must complete an application and appropriate supplemental materials for position openings. The O3A relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as accuracy of other data provided throughout the selection process and employment. Any misrepresentation, falsification, or material omission may result in exclusion of the individual from consideration for employment or, if hired, discipline including termination of employment.

2.04 EMPLOYEE SELECTION

The O3A's overall approach to employee selection decisions is to hire the individual most qualified for each position. O3A is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer (EEOE).

Executive Director Selection

The Executive Director will be selected by and serve at the discretion of the COG. The authority to appoint, hire, or rehire other employees has been vested in the Executive Director, which may be delegated to other managers and supervisors.

O3A Staff Selection

O3A follows a centralized recruitment procedure which guides staff selection. Staff recruitment (whether to fill a vacancy or a new position) must be approved by the Executive Director. Human Resources will work with supervisors to conduct approved staff recruitments following established procedures.

The O3A recognizes the value of promoting strong performers within the agency and will internally post all position opportunities. Employees interested in posted positions must follow application instructions provided by Human Resources in the internal recruitment announcement. The O3A may announce a position opening to the public simultaneously with the internal announcement. The O3A reserves the right to select the candidate it believes is best qualified for the position based on the O3A's assessment.

To be eligible to apply for any position opening, employees must have no disciplinary action on file for the previous 12 months, and their most recent performance evaluation must reflect an overall performance rating of "Satisfactory" and have no critical performance issues identified. Critical performance issues are those issues that must be immediately improved by the employee, or they will lead to disciplinary action or prevent the employee from obtaining future step increases. The O3A reserves the right to consider employees in the above circumstances for position transfers or demotions if such job changes would benefit the organization (e.g., put the employee in a position of lesser responsibility better suited for the employee, move the employee to a position with closer supervision, etc.). The O3A also reserves the right to consider employees in the above circumstances for position transfers if such job transfers are to reasonably accommodate an employee with a disability.

2.05 PRE-EMPLOYMENT AND CONTINUING REQUIREMENTS

Pre-Hire Licensure and Certification

Employees whose work requires a state or national license, registration, certification, or permit will be required to present proof of such prior to employment and at each renewal period. It is the employee's responsibility to provide the O3A with proof of current required license, registration, certification or permit within 2 weeks of the issue date.

O3A employees whose job responsibilities require them to drive to attend meetings, serve clients, or perform other O3A business will be required to provide a copy of a valid driver's license at the time of hire and proof of current auto insurance. The O3A reserves the right to accept out-of-state licensure on a case-by-case basis, but all insurance carried on policies outside the State of Washington must meet the Washington State minimum standards. Additionally, O3A may request a copy of any employee's or applicant's driving abstract for review. In the event of an auto accident,

the employee's insurance is primary.

Employees are responsible to advise O3A of any change in driver's licensing (e.g., suspensions, revocations, arrests for driving-related offenses) that may lead to suspension or revocation of license) or insurance status (e.g., lapse or cancellation of coverage due to moving violations or nonpayment of premiums) on the next business day after the employee learns of such changes. It is the employee's responsibility to provide the O3A with copies of updated licensing and insurance as they are renewed.

Background & Reference Checks

Washington State law requires the O3A to check the background of applicants who may have unsupervised access to vulnerable adults. The O3A will conduct the appropriate background checks regarding licensure, criminal records, and employer references on all applicants completing the final stages of the selection process. Any offers of employment will be rescinded should the applicant fail to satisfactorily pass these checks.

Follow-up background and license checks will occur throughout employment. Continued employment is subject to the passing of these background checks and authorization to perform job duties.

Applicants must notify the O3A of any arrests, any convictions, or any investigations by a government entity that may reasonably affect or prevent them performing any of their job functions. At a minimum, such notification will occur in writing to the Executive Director within 1 business day of the arrest, notification of investigation, or conviction.

I-9 Form

To comply with the Immigration Reform and Control Act, all employees are required to complete the Employment Eligibility Verification form (I-9 form) on their first day of work and provide appropriate original documentation.

2.06 ORIENTATION & TRAINING

Within the first few days of employment, the O3A will conduct an orientation to acquaint employees with co-workers, supervisor, and the overall organization and its mission. This orientation will include information regarding payroll, benefits, safety concerns, policies, etc. Employees will receive on-the-job training specific to their position within their department.

Throughout employment, employees may be required to attend mandatory periodic informational and training programs. The program topics and frequency will vary based on position responsibilities and requirements.

2.07 TRIAL SERVICE PERIOD (NEW HIRES)

Beginning on the first day of employment, all newly hired employees and rehired employees will serve a 6-month training and evaluation trial service period. The trial

service period allows the employee an opportunity to demonstrate their suitability for the position through actual work performance and it provides the employer an opportunity to evaluate the employee's ability to meet the demands of the position and become a contributing member of the O3A. Employees will be evaluated by their supervisor prior to the completion of the trial service period. Trial service period does not include time spent away from the position such as leave without pay status. In the event that a temporary employee moves into a regular staff position, accrued time on temporary status may be applied toward the trial service period.

If circumstances require the need for additional observation, the O3A may extend the trial service period for a specified length of time. The employment of a trial service employee may be terminated with or without cause or notice at any time during the trial service period or extended trial service period and the at-will status continues upon completion of the trial service period. Employees dismissed during the initial six-month trial service period are not eligible to use the O3A grievance procedure.

2.08 TRIAL SERVICE PERIOD (OTHER)

Employees who are promoted, receive lateral job changes, or are demoted will serve a 6-month trial service period. This trial service period will be used to determine the employee's ability to perform the new job responsibilities. During a trial service period resulting from a change in position, the restrictions on usage of annual leave will be waived for employees that were not already on a new-hire trial service when the position change was made. Employees will be evaluated prior to the completion of the trial service period. If circumstances require the need for additional observation, the O3A may extend the trial service period for a specified length of time.

2.09 CONFLICT OF INTEREST/NEPOTISM

To avoid the reality or appearance of improper influence, favor, or conflict of interest, and for reasons relating to supervision, safety, and security, the O3A does not allow individuals related by blood or marriage to be employed where:

1. One of the parties would have authority (or practical power) to supervise, appoint, remove, or discipline the other.
2. Where one party would be responsible for auditing the work of the other.
3. Where there is potential for conflict between the parties or between the interest of one or both parties and the best interest of the O3A.

If two employees marry, become related, or begin sharing living quarters with one another, and in the O3A's judgment the potential problems noted above exist or reasonably could exist, only one employee will be permitted to remain in the O3A's employment unless modification of job duties, positions or responsibilities, as determined in the sole discretion of the Executive Director, can be made to eliminate the potential problem. If termination of one employee is necessary, the decision as to which employee will remain with the O3A will be made by the two employees within thirty (30) calendar days of the date they marry, become related, or begin sharing living quarters

with each other. If no decision is made during this time, the O3A reserves the right to select the employee whose employment will be terminated using any lawful criteria.

In the event that a client is a relative of an employee and there is a potential conflict of interest (e.g. the employee has a power of attorney guardianship, or representative payee for that client), that client will be assigned to an employee who does not have a conflict of interest.

2.10 REHIRES

When former employees apply to be rehired, they will be evaluated on the same basis as all other applicants. Consideration will be given to past job performance and the circumstances surrounding termination of previous employment.

Employees rehired within 30 consecutive days after separation will have their service bridged. This means that the employee may retain the original date of hire and may continue to accrue time off benefits at the previous rate. Insurance benefits will continue as stipulated in the plan documents. Employees rehired after a break of service of more than 30 consecutive days will receive a new date of hire (and anniversary date) and will be treated the same as new employees for all benefits with the exception of sick leave for employees rehired within 12 months of separation (see 6.04 Sick Leave).

2.11 EMPLOYMENT REFERENCES

Supervisors and managers may provide accurate written letters of recommendation when requested by an employee. Supervisors and managers providing employment references to other employers will obtain an information release waiver prior to releasing employment-related information on current or past employees. Human Resources can assist in verifying that a release form has been completed and placed in the employee's personnel file or in providing a form to the requesting employer should they not have one. Any supervisor or manager who provides a letter or reference shall provide a copy of the letter to Human Resources. Any supervisor or manager who provides a verbal employment reference shall inform Human Resources of the reference by providing the date and time of the call, the identity of the person they spoke with (i.e., name, employer, and position with employer), and a brief synopsis of the information provided.

2.12 OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees are prohibited from accepting outside employment which interferes with daily work assignments and general responsibilities set by the O3A, where confidential client or O3A information may be disclosed, or where outside employment activities conflict with Agency goals and programs. Employees must report all outside employment to their supervisor and to Human Resources prior to accepting and commencing outside employment.

Outside employment shall not occur during the employee's established working hours

with the O3A, unless the employee, during the period when such employment occurs, is on either annual leave or leave without pay. O3A employees are strictly prohibited from using O3A equipment and tools and from engaging in work for outside employers while on or off the O3A worksite or while being compensated for O3A employment.

2.13 EMPLOYEE PRIVACY AND PERSONNEL FILES

O3A maintains employment related files for its employees. These files are property of the O3A. The main personnel file primarily contains the following type of information:

- Address, telephone number, and emergency contacts;
- Application and/or resume, reference letters or other materials submitted or created during the employment process;
- Employment history information, including titles and dates of positions held, salaries, dates and amounts of raises, changes in status (e.g., full-time, part-time, temporary), resignation and hires;
- Copies of licensure and vehicle insurance;
- Performance evaluations;
- Records of investigations, corrective counseling or disciplinary action;
- Personnel action items such as insurance enrollment/change records and personal information changes;
- Other documents pertaining to employment such as letters of commendation, training records, etc.

All medically-related information will be maintained in a separate employee medical file. Information in the medical file may be disclosed only to the employee, to a supervisor on a need-to-know basis, individuals given access by the employee's written consent, or as otherwise required or allowed by state and federal law.

An employee who wishes to review their personnel records should contact Human Resources to arrange a time. These records may be reviewed only in the presence of a designated O3A official during normal business hours. Where an employee disputes information contained in their personnel file, the employee may submit a written request to the Executive Director that the information be changed. If this request is denied, the employee may request that a statement containing their correction or rebuttal be placed in the file.

While personnel files are kept confidential in accordance with applicable laws, information contained in personnel files may be audited by governing or funding agencies.

Employees should notify Human Resources of any personal information changes.

2.14 INTERNSHIPS

To assist in the development of future workforces, the O3A may choose to participate in school-related internship programs. These programs must be affiliated with an

educational institution and provide practical application of what the student is learning in school. All internships must receive approval from the Executive Director prior to commencement. Work will be performed under the supervision of an assigned appropriate mentor. The assigned supervisor will be responsible for completing school-related progress reports.

While internships are generally unpaid positions, interns will be required to comply with many of the processes, policies and procedures required of regular employees and must sign the internship letter of understanding. Internship programs are considered stand-alone programs and in no way entitle the student to a position at the conclusion of the internship period.

2.15 VOLUNTEERS

O3A may, from time-to-time, utilize volunteers to assist within the organization. All volunteer assignments will receive approval from the Executive Director prior to commencement. Volunteers may receive reimbursement for specific portions of their volunteer service, such as business-related mileage reimbursement. A current employee may not volunteer in any capacity related to their paid position. While volunteer positions are unpaid, volunteers will be required to comply with many of the processes, policies and procedures required of regular employees and must sign the volunteer letter of understanding.

2.16 REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION OF DISABILITIES AND RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

Disability Accommodation

The O3A complies fully with its duty to provide a reasonable accommodation to allow employees with physical, sensory, or mental disabilities to perform the essential functions of their job.

Under federal law, a disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Major life activities include such things as breathing, eating, sleeping, learning, reading, concentrating, lifting, communicating, and walking.

Under Washington State law, a disability is a diagnosable physical, sensory, or mental impairment that has more than a trivial effect on an employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the job.

A reasonable accommodation is one that the O3A can reasonably provide, given its resources and obligations, that does not create an undue burden, significantly impair the O3A's services, or create legitimate safety concerns. Depending on the circumstances, reasonable accommodations may involve, but are not limited to: new or different equipment used as part of the job, modification of the workplace or facilities, temporary light or modified duty, elimination of non-essential functions, a modification in the shifts, days, or hours worked, unpaid leave, or reassignment to another available shift.

Religious Accommodation

The O3A complies fully with its duty to provide a reasonable accommodation of an employee's sincerely held religious beliefs, unless the O3A believes such an accommodation would create an undue hardship.

Depending on the circumstances, reasonable accommodation requests may involve, but are not limited to: complying with dietary restrictions, a modification in the shifts, days, or hours worked, days off for religious holidays or to attend religious services or ceremonies, or modifications in the dress or grooming code for employees.

Procedure to Request Reasonable Accommodation

Any employee who seeks reasonable accommodation for a disability or sincerely held religious belief or practice should make this request to Human Resources.

A request for reasonable accommodation will trigger the interactive process. The interactive process may involve communications between you, the O3A, and either your medical providers (disability) or clergy (religion) to obtain information on your disability or religious beliefs/practices, the limitations it entails, the likely duration of the limitations, and what accommodations can reasonably be offered you. You may be required to sign releases or disclosures that will allow your medical providers to communicate with the O3A regarding a medical condition for which you are seeking reasonable accommodation.

The O3A will decide whether any accommodation can be reasonably offered after obtaining relevant information from you, your supervisors, and your medical providers or clergy.

Personal information that you submit about your limitations will be kept confidential, except for cases where (i) your supervisor needs to be informed of work restrictions or necessary accommodations, (ii) first aid or safety personnel need to be informed to provide emergency treatment, or (iii) government officials need to be informed in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act or other laws. In such cases, personal information is only released to the minimum extent necessary, and you are assured that your information will be used in ways that are consistent with applicable laws.

Any employee who feels that they have been denied reasonable accommodation in violation of this policy should report this concern to the Executive Director. The O3A will review the merits of any allegation reported to it. This may include an investigation by a qualified investigator who is either an employee or a professional employed outside of the O3A.

If the allegation is found to have merit, the O3A will take prompt action to correct the unlawful conduct and remedy any violations that have occurred. Such corrective action may include disciplinary action against those employees found to have violated policy.

SECTION 3: GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

3.01 GENERAL EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Employees are expected to use good judgment in performing their job and in representing the agency. Unsatisfactory employee conduct will be handled through disciplinary procedures. The following are general guidelines for employee conduct:

- Ensure that our interactions and communications with each other, clients, and the general public present a professional and caring image.
- Respect the privacy and human dignity of all persons with whom you have professional contact.
- Demonstrate mutual respect toward co-workers, colleagues, clients, and the general public.
- Recognize that each work assignment is important and worthy of our best efforts.
- Support and work with colleagues for the good of the agency and to the benefit of the clients that the O3A serves.
- Share pertinent program information with fellow employees and colleagues to ensure quality service delivery, and to improve communication within the O3A.
- Accomplish work in a timely, accurate, and professional manner.
- Present a neat, professional, business-like appearance at all times.
- Report immediately to your supervisor problems with a client, colleague, or member of the general public.
- Abide by all confidentiality standards when handling client or other confidential information.
- Exercise good judgment by confining personal telephone calls, conversations, and visits to non-work hours.
- Adhere to policies, procedures, safety rules and safe work practices.
- Comply with directions from supervisors.
- Preserve and protect the O3A's equipment, grounds, facilities, and resources.
- Follow the O3A's ethics policy and professional ethics standards.

3.02 ETHICS POLICY: INTERACTIONS WITH PEOPLE SERVED BY O3A PROGRAMS

As a public agency, we are entrusted with the public's confidence to provide service with the highest ethical standards. This policy is designed to guide employees on the standards of ethical behavior, particularly as those behaviors relate to interaction with people served by the O3A's programs and with co-workers. The following guidelines are intended to supplement and explain, and not to supersede or conflict with the ethical standards set forth in the Revised Code of Washington ("RCWs").

Definitions

Staff - for the purposes of this ethics policy all persons who act on behalf of the O3A, whether paid or unpaid, are included.

Immediate Family - for the purposes of this ethics policy means:

- 1) Spouse, domestic partner;
- 2) Any parent, parent-in-law, child, stepchild, or son/daughter-in law or;
- 3) Any sibling, uncle, aunt, cousin, niece, or nephew.

Client - indicates an individual who receives services through the O3A or its contractors.

General Staff Member Conduct

- Staff should focus on the performance of their duties and the provision of quality community services.
- Staff should seek to find and employ efficient and economical ways to provide services.
- Staff should be aware that they are seen as a representative of the O3A when they are acting within the scope of their job responsibilities.
- Staff must never intentionally act outside the scope of their job responsibilities in representing the O3A, nor portray themselves as acting on behalf of the O3A unless authorized to do so.
- Staff must treat every person fairly and equally with courtesy and respect, and without discrimination.
- Staff must not dispense special favors or privileges to anyone, and should never accept from others personal payment of any kind for providing O3A services, and should never accept for themselves or family any favors or benefits, which might give the appearance to reasonable persons as influencing the performance of their O3A duties.
- Staff must avoid the appearance of improper influence and refrain from ever receiving, soliciting or accepting gifts, gratuities, favors or anything of value for themselves, or their families, which is intended to influence the performance of their duties or gives the appearance of undue influence.
- Staff must never attempt to influence others in the performance of their duties by any means which are not appropriate or proper.
- Staff must never use nor allow the use of O3A property or funds for private purposes, for purposes other than those authorized or permitted, or for purposes which could mislead clients or damage the reputation and integrity of the O3A.
- O3A property, equipment, money, services, and staff time are for O3A purposes only and shall not be appropriated for personal or private use.

Service Provision

- Staff are to provide client services within the scope of the program standards, policies and/or procedures. Clients who are in need of assistance beyond the scope of a particular program's standard will be referred to other available services and/or providers.
- The O3A strives to provide fair and equitable community services. Staff members should use their best judgment to ensure their actions do not create actual or apparent favoritism or conflict of interest.

- Staff must refer clients who need services of guardianship, power of attorney, protective payee, or other substitute decision making (such as health care or financial decisions) to available resources in the community.
- Falsification of client financial or eligibility status in order to obtain services is prohibited.

Client Respect and Well Being

- Staff are to preserve the privacy of the client by refraining from visiting or contacting the client except for purposes of fulfilling their professional responsibilities.
- Obscene, profane, disrespectful, or inappropriate language or behavior are prohibited while in the presence of the client, their representative, or family member.
- Staff should be alert for indications of situations that jeopardize or compromise a client's right to be free of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 1. Outright physical harm to a person,
 2. Verbal abuse which may lead to physical abuse or neglect.
 3. Client's loss of decision-making or choice with regard to lifestyle (e.g., refusal to allow visitors, refusal to allow client to come and go as they choose, etc.)
 4. Unauthorized use of client assets.
 5. Withholding of food, care, or medication by the caregiver.

Mandatory Reporting

While it depends on your responsibilities and credentials, many Staff are “Mandatory Reporters” under the law and must report any suspected abuse to appropriate authorities. If abuse, neglect, or exploitation is suspected, staff should document their concerns. To report suspected abuse of an individual living in a nursing home, boarding home (including assisted living), or adult family home, staff should call the DSHS Complaint Resolution Unit. To report suspected abuse of an individual living on their own or with family, staff should call the DSHS Home and Community Services Office. Staff may inform the client that outside assistance is being sought. The timing and detail of such notice will be sensitive to the condition and needs of the client. Staff should immediately notify their supervisor when a Mandatory Report as described above is made.

Confidentiality

Staff may not disclose any information obtained during the course of employment as it relates to clients or the provision of services to clients even after the staff person has terminated their relationship with the agency. This prohibition does not apply to information that is shared with DSHS or subcontractors for purposes directly connected with the administration of O3A programs or the provision of services to clients. Such purposes include, but are not limited to, determining eligibility, providing a service, and participating in an audit. With written approval from the O3A Executive Director, staff may disclose information for research, statistical, monitoring, and evaluation purposes conducted by appropriate federal agencies and DSHS. Certain client information is considered protected health information under state and federal law, including the federal Health Information Portability Accountability Act. Each employee is required to

fully comply with state and federal laws regarding protected health and private information.

Client Gifts/Reimbursement

- Staff may not accept gifts or items of value from clients, or from friends or family of clients, other than for official donations made to the agency. In some cases, it may be clear that to not accept a gift will greatly offend the client or person offering the gift on behalf of the client. In these cases, the staff member should thank the client graciously but make it clear that gifts are not necessary or expected and request that in the future the client not offer personal gifts. The staff member should turn any accepted gift over to their supervisor for use by the agency or for donation to a recognized charity.
- Failure to provide services or make referrals until a client returns a favor or reimburses a staff member for the service or referral is prohibited.

Client Finances and Property

- Staff should advise clients whenever possible about financial obligations the client will incur as a result of referral and receipt of a service/benefit from a particular service provider.
- In general, staff should not handle the money or property of clients in the normal course of business. However, there are times when handling money or property may be necessary, such as when a client makes a cash or property donation to the agency. Any time staff members handle the money or property of a client, a receipt documenting the amount of money or value of property handled and the nature of the transaction should be signed by both the client and staff person. Documentation should be retained within the client's record with a copy to the client and/or their representative. Money and related documentation is mailed to fiscal department for deposit and processing. Donations of property are documented and reported to the Executive Director for appropriate disposition.

Conflict of Interest

- Staff are to accept and assist any client in a manner appropriate to the staff member's position. If a potential conflict of interest exists between staff and the client, the staff person shall present such conflict to their immediate supervisor for resolution.
 - If a client is "Immediate Family" of a staff member, that staff member will notify their supervisor and disqualify his/herself from direct service provision for that client.
 - A staff member who has had a personal relationship with a person who is being assigned as a prospective client must inform their supervisor of the relationship so that the client may be assigned to an alternate staff member if there is a potential conflict of interest.
 - Staff and relatives or friends of staff may not engage in any financial transactions with former or present clients of the agency. Such activities include, but are not limited to: real estate, insurance or other investment activities.
 - Staff may not ask a client to purchase any item or service belonging to or sold by staff or immediate family of the staff member.
 - Staff may not receive any form of payment from any source for a client referral.
-

- Staff are not to use any information obtained in the course of their employment for the purpose of private personal economic gain by that staff member or any other person.
- Staff will notify their supervisor, in writing, prior to serving on any Board that is affiliated with the O3A.

Violations of Ethics Policy

Violations of this Ethics Policy are considered a violation of the terms and conditions of employment. Such a violation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The actions and remedies of the Personnel Policies are not to be presumed exhaustive and do not replace or exclude civil or criminal sanctions.

3.03 POLICY AGAINST UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION

Policy Against Unlawful Discrimination

The O3A is an equal employment opportunity employer. This means that the O3A does not discriminate against any employee on the basis of protected class status. All employees will be recruited, selected, trained, promoted, compensated, and if appropriate, disciplined or terminated without regard to race, color, religion or creed, ethnicity, national origin, sex, age (over 40), marital status, pregnancy or maternity, sexual orientation or gender identity, veteran status, use of a guide or service animal, genetic information, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability (unless based on a bona fide occupational qualification), or status as the victim of domestic violence, sexual abuse, or stalking.

Unlawful discrimination occurs when the O3A bases a decision it has made about an employee on the person's protected class status (e.g., race, religion, sex), rather than the person's qualifications, conduct, performance, or other lawful factors. Your protected class status will not be the basis for any decision the O3A makes about you.

Any employee who feels that they have been subject to unlawful discrimination in violation of this policy should report this concern to Human Resources. If you believe that Human Resources is involved in the violation, or you otherwise do not feel comfortable reporting to this person, the employee should report this concern to the Executive Director.

The O3A will review the merits of any allegation reported to the agency. As discussed below, this may include an investigation by a qualified investigator who is either an employee or a professional employed outside of the O3A.

If the allegation is found to have merit, the O3A will take prompt action to correct the unlawful conduct and remedy any violations that have occurred. Such corrective action may include disciplinary action against those employees found to have violated policy.

Policy Against Unlawful Harassment

It is the policy of the O3A to provide a work environment for its employees that is free from unlawful harassment based upon any protected class as identified by local, state and federal law. Unlawful harassment negatively affects morale, motivation, and job performance. The O3A is committed to ensuring that the practices and conduct of all its employees comply with the requirements of federal and state laws against harassment. To that end, the O3A expects all employees to work in a manner that respects the feelings and dignity of their co-workers.

Unlawful harassment can come from a supervisory employee, a colleague, or a person outside the workplace.

Definitions

Unlawful harassment occurs when conduct is directed at protected class status (e.g., race, religion, age) that is unwelcome, offensive to a reasonable person, and sufficiently severe and pervasive to negatively affect an employee's work environment. Conduct may include jokes, remarks, comments, pictures, and images that are spoken to, shared with, or made in the presence of other employees. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment, or has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or otherwise adversely affects the individual's employment opportunities.

Sexual harassment is a form of unlawful harassment and is defined as behavior of a sexual nature that is unwelcome, offensive to a reasonable person, and sufficiently severe and pervasive to negatively affect an employee's work environment. These may include sexual advances and other verbal or physical advances or conduct made when: (a) submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (b) submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individuals; or (c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Examples of sexual harassment include:

- Unwelcome or unwanted flirtations, propositions, or advances. These include patting, pinching, brushing up against, hugging, cornering, blocking, kissing, fondling, putting one's arms around another, or any other similar physical contact considered unacceptable by another individual.
- Verbal behavior such as comments, suggestions, jokes, innuendos, or derogatory remarks based on sex.
- Visual harassment such as leering, whistling, gesturing or posting sexually suggestive or derogatory pictures, cartoons or drawings, including at one's workstation.
- Pressure for sexual favors. This includes subtle or blatant expectations, pressures, or requests for any type of sexual favor accompanied by implied or

stated promise of preferential treatment or negative consequences concerning an individual's employment (such as an employee's performance evaluation, work assignment, advancement, or training opportunities).

Procedure for Reporting Unlawful Harassment

If an employee believes that they have been subject to unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment, the following complaint procedure shall be followed:

If the employee feels comfortable doing so, the matter *may* first be brought to the attention of the offender(s). The employee who feels harassed can tell the offender(s) that the conduct is unwelcome, is inappropriate, and needs to stop immediately. If the employee/volunteer has addressed the matter with the offender(s) and such communication is not successful in stopping the harassment, the employee/volunteer should proceed to report the matter as set forth below.

If the employee does not feel comfortable confronting the offenders, or confronting the offenders was not successful in stopping the harassment, the employee should report their concerns to Human Resources. If the employee believes Human Resources is involved in the violation, or otherwise does not feel comfortable reporting to this person, the applicant/employee should report this concern to the Executive Director instead.

The O3A will look into the merits of any allegation reported to it. This may include an investigation by a qualified investigator who is either an employee or a professional employed outside of the O3A.

If the allegation is found to have merit, the O3A will take prompt action to correct the unlawful conduct and remedy any violations that have occurred. Such corrective action may include disciplinary action against those employees found to have violated policy.

Duty of Supervisors

All supervisors are assigned responsibility for implementing this policy, ensuring compliance with and knowledge of its terms, and for taking immediate and appropriate corrective action if they witness inappropriate behavior or receive a complaint. Supervisors must open and maintain channels of communication to permit employees to raise concerns of sexual or other harassment without fear of retaliation, stop any observed harassment, and treat harassment matters with sensitivity, confidentiality, and objectivity. A supervisor's failure to carry out these responsibilities may result in discipline up to and including termination.

Policy Against Unlawful Retaliation

The O3A does not tolerate unlawful retaliation against employees who engage in protected activities. Retaliation occurs when an employee suffers employment-related adverse consequences as a result of their protected activity.

Protected activities include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- (a) Reporting unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation,

- (b) Cooperating in an internal investigation regarding discrimination, harassment, or retaliation,
- (c) Testifying in a legal proceeding regarding discrimination, harassment, or retaliation,
- (d) Requesting reasonable accommodation for a disability or sincerely held religious belief or practice,
- (e) Taking leave as authorized by federal or Washington State law;
- (f) Reporting workplace safety issues,
- (g) Reporting financial irregularities,
- (h) Reporting criminal misconduct,
- (i) Filing a worker's compensation claim,
- (j) Serving on a jury,
- (k) Engaging in union-related activity such as bargaining a contract or filing grievances or unfair labor practice complaints.

Employees do not receive protection for actions taken in bad faith. Bad faith is defined as an employee/volunteer providing false information with knowledge that the information provided is false.

Adverse employment-related consequences include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) Termination of employment,
- (b) Demotion in position, responsibilities, or pay,
- (c) Suspension,
- (d) Other disciplinary action,
- (e) Reassignment to a less desirable position with less desirable duties,
- (f) Reassignment of workspace or office location.

Procedure for Reporting Unlawful Retaliation

Any employee who feels that they have been subject to unlawful retaliation in violation of this policy should report this concern to Human Resources. If the employee believes Human Resources is involved in the violation, or otherwise does not feel comfortable reporting to this person, the employee/volunteer should report this concern to the Executive Director.

The O3A will review the merits of any allegation reported to the agency. This may include an investigation by a qualified investigator who is either an employee or a professional employed outside of the O3A.

If the allegation is found to have merit, the O3A will take prompt action to correct the unlawful conduct and remedy any violations that have occurred. Such corrective action may include disciplinary action against those employees found to have violated policy.

All supervisory employees are assigned responsibility for implementing this policy, ensuring compliance with and knowledge of its terms, taking immediate and appropriate corrective action if they witness inappropriate behavior, and notifying Human Resources if they receive a retaliation complaint. A supervisor's failure to carry out these responsibilities may result in discipline.

3.04 DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

General

The O3A is concerned about the effects that drugs and alcohol may have on safe and productive job performance. We also recognize that employees who are affected in their ability to perform their jobs safely and productively jeopardize the integrity of the workplace and the achievement of our mission. Therefore, abiding by the provisions of this policy is a condition of employment with O3A.

Prohibited Activities The prohibitions below apply to alcohol and drugs that are that are illegal under federal or state (although possession and use of marijuana is now legal under Washington State law, it is still prohibited under federal law):

- Performing work with a presence of drugs (including marijuana) or alcohol in an employee's system (other than those that are medically prescribed and approved by a physician and used as prescribed, or purchased over the counter and used as directed).
- The unlawful use, possession, manufacture, distribution, transfer, or trafficking of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances in any amount or in any manner on O3A property or in O3A vehicles at any time, whether or not engaged in O3A business.
- The use, in any way, of O3A property, equipment or the employee's position to make or traffic alcohol, drugs or controlled substances.
- Any other use, possession or trafficking of alcohol, drugs or controlled substances in a manner which is detrimental to the interest of the organization, creates a safety concern or unduly interferes with job performance.
- Refusing to submit to a drug or alcohol test requested by O3A.
- Tampering with a test sample or obstruction of the test process.

Employees may use or consume prescription drugs while on the job when taken pursuant to a valid physician's order, or over-the-counter drugs when taken as directed on the label, only when there is no possibility that such use may impair the employee's ability to safely perform his or her job or may adversely affect his or her safety, client/public safety, or the safety of other employees. It is the employee's responsibility to be aware of the effects of any medication that he or she may be taking and to be alert for any evidence of impairment. Employees taking medication which may affect their performance or abilities must advise their supervisor of this fact.

Violations of these prohibitions will lead to discipline, up to and including termination.

Reasonable Suspicion Testing

The O3A is authorized to require drug and/or alcohol testing when it has a reasonable suspicion of violation of this policy. Reasonable suspicion is suspicion based on specific personal observations of the employee's appearance, behavior, speech, or odor. Reasonable suspicion will be confirmed by a supervisor or manager who has received training on when an employee is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Requests for Retesting

An employee who is requested by the O3A to submit to drug and/or alcohol testing will be placed on Administrative Leave for the period of testing and waiting for test results. This leave will be unpaid if the employee tests positive and will be paid leave if the employee tests negative. Should an employee elect to dispute a positive test, the employee may request a re-test of the same sample and that request must be made within forty-eight (48) hours of the positive test result. The expense for re-testing must be pre-paid by the employee.

Type of Tests

The O3A-designated lab has the discretion to determine its testing methods and the standards for determining whether a test is "positive" or "negative." O3A and laboratory will provide quality control procedures and will assure the maximum confidentiality and chain of custody.

Confidentiality/Privacy

The fact that a drug and/or alcohol test has been requested or administered, the results of that test, and communications with the employee regarding substance use and abuse, are considered private and confidential unless the employee tests positive and disciplinary action results from the positive test.

Disciplinary Action

Employees are subject to appropriate discipline and/or termination for violating the drug free workplace policy. Policy violations also include:

- a. **Refusal to Allow Test.** The O3A may request an employee to consent to testing, to permit the test results to be analyzed, and to release such results to authorized company representatives, subject to any applicable state or local laws and regulations. An employee's failure to consent and submit to requested testing will subject the employee to disciplinary action including termination.
- b. **Positive Test Results.** An employee who tests positive for the presence of alcohol or drugs in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action including termination.
- c. **Off-The-Job Conduct.** An employee's off-the-job use of illegal drugs or unauthorized substances which adversely affects the employee's job performance or jeopardizes the safety of other employees or the security of the O3A's premises also violates this policy. An employee who is convicted of or pleads guilty or no contest to off-the-job manufacture, sale, purchase, transfer, use or possession of

illegal drugs or unauthorized substances will be subject to disciplinary action including termination if, in the view of management the O3A, the circumstances warrant. Any employee convicted of a violation of a criminal drug statute that is workplace-related must notify the Executive Director within five working days of the conviction.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The O3A offers EAP to its employees as an additional benefit. The EAP provides professional, confidential counseling to employees experiencing personal issues. The O3A will not discipline or terminate an employee who voluntarily seeks EAP assistance before there is a performance problem or positive drug or alcohol test result. However, all employees (including those seeking EAP assistance) must be free of drugs and alcohol at work and comply with the O3A's other work rules and performance standards. The O3A notes that any employee who fails to do so is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

3.05 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

The O3A prohibits violence in the workplace and is committed to maintaining an environment free of all forms of violence, including verbal or physical threats, intimidation, and abusive statements or any conduct that causes others to feel intimidated or unsafe.

Employees are prohibited from bringing weapons to work or on O3A premises, including the O3A's parking lot. The O3A reserves the right to inspect, with or without notice, all persons' packages, automobiles, and other items that come on to O3A property. The O3A encourages its employees to raise workplace safety concerns with their immediate supervisor. If the supervisor is unavailable, or if the complaints remain unresolved after talking with the supervisor, or if the nature of the complaint is such that the employee does not feel he or she can discuss the complaint with his or her supervisor, the employee may make a complaint to any supervisor or member of the Leadership Team.

The O3A prohibits the following by way of example:

- Any act or threat of violence made by an employee against another person's life, health, well-being, family, or property.
- Any act or threat of violence, including, but not limited to, intimidation, harassment, or coercion.
- Any act or threat of violence that endangers the safety of employees, clients, vendors, contractors, or the general public.
- Any act or threat of violence made directly or indirectly by words, gestures, or symbols.
- Use or possession of a weapon on the organization's premises or while conducting agency business.

Upon receiving a complaint, the O3A will promptly investigate the matter to determine relevant facts and circumstances. Information about any complaint will be treated as confidentially as possible, consistent with proper investigation and responsive action. Based on its investigation, the O3A will take immediate and appropriate corrective action. Individuals who lodge good faith complaints or who participate in an O3A investigation will not be retaliated against or otherwise treated adversely for having done so.

Orders of Protection/Restraining Orders

An employee who has obtained an order of protection or restraining order against another individual is strongly encouraged to notify their supervisor and provide a copy of the official restraining order document. If the individual is restrained from coming to O3A or contacting the employee at work, the employee must notify the O3A of the order. The O3A may also request a picture from the employee of the individual listed on the restraining order. The O3A may take whatever steps it deems appropriate to ensure the safety of the workplace. The mandates of the restraining order will be followed until it has expired, or an alternative document has been provided which changes the status of the order.

Public Contact

The O3A strives to maintain a safe and secure workplace and does not tolerate violent, threatening, or abusive treatment of employees by clients or members of the public. Employees who feel they are being treated inappropriately or in a threatening manner by another individual should politely remove themselves from the situation and immediately inform their supervisor or, in the absence of their supervisor, another available supervisor.

The O3A Response

When the O3A becomes aware of a potentially threatening situation that violates the Workplace Violence policy or creates a safety issue, management will undertake an assessment of the risk and implement a safety response plan specific to the circumstances of the threat. A response plan may include any of the following:

- If circumstances warrant, the O3A may pursue an order of protection/restraining order against the threatening individual.
- Post a picture or other identifying information at the front desk area to alert individuals monitoring incoming traffic.
- Alert necessary personnel to the situation (which will include, at a minimum, all O3A Leadership Team members and executive management of other service contractors located in the building).
- Review existing security systems and procedures.
- Identify exit/escape plans for potentially targeted individuals.
- Remind staff of the universal office evacuation system.
- Consult with local authorities for further advice, as needed.

3.06 COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

General Policy

The O3A affirms that informal and open communication is essential to the effectiveness and well-being of the O3A's employees and operations. Therefore, all O3A personnel including the Executive Director will adhere to an "open-door" policy in which they are reasonably accessible and available for dialogue with other employees, clients, contractors, community partners and the general public. O3A management staff will insure that employees receive all communications that are necessary for them to carry out their work responsibilities.

Management Bulletins and Information Memoranda

Copies of Management Bulletins (MB) and Information Memoranda (IM) received from the Aging and Long-Term Support Administration (AL TSA), and MB's or IM's generated by O3A staff, are distributed via email to the appropriate supervisors for distribution as needed.

Public Disclosure Requests

The Executive Director shall serve as the Agency's Public Disclosure Officer. In keeping with the requirements of RCW 42.17 -.260, -290, -300, and -320 (Public Records), all requests made by members of the public to O3A staff for disclosure of public documents, in part or in full, shall be referred to the Executive Director. The Executive Director has the discretion to delegate this function.

Public Statements

No employee will speak for or on behalf of O3A, the Executive Director or COG regarding Agency matters without specific prior approval or designation of the Executive Director. The Executive Director may choose to designate a staff person as a spokesperson for the Agency on specific issues or topics. When designated as a spokesperson or in public statements and actions as an individual, an employee will be accurate, exercise proper restraint and show respect for the opinions of others. When speaking as an individual about O3A, the employee must specify that their comments are made as an individual member of the public, and that their statements are not authorized by or on behalf of O3A.

Representing the O3A

Employees representing the O3A at meetings, professional conferences, etc., will always represent the O3A's interests. The O3A's mission and values should be stressed whenever possible.

3.07 NON-SMOKING & NON-VAPING

Smoking and vaping is prohibited in all O3A offices. To comply with Washington State law, employees wishing to smoke or vape during their breaks or lunch periods must do so at least 25 feet from any public entrances, exits, windows, and ventilation intakes.

Employees are required to properly dispose of cigarette butts, both for safety and to help avoid unsightly litter on agency premises.

3.08 SELLING AND SOLICITATION

To provide freedom from pressure, embarrassment, and work interruptions for employees and customers, the O3A does not permit solicitation or distribution of literature by persons not employed by the O3A in work areas or by O3A employees during work hours. This prohibition includes charity solicitors, insurance salespersons, initiative or ballot petitions, union organizers, survey or questionnaire activity, or any other form of solicitation or distribution. Specifically, prohibited activities include, but are not limited to:

- The solicitation of any funds or money for whatever purpose and in any form unless the solicitation is agency sponsored and has the approval of the Executive Director, such as O3A benefit plans.
- The passing of literature or other written material that does not have to do with O3A business operations.
- The sale of articles, display of articles for sale, or taking of orders for merchandise.

Employee solicitation for charitable and/or community-supportive events is permitted during non-working time, in non-working areas used only by Agency employees. Employees should utilize non-obtrusive methods of solicitation such as notices on employee bulletin boards and placing items in the kitchen area/snack bar. Employees may not solicit for any purpose during their own or another employee's work time. Work time is defined as the time an employee spends performing their duties and does not include break periods or meal periods. The O3A reserves the right to disallow specific employee solicitations it believes to be inappropriate.

3.09 POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

O3A recognizes the rights of its employees, as private citizens, to express their political views, to pursue legitimate involvement in the political system, and to vote as they please, provided that all this occurs during the employee's non-working time. No O3A employee shall expend public funds, or supplies, or work towards the campaign of any candidate or issue while on O3A time unless the activity is permitted by law and approved by the Executive Director.

In order to be respectful of all political views, and to keep the O3A free from any appearance of partisanship, employees are expected to refrain from political discussions in shared offices and open shared workspaces. Employees are also expected to refrain from displaying posters or signage supporting particular political candidates or political issues in O3A offices, on O3A premises, and when driving on behalf of the agency.

3.10 RESPONSIBILITY FOR AGENCY PROPERTY

Staff members who receive keys or keypad information will be the sole proprietors of such keys or information. Key-pad combinations will not be given to individuals outside employment of the O3A. Duplicates of keys will be made only by the office administrator or designee of each office. A list of keys will be kept on file by management of each office. Employees will return keys upon termination of employment with the O3A.

O3A property may not be removed from agency premises except in the ordinary course of performing duties. Taking O3A property without permission is considered theft. Any employee who is aware of another employee stealing is expected to immediately report such behavior to a supervisor. Violation of this policy is a serious offense and will result in the appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

In addition, when an employee leaves employment with the O3A, the employee must return all O3A-related information, property, and equipment that the employee has in their possession. Work products (not limited to client files) and computer files are the property of the O3A and the State of Washington and will not be destroyed by the employee who is terminating employment. Legal action may be taken against employees who willfully destroy, delete, or remove O3A property, files, or equipment.

3.11 PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The O3A strives to establish and maintain a professional business atmosphere sensitive to the needs and perspectives of our clients. The image and conduct of the agency's employees play a key role in establishing a professional business atmosphere. Employees are expected to be neat and professional in appearance at all times. Employees are expected to use good judgment and dress according to the assignment of the day (i.e., more casual dress for labor intensive duties and business attire for meeting settings). Employees are expected to observe good habits of grooming and hygiene at all times, and to avoid personal practices that may prove offensive to others, including the excessive use of scented products.

If an employee seeks to vary from the personal appearance code for reasons of religious belief or practice, the employee should contact Human Resources to request a reasonable accommodation in compliance with Section 2.16 above.

If there are other questions as to what constitutes proper attire, employees should consult their supervisor. Employees who are inappropriately dressed may receive corrective counseling regarding their attire and may be sent home to change their attire. Employees who are directed to leave work to correct their attire will not be paid for such time away from work. Further violations of the policy will be addressed with progressive discipline.

3.12 DRIVER SAFETY

The safety and well-being of our employees is of critical importance to the Agency. We therefore each have a responsibility to not only protect ourselves when on the road but also should do our part to protect those around us. Employees that are required to drive on O3A business at any time will be expected to consistently follow all the procedures below:

- Employees are expected to follow all driving laws and safety rules such as adherence to posted speed limits and directional signs, use of turn signals and avoidance of confrontational or aggressive behavior while driving.
- Employees are expected to wear seat belts at all times while in a moving vehicle being used for Agency business whether they are the driver or a passenger.
- Use of handheld cell phones, whether personal or Agency-owned, while behind the wheel of a moving vehicle being used on Agency business is strictly prohibited. The use of hands-free technology may be an alternative if necessary.
- Use of alcohol, drugs, or other substances, that in any way impair driving ability, is prohibited.
- Employees should never allow anyone to ride in any part of the vehicle not specifically intended for passenger use and/or any seat that does not include a working seat belt.
- Employees must promptly report any accidents to local law enforcement as well as to the Agency in accordance with O3A established procedures.
- Employees are required to notify their supervisor if their driver's license or personal auto insurance is revoked, canceled, restricted, or suspended.
- In the event of an auto accident, the employee's insurance is primary.

3.13 CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

All O3A employees are required to keep client information in the strictest confidence and to not disclose that information except in the course of providing services to the client or in administering O3A programs. Employees shall comply with all applicable confidentiality requirements of state and federal funders.

Client information includes information such as name, address, health or medical information, social security, or other identifying numbers. Client information should not be shared with another employee of the O3A unless that employee has a need to know that information in the course of providing services to the client or in administering O3A programs, which means employees must be respectful of client information and take reasonable measures to ensure that client information is not inadvertently shared, whether by loud conversation or leaving material unattended where it can be viewed by others.

Employees will receive training regarding HIPAA and maintaining the confidentiality of client information. Employees violating confidentiality may receive discipline, up to and including termination.

3.14 TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Overview

E-mail, the Internet and computer software are technology that has been provided by O3A for the business use of the agency. It is another tool for the employee to use in business transactions for business communication. The employee is prohibited from the unauthorized copying and distribution of copyrighted materials. If any employee is found to have misused or abused the agency communications systems, the employee may be subject to discipline. If an employee has any questions about whether certain information may be circulated to all employees, the employee will ask their supervisor before doing so.

O3A adheres to the DSHS Information Security Office (ISO) Information Security Standards Manual. All employees issued computer equipment for use on the state network will complete security awareness and HIPAA training upon hire and annually thereafter. The appropriate DSHS security agreement forms and training certificates copies will be retained in the employee's personnel file and Information Services Department files.

Use of Agency Resources

O3A respects the individual privacy of its employees. However, employee privacy does not extend to the employees' work-related conduct, or the use of agency-provided equipment or supplies. Employees should have no expectation of privacy when using Agency equipment or software i.e., computers, cell phones, copiers, fax, email, or voicemail. Managerial personnel have the right and ability to access individual voice mail boxes, e-mail, cell phones, and computers of their direct report employees in accordance with DSHS Information Security Office (ISO) Information Security Standards Manual.

Agency Computer Systems

O3A communication services, computers, and all other electronic systems are for the sole purpose of conducting the Agency's business. These systems are not intended to be used by employees for conducting personal business, playing electronic or video games, storing personal documents, etc., or for any other personal reason. Excessive, continued, or inappropriate use of the Agency's communications and/or computer systems may result in disciplinary action.

It is the further policy of O3A to reserve the right to monitor its employees' use of these communication services, computers, and other equipment to ensure that professional and business performance and conduct standards are maintained.

All information stored in the computers and other electronic record-keeping devices is the property of O3A. Specifically, but without limitation, all documents, data, software, hardware, tapes, taped messages, voice mail, electronic mail, etc., stored in the Agency's communications and computer systems are the property of O3A and may be used and accessed by the Agency at any time and in any manner it deems appropriate. The Agency reserves the rights to access, alter, save, copy, recreate, print, and/or use

this electronic data in any method not prohibited by law.

All electronically based computer programs and software are owned and licensed to O3A and may not be used or copied for personal use or for any non-agency business purpose. Employees are prohibited from installing any unauthorized software or uninstalling any authorized software onto computers owned by O3A.

All portable equipment provided for an employee's use, such as laptops, monitors, webcams, headphones, keyboards, mice, and cellular phones, must be promptly returned to the Agency when such equipment is no longer required, or immediately upon the employee's departure from the Agency. All equipment must be returned in good condition. Any damage beyond reasonable wear and tear shall be the financial responsibility of the employee unless extenuating circumstances e.g., storm damage, damaged during moves, has occurred.

Employees may not use O3A's voice mail, electronic mail, desktop computers, cellular phones, fax machines or the Internet in any way that may be seen as insulting, disruptive, or offensive by other persons or is illegal or unethical.

3.15 CELLULAR TELEPHONES

Agency Issued Cellular Telephones

Cellular telephones are to be acquired by following the O3A purchasing policies and procedures. The following factors shall be considered in all cellular telephone acquisitions:

- Cellular usage cost compared to alternative communication costs.
- Level of employee need and usage.
- Departmental authorization of employee use.
- All O3A-owned cellular equipment shall be inventoried and accounted for on at least an annual basis.

Agency Cellular Telephone Usage Policy

Cellular telephones provided by O3A are intended to be used for O3A business exclusively. Employees should use care to comply with all HIPAA requirements when discussing client information on cell phones.

O3A reserves the right to audit all O3A-owned cellular telephones and their use, which will include but not be limited to, a review of the monthly billing by the employee's supervisor. Employees should take reasonable precautions to prevent equipment theft and vandalism.

Employee Personal Use of Agency Cell Phones

Calls home or to the family, by O3A staff when required to work extended hours or changes to a regular work schedule, are considered business calls.

If an employee does need to make or receive a personal call on an O3A-owned cellular telephone that incurs additional cost, that employee is required to reimburse O3A in full

for such calls. Employee's supervisors are required to assist the Fiscal Department to differentiate between business-related and personal calls. Employees are required to remit the full amount owed for personal calls within 30 days of first notification by the Fiscal department.

Employee-Owned Cellular Phones

Employees utilizing their personal cell phones for business purposes should be aware that this may make an employee's personal phone information subject to public disclosure. Therefore, employees should not conduct O3A business over employee-owned cellular telephones, except under emergency situations. Employees who have a business need for regular access to a cellular phone to complete their work on a day-to-day basis should request a cellular telephone to be issued to them by the O3A.

The Agency will not be liable for the loss of personal cellular phones brought into the workplace.

Use of Cell Phones While Driving a Vehicle

Washington State law prohibits the use of hand-held cell phones when driving a motorized vehicle. O3A employees who are using cellular telephones for O3A business are required to safely pull over to the side of the road until the conversation is finished. O3A employees who are required to use a cell phone for O3A business may request a hands-free device to install in their vehicle.

3.16 ELECTRONIC AND SOCIAL MEDIA

O3A understands that personal social media can be a fun and rewarding way for employees to share their lives and opinions with co-workers, family, and friends around the world. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. To assist employees in making responsible decisions about the use of social media, the O3A has established these guidelines for appropriate use of electronic and social media.

Guidelines

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet. Examples include but are not limited to your own or someone else's blog, journal or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board, or chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with the O3A, as well as any other forms of electronic communication. Each employee is solely responsible for material they post online. Before creating online content, employees should consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. Keep in mind that any conduct that adversely affects job performance, the performance of fellow employees or otherwise adversely affects employees or clients may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Be Respectful

Always be fair and courteous. Keep in mind that employees are more likely to resolve work-related complaints by speaking directly with each other than by posting complaints to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, if an employee decides to post complaints or criticism, he or she should avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparage the Agency, employees or clients, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, gender, disability, religion or any other status protected by law or O3A policy.

Be Honest and Accurate

Employees should be honest and accurate when posting information or news, and any mistakes should be corrected quickly. Employees should be open about any previous posts that they have altered. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. Never post any information or rumors that are known to be false about the Agency, its employees, or clients.

Post Only Appropriate and Respectful Content

Maintain client confidential information. Client names and information are confidential and will not be disclosed. Employees should express only their personal opinions. Employees must never represent themselves as a spokesperson for the O3A. If the O3A is a subject of the content, the employee must be clear and open about the fact that he or she is an employee and make it clear that his or her views do not represent those of O3A, fellow employees or clients and that the employee is not representing O3A. It is best to include a disclaimer such as "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of O3A."

Using Social Media at Work

Refrain from using social media for personal purposes while on work time or on equipment the O3A provides. State systems do limit or prohibit access to some platforms.

Violation

Employees should report any violation of this policy and will not be retaliated against for doing so. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the use of electronic media, please consult your supervisor.

3.17 PERSONAL VISITORS & PETS & SERVICE ANIMALS

Personal visits should be limited in scope and duration to non-work time (before/after work and break or lunch periods). Personal guests must check in with the front desk and state which employee they are meeting. All guests must wait in the general lobby area until they can be escorted to and from their destination within the office. Sensitivity should be shown to other employees working (especially in shared office spaces) to prevent disrupting coworkers.

Due to the potential risk of injury, allergies, property damage, and/or loss of productivity, the O3A does not allow employees (or visitors) to bring pets to the office.

Service animals are allowed for both clients and employees. For employees, service animals are limited to either dogs or miniature horses that are trained to meet a physical or emotional need. Employees seeking authorization to bring a service animal to work should contact Human Resources to discuss the current legal requirements.

3.18 FEDERAL & STATE FALSE CLAIMS ACT

Policy

It is the O3A's policy to actively engage in efforts to prevent, detect, and mitigate losses related to fraud and abuse. The O3A is committed to following all applicable laws and regulations, in particular, those that address fraud, waste and abuse and the proper billing of all government-funded programs. This includes the Federal False Claims Act, and the Washington State Medicaid False Claims Act. It is required that when an O3A employee becomes aware of active or suspected fraud and abuse, they will immediately report it to the appropriate entity.

This policy applies to all employees, including management and contractors. It addresses reporting of fraud and abuse committed by or against the O3A, and/or Washington State Aging and Long Term Supports Administration (AL TSA) providers, enrollees, beneficiaries, members, employees, contractors, and vendors.

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- *Fraud* - intentional deception or misrepresentation made by a person with the knowledge that the deception could result in some unauthorized benefit to himself or to some other person.
- *Abuse* –practices that are inconsistent with accepted sound fiscal, business, or medical practices, and result in an unnecessary cost or in reimbursement for services that are neither necessary nor authorized under a client's plan of care, or that fail to meet prescribed standards.

Set forth below is information about the federal and state false claims acts, remedies available under these acts and how individuals can use them, and whistleblower protections available to anyone who claims a violation of the federal or state false claims acts.

Federal False Claims Act (31 U.S.C. § 3729)

Federal statute which allows for civil and/or criminal action to be brought against a health care provider who:

1. Knowingly presents, or causes to be presented, a false or fraudulent claim for payment or approval to any federal program;
2. Knowingly makes, uses, or causes to be made or used a false record or statement to get a false or fraudulent claim paid; or

3. Conspires to defraud the government by getting a false or fraudulent claim allowed or paid.

Examples of a false claim are:

1. Billing for procedures not performed;
2. A provider may conspire with another provider to give a kickback, either money, gifts, or products, when they receive a referral from the other provider or use the other providers products or services;
3. Falsifying information in the client's record;
4. Billing of unnecessary services;
5. Billing for non-covered services; and
6. Billing for incorrect level of service.

Washington State Medicaid False Claims Act (codified at RCW 77.66.020)

A person is liable to the government entity for a civil penalty of not less than five thousand five hundred dollars and not more than eleven thousand dollars, plus three times the amount of damages which the government entity sustains because of the act of that person, if the person:

1. Knowingly presents, or causes to be presented, a false or fraudulent claim for payment or approval;
2. Knowingly makes, uses, or causes to be made or used, a false record or statement material to a false or fraudulent claim;
3. Conspires to commit one or more of the violations in this subsection;
4. Has possession, custody, or control of property or money used, or to be used, by the government entity and knowingly delivers, or causes to be delivered, less than all of that money or property;
5. Is authorized to make or deliver a document certifying receipt of property used, or to be used, by the government entity and, intending to defraud the government entity, makes or delivers the receipt without completely knowing that the information on the receipt is true;
6. Knowingly buys, or receives as a pledge of an obligation or debt, public property from an officer or employee of the government entity who lawfully may not sell or pledge property; or
7. Knowingly makes, uses, or causes to be made or used, a false record or statement material to an obligation to pay or transmit money or property to the government entity, or knowingly conceals or knowingly and improperly avoids or decreases an obligation to pay or transmit money or property to the government entity.

Remedies

A federal false claims action may be brought by the U.S Department of Justice Civil Division or the State Attorney General. An individual, called a "relator," may bring what is called a qui tam action. If the State Attorney General chooses not to pursue the false claims action alleged by relator, the relator may bring the action him/herself and may be entitled to share in a percentage of the recovery on behalf of the government.

A statute of limitations says how much time may pass before an action may no longer be brought for violation of the law. Under the False Claims Act, the statute of limitations is six years after the date of violation or three years after the date when material facts are known or should have been known by the government, but no later than 10 years after the date on which the violation was committed. The submission of false claims may also give rise to criminal liability.

Federal Whistleblower Protections

Federal law prohibits an employer from discriminating against an employee in the terms or conditions or his or her employment because the employee initiated or otherwise assisted in a false claims action. The employee is entitled to all relief necessary to make the employee whole.

Washington State False Health Claims Act Whistleblower Protections

The Washington State False Claims Act has whistleblower protections which prohibit retaliation against the reporter. You may report directly to the United States Department of Justice or to the Washington State Attorney General. You are not required to report a possible false claims act violation to O3A first. The O3A will not retaliate against you if you inform anyone of a possible false claims act violation.

Responsibility

All O3A employees, service providers, contractors and vendors are required to report concerns about actual, potential, or perceived fraud and abuse or other misconduct to the Office of the Attorney General Medicaid Fraud Control Unit. You may reach the Department using one of the methods listed immediately below.

Phone: (360) 586-8888

Email: MFCUreferrals@atg.wa.gov

Mail: Office of the Attorney General Medicaid Fraud Control Unit,
P.O. Box 40114, Olympia, WA 98504

3.19 WHISTLE BLOWER

As a public organization, the O3A must be a good and prudent steward of public funds and provide service with the highest ethical standards. Pursuant to RCW 42.41 it is the policy of the O3A to: 1) encourage reporting by its employees of improper governmental action taken by the O3A officers or employees and 2) to protect O3A employees who have, in good faith and in accordance with O3A policies and procedures, reported improper governmental action taken by O3A officers or employees.

Definitions

“Improper governmental action” – means any action by an O3A officer or employee:

1. That is undertaken in the performance of the officer's or employee's official duties, whether or not the action is within the scope of the employee's employment; and

2. That is in violation of any federal, state, or local law or rule, is an abuse of authority, is of substantial and specific danger to the public health or safety, or is a gross waste of public funds.

"Improper government action" does not include personnel actions, which include but are not limited to employee grievances, complaints, appointments, promotions, transfers, assignments, reassignments, reinstatements, restorations, reemployments, performance evaluations, reductions in pay, dismissal, suspensions, demotions, violations of collective bargaining or civil service laws, alleged violations of labor agreements, or reprimands.

“Good faith” – means the individual providing the information or report of improper governmental activity has a reasonable basis in fact for reporting or providing the information. An individual who knowingly provides or reports, or who reasonably ought to know he or she is providing or reporting, malicious, false, or frivolous information, or information that is provided with reckless disregard for the truth, or who knowingly omits relevant information is not acting in good faith.

“Emergency” – means a circumstance, that if not immediately changed, may cause damage to persons or property.

Procedures for Reporting

O3A employees who become aware of improper governmental action are to notify the Executive Director or their designee, stating in written detail the basis for the employee's belief that an improper governmental action has occurred. In case of an emergency, as defined above, an employee may provide information of an improper governmental action to a person or entity outside the O3A.

For detailed instructions on the required reporting procedure, including a list of appropriate persons or entities outside the O3A to whom to report, refer to O3A's "Right to Report Improper Governmental Action Procedure." This document is permanently posted in each O3A office location and is available to any employee upon request.

Protection Against Retaliatory Actions

It is unlawful for any local government official or employee to take retaliatory action against a local government (O3A) employee because the employee provided information in good faith that an improper governmental action occurred. O3A officials and employees who report improper governmental actions are protected from retaliation pursuant to RCW 42.41.040.

Definitions

“Retaliatory action” - means:

1. Any adverse change in an O3A's employee's employment status, or the terms and conditions of employment including denial of adequate staff to perform duties, frequent staff changes, frequent and undesirable office changes, refusal to assign meaningful work, unwarranted and unsubstantiated letters of reprimand or unsatisfactory performance evaluations, demotions, transfer, reassignment,

reduction in pay, denial of promotion, suspension, dismissal, or any other disciplinary action; or

2. Hostile actions by another employee towards an O3A employee that were encouraged by a supervisor, senior manager, or official.

Procedures for Reporting

In order to seek relief, the employee will provide a written notice of the charge of retaliatory action to the O3A governing board that specifies the alleged retaliatory action and the relief requested.

For detailed instructions on the required reporting procedure, including how to obtain contact information for the O3A governing board, refer to O3A's "Right to Report Improper Governmental Action Procedure." This document is permanently posted in each O3A office location and is available to any employee upon request.

The O3A Executive Director will be responsible for ensuring that this policy and the reporting procedure 1) are permanently posted where all employees will have reasonable access to them, and 2) are made available to any employee upon request.

SECTION 4: COMPENSATION & WORK HOURS

4.01 WORK WEEK & PAY DAYS

For payroll purposes, the O3A's established workweek is from 12:01 Sunday A.M. until Saturday midnight. Agency offices are open Monday through Friday and this is the intended normal work week for staff. Work on weekends and holidays is not expected in general, but may be pre-approved by a supervisor for events, travel days, etc. Weekly work schedules are established for each employee by their supervisor. Work days (Monday through Friday) cannot start before 7:00 a.m. and must end no later than 6:00 p.m.

The Agency transitioned to a new payroll and timecard system effective July 1, 2023. Agency payroll is now semi-monthly with two payroll periods per month defined as follows:

- Payroll Period 1: 1st to the 15th of the month paid on or about the 25th.
- Payroll Period 2: 16th to the end of month paid on or about the 10th of the following month.

The agency will post for staff a payroll and timecard schedule for timecard due dates and expected payroll dates for each calendar year. All staff (both Exempt and Non-Exempt) will be paid on this schedule following the above payroll periods.

The agency's policy is to pay by direct deposit to ensure that employees receive their pay in a secure and timely manner; paper checks are available on an emergency-only basis.

Exempt Agency employees are paid on a salary basis. Exempt staff are required to complete timesheets. Exempt staff may be paid on a pro-rated basis if their timesheet for any payroll period will not reflect a full schedule (i.e. new hires, staff on medical absence without sufficient leave accrual, etc.) Salary basis is defined as the annual salary divided by 12 to determine a standard monthly salary, paid in accordance with the above schedule.

Non-Exempt employees are paid on an hourly basis, based on their approved timesheet (including work, paid leave usage, and holidays) following the above payroll schedule.

Per Diem and Temporary Employees and Employment Trainee/Participants are paid hourly based on approved timesheets.

All wages and salaries are subject to standard and mandatory payroll deductions including federal withholding tax, based on W-4; FICA (Social Security and Medicare); Labor and Industries Insurance; PERS retirement plan; WA PFML and WA Cares premiums; O3A approved fringe benefit plans including the cost of voluntary dependent enrollments; and court-ordered deductions.

4.02 ADMINISTRATIVE PAY CORRECTIONS

The O3A takes all reasonable steps to ensure that employees receive the correct amount of pay in each paycheck and that employees are paid promptly on the scheduled paydays. If you believe that your compensation or deductions have been improperly calculated, you should immediately notify Human Resources. The O3A will promptly review your concern and remedy any mistakes, if warranted.

4.03 TIMESHEET REQUIREMENTS

The O3A now uses an electronic timekeeping system. All employees (both Exempt and Non-Exempt) will complete a timesheet for each payroll period. Every timesheet will be completed and verified (electronic signature) by each employee and approved by a supervisor. Timesheets must be completed and approved by 5:00 p.m. on the first business day following the end of each payroll period, with small exceptions for holidays and weekends. The agency will include timesheet due dates on the payroll and timecard schedule for each calendar year.

Each employee is responsible for accurate reporting of time worked and leave taken. Failure to submit timesheets in a timely manner or inaccurate reporting of payroll information may lead to discipline, up to and including termination.

No employee shall take annual leave or sick leave, without having first accrued that leave (referred to “leave without pay” status), unless the employee has received supervisor approval. Leave without pay must be approved by the Administrative Director or Executive Director if it is sought as a reasonable accommodation for FMLA, a disability, religious belief or practice, domestic violence, or for some other reason protected by law. Leave without pay for other reasons must be approved by the employee’s supervisor and the Administrative Director or Executive Director prior to taking such leave and approved by the supervisor prior to being electronically submitted.

4.04 ATTENDANCE

Regular, dependable and punctual attendance is an essential element of employment at the O3A. Employees are expected, as a condition of employment, to be at work during their scheduled workdays and times. Absenteeism places a burden on other employees and can adversely affect our ability to serve our clients.

O3A Non-Exempt staff are expected to work in office (other than for work appointments) unless there is an approved remote work agreement in place. O3A Exempt staff are expected to maintain a predominately in-office work presence to ensure maximum supervisory support.

All employees using sick leave, or being absent for other reasons without prior notice, will notify their supervisor as soon as possible, but no later than within one hour of their scheduled start time that they are unable to report for duty and the reason for the

absence, except in cases of extreme emergency. Each Supervisor will establish for their direct report staff a preferred method of notice for unscheduled absences, and employees are expected to adhere to that process. Employees unable to contact their Supervisor using the established method of notice should leave a message for that supervisor at the Supervisor's base office and include the employee's name, the nature of the absence, and the best method for contacting them if necessary.

Employees who will be absent longer than one day are required to discuss the matter directly with their supervisor on the same business day. If the employee is incapacitated to the point they are unable to call in personally, they are responsible to have someone call in for them. If an employee has not indicated the duration of their absence, a daily call in is required.

Any planned absences such as paid or unpaid days off should be arranged in advance with the employee's supervisor. Employees should notify their supervisor of planned medical appointments. An employee may be required to furnish written medical proof of sickness or disability for absences in excess of three days. Additionally, consistent with the terms of the Americans With Disabilities Act, the O3A may require an employee to furnish a doctor's release to return to work following an injury or absences for an extended length of time.

An employee who is absent without prior notification or fails to provide proper documentation of illness when required will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Any employee who is absent for three consecutive days without giving proper notification will be considered to have voluntarily terminated employment.

Employees are expected to observe the established schedule set by their supervisor. O3A provides employees with paid time off in the form of annual leave, sick leave, and holidays. It is the employee's responsibility to monitor and manage their own paid time off to ensure there is sufficient paid time to cover each pay period. Employees who are regularly absent and use all their leave balances, requiring Leave without Pay, may be considered to be excessively absent and subject to progressive discipline, up to and including termination (with the exception of employees who are on approved leaves of absences such as FMLA, or employees who are in their trial service period and may not have access to accrued leave). A pattern of repeated tardiness or unauthorized absences may be cause for disciplinary action or dismissal.

4.05 OVERTIME

Non-Exempt Staff

Employees in positions defined as Non-Exempt under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act are entitled to overtime payment for hours worked in excess of 40 hours in one week. Overtime is paid at one and one-half times an employee's regular hourly rate of pay. For purposes of computing overtime, holidays, annual leave, and sick leave shall not be considered time worked.

Overtime service over forty (40) hours per week is not expected but may be authorized by a supervisor when necessary to handle work and client service requirements.

Overtime work shall be authorized, in advance, by the supervisor or Executive Director. Overtime will not be granted in units smaller than fifteen (15) minutes. Staff may not self-assign overtime and may not work extra hours (including weekends and holidays) without supervisor approval. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Exempt Employees

Exempt employees are exempt from the overtime pay provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act. Positions categorized as "Exempt" are salaried employees who are expected to work the hours necessary to accomplish assigned tasks, including any additional hours that may be necessary in excess of their normal scheduled hours per week. Exempt employees are expected to manage time so that their hours are as close to their regular scheduled hours as possible. With supervisor approval, exempt employees may adjust their weekly schedule to accomplish assigned tasks while limiting additional hours. Exempt employees may have their pay reduced for working fewer hours in a week without accrued annual leave or sick leave to cover the absence.

4.06 REST & MEAL PERIODS

Employees are allowed a paid rest period of fifteen (15) minutes for each four (4) hours of work. It is the responsibility of each O3A employee to take rest periods as designated in this policy. Employees may not eliminate the rest periods to shorten the work schedule or combine them with the meal period.

Employees who work more than five (5) hours a day are allowed an unpaid meal period of at least thirty (30) minutes. The scheduled meal period may not exceed sixty (60) minutes. Employees may not eliminate the meal period in order to shorten the work schedule.

4.07 REMOTE WORK

Remote work is generally defined as working from an alternate worksite (the employee's primary residence) on a part-time basis. The O3A has a Remote Work Procedure approved by the Executive Director which provides the guidance for agency remote work. This procedure may be updated, suspended, or rescinded in whole or in part to reflect changing business needs and for emergency response at the Executive Director's discretion. The procedure is made available to all staff in the same manner as other agency documents.

Remote work is a selective work site option that will be apply to some employees and positions. The Agency has the right to *refuse any remote work request* and to modify or terminate a remote work arrangement **at any time**. Requests for a remote work schedule that are based on a disability or medical accommodation request will be addressed under the accommodations policies in the Employee Handbook as a separate process based on Executive Director approval.

Remote work requests will be approved or denied on a case-by-case basis, depending on agency needs, the employee's job position, and Supervisor review. Employees may not be granted a remote work agreement unless they have more than one year of continuous service and maintain a satisfactory evaluation status. An employee on Trial Service status is not eligible for remote work unless approved by the Executive Director. Any employee who receives an unsatisfactory performance evaluation or is under any disciplinary review or performance improvement plan will have their remote work agreement automatically revoked.

All remote work agreements are contingent upon maintaining a confidential, productive remote workspace, free from distractions.

Remote work schedules are determined by an employee's supervisor and may be subject to approval by the Executive Director or designee. No employee may be granted a remote work agreement that provides for more than two days of remote work. The scheduled remote workdays may not be consecutive and may not include both Monday and Friday.

Employees on an approved remote work agreement may still be required to attend meetings at the office, or to report to and work from the office for a period of time, without formally modifying the approved remote work schedule.

Employees working remotely must remain available to their supervisor at all times. Employees will also adhere to their established schedule, maintain a confidential remote work environment, maintain satisfactory job performance, and adhere to all agency policies and established procedures. Employees who do not comply with their supervisor's directions or who fail to adhere to agency policies and procedures will have their remote work agreement revoked.

If a remote worker must make an off-site visit, travel reimbursement mileage will be calculated based on departure from the office workstation or residence to the destination and return, whichever is less.

Employees who are sick shall not use remote work in lieu of using accrued leave. If an employee reports their status as sick, they must use accrued leave until approved for work by their supervisor. Employees will report work-related injuries immediately to their supervisor.

Employees are prohibited from using remote work while providing dependent care and should use accrued leave for this purpose.

4.08 OFFICE CLOSURES (INCLUDING INCLEMENT WEATHER OR EMERGENCY)

Due to weather conditions or other emergencies, offices may be closed for all or a portion of a workday. The Executive Director or Administrative Director is designated to make office closure decisions for the Jefferson County Office and can close any office for general safety concerns. The Case Management Supervisor in Sequim will make office closure decisions for Clallam County. The Case Management Director or designated local supervisor will make office closure decisions for Grays Harbor and Pacific County offices. The Executive Director and Administrative Director must be informed of all office closure decisions.

Once an office is closed, the appropriate supervisor or director will take action to notify impacted staff and to modify office voice message systems to reflect the office closure.

In general, O3A will follow the weather-related status for the school district appropriate for each office's location for office closure guidance. When schools are not in active session at the time of a weather event, directors will review local weather and travel advisory alerts, local County office status, and Department of Transportation information to obtain local condition information.

To document each closure, the Director or Supervisor authorizing the closure shall provide the Accounting Assistant with a copy of appropriate source documentation considered for the decision (school closure print out, weather advisory, etc.). In the case of office closures or late start, employees are expected to work from home if they are able to do so. If inclement weather is expected, employees should take their laptops and cell phones home with them and are expected to work remotely unless circumstances prevent work (power outages, etc.).

Payment During Office Closure

Employees will receive full pay for workdays when the office is closed due to inclement weather or emergencies, for remote work, and/or approved inclement weather leave. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to approve leave and work time during office closures.

Employees who are sent home early by management for safety reasons during inclement weather conditions or disaster will be paid their regular wage for the remainder of their scheduled shift, however, employees who are able to finish the day via remote work are expected to do so.

The O3A encourages safety first; if the office is open but an employee cannot safely report to the office (including arriving late), they must notify their supervisor and either work from home or elect to use annual leave.

Disaster Conditions

In the event that a respective O3A office is located in an area that a portion thereof in which an individual employee or employees reside, has been declared a "disaster area" by a government agency, and employees are unable to report to work due to such

conditions, it shall be O3A's policy to compensate employees in accordance with the "Payment During Office Closure" statement above.

Employees will make every effort to report their circumstances to the Department Director or designee. Employees will make every effort to report to work as soon as is reasonably possible under such conditions, provided the O3A office is open and functioning to the public. O3A may assign employees to report temporarily to another office, work from home, or make other alternative arrangements appropriate to the circumstances.

O3A's general Disaster Plan will be posted for staff review electronically on agency servers and/or websites.

4.09 TRAVEL TIME

These guidelines are intended to assist employees in determining what portion of their travel time is compensable. For further information or for guidance on specific situations, please contact the Chief Financial Officer.

1. The following types of travel time are considered work time for which an employee will be compensated:
 - a. Travel time between O3A sites, when occurring as part of the workday.
 - b. All travel time during work assignments (such as home visits, site visits, etc.,) whether within or outside the normal workday.
 - c. Time spent by employees to attend training programs, meetings, or conferences required by O3A, whether or not such time is outside the employee's normal workday.
 - d. Meal breaks during travel are excluded unless a business meeting or work is conducted during the meal.
 - e. Employees on travel status must continue to observe standard rest and meal periods.

2. The ordinary travel/commute between home and work is not considered work time and is not compensated time.

4.10 TRAININGS, MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

Employees attending training programs, meetings or conferences required by the O3A during their regular work hours will receive their normal pay for attendance at such programs. Employees are eligible to receive compensation for attendance at trainings, meetings, or conferences under the following circumstances:

- The employee was required to attend a training, meeting, or conference,
- The employee was required to perform productive work,
- The training takes place during regular working hours; or
- The training, meeting, or conference was directly related to the employee's current position.

4.11 ESTABLISHMENT OF PAY RATES

Salary Comparability Study (Salary Survey)

To review the market competitiveness of O3A positions, the Executive Director or designee will conduct a salary comparability study periodically, as needed. The study results, along with recommendations, will be presented to the COG for their consideration and approval based on funding.

Salary Schedule

The COG will adopt a salary schedule, which will be used for setting salaries and salary increases. Any changes in salary ranges or rates of pay during a budget year must be approved by the COG. New salary schedules will be distributed to all employees once approved by the COG.

The Executive Director is responsible for approving all starting salary recommendations, within the salary schedule. The COG shall establish the salary for the Executive Director and any annual pay adjustments.

Salary Ranges & Adjustments

Each position will have an O3A salary range. The intent of the salary range is to provide a minimum and a maximum rate of pay for employees. The Executive Director may reclassify positions to a different salary range. The Executive Director will consult with the Department Director and the Chief Financial Officer to ensure the change is consistent with the level and compensation of similar positions in the organization. All salary adjustments are dependent on the availability of funds.

Merit Step Increases

O3A maintains high expectations of performance and rewards employees who meet these expectations with annual step increases identified within the pay plan. These merit step increases recognize the employee's increasing knowledge, skills, longevity, and performance. Conversely employees who perform below established expectations will not receive an annual step increase.

During an employee's anniversary month, the employee will receive a performance evaluation. All employees who receive a rating of "Satisfactory" will receive a merit step until they have reached the maximum of their salary range. Supervisors are responsible for notifying payroll of merit step increases.

Cost of Living Increase

Cost of living adjustments (referred to in this document as a COLA) will be considered annually by the COG, dependent upon the availability of funding and as a result of review and recommendation by the Executive Director to the COG. The Executive Director may take whatever review steps they deem appropriate and will consult with the CFO prior to making a COLA recommendation to the COG.

COLAs are generally effective for the first of January of a calendar year. All O3A staff are eligible to receive a COLA, with the exception of Employment Trainee/Participants when receipt of a COLA is not allowed under applicable program guidelines.

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SECTION 5: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

5.01 BENEFITS OVERVIEW

The O3A strives to provide competitive and cost-effective benefits for employees as part of the employee's total compensation package. The total cost to provide the benefits programs described herein is a significant supplement to each employee's pay and should therefore be viewed as additional compensation paid in various benefit forms (including paid time off) on behalf of each employee. Benefit plan years are calendar years.

Employees may enroll in benefits at hire for the balance of the plan year and at open enrollment each Fall for the following year. Benefit plans change from time to time, and changes are reflected in the terms of the plans themselves. Specific and detailed information is contained in the pertinent plan documents posted for staff use, and documents may also be requested from Human Resources.

O3A reserves the right and discretion to amend, modify or terminate, in whole or in part, any or all of the provision of the benefits described in this manual. Further, the agency reserves the exclusive right, power, and authority to administer, apply, and interpret the plans described herein.

5.02 PEBB BENEFITS

The O3A utilizes the Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) pool for medical, dental, basic life insurance, basic accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) insurance, and long-term disability (LTD) insurance. Premium cost share rates are updated annually and posted on the public drive "O3A Staff Benefit, LTD and Life Rates."

Eligibility

An employee is eligible for PEBB benefits if they are regularly scheduled to work at least 80 hours per month, approximately 20 hours per week. In general, coverage becomes effective on the first day of the month following the date an employee becomes eligible. If the employee becomes eligible on the first working day of the month, then coverage begins on that date. See WAC 182-12-114.

Medical/Vision

The premium for employee medical coverage is paid by the O3A. Vision coverage is included in the health plan; separate policies are not available. Employees may elect to cover eligible dependents in medical/vision coverage by paying the premium cost share, as established annually by the O3A, through a payroll deduction.

Dental

The premium for employee dental coverage is paid by the O3A. Employees who enroll in dental coverage may also enroll dependents in dental with no premium cost.

Life, LTD and AD&D Insurance:

The O3A provides every employee with basic employer-paid Life, Long Term Disability, and AD&D insurance, with options to purchase voluntary supplemental coverages through PEBB. PEBB requires employees to decline voluntary LTD coverage on initial enrollment to avoid auto-enrollment in a supplemental plan at their expense.

Employees who decline to purchase voluntary LTD coverage still receive the agency paid basic LTD policy at no cost.

Waiver of Coverage

Employees may waive medical coverage only if they are enrolled in other employer-based group medical plans (such as a spouse's plan), a TRICARE plan, or Medicare. Employees who waive medical/vision must enroll in the balance of the employer-paid benefit package as listed above, but do not pay the premium cost share. Dental coverage may only be waived if the employee can enroll in SEBB dental and SEBB vision (such as spousal coverage). Proof of other enrollment must be provided to O3A to waive medical and/or dental coverage. Employees cannot enroll dependents in plans (medical or dental) for which they have waived their own coverage.

5.03 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP) SERVICES

The O3A offers confidential EAP services to employees. O3A offers EAP services through WA State Department of Enterprise Services. Assistance may be obtained through the EAP for a variety of issues including work/family life issues, emotional issues, parenting issues, relationship concerns, depression, stress, alcohol/drug dependencies, family counseling, grief counseling, spousal/child/parent abuse, work/group dynamics and elder care issues.

Access to EAP services is offered online or by telephone 24/7.

1-877-313-4455 / Website: eap.wa.gov/worklife / Org code: O3A

EAP services may be accessed in three different ways:

1. An individual or any eligible family member may initiate the use of EAP services. (self-referral);
2. A supervisor may encourage the employee to seek services (informal supervisor referral);
3. A supervisor may initiate a referral to EAP services as part of a disciplinary process. (formal/mandatory referral).

5.04 RETIREMENT

The O3A participates in the Washington State Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) through the Washington State Department of Retirements Systems (DRS). Retirement benefits begin to accrue with the first month of employment for PERS eligible O3A employees. PERS enrollment for new hires is guided by the employee's prior enrollment history in PERS, if any.

Newly hired employees without prior PERS enrollment must choose to become either PERS Plan 2 or PERS Plan 3 members within 90 days of beginning employment, and

are reported in Plan 2 until a plan is selected. If no plan selection is made within 90 days, the default choice is Plan 2. An employee's plan choice is irrevocable.

Established PERS Plan 2 members (those who first entered service prior to the implementation of PERS Plan 3) have the option to transfer to Plan 3 during a designated transfer period. Transfer to Plan 3 is irrevocable. You can obtain more information about the Plan Choice on the Department of Retirement Systems website www.drs.wa.gov.

5.05 DEFERRED COMPENSATION

The O3A employees are eligible to supplement their retirement benefits through various deferred compensation programs. These programs allow employees to invest pre-tax dollars for future use at retirement. For more information, please see plan brochures.

5.06 SECTION 125 PLAN, or FLEXIBLE SPENDING ARRANGEMENT (FSA)

The O3A participates in a Section 125 Plan that allows employees to pay premiums on a pre-tax basis. The initial decision to participate is made upon hiring and may be changed only at the plan anniversary date or when the employee has a qualifying circumstance.

5.07 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The O3A recognizes that providing opportunities for professional development is part of the benefits plan and prepares employees for current and future job responsibilities. The O3A encourages all employees to develop the skills and training necessary to qualify for possible advancement within the Agency.

On-the-Job Training

The O3A may provide internal training opportunities in the following areas:

The O3A provides internal training opportunities for staff, such as cross-training with other employees, assignment as trainers, joint projects with other agencies, and assignment to special projects.

- Assignment to projects for employees to develop new skills or enhance project management skills.
- Assignment as trainers to instruct staff, volunteers, and/or community groups.
- Project assignments with other agencies to assist in the development of joint projects.
- Cross-training with other O3A employees to learn the multi-disciplinary processes within our organization.

Outside Training

1. Agency selected training: The O3A may select training seminars, workshops, or classes for an employee to attend and will pay for such training.

2. Employee selected outside training: An employee may request formal education tuition support or to attend a particular outside training under the following guidelines:
 - The training must contribute to the employee's effectiveness in their current position or professional development.
 - The employee will be asked to explain how such training would enhance the employee's performance and thus benefit the O3A.
 - The employee must receive both supervisory and department director approval.
 - The employee's department director must obtain budgetary approval to ensure that funds are available for the training or tuition support.

The O3A will approve requests for employee selected outside training or tuition support that meet the above stated criteria on a case-by-case basis up to a maximum of \$2,000 per person per year dependent upon agency funding considerations. Some outside trainings may be paid directly by the agency on behalf of the employee, but in most instances outside training and all education tuition support will be on a pre-approved reimbursement basis using the following general criteria:

- The employee must submit on the agency standard travel form proof of payment of the approved outside training expense or tuition fees; and
- The employee must provide proof of attendance to outside training or proof of course completion for tuition support; and
- Tuition support will only be reimbursed upon documentation that the employee completed the designated course(s) with a passing Grade of "C" or better or Pass if the course was Pass/Fail.

Employees should keep in mind that any outside training or tuition support reimbursement may represent additional taxable income depending upon current tax laws. Employees approved for agency paid educational support are expected to remain with the agency for a minimum of one year and may be asked to reimburse the agency a portion of the paid educational support if leaving the agency earlier.

5.08 WORKER'S COMPENSATION

All employees and volunteers are covered by the State of Washington's Worker's Compensation Program. This insurance covers employees in the case of an on-the-job injury or job-related illness and is funded by an employee and employer-paid premium. For qualifying cases, the State Industrial Insurance will pay the employee for medical costs and lost compensation when certain criteria are met.

Employees who are injured on-the-job must report their injury immediately to their supervisor.

5.09 UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

Employees may qualify for Washington State unemployment compensation after separation from O3A employment depending on the reason for separation and if certain qualifications are met. For more information on these benefits, contact your local Employment Security office and/or website.

5.10 INSURANCE COVERAGE DURING LEAVES

Benefits during FMLA & PF&ML Leave

Benefits for eligible employees on approved Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) will continue under the same conditions for the duration of their 12-week leave.

Benefits for eligible employees on Washington Paid Family & Medical Leave (PF&ML) will continue under the same conditions for the duration of their 12-week PF&ML leave **only** if their PF&ML overlaps with approved FMLA leave by one day or more in accordance with PF&ML rules.

Employees on approved FMLA and/or PF&ML leave are required to continue to pay for voluntary policies to keep those policies current. Employees who are still receiving agency pay (using work or accrued paid leave hours) will have this payment automatically deducted from their pay. Employees on unpaid status must provide personal payment (check or money order) by the end of the applicable month.

Please refer to section 6.05 Statutory Leaves for further leave details.

Benefits during Leave Without Pay (LWOP)

When an employee has exhausted all accrued leave (annual, sick, or birthday) they are considered to be on LWOP status, including employees on FMLA, PF&ML or leave designated as unpaid administrative leave.

Employees on LWOP status cease to accrue additional time off (annual, sick leave, or receive holiday pay), except for birthday leave which will accrue automatically. The employee may choose to retain accrued birthday leave or use the leave when accrued.

During an approved LWOP (that is not FMLA or PF&ML related) employee benefits will be handled in accordance with PEBB benefit rules, which in general require that employees on LWOP status who are not on FMLA or PF&ML work at least 8 hours in each month to receive employer paid benefits. Employees not eligible for employer paid benefits under PEBB rules may continue benefits at their expense.

5.11 COBRA BENEFITS

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) allows for continued health care insurance coverage, on a self-pay basis, for employees and/or their dependents who would otherwise lose their health care insurance due to

termination of employment, divorce or separation, or other events specified in the law. This continuation right only applies to insurance coverage that the employee or their dependents had at the time of the qualifying event. The duration of the self-pay premium coverage is directly related to the nature of the qualifying event and the coverage in place at the time.

Eligible employees who separate from employment from the O3A with benefit coverage will receive COBRA information directly from PEBB after their separation. At any other time, employees who are interested in finding out more information about COBRA insurance costs and enrollment should contact Human Resources.

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SECTION 6: PAID TIME OFF & LEAVES

6.01 HOLIDAYS

O3A offices will be closed for the following twelve holidays each year:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King's Birthday
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve Day
- Christmas Day

Full-time employees will receive 8 hours pay for all holidays referenced above. Part-time employees will receive holiday pay pro-rated based on their scheduled hours per week. Holidays that fall during a work week will normally be observed on that day. If a holiday falls on a Saturday, then the preceding Friday will be the observed holiday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, then the following Monday is the observed holiday. The Executive Director gives final authorization for when holidays are observed.

If a holiday falls on a day when the regular employee does not normally work, the employee will be granted the holiday, which will be approved by and scheduled with the supervisor.

Unpaid Holiday for Reasons of Faith or Conscience

An employee may take two (2) unpaid holidays per calendar year for a reason of faith or conscience, or an organized activity conducted through a religious denomination, church, or religious organization. The employee must submit a request for these days to their supervisor for approval. The employee will be allowed to take the unpaid holiday on the days selected unless the absence would unduly disrupt operations or impose an undue hardship. The employee may access annual leave during the unpaid holidays. If the employee chooses to use leave without pay it will not affect proration of benefits. The two unpaid holidays must be taken during the calendar year and do not carry over from one year to the next.

6.02 ANNUAL LEAVE

Full-Time Employees

All employees will accrue annual leave calculated from the first day of hire, in accordance with the annual leave accrual schedule approved by the Executive Director. Half of the monthly leave accrual is allocated to the employee at the end of each pay period. Accrual of annual leave for pay periods where a full pay period does not appear

on the timesheet, will be pro-rated based on the paid hours including work time, holidays and leave balances available as of the end of the prior pay period.

Determination of annual leave for the Executive Director will be established in the Executive Director's contract with the Council of Governments.

Part-Time Employees

Annual leave for regular part-time employees will accrue as set forth above for full-time employees, except that their accrual will be calculated on a pro-rated basis, based on the percentage of their regularly scheduled hours vs. a 40-hour week (i.e., an employee working 20 hours per week would accrue annual leave at 50% of a full-time employee).

Use & Carryover

No more than four (4) weeks may be taken at one time without approval of the Executive Director, or as required by law (e.g., FMLA). No more than 200 hours of annual leave may be carried over into the next calendar year. Exceptions may be allowed on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration factors such as illness or a heavy workload at the end of the calendar year. Exceptions to carryover limit must meet the following criteria: (a) the excess carry-over is approved in writing by the Executive Director, (b) is forwarded to the Human Resources, and (c) a plan is determined in writing for use as early as possible after the new calendar year begins. The O3A's programs, operations and workload govern the granting of annual leave. The immediate supervisors will approve the scheduling of annual leave based on workload.

Cash Outs During Employment

During the period of employment, employees may not "cash out" any accrual of annual leave. It is the Agency's position that the employees deserve and should take annual leave and a break from work for their own well-being.

Cash Outs at Termination

When persons leave the employment of the Agency, they will be paid for their unutilized annual leave balance, up to a maximum of 240 hours.

Approval Procedure

An employee wishing to take annual leave shall obtain advance approval from their supervisor.

Annual Leave During Initial Trial Service

During the new-hire 6-month trial service period, new O3A Employees will accrue annual leave, but may not take annual leave until the completion of trial service. Exceptions may be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Director or Administrative Director. Employees who exit employment during their initial trial service period are not eligible for payment for their accrued annual leave balance.

Holidays During Annual Leave

A holiday falling within approved annual leave periods will be paid as holiday pay.

6.03 BIRTHDAY LEAVE

Each employee accrues one full work day annually (based on their approved schedule) of birthday leave. Birthday leave is available to use on the employee timesheet on or after the employee's actual birthday date. Birthday leave can be carried over from one year to the next without loss of leave and is paid out at end of service combined with any annual leave up to the 240 total leave cash out maximum described under annual leave above.

6.04 SICK LEAVE

Accrual & Carryover

Paid sick leave is available for employees to care for their health and the health of their family members. Regular, full-time employees working 40 or more hours per week will accrue eight (8) hours of sick leave per month. Part-time employees working less than 40 hours per week will receive pro-rated sick leave based upon their scheduled hours.

Employees will begin to accrue sick leave on their start date and may utilize leave as it is accrued. Half of the monthly leave accrual is allocated to the employee at the end of each pay period. Accrual of sick leave for pay periods where a full pay period does not appear on the timesheet will be pro-rated based on the paid hours, including work time, holidays and leave balances available as of the end of the prior pay period.

Employees may carry over up to 480 hours of sick leave from one calendar year to the next. Sick leave may be taken in increments of 15 minutes or greater and is not considered worked time for the calculation of overtime.

Conversion

At the end of each calendar year, an employee may convert their excess hours above 40 of up to twenty-four (24) hours of sick leave into annual leave. This converted leave becomes a part of the employee's annual leave balance, subject to the same rules that govern annual leave.

Usage

In compliance with Washington's Paid Sick Leave law, employees may also utilize sick leave to care for their health and the health of their family members. Employees are required to give reasonable notice regarding the need for such leave. "Family members" is defined as a child or parent (including biological, adopted, foster, step or legal guardian/dependent), a spouse, state-registered domestic partner, spouse's parent, grandparent, grandchild, or sibling. Sick leave may be used for the following circumstances:

- An employee's mental or physical illness, injury or health condition;
- Preventive care such as a medical, dental or optical appointment and/or treatment;

- Care of a family member with an illness, injury, health condition and/or preventative care;
- Closure of the employee's place of business or child's school/place of care by order of a public official for any health-related reasons;
- If the employee or the employee's family member is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.
- Sick leave may be granted to employees who become sick or disabled while on annual leave. O3A management staff may request medical verification in these circumstances.

Notification

Employees must personally notify their supervisor prior to work, or, if unable to do so, within the first hour of the workday to report an illness or other reasons for absence. Employees planning to use sick leave for medically-related appointments should notify the appropriate supervisor in advance. Time taken in this instance is to be scheduled around the requirements of the job.

When an employee is absent for more than three consecutive days, O3A may require medical verification that the employee is taking leave for an authorized purpose and able to return to work.

Separation & Reinstatement

Sick leave has no monetary value and employees will not receive compensation for sick leave at separation. When an employee leaves O3A and is rehired within twelve months of separation, previously accrued and unused sick leave at the time of separation will be reinstated and the previous period of employment will be counted for purposes of determining the employee's eligibility to use sick leave.

Notice

The O3A will provide employees with regular notice about the amount of sick leave the employee has earned and used. Any questions and concerns about the sick leave policy may be directed to O3A management staff.

Use of Sick Leave for an employment-related injury

Every precaution is made to prevent employees from being injured on the job. If an employee is injured while at work they may need to spend time away from work. In addition to paid time off received from worker's compensation, employees can use accumulated sick leave or annual leave to supplement the worker's compensation payments to the extent allowed by law.

6.04 LEAVE DONATION

The donation of leave, of any kind, from one employee to another is not allowed by O3A.

6.05 STATUTORY LEAVES (FMLA AND PF&ML)

O3A employees may be able to access a range of federal and state leaves depending on the circumstances and their eligibility.

- Employees may be eligible for Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave depending on the circumstances described below. O3A designates FMLA leave is unpaid and employees usually is required to use any eligible paid leave (sick leave, annual leave, and holidays) while on FMLA as described below.
- Employees may also be able to access Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave (PF&ML) if eligible. Employees choose when to apply for this benefit which covers a portion of the employee’s compensation as explained below.
- FMLA and PF&ML may run concurrently depending on the situation. In such cases where these leaves run concurrently, employees will not be required to use their own paid leave.
- The O3A will comply with all federal and state laws applicable to a particular employee or group of employees. The O3A recognizes that understanding the laws can be confusing and therefore encourages employees to go to Human Resources with their leave questions.

Leaves that may be available to eligible O3A employees:

FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)	WASHINGTON PAID FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE (PF&ML)
Unpaid, other than use of available leave	Partially paid by Employment Security Dept. (ESD)
Typically required to use paid leave while on FMLA	Employees receive no compensation from O3A while on PF&ML.
Employer designates or approves of employee’s leave	Employee elects to use leave and ESD approves based on application
O3A designates as FMLA employer – employee must have worked 1250 hours over previous 12 months;	Eligible if 820 hours at any Washington employer or last 4/5 quarters
Leave taken for spouse, children, parents, or registered domestic partner	Leave taken for FMLA family members plus grandkids, grandparents and siblings
Job protection if eligible employee takes leave	Job protection if employee works at 50+ employer, 1250 hours over previous 12 months
Intermittent leave for child bonding based on employer approval	Intermittent leave in 8-hour increments (can be taken for child bonding)
No waiting period	7 day waiting period as defined by ESD.

6.06 FEDERAL LEAVE: FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

The O3A recognizes the need for employees to balance their work and family life by taking reasonable leave to care for themselves or their family members. In accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the O3A provides up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth; to care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care; to care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, parent, or registered domestic partner who has a serious health condition; or for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job. In addition, the O3A will reinstate eligible employees returning from FMLA leave to the same or an equivalent job to the extent these laws require. O3A employees must use all paid sick leave, annual leave, and eligible floating holidays while on FMLA as described below.

Eligibility & Reasons for FMLA

An employee is eligible for FMLA leave when they have worked for the O3A for at least one year, provided that the employee has worked at least 1,250 hours over the previous twelve (12) months. The twelve months need not be consecutive. Time that is paid but not worked, for example sick leave, annual leave or holidays, is not counted toward this 1,250 hour requirement. An employee who meets these eligibility requirements is entitled to take up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave for the following reasons:

- for incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or childbirth;
- to care for the employees' child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- to care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, parent, or registered domestic partner who has a serious health condition; or
- for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

The O3A adopts a "rolling year" for determining an employee's eligibility, measuring backwards twelve (12) months from the first day that the employee requests leave.

FMLA Servicemember Provisions

The O3A will grant up to 12 workweeks of unpaid family and medical leave to an eligible employee during any 12-month period when leave is due to a "qualifying exigency" arising out of a covered family member's active duty or call to active duty in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency plan.

The O3A will grant up to 26 workweeks of unpaid family and medical leave to an eligible employee during a single 12-month period to care for an injured or ill family member servicemember. When combined with other FMLA-qualifying leave, this may not exceed 26 weeks in a single 12-month period.

Servicemember FMLA runs concurrent with other leave entitlements provided under federal, state, and local law.

FMLA Notice Requirements/Employee Responsibilities

Employees must provide thirty (30) days advanced notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. The O3A reserves its right to deny or delay the leave when the employee does not give sufficient notice. When thirty (30) days' notice is not possible, employees must provide notice to Human Resources as soon as possible and must comply with company call-in-procedures. The O3A will require the employee to provide medical certifications as the law permits. Typically, the O3A will require a medical certification to initiate the leave and may also request subsequent re-certifications periodically thereafter supporting the need for continued leave.

The O3A will also typically require that the employee obtain a fitness for duty certification as a prerequisite to returning to his or her job functions. The employee is responsible for obtaining these certifications and must provide sufficient information to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform Human Resources if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Under some circumstances, the O3A can request second and third opinions regarding health conditions. In the event that second and third opinions are sought, the O3A will pay for them in accordance with the law.

FMLA Serious Health Condition

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities. Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than three (3) consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

FMLA Intermittent Leave

FMLA leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt business operations. The O3A may temporarily transfer an employee to an available alternate position with equivalent pay and benefits if the alternate position would better accommodate the employee's intermittent or reduced schedule. The O3A typically requires an employee to verify the need for the intermittent leave through the medical certification form. For the birth, adoption or foster care of a child, the employee may only be allowed to take FMLA leave intermittently or work a reduced schedule with the O3A's approval.

FMLA Benefits and Protections

While an employee is on FMLA leave, the O3A will maintain the employee's group health plan on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Employees will be required to continue paying their portion of the medical benefits. If an employee chooses not to return to work following their leave, for reasons other than a continued serious health condition, the O3A may require reimbursement for the amount paid for the health insurance premium during the leave period. Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave. However, employees on FMLA leave do not accrue additional paid time off benefits during their leave and are not entitled to paid holidays.

FMLA Substitution of Paid Leave

Employees taking leave under this policy must use all eligible paid sick leave, annual leave, and holidays before taking the remainder as unpaid leave. Such paid leave will be considered FMLA leave and counted toward the 12 eligible weeks.

FMLA Return from Leave

The O3A will restore an employee who takes FMLA leave under this policy to return to the original or equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms. The O3A reserves the right to deny reinstatement to certain highly compensated employees that it designates as key employees in accordance with applicable law. The O3A will notify an employee of this designation, of applicable, at the time the employee requests the leave. The O3A reserves the right to treat an employee who does not return as scheduled from FMLA leave as having voluntarily resigned from employment.

FMLA Employer Responsibilities

The O3A will inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice will specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the O3A will inform the employee and provide a reason for the ineligibility. Employees will be informed if the leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement.

Under the FMLA it is unlawful for the O3A to interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under the FMLA, or to discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA. An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer. FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement which provides greater family or medical leave rights.

6.07 STATE LEAVE: WASHINGTON PAID FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE (PF&ML)

Washington Paid Family & Medical Leave (PF&ML) is a statewide insurance program that provides eligible Washington employees with paid time off to give or receive care. The Program is administered by the Washington Employment Security Department (ESD) and is funded through an employer and employee tax. Employees should go directly to ESD's website for a full description of the program, to ascertain if they are eligible for program benefits, and to apply to access benefits: (www.paidleave.wa.gov). The O3A will not discriminate or retaliate against any employee for requesting or taking leave under this law.

PF&ML Eligibility

The ESD determines eligibility for the program based on state employment records. In general, employees who have worked 820 hours in the preceding 12 months (equal to 16 hours a week for a year) will be able to apply to take paid medical or family leave. The 820 hours are cumulative, regardless of the number of employers or jobs someone has during a year if all prior employers are in the State of Washington. All paid work over the course of the year counts toward the 820 hours, including part-time, seasonal, and temporary work.

Except for leave taken in connection with the birth or placement of a child, PF&ML benefits are subject to a waiting period of up to seven (7) days. PF&ML

PF&ML Reasons for Leave

Eligible employees may take PF&ML of up to 12 weeks, for

- The birth, adoption or foster placement of a child;
- The Employee's serious illness or injury;
- To care for the Employee's seriously ill or injured relative; or
- To prepare for a family member's pre and post-deployment activities, as well as time for childcare issues related to a family member's military deployment.

Employees have up to one year from the birth, adoption or fostering of a child to access the leave benefit. If there are multiple events in a year, the employee may be eligible to receive up to 16 weeks, and up to 18 weeks for a serious health condition during pregnancy that results in incapacity.

PF&ML Serious Health Condition

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities. Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than three (3) consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or

incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

PF&ML Partial Wage Replacement from ESD

Employment Security Department (ESD) pays to an employee partial wage replacement through the during Washington PF&ML program. The benefit generally ranges from 75-90 percent of your weekly wage as determined by ESD. Employees are required to communicate weekly with ESD to verify continued eligibility for leave and report any compensation received from their employer. Employees will receive the partial wage replacement based on their earnings directly from ESD. Employees may also access partial wage benefits for intermittent leave. There is a minimum claim requirement of either (8) consecutive hours of leave in a week for which benefits can be sought.

PF&ML No Supplemental Benefits

The O3A, as employer, has elected NOT to allow its employees to access accrued leave to supplement their Washington PF&ML. For O3A employees, this means that employees on PF&ML will receive payment from Employment Security only when accessing continuous PF&ML. Employees who access PF&ML intermittently will record Leave Without Pay on their timesheet to indicate hours they are claiming to PF&ML and will not be paid for those hours by O3A.

Employees may use their accrued leave balances during the waiting week before their PF&ML services start.

PF&ML hours are unpaid from O3A, and those hours do not count toward accrual of paid leave from the O3A. Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) service credit is not earned for hours that are paid by PF&ML. Employees may contact the Department of Retirement Systems (DRS) to discuss the option of purchasing back service credit not earned while utilizing PF&ML.

PF&ML Notice Requirements

Employees must provide written notification of their intention to take PF&ML leave. If an event is foreseeable, the employee must provide 30 days' notice. If the event is unforeseeable, the employee must provide notice as soon as possible. For example, if the employee has a medical procedure appointment that will be the start of their leave, they must give their employer 30 days' notice of their intention to take leave. The employee's application to the ESD is not considered notice to the O3A.

The employee's notification of their intention to take PF&ML leave must include the employee's anticipated timing and duration of leave. The O3A may require the employee to periodically check in regarding status and return date depending on the circumstances of the leave.

The O3A also requires that employees provide written notice in the following circumstances:

- When the employee files an initial application for leave with ESD.

- When an employee takes leave on an intermittent basis and the intermittent schedule changes in any way.

In general, the O3A requires employees to make a reasonable effort to schedule foreseeable or planned personal or family members' medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt O3A operations when possible.

PF&ML Job and Benefits Protection

PF&ML taken under this policy is job protected only to the extent that the employee has worked at least 1,250 hours over the previous twelve (12) months preceding the date leave will commence. O3A will generally restore an employee who returns from leave to the same or a comparable position. While on PF&ML, employees will continue to receive existing health insurance coverage, provided that their PF&ML and FMLA leave overlap for at least one day for a reason covered under both laws and they continue to pay for any voluntary benefit policies.

The O3A reserves the right to treat an employee who does not return as scheduled from medical or family leave as having voluntarily resigned from employment.

PF&ML Coordination of Leaves

An employee may meet the eligibility criteria for both federal and state family and medical leave. In such cases, the O3A will designate these leaves to run concurrently where permitted. For circumstances of leave related to a serious health condition, the health care certification process conducted under the state leave will suffice to designate the leave as FMLA.

6.08 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/SEXUAL ASSAULT LEAVE AND ACCOMMODATION

An employee is eligible to take reasonable leave from work on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule under the following conditions:

1. To seek legal or law enforcement assistance or remedies to ensure the health and safety of the employee or employee's family members including, but not limited to, preparing for, or participating in, any civil or criminal legal proceeding related to or derived from domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking;
2. To seek treatment by a health care provider for physical or mental injuries caused by domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or to attend to health care treatment for a victim who is the employee's family member;
3. To obtain, or assist a family member in obtaining, services from a domestic violence shelter, rape crisis center, or other social services program for relief from domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking;
4. To obtain, or assist a family member in obtaining, mental health counseling related to an incident of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, in which the employee or the employee's family member was a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking; or

5. To participate in safety planning, temporarily or permanently relocate, or take other actions to increase the safety of the employee or employee's family members from future domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

"Family members" are defined as (a) persons related by blood, marriage, domestic partnership, or adoption; (b) persons who currently or formerly resided together; (c) persons who have a biological or legal parent-child relationship, including stepparents and stepchildren; and (d) a person who is acting or has acted as a legal guardian (RCW 7.105010).

An employee may access their annual leave or other eligible paid time off for such leave. Employees are required to provide advance notice in writing of the employee's need for leave. Such requests will be provided in writing accompanied with verification to support the need for leave (i.e., police report, court document, or a written statement from the employee). When advance notice cannot be given because of an emergency or unforeseen circumstance due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, the employee or their designee will notify the O3A of the need for leave no later than the end of the first day that leave is taken.

Victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and stalking are also entitled to reasonable accommodation in the workplace. Such accommodations that may be requested include: transfers; reassignments or modified schedules; updating work telephone numbers and/or email addresses; changed workstations; other adjustments to job structures, safety procedures, workplace facilities, or work requirements in response to actual or threatened domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking determined on a case-by-case basis.

Employees who seek such accommodations may make such requests to Human Resources.

6.09 LEAVE WITHOUT PAY (LWOP)

Leave without pay may be granted to employees at the discretion of the Executive Director or Administrative Director when necessary for absences due to illness, family medical, or personal reasons that extend beyond available paid time off or protected leave on a case-by-case basis.

Requests for leave without pay (LWOP) must be submitted in writing in advance of the planned leave. The request will be submitted to the employee's supervisor and Unit Director for review and then forwarded to the Executive Director or Administrative Director for final review. The request for LWOP must be submitted as far in advance of the anticipated leave as possible in order for the review process to take place.

An employee who fails to report promptly for work at the expiration of a leave of absence, or who accepts other employment during the leave, or who applies for unemployment insurance while on leave, will be considered to have voluntarily resigned.

6.10 BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Bereavement leave with pay is granted to a regular employee due to death of a member of the employee's immediate family, which for the purpose of Bereavement Leave is defined by the O3A as the following relatives: mother, father, and mother or father-in-law; spouse or registered domestic partner; child or step-child; grandchild or step-grandchild; grandparent or step-grandparent; brother or sister, brother or sister-in-law, and step-brother or sister. Bereavement leave is not available for nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, and cousins. O3A provides three (3) paid bereavement days, which may be taken at once or intermittently. Leave may be taken without prior approval, but the employee is expected to notify the supervisor as soon as possible.

6.11 MILITARY LEAVE

The O3A provides a military leave of absence for employees while performing military service in accordance with federal and state law. Military service includes active military duty and Reserve or National Guard training. In accordance with RCW 38.40.060, employees will receive paid military leave for up to 21 days of military service for each year calculated October 1st through September 30th. Employees are required to provide their supervisor with copies of their military orders as soon as possible after they are received. Reinstatement upon return from military service will also be determined in accordance with applicable federal and state law.

6.12 MILITARY SPOUSAL LEAVE

Any employee who works more than 20 hours per week and whose spouse or state-registered domestic partner is deployed, about to be deployed, or is on leave from deployment (in a military conflict declared by Congress or the President) is entitled to up to fifteen (15) days of leave of absence per deployment. The leave is unpaid except for the use of their annual leave balance. An employee wishing to take this leave must notify their supervisor within five business days of receiving official notice that the spouse is being deployed or will be on leave from deployment. Upon conclusion of the leave, the employee will return to their position or an equivalent one.

6.13 JURY AND WITNESS LEAVE

Jury Duty

An employee shall be allowed leave with pay for jury duty when required to appear at a court of law for this service.

An employee is required to provide a copy of the jury duty notice to their supervisor promptly when they are summoned for jury duty service and subsequently upon their selection as a juror. Employees will be paid their regular salary/wages for any period of required service as a juror, which occurs during the employee's scheduled workday. Employees may be required to produce evidence of daily attendance in court.

When an employee is excused or released from jury duty, the employee is required to report back to work or immediately notify their supervisor that they are able to return to work for the balance of their scheduled workday.

Witness Duty

All employees summoned to testify in court are allowed time off for the period they serve as a witness. In general, witness duty leave is not paid work time, unless the employee is a witness in a case involving the O3A and is called to testify by the O3A. Employees may access eligible paid time off (such as annual leave) for work hours spent during witness duty.

6.14 ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

On a case-by-case basis, the O3A may place an employee on an administrative leave with or without pay for a period of time, as determined by the Executive Director or the Administrative Director. This leave may be used to provide the O3A with time and opportunity to investigate matters, make decisions, or execute other administrative proceedings as needed.

SECTION 7: TRAVEL & REIMBURSEMENT

7.01 CONTROL OF TRAVEL

The O3A will reimburse agency employees for approved travel expenses related to the conduct of agency business as explained in this Section 7. Employees are to exercise prudent judgment in incurring travel expenses on O3A official business. Excessive or unnecessary expenses are not to be requested, approved, or reimbursed. The Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that travel expense claims are consistent with these travel policies and the lowest reasonable cost to the O3A.

Reimbursement for all travel expenses other than mileage requires a receipt, regardless of the amount requested.

7.02 DIRECT PAYMENT TO VENDORS

Advance approval must be obtained before authorizing direct billing. Fiscal Department staff set up the billing account(s). Any payments made in accordance with this section are to be supported by documentation as set forth by the Chief Financial Officer.

7.03 BASIS FOR REIMBURSEMENT

The reimbursement for meals and lodging expenses incurred on official O3A business will be on an actual expense basis.

Reimbursable Meal Expenses

- **Eleven Hour Rule:** An employee's meals are eligible for reimbursement when the employee has been in travel status for a continuous eleven hours or more.
- If an employee is on an overnight travel assignment, dinner that night is eligible for reimbursement and breakfast the next morning is eligible for reimbursement.
- If an employee is required to begin their travel assignment at 6:00 am or earlier, breakfast is eligible for reimbursement. Departure time must be recorded in the "Description" column of the detailed travel expense form.
- If an employee's travel assignment ends at 7:00 PM or later, dinner is eligible for reimbursement. Return time must be recorded in the "Description" column of the detailed travel expense form.

Exceptions:

- When a meal is included as part of the approved registration and attendance at a meeting, conference, convention, or formal training session, that meal is not eligible for reimbursement.

- Volunteers and governing board members may be reimbursed for meal expenses following the same reimbursement schedule as staff when they have been in travel status for at least five hours with prior approval from program supervisor.
- Reimbursement for alcoholic beverages is prohibited.

All other exceptions not listed require the advance approval of the Admin Director, Executive Director, or CFO.

Other Travel Expenses

Reimbursable transportation expenses include all necessary official travel on railroads, airplanes, ships, buses, private automobiles, and other necessary means of conveyance.

Reimbursement for Use of Privately Owned Automobile

O3A employees using a motor vehicle to travel on official O3A business must have in their possession a valid Washington State Driver's License and proof of insurance. Reimbursement for use of privately owned automobiles shall be at the IRS Federal rate. Reimbursement will be payable to only one of two or more employees traveling on the same trip and in the same automobile.

Non-Reimbursable Expenses

Certain travel expenses are considered as personal and not essential to the transaction of official O3A business. Such non-reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Laundry, valet service and entertainment expenses, video, or television rental.
- Taxi fees, car rentals and other transportation to places of entertainment and other similar facilities.
- Costs of personal trip insurance.

Travel Allowances for High-Cost Areas

Approval for high-cost reimbursement must be granted by the Executive Director prior to travel. Employees may be reimbursed for the actual cost of lodging and meals as evidenced by a receipt and is consistent with reasonable and regular costs for the area incurred.

7.04 MISCELLANEOUS TRAVEL EXPENSES

Miscellaneous travel expenses essential to the transaction of official O3A business are reimbursable to the employee. Reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Taxi fares, car rentals, parking fees, ferry, and bridge tolls.
- Registration fees required in connection with attendance at conventions, conferences, and official meetings.
- Approved rental of room in a hotel or other place which is used to transact official business. The room rental is reimbursable as a separate item when authorized. Rental dates and costs must be specified and approved in advance.

7.05 TRAVEL EXPENSE ADVANCES

In special circumstances, approved in rare case-by-case situations, employees traveling on official O3A business may request a travel advance to help pay for certain out-of-pocket travel costs. The travel advance is meant to cover longer travel circumstances (not to exceed 90 days), not regular business travel situations. Travel advances are not to be considered a personal loan and will not be made for purposes other than to defray reimbursable expenses for official travel.

The Travel Request Form must first be approved by the Department Director, Executive Director or designee. Any employee who receives a travel advance must file a Travel Expense Claim Form within 30 days of the actual travel.

No advance of any kind may be made to an employee at any time when they are delinquent in accounting for or repaying a prior travel advance. Any default in accounting for or repaying a travel advance will cause the full amount, which is unpaid to become immediately due and payable. In order to protect O3A from any losses on account of travel advances made, O3A will request a written authorization from the employee to withhold the amount of the unpaid balance.

7.06 TRAVEL EXPENSE CLAIMS

Travel expense claims detail the employee's expense reimbursement request and must be approved by a Supervisor. The Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that travel expense claims are consistent with these travel policies and the lowest reasonable cost to the O3A.

All employees will use the O3A Travel expense reimbursement forms. Travel expense forms, with accompanying receipts, must be submitted to the Fiscal Department by the fifth day of the following month to receive prompt payment, and no later than 60 days with extenuating circumstances. Volunteers and board members will also complete a travel expense reimbursement form.

Employees should provide a travel expense claim form for each month that they incur travel expenses. If the total reimbursement costs do not exceed \$10.00 the employee, volunteer or board member may be reimbursed from petty cash after the travel form is approved following petty cash policies.

Meals: For overnight travel assignments, all meals are reimbursed at the rate in effect for the area where the traveler stops for sleep. The meal reimbursement rate for the last day of travel (return day) would continue to be the rate for the location where the traveler last stopped for sleep. (IRS publication 463).

Reimbursement follows the schedule published by the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) for each county in the service area. The county in which travel occurs must be reported on the travel form for accurate reimbursement. Current rates will be posted on the public drive.

Website: <https://ofm.wa.gov/accounting/administrative-accounting-resources/travel/diem-rate-tables>

The following per meal maximums are stated in the chart below, as of 4/1/2024.

	Locations without specified rates (Pacific, etc.)	Pierce Benton Franklin	Jefferson/Clallam Gray's Harbor/Thurston Snohomish/Spokane Clark/Cowlitz/Skamania	King
Breakfast	\$14.00	\$17.00	\$18.00	\$19.00
Lunch	\$17.00	\$19.00	\$20.00	\$22.00
Dinner	\$28.00	\$33.00	\$36.00	\$38.00

Receipts for all meals must be attached to the Expense Claim Form. Employees may include a reasonable tip in a meal reimbursement request; the total request will be reimbursed following the above maximum amounts.

Mileage: Federal IRS Rate.

Lodging: Actual cost reimbursement. Lodging is eligible for reimbursement when the employee is required to travel 50 miles or more (one-way) from their assigned office, or when a volunteer travels on agency business 50 miles or more (one way) from their home. Exceptions due to weather and road conditions are subject to supervisor approval.

Employees traveling on behalf of the agency are expected to make an effort to keep the cost of lodging to a reasonable amount. Employees are encouraged to use the O3A list of lodging facilities who direct bill the O3A when applicable.

Departure and return times should be rounded to the nearest half hour on the expense claim and shall be designated as AM or PM.

Vehicle: Reimbursement for privately owned automobiles shall be based on the Federal IRS Rate. Such reimbursement will be based on departure from the workstation or residence to the destination, whichever is less, and return. Employees must specify the purpose of the work-related mileage and the starting and ending address for each destination for which mileage reimbursement is claimed. O3A provides a list of frequently travelled locations and related mileage which employees may use in lieu of tracking actual mileage to the destinations on the list.

SECTION 8: PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

8.01 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The O3A utilizes a formal employee performance evaluation process. Evaluations are part of an employee's official personnel file and may be a factor in determining employee development, training needs, validating selection procedures, determining pay increases, promotions, demotions, and transfers. The appraisal process may also be used in coordination with planning for layoffs or termination proceedings.

All O3A positions will have written job descriptions, and the Executive Director may approve temporary or permanent variations and/or exceptions. Job descriptions (including updates) must be approved by the Executive Director. Supervisors are responsible for completing performance evaluations reviews on time.

8.02 TRIAL SERVICE PERIOD REVIEWS

Trial service employees will be evaluated by their supervisor prior to the end of the 6-month trial service period. As with any O3A employee, the Executive Director may terminate the employment of a trial service employee with or without cause at any time during the trial service period.

Trial service reviews will evaluate the employee's adjustment to employment conditions, integration with the team, job learning progress, attendance, and any other feature of the employee's job that is significant to retention decision-making and prospects of job success. During this period, each employee may receive instruction, review of work, training and any other guidance that is supportive of the employee's opportunity for success on the job.

Circumstances may require additional observation and O3A may extend the trial service period for a specified length of time based on an evaluation.

8.03 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

All employees will be evaluated on at least an annual basis. The Executive Director is evaluated by the Council of Governments.

During an employee's anniversary month, the employee will receive a performance evaluation. All employees who receive a rating of "Satisfactory" will receive a pay increase of one merit step until they have reached the maximum of their salary range. Supervisors are responsible for notifying payroll of approval for merit step increases.

During the evaluation process, the supervisor will meet with the employee to discuss the employee's performance which will be documented on the performance review form. Both the employee and the supervisor are asked to sign the evaluation form. The employee will receive a copy of the performance review and the original will be placed

in the employee's personnel file. Employees have the option to complete a self-evaluation regarding their job performance, which is placed in their personnel file.

If an employee's overall performance is unsatisfactory, the merit step increase cannot be approved. The employee may receive that merit step at any time before their next anniversary date if the employee's job performance is reevaluated as satisfactory; such merit steps are not granted retroactively. Unsatisfactory performance evaluations may result in a Performance Improvement Plan as outlined below.

8.04 PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

If the supervisor observes a gradual or marked decline in the performance of an employee, the organization may utilize the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) to outline specific areas for improvement. The organization may utilize various methods (such as check-in meetings or additional training) to assist the employee's performance improvement. Through this focused process, it is O3A's goal that the employee will make full efforts and bring performance up to the identified expectations.

Failure of an employee to improve identified areas within timeframes may lead to an extended PIP process and/or termination.

This review process is entirely discretionary on the part of the O3A.

SECTION 9: CONCERN RESOLUTION, DISCIPLINE, AND INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION

9.01 PROCEDURES FOR RESOLUTION OF CONCERNS

The O3A recognizes that fostering a work environment which allows employees the opportunity to openly voice their concerns, suggestions, and problems can improve the overall quality of work and conditions of employment. Toward that end, the agency will support an “open door” management style and encourages employees to share their concerns, suggestions, or problems before they escalate to a more severe situation.

Employees are encouraged to contact their supervisor (in person or in writing) to discuss any concern, problem, or suggestion. In the event the employee’s concern relates directly to the employee’s supervisor, the employee should contact the next level (i.e., the department director). When attempts have been made to resolve the situation at the previous levels, employees may bring their concerns/issues directly to the Executive Director.

In the event the Executive Director is the subject of the concern, the Council of Governments (COG) should be notified through the COG Chair. The COG will be the final step of any grievance involving the actions of the Executive Director

9.02 DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

O3A recognizes that each situation requiring corrective action must be determined on its own merit. If an employee violates an O3A policy or procedure or commits a serious violation, corrective action may occur in the form of a Verbal Warning, Written Warning, Suspension/Last Warning (with or without loss of pay) or Termination.

The level of disciplinary action is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The O3A recognizes the benefits, in some cases, of using progressive discipline, but retains the discretion and flexibility to use the discipline it considers appropriate to any particular situation, up to and including immediate termination. Nothing in this policy is intended to change the At-Will status of O3A employees.

9.03 INVOLUNTARY TERMINATIONS

Involuntary Termination

When circumstances warrant, an employee may be involuntarily terminated through the following process:

- **Approval:** Such action should be recommended by the employee's supervisor and approved by the Department Director and the Executive Director following consideration of all aspects of the specific case.

- **Pre-Termination Meeting:** The Executive Director or designee will give the employee written notice that such action is being considered and state the reasons. The employee will be provided an opportunity to respond verbally or in writing prior to any action being taken.

Layoff

- A layoff is defined as removal from employment because of abolition of the position due to reorganization, program reduction or de-funding, or other administrative readjustments.
- In the event of a layoff, the affected employee will receive a minimum of two (2) weeks written notice prior to the layoff or pay in lieu of notice.

Notification to COG:

The COG will be notified by the Executive Director of all involuntary terminations.

Benefits and Leave payout for Involuntary dismissals:

Employees who are involuntarily dismissed from employment, including the Executive Director, will receive accrued benefits less any advances or other obligations due the O3A following agency policies. All fringe benefits close on the date of discharge except those contractual insurance programs which automatically continue to the end of the month.

SECTION 10: VOLUNTARY SEPARATION OF EMPLOYMENT

10.01 RESIGNATION/VOLUNTARY TERMINATION

Employees may voluntarily terminate their employment with the Agency at any time.

Notification of Resignation:

An employee wishing to voluntarily terminate employment is asked to provide their supervisor with a two-week written notice. Managers and supervisors are asked to provide a minimum of four (4) weeks' notice. Supervisors will immediately notify Human Resources.

An employee's last day worked, whether retirement or another type of separation, will be the date of termination. On occasion, the O3A may deem it in the best interest of the agency to end the employment relationship at the time the employee provides their written notice. In such cases, the O3A reserves the right to accept the voluntary resignation at the time it is given and compensate the employee for the notice period (two weeks or less). In such cases, the date of termination will be at the conclusion of the paid notice period.

All agency employees who voluntarily resign employment with the O3A, including the Executive Director, will receive accrued benefits less any advances or other obligations due the O3A following agency policies. All fringe benefits close on the date of discharge except those contractual insurance programs which automatically continue to the end of the month.

10.02 RETIREMENT

O3A is a member of the federal Social Security System and the Washington Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). If an employee is contemplating retirement or has questions about the retirement system, they should contact the appropriate agency.

10.03 RETURN OF PROPERTY

Employees are responsible for items issued to them by O3A or in their possession or control, such as the following:

- Laptops or other equipment
- Keys or keycards
- Identification badges
- Cell phones
- O3A files or information

All O3A property must be returned by employees on or before their last day of work. Where permitted by applicable laws, O3A may withhold from the employee's check or

final paycheck the cost of any items that are not returned when required. O3A may also take all action deemed appropriate to recover or protect its property.

10.04 FINAL COMPENSATION

An employee's final paychecks will follow general agency payroll procedures. Exiting employees receive written notification of anticipated final payment dates. Payment will include all wages for hours worked up to the time of separation based on the final timesheet, including applicable overtime and unutilized annual leave.

10.05 EXIT INTERVIEW

At an employee's separation, O3A may offer the opportunity to provide an exit interview by telephone to gain insight into the reason for the employee's separation and to identify areas in which the agency can improve selection, training, or business operations.

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SECTION 11: MISCELLANEOUS

11.01 GENERAL SAFETY

O3A strives to provide for a healthy and safe work environment. All employees are responsible to observe and practice the highest standard of safety at all times in performing their jobs. Employees who violate safety standards or who do not perform their duties in a safe manner will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

11.02 REPORTING ON-THE-JOB INJURIES

Employees who are injured on the job, or whose injuries are directly related to the performance of their job duties, are required to report such injuries to their supervisor immediately, regardless of how minor the injury may be. Employees need to follow these steps when injured on the job:

1. The employee must complete the “Employee Injury/Accident Report” and return it to their immediate supervisor for review and completion of the supervisory section.
2. The employees will cooperate to their fullest extent on all accident investigation and injury inquiries.
3. If medical treatment is necessary, the employee should notify the treating physician that the injury was work-related and that the O3A is covered under the State Worker’s Compensation Fund program.
4. The employee shall contact their supervisor as soon as possible, following a physician’s visit, to provide an update on the employee’s status and ability to return to work.
5. If the employee is injured, a return-to-work release from the treating physician will be required from the employee prior to returning to work.

11.03 REPRESENTATION OF EMPLOYEES

Employees of the O3A, acting in good faith and within the parameters of their positions, are assured that O3A will defend and indemnify them from any cost or judgment or attorney fees arising from actions as employees that are not grossly negligent, reckless, or commit intentional or criminal acts. When deemed appropriate, O3A will request that O3A’s risk management entity provide legal representation and indemnity for claims against its employees. Employees may seek additional or other counsel at their own expense.

11.04 RESTRICTION OF DUTIES FOR NURSEES

O3A Registered Nurses and other O3A health professionals are restricted from providing general health care services and medical advice to the O3A staff and employees unless it is an emergency situation requiring immediate medical intervention. Instead, O3A employees should access routine medical care from their personal medical care provider.

11.05 BREASTFEEDING/LACTATION BREAKS

As part of our family-friendly policies and benefits, the O3A supports breastfeeding mothers by accommodating the mother who wishes to express breast milk during her workday when separated from her newborn child. The provisions of this policy meet the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act as it relates to breaks for nursing mothers.

For up to one year after the child's birth, any employee who is breastfeeding her child will be provided reasonable break times to express breast milk for her child. Employees shall use designated leaves for this purpose, which may be extended to 20 minutes total and any time in excess of this will be unpaid. The employee must make up this time during the workday or indicate the time on her time record. O3A will designate a private space at each facility for this purpose when requested. To designate a location at your work location, please contact your supervisor.

Breast milk may be stored in the lunchroom refrigerator and must be labeled with the name of the employee and date. Any non-conforming products stored in the refrigerator may be disposed of. Employees storing milk in the refrigerator assume all responsibility for the safety of the milk and the risk of harm for any reason, including improper storage, refrigeration, and tampering.