



# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

2022 EDITION

Welcome to

# THE COUNCIL FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT (CED)

Welcome to the CED Family!

We are delighted that you have chosen to join our organization and hope that you will enjoy a long and successful career with us. As you become familiar with our culture and mission, we hope you will take advantage of opportunities to enhance your career and further CED's mission.

With your active involvement, creativity, and support, CED will continue to have a tremendous impact on the success of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the Triangle. We sincerely hope you will take pride in being a valued member of the CED Team and active participant in driving innovation across North Carolina.

Let's get started with who we are and how we show up. Then we will cover the technical aspects of your employment. We take pride in this guide, so we appreciate your attention to our outlined practices and policies. If you have questions, feel free to ask your manager or to contact the Human Resources Department.

Welcome aboard: It should be a fun ride!



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## WHO ARE WE?

CED is an established and well respected nonprofit organization that has been in operation for nearly 40 years. Since its inception, it has acted as a convener of the ecosystem supporting entrepreneurs, a liaison to founders building scalable companies, a provider educating new entrepreneurs as they take the leap into entrepreneurship, and a partner to other resources with aligned missions.

## WHAT DO WE DO?

### **Mission:**

We connect entrepreneurial companies with high-value resources that accelerate business growth.

### **Value Proposition:**

With entrepreneurs and partners being essential to CED's organizational structure, having a meaningful message that resonates across these relationships is key. Entrepreneurs receive direct benefit from CED branded services, programs and engagement opportunities. Where our corporate partners, investors and community collaborators provide resources for these companies that enable them to go farther, faster.

### **How we show up together:**

At CED, we believe in open communication and collaborative problem solving. We value curiosity and helpfulness. We encourage expressing intellectual honesty with your manager or any member of the leadership team when you have an idea, question, concern, complaint, suggestion, or comment. And we communicate openly with each other, even when it's hard to do. Always remember that you are the face of our organization. By consistently exhibiting a can-do attitude, you positively influence your results, those of your colleagues and our organization's overall success.

We want to show up as our best selves every day, so as a team we developed the following team agreements that give us permission to do just that. As part of this team, you commit to:

1. Treat others with respect and assume positive intent.
2. We surface issues quickly and stay in a problem-solving mode in an honest and respectful way.
3. If I'm confused or overwhelmed I will bring it up and not blame others.
4. We celebrate success regularly and thank each other for jobs well done.
5. We can disagree. It is a safe space to surface tough issues and seek resolution.
6. Make agreements thoughtfully, keep the ones we made, and inform early if you can't keep an agreement with a solution.
7. Stay open and curious to new ideas...see the positive before dissecting out the negative.
8. Immediate feedback to my good teammates if they break an agreement using an "I" message.

We value you. We want to support you. We want you to grow in your career as you help us to grow CED! With a commitment to these agreements, you can be successful and happy.

## ABOUT YOUR EMPLOYEE GUIDE

This handbook is a guide and resource on general work standards, requirements, and expectations for all members of the CED team. Since this handbook is a guide, it is not written with the intention to cover every situation that might come up. If it so happens that any policy in this handbook conflicts with or is not sufficient to meet federal, state, or local law, we'll always comply with the federal, state, or local law's requirements.

### Employment at Will

Employment at CED is on an at-will basis. This means that either the employee or the company may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without notice.

Nothing in this employee handbook is intended to or creates an employment agreement, express or implied. Nothing contained in this or any other document provided to the employee is intended to be, nor should it be, construed as a contract that employment or any benefit will be continued for any period of time.

In addition, no company representative is authorized to modify this policy for any employee or to enter into any agreement, oral or written, that changes the at-will relationship.

Any salary figures provided to an employee in annual or monthly terms are stated for the sake of convenience or to facilitate comparisons and are not intended and do not create an employment contract for any specific period of time.

Nothing in this statement is intended to interfere with, restrain, or prevent concerted activity as protected by the National Labor Relations Act. Such activity includes employee communications regarding wages, hours, or other terms or conditions of employment. CED employees have the right to engage in or refrain from such activities.

## **Commitment to Equal Opportunity and Diversity**

### **We Value Diversity and We Don't Discriminate**

Because we are a creative and intellectually honest group of people, we value working with people who come from a wide array of backgrounds and come with different perspectives and ways of tackling problems. This means we welcome and value people from all classes that are protected by federal and state laws, as well as those who represent other kinds of thought diversity. We commit to equal employment opportunity and we don't discriminate or harass. CED will always seek to minimize conditions that could lead to such unfortunate behavior. We abide by all applicable federal laws and any other relevant local and state laws.

CED provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, age, disability, gender identity, results of genetic testing, or service in the military. Equal employment opportunity applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leave of absence, compensation, and training.

## AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

To ensure equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with a disability, CED will make reasonable accommodations for the known disability of an otherwise qualified individual, unless undue hardship on the operation of the business would result. Employees who may require a reasonable accommodation should contact Human Resources.

## ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

In keeping with our philosophy on non-discrimination, CED is committed to providing a positive and respectful working environment for everyone that is free from sexual or other harassment. Our anti-harassment policy backs up that commitment. We expect you to share that commitment and trust that you will treat the people around you in a professional manner, and respect their personal boundaries.

At a minimum, CED does not tolerate harassment related to any protected characteristic such as race, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, religion, age, disability, veteran status, or other characteristic protected by state or federal law.

Definition of Unlawful Harassment “Unlawful harassment” is conduct that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment; has the purpose or effect of substantially and unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance; or otherwise adversely affects an individual’s employment opportunities because of the individual’s membership in a protected class.

Unlawful harassment can refer to any behavior that is personally offensive, which includes, but is not limited to, epithets; slurs; jokes; pranks; innuendo; comments; written or graphic material; stereotyping; or other threatening, hostile, or intimidating acts based on race, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, age, disability, veteran status, or other characteristic protected by state or federal law.



Definition of Sexual Harassment While all forms of harassment are prohibited, special attention should be paid to sexual harassment. "Sexual harassment" is generally defined under both state and federal law as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:

- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of any individual's employment or as a basis for employment decisions; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

It is not possible to list all circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, but the following are some examples of conduct that, if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending on the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwanted sexual advances, whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, comments about an individual's body, comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing up against the body, sexual gestures, or suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and
- Discussion of one's sexual activities.

Other sexually oriented conduct, whether intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a work environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to workers may also constitute sexual harassment.

Complaint Procedure In the unfortunate event that you experience or witness an instance of harassment, regardless of whether it is by a coworker, member of management, contractor, customer, vendor, or a member of the general public, we encourage you to report it as soon as possible to your immediate supervisor, HR, or any other member of management you feel comfortable with. No reprisal, retaliation, or other adverse action will be taken against an employee for making a complaint or report of discrimination or harassment or for assisting in the investigation of any such complaint or report.

We truly mean that. Any suspected retaliation or intimidation should be reported immediately to one of the persons identified above.

We take these matters seriously and commit to investigating any reports of harassment, discrimination or retaliation immediately and fully. We will maintain confidentiality throughout the investigation process as much as possible and information/identities will only be revealed on a need-to-know basis. If the investigation confirms that this policy has been violated, CED will take immediate, appropriate, corrective action, including discipline, up to and including immediate termination.

Problem Resolution Procedures CED promotes a healthy, adult working environment and most problems are best addressed immediately and directly with the person(s) involved.

**Should an informal one-on-one discussion fail to resolve the issue, he or she is encouraged to speak to Human Resources or the CEO.**

## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIALITY

### Conflicts of Interest

While working for CED, make sure to avoid situations that could cause a potential conflict of interest, or even the appearance of a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest or an unethical business practice could be any activity that interferes with your ability to do your job and/or make fair decisions in the course of doing your job, or is against the best interest of the company. For the sake of clarity, here are some examples (not an exhaustive list) of the types of activity that could be considered a conflict of interest:

- Engaging in company business with a firm in which the employee, or a close relative of the employee, has substantial ownership or interest.
- Holding a substantial interest in, or participating in the management of, a firm to which the company makes sales or from which it makes purchases.
- Borrowing money from customers or firms, other than recognized loan institutions, from which our company buys services, materials, equipment, or supplies.
- Accepting substantial gifts or excessive entertainment from an outside organization or agency.

- Speculating or dealing in materials, equipment, supplies, services, or property purchased by the company.
- Participating in civic or professional organization activities in a manner that divulges confidential company information.
- Misusing privileged information or revealing confidential data to outsiders.
- Using your position in the company or knowledge of its affairs for personal gains.
- Engaging in practices or procedures that violate antitrust laws, commercial bribery laws, copyright laws, discrimination laws, campaign contribution laws, or other laws regulating the conduct of company business.

It would be impossible to list every potential source for a conflict of interest here, so if you have a doubt or question about what could be considered a conflict of interest, talk to your manager for advice and guidance. Talking is fun!

## **Confidential Information**

As an employee of CED, you will learn information about our company and the companies we support that is not available to the public. When going about your daily work, we want to remind you to make sure that private information about clients, employees, partners, and our company stays private. The protection of confidential business information and trade secrets is vital to the interests and success of CED.

Here are some guidelines that will help make sure that private information stays secure:

- You should lock or secure (e.g. strong passwords, 2FA) confidential information at all times.
- Only print hard copies of confidential information when you have management approval. Shred confidential documents when no longer needed; This includes but is not limited to customer lists, sales reports, financial or performance reports, etc.
- View confidential information on secure devices only.
- Only disclose confidential information to other employees when necessary and authorized.
- Keep confidential documents inside our company's premises unless authorized.
- Report lost or stolen company-provided devices to your manager immediately.

An employee who improperly uses or discloses trade secrets or confidential business information will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and legal action, even if he or she does not actually benefit from the disclosed information. Leave the corporate espionage for the spy movies.

All inquiries from the media must be referred to the President and CEO. This policy does not prohibit employees from discussing wages and other terms and conditions of employment if they choose to.

## YOUR EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP WITH CED

### Employee Types and What that Means for You

In order to determine eligibility for benefits and overtime status and to ensure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations, CED classifies its employees as shown below. CED may review or change employee classifications at any time.

Exempt: Exempt employees are paid on a salaried basis and are not eligible to receive overtime pay.

Nonexempt: Nonexempt employees are paid on an hourly basis and are eligible to receive overtime pay for overtime hours worked.

Regular, Full-Time: Employees who are not in a temporary status and work a minimum of 30 hours weekly and maintain continuous employment status. Generally, these employees are eligible for the full-time benefits package and are subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefits program.

Regular, Part-Time: Employees who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work fewer than 30 hours weekly, but at least 20 hours weekly, and who maintain continuous employment status. Part-time employees are eligible for some of the benefits offered by the company and are subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefits program.

Temporary, Full-Time: Employees who are hired as interim replacements to temporarily supplement the workforce or to assist in the completion of a specific project and who are temporarily scheduled to work the company's full-time schedule for a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status.

Temporary, Part-Time: Employees who are hired as interim replacements to temporarily supplement the workforce or to assist in the completion of a specific project and who are temporarily scheduled to work fewer than 30 hours weekly for a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status.

#### Internships:

From time to time, CED will offer internships to students interested in learning about entrepreneurship and the educational programs CED offers entrepreneurs. Interns will not replace paid staff. These are the guidelines for internship programs:

- CED will accept only interns who are candidates for a degree program at an accredited academic institution.
- Internships will be offered for academic credit.
- Interns will not be paid for their time at CED and will not be eligible for company benefits.
- Training will be for the benefit of the intern.
- Hours and training activities will be agreed to in writing between the manager and the intern's academic advisor.
- Internships will be for one semester and may be extended if both parties agree.
- There is no guarantee of permanent employment at CED as a result of completing an internship.

### **Work Week and Hours of Work**

CED employs a team of highly motivated skilled professionals. We understand that we have a job to do and we do what it takes to get it done. We employ an EOS model that sets clear expectations through ROCKS.

CED maintains an office at the Frontier. Employees are expected to respond to business needs during regular business hours and work from the office regularly during group meeting days. These days are currently Tuesday and Thursday but subject to change.

While full-time employees are expected to work 40 hours in a typical work week, we recognize that schedules may vary depending on workloads, organizational needs, member/investor needs, and personal commitments. We allow various work schedule arrangements and ask that employees honor any flexibility with office hours by working hard, being productive, and contributing as expected. Our goal is to meet the needs of the business while balancing life outside of work.

### **Time Records**

All nonexempt employees are required to complete accurate weekly time reports showing all time actually worked. These records are required by governmental regulations and are used to calculate regular and overtime pay.

### **Overtime**

When required due to the needs of the business, you may be asked to work overtime. Overtime is actual hours worked in excess of 40 in a single workweek. Nonexempt employees will be paid overtime compensation at the rate of one and one-half their regular rate of pay for all hours over 40 actually worked in a single workweek. Paid leave, such as holiday, PTO, bereavement time, and jury duty does not apply toward work time. All overtime work must be approved in advance by your manager.

### **Deductions from Pay/Safe Harbor Exempt Employees**

CED does not make improper deductions from the salaries of exempt employees and complies with the salary basis requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). See Employment Classification.

Permitted deductions: The FLSA limits the types of deductions that may be made from the pay of an exempt employee. Deductions that are permitted include:

- Deductions that are required by law, e.g., income taxes;
- Deductions for employee benefits when authorized by the employee;
- Absence from work for one or more full days for personal reasons other than sickness or disability;
- Absence from work for one or more full days due to sickness or disability if the deduction is made in accordance with a bona fide plan, policy or practice of providing compensation for salary lost due to illness;
- Offset for amounts received as witness or jury fees, or for military pay; or
- Unpaid disciplinary suspensions of one or more full days imposed in good faith for workplace conduct rule infractions.

During the week an exempt employee begins work for the company or during the last week of employment, the employee will only be paid for actual hours worked. In addition, an employee may be paid only for hours worked during a period when the employee is using unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

Improper deductions: If an employee classified as exempt believes that an improper deduction has been taken from his or her pay, the employee should immediately report the deduction to the Human Resources Department. The report will be promptly investigated and if it is found that an improper deduction has been made, the company will reimburse the employee for the improper deduction.

### **Paychecks**

CED's pay period is monthly, distributed on the last workday of the month by direct deposit. If payday falls on a federal holiday, employees will receive their paycheck on the preceding workday.

### **Separation from Employment**

In all cases of voluntary resignation (one initiated by the employee), employees are asked to provide a written notice to their supervisors at least 20 working days in advance of the last day of work. Holidays and paid time off (PTO) will not be counted toward the 20-day notice. Employees who provide the requested amount of notice will be considered to have resigned in good standing and generally will be eligible for rehire.

In most cases, Human Resources will conduct an exit meeting on or before the last day of employment. If applicable, information regarding benefits continuation through the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) will be sent to the employee's home address. Should it become necessary because of business conditions to reduce the number of employees or work hours, this will be done at the discretion of the company. "It's not you, it's us" type of deal, let's try to leave on good terms if it doesn't work out.

# WORKPLACE SAFETY

## **Drug-Free, Alcohol-Free, and Smoke-Free Workplace**

It is the policy of CED to maintain a drug- and alcohol-free work environment that is safe and productive for employees and others having business with the company.

The unlawful use, possession, purchase, sale, distribution, or being under the influence of any illegal drug and/or the misuse of legal drugs while on company or client premises or while performing services for the company is strictly prohibited. CED also prohibits reporting to work or performing services under the influence of alcohol. In addition, CED prohibits the possession, use, or sale of illegal drugs, when these activities adversely affect job performance, job safety, or CED's reputation in the community.

To ensure compliance with this policy, substance abuse screening may be conducted in the following situations (do we have time for this, no probably not):

Pre-employment: As required by the company for all prospective employees who receive a conditional offer of employment.

For Cause: Upon reasonable suspicion that the employee is under the influence of alcohol or drugs that could affect or has adversely affected the employee's job performance.

Random: As authorized or required by federal or state law.

Compliance with this policy is a condition of employment. Employees who test positive or who refuse to submit to substance abuse screening will be subject to termination. Notwithstanding any provision herein, this policy will be enforced at all times in accordance with applicable state and local law. Any employee violating this policy is subject to discipline, up to and including termination, for the first offense.

Smoking is not allowed in company buildings or work areas at any time. "Smoking" includes the use of any tobacco products (including chewing tobacco), electronic smoking devices, and e-cigarettes.

Smoking is only permitted during break times in designated outdoor areas. Employees using these areas are expected to dispose of any smoking debris safely and properly.



Contact your HR representative or management if you need information about the availability of treatment programs such as alcohol abuse rehabilitation and education programs. The SPCA of Wake County will assist and support employees who voluntarily seek help for such problems before becoming subject to discipline and/or termination under this or other policies. Such employees may be allowed to use a leave of absence, referred to treatment providers and otherwise accommodated as required by law.

### **Workplace Violence Prevention**

CED is committed to providing a safe, violence-free workplace for our employees.

Due to this commitment, you are expected to conduct yourself in a non – threatening and non-abusive manner at all times. Threats, threatening language, or any other acts of aggression or violence made toward or by any employee will not be tolerated. A threat may include any verbal or physical harassment or abuse, attempts to intimidate others, menacing gestures, stalking, or any other hostile, aggressive, and/or destructive actions taken for the purposes of intimidation. This policy covers any violent or potentially violent behavior that occurs in the workplace or at company-sponsored functions.

All CED employees are responsible for keeping our work environment free from violence or potential violence. Any employee who witnesses or is the recipient of violent behavior should immediately inform their supervisor, manager, or Human Resources. All threats will be promptly investigated. No employee will be subject to retaliation, intimidation, or discipline as a result of reporting a threat in good faith under this guideline.

Any individual engaging in violence against the company, its employees, or its property will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. All acts will be investigated, and the appropriate action will be taken. Any such act or threatening behavior may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. You hit someone, we hit back.

CED prohibits the possession of weapons on its property. Additionally, while on duty, employees may not carry a weapon of any type. Weapons include, but are not limited to, handguns, rifles, automatic weapons, throwing stars, sea turtle shells and knives that can be used as weapons (excluding pocket knives, utility knives, and other instruments that are used to open packages), martial arts paraphernalia, stun guns, tear gas and ketchup (okay, not ketchup).

Any employee violating this policy is subject to discipline up to and including termination for the first offense.

### **Commitment to Safety**

Protecting the safety of our employees and visitors is the most important aspect of running our business.

All employees have the opportunity and responsibility to contribute to a safe work environment by using common sense rules and safe practices and by notifying management when any health or safety issues are present. All employees are encouraged to partner with management to ensure maximum safety for all.

In the event of an emergency, dial 911 to activate the medical emergency services.

### **Emergency Closings**

If emergencies or severe weather disrupts CED operations, these circumstances may require the closing or the delayed opening of our office. In the event of severe conditions, employees will be notified. Although this is our general policy, employees are advised to use their personal judgment regarding their travel to and from work during inclement weather. The personal safety of our employees and their families is of the utmost importance. If the office is officially closed due to emergency conditions, the time off from scheduled work will be paid at 100% of base pay. Employees are encouraged to work remotely when possible.

## **WORKPLACE GUIDELINES**

### **Performance Feedback**

We all perform at our best when we have helpful, frequent feedback on our performance. At CED your manager is there to help you succeed by ensuring you have the information and resources you need to build mastery in your current role and to prepare yourself for career growth. Performance feedback may come in the form of metrics, informal conversations, and intermittent formal reviews. At this time, we leave it to manager discretion to determine how frequently they provide formal, written reviews and what format is best for each team member.

## Outside Employment

Employees are permitted to work a second job as long as it does not interfere with their job performance with CED. Employees with a second job are expected to work their assigned schedules. A second job will not be considered an excuse for poor job performance, absenteeism, tardiness, leaving early, refusal to travel, or refusal to work overtime or different hours.

If outside work activity causes or contributes to job-related problems, it must be discontinued, or the employee may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## Dress and Grooming

CED provides a casual yet professional work environment for its employees. Even though the dress code is casual, it is important to project a professional image to our customers, visitors, and coworkers. All employees are expected to dress in a manner consistent with good hygiene, safety, and good taste. Please use common sense.

## Electronic Communication and Use of Technology

At CED, we expect each employee to take responsibility for their words as well as their actions.

You are accountable for any statements you make in the public forum. If you are asked by the press for comment about CED business, please refer to the CEO.

## Social Media Acceptable Use

We encourage you to use good judgment when communicating via social media.

Ultimately, you are solely responsible for what you post online. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. If you are about to publish, respond or engage in something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, don't do it.

Keep in mind that any of your conduct that adversely affects your job performance, the performance of fellow associates, violates the terms of the CED Employee Confidentiality Agreement or otherwise adversely affects members of the community affiliated with CED's work, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

**Be respectful and appropriate.**

“Social media” includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else’s web log or blog, journal or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with CED, as well as any other form of electronic communication.

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

The following is a general and non-exhaustive list of guidelines you should keep in mind:

1. Always be fair and courteous to fellow team members, members, partners, or people who work on behalf of CED. Also, keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work related complaints by speaking directly with your co-workers or by speaking to your supervisor than by posting complaints to social media outlets. Nevertheless, if you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparages team members, members, or partners, 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, age, gender, national origin, color, disability, religion or any other status protected by federal, state or local law or company policy. Inappropriate postings that include discriminatory remarks, harassment, retaliation, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject you to disciplinary action up to and including immediate discharge.

2. Make sure you are always truthful and accurate when posting information or news. If you make a mistake, correct it quickly. Be open about any previous posts you have altered. Use privacy settings when appropriate. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched.

The Internet is immediate; nothing that is posted ever truly “expires.” Never post any information or rumors that you know to be false about CED, fellow employees, members, partners, people working on behalf of the CED or competitors.

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

4. Do not create a link from your blog, website or other social networking site to CED's website without identifying yourself as a CED employee.

5. Express only your personal opinions. Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for CED. If CED is a subject of the content you are creating, be clear and open about the fact that you are a team member and make it clear that your views do not represent those of CED, fellow team members, team members, members, partners or people working on behalf of CED. If you do publish a blog or post online related to the work you do or subjects associated with CED, make it clear that you are not speaking on behalf of CED. 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 CED.”

6. Do not use any CED e-mail addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online CED encourages employees to share information with co-workers and with those outside the company for the purposes of gathering information, generating new ideas, and learning from the work of others. Social media provides inexpensive, informal, and timely ways to participate in an exchange of ideas and information. However, information posted on a website is available to the public and, therefore, the company has established the following guidelines for employee participation in social media.

Violations of this policy may result in discipline up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Note: Nothing in this policy is meant to, nor should it be interpreted to, in any way limit your rights under any applicable federal, state, or local laws, including your rights under the National Labor Relations Act to engage in protected concerted activities with other employees to improve or discuss terms and conditions of employment, such as wages, working conditions, and benefits.

## Solicitation

Employees should be able to work in an environment that is free from unnecessary annoyances and interference with their work. In order to protect our employees and visitors, solicitation by employees is strictly prohibited while either the employee being solicited or the employee doing the soliciting is on “working time.” “Working time” is defined as time during which an employee is not at a meal, on break, or on the premises immediately before or after his or her shift.

Employees are also prohibited from distributing written materials, handbills, or any other type of literature on working time and, at all times, in “working areas,” which includes all office areas. “Working areas” do not include break rooms, parking lots, or common areas shared by employees during nonworking time. Nonemployees may not trespass or solicit or distribute materials anywhere on company property at any time.

## Company Property

All company property you are given the right to use during the course of your employment at CED remains the property of CED inspect the contents of lockers, storage areas, file cabinets, desks, and workstations at any time and may remove all company property and other items that are in violation of CED rules and policies. This feels like an invasion of privacy, so we’ll try to avoid it.

Return of Company Property: If you leave the company for any reason (voluntary or involuntary), we require you to return all company property including electronic equipment (e.g. laptop), keys, ID cards, and any other property belonging to CED immediately. Failure to return company property could result in deductions from or withholding of your final paycheck in accordance with local/state laws.

## Computers, Internet, Email, and Other Resources

We’ve put together a few reminders and guidelines for using company-provided equipment at CED including all media, services, and communication systems:

- All company-provided equipment remains company property and we expect you to treat it with the same care you would for your own property.
- Don’t access, click on, download, or view anything you shouldn’t.
- Check with your manager before downloading any software from the Internet onto any company-provided device. This helps us prevent viruses and other malware.

- We assume no liability for loss, damage, disclosure, or misuse of any non-company data or communications transmitted or stored on our electronic resources.
- We reserve the right to monitor use of company-provided systems and equipment.
- Be mindful that any information you create, send, receive, or store on the company's electronic resources is a business record and is company property.

## **Disciplinary Procedure**

We expect excellent performance from everyone at CED and a commitment to how we show up. We trust that you share that commitment, however, in the case of performance and behavior expectations getting out of sync, we believe in clear, helpful feedback to get things back on track. Sometimes things don't get back to where they need to be, so the honest thing to do for our teammates and the business is to use a fair process of progressive feedback and discipline. Feedback starts with informal and often verbal forms, progresses to written constructive feedback, and then to a probationary period that can result in termination if performance has not improved, and/or problems have not been corrected. During this staged process, a manager can accelerate, slow, and skip steps based on the severity and situational variables. Managers will use their best, fairest judgment for how to proceed.

# **TIME OFF AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

## **Holidays**

The company observes (10) holidays and allows time off with pay:

- Your Birthday
- Good Friday or Easter Monday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth (June 19)
- Independence Day (July 4th)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and Friday following
- Two floating holidays to be used for other cultural or religious celebrations

Any additional holidays will be designated by the company at the start of each calendar year.

If one of these holidays falls on a Sunday, it will be observed on the following Monday. If the holiday falls on a Saturday, the company will select either the following Monday or the preceding Friday as a substitute holiday. The company reserves the right to pay eligible employees in lieu of time off if the holiday falls on Saturday.

CED closes its offices the week between Christmas and New Years. If you have administrative duties such as mail pick up, etc. you may be required to continue those tasks, however, you will not be required to come to the offices during normal business.

### **Paid Time Off**

CED hires exceptional, professional adults to perform a wide variety of important functions that contribute to the success of our company. It is our intent to provide our exceptional employees the freedom they require to balance the responsibilities of both their work and home lives, thereby maximizing their value to CED.

### **Open Paid Leave**

It is the policy of CED to forego implementation of a leave accrual or bank system of any sort. Eligible employees will be free to take leave when they require it for up to 30 days of consecutive leave.

All employees are required to take a leave of at least 5 consecutive days annually. During your leave, you are expected to have cross-trained a colleague to handle any issues that may arise. Therefore, you shall be able to truly take a vacation and not be in contact with the office.

At our discretion, leave may be tracked for business purposes.

### **Eligibility**

All full-time exempt-level employees with 90 days of continuous service are considered eligible under this policy.

### **Expectations**

Under this policy, exempt-level employees are expected to:

- Recognize that at CED, we value all employees' contributions and are committed to communicating with our team members in advance when scheduling an absence or notifying the appropriate team member before the start of the workday when an unscheduled absence occurs.



- Understand that due to staffing needs, sometimes, not all leave requests can be honored. Advance requests are still subject to the appropriate approval.
- Meet all established goals despite the absences.
- CED has a number of mandatory events and internal planning days that will prevent the authorization of PTO.

If you have questions regarding these expectations, please contact Human Resources.

Except for those on protected leave (such as state or federal family and medical leave), if an eligible employee is unable to meet the expectations outlined above, CED reserves the right to temporarily revoke open leave. Further, if gross abuse of this leave is observed, disciplinary action may be taken, which may include termination of employment.

### **Verification**

Managers and supervisors also reserve the right to request verification of absences (such as a doctor's note) when legal and appropriate to do so.

### **Leave of Absence**

This policy does not apply to eligible employees requesting military leave or sabbaticals. For more information on these types of leave, please see the corresponding policies located in your handbook.

CED employees are professionals with responsibilities to the company, to our internal and external customers, and to themselves. We expect each employee to determine for himself or herself, consistent with the employee's responsibilities, how much time to take off from work. Time away from work is beneficial, and all employees are encouraged to take it; however, no particular amount of time off is promised, guaranteed, vested or accrued. Compensation is not reduced for taking time off under this policy, but the time off will not be counted as hours worked when computing overtime for nonexempt employees.

### **Eligibility**

This Open Leave Policy applies to all full-time employees. Holidays are pro-rated for part-time employees.

### **Applicable Reasons for Leave**

This policy applies to time off for purposes such as vacation, relaxation, personal or family matters, illness, leave for jury duty, bereavement, and leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and other federal/state/local leave laws. The appropriate policies should also be consulted for any additional requirements for leaves that may run concurrent with this policy.

### **Scheduling Time Off**

Employees must follow the steps below if they intend to take leave under this policy for vacation or personal reasons known in advance. For time off under this policy for other reasons, please consult the applicable leave policy for information regarding notification, documentation, approval and any other requirements related to the leave.

- Obtain manager approval at least two weeks in advance when possible. If taking off more than a week at a time additional consideration, planning and coordination with your manager may be required.
- Submit all leave requests through Slack/Wrangle PTO request system
- Set the "Out of Office Assistant" in Gmail and change your voicemail greeting to the appropriate out-of-office option.

As is the case with all policies CED has the exclusive right to interpret, amend or terminate this policy in accordance with applicable laws.

If you have questions about this policy, please contact Human Resources.

### **Family and Medical Leave**

CED complies with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which requires employers to grant unpaid leaves of absence to qualified workers for certain medical and family-related reasons. The company also abides by any state and local leave laws. The more generous of the laws will apply to the employee if the employee is eligible under both federal and state laws.

Please note there are many requirements, qualifications, and exceptions under these laws, and each employee's situation is different. Contact the Human Resources department to discuss options for leave.

The FMLA requires private employers with 50 or more employees and all public agencies, including state, local, and federal employers, and local education agencies (schools), to provide eligible employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in any 12-month period for certain family and medical reasons.

The 12-month period is a rolling period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave, except for leaves to care for a covered servicemember with a serious illness or injury. For those leaves, the leave entitlement is 26 weeks in a single 12-month period, measured forward from the date an employee first takes that type of leave.

Still have questions? That's understandable because FMLA is pretty complex. The Department of Labor has a helpful Employee's Guide to FMLA you can check out here: <https://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/employeeeguide.pdf>. You can also see your manager or Human Resources if you have questions or would like to discuss your options under this policy.

### **Military Leave**

We are grateful for the service of our fellow citizens and colleagues who have served and continue to serve in the military. CED supports the military obligations of all employees and grants leaves for uniformed service in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. Any employee who needs time off for uniformed service should immediately notify the Human Resources department and his or her supervisor, who will provide details regarding the leave. If an employee is unable to provide notice before leaving for uniformed service, a family member should notify the supervisor as soon as possible.

Upon return from military leave, employees will be granted the same seniority, pay, and benefits as if they had worked continuously. Failure to report for work within the prescribed time after completion of military service will be considered a voluntary termination.

### **Jury Duty/Court Appearance**

We support you in your civic duty to serve on a jury when you're called upon to do so. Employees must present any summons to jury duty to their supervisor as soon as possible after receiving the notice to allow advance planning for an employee's absence.

Nonexempt employees will be paid for up to 2 weeks of jury duty service at their regular rate of pay minus any compensation received from the court for the period of service. Exempt employees are subject to the same 2-week limitation except that they will also receive pay for any days they serve as a juror or witness in a workweek in which they actually perform work. All employees may use any accrued time off if required to serve more than 2 weeks on a jury.

Time for appearance in court for personal business will be the individual employee's responsibility.

### **Time Off for Voting**

CED recognizes that voting is a right and privilege of being a citizen of the United States and encourages employees to exercise their right to vote. In almost all cases, you will have sufficient time outside working hours to vote. If for any reason you think this won't be the case, contact your supervisor to discuss scheduling accommodations.

### **Workers' Compensation**

Workers' compensation is a "no-fault" system that provides compensation for medical expenses and wage losses to employees who are injured or who become ill because of employment.

CED pays the entire cost of workers' compensation insurance. The insurance provides coverage for related medical and rehabilitation expenses and a portion of lost wages to employees who sustain an injury on the job. The company abides by all applicable state workers' compensation laws and regulations.

If an employee sustains a job-related injury or illness, it is important to notify your supervisor immediately. In cases of true medical emergencies, report to the nearest emergency room.

Workers' compensation benefits (paid or unpaid) will run concurrently with FMLA leave, if applicable, where permitted by state and federal law. In addition, employees will not be paid vacation or sick leave for approved absences covered by the company's workers' compensation program, except to supplement the workers' compensation benefits such as when the plan only covers a portion of the employee's salary as allowed by state law.

## IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS THAT AREN'T ANSWERED IN THIS HANDBOOK.

We are big believers in the use of good judgment and continually seeking to do the right thing. Our belief is that we don't need a 90 page handbook (30 still felt like a lot, let's be honest) because we know that the kind of people we choose to work with are sincere, transparent, thinkers and doers-- not bureaucrats. This means that there might be questions you have that aren't covered in this handbook. If that's the case, we encourage you to speak with your manager first and then check with HR and other leaders if you need further guidance. We can always find a way forward if we remain curious and help each other.

## WHO SHOULD I CONTACT?

### **Leadership:**

Kelly Rowell, CEO

### **Human Resources - Your HR Team:**

Kathryn Brant -- ph: 919.943.8316

# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the employee handbook of CED. I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies in the handbook.

I understand that the handbook and all other written and oral materials provided to me are intended for informational purposes only. Neither it, company practices, nor other communications create an employment contract or term. I understand that the policies and benefits, both in the handbook and those communicated to me in any other fashion, are subject to interpretation, review, removal, and change by management at any time without notice.

I further understand that I am an at-will employee and that neither this document nor any other communication shall bind the company to employ me now or hereafter and that my employment may be terminated by me or the company without reason at any time. I understand that no representative of the company has any authority to enter into any agreement for employment for any specified period of time or to assure any other personnel action or to assure any benefits or terms or conditions of employment, or make any agreement contrary to the foregoing.

I also understand and agree that this agreement may not be modified orally and that only the president of the company may make a commitment for employment.

I also understand that if such an agreement is made, it must be in writing and signed by the president of the company.

Employee's Name in Print \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Employee \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed by Employee \_\_\_\_\_

TO BE PLACED IN EMPLOYEE'S PERSONNEL FILE

# ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

I have read and I understand the Company's Anti-Harassment Policy.

Employee's Name in Print \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Employee \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed by Employee \_\_\_\_\_

TO BE PLACED IN EMPLOYEE'S PERSONNEL FILE

# DEDUCTION AUTHORIZATION FOR RECEIPT OF CED LAPTOP

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received a laptop computer from CED for use in the course of my employment. I understand that if I fail to return the laptop upon separation from the company, CED may deduct the value of the laptop from my final paycheck.

Employee's Name in Print \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Employee \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed by Employee \_\_\_\_\_

TO BE PLACED IN EMPLOYEE'S PERSONNEL FILE