



***NORTHERN COMMUNITY MEDIATION OF  
CHARLEVOIX & EMMET COUNTIES***

**PERSONNEL POLICIES**

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PERSONNEL POLICIES**

Acknowledging Receipt of Handbook	3
Purpose	4
Vision Statement	4
Mission Statement	4
Philosophy	4
Objectives	4
Accessibility	4
Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity	5
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	5
At Will Employment Status	5
Back-Up	5
Cell Phones and Pagers	5
Code of Conduct/Ethics	6
Compensation Program	6
1. Employee	6
2. Travel Time	6
3. Compensatory Time	6
4. Holidays	7
5. Vacations/Paid Time Off	7
6. Personal Days	8
7. Bereavement Leave	9
8. Community Service	9
9. Retirement	10
10. Maternity / Paternity Leave	10
11. Other Benefits	10
12. Salary Determination	10
Confidentiality	10
a. General	10
b. Case Files	10
Conflict of Interest	11
Corporate Compliance with Center Policies/Procedures	11
Criminal Background Check	11
Cultural Competence and Diversity	11
Discrimination	11
Drug-Free Workplace	11
Efficient Use of Resources	12
E-Mail/Internet Communications	12
Emergency Contacts	12
Emergency Procedures	12
Employment Outside of NCM	12
Employment, Review of Performance, Discipline, and Termination	12
Equal Employment Opportunity Plan	13
Exit Interview	13
Grievance Procedure	13
Healthy Work Environment	14
Job Descriptions	14
Jury Duty	14

Leave of Absence	14
1. Administrative Purposes	15
2. Disability Due to Illness	15
3. Maternity	15
4. Educational Purposes	15
5. Military Service	15
6. Personal/Emergency Leave	15
License and Insurance Verification	15
Media Response	15
Mediator Issues	15
Nepotism Policy	16
Open Door Policy	16
Orientation	16
Paid Work Outside of NCM	16
Payroll Deductions	16
Personnel File Management	16
Personnel Policies	17
1. Selection	17
2. Promotion	17
Personnel Record Information Changes	17
Proofreading Procedures	17
Requests for References	17
Replacement Responsibilities	17
Reprisal	17
Risk Reduction Measures	18
Screening Staff	18
Sexual Harassment	18
Smoking	18
Social Media	18
Social Security Numbers	18
Responsibility for the Personnel Function	19
1. Board of Directors	19
2. Executive Director	19
Statement of Staff Expectations	19
Termination of Employment	19
Travel and Expenses Reimbursement	19
Use of NCM Equipment	20
Weapons	20
Whistleblower Policy	20
1. Policy	20
2. Procedure Overview	20
Workplace Violence Policy and Reporting	21

## STAFF HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT STATEMENT FORM

This is to acknowledge that I have received and thoroughly read Northern Community Mediation's (NCM) Personnel Policies from which this form was obtained. I have asked for and received to my satisfaction an explanation of anything I did not understand. I will retain a copy of the handbook for my own reference.

I further understand that this handbook is a guide and not an employment contract, and that from time to time, changes, both oral and written, can be made to update or clarify these guidelines.

In addition, I understand that NCM maintains the exclusive right to alter, amend, modify, eliminate, add to, interpret, and apply the guidelines outlined in this handbook as management believes is necessary or expedient to promote NCM's overall best interests.

I understand that the responsibility for interpreting any NCM policies, procedures, rules, and benefits is entirely that of NCM management. I also understand that any outstanding advances; unearned vacation, personal, sick, or holiday time, or other monies owed to NCM will be deducted in full from my last paycheck.

Finally, I understand that employment is for no definite term. All employees of NCM are hired "at will." It is clear that either NCM or I can terminate employment and compensation, with or without cause, and with or without notice, at any time.

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Employee Signature

Date

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Executive Director Signature

Date

# **NORTHERN COMMUNITY MEDIATION PERSONNEL POLICIES**

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this handbook is to describe the Northern Community Mediation (NCM) policies, procedures and benefits available to employees. NCM reserves the right to modify, revoke, suspend, terminate or change any or all such plans, policies or procedures, in whole or part, at any time, with or without notice. This handbook supersedes all prior written and oral communication concerning benefits and employment. It is not a contract of employment. It is intended to be informative, but not all of the NCM's policies and procedures can be set forth here. Read it carefully and refer to it when the need arises. Questions should be directed to the Executive Director. The Executive Committee of the Board will review this handbook and make appropriate recommendations to the full Board at least annually. Any modifications to this handbook must be approved by the Board and be in writing.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

The vision of Northern Community Mediation is to be the first source for conflict prevention / resolution in Charlevoix and Emmet Counties.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Northern Community Mediation is to help people from Charlevoix and Emmet Counties meaningfully resolve conflicts.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Northern Community Mediation is a non-profit organization (501 (c) (3) that provides conciliation, mediation, and other forms of dispute resolution for the citizens of Charlevoix and Emmet counties regardless of status. In order to achieve this objective, NCM is committed to maintaining affordable alternative dispute resolution opportunities for all participants regardless of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, age, marital or family status, height, weight, and/or physical challenge. Services and programs are designed and implemented to empower the participants so that a solution can be reached that is agreeable to all parties involved.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To provide mediators who maintain an environment that is non-threatening to the participants.
2. To ensure that the participants themselves are the ones who resolve the disagreement(s).
3. To guarantee confidentiality.
4. To assure all participants that they will be given the opportunity to express themselves and be heard by the other parties.
5. To ensure that the process is a voluntary one.
6. To maintain neutrality on the part of the mediators.
7. To promote conciliation, mediation and other forms of dispute resolution.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

The Board of Directors of NCM requires the Agency to be involved in a process to remove attitudinal and other barriers to the persons served. This process will also apply to all employment practices. These practices shall include but are not limited to the recruitment of, making reasonable accommodations for, and participating in community efforts to promote social and economic opportunities for persons with disabilities.

## **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

NCM is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. NCM will provide equal employment opportunities to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital or family status, height, weight or physical challenge in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1977, prohibiting discriminatory practices, policies, and customs.

All positions are filled on the basis of the applicant's qualifications for a specified job, which includes but is not limited to ability, experience, certification, and education.

This Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy will continue to be communicated to all relevant segments within the area serviced by the Agency and:

1. will be a continuing and essential component of the Personnel Policies;
2. will be publicized in the organization's printed materials;
3. will be given to every employee; and
4. will be thoroughly discussed in employee orientation and training programs and in appropriate management and supervisory meetings.

Participants needing special accommodations should call 231.487.1771 in advance to make appropriate arrangements.

## **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)**

NCM, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of July 26, 1992, does not discriminate against qualified individuals with a disability who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform essential functions of specific jobs. Neither does NCM discriminate against individuals who are perceived to have a disability. Further, NCM will make reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals with disabilities.

## **AT WILL EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

Because employment with NCM is for an indefinite period of time rather than for a specified period, any employee who wishes to do so can terminate employment at any time. Similarly, NCM can terminate the employment of any employee, with or without cause, at any time. Only 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 make any contrary agreement.

## **BACK-UP**

All documents on the computers are to be backed-up on a daily basis. The back-up hardware shall be stored outside of the office premises.

## **CELL PHONES AND PAGERS**

It is the policy of NCM that employees use hand-free cell phones and pagers when operating a moving vehicle when they are on NCM business and time. Employees are encouraged to follow this practice on their own time as well. Mediators are also encouraged to use only hand-free devices.

Unless approved otherwise by the Executive Director, staff, mediators and board members are not to use their personal cell phones or pagers when contacting clients to conduct NCM business.

## CODE OF CONDUCT/ETHICS

Employees are to conduct themselves in a professional manner when working with clients or co-workers, whether they are out in the community or at any other location where the association of employment with NCM can be made. Interaction with clients, co-workers, other agencies and community resource persons is to be conducted courteously, fairly, honestly and respectfully. Examples of inappropriate behavior include but are not limited to the following: staff forming any kind of personal or social relationship with clients or members of their families, purchasing items from/for a client, borrowing or lending money or personal items, sexual contact or exploitation, physical abuse (including sexual abuse and physical punishment), verbal abuse (including derogatory and condescending remarks), psychological abuse (including humiliating, threatening and/or exploiting actions), and making references to friends and/or relatives. Any incident of professional misconduct must be reported to the Executive Director.

## COMPENSATION PROGRAM

The Executive Director and the Board of Directors will review the compensation package at least annually, or as needed.

An employee's first day of actual work time will be recorded in organizational records as the employee's anniversary date. This date will then be used to calculate benefits, etc.

**1. EMPLOYEE:** The status of an employee is determined at the time of employment whether it is salaried, full-time, or part-time. Status can change during the course of employment.

- a) Salaried (Exempt): An employee who is in an administrative position, whose accountability is based upon performance indicative of a forty-hour work week, who is exempt from overtime policies under the Fair Labor Standard Act, and who is entitled to full-time benefits if available.
- b) Full-Time (Non-Exempt): An employee who typically works an average of 35-40 hours per week, who must record times and hours worked, whose pay is based upon hours worked, who is not exempt from overtime policies under the Fair Labor Standard Act, and who is entitled to full-time benefits if available.
- c) Part-Time (Non-Exempt) - An employee who works less than 30 hours per week, who must record times and hours worked, whose pay is based upon hours worked, who is not exempt from overtime policies under the Fair Labor Standard Act, and who is entitled to part-time benefits if available.

**2. TRAVEL TIME:** Employees will be paid at their regular rate of pay when attending meetings, conferences, and workshops during normal business hours. Employees will be paid for travel time outside of normal business hours.

**3. COMPENSATORY TIME:** In lieu of overtime compensation for employees who work forty hours per week and are not exempt from overtime policies under the Fair Labor Standard Act, NCM provides compensatory time at the rate of one-and-a-half (1.5) hours for each hour of overtime worked. The Executive Director must approve all overtime in advance. The compensatory time must be taken within the pay period of the overtime hours worked. Compensatory time earned by an employee will be recorded and kept on file.

Employees who attend job-related workshops/conferences will be paid for their normal working hours. If an employee is not scheduled to work during the specific days or hours she/he is attending the conference, compensatory time will be granted by the Executive Director.

Volunteer time as a mediator by staff does not qualify for compensatory time.

**4. HOLIDAYS:** Full-time employees who work 35 hours or more per week will receive 18 paid holidays per year:

- a. New Year's Day plus one of the following:
- b. Day before New Year's Day if New Year's Day falls on a Tuesday  
Day after New Year's Day if New Year's Day falls on a Thursday  
Friday before New Year's Day if New Year's Day falls on a Monday  
Monday after New Year's Day if New Year's Day falls on a Friday  
A designated day if New Year's Day falls on a Wednesday  
The Friday before and the Monday after New Year's Day if New Year's Day falls on a Saturday  
The Monday after and the Friday before New Year's Day if New Year's Day falls on a Sunday
- c. Spring Break  
Good Friday (Friday before Easter)  
Easter Monday (Monday after Easter)
- d. Memorial Day
- e. Fourth of July  
Friday before July 4 when July 4 falls on a Saturday  
Monday after July 4 when July 4 falls on a Sunday
- f. Labor Day (legal date)
- g. Thanksgiving Day
- h. Day after Thanksgiving
- i. Christmas plus one of the following:
- j. Day before Christmas if Christmas falls on a Tuesday  
Day after Christmas if Christmas falls on a Thursday  
Friday before Christmas if Christmas falls on a Monday  
Monday after Christmas if Christmas falls on a Friday  
A designated day if Christmas falls on a Wednesday  
The Friday before and the Monday after Christmas if Christmas falls on a Saturday  
The Monday after and the Friday before Christmas if Christmas falls on a Sunday
- k. Employee's birthday
- l. Five Federal holidays (Martin Luther King's Birthday, President's Day, Juneteenth, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day)  
When the above five holidays fall on a Saturday or Sunday, either the Friday before or the Monday after will be taken as the holiday.
- m. Floating Holiday  
This holiday can be used whenever it is convenient for the employee but does require prior approval by the Executive Director.

Part-time employees not scheduled to work on a designated holiday will not be paid for that day. They will, however, be paid for those days on which they are scheduled to work.

An employee who observes other religious holidays should speak with the Executive Director about the possibility of switching holidays and/or obtaining different days off.

An employee's birthday holiday should be taken within the two week pay period in which it falls unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director.

Holiday time cannot be earned or accumulated while an employee is on leave.

**5. VACATIONS/PAID TIME OFF:** Salaried and full and part-time employees will begin accruing vacation time upon their first day of employment. However, employees must work for 6 months before paid vacation time can be used. Any employee who terminates employment prior to 6 months forfeits any accrued vacation time. Vacations will be scheduled based upon the calendar year. Salaried and full and part-time employees will earn vacation time in proportion to number of hours worked per week. Examples are listed below:



40 hours per week

During the first year of employment	-	40 hours (5 days)
During the second year of employment-		80 hours (10 days)
During the fifth year of employment		120 hours (15 days)
During the tenth year of employment	-	160 hours (20 days)

35 hours per week

During the first year of employment	-	35 hours (1 week)
During the second year of employment-		70 hours (2 weeks)
During the fifth year of employment		105 hours (3 weeks)
During the tenth year of employment	-	140 hours (4 weeks)

32 hours per week

During the first year of employment	-	32 hours (1 week)
During the second year of employment-		64 hours (2 weeks)
During the fifth year of employment		96 hours (3 weeks)
During the tenth year of employment	-	128 hours (4 weeks)

28 hours per week

During the first year of employment	-	28 hours (1 week)
During the second year of employment-		56 hours (2 weeks)
During the fifth year of employment		84 hours (3 weeks)
During the tenth year of employment	-	112 hours (4 weeks)

20 hours per week:

During the first year of employment	-	20 hours (1 week)
During the second year of employment-		40 hours (2 weeks)
During the fifth year of employment		60 hours (3 weeks)
During the tenth year of employment	-	80 hours (4 weeks)

16 hours per week:

During the first year of employment	-	16 hours (1 week)
During the second year of employment-		32 hours (2 weeks)
During the fifth year of employment		48 hours (3 weeks)
During the tenth year of employment	-	64 hours (4 weeks)

The Executive Director must approve vacation time in advance. Vacation time cannot be accrued without the approval of the Executive Director. No more than one-year's worth of vacation time can be accrued from one year to the next. No cash payment will be made in lieu of taking vacation time.

Vacation time will be computed monthly and kept on record for each employee's view. During a scheduled leave of absence, vacation time will not be earned, computed or recorded.

In the event of termination of employment by either the employee or employer, unused vacation time for the given year will be compensated at the salary rate. Carry-over vacation time from previous years will not be compensated.

**6. PERSONAL DAYS:** Salaried and full and part-time employees will begin accruing personal days upon their first day of employment. However, employees must work for 6 months before paid personal days can be used. Any employee who terminates employment prior to 6 months forfeits any accrued personal days.

Personal time may be used for doctor/dentist appointments, illness, funerals, hospitalization of employee and/or members of the employee's immediate family (husband, wife, children, step-children, parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers, and significant others such as roommates), or personal business in general. The Executive Director must approve personal days in advance when possible.

Salaried and full and part-time employees are entitled to personal time in proportion to the number of hours worked per week. Employees may accrue personal time up to the maximum of four-year's worth of personal time over a four-year period. Examples are listed below:

<u>Hours Worked Per Week</u>	<u>Personal Hours Per Year</u>	<u>Maximum Accrued Hours</u>
40	40	160
35	35	140
32	32	128
28	28	112
20	20	80
16	16	64

Any personal time accrued over the maximum allowable will not be considered, recorded, or paid. No cash payment will be made for unused personal time.

When an employee is sick and unable to report to work, the employee is responsible for calling the Executive Director. If hospitalization is pending, notification to the Executive Director is required as soon as a date is scheduled. A Disability Leave for the employee will be considered if proper documentation is submitted (refer to Disability Leave).

Unless the Executive Director declares the weather to be unsuitable for reporting to work, staff unable to report to work during bad weather must use Personal or Vacation days for time off.

Personal days will be computed monthly and kept on record for each employee's view. During a scheduled leave of absence, personal time will not be earned, computed or recorded.

In the event of termination of employment by either the employee or employer, unused personal days will not be compensated.

**7. BEREAVEMENT LEAVE:** Salaried, full-time and part-time employees will be given three days of bereavement leave for parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers, step-sisters, step-brothers, and close friends. An additional two days can be added for spouses, children, stepchildren, and significant others. Other bereavement leave will be at the discretion of the Executive Director. If additional days are needed, personal days can be used.

**8. COMMUNITY SERVICE:** Employees are encouraged to be active in their communities. Consequently, salaried and full and part-time employees are entitled to community service (CS) hours in proportion to the number of hours worked per week. Examples are listed below:

<u>Hours Worked Per Week</u>	<u>CS Hours Per Month</u>	<u>CS Hours Per Year</u>
40	8	96
35	7	84
32	6 ½	78
28	5 ½	66
20	4	48
15	3	36
10	2	24

Documentation of the volunteer time, which will be entered into the employee's personnel file, is to be

submitted to the Executive Director. Community service time cannot be accrued from one year to the next.

**9. RETIREMENT:** A Simple IRA is available to each employee upon request.

**10. MATERNITY / PATERNITY LEAVE:** Twenty days of paid leave will be granted for the birth or adoption of a child. These 20 days may be used in any combination before or after childbirth or adoption. In addition to the 20 days available as maternity / paternity leave, available personal leave and vacation days may be applied during the period of absence at the discretion of the Executive Director. An employee must have been employed one full year to take advantage of this option, and this type of benefit may only be taken within the time frame of 20 days prior to and 20 days following the birth or adoption.

**11. OTHER BENEFITS:** Full-time employees (35 hours per week or more) who have been with NCM 6 months may be reimbursed up to \$2,500 per year for any one or more of the following:

1. Educational Assistance
2. Life Insurance
3. Health Insurance
4. Supplemental Health Insurance
5. Long Term Care Insurance
6. Vision or Dental Insurance
7. Reimbursement for health club and/or gym memberships

An employee who takes an employer approved leave of absence will remain eligible for the above. An employee who takes an unapproved leave of absence or a leave that exceeds thirty (30) calendar days must meet the eligibility requirements again prior to becoming an eligible employee. The employer reserves the right to terminate, modify, amend, suspend or change the policies in this section at any time.

**12. SALARY DETERMINATION:** As a part of establishing the budget for the upcoming year, staff salaries will be reviewed.

Staff will receive annual cost of living increases in their salaries with the caveat that there are sufficient funds to do so. At the end of any given year, if there is a surplus of money and with the recommendation of the executive director, bonuses for staff will be considered by the Board at the November board meeting. The Board and the executive director will work together to determine the amount each staff member is to receive, each staff member receiving the same amount. NCM will not use a pay scale to determine salaries.

On an as needed basis, adjustments to salaries may be made. Merit raises may be given by the executive director if deemed appropriate. When there is a new hire the executive director may seek input from the Board as to the beginning salary for that individual.

Everything described above has the caveat of having sufficient funds to do so.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

**1. GENERAL:** No employee shall disclose personal or confidential information to persons not authorized by law and/or ethics to receive such information. Under no circumstances will client identity or information be disclosed without the express written permission and knowledge of the client.

**2. CASE FILES:** Unless there are extenuating circumstances, case files or other documents relating to confidentiality are not to be taken from the NCM office without approval of the Executive Director and without signing the documents out.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

NCM board members, volunteers, and employees must avoid conflicts of interest or even the appearance of impropriety. Such conflicts may arise in a number of contexts, but generally arise when an action of, or association with, the Agency benefits not only NCM but also a particular board member, volunteer, or staff person. As a general rule, board members and volunteers should not benefit financially from their association with NCM. Full disclosure of any type of possible conflict of interest is expected of all board members, volunteers, and staff.

Employees may not accept gifts of more than nominal value from individuals or entities associated with NCM when the relationship between the employee and the donor exists as a result of the employee's employment with NCM. When an employee has knowledge of a gift or pending gift, she/he is to notify the donor that as an employee of NCM, such a gift cannot be accepted.

## **CORPORATE COMPLIANCE WITH CENTER POLICIES/PROCEDURES**

Employees are expected to comply with all policies, procedures and protocols established by the Board of Directors or its designee. Violation of any stated policies, procedures or protocols or an employee's failure at any time to perform or behave to the satisfaction of NCM may result in disciplinary action and/or termination from employment, at the sole discretion of NCM.

## **CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK**

All onboarding volunteer mediators and staff who are mediating and / or working for NCM are required to have a criminal background check pursuant to requirements from the State of Michigan. Each mediator or staff member must sign a consent form for the purposes of a criminal background check. Anyone convicted of a sexual offense of a felonious nature will not be eligible to mediate for NCM. The background checks shall be done through the Internet Criminal History Access Tool (ICHAT) and the Criminal Registry by the Executive Director. The results of the background checks shall be stored in a separate, locked file drawer or cabinet in the office of the Executive Director. The records shall be maintained throughout the tenure of the mediator's or staff's activities with NCM and then destroyed. Background checks shall be conducted on each volunteer mediator or staff member every two years.

## **CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND DIVERSITY**

NCM strives to ensure a cultural diversity representative of the community in which we live and provide services in the recruitment and retention of personnel and leadership. The Philosophy and Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity policies in this handbook reflect the intention and the procedures involved in this plan. All employees are expected to assist in creating an atmosphere that values and respects diversity.

## **DISCRIMINATION**

It is the policy of Northern Community Mediation that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin or ancestry, age, sex, height, weight, marital status, or disability be discriminated against, excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination in any program or activity for which it is responsible.

## **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

NCM, in compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1983, maintains a drug-free workplace. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited. Failure to comply may result in immediate termination.

Employees must notify NCM of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than 5 days after such a conviction.

### **EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES**

Staff is expected to help keep the costs of the NCM operation within the approved budget. Great care and awareness should be given to all matters where financial responsibility falls on the Center in regards to travel, energy conservation, food consumption, use of supplies and equipment, and use of employee time.

### **E-MAIL/INTERNET COMMUNICATIONS**

NCM provides its employees with access to one or more forms of electronic information systems and services, including computers, e-mail, telephones, voice mail, fax machines, the Internet, etc. These systems and services are the property of NCM and are provided in order to support Agency business. Employees should not assume that electronic communications are private. NCM does reserve the right to access and review all directories, diskettes, files, data bases, e-mail messages, voice mail messages, etc. used in connection with the NCM's information systems. NCM strictly prohibits the use of information and communication systems for any communication or activity which is obscene, pornographic, profane, abusive, defamatory, derogatory, discriminatory, a violation of any civil or criminal law or statute, or a violation of any Agency policy. Employees may not install, add or download any other computer software to the Agency computer systems without prior approval of the Executive Director.

Unless approved otherwise by the Executive Director, staff, mediators and board members are not to use their personal e-mails when contacting clients to conduct NCM business.

### **EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

Each staff member is to fill out emergency contact information. This contact information will be maintained in each employees personnel file. If an employee should have a medical or other emergency, other staff should call the emergency contact after dialing 911. Staff will be asked annually to update emergency contact information.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Every precaution is to be taken to ensure the safety of all employees. In the case of an emergency, 911 should be called. Following that call, the emergency contact stipulated by the affected employee should be called.

### **EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE OF NCM**

If an employee works an additional job while employed at NCM, the Executive Director should be notified. Outside positions must not be in a conflict of interest with NCM. Any employee who chooses outside employment must recognize that the position she/he holds with NCM is considered the primary employment and must be regarded as such.

Agency equipment, facilities, time, and staff services shall not be used for purposes of seeking, obtaining, or advancing additional employment. Employees are not to use the Agency or their work at the Agency to promote their private practice or other type of supplemental employment. (See also Paid Work Outside of NCM).

### **EMPLOYMENT, REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE, DISCIPLINE, AND TERMINATION**

Because employment with NCM is for an indefinite period of time rather than for a specified period, any employee who wishes to do so can terminate employment at any time. Similarly, NCM can terminate the employment of any employee at any time. Only the Executive Director, and then only in writing, has the

authority to enter into any other agreement for employment for any specified period of time.

Staff is reviewed for job performance at least annually or as needed. The Executive Director will do the reviews with a report to the Board. Staff will also have an opportunity to review job descriptions and personnel policies during annual review and make suggestions or recommendations.

### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PLAN**

The counties serviced by NCM all have a small minority population. It ranges from 5.64% of the population in Emmet County to 5.6% in Charlevoix County (Figure source is the 2020 Census). The bulk of the minority population is Native American. Less than .5% of any other minority group exists in either county. Since NCM fully subscribes to non-discrimination in its provision of service, the same principle applies in all matters of recruitment, hiring, and promotion.

### **EXIT INTERVIEW**

When an individual will no longer be employed by Northern Community Mediation, the President of the Board of Directors will contact that individual and send him/her an Employment Exit Interview questionnaire. The President will request that the individual complete the questionnaire and return it to the President. The President shall also offer an in-person exit interview in addition to the questionnaire.

The template for the NCM Exit Interview is found in the Personnel Policies file under Personnel under Documents on the computer desktop of the Executive Director.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

A major function of effective management is the resolution of employee issues in relation to work objectives. This procedure is designed to create a more effective employee/employer work relationship. It is intended to provide all employees with a prompt and equitable means of resolving personal grievances regarding work or working relationships. Employees must seek resolution to their issues through the grievance procedure.

Stages of the Grievance Procedure: The grievance procedure contains four possible phases:

1. Resolution Between the Parties Involved
2. Resolution Through the Executive Director
3. Resolution Through the Mediation Process
4. Resolution Through Appeal to the Executive Board of Directors

#### *Resolution Between the Parties Involved*

An employee with a grievance in regards to NCM employment is encouraged to first seek resolution within the parties before seeking resolution through grievance steps 2-4. The parties involved are encouraged to make a good faith effort to resolve the matter collectively.

#### *Resolution Through the Executive Director*

If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the parties involved, an alternative may be sought with the Executive Director. The Executive Director will conduct a thorough investigation of the grievance and make a good faith effort to resolve the matter. If the Executive Director is a party to a grievance, the process will advance to step four.

### Resolution Through the Mediation Process

If the Executive Director is unable to resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the parties involved, an alternative may be sought through the Mediation Process. Mediation must be conducted by an outside mediation center of the Executive Director's choosing. If the Executive Director is a party to a grievance, the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors will choose an outside mediation center.

### Resolution Through Appeal to the Executive Board of Directors

If the parties involved are still unable to resolve the conflict, a written appeal may be made to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors. The determination made by the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors will be final.

It is understood that any employee who follows this procedure will be treated courteously, fairly, and the case will be handled confidentially at all levels. Data relating to grievances will be stored in a grievance file housed in a locked cabinet or personnel file by the Executive Director.

## **HEALTHY WORK ENVIRONMENT**

Providing a safe, healthy work environment is a priority for NCM. In an effort to provide this safe climate, NCM will be sensitive to the individual needs of its employees.

## **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

There is a written job description for each position within NCM. A copy of the appropriate job description is provided to each employee. The duties and responsibilities of each employee are outlined in the job description pertaining to each position. Job descriptions are reviewed by the staff and Executive Director at least annually.

## **JURY DUTY**

If employees are called to serve on jury duty, the Executive Director should be notified immediately. A copy of the jury summons must be turned in to the Executive Director. Employees will be encouraged to participate as jurors and will be paid for the day(s) served at their regular rate of pay. Any payments made to employees by the court will be paid to NCM.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

The Executive Director will handle leaves of absence without pay on an individual basis. An employee may request an approved leave of absence for

1. Administrative purposes.
2. Disability due to illness
3. Maternity
4. Educational purposes.
5. Military service.
6. Personal/emergency reasons.

An approved leave of absence must be requested in writing to the Executive Director. When possible and/or appropriate, the Executive Director may approve granting the leave to the employee. Although it may not always be possible, every effort will be made to secure a return to the same or a comparable job following a leave of absence.

During a scheduled leave of absence, accumulated vacation and sick time must be used first. No additional vacation, sick, personal or holiday time will be earned or accumulated during an employee's leave of absence. Benefits will not be paid by NCM during leaves of absence (except for during an Administrative Leave).

Types of leaves that may be requested are as follows:

1. **ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES:** An employee may request an Administrative Leave for a pre-determined amount of time not to exceed 40 hours per fiscal year in order to provide consultation and/or expertise training outside of the Agency, as it relates to the person's job responsibilities, or other professional development activity. (See also Paid Work Outside of NCM in these Personnel Policies.)
2. **DISABILITY DUE TO ILLNESS:** Employees who must be absent from work beyond accumulated paid time must apply for unpaid time. An employee who must be absent from work because of disability should request a Disability Leave of Absence. Employees must provide medical documentation from attending physician(s) of inability to work, as well as the approximate date of return to work. Employees will be required to use all accumulated paid time prior to unpaid time being used. A Disability Leave of Absence may be granted by NCM for a maximum of 90 days: 90 day extensions up to 1 year may be granted by the Executive Director.
3. **MATERNITY:** Maternity Leaves follow the same guidelines as Disability Leaves of Absence.
4. **EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES:** An employee may request a leave of absence for one semester to complete educational course work not available in evening classes. Requested documentation must be submitted to the Executive Director for leave approval to be considered.
5. **MILITARY SERVICE:** An employee ordered to report for military duty in the armed forces of the United States is eligible for a Military Service Leave of Absence. Documentation of the Order to Report for Military Service must be submitted to the Executive Director. The required length of time in service will determine the duration of the leave.
6. **PERSONAL/EMERGENCY LEAVE:** Employees who must be absent from work due to a serious personal emergency or family problem beyond accumulated paid time may request a leave of absence. Accumulated paid time must be used prior to use of any approved unpaid time. A Personal/Emergency Leave of Absence may be granted by NCM for a maximum of 30 days. The duration of the leave is to be approved by the Executive Director.

### **LICENSE AND INSURANCE VERIFICATION**

Employees are often required by their position description to travel in their cars on NCM business. They are, therefore, required to maintain a valid Michigan Driver's License and sufficient, appropriate insurance on any vehicle used during the course of Agency business. All vehicle accidents occurring while on Agency-related business must be reported to the police and the Executive Director immediately.

### **MEDIA RESPONSE**

Any request from media shall be directed to the Executive Director.

### **MEDIATOR ISSUES**

Individuals who have been certified as mediators through a CDRP center other than NCM or through another state-approved program will be allowed to co-mediate for NCM upon completion of observing at least ten hours of NCM mediations.

Individuals who have been trained through a CDRP center other than NCM or through another state-approved program and do not plan to mediate for NCM will be allowed to observe two mediations and then participate in one co-mediation sessions for a fee of \$150.

NCM mediators are required to participate in eight hours of update training every two years.



## **NEPOTISM POLICY**

Although nepotism is not encouraged at NCM, it is the intent of the Agency to hire the best person possible for each position. If that person is a relative of another employee, the Executive Director can approve that hiring. However, a relative cannot supervise another relative.

## **OPEN DOOR POLICY**

It is the desire of NCM to provide good working conditions and maintain harmonious working relationships among employees and management. In order to address any work-related problems, NCM management must be fully informed about them. To facilitate open communication, NCM has an open-door, problem-solving policy. Employees are encouraged first to discuss concerns or suggestions with the coworker(s) involved. Employees who believe that an adequate solution cannot be reached are then encouraged to discuss the problem with the Executive Director. Employees who believe that they could not receive unbiased or fair treatment from the Executive Director are then encouraged to discuss the matter with the President of the Board of Directors.

## **ORIENTATION**

Orientation will be provided for all newly hired employees. This orientation process will begin the first day of employment and include a review and training of appropriate Agency policies, as well as a tour of the facilities and introduction to staff.

## **PAID WORK OUTSIDE OF NCM**

If a staff person is requested to do paid work, such as consultation and/or expertise training outside of the Agency, she/he may request an Administrative Leave (see Administrative Leave of these Personnel Policies). An Administrative Leave requires approval by the Executive Director, if possible one month in advance. In the case of the Executive Director's requesting such time, approval is to be granted by the Board of Directors.

If a staff person does not take an Administrative Leave, and hence is performing such services as described above on Agency time, any remuneration, such as travel expenses and fees for service, are to be returned to NCM.

## **PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

Under state and federal law, NCM is required to make certain deductions from an employee's paycheck each pay period. All deductions and amounts of the deductions are listed on the employee's pay stub. It is the responsibility of the employee to keep the Executive Director advised of any changes the employee desires in relationship to payroll deductions.

## **PERSONNEL FILE MANAGEMENT**

A personnel file is maintained on each employee of NCM. The Executive Director maintains this file. Information from a personnel file is not distributed to anyone without a written release from the employee. An employee may request specific information from her/his personnel file during normal business hours. This request should be made in writing to the Executive Director. These requests will be dealt with within five working days.

As of September 2003, personnel files will be kept for at least seven (7) years after a staff person has left the employ of NCM. Shredding by the Executive Director will then destroy those files.

It is the responsibility of the employee to keep the Executive Director informed of any changes in status relating to the personnel file, such as address change or emergency contact.

## **PERSONNEL POLICIES**

**1. SELECTION:** The Executive Director is responsible for evaluating applicant qualifications and selecting job candidates based on the requirements of the job.

**2. PROMOTION:** The Advancement Policy of NCM is to promote from within employees who have qualifications for the open position and who are willing to accept the responsibilities of the position being filled. Employees who have the qualifications for the position and are interested in being considered for the job opening should apply to the Executive Director. Applicants must have average or better work performance, attendance, and punctuality records to be eligible. Employees with good performance records and qualifications will be considered, along with any outside applicants, for the position. Length of service is an important consideration when candidates are otherwise equally qualified.

The Executive Director or a designee will be responsible for the discharge of any employee.

## **PERSONNEL RECORD INFORMATION CHANGES**

For the purpose of proper benefits administration and human resource management, it is the responsibility of each employee to keep personnel records current in the following areas: address, telephone number, name, driver's license status, tax information, proof of insurance, emergency contacts, educational diplomas, degrees, professional licenses, marital status, dependents, military status, benefits status and outside employment status.

All changes to personnel records are required to be in writing with supporting copies of official documentation when appropriate. If the change relates to salary or title, the Executive Director will initiate the appropriate form.

## **PROOFREADING PROCEDURES**

The Executive Director must proofread in advance all written documents that are to be distributed in mass. This includes but is not necessarily limited to brochures, newsletters, memos, action alerts, agendas, and meeting notices. Proofreading should be looking for content, spelling, grammar, factual, and fiscal errors.

## **REQUESTS FOR REFERENCES**

The Executive Director may release dates of employment to prospective employers requesting reference information. Additional information may only be released if there is a signed release form from the employee.

## **REPLACEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**1. CONFERENCE COSTS:** Employees who have requested and/or agreed to attend a conference/workshop are responsible for any non-refundable costs when canceling.

**2. KEYS:** Employees losing or misplacing keys to any NCM facility are responsible for the replacement cost of new keys. If it is necessary for safety reasons to re-key all doors and files in any building due to an employee losing or misplacing keys, that employee is also responsible for all costs involved in changing the locks on specific doors.

## **REPRISAL**

A staff member will face no negative reprisals from management, other staff or board for the reporting of any issues concerning workplace violence, sexual harassment, safety, or other concern.

## **RISK REDUCTION MEASURES**

Employees are expected to exercise good judgment and to inform NCM if any employee or non-employee exhibits behavior which could signal a dangerous situation. Such behavior includes discussing weapons or bringing them to the workplace, displaying overt signs of extreme stress, resentment, hostility, or anger, making threatening remarks, displaying irrational or inappropriate behavior, or sudden or significant performance deterioration.

## **SCREENING STAFF**

Prior to employment, all applicants must submit a cover letter and resume. Individuals are also screened using the following tools: a first interview, a second interview (if necessary), 3 reference checks, a criminal background check, a check of necessary credentials (degrees, licenses, accreditations, etc.), appropriate paperwork for specific jobs, and approval by Executive Director.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Harassment on the basis of sex is a form of sex discrimination that is illegal and expressly prohibited by NCM. Sexual harassment consists of requesting sexual favors in exchange for an enhancement of employment conditions, or penalizing or threatening to penalize an employee in her/his employment unless sexual favors are granted. Sexual harassment also consists of any unwelcome behavior or conduct of a sexual nature that causes or creates a discomfort and/or interferes with job performance. Such conduct would include, but is not limited to, unwelcome touching or other bodily contact, the making of unwelcome sexual advances, the display of or reference to pornographic, sexually explicit materials in the workplace, the use of sexually provocative or offensive language, unwelcome inquiry into the private life of another employee, or any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Any applicant or employee who believes that she/he has been subjected to sexual harassment is immediately to notify the Executive Director or a Board of Directors member with whom she/he feels comfortable, and complete a detailed written report as soon as possible so NCM will have adequate notice of, and be able to investigate, any claim of sexual harassment. Completion of this written report is necessary in order to trigger an investigation. Failure to provide the report will be considered by NCM to be an admission that the claim of sexual harassment is totally without merit and a waiver of any right to said claim.

NCM will not tolerate sexual harassment. The Agency will actively investigate every report of sexual harassment. It is the duty of every NCM employee to cooperate in any such investigation. It would constitute a serious infraction of Agency policy to retaliate against or penalize any employee for asserting a claim of sexual harassment. Any employee found to have sexually harassed an applicant or employee, or to have retaliated against an employee for making a complaint of sexual harassment, will be subject to discipline, up to and including suspension or immediate dismissal.

## **SMOKING**

All offices operated by NCM are smoke-free. The use or sale of smoking products by staff, volunteers, clients or other visitors within NCM facilities or within facilities being used by NCM is prohibited.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Posts on social media by an NCM employee that breach confidentiality of its clients, encourage insubordination, support violence, disparage the services of NCM, are racist or sexist in nature, or are damaging to the organization and its reputation will not be tolerated and can be grounds for dismissal.

## **SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS**

Any employee of NCM is required to provide the Executive Director with his/her social security number at

the time of employment. This number will be shared with the accountant for payroll and NCM tax purposes only. No other individual, organization or agency will have access to this number unless required by law.

### **RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PERSONNEL FUNCTION**

**1. BOARD OF DIRECTORS:** The Board of Directors is the employing body of NCM. Board action is required for revisions to the Personnel Policies. Board action may also be required on special areas for problems not specifically covered by the Personnel Policies.

**2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:** The Executive Director is the designated head of the employed staff and is accountable to the Board of Directors. The functions of assigning, supervising, employing, promoting, transferring, and releasing staff members are the responsibility of the Executive Director. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors and has the responsibility to administer the office in accordance with good human resource management practices and equal opportunity practices.

### **STATEMENT OF STAFF EXPECTATIONS**

It is the expressed policy of NCM that employees maintain a professional attitude and relationship with other employees and with those seeking services at all times. An employee's role is to maintain a professional attitude and to treat all people equally and with dignity regardless of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital or family status, height, weight or physical challenge in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1977.

Confidentiality is to be maintained at all times. Only a signed release statement is cause for any disclosure of any client information with any persons outside NCM. It is further expected that all employees perform those duties and carry out those policies and procedures as described in specific employee job descriptions.

### **TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

Because employment with NCM is “at will” and for an indefinite period of time rather than for a specified period, any employee who wishes to do so can terminate employment at any time. Similarly, NCM can terminate the employment of any employee, with or without cause, at any time. The courtesy of a two-week notification, however, is encouraged. Upon termination of employment, the supervisor or designee

1. will return Agency equipment (manuals/materials, computer equipment, etc.);
2. will return Agency keys;
3. will complete an Exit Interview with the employee, which will be filed in the Employee’s Personnel File.

### **TRAVEL AND EXPENSES REIMBURSEMENT**

Employees will be paid at their regular rate of pay when attending meetings, conferences, and workshops during normal business hours. Full-time exempt employees will not receive additional pay for travel outside of their normal business hours, whereas full-time and part-time non-exempt employees will be paid for travel time outside of normal business hours. When an employee is assigned a job responsibility outside of the designated work site, appropriate reimbursement will be allowed. Travel will be defined as the expenses incurred by use of car, train, plane, etc. Other normally incurred reimbursable expenses are meals, lodging, and conference fees.

NCM will provide appropriate voucher forms. The Executive Director will approve/disapprove all submitted vouchers for all employees. An appropriate receipt must accompany any meals, lodging, and conference costs.

Employees will be reimbursed for expenses consistent with the SCAO guidelines. With approval of the Executive Director, reimbursement can exceed the SCAO guidelines.

Lodging	\$130.00 per night
Breakfast	\$ 9.75
Lunch	\$ 9.75
Dinner	\$22.00
Mileage	IRS rate

Meals will only be reimbursable for an overnight or all-day meeting. If the meeting or conference adjourns in time for the employee to return to Petoskey before 7:00pm, dinner for that day will not be reimbursable. Breakfast will only be allowed for an overnight or an event that the employee would leave Petoskey before 7:00am. Lunch will be allowed during an overnight or all day meeting/conference. Employees may not submit vouchers for meals while attending a conference if meals are included in the conference price. If any meal is provided as part of the conference registration/cost, the per-meal rate does not apply. If lunches and dinners are provided by a conference and the price exceeds the allowable amount, the employee will be allowed to purchase the meals offered and be reimbursed for the whole amount.

### **USE OF NCM EQUIPMENT**

Agency equipment and materials may only be used by trained and designated staff. Computer equipment may not be used for personal business unless approved in advance by the Executive Director. Office equipment including copiers, shredders, telephones, and fax machines may be used occasionally by staff for personal business as long as required documentation is recorded, specific costs for use as set by the Agency are paid, and it is neither consistent nor excessive use.

### **WEAPONS**

NCM maintains a weapons-free environment. Staff, mediators, clients or visitors are prohibited from bringing weapons of any kind into NCM facilities or into facilities being used by NCM.

### **WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY**

The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 encourages all employers to establish a policy that provides a confidential, anonymous mechanism for employees to report inappropriate financial actions taken by management without fear of retaliation. Moreover, NCM is committed to fair, accurate and transparent accounting of its financial matters and expects all employees, officers, directors and agents to act in accordance with the highest ethical standards in the performance of their responsibilities. It requires full compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, accounting standards, accounting controls and audit practices. NCM relies on all employees, officers, directors and agents of the Organization to conduct themselves in accordance with the requirements and spirit of this policy and to report any suspected violations of this policy or other questionable financial, accounting or audit matters without fear of retaliation.

1. **POLICY:** Any NCM employee must be able to submit a good faith complaint regarding accounting, internal auditing controls, or auditing matters (Accounting Complaints) to the appropriate senior staff or volunteer leader, without fear of dismissal or other retaliation of any kind. An Accounting Complaint may be submitted, in writing or orally, to any of the following individuals:
  - President of the Board
  - Treasurer of the Board

Confidential, anonymous Accounting Complaints submitted to one of the above should describe the matter at issue in as much detail as possible.

2. **PROCEDURE OVERVIEW**

- Accounting complaints received by the President of the Board will promptly be forwarded to the Treasurer, who will record the receipt of all Accounting Complaints.

- If the Treasurer is the subject of the Accounting Complaint, then the President of the Board may be substituted for the Treasurer in the stated procedures of this policy.
- The Treasurer will review and evaluate each Accounting Complaint and make an initial determination as to whether it should be investigated, and if so, may designate an appropriate NCM employee(s) and/or NCM volunteer(s) to conduct such investigation. In addition, the Treasurer has discretion to request, and the Board President has the authority to direct, special handling or investigation of any Accounting Complaint, including the retention of outside counsel or advisors.
- The Treasurer shall also report on Accounting Complaints to the Executive Committee.
- The Treasurer, or designee, may contact persons submitting Accounting Complaints, if known and to the extent appropriate, to inform such persons of the results of any investigation and what, if any, corrective actions has been recommended or taken.
- Records concerning Accounting Complaints will be retained by NCM for not less than seven (7) years after the Accounting Complaint has been received.
- When asked, employees shall fully and completely cooperate with such investigations. Failure to cooperate, or interfering with an investigation, shall subject employee(s) to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- It shall be a violation of this Policy, and grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment for any NCM employee to discharge, demote, suspend, threaten, harass, or in any other matter, retaliate against a NCM employee by reasons of his or her submission in good faith of an Accounting Complaint. However, if NCM determines that the complaint was not made in good faith or that an employee provided false information to the investigator, said employee(s) may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. This policy is not intended to, and does not create any rights or any private right of action, in any person.

## **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE POLICY AND REPORTING**

Providing a safe workplace for all employees is a priority of NCM. The purpose of this policy is to minimize the potential risk of personal injuries to employees at work.

NCM does not tolerate any type of workplace violence committed by or against employees. Employees are prohibited from making threats or engaging in violent activities. This list of behaviors, while not exhaustive, provides examples of prohibited conduct:

1. causing physical injury to another person;
2. making threatening remarks;
3. aggressive or hostile behavior that frightens, distresses or creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person;
4. intentionally damaging employer property or property of another employee;
5. possessing a weapon while on NCM property or while on NCM business; or
6. committing an act of sexual harassment or domestic violence.

Any potentially dangerous situations must be reported immediately to the Executive Director. All reported incidents will be investigated. NCM may impose disciplinary measures up to and including termination.