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**North Sound Behavioral Health Organization**  
Section 3500 – Human Resources: Personnel Policies and Procedures

Authorizing Source: North Sound BHO Executive Committee

Responsible Staff: Human Resources Manager

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North Sound  
Behavioral Health Organization, LLC



**Personnel  
Policies and Procedures  
Manual**

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## **SECTION 1: PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

### **1.01 ABOUT NORTH SOUND BHO**

The North Sound Behavioral Health Organization, LLC (North Sound BHO) began as a Regional Support Network, DBA North Sound Mental Health Administration (NSMHA). NSMHA was formed by an Interlocal agreement between Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom Counties in 1990 to administer public community mental health services.

In 2016, NSMHA converted to the North Sound BHO, which became responsible for both Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder (Behavioral Health) Treatment on April 1, 2016. A Joint Operating Agreement was entered into by the five (5) member counties, superseding the former Interlocal Agreement of NSMHA.

The governing board of the North Sound BHO is the County Authorities Executive Committee (Executive Committee), consisting of nine (9) elected officials or their representatives of the five-member counties and two (2) ex-officio Advisory Board members.

North Sound BHO is a Prepaid Inpatient Health Plan that pays for approved state plan services provided to eligible enrolled individuals at a prepaid capitation rate under the terms of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) contract.

### **1.02 INTENT OF POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

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

Circumstances may require a change in North Sound BHO policies, practices, and benefits. North Sound BHO reserves the right to interpret, change, or rescind this manual or any part of it, with or without notice subject to state and federal laws.

### **1.03 “AT WILL” EMPLOYMENT**

Many individuals and other organizations rely on the quality and reliability of North Sound BHO’s work and service. In addition, all of us depend on our employees' excellent job performance for our organization success. As a result, all employees are expected to provide excellent and reliable service to our organization, our stakeholders, providers, and our fellow employees.

For that reason, all North Sound BHO employees are employed on an "at will" basis. This means that both the organization and the employee have the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without prior notice or cause. This Personnel Policy and Procedure manual is intended to make this mutual "at will" relationship perfectly clear, and to make clear that no one has any express or implied contract limiting an employee's right to resign, or North Sound BHO's right to terminate employment, at any time, for any reason, with or without prior notice or cause. Furthermore, that "at will" relationship cannot be changed by any person, statements, acts, series of events, or pattern of conduct, but only by an express individual written employment agreement signed by the Executive Director, and also signed by the employee. Furthermore, current employees understand and accept this relationship as an integral part of their employment with North Sound BHO.

#### **1.04 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

It is North Sound BHO's policy to treat all applicants and employees equally and without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation/gender identity/expression, pregnancy, age, marital status, military or veteran status, physical, mental, or sensory disability, genetics/genetic markers or any other basis protected by federal, state and local law.

This policy extends to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection and placement, compensation, promotion, transfer, discipline, demotion, lay-off, termination, training, daily working conditions, benefits and all other terms and conditions of employment. Applicants or employees requiring reasonable accommodation within the selection process or employment should make such requests in writing to Human Resources.

## **SECTION 2: EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **2.01 DEFINITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

**Orientation Period Employee:** The first six (6) months of employment for newly hired employees is referred to as the orientation period. An employee may be released at any time during the orientation period, with or without cause.

**Full-time Regular Employees:** Individuals who are hired for an indefinite period of time to work full workweeks (a minimum of 30 hours per week), and who are eligible to participate in North Sound BHO's benefit program, as specified in the plan documents. Eligibility for full-time benefits is defined as working 30 hours per week or more.

**Part-time Regular Employees:** Individuals who are hired for an indefinite period of time to work less than full-time workweeks as described above. Part-time employees who work less than an average of 20 hours per week are not eligible for some North Sound BHO benefits.

**Temporary Employees:** Individuals hired as an interim replacement, to temporarily supplement the work force, or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Such individuals are hired into North Sound BHO for a limited period of time. Temporary employees are not eligible for North Sound BHO benefits.

**Exempt Employee:** An employee who is paid a fixed salary and whose duties meet the criteria for exclusion under the applicable federal and state wage and hour laws, including but not limited to, executive, administrative, or professional employees. An exempt employee is not eligible to receive overtime pay.

**Non-Exempt Employee:** An employee whose duties render their job eligible for overtime pay for all hours actually worked in excess of forty hours in a week in accordance with applicable federal and state wage and hour laws.

**Student Intern/Work Study:** Temporary work assignment which allows a student to gain work experience in the field. The fringe benefits herein do not apply to these students.

**Volunteer:** An individual who volunteers or donates their services, usually on a part time basis, for North Sound BHO, not as an employee and without contemplation of pay, are not considered employees of the North Sound BHO. Volunteers are not eligible for benefits, except those required by law.

### **2.02 EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS & INFORMATION**

Individuals who want to be considered for employment with North Sound BHO must complete an application and appropriate supplemental materials. Viable candidates will be those individuals submitting applications for particular position openings. North Sound BHO

relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as accuracy of other data provided throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentation, falsification, or material omission may result in exclusion of the individual from consideration for employment or, if hired, termination of employment.

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

North Sound BHO employees whose job responsibilities require them to drive to attend meetings or perform other North Sound BHO business will be required to provide a copy of a valid driver's license at the time of hire and proof of current auto insurance. These employees are also responsible to advise North Sound BHO of any change in driver's licensing or insurance status. It is the employee's responsibility to provide North Sound BHO with copies of updated licensing and insurance when requested annually.

## **2.03 HIRING**

Recruitment and selection of employees will be based on the knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform a given position. North Sound BHO fills each position with the individual best suited and qualified for the position.

The following elements may typically be included in the official job notice:

- Title of position
- Starting salary
- Brief description of job
- Essential responsibilities
- Qualifications
- Where to send application materials
- Closing or first consideration date for application
- "Equal Opportunity Employer" statement

Job vacancies may be advertised in various public resources for all five counties of North Sound BHO. Job vacancies may also be placed in major outlets statewide and nationally, when recruitment needs indicate. Job postings will be open a minimum of five working days prior to the closing date for applications.

All North Sound BHO job vacancies will be considered an open/competitive recruitment, unless otherwise authorized by the Executive Director. Qualified North Sound BHO employees may be afforded preferential consideration when it is in the best interest of the North Sound BHO as authorized by the Executive Director. In the event of a successful internal applicant, the hiring process will follow the reclassification/promotion personnel procedure. Qualified Temporary Employment Agency staff that have substantially performed

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the duties of the vacant position may be afforded preferential consideration when it is in the best interest of the North Sound BHO as authorized by the Executive Director.

### **Background & Reference Checks**

North Sound BHO will conduct the appropriate background checks regarding criminal records, exclusion from participation in federal programs, required licensure or certification, and employer references on all applicants completing the final stages of the selection process. Any offers of employment will be rescinded should the applicant fail to satisfactorily pass these checks.

Applicants or current North Sound BHO employees must notify North Sound BHO of any investigations or convictions that would affect or preclude them performing any of their job functions.

### **Employment Eligibility**

All employees must complete an Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9) Form and produce required documentation within three days of their hire date.

## **2.04 ORIENTATION & TRAINING**

Within a new employee's first week of employment, North Sound BHO will conduct an orientation to help orient the new employee to the organization. Orientation will include North Sound BHO mission, vision and core values, as well as information regarding the employee's pay and benefits, personnel policies, assigned trainings, and administrative and/or clinical policies, as appropriate. Employees will also receive on-the-job training specific to their position within their team.

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

## **2.05 ORIENTATION PERIOD**

All new North Sound BHO employees will serve a six (6) month orientation period. The orientation period is an extension of the selection process. The orientation period is used to train and evaluate the employee's performance, conduct, observance of rules, and attendance. North Sound BHO employees who are promoted will serve a six (6) month orientation period. This period will be used to determine the employee's ability to perform the new job responsibilities.

If North Sound BHO has been unable to adequately observe an employee's orientation period or if circumstances require the need for additional observation, North Sound BHO may extend the orientation period for a specified length of time. If an employee is gone for an extended period of time, two weeks or more, during their orientation period, the orientation period will be extended by a commensurate period of time.

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Upon satisfactory completion of the orientation period, the employee will be considered as having demonstrated qualifications and readiness for the position, and will be so informed through their Supervisor/Manager. A step increase may be granted upon successful completion of the orientation period for new employees based on the salary schedule. At the conclusion of the orientation period, the employee is still considered to have "at will" status.

North Sound BHO may elect to terminate North Sound BHO's relationship with anyone on orientation status at any time during the orientation period. An individual released from orientation status will be notified of such action in writing by the Executive Director. A copy of this notification will be retained by Human Resources in the individual's personnel record.

## **2.06 EMPLOYMENT CONFLICTS**

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

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

If two employees marry, become related, or begin sharing living quarters with one another, and in North Sound BHO's judgment the potential problems noted above exist or reasonably could exist, only one employee will be permitted to remain in North Sound BHO's employment unless reasonable accommodations, as determined by the Supervisor/Manager, can be made to eliminate the potential problem. The employees may submit, in writing, a workable alternative solution for the Supervisor/Manager's consideration. In the event no workable alternative solution is identified, the decision as to which employee will remain with North Sound BHO will be made by the two employees within thirty (30) calendar days of the date they marry, become related, or begin sharing living quarters with each other. If the two employees cannot make the determination the Executive Director will determine which employee will remain employed based on the needs of the organization.

## **2.07 REHIRES**

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

Employees rehired within ninety (90) consecutive days after separation will have their service bridged. This means that the employee may retain the original date of hire (adjusted for absence) and may continue to accrue time off benefits at the previous rate. Insurance

benefits will continue as stipulated in the plan documents. Employees rehired after a break of service of more than ninety consecutive days will receive a new date of hire. They will be treated the same as new employees for all benefit purposes.

## **2.08 EMPLOYMENT REFERENCES**

Supervisors and managers may provide accurate written letters of recommendation when requested by an employee. Supervisors and managers providing employment references to other employers will obtain an information release waiver prior to releasing employment-related information on current or past employees. Human Resources can assist in verifying that a release form has been completed and placed in the employee's personnel file or in providing a form to the requesting party should they not have one.

## **2.09 OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT**

North Sound BHO expects employees to place a priority on their employment with the organization and avoid other employment or activities that interfere with the employee's ability to do their job, meet their work schedule or otherwise create a conflict of interest. Employees who have outside employment that might pose a possible conflict or impact their ability to perform their job functions are required to discuss this with their Supervisor/Manager. Should outside employment or activities become a conflict, it must be discontinued, or the employee will be asked to terminate employment.

## **2.10 EMPLOYEE PRIVACY AND PERSONNEL FILES**

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

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

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

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

While personnel files are kept confidential in accordance with applicable laws, information contained in personnel files may be audited by governing or funding agencies. Employees should notify the Human Resources of any personal information changes.

## **2.11 APPOINTMENTS**

### **Acting Appointments**

Acting appointment is a form of temporary appointment whereby a regular North Sound BHO employee is given an assignment in a position in a different classification having the same or higher pay range to replace another employee. Such appointments will not normally exceed six (6) months unless extended by the Executive Director for good cause and will expire upon hiring a regular employee. The interim employee will be paid no less than the minimum step in the higher pay range and will continue to accrue seniority and other benefits as if assigned to their regular classification. Time spent in such acting appointment will not be credited toward the satisfaction of any orientation period. An employee so appointed will be entitled to re-appointment to the position previously held upon expiration of the acting appointment.

### **Promotional Appointments**

Promotions are appointed at the discretion of management. Promotions are awarded when North Sound BHO management believes an employee is an appropriate choice for a higher-level classification and the corresponding responsibility.

## **2.12 INTERNSHIPS**

To assist in the development of future workforces, North Sound BHO may choose to participate in school-related internship programs. These programs must be affiliated with an educational institution and provide practical application of what the student is learning in school. All internships will receive approval from the Executive Director prior to commencement. Work will be performed under the supervision of an assigned appropriate mentor. The assigned Supervisor/Manager will be responsible for completing school-related progress reports.

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

### **2.13 VOLUNTEERS**

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

## **SECTION 3: GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **3.01 BUSINESS AND ETHICAL CONDUCT**

The success of North Sound BHO is dependent upon our providing the public with the highest possible level of service. The continued success of North Sound BHO to maintain this effort is dependent upon all employees working effectively and productively together.

North Sound BHO's Executive Committee and management believe that an important element of this organization's character is its commitment to integrity and ethical behavior. The way in which employees perform affects their personal success, the performance and success of their fellow employees and, ultimately, the success of North Sound BHO. It is essential, therefore, that each employee understands and upholds North Sound BHO core values that reflect the organization's commitment to excellence.

North Sound BHO abides by all laws governing our organization and our work. North Sound BHO's commitment to excellence goes far beyond observing the letter and spirit of the law. Even if no laws, rules or regulations existed for a given situation, each employee has a responsibility to act in a prudent manner. All North Sound BHO employees are expected to conduct their business activities with honesty, integrity, and the highest ethical values.

North Sound BHO employees must always do the business and deliver the services of the BHO in an ethical manner. Employees must be attentive to comply with all laws and regulations governing our operation at the federal, state and local levels. It is expected that each employee will become familiar and comply with all North Sound BHO stated policies, practices and procedures. It is expected that each North Sound BHO employee have a commitment to integrity, honesty, and reliability in every aspect of their work. It is expected that North Sound BHO employees will demonstrate sensitivity to the needs and expectations of our customers, providers, vendors, regulators, community and fellow employees.

### **3.02 GENERAL EMPLOYEE CONDUCT**

Our human capital is the most valuable asset we have. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talent that our employees invest in their work represents a significant part of not only our culture, but our reputation and company's achievement as well.

We embrace and encourage our employees' differences in age, color, disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, and other characteristics that make our employees unique

All employees of North Sound BHO have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect at all times. All employees are expected to exhibit conduct that reflects inclusion during work, at work functions on or off the work site, and at all other North Sound BHO-sponsored and participative events.

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

- Ensure that our interactions and communications with each other, stakeholders, community partners and the general public present a professional and caring image.
- Demonstrate mutual respect toward co-workers, colleagues, community partners, stakeholders, and the general public.
- Recognize that each work assignment is important and worthy of our best efforts.
- Accomplish work in a timely, accurate, and professional manner.
- Present a neat, professional, business-like appearance at all times.
- Report immediately to your Supervisor/Manager problems with a stakeholder, community partner, colleague or member of the general public.
- Abide by all confidentiality standards when handling personal health information.
- Exercise good judgment by limiting personal calls, texting, conversations, and visiting to non-working hours.
- Adhere to policies, procedures, safety rules and safe working practices.
- Comply with directions from Supervisor/Managers.
- Preserve and protect North Sound BHO's equipment, grounds, facilities, and resources.
- Follow North Sound BHO's Code of Conduct: Professional and Ethical Standards and Workplace Expectations.

### **3.03 UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

#### **Unlawful Discrimination**

Every employee has the right to work in surroundings that are free from unlawful discrimination. North Sound BHO therefore strictly prohibits unlawful discrimination based upon race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, veteran status, genetic information, disability, and any other class status protected by federal, state, or local law. North Sound BHO requires its employees to abide by this policy in practice and in spirit. North Sound BHO encourages its employees to address any questions or concerns about this policy directly to their Supervisor/Manager, Human Resources or the Executive Director. Employees may do so without fear of reprisal.

#### **Unlawful Harassment**

North Sound BHO prohibits the harassment of any individual; all employees have the right to work in an environment free from unlawful harassment based upon their race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation/gender identity/expression, veterans' status, genetic information, disability, and any other class status protected by federal, state, or local law. Any unlawful workplace harassment of employees will not be tolerated by the North Sound BHO.

Harassment encompasses unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual. The North Sound BHO will not tolerate harassing conduct that interferes unreasonably with an individual's work performance or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Some examples of behavior that could constitute or contribute to harassment include but are not limited to: using epithets, slurs, or negative stereotypes; threatening, intimidating, or engaging in hostile acts that relate to protected status or characteristics such as those referred to above; jokes or pranks that refer to or denigrate a protected status; or placing on walls, bulletin boards, or elsewhere on the work premises or circulating in the workplace written, electronically transmitted or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward a person or group because of a protected characteristic.

### **Unlawful Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination and North Sound BHO will not tolerate it in the workplace. Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment may also include unwelcome sexual attention, verbal abuse of a sexual nature, unnecessary touching, a display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, sexually explicit or offensive jokes or objects, or engaging in any sexually-oriented conduct which unreasonably interferes with another's work performance or creates a work environment that is intimidating, hostile or offensive. North Sound BHO specifically prohibits any employee from behaviors that could constitute or contribute to sexual harassment to include, but not limited to:

- Unwelcome or unwanted flirtations, propositions, or advances. This includes patting, pinching, brushing up against, hugging, cornering, kissing, fondling, putting one's arm around another, or any other similar physical contact considered unacceptable by another individual; or
- Requests or demands for sexual favors. This includes subtle or blatant expectations, pressures, or requests for any type of sexual favor accompanied by an implied or stated promise of preferential treatment or negative consequences concerning an individual's employment; or
- Verbal abuse or kidding that is sexually oriented and considered unacceptable by another individual. This includes comments about an individual's body or appearance when such comments go beyond an isolated innocuous compliment; off-color jokes or offensive language; or any other tasteless, sexually oriented comments, innuendoes, or offensive actions, including leering, whistling, or gesturing; or
- Participation in fostering a work environment that is generally intimidating, hostile, or offensive because of unwelcome or unwanted sexually oriented conversation, office décor, suggestions, requests, demands, physical contacts, or attention.



### **Employee's Response to Misconduct**

North Sound BHO requires any employee who feels that they have been the subject of discrimination or harassment to report the conduct. Employees who feel that they or others may have been subject to discrimination or harassment, including but not limited to any of the conduct listed above, by any Supervisor/Manager, other employee, stakeholder, or other any person in connection with their employment should bring the matter, verbally or in writing, to the immediate attention of Human Resources, their Supervisor/Manager, or the Executive Director, who will initiate an investigation. Allegations of harassment will be promptly investigated, and appropriate corrective action will be taken. To assist in the prompt resolution of the complaint, employees should provide any supporting documents and identify any person who may have knowledge regarding the allegations. The Executive Director will be immediately notified of any complaints unless the complaint is against the Executive Director.

### **Investigation**

North Sound BHO will take all reports seriously and conduct an appropriate investigation. North Sound BHO will require employees to cooperate in any investigation, whether or not they are directly involved. North Sound BHO will keep the fact and results of its investigation as confidential as possible. Additionally, employees are expected to refrain from discussing investigatory matters with other individuals. North Sound BHO will take appropriate disciplinary action against an employee found to have violated the policy, up to and including termination of employment.

### **Non-Retaliation**

North Sound BHO prohibits retaliation because of an employee's good faith report of discrimination or harassment, or participation in an investigation of such a claim. Any individual who is found to have engaged in retaliatory conduct will be subject to appropriate corrective action, up to and including termination. Employees who believe that they have experienced such retaliation should notify Human Resources, their Supervisor/Manager, or the Executive Director. In the case of a complaint against the Executive Director, the Human Resources Manager or Executive Committee Chair should be notified.

## **3.04 WORKPLACE BULLYING**

At North Sound BHO, we are committed to providing a positive work environment which values cooperation, integrity, professionalism, teamwork, and treating others with respect.

Workplace bullying is unacceptable behavior and contrary to the values we believe are important. Workplace bullying is unreasonable behavior that generally is persistent, and that demeans, intimidates and humiliates employees, either as individuals or as a group.

Workplace bullying may cause the loss of trained and talented employees, reduce productivity and morale and create legal risk. North Sound BHO believes that all employees should be able to work in an environment free of bullying. Supervisor/Managers must ensure employees are not bullied.

Examples of Workplace bullying may include such behavior as:

- Unwarranted or invalid criticism
- Blame without factual justification
- Being treated differently than the rest of your work group
- Being sworn at
- Physical threats of violence
- Malicious workplace gossip
- Cyber bullying
- Exclusion or social isolation
- Being shouted at or being humiliated
- Excessive monitoring
- Being given unrealistic work deadlines

### **Reporting Procedures**

Any instance of bullying must be reported to a Supervisor, Manager, Human Resources, or the Executive Director, when the behavior occurs. Any reports of workplace bullying will be treated seriously and investigated promptly, confidentially, and impartially. Managers and Supervisors will ensure that employees or witnesses who make complaints do not receive retaliation. In the case of a complaint against the Executive Director, the Human Resources Manager or Executive Committee Chair should be notified.

Disciplinary action will be left to the discretion of the appropriate management representative, with the approval of the Executive Director. In the case of the Executive Director, the Executive Committee Chair will determine disciplinary action. All situations will be monitored to make sure the bullying does not recur.

### **3.05 WEAPONS FREE WORKPLACE**

Employees are prohibited from bringing dangerous weapons to work, including firearms, explosives, knives, and other weapons that might be considered dangerous or that could cause harm. Employees are prohibited from possessing dangerous weapons when traveling on North Sound BHO business or are on North Sound BHO property. Property is defined as owned or leased buildings and surrounding areas such as sidewalks, walkways, driveways and parking lots under North Sound BHO's ownership or control. North Sound BHO further reserves the right to inspect all North Sound BHO property with or without notice.

### **3.06 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

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

North Sound BHO encourages its employees to raise workplace concerns with their immediate Supervisor/Manager. If the Supervisor/Manager is unavailable, or if the complaints remain unresolved after talking with the Supervisor/Manager, or if the nature of the complaint is such that the employee does not feel they can discuss the complaint with their Supervisor/Manager, the employee may make a complaint to Human Resources or the Executive Director.

North Sound BHO prohibits the following by way of example, including but not limited to:

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

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

### **Orders of Protection/Restraining Orders**

An employee who has obtained an order of protection or restraining order against another individual must notify their Supervisor/Manager and provide a copy of the official restraining order document. North Sound BHO may also request a picture from the employee of the individual listed on the restraining order. North Sound BHO may take whatever steps it deems appropriate to ensure the safety of the workplace. The mandates of the restraining order will be followed until it has expired, or an alternative document has been provided which changes the status of the order.

### **Public Contact**

North Sound BHO strives to maintain a safe and secure workplace and does not tolerate violent, threatening or abusive treatment of employees by stakeholders or members of the public. Employees who feel they are being treated inappropriately or in a threatening manner by another individual should politely remove themselves from the situation and immediately inform their Supervisor/Manager or another available Supervisor/Manager.

### **North Sound BHO Response**

When North Sound BHO becomes aware of a potentially threatening situation (both domestic and from the public), management will undertake an assessment of the risk and implement a safety response plan specific to the circumstances of the threat. A response plan may include any of the following:

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

### **3.07 AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT - Reasonable Accommodation of Disabilities**

North Sound BHO's policy is to ensure equal employment opportunity for all qualified persons with a disability. For purposes of this section, "disability" includes a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits an employee's major life activities, or a record, or appearance, of having such impairment.

North Sound BHO recognizes that employees with physical or mental disabilities may need reasonable accommodations to enable them to perform their essential job functions. Any employee who believes they need reasonable accommodation should notify their Supervisor/Manager and Human Resources. Although the need for accommodation is determined on a case-by-case basis, generally North Sound BHO and the employee engage in an interactive process with the employee and the employee's healthcare provider(s) to confirm the existence of the condition, its limitations in the workplace, and possible reasonable accommodations. The employee has an obligation to cooperate with the organization in this process, which may include authorizing North Sound BHO to communicate with the employee's healthcare providers concerning the employee's condition, its limitations, and possible reasonable accommodations. All disability accommodation requests must be submitted on the Disability Accommodation Request form.

### **3.08 REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS**

The North Sound BHO respects the religious beliefs and practices of all employees and will make, upon request, an accommodation for such observances when a reasonable accommodation is available that does not create an undue hardship on the BHO's business or operations. If an accommodation for religious reasons is requested, contact Human Resources.

### **3.09 DRUG FREE WORKPLACE**

Use of alcohol or any drug that is illegal under federal or state law while on the job is a serious threat to personal health, workplace safety and job performance. Employees are strictly prohibited from possessing, selling, consuming or being under any influence (defined as having any detectable amount in their body) of alcohol, marijuana or illegal drugs while on the job or in any other manner that may affect the employee's work performance or the North Sound BHO's interests or reputation. This prohibition also extends to legal drugs for which an employee may not have a valid prescription, or that are not used in a manner consistent with accepted frequency or dosage requirements.

Any employee who is taking a medication that may be legally prescribed under both federal and state law should determine from their physician or pharmacist whether the prescription drug could impair their ability to perform the job safely and effectively. If the employee's performance of essential job functions may be functionally limited at work by use of a legal drug, they must promptly advise their Supervisor/Manager and Human Resources so that reasonable accommodations can be considered.

To ensure compliance with this policy, North Sound BHO may require drug and alcohol testing of employees based upon reasonable suspicion where the North Sound BHO's representatives reasonably suspect that an employee may be under any influence of drugs or alcohol, or any other situation that suggests that an employee is otherwise violating this policy. The North Sound BHO also reserves the right to search employee desks, lockers, work areas and personal property brought into the workplace where there is a reasonable basis to suspect a violation of this policy.

The North Sound BHO may take disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, in the event of any of the following: (1) violation of this policy; (2) a positive test result; (3) refusal or failure to submit to testing when requested to do so; (4) refusal to cooperate in the testing process; or (5) adulteration of any sample or tampering with any part of the testing process.

Alcohol and drug test results are maintained as employee medical records in an employee's separate medical personnel file. The North Sound BHO limits access to employee medical personnel files in accordance with applicable law, which generally means that test results are shared only with those who have a need to know the information.

Any employee experiencing difficulties with drugs or alcohol is encouraged to contact the North Sound BHO's Employee Assistance Program before the drug or alcohol issue affects their work performance.

#### **Employee Assistance and Rehabilitation**

North Sound BHO offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to its employees as an additional benefit. The EAP provides professional, confidential counseling to employees experiencing personal issues. North Sound BHO will not discipline or terminate an employee who voluntarily seeks EAP assistance before there is a performance problem or positive drug or alcohol test result. For more information on North Sound BHO's EAP program or benefit coverage for rehabilitation, please see your benefit information or contact Human Resources.

### 3.10 WHISTLE BLOWER

It is the policy of North Sound BHO to: (1) encourage reporting by its employees of improper governmental action taken by North Sound BHO Leadership/Executive Committee or employees and (2) not to retaliate against North Sound BHO employees who have reported improper governmental actions in accordance with North Sound BHO policies and procedures and RCW 42.41.

#### Definitions

**Improper governmental action** - any action by a North Sound BHO officer or employee:

1. That is undertaken in the performance of the officer's or employee's employment whether or not the action is within the scope of the employee's employment; and
2. That is in violation of any federal, state, or local law or rule, is an abuse of authority, is of substantial and specific danger to the public health or safety or is a gross waste of public funds.

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

**Retaliatory action** - means any adverse change in the terms and conditions of a North Sound BHO employee's employment.

**Emergency** - means a circumstance that if not immediately changed may cause damage to persons or property.

#### Procedures for Reporting

North Sound BHO employees who become aware of improper governmental action are encouraged to notify the Executive Director. The employee will submit a written report to the Executive Director or their designee, stating in detail the basis for the employee's belief that an improper governmental action has occurred. The Executive Director or their designee will promptly initiate an investigation. Within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the employee's notice of improper governmental action, the Executive Director or their designee will provide the employee with a written summary of the results of the investigation. Personnel actions taken as a result of the investigation may be kept confidential. North Sound BHO officers and employees involved in the investigation will keep the identity of reporting employees confidential to the extent possible under law, unless the employee authorizes disclosure of their identity in writing. North Sound BHO employees must follow North Sound BHO procedures and policies with respect to reporting improper governmental action. Any employee who fails to make a good faith attempt to follow this policy will not receive the protections of the Local Government Employee Whistleblower Protection Act as codified in chapter 42.41 RCW.

Thirty (30) days after making a written report of the improper governmental action alleged by the employee, North Sound BHO employees may report information about improper governmental action directly to the appropriate governmental agency responsible for investigating the improper action.

### **Protection against Retaliatory Actions**

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

1. In order to seek relief, the employee will provide a written notice of the charge of retaliatory action to the governing body (North Sound BHO Executive Committee) of the local government that specifies the alleged retaliatory action and the relief requested.
2. The charge will be delivered to the local government no later than thirty (30) days after the occurrence of the alleged retaliatory action. North Sound BHO has thirty (30) days to respond to the charge of retaliatory action and requested relief.
3. Upon receipt of either the response of the local government or after the last day upon which the local government could respond, the local government employee may request a hearing to establish that a retaliatory action occurred and to obtain appropriate relief. The request for a hearing will be delivered to the local government within fifteen (15) days of delivery of the response from the local government, or within fifteen (15) days of the last day on which the local government could respond.

### **Responsibilities**

The Executive Director will be responsible for insuring that this policy and these procedures (1) are available where all employees will have reasonable access to them, (2) are made available to any employee upon request, and (3) are provided to all newly hired employees. Violations of this policy and these procedures may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

### **3.11 NON-SMOKING**

Smoking is prohibited in all North Sound BHO facilities. To comply with Washington State law, employees wishing to smoke and/or vape during their breaks or lunch periods must do so at least twenty-five (25) feet from any public entrances, exits, windows, and ventilation intakes. Cigarette butts must be properly disposed.

### **3.12 SELLING AND SOLICITATION**

To provide freedom from pressure, embarrassment, and work interruptions for employees and customers, North Sound BHO does not permit solicitation or distribution of literature by persons not employed by North Sound BHO in work areas or by North Sound BHO employees during work hours. This prohibition includes charity solicitors, insurance salespersons,

initiative or ballot petitions, union organizers, survey or questionnaire activity, or any other form of solicitation or distribution. Specifically, prohibited activities include, but are not limited to:

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

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

### **3.13 POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

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

North Sound BHO employees should be respectful of the diversity of our workforce in all areas, including political perspectives. Employees should maintain respectful, professional discourse when discussing political issues.

### **3.14 THEFT**

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



In addition, when an employee leaves employment with North Sound BHO, the employee must return all North Sound BHO-related information and property that the employee has in their possession. Violation of this policy may result in appropriate legal action.

### **3.15 PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

North Sound BHO strives to establish and maintain professional business attire and an atmosphere sensitive to the needs and perspectives of those we serve. The image and conduct of the organization's employees should project professionalism and play a key role in establishing a professional business atmosphere. Employees are expected to use good judgment in their choice of clothing that reflects our professional atmosphere. Inappropriate attire includes, but is not limited to, such clothing items as spaghetti-strapped tops, shirts with low necklines or exposed midriff, casual T-shirts with inappropriate logos, tattered or torn blue jeans, short shorts, stretch/sweat/fleece pants, and short mini-skirts.

Employees are expected to observe good habits of grooming and hygiene at all times, and to avoid personal practices that may prove offensive to others, including the excessive use of scented products.

If there are questions as to what constitutes proper attire, employees should consult their Supervisor/Manager or the Human Resources Manager. Employees who are inappropriately dressed may receive corrective counseling regarding their attire and may be sent home to change their attire. Further violations of the policy will be addressed with progressive discipline.

### **3.16 CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Employees who have been employed by a North Sound BHO contractor within one (1) year of hire may be recused from working with their previous employer during the six (6) month orientation period, the determination will be made on a case by case basis.

Employees are expected to be loyal to North Sound BHO. It is their responsibility to avoid any conflicts between their own personal interests and the interests of North Sound BHO.

North Sound BHO employees are precluded from sitting on any governing board for an organization that is contracting with North Sound BHO.

North Sound BHO employees will not receive any gift, gratuity or special favor from a contractor in the performance of their duties on behalf of North Sound BHO with a contractor. Any attempt to provide a North Sound BHO employee with a gift or gratuity must be immediately reported to their Supervisor/Manager. North Sound BHO employees who have or may have an interest either directly or indirectly with any contractor or potential contractor must state this interest and not participate in any meeting related to procurement or contract compliance.

### **3.17 CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentiality is a core value at North Sound BHO. Annually, all North Sound BHO employees will sign an oath of confidentiality which will be retained in the employee's personnel file. Breach of confidentiality will be grounds for disciplinary action.

Any information that has Personal Health Information (PHI), including unsecured technology storage devices, will be stored in a locked cabinet/room in North Sound BHO office.

Any other issue related to PHI that is not addressed herein will conform to applicable state and federal regulations, including: a) RCW 71.05 b) RCW 71.24 c) RCW 71.341 d) Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 and its implementing regulations, as amended (collectively, "HIPAA") d) Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act, enacted as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 e) 42 CFR Part 2.

### **3.18 RIGHT TO SEARCH/OBSERVE**

North Sound BHO may conduct searches of employee desks, computers, or any other North Sound BHO property at any time and for any reason. Management must also reserve the right to audit, access and or disclose any transactions such as Internet usage, phone usage, voice mail, and e-mail messages.

### **3.19 ELECTRONIC MAIL**

North Sound BHO's electronic mail system (e-mail) is for official business. Employees should understand that e-mail is not private or confidential. E-mail that has been deleted is retrievable. All messages are records of the organization and are the property of North Sound BHO. North Sound BHO reserves the right to read, use and disclose e-mail messages. For these reasons, employees should not have an expectation of privacy in anything created, stored, sent or received on the company computer system.

Additionally, when using the e-mail system, keep correspondence to a professional, business tone. E-mail should be respectful, productive and constructive. Basic acceptable e-mail format and etiquette are provided in the North Sound BHO e-mail etiquette fact sheet, available through Human Resources.

Special care should be shown not to make comments or forward jokes that may be in violation of policies on discrimination, harassment, or bullying. Employees are prohibited from using the e-mail system to forward 'chain' e-mails, jokes, cartoons or any similar material.

### **3.20 COMPUTER & INTERNET USE**

Employees are required to comply with all software licenses, copyrights, and other state and federal laws governing intellectual property. Fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, indecent, profane, obscene, intimidating, or other inappropriate material may not be accessed, displayed, sent, or stored on North Sound BHO computers. Employees encountering or receiving such material should report the incident to their Supervisor/Manager.

The internet is filled with a wide variety of information. North Sound BHO believes that some of the material found on the internet is inappropriate for the workplace and therefore, during work hours the internet will be used primarily for business purposes. Employees may use their computers to access the internet for personal reasons during break and lunch periods. North Sound BHO computer systems are monitored so employees should not have an expectation of privacy in anything created, stored, sent, or received, on the organization's computer system. Use of organization equipment for inappropriate internet use, as outlined in this policy, will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Employees must follow these guidelines when communicating through the internet and/or utilizing social media:

- Organization information will not be broadcast without express authorization from leadership. News of activities, information about coworkers, and event pictures will not be shared without express authorization.
- Personal Health Information (PHI) and other identifying information are confidential and will not be broadcast.
- Since we represent the organization in the community, employees are expected to be respectful and avoid posting derogatory, defamatory or other negative comments about others.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the use of social media, please consult your Supervisor/Manager or Human Resources.

### **3.21 NORTH SOUND BHO CELLULAR PHONES**

Cellular telephones are available for North Sound BHO employees to use outside of North Sound BHO office and when traveling to and from meetings on behalf of North Sound BHO. Cellular telephones are to be used expressly for North Sound BHO business. North Sound BHO cell phones will not be used for personal calls except in extenuating circumstances.

North Sound BHO reserves the right to monitor the use of all North Sound BHO-owned cellular telephones. Cellular transmissions are not secure. Employees should use discretion in relaying confidential information. Reasonable precautions should be made to prevent equipment theft and vandalism. Additionally, employees will comply with all laws regarding the use of cell phones while operating a motor vehicle.

### **3.22 PERSONAL CELL PHONES**

To show respect to co-workers, employees are asked to turn cell phones off or place them on low ring or vibrate during work hours. Employees should utilize their breaks or lunch periods to check personal cell phone messages and return calls. In addition, please choose a private location for cell phone conversations to prevent disrupting co-workers. Employees may not use personal cell phones to record conversations or take workplace pictures except with consent from parties involved.

### **3.23 USE OF OTHER NORTH SOUND BHO PROPERTY**

Use of North Sound BHO telephone system for personal local calls should be kept to a minimum and generally conducted during non-work time. Any other personal use of the telephone system, such as making long distance calls, is prohibited. All North Sound BHO equipment, property, and systems should be used by employees for North Sound BHO business only. North Sound BHO reserves the right to monitor the use of all North Sound BHO systems and equipment.

Employees who improperly utilize North Sound BHO equipment, property or systems may be liable for expenses incurred and will be subject to disciplinary procedures, up to and including termination.

### **3.24 BULLETIN BOARDS & OTHER COMMUNICATION**

North Sound BHO primarily utilizes the e-mail system to communicate important work-related information to employees. It is each employee's responsibility to read this information to stay current on the necessary information to be effective in their position.

Information of special interest to all employees may be posted on designated employee bulletin boards. Postings of a political, controversial, or distasteful nature will not be posted. North Sound BHO Human Resources will generally monitor the bulletin boards and will remove any inappropriate material.

### **3.25 CONTACT WITH NEWS MEDIA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

The Executive Director shall be responsible for all official contacts with news media regarding North Sound BHO business matters. The Executive Director may designate specific employees to give out procedural, factual, or historical information on particular subjects. Any employee receiving calls or requests from the media must refer such calls to the Executive Director or the designated media representative.

Employees who are contacted by local, state, or federal agencies and asked to provide information on behalf of North Sound BHO, an action that would be outside the scope of their normal duties, should consult with their Supervisor/Manager prior to releasing such

information. Additionally, employees contacted by attorneys, paralegals, or other similar individuals/organizations should note the information being requested and inform the caller that they or another North Sound BHO representative will get back to them. Such inquiries should be documented and reviewed with the employee's Supervisor/Manager prior to releasing North Sound BHO information.

### **3.26 BREASTFEEDING/LACTATION**

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

For up to one year after the child's birth, any employee who is breastfeeding their child will be provided reasonable break times to express breast milk for their newborn. For non-exempt staff, breaks of more than thirty (30) minutes total will be unpaid and the employee must make up this time during the work day or indicate the time on their timesheet. North Sound BHO has designated a private room for this purpose. For the designated location, please contact Human Resources.

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

## **SECTION 4: HOURS OF WORK AND COMPENSATION**

### **4.01 ATTENDANCE**

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

#### **Reporting of Sick Leave**

It is the responsibility of the employee to contact their direct Supervisor/Manager in the event of any absence. In addition, employees are asked to notify (by phone and e-mail) the receptionist of their absence so appropriate staff can be informed. Such notification must be made no more than thirty (30) minutes after the start of the employee's work day. At the time of notification, it is the employee's responsibility to indicate when they anticipate being able to return to work. If the employee is subsequently unable to return to work as anticipated, the employee is obligated to follow the procedure for reporting the absence to both their direct Supervisor/Manager and the receptionist. If, at any time, an employee is incapacitated to the point they are unable to call in personally, they are responsible to have someone call in for them.

#### **Verification of Illness**

Any planned absences such as paid or unpaid days off, medical appointments, etc. should be arranged in advance with the employee's Supervisor/Manager.

An employee may be required to furnish written medical proof of sickness or disability, usually in excess of three (3) days. Additionally, North Sound BHO may require an employee to furnish a doctor's release to return to work following an injury or absences for an extended length of time.

An employee who is absent without prior notification or fails to provide proper documentation of illness when required will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Any employee who is absent three (3) consecutive days, without giving proper notification, will be considered to have voluntarily terminated employment.

#### **Attendance Standards**

North Sound BHO provides employees with sufficient paid time off in the form of vacation, sick leave, and holidays. It is the employee's responsibility to monitor and manage their own paid time off to ensure there is sufficient paid time to cover each pay period. Employees who are regularly absent and use all their paid time off, requiring Leave Without Pay, may be considered to be excessively absent and subject to progressive discipline, up to and including termination (with the exception of employees who are out on approved leaves of absences such as FMLA or employees who are in their first three (3) months of the orientation period and may not have access to accrued leave). Repeated tardiness and/or patterned or unauthorized absences may be cause for disciplinary action or dismissal.

#### **4.02 HOURS OF WORK**

The normal full-time workday will consist of eight (8) hours per day for forty (40) hours per five (5) day week excluding the normal lunch period of one (1) hour. North Sound BHO's work week begins at 12:00 AM Monday and ends midnight on Sunday.

Part-time work schedules will be established as may be necessary to facilitate timely service to the public within budget limitations.

Exempt employees are required to work as many hours as is required to fulfill the responsibilities of their positions.

In emergencies, hours of work will be directed by the Executive Director and reports will be submitted of overtime hours worked. In addition, the Supervisor/Manager may authorize an overtime work schedule if in so doing the efficiency of a work unit will be enhanced. In the event the Supervisor/Manager is unavailable, approval of the Executive Director is required.

#### **4.03 BREAKS AND MEAL PERIODS**

Meal and rest breaks for all employees are scheduled by Leadership to meet the business needs of North Sound BHO. Meal breaks are scheduled for **non-exempt** employees no later than five (5) hours after the start of a workday. Meal breaks must be a minimum of thirty (30) minutes. One additional meal break of at least thirty (30) minutes must be taken if overtime worked on the same day exceeds three (3) hours. Work may not be done on meal breaks, and time is not paid for meal breaks.

Except in case of emergency, non-exempt employees are generally permitted a fifteen (15) minute, paid rest break for each four (4) hour period worked during a full workday. Breaks may not be taken at the start or end of a workday, added to lunch break, or taken consecutively.

#### **4.04 PAYDAY**

North Sound BHO pay periods are the 1<sup>st</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month and 16<sup>th</sup> through the end of the month. Pay day is on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of the month. If the pay day falls on a weekend or holiday, North Sound BHO will pay employees on the last work day prior to the weekend or holiday.

#### **4.05 PAYROLL RECORDS**

Employees are responsible for completing timesheets within the established timeframes so payroll can be processed in a timely manner. Each employee is responsible for accurate reporting of time worked and leave taken. Inaccurate reporting of such information is considered falsification of payroll records and will lead to discipline, up to and including termination.

#### **4.06 PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

North Sound BHO will withhold from the employee's paycheck required deductions and any voluntary deductions authorized by the employee. For questions about payroll deductions, please contact Human Resources/Payroll.

#### **4.07 OVERTIME**

Only non-exempt employees are eligible for overtime pay. Eligible employees earn one and one-half (1.5) hours of overtime for each hour worked in excess of forty (40) hours worked during a workweek. Overtime work requires prior approval by the Supervisor/Manager or Executive Director. The Overtime Authorization form can be obtained through Human Resources.

#### **4.08 FLSA EXEMPT EMPLOYEES**

"Exempt" employees are individuals working in positions that are exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). These positions are typically paid a fixed salary regardless of the hours worked in a workweek. Such employees will be required to use their paid time off (vacation, sick leave, etc.) for typical absences.

Exempt employees may take up to four (4) hours of leave per day without deducting that time from their leave banks.

If an exempt employee will be working less than four (4) hours during their work day, they must account for any remaining regularly scheduled time on their timesheet as either sick leave, vacation leave, or floating holiday. I.e. if an employee works for three (3) hours, they must take five (5) hours of leave, conversely if an employee is working four (4) hours or more, they are paid for a full day.

Exempt employees who feel their pay has been improperly reduced must report their concern to the Human Resources Manager immediately. The employee shall specify in writing the concern, including whether it is believed that their pay has been reduced improperly on other occasions. North Sound BHO will then review the pay records and perform an adequate investigation. If the deduction was in fact improper, North Sound BHO will reimburse the employee as promptly as possible and document the resolution of the situation.

#### **4.09 EMERGENCY CLOSURES**

Occasionally adverse weather or other emergencies might interfere with normal arrival and departure times from the office. Every reasonable effort will be made to open North Sound BHO office. If the office is closed early or opened late, employees will receive regular pay for that day(s) unless they were otherwise absent that day.



If the office is open during adverse conditions any employee not reporting to work must notify their Supervisor/Manager and may elect to take vacation leave. In rare circumstances, the employee (in eligible positions) may be allowed to work from home with approval from their Supervisor/Manager if the employee is unable to get to work due to adverse conditions. Employees will consult with their Supervisor/Manager regarding specific applications of this policy.

#### **4.10 ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES**

North Sound BHO recognizes the desire for some employees to work alternative schedules from the traditional work schedule. This policy outlines the parameters in which employees may request alternative work schedules. When considering alternative work schedule requests, the first priority will be to ensure quality service to our customers and the appropriate level of staffing coverage. In some cases, an alternative work schedule may not be possible because the employee's responsibilities require regular presence in the office during office hours. In other cases, an alternative work schedule may work more effectively for the employee, North Sound BHO, or both. Supervisor/Managers must get the Executive Director approval prior to initiating alternative work schedules based on North Sound BHO workload needs. Other than supervisory-initiated situations, employees must complete their six (6) month orientation period before requesting an alternative work schedule.

##### **Schedule Options**

###### **Flexible Hours**

An employee's start and end time are adjusted, upon Supervisor/Manager approval, to extend beyond the standard 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. shift (i.e., 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.).

###### **Compressed Workweek**

An employee, upon a case-by-case approval, works longer hours in each day and reduces the number of days worked in the week (i.e., 10-hour days, 4 days a week). The Supervisor/Manager may consider some variation other than the 10-hour/4-day workweek schedule based on employee and organizational needs.

###### **Reduced Workweek**

On a case-by-case basis, it may be desirable for the employee and organization to reduce the hours worked in a workweek on a regular basis. An employee on a reduced workweek schedule will receive reduced wages and benefits based upon the number of hours worked (see benefits section).

###### **Telecommuting Arrangement**

North Sound BHO considers telecommuting to be a viable alternative work arrangement in cases where individual, job, and Supervisor/Manager, determine job characteristics are best suited to such an arrangement. Telecommuting allows an employee to work at home, on the road, or in an offsite location for part of their regular workweek. Telecommuting is a

voluntary work alternative that may be appropriate for some employees and some jobs. Long term telecommuting arrangements will need to be approved as an alternative work schedule. It is not an entitlement, it is not a company-wide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with North Sound BHO.

Supervisors/Managers may authorize episodic telecommuting on a case by case basis for their Staff based on the job function and the needs of the organization. This does not require an agreement, unless it becomes recurring in nature.

Criteria below is to be used consistently by Supervisors/Managers when approving telecommuting arrangements:

- Job function is not location specific
- Prior managerial approval
- Confidentiality is maintained at offsite location
- Outlook calendar is updated with contact information

### **Submitting Requests**

All requests for alternative work schedules and arrangements, full-time or part-time, must be submitted on an “Alternative Work Schedule Request” form. Forms are obtained through Human Resources. Such requests will be considered by the Supervisor/Manager and approved by the Executive Director. While North Sound BHO may not be able to accommodate all requests for alternative work schedules, each request will be carefully considered based upon the following:

- North Sound BHO operational needs and goals
- The affected Team’s ability to accommodate the requested schedule
- The employee’s past performance and productivity
- The order of the request (first request gets first consideration)

### **Schedule Adjustments**

Employees who are approved to work an alternative work schedule or arrangement are expected to remain flexible and adjust their schedule as needed to attend mandatory meetings or scheduled training sessions. Such schedule adjustments may also be necessary to cover for vacation or extended absences.

### **Review and Modification or Revoking**

North Sound BHO reserves the right to periodically review alternative work schedule/arrangements. This review will examine whether the schedule/arrangement change allows the employee to meet all job requirements and whether North Sound BHO is best served by the adjusted schedule. Additionally, North Sound BHO reserves the right to suspend, modify, or revoke any previously approved schedule adjustment or arrangements as necessary or advisable for North Sound BHO operational needs. In such cases, the employee will return to the standard office work hours.

## **SECTION 5: PAY ADMINISTRATION**

### **5.01 PAY PLAN**

The administration of North Sound BHO's pay structure is the responsibility of the Executive Director as established and authorized by action of the Executive Committee. The Executive Director is responsible for development, implementation, maintenance, and administration of the pay structure. North Sound BHO's pay structure represents the total remuneration for an employee occupying the position except for official travel and other approved expenses. No employee will receive pay from North Sound BHO in addition to the salary.

A salary range comprises a series of steps through which an employee may progress to compensate for the value of time and experience on the job. Positions are assigned to salary ranges based upon the following factors:

- a) Duties and responsibilities of position or class;
- b) Maintaining internal equity between positions;
- c) Prevailing local market rates for similar work in both public and private employment, where applicable;
- d) Pay relationships between Supervisor/Managers and employees;
- e) Employee recruitment and retention patterns;
- f) Economic trends and forecasts;
- g) Periodic review of salary survey data, including comparative fringe benefits; and,
- h) Availability of funds

### **5.02 SALARY RANGE & MOVEMENT**

Each North Sound BHO position is assigned a salary range with the stated minimum and maximum salary. Employees progress through the steps of the salary range based on length of employment and satisfactory performance as determined by their Supervisor/Manager. Regular part-time employees will progress through the pay plan structure on the same schedule as full-time employees

### **5.03 RATES OF PAY**

#### **Starting Rate Upon Initial Employment**

Upon initial employment to a position, the employee will receive the minimum salary for that class to which the position is assigned; however, in cases where unusual difficulty in filling the vacancy is experienced or when the appointee is exceptionally qualified, the Executive Director may place the individual at the appropriate salary step.

#### **Rate of Pay After a Transfer**

When an employee transfers from one position to another within the same class or transfers to a position in another class with the same pay range, the employee will generally continue to receive the same rate of pay. Movement to a higher step may be approved on a case-by-

case basis by the Executive Director when it is deemed in the best interests of North Sound BHO.

### **Temporary Appointments**

In the event an employee is temporarily reassigned to and will actually be performing the significant responsibilities of a job of higher classification for one week or more, the employee will be paid at the closest salary range step of the higher classification which represents an increase for the employee.

### **Voluntary Demotion**

An employee requesting demotion in lieu of layoff or any reason except failure to perform after a promotion will usually be placed in the same pay step of the lower level position.

### **Pay Increases & Performance**

In the event that an employee is experiencing performance issues which are documented in the performance evaluation process, the employee will not receive any scheduled step increases. The Supervisor/Manager will outline a performance improvement plan and re-evaluate performance during and at the conclusion of the performance improvement plan. If the employee's overall performance has significantly improved, a step increase (if eligible) will be implemented. Such step increase will not be retroactive.

### **Promotions/Upgrades**

When determining the step placement of the new range for promotional reclassifications, consideration should be given to the incumbent's current salary and eligibility for upcoming step adjustments and/or cost of living adjustments, as applicable. Additional consideration will be given to added responsibilities and duties. An employee reclassified to a higher range will be placed in the step in the new range that most closely meets this criterion.

## **5.04 RECLASSIFICATIONS**

The goal of North Sound BHO is to assure that employees are working within the scope of their assigned job descriptions. Changes to an employee's job responsibilities, and subsequent changes to the job description, are the assigned Supervisor/Manager's responsibility. Before significant changes to the scope of an employee's job are made, Supervisor/Managers are to consult with and receive approval from the Executive Director.

An employee who feels that their tasks and responsibilities do not match the assigned job description, should talk with their Supervisor/Manager. In such circumstances, North Sound BHO may choose to update the employee's job description or reassign tasks.

Changes to an employee's position that have a significant impact on the scope of the job may be cause for the position to be reevaluated and reclassified.

Reclassifications include promotions/upgrades to a position in a higher classification, downward reclassification to a position in a lower classification, lateral position change within job classification, and interim assignments.

Reclassifications may be considered when a significant change occurs in the responsibility and authority of the position involved. Any employee undergoing a change in classification will be assigned a new anniversary date to coincide with the first day of the month following classification. While the employee will utilize their date of hire for the accrual of paid time off, future performance reviews and step increases will be based on the employee's adjusted anniversary date.

**Requests for Reclassifications**

A regular employee who believes their position has had significant changes in the responsibility and/or authority should submit a written request for a classification review. The written request will provide specific information regarding changes in job duties or responsibilities and an explanation to support any reclassification change. The Supervisor/Manager will review the request and forward it with written recommendations to Human Resources and the Executive Director. North Sound BHO will advise the employee of the reclassification decision in writing.

## **SECTION 6: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

### **6.01 BENEFITS INTRODUCTION**

North Sound BHO strives to provide competitive and cost-effective benefits for employees as part of the employee's total compensation package. Employees should recognize that the total cost to provide the benefits programs described herein is a significant supplement to each employee's pay, and should therefore be viewed as additional compensation, paid in various benefit forms (including vacation, sick leave and holidays), on behalf of each employee.

This portion of the manual contains a very general description of the benefits to which you may be entitled as an employee of North Sound BHO. Please understand that this general explanation is not intended to, and does not, provide you with all the details of these benefits. Therefore, this manual does not change or otherwise interpret the terms of the official plan documents. Your rights can be determined only by referring to the full text of the official plan documents.

North Sound BHO Executive Committee reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to amend, modify or terminate, in whole or in part, any or all of the provision of the benefit plans described herein.

### **6.02 BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY & TERMS**

Regular full-time and part-time employees are eligible for benefits offered by North Sound BHO unless otherwise specified in these policies. Part-time employees working less than an average of twenty (20) hours per week are not eligible for some benefits as outlined below. Employees may also extend specific health benefits to their spouses, North Sound BHO-certified domestic partners, and/or eligible dependents. In order for an employee to access eligible domestic partner benefits, they must have a signed North Sound BHO Domestic Partner Affidavit on file in the personnel file. The Affidavit of Domestic Partnership is available through Human Resources.

North Sound BHO generally offers an open enrollment period for all North Sound BHO employees once a year. Particular aspects of the benefit program may permit mid-year changes for "major life events" as defined in their particular Summary Plan Descriptions. If you should have a change in your family status, please see Human Resources for benefits eligibility.

### **6.03 HEALTH & WELFARE BENEFITS**

North Sound BHO offers a full range of medical, dental, vision, short term and/or long-term disability, and life insurance benefit options. Information and applications for coverage are available from North Sound BHO's Human Resources as medical, dental and vision plans have different requirements for eligibility as outlined by North Sound BHO's insurance carrier.

Coverage is usually effective the first of the month following employee's hire date.

**Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA)**

COBRA allows for continued health care insurance coverage, on a self-pay basis, for employees and/or their dependents that would otherwise lose their health care insurance due to termination of employment, divorce or separation, or other events specified in the law. This continuation right only applies to insurance coverage the employee or their dependents had at the time of the qualifying event. The duration of the self-pay premium coverage is as follows, based on the qualifying event:

<u>Qualifying Event</u>	<u>Duration of coverage</u>
Termination of employment	18 months
Reduction of hours	18 months
Death of a covered employee	36 months
Dependent child ceasing to be dependent	36 months
Divorce or legal separation	36 months
Medicare entitlement	36 months

Eligible employees who separate from employment from North Sound BHO with benefit coverage will receive COBRA information at their separation. At any other time, employees who are interested in finding out more information about COBRA insurance costs or have an event as described above should immediately contact Human Resources.

**Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)**

- a) Special Enrollment Rights - If you are declining enrollment for yourself or your dependents (including your spouse) because of other health insurance coverage you may in the future be able to enroll yourself or your dependents in this plan, provided that you request enrollment within 31 days after your other coverage ends. In addition, if you have a new dependent as result of marriage, birth, adoption or placement for adoption, you may be able to enroll yourself and your dependents, provided that you request enrollment within 31 days after the marriage, birth, adoption or placement for adoption.
- b) Actively (eligible employee) At Work - If an employee elects one of North Sound BHO's medical plans, coverage will become effective under the plan even if they are hospitalized or on medical leave on the effective date. However, coverage may not include medical expenses accrued prior to effective date.

**6.04 RETIREMENT BENEFITS**

North Sound BHO makes contributions on behalf of all eligible employees to the Social Security system in addition to those contributions made by the employee through FICA payroll deductions.

All regular, full-time and eligible part-time employees are covered under the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). Benefit levels and contribution rates are set by the State of Washington Department of Retirement Systems (DRS). A percentage of the employee's gross salary is deducted from earnings and matched by North Sound BHO as payments to the pension system.

## 6.05 HOLIDAYS

The following days will be recognized as holidays with pay for all regular full-time and regular part-time employees working an average of 20 hours or more hours per week.

Holiday	Day Observed
New Year's Day	January 1
Martin Luther King's Day	Third Monday in January
President's Day	Third Monday in February
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Veteran's Day	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Day after Thanksgiving Day	Day immediately following Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day	December 25
Two Floating Days	Employee's choice with approval of their Supervisor/Manager (Executive Director's choice with the approval of the Executive Committee Chair or their designee)

Full-time employees will receive eight (8) hours for the holiday. Part-time employees (working an average of twenty [20] hours or more per week) will receive pro-rated pay for the holiday based on regularly scheduled hours. Unless otherwise announced, when a holiday falls on a Saturday, North Sound BHO will observe the holiday on the preceding Friday; holidays which fall on Sunday will be observed the following Monday.

In order to be eligible for holiday pay, employees must be on pay status for the regularly scheduled workdays that precede and follow the Holiday.

### Holidays and Paid Leave

Holidays observed during an employee's annual vacation or other paid leave period will not be counted as vacation or leave time. Holidays and paid leave do not count as time-worked; therefore, they are not calculated into overtime computations. If a non-exempt employee works on a holiday, with prior approval of their Supervisor/Manager, the employee will be paid for hours worked in addition to the holiday.



### **Floating Holidays**

An employee will receive two (2) paid "floating" holidays per year upon completion of three (3) months of the six (6) month orientation period. Each employee may select the day on which they desire to take the additional holidays subject to the approval of their Supervisor/Manager. In the case of the Executive Director, floating holiday selection is subject to the approval of the Executive Committee Chair or their designee. The floating holidays must be expended prior to January 1 of the succeeding year or they will be forfeited without pay.

### **Holidays and Benefits Accrual**

Holiday hours will be counted toward eligibility for sick leave and vacation benefits as outlined above.

## **6.06 SICK LEAVE**

Sick leave provides eligible employees with a measure of financial protection by allowing time off with pay when a personal health, hygiene issue, personal illness, accident, disability, or an illness of an immediate family member occurs. It is solely intended as a form of income protection and is not to be considered as paid time off that is owed to an employee.

### **Use of Sick Leave**

Sick leave may be taken for any of the following reasons:

- a) Illness or injury which incapacitates the employee to the extent that they are unable to perform their work.
- b) Exposure to contagious disease such as would jeopardize the health of fellow workers or the public.
- c) Doctor, dental or optical appointments.
- d) Enforced quarantine in accordance with health regulations.
- e) Temporary disabilities caused or contributed to by pregnancy, miscarriage, surgery, childbirth and recovery there from.

Consistent with Washington Family Care Act, employees may also use sick leave to attend to the need of an employee's immediate family member as follows:

- 1) To care for a child of the employee with a health condition that requires treatment or supervision.
  - ***Child of the employee:*** Biological, adopted, or foster child, a stepchild, legal ward, or child of a person standing in loco parentis who is under eighteen (18) years of age; or eighteen years or older and incapable of self-care because of a serious health or emergency condition.

2) To care for the following family members who have a serious health condition or an emergency condition:

- spouse, domestic partner (with affidavit) and parents thereof;
- parents or an individual who stood in loco parentis to an employee when the employee was a child;
- other family members which includes: brothers and sisters, and spouses thereof, grandparents, and grandchildren.

If any of the above occurs during an approved vacation, the employee will be eligible to access available sick leave.

**Sick Leave Accrued**

Full-time employees accrue sick leave at the rate of one (1) day (eight [8] hours) per completed calendar month. Part-time employees, working an average of twenty (20) hours or more each week, will accrue a proportionate amount of sick leave based on their percentage of time on pay status for the month. Time on pay status includes hours worked, holidays, approved vacations, sick leave, and bereavement leave. Unpaid leaves of absence are not counted toward sick leave accrual.

Employees may accrue up to one hundred twenty (120) days of earned but unused sick leave.

A temporary change in the employee's regular weekly work schedule (which lasts for one month or less) will not affect the employee's accumulation of sick leave benefits.

**Sick Leave Cash Out**

An employee in good standing with five (5) or more years of current, continuous employment with North Sound BHO shall be entitled to sick leave cash out upon voluntary separation or layoff in the amount of twenty-five percent (25%) of accrued hours up to a maximum of nine hundred sixty (960) hours. No compensation shall be made for unused sick leave accrued by employees who have been terminated as a result of disciplinary action or who resign due to pending disciplinary action.

**6.07 VACATION**

All eligible North Sound BHO employees will accrue vacation on a monthly basis at one-twelfth (1/12) the yearly rate in accordance with the schedule below. Regular part-time employees working an average of twenty (20) hours per week will be credited in proportion to the time worked.

PERIOD COVERED	ANNUAL VACATION BENEFIT	FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE MONTHLY ACCRUAL
First 1-2 years	12 workdays	8 hours
2-5 years	18 workdays	12 hours
5-8 years	22 workdays	14 hours
8-10 years	24 workdays	16 hours
10 years forward	27 workdays	18 hours

The schedule above refers to a period of continuous employment. Changes in accrual levels will take effect on the beginning of the pay period following an employee's anniversary date.

Accrual of vacation and sick leave will begin on the date of hire. New employees accrue vacation benefits from date of employment for use following satisfactory completion of three (3) months of the six (6) month orientation period.

Consistent with North Sound BHO's needs and workload, employees may select their own vacation time with the approval of their Supervisor/Manager. In the case of the Executive Director, the Executive Committee Chair or their designee will approve the vacation time selection. It is intended that vacation accruals will be used during the year in which they are earned; however up to thirty days (240 hours) may be carried over into the next year. Accruals in excess of thirty days (240 hours) may be carried over into the New Year with the approval of the Executive Director; however, any hours over thirty days (240) hours at the end of the calendar year must be used within six (6) months or will be forfeited. In the case of the Executive Director, the Executive Committee Chair or their designee will approve any carry-over.

Accrual of vacation leave is based upon an employee's regular weekly work schedule including regular hours worked, paid holidays, vacations, sick leave or bereavement leave, and excluding overtime hours and other unpaid leave of absences periods.

Regular part-time employees working an average of twenty (20) hours per week will be eligible for vacation leave in direct proportion to the time worked as outlined above. When vacation leave is taken, leave will be charged only against regularly scheduled working hours for such employees.

In the event of a change in the employee's regular weekly work schedule, the employee's accrual of vacation benefits will be adjusted accordingly. A temporary change in the employee's regular weekly work schedule (which lasts for one [1] month or less) will not affect the employee's accrual of vacation benefits.

Eligible employees will be paid accrued but unused vacation time through date of termination or retirement, subject to the maximum accrual of thirty (30) days. Upon the death of a full-time employee, the employee's estate will be compensated for all accrued vacation time, subject to the maximum accrual of thirty (30) days.

## **6.08 COMPASSIONATE LEAVE**

The Compassionate Leave Donation Program is a voluntary program that allows eligible regular employees to donate a portion of their accrued sick leave to a qualified eligible regular employee who is unable to work because of a FMLA-qualifying reason and who is not eligible for workers' compensation.

## **Qualified Recipients**

Employees who are qualified recipients for donated leave are those who meet all of the following conditions:

- a) Have exhausted all accrued vacation, sick leave and personal holiday leave.
- b) Are regular employees and have worked for North Sound BHO for at least one (1) year and are currently on an approved FMLA leave of absence.
- c) Are not eligible for workers' compensation benefits.
- d) Have no discipline related to the use of sick leave in the last five (5) years.
- e) Have completed and submitted a Request for Compassionate Leave Donation form to Human Resources.

## **Qualified Donors**

An employee may transfer up to five (5) days of sick leave to another employee in the event of an unforeseen lengthy illness provided that a minimum accrued balance of thirty days (240 hours) sick leave is maintained after transference.

## **Parameters**

1. Total Compassionate Leave is available for a maximum of twelve (12) weeks (480 hours) for full-time employees (or prorated for regular part-time employees).
2. Leave donations to a qualified recipient will be on an hour for hour basis. No partial hours may be donated or received.
3. While an employee is using Compassionate Leave, they will continue to receive the same treatment, in respect to salary and benefits, as the employee would otherwise receive if using sick leave.
4. Compassionate Leave shall count toward Family and Medical Leave.
5. Use of donation leave to a qualified recipient may be terminated under any of the following conditions:
  - a. After use of four hundred eighty (480) (or pro rata) hours of donated leave.
  - b. Upon the physician's release to work.
  - c. Upon eligibility for disability insurance benefits or retirement.
6. Participation as either a donor or recipient is completely voluntary. Posting of the Compassionate Leave Request is allowed, solicitation is not.
7. Any dispute arising over the Compassionate Leave Donation Program will be reviewed by Human Resources and the Executive Director.

## **Procedures**

1. The employee submits request for contributions of leave to the Human Resources Manager who verifies eligibility. Human Resources then facilitates the following steps:

- a. Human Resources approval or denial of request based on the criteria established.
- b. Notifies employee of decision.
- c. Human Resources shall notify employees who have over 240 hours of accrued sick leave, by electronic mail, or by verbal announcement to eligible staff.
- d. Receives donations using the Compassionate Leave Donation Form and forwards to Human Resources/Payroll.

2. Human Resources/Payroll:

- a. Assures that donors are qualified and that donations meet the guidelines stated above.
- b. Receives and matches requests and donations reducing donor's sick leave accruals and increasing recipient's sick leave account as authorized.
- c. Transfers donated time monthly until the maximum hours have been received.
- d. Provides a summary of the total donations to Human Resources.
- e. Accounts for unused donation leave.

3. The Employee notifies the Supervisor/Manager and Human Resources immediately if condition improves sufficiently to return to work, whether regular or light duty.

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

All employees are eligible to utilize North Sound BHO's Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Participation begins on the employee's date of hire. The purpose of the EAP is to establish a voluntary program of confidential counseling and assistance to an employee or a member of the household. North Sound BHO recognizes that a wide range of problems, such as emotional or mental stress, family or financial difficulties, legal issues, or drug or alcohol dependency, can affect an employee's performance. The EAP is an independent organization which provides professional and confidential diagnostic, counseling, and referral service to eligible employees and their families at no cost to the employee.

North Sound BHO may also utilize the EAP services to assist in correcting an employee's behavior or work performance concern. Such referrals may be made on a voluntary or mandatory basis.

#### **6.10 DEFERRED COMPENSATION**

North Sound BHO employees are eligible to supplement their retirement benefits through various deferred compensation programs. These programs allow employees to invest pre-tax dollars for future use at retirement. For more information, contact Human Resources.

## **6.11 FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT**

North Sound BHO provides employees with a Flexible Spending Account that allows employees to pay insurance premiums and to establish reimbursement accounts for out-of-pocket health care expenses and child/elder care expenses, utilizing pre-tax funds.

Full-time employees are eligible to enroll in the flexible spending account during open enrollment each year or after a qualifying life event. This benefit allows you to pay certain expenses with pre-tax pay. Employees should be aware that after they have elected the amount to put into an account, any funds unused at the end of the year are forfeited. There are two types of flexible spending accounts:

### **Health Care Spending Account**

This account allows employees to pay for most non-covered medical, dental, and vision expenses.

### **Dependent Care Spending Account**

This account allows employees to pay qualified dependent care expenses such as child or elder day care.

For more information, contact Human Resources.

## **6.12 WORKER'S COMPENSATION**

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

Employees must report all job-related accidents to their Supervisor/Managers and complete an Employee Injury/Accident Report. Employees seeking professional medical attention for job-related injuries or illnesses should inform their health care professional as to the nature of their injury/illness (e.g., that it is job-related) so the appropriate paperwork can be filled out to open a claim.

## **6.13 INSURANCE COVERAGE DURING LEAVES**

### **Family and Medical Leaves of Absence**

Eligible employees on an approved Family and Medical Leave of Absence will continue their medical, dental and vision benefits listed above for the duration of their twelve (12) week leave. Employees will be required to continue paying their portion of the monthly insurance premiums.

**Unpaid Leaves of Absence**

During a leave of absence without pay which results in an employee's hours dropping below the minimum required for continuing employer-paid insurance coverage, insurance premiums shall not be paid by North Sound BHO but may be paid by the employee.

## **SECTION 7: OTHER LEAVES**

### **7.01 FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE**

#### **General Provisions**

North Sound BHO recognizes the need for employees to balance their work and family life by taking reasonable leave for serious health conditions, the birth of an employee's child or the placement of a child with an employee in connection with adoption or foster care and for the care of a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health condition. The organization also encourages Supervisor/Managers to work with employees to creatively solve personal and scheduling conflicts in designing leaves and alternate work schedules.

North Sound BHO will grant up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid family and medical leave during any twelve (12) month period. In order to qualify to take family and medical leave under this policy, the employee must meet all of the following conditions:

- 1) The employee must have worked for the employer at least twelve (12) months, or fifty-two (52) weeks. The twelve months, or fifty-two weeks, need not have been consecutive. For eligibility purposes, an employee will be considered to have been employed for an entire week if the employee was on the payroll for all or part of the week or if the employee was on leave during part of the week.
- 2) The employee must have worked at least one thousand two hundred fifty (1,250) hours during the twelve-month period immediately before the date when the leave would begin.

If an employee and their need for leave meets the FMLA qualifications, North Sound BHO will require that the employee begin the FMLA paperwork process and designate appropriate leave as FMLA. FMLA paperwork can be obtained through Human Resources.

#### **Service member FMLA Provisions**

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

North Sound BHO will grant up to twenty-six (26) workweeks of unpaid family and medical leave to an eligible employee during a single twelve (12) month period to care for an injured or ill family member service member. When combined with other FMLA-qualifying leave, this may not exceed twenty-six weeks in a single twelve-month period.

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



## Definition of FMLA Terms

**Child** - includes a legal ward, under the age of eighteen (18), in the employee's care, a biological, step-child, foster child, adopted child under the age of eighteen (18), or eighteen (18) years old and older if incapable of self-care because of mental or physical disability.

**Eligible Family Member** - child, parent, step-parent or spouse (as defined in this policy).

**Foster care** - such care that requires state action, rather than an informal arrangement or agreement.

**Parent** - is defined as direct parent to employee (not parent-in-law).

**Spouse** - is defined in accordance with applicable State and Federal law.

**North Sound BHO-certified domestic partner** – while not identified in the federal law, North Sound BHO will allow employees to request Family and Medical Leave to care for their domestic partner if they have a completed a Domestic Partner Affidavit on file.

**North Sound BHO-Secondary Caregiver** – a spouse or certified domestic partner of a woman who has given birth to a child or have adopted a child or been placed with a foster child (in either case, the children must be seventeen [17] or younger). The adoption of a child by a new spouse is excluded from this policy.

**Serious health condition** - a condition which requires inpatient care at a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, or a condition which requires continuing care by a licensed health care provider.

**Twelve-month period** - the time period within which the twelve (12) weeks of leave may be taken and will be defined as a “rolling” twelve (12) month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave.

## General FMLA Leave Parameters

In order to qualify as Family and Medical Leave under this policy, the employee must be taking the leave for one of the reasons listed below:

1. The birth of a child and to care for that child;
2. The placement of a child for adoption or foster care with an employee;
3. To care for a spouse (or North Sound BHO-certified domestic partner), child, or parent with a serious health condition; or
4. The serious health condition of the employee.

### **Service member FMLA Leave Parameters**

Service member FMLA provides eligible employees unpaid leave for any one, or for a combination, of the following reasons:

1. A “qualifying exigency” arising out of a covered family member’s active duty or call to active duty in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency plan; and/or
2. To care for a covered family member who has incurred an injury or illness in the line of duty while on active duty in the Armed Forces provided that such injury or illness may render the family member medically unfit to perform duties of the member’s office, grade, rank or rating.

### **Serious Health Condition**

An illness, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves:

1. **Hospital care:** Inpatient care (i.e., an overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, including any period of incapacity (defined as an inability to work, attend school or perform other regular daily activities), or any subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care; or
2. **Absence and treatment:** A period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition, that also involves:
  3. Treatment two or more times by a health care provider, or by a nurse or physician’s assistant under direct supervision of a health care provider, or by a provider of health care services (e.g., physical therapist) on referral by a health care provider; **or**
  4. Treatment by a health care provider on at least one occasion which results in a regimen of continuing treatment.
3. **Pregnancy:** Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy or for prenatal care. Since pregnancy is the only FMLA condition that does not require medical certification, absences under this category will automatically be classified under FMLA. Employees gone for continuous periods of time will need to provide proper documentation under the Maternity Disability policy.
4. **Chronic conditions requiring treatments:** A chronic condition which requires:
  5. Periodic visits for treatment by a health care provider, or by a nurse or physician’s assistant under direct supervision of a health care provider; **and**
  6. Continues over an extended period of time (including recurring episodes of a single underlying condition); **and**
  7. May cause episodic rather than continuing period of **incapacity** (e.g., asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, etc.).
5. **Permanent long-term conditions requiring supervision:** A period of incapacity which is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective. The employee or family member must be under the continuing supervision of, but need not be receiving treatment by, a health care provider. Examples include Alzheimer’s, a severe stroke, or the terminal stages of a disease.

6. **Multiple treatments (non-chronic condition):** Any period of absence to receive multiple treatments (including any related period of recovery) by a health care provider or by a provider of health care services under orders of, or on referral by, a health care provider, either for restorative surgery after an accident or other injury, or for a condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days in the absence of medical intervention or treatment, such as cancer (chemotherapy, radiation, etc.), severe arthritis (physical therapy), or kidney disease (dialysis).

### **Medical Certification**

The organization will require an employee requesting leave to provide a certification from a health care provider of the serious health condition. Medical certification will be provided on the form listed in the forms section. Such certification will be due fifteen (15) days from the request, or the employee will provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a delay in the approval of an employee's FMLA leave.

The organization may request a second opinion for a medical leave. If a second opinion is requested, the organization will pay for the employee to get a certification from a second doctor, which the organization will select. If necessary to resolve a conflict between the original certification and the second opinion, the organization will request the opinion of a third doctor. North Sound BHO and the employee will jointly select the third doctor, and the organization will pay for the opinion. This third opinion will be considered final.

The organization may require an employee to obtain subsequent re-certifications to support continued leave. Re-certifications will not be required more often than every thirty (30) days unless the employee requests an extension of leave, if circumstances have changed since the original certification, or the organization has information raising a question regarding the validity of the original certification.

### **Intermittent Leave**

Employees are eligible to take up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave for a serious health condition on an intermittent basis (days periodically over the year when needed), if medically necessary. Under certain circumstances, serious health conditions may require the use of family and medical leave to reduce the workweek or workday, resulting in a reduced schedule. Such leave should be scheduled so that it does not unduly disrupt business operations. The organization may temporarily transfer an employee to an available alternative position with equivalent pay and benefits if the alternative position would better accommodate the intermittent or reduced schedule. Under an intermittent or reduced leave schedule, only the amount of leave actually taken may be counted against the 12-week entitlement.

If the employee is taking unpaid leave for a serious health condition or because of the serious health condition of a family member, the employee should try to reach a suitable reduced work schedule agreement with the organization prior to taking intermittent leave or working a reduced hour schedule. In any case, the employee must verify the need for intermittent leave is medically necessary through the medical certification form.

For the birth, adoption, or foster care of a child, the employee may be allowed to take leave intermittently or work a reduced schedule only with the organization's approval. Leave for birth, adoption, or foster care of a child must be taken within one (1) year of the birth or placement of the child.

### **Status, Pay, and Benefits**

**Status:** An employee who takes leave under this policy will be able to return to the same job or a job with equivalent status, pay, benefits, and other employment terms. The position will be the same or one which entails substantially equivalent skill, effort, responsibility and authority.

**Pay:** Employees taking leave under this policy must use all eligible paid time off benefits before taking the remainder as unpaid leave. Such paid leave will be considered FMLA leave and counted against the twelve (12) eligible weeks.

**Benefits:** While an employee is on leave, North Sound BHO will continue the employee's medical, dental, and vision benefits during the leave period at the same level and under the same conditions as if the employee had continued to work. If an employee chooses not to return to work for reasons other than a continued serious health condition, North Sound BHO will require reimbursement for the amount paid for the health insurance premium during the leave period.

### **Requesting Leave**

Employees requesting leave under this policy must submit a FMLA Request form to their Supervisor/Manager. Unless the leave is unforeseeable, employees must give thirty (30) day notice. If it is not possible to give thirty (30) day notice, the employee must give as much notice as is practical. In such cases, the employee must notify the Supervisor/Manager in-person or by phone of the need for FMLA. If an employee fails to provide thirty (30) day notice for foreseeable leave with no reasonable justification for the delay, the leave request may be denied until at least thirty (30) days from the date notice is received.

### **Returning to Work**

Upon return from a leave related to an employee's serious health condition, the employee shall present a doctor's release allowing the employee to return to work. Failure of an employee to return to work on the established date (beyond twelve [12] weeks entitled in this policy) may result in termination.

## **7.02 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/SEXUAL ASSAULT LEAVE**

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

1. To seek legal or law enforcement assistance or remedies to ensure the health and safety of the employee or employee's family members including, but not limited to, preparing for, or participating in, any civil or criminal legal proceeding related to or derived from domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking;

2. To seek treatment by a health care provider for physical or mental injuries caused by domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or to attend to health care treatment for a victim who is the employee's family member;
3. To obtain, or assist a family member in obtaining, services from a domestic violence shelter, rape crisis center, or other social services program for relief from domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking;
4. To obtain, or assist a family member in obtaining, mental health counseling related to an incident of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, in which the employee or the employee's family member was a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking; or
5. To participate in safety planning, temporarily or permanently relocate, or take other actions to increase the safety of the employee or employee's family members from future domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

"Family Member" (for this policy) is defined as any individual whose relationship to the employee can be classified as a child, spouse, North Sound BHO-certified domestic partner, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, or person with whom the employee has a dating relationship.

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

### **7.03 MATERNITY DISABILITY**

An employee is eligible to take a leave of absence for the period of time they are disabled from working due to pregnancy or childbirth. This leave is available in addition to the twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave available under Washington Family Leave. FMLA leave will run concurrently with the maternity disability period. At the conclusion of maternity disability, the employee is eligible to receive up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid Washington Family Leave. An employee who is on any of the above leaves may access their paid time off.

Requests for maternity disability leave must be submitted in writing to the employee's Supervisor/Manager and must include a report or letter from the employee's physician confirming that the employee is actually disabled from working. Employees taking maternity disability leave will be required to use all eligible paid time off benefits (such as sick leave and vacation) during this period. When an employee has exhausted their paid time off, they will begin a leave of absence without pay for the duration of the maternity disability leave. During the FMLA portion of the leave benefits will be handled according to the FMLA policy. At the conclusion of the twelve (12) week FMLA period, if an employee has exhausted all paid leave, benefits will be handled according to the leave of absence without pay policy.

#### **7.04 PARENTAL LEAVE-Secondary Caregiver**

North Sound BHO provides up to twelve (12) weeks of parental leave to employees following the birth of an employee's child or the placement of a child with an employee in connection with adoption or foster care. The purpose of parental leave is to enable the employee to care for and bond with the newborn or newly adopted or newly placed child. This policy will run concurrently with Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave, as applicable.

Eligibility for parental leave is the same as for FMLA, see section 7.01 General Provisions. If an employee need for leave meets the FMLA qualifications, North Sound BHO will require that the employee begin the FMLA paperwork process and designate appropriate leave as FMLA. FMLA paperwork can be obtained through Human Resources.

Parental leave taken under this policy will run concurrently with leave under the FMLA; thus, any leave taken under this policy that falls under general FMLA leave parameters qualifying for leave due to the birth or placement of a child due to adoption or foster care, the leave will be counted toward the twelve (12) weeks of available FMLA leave per a twelve (12) month period. All other requirements and provisions under the FMLA will apply. In no case, will the total amount of leave granted to the employee under the FMLA exceed twelve (12) weeks during the twelve (12) month FMLA period. Please refer to the Family and Medical Leave Policy for further guidance on the FMLA.

#### **7.05 MILITARY LEAVE**

North Sound BHO provides military leave of absence for employees while performing military service in accordance with federal and state law. Military service includes active military duty and Reserve or National Guard training. Employees are required to provide their Supervisor/Manager with copies of their military orders as soon as possible after they are received. Reinstatement upon return from military service will also be determined in accordance with applicable federal and state law.

#### **7.06 MILITARY SPOUSAL LEAVE**

Any employee who works at least an average of twenty (20) hours per week and whose spouse or North Sound BHO-certified domestic partner is deployed or about to be deployed or is on leave from deployment in a military conflict declared by Congress or the President is entitled to up to fifteen (15) days of leave of absence per deployment. The leave is unpaid except that the employee can use their eligible paid time off benefits at the same time. An employee wishing to take this leave must notify their Supervisor/Manager within five (5) business days of receiving official notice that the spouse is being deployed or will be on leave from deployment. Upon conclusion of the leave, the employee will return to their position or an equivalent one unless the employee would otherwise have been terminated had they not taken the leave.

## **7.07 CIVIL LEAVE**

Any employee who is called for a district, superior or federal court jury duty or subpoenaed as a witness in one of the above-named courts, will receive from North Sound BHO their regular rate of pay for the actual time they are required to be absent from work because of such jury duty or subpoena. If dismissed from such duty prior to noon, they will report to work at North Sound BHO. Any compensation for such duty, other than reimbursed expenses, will be submitted to North Sound BHO in order for the employee to receive their regular pay. North Sound BHO reserves the right to require verification of court attendance.

This provision will not apply to any employee who is a party to any civil litigation for which such subpoena is issued, nor will it apply if the employee is a defendant in a criminal case.

## **7.08 BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

In the event of a death in a regular, full-time employee's immediate family, the employee will be eligible for not more than three (3) working days or not more than twenty-four (24) hours bereavement leave with pay to assist with funeral arrangements and services.

Bereavement leave may be extended by the use of other paid time off with approval of the Supervisor/Manager. In the case of the Executive Director, the approval of the Executive Committee Chair or their designee is required for such extension.

Those family members qualifying under the bereavement leave policy are defined as the employee's spouse, certified domestic partner (with North Sound BHO affidavit), child, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, step-child, grandchild, parent, step-parent, brother, step-brother, sister, step-sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandparent, or guardian of the employee, or the death of any person residing with or legally dependent upon the employee. For the purpose of bereavement leave use and employees with domestic partners, the domestic partner's family members qualify as in-laws and the employee is able to use bereavement leave for qualifying family members as noted above.

## **7.09 LEAVE FOR ON-THE-JOB INJURIES**

Any North Sound BHO employee who sustains an injury on the job must report such injury to their Supervisor/Manager or Human Resources immediately. Employees involved in work-related injuries are required to complete an Accident form and cooperate with any investigation. Any absence due to a work-related injury that qualifies under FMLA, will be counted as FMLA and apply to the twelve (12) week leave entitlement.

Prior to returning to work from an injury, the employee will provide a doctor's release verifying eligibility to safely return to work.

## 7.10 LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

Leaves of absence may be granted at North Sound BHO discretion where valid reasons exist. Consideration of the employee's written request for a leave of absence will include the reason(s) for requesting the leave, the length of time desired, the workload involved, and the need for a replacement employee. The employee's Supervisor/Manager will make a recommendation to the Executive Director regarding the Leave of Absence.

It is the responsibility of the employee to notify their Supervisor/Manager of their intention to return to work a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the end of an approved leave, or in the absence of extenuating circumstances, the employee will be considered to have voluntarily resigned their employment with North Sound BHO.

With proper notification to the Supervisor/Manager, the employee may return to their same job, or, if the position no longer exists, receive consideration for another position, if available, for which the employee is qualified by reason of skill, training, education, experience and length of employment.

The following qualifiers must be met for Supervisor/Manager or Executive Director to use discretionary powers in deciding if employee can take leave without pay and not use time from existing leave banks. If a temporary leave is granted, the employee's leave accruals will not be affected, nor will the employee be charged for a portion of their benefits.

The request shall meet the following requirements for consideration:

- Must be for a community-based service that benefits stakeholders at large; not just the employee;
- Must provide at least three (3) week notice by written request to the Supervisor/Manager and the Executive Director;
- LWOP should not extend more than five (5) days annually;
- Need to ensure adequate coverage during their absence.

Unpaid leaves of absence will normally not exceed two (2) months. An employee paid time off benefit accruals will be pro-rated based on an employee's hours worked. When an employee's paid hours drop below a monthly average of twenty (20) hours per week, benefit premiums will no longer be paid by North Sound BHO. The employee then has the option of continuing coverage through COBRA self-pay premiums. If an employee's unpaid leave of absence exceeds thirty (30) consecutive calendar days, the employee's anniversary date will be adjusted accordingly.

All eligible paid time off must be used prior to the commencement of the leave without pay, with the exception of temporary leave as noted above.



## **7.11 ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE**

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

## **SECTION 8: TRAVEL & TRAINING**

### **8.01 REIMBURSEMENT FOR TRAVEL**

North Sound BHO will reimburse employees and volunteers for all allowable travel costs in order to perform work on behalf of North Sound BHO. Reimbursement schedules and parameters will be according to Policy #3031.00 Travel Reimbursement for North Sound BHO staff.

### **8.02 GENERAL TRAINING**

North Sound BHO encourages employees to seek training and education consistent with their program area responsibilities. This policy establishes guidelines for requests to attend training and classes paid for by North Sound BHO.

North Sound BHO may select training seminars, workshops or classes for an employee to attend and will pay for such training. Employees shall have an individual training plan developed and reviewed with their supervisor at the time of the annual performance evaluation. An employee may request to attend training under the following guidelines:

- The training must contribute to the employee's effectiveness in their current position or professional development.
- The employee must submit a "Training Request Form," including written materials describing the course outline, cost, location, and other pertinent details. Preference will be given to local training due to travel costs associated with programs conducted outside the area.
- Out of state training must be approved by employee's Supervisor/Manager and the Executive Director.
- The employee will be asked to explain how such training would enhance the employee's performance and thus benefit North Sound BHO.
- The employee must receive both supervisory approval and budgetary approval to ensure that funds are available for such training.

## **SECTION 9: PERFORMANCE REVIEWS**

### **9.01 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PROGRAM**

North Sound BHO believes that Supervisor/Managers and employees should openly communicate regarding each employee's job performance at regularly scheduled one on one meetings. Accordingly, North Sound BHO has established a general system of performance reviews as identified below. North Sound BHO also encourages Supervisor/Managers and employee to regularly discuss job performance on an informal basis outside the review process.

#### **Orientation Review Period**

North Sound BHO will typically conduct a six (6) month performance evaluation during the employee's orientation period. This review will examine the employee's adjustment to employment conditions, integration with the team, job learning progress, attendance, and other job performance aspects.

#### **Annual Review Period**

The performance of all employees will typically be evaluated on an annual basis according to the schedule established by North Sound BHO. Such reviews will be used in the consideration of an employee's step increase, training, employee development, promotions and retention. Completed performance reviews will be discussed with the employee and maintained in the employee's personnel file.

An employee must be performing satisfactorily in order to progress through the pay step schedule. In the event that an employee is experiencing performance issues which are documented in the performance evaluation process the employee will not receive any scheduled step increases.

The Supervisor/Manager will outline a performance improvement plan and evaluate performance within the next ninety (90) days. If the employee's overall performance has reached a satisfactory level, a step increase (if eligible) will be implemented. Such step increase will not be retroactive.

### **9.02 DISCRETIONARY REVIEWS**

When, in the opinion of the Supervisor/Manager, a gradual or marked decline in the performance of an employee occurs, the Supervisor/Manager may conduct a discretionary review – outside the regular annual review cycle. This review would be used as a discussion guide to review the performance changes and identify corrections needed.

Discretionary reviews will be completed and reviewed with the employee and placed in the employee's personnel file as a means of formally recognizing the need to correct significant declines in an employee's performance. Such performance review may also be accompanied with disciplinary notices. This review process is entirely discretionary on the part of North Sound BHO.

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North Sound BHO Supervisor/Managers may also utilize the discretionary review process to document and note performance that has exceeded expectations – outside the regular annual review cycle.

## **SECTION 10: CONCERN RESOLUTION AND DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

### **10.01 PROCEDURES FOR RESOLUTION OF CONCERNS**

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

Employees are encouraged to contact their Supervisor/Manager to discuss any concern, problem, or suggestions. Those employees who do not wish to voice their concern, problem, or suggestion in an oral, face-to-face manner may submit their concerns in writing. While North Sound BHO encourages employees to resolve concerns on the most immediate level, in the event the employee’s concern relates directly to the employee’s Supervisor/Manager, the employee should contact the next level (i.e., the Supervisor/Manager’s Supervisor). When attempts have been made to resolve the situation at the previous levels, employees may bring their concerns/issues directly to Human Resources or the Executive Director.

### **10.02 GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

The following process is designed to be progressive and to permit the grievance to be resolved at the lowest possible level. An employee may file a grievance when they believe that an express policy of North Sound BHO has been violated. Grievances may not be filed regarding:

- a) Reclassification requests;
- b) Rates of pay;
- c) Decisions regarding employees during their orientation status; and
- d) Disciplinary actions

Grievance process may be handled in the following manner:

**Step 1:** An employee who has a grievance or complaint must first raise the matter with their Supervisor/Manager within five (5) working days of its occurrence. The grievance must be submitted in writing, setting forth the nature of the grievance, the specific policy alleged to have been violated, and the circumstances out of which it arose. The employee must include all pertinent facts, as well as a desired resolution. The Supervisor/Manager will attempt to secure a satisfactory resolution of the grievance. The Supervisor/Manager will give a written decision on the grievance to the employee within ten working days, providing a copy to Human Resources and the Executive Director.

**Step 2:** If the matter is not settled in Step 1, the employee may appeal to the Executive Director of North Sound BHO. The appeal must be filed with Human Resources and the Executive Director in writing within ten (10) working days from the date of receipt of the Supervisor/Manager's reply in Step 1. The Executive Director or their designee will investigate the matter and respond to the grievant in writing within twenty (20) working days of the receipt of the appeal. The Executive Director may elect to meet with the affected parties or bring in outside resources to mediate/arbitrate the situation. When necessary, the Executive Director may extend the date upon which their Step 2 response is due. If circumstances require this, the grievant will be notified of the changed date.

**Step 3:** If the matter is not settled in Step 2, the employee may appeal to the Executive Committee. This appeal must be filed in writing within ten (10) working days from the date of the Executive Director's decision as described in Step 2. The Executive Committee will consider the matter at their next regular or specially scheduled Board meeting and issue their final decision within seven (7) working days of the Board meeting at which the matter was discussed. The decision of the Executive Committee is final and not subject to further appeal or arbitration.

A written grievance must be filed within the time limit specified in Step 1 or it will be considered waived. If a grievance is not appealed within the time limit set forth in Step 1 and 2 above, it will be considered settled on the basis of North Sound BHO's last answer. If North Sound BHO fails to reply within the prescribed time limits, the employee may appeal the grievance to the next step of the procedure, unless notified by the Executive Director that an extension was necessary in order to answer the grievance adequately.

Nothing in this policy alters the "at will" employment relationship.

### **10.03 DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES**

The disciplinary guidelines outlined below are simply guidelines which describe in general terms the options for discipline. Supervisors and managers have the full discretion and authority to determine disciplinary action most appropriate based on the circumstances of the particular situation.

In the event that discipline is necessary, any of the following types of disciplinary actions may be used:

1. **Verbal Warning.** A verbal warning is a counseling session on the subject of the employee's conduct, performance, or their failure to observe a guideline, policy, regulation, or administrative instruction. During this session, the Supervisor/Manager will discuss North Sound BHO expectations and the change in behavior required by the employee. The Supervisor/Manager will document the discussion on a "Verbal Warning Form."

2. **Written Warning.** A written warning is a formal written disciplinary action for inadequate performance, misconduct, or violations of North Sound BHO policy. Written reprimands will be documented on a “Corrective Action Form” and discussed with the employee.
3. **Suspension/Last Warning.** A suspension is a temporary, unpaid absence from work, which may be imposed as a result of inadequate performance, misconduct, or violations of North Sound BHO policy. A Last Warning is a message to the employee indicating that any further unsatisfactory conduct or performance will result in termination. Last warning disciplinary action may be given when the employee is being disciplined at this level but North Sound BHO is not requiring unpaid leave. Suspension/Last Warning reprimands will be documented on a “Corrective Action Form” and discussed with the employee.
4. **Termination.** This level of disciplinary action ends the employment relationship. A termination is documented on a “Corrective Action Form” form and discussed with the employee.

The employee will receive a copy of the disciplinary notice and all originals will be maintained in the employee’s personnel file. The level of disciplinary action is usually evaluated on a case-by-case basis. North Sound BHO recognizes the benefits, in some cases, of using progressive discipline, but retains the discretion and flexibility to use the discipline it considers appropriate to any particular situation, up to and including termination. Nothing in this policy alters the “at will” employment relationship.

The choice of what discipline to apply in any particular case is solely North Sound BHO’s. Employees who are exempt from overtime laws will not be suspended without pay for disciplinary purposes for periods less than a full work week, unless the infraction involves violation of safety rules of major significance.

## **SECTION 11: EMPLOYMENT SEPARATION**

### **11.01 RESIGNATION**

An employee wishing to leave North Sound BHO in good standing will, at least two (2) weeks before leaving, file with the Supervisor/Manager, Human Resources, or Executive Director a written statement as to the reasons for leaving and the effective date of leaving. Employees who neglect to provide this minimum two (2) week notification may forfeit any pay-out of accrued time remaining in their vacation bank and sick leave bank. The required two (2) week notification of the resignation may be waived at the discretion of the Executive Director. If the Executive Director waives the two (2) week notification requirement, accrued time in the resigning employee's vacation bank and sick leave will be paid according to North Sound BHO policy.

On occasion, North Sound BHO may deem it in the best interest of the organization to end the employment relationship at the time the employee provides their written notice. In such cases, North Sound BHO reserves the right to accept the voluntary resignation at the time it is given and compensate the employee for the notice period (two [2] weeks or less).

### **11.02 REDUCTION IN WORKFORCE**

North Sound BHO may make reductions in the work force for lack of work, budgetary restrictions or other organizational changes that make such reductions necessary. If a reduction in force becomes appropriate for any reason, positions may be eliminated, consolidated, or otherwise affected. If more than one employee is in such a position(s), North Sound BHO will select the person or persons to be laid off based on its judgment of needs and skills.

The affected employee(s) will be given ten (10) working days' notice except in cases of emergency before such layoff is to take place. North Sound BHO may opt to give the employee ten (10) days of pay in lieu of notice. Temporary employees may be laid off without prior notice.

No regular employee will be laid off while another person in the same classification is employed on orientation status or temporary basis in a position for which the regular employee is qualified.

Employees laid off by this process may request consideration for any current North Sound BHO openings for which they are qualified but are not entitled to displace any current employees. If a reduction in force or other reorganization takes place while the employee is on leave, the employee will not be advantaged or disadvantaged by their leave status (i.e., will be treated the same as if they had not taken leave).



### **11.03 EXIT INTERVIEW**

All employees terminating employment with North Sound BHO whether by resignation, discharge or retirement, may be interviewed and complete an employee's separation statement prior to separation. A copy of the signed employee's separation statement, compliance questionnaire and exit interview will be placed in the employee's personnel file and a copy submitted to Human Resources. At the time of the exit interview, or at a mutually agreed time, all North Sound BHO property will be accounted for and returned to the organization.