

Spokane County  
MEDICAL SOCIETY

Orange Flag Building • 104 S. Freya St., Suite 114 • Spokane, WA 99202-4868 • (509) 325-5010 • Fax (509) 325-5409

# PERSONNEL HANDBOOK

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YOUR EMPLOYMENT WITH SCMS IS VOLUNTARY AND YOU MAY RESIGN AT ANY TIME. SIMILARLY, SCMS MAY TERMINATE YOUR EMPLOYMENT, WITH OR WITHOUT CAUSE, WHENEVER IT BELIEVES THAT TERMINATION IS IN SCMS' BEST INTEREST.

Spokane County Medical Society  
~ including ~  
Spokane County Medical Society Foundation  
Spokane Medical Library  
Physician Services, Inc.

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Revised June 2007

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# **A. EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS**

# Welcome to the Spokane County Medical Society

It is our goal to establish and maintain clearly defined personnel policies and procedures. While it is difficult to anticipate the almost infinite number of situations that can arise during the employment relationship, there are certain guidelines that we follow in human resources matters. This handbook will provide you with an overview of how things work at the Spokane County Medical Society (SCMS).

Our policies and guidelines are continually reviewed and modified to respond to the changing needs of our organization, the physicians and patients we serve, and our employees. You will be informed of changes that affect your employment as they occur.

You also should use this handbook as a reference when you have job-related questions. If you have a question that is not answered in the handbook, I encourage you to ask your supervisor.

It is important that you read, understand and comply with all provisions of this handbook. This handbook is informational only, and is not intended to confer any contractual rights or privileges on employees, or to guarantee employment for any definite period of time. It describes your responsibilities as an employee of the SCMS.

This handbook replaces all earlier organizational handbooks and takes precedence over all memoranda and verbal or written editions of the personnel policies entered into, by and between the organization and its employees. To avoid confusion, please destroy any old handbooks in your possession.

SCMS is an at-will employer. This means that you are free to terminate your employment with the organization at any time, with or without reason, and the organization is free to terminate your employment at any time, with or without reason.

Only the chief executive officer of the organization can enter into an agreement for employment for a specified period of time, or any agreements that changes the at-will status of an employment relationship. Any such agreement must be in writing and signed by the chief executive officer.

Apart from the at-will employment and those policies dictated by law, SCMS may change any of its policies or practices at any time without further notice.

In summary, every employee is expected to observe our policies and maintain the highest standard of conduct and ethical principles:

- Respect the individual rights of each employee and treat all employees with courtesy, dignity, respect and consideration.
- Pursue excellence in the selection, treatment and performance of our employees, and the services we provide to our members and patients.
- Maintain a work environment that is free from discrimination, harassment and substance abuse.
- Conduct business with integrity and efficiency to provide the best service possible to our members and patients.

We are pleased that you have chosen to be part of our team and look forward to your playing an important role in fulfilling the mission of the organization.



Janet L. Monaco, MHS  
Chief Executive Officer

# The Medical Society

The Spokane County Medical Society (SCMS) is a professional membership organization comprised of physicians (MD's, DO's) and Physician Assistants (PA's). The SCMS is devoted to promoting the health and well being of all the citizens of Spokane County and the educational and professional needs of its member physicians.

## Our Mission

The Spokane County Medical Society exists to promote and provide leadership in the art and science of medicine. Furthermore, the Society strives to improve and preserve the health of the citizens in our community. This is accomplished by:

- Establishing and maintaining high ethical, educational and professional standards
- Providing services and benefits to aid members in their professional pursuits.
- Enhancing goodwill, cooperation and unity among physicians.
- Firmly advocating the public's best interest in matters of health and medicine.
- Promoting and defending the physician's freedom to practice medicine in the patient's best interest and advantage.
- Providing a forum for the interchange of thought, opinion and experience so as to enhance the fellowship and solidarity of the physician community.
- Initiate and joint-sponsor programs and seminars for Category I CME credit with a diverse number of organizations in the Spokane community and throughout the Inland Northwest.

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The SCMS is a federally designated trade association [501(C6)]. About twenty physicians created the Society in 1885 in the Spokane Falls locale. It included a dentist and physicians from as far away as Colville, Cheney and Rockford, many of whom were homeopaths. The primary purpose of the organization was to promote physician unity and carry out public service. Currently, we have almost 1,000 practitioners (MD's, DO's and PA's) in our membership, and that important mission still guides this association. Many projects, programs and services have been created by SCMS, yet patient advocacy is still our primary focus.

In 1996, the Spokane County Medical Society Foundation was created and designated a charitable organization [501(C3)]. It has been involved in community projects, from providing funding and manpower for a Habitat for Humanity home, removing gang tattoos, increasing childhood immunizations, supporting a community health clinic, various research projects, and support for the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile (to name a few).

In 2003, we established Project Access, which is the only volunteer network of physicians and hospitals providing the full range of health care at no charge to low income uninsured residents of Spokane County. The mission of Project Access is to provide total health care to low income uninsured patients. Services include donated physician appointments, inpatient and outpatient hospital care, laboratory and radiology services, surgical care, pharmaceuticals, and rehabilitation therapy services.

Additionally, in 2006, SCMS revived its Medical Library Foundation. The Medical Library has been given the mission to develop a community-wide Internet-based health portal. This new electronic gateway will greatly improve access to patient care information at the point of care by helping our

members to better identify and retrieve the wealth of clinical information resources available in the Spokane geographic region.

Finally, from time to time, SCMS is involved in for-profit ventures. Physicians Services, Inc. facilitates these projects.

## Chain of Command

The Board of Directors of SCMS is responsible for setting policies for its staff members. The Board employs the CEO, to whom it delegates the responsibility for the day-to-day administration of this organization. The CEO manages the staff, using policies approved by the board of directors. SCMS' staff members are accountable only to the CEO, through whom all communication to the board is channeled. A staff member who does not follow the stated policy of channeling information through the CEO is subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal.

## Organizational and Senior Management Structure

The Board of Directors plays a crucial role in the governance of the organization. The Board is made up of elected volunteers who are committed to the mission of the organization. The Board members actively monitor the organization's management, financial and programmatic performance.

The senior management of the organization consists of the Chief Executive Officer, the Associate Director and the Executive Assistant. The senior management team is responsible for administering all the programs, policies, and the budget for the organization. The majority of the work of the organization is carried out within the departments under the traditional line of supervision from the chief executive officer and the associate director through the supervisors.

## Confidentiality / Patient Confidentiality

Information between a physician and a patient is confidential, both by the medical code of ethics and legally. This confidential nature of the medical relationship extends not only to diagnosis, treatment and things that the patient may tell a physician, but even to the fact that the patient has made a visit to the doctor.

As an employee of the Medical Society, you are bound by medical ethics. This means that information entrusted to you regarding physician members, their patients, your fellow employees, and any office matter, must be treated as completely confidential. Each one of us is legally responsible for guarding privileged information and can be subject to legal action if we divulge it.

All confidential papers and correspondence, etc., should be kept out of sight.

It is inappropriate for personnel to discuss diagnoses or medical information relating to any of their work with anyone except as necessary to do the job as assigned to each employee. Any violation of this rule is cause for immediate dismissal. Specifically:

- No information requested by someone outside the organization will be given over the telephone. Staff is instructed to respond with the statement: "SCMS policy does not permit me to give out this information." That includes whether or not a person is or has been served by this organization.
- Before information is released, release-of-information forms will be explained and completed in the presence of the person about whom any information may be released.

- No information about individuals or records will be released to state, federal, or other agencies that enables the identification of any person by name, address, Social Security number, or other coding procedures.
- If records are inspected by an outside agency, the individual(s) who inspect the records must be specifically authorized to do so by the CEO. The taking of notes, copying of records, or removal of records is specifically prohibited in such cases without legal documents (for example, subpoenas or search warrants first reviewed by the CEO).

Staff will not discuss any individual's record with unauthorized individuals, whether on or off duty. All staff are required to sign a confidentiality acknowledgment stating their responsibility and commitment in regard to client information.

## At-Will Employment

All employees of the SCMS are at-will employees. This means:

- that the employment relationship may be terminated at the will of either the employee or the Spokane County Medical Society
- that the employment may be terminated for any reason
- that the employment may be terminated without prior notice

The "employment-at-will" relationship can only be changed by an agreement, in writing, specifically modifying this relationship, and signed by the Spokane County Medical Society chief executive officer.

## Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986

The Immigration Reform and Control Act (RCA) of 1986 requires that SCMS ensure that staff members are authorized for employment in the United States. Therefore, only individuals lawfully authorized for employment in the United States will be employed.

In connection with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, SCMS must collect certain information on INS Form I-9 and review certain documentation concerning the employment authorization of individuals hired after November 6, 1986. This information and documentation will be used only for compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 and not for any unlawful purpose.

## Equal Employment

The Spokane County Medical Society recruits, hires, trains, and promotes in all job titles without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, physical disability, age, or status as a disabled veteran of the Vietnam Era, except where sex or age is a bona fide occupational qualification.

We ensure that all other personnel actions such as compensation, benefits, Company-sponsored training, transfer, demotion, termination, layoff and return from layoff shall be administered without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, physical disability, age, or status as a disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam Era, except where sex or age is a bone fide occupational qualification. We base employment decisions on the principles of equal employment opportunity.

It is the policy of the SCMS to treat all applicants fairly and to base all hiring decisions on individual qualifications and past performance. An applicant may be required to submit to testing for particular

skills, knowledge, and/or health status. Applicants selected to a position at the SCMS shall receive written notice from SCMS indicating salary and starting date of their employment.

#### *Affirmative Action Statement*

The Spokane County Medical Society provides equal employment opportunity to all persons without regard to race, color, religion, disability, sex, age, or national origin. We are committed to equal opportunity for all applicants and staff in personnel matters, including recruitment and hiring, benefits, training, promotion, compensation, transfer, and layoff or termination. We strive for a staff that reflects diversity.

We attempt to achieve and maintain a diverse work force. These steps may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. ensuring that SCMS' policy regarding equal employment opportunity is communicated to all staff
2. ensuring that hiring, promotion, and salary administration practices are fair and consistent with our policies
3. reporting to the board of directors on all activities and efforts to implement the SCMS policy of equal employment opportunities
4. to the extent that staff are not diverse, making special recruitment efforts as part of this plan

Each supervisor and member of the management staff must provide equal opportunity for all staff members with regard to work assignments, training, transfer, advancement, and other conditions and privileges of employment, and will work to ensure a continuation of this policy of equal employment opportunity.

## Communication of Personnel Guidelines

The CEO is responsible for recommending changes to the organization's personnel policies and guidelines as needed to the board of directors. The board is responsible for their approval. All new employees will receive a copy of the organization's personnel policies and guidelines, and must review these prior to signing the letter of employment.

The CEO will communicate changes in personnel policies and guidelines to employees.

## Receipt of Policy Manual

["Receipt of Handbook" form is included at the end of this manual]

Staff members, upon receipt of their copy of the personnel policies manual affecting their employment or any addendum thereto, must sign a "Receipt of Policy Manual" form indicating they have read and understand SCMS' policies. Staff also acknowledges their understanding that no part of this manual shall be construed as being an employment contract – either implied or expressed – between the staff member and SCMS.

This manual has been prepared for the information and guidance of staff working at SCMS. It is intended to cover the procedures, rules, and policies most often applied to day-to-day work activities. Some of the information will change from time to time since the policies are under constant review and are revised when appropriate. Such changes will be communicated to you in writing, in advance of their implementation. There is no guarantee of employment made to any staff member in this manual.

## Enforcement of Personnel Policies

The CEO is responsible for ensuring that all employees comply with the provisions of these policies and that they are applied fairly and impartially to all employees. Noncompliance with these personnel policies and procedures shall result in appropriate disciplinary measures as defined herein.

## Conflict of Interest

The SCMS expects the primary interest of staff members to be the members and patients we serve. A conflict of interest occurs when the interests of a staff member or an outside party actually or potentially affect SCMS in a negative way.

- *Outside business interests* – Staff may have outside business interests and outside employment so long as these do not interfere with job performance. (See policy on page 9.)
- *Personal beliefs* – SCMS recognizes that its staff may hold a wide range of personal beliefs, values, and commitments. These beliefs, values, and commitments are a conflict of interest only if they prevent staff from fulfilling their job responsibilities, if staff attempts to use SCMS time and facilities for furthering them, or if staff continues attempting to convince others of their personal beliefs after they have been asked to stop.

## Employee Privacy

In recognition of the individual employee's right to privacy, SCMS has adopted these six principles:

1. The organization will request only that information required for business or legal purposes.
2. The organization will protect the confidentiality of all personal information in its records.
3. The organization will limit the availability of personal information to those company officials with a business "need to know."
4. The organization will refuse to release information to outside inquirers without the employee's written approval.
5. The organization will require each employee involved in recordkeeping to adhere to these policies and practices, and violations will result in disciplinary action.
6. Each employee has the right to be given access to personal information regarding him or her in organization records, and to correct inaccurate information or express disagreement with material contained therein.

## Personnel Records

The organization keeps an individual personnel record for each employee. The personnel file is maintained by the CEO and may contain, but is not limited to:

- Resume
- Application for employment
- References
- Employment letter
- Court orders
- Job description
- Introductory and annual evaluations

- Documentation of wage/salary history
- Supervisory remarks
- Other federal, state, and local requirements
- Written warnings, grievances, occurrence reports, and commendations
- Termination letter
- Resignation letter
- Exit interview

The CEO also maintains in the personnel record the name, address and telephone number of the employee and the person to be notified in the event of an emergency.

Personnel records are confidential. Access to personnel files will generally be restricted to the employee, his or her supervisor, the Associate Director, and the CEO.

Although requirements for respecting confidentiality pertain to all SCMS personnel, it is important that employees realize that there may be times when it will be appropriate for various agency employees to request specific information; such items include terms of employment, past evaluations, and the employee development log. Employees should also realize that, at time, legal statutes or regulations may require sharing or review of information; therefore, confidentiality cannot be considered absolute. Insofar as possible, the employee's consent or agreement to such information will be obtained.

Employees may request access to their personnel file by writing to the CEO. Within a reasonable time, the employee will be granted a review of his or her file in the presence of the CEO or Associate Director. Contents of the file are the property of the organization. Copies of specific information may be obtained at the employee's expense. Regarding any item in the file, an employee has the right to correct the item, ask for its deletion, or write a statement of disagreement with the item, all in the presence of the CEO or Associate Director. However, the employee may not actually remove any item from the file. Former employees must arrange to come to the office to look at the file before being permitted to make copies.

Personnel records will be maintained a minimum of three years after termination.

The Associate Director keeps payroll, vacation, sick, and other records from timesheet data in a separate file.

#### *Disclosure of Employee Information*

All requests for information about a current, retired, or terminated employee must be referred to the CEO or Associate Director. SCMS may disclose to prospective employers dates of employment, final title or position, and job location. With the employee's permission, a senior staff member may give a five-year employment and salary history.

Information will also be given in response to duly authorized requests for criminal investigations from law enforcement agencies, including summonses, subpoenas, and judicial orders. The organization need not inform an employee that personal information has been disclosed to law enforcement agencies if the information is related to an investigation into the employee's on-the-job conduct, especially when the employee's actions may endanger other employees or organization security and property. Employees will be notified if the organization is served a subpoena or other document in a legal matter to which we must respond.

## Changes to Personnel Data

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify the Associate Director of any changes in personnel data, including change of marital status, addition of family members, personnel mailing addresses, telephone numbers, number and names of dependents, individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency, educational accomplishments, and other such status reports. It is important that this information be accurate and current at all times.

## Outside Employment

Staff members shall not engage in or accept outside employment or render services with a person, firm or corporation when such service or employment:

- is incompatible with the proper discharge of the duties and responsibilities of employment with this organization or would impair independence of judgment or actions in such employment (conflict of interest)
- involves such hours or work or physical effort that it would or could be reasonably expected to reduce the staff member's quality or quantity of service to SCMS

Occasionally, a staff member may request to work part time in addition to his or her regular job, in some other capacity at this organization. Permission to do so will be given in accordance with this policy on outside employment. In such cases, the US Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division has established guidelines that require hourly employees to be paid overtime for hours worked in excess of 40 per week.

### *Employment Disclosure*

Any staff member who is engaged in or is planning to engage in outside employment shall request clearance from his or her immediate supervisor as to whether such current and planned activities are prohibited. If they are not prohibited, the staff member shall then complete an Outside Employment Request form. The immediate supervisor may require the staff member to furnish such other information as may be appropriate in considering the clearance request. The immediate supervisor may grant clearance only when he or she believes such activities would be consistent with this regulation. If clearance is not granted, the employee shall not commence or continue the outside employment or activity. If the immediate supervisor elects to grant a clearance, it shall be issued in writing.

Staff members who are on medical or family leave are not eligible for outside employment during the time of their leave.

## Nepotism

It is our policy to avoid bringing family relationships into the workplace whenever possible. SCMS does not believe it is in its best interest to allow family members to work together. On occasion, with the permission of the CEO, more than one family member may work for the Spokane County Medical Society, but only as a temporary solution. A permanent relationship would be at the discretion of the CEO. If approved, the following guidelines will govern these situations:

- No staff member will be permitted to hire a direct family relative, including spouse or significant other.

- When related persons work for this organization, one relative may not supervise another relative.
- Related persons will not be involved in evaluating each other's job performance or in making recommendations for salary adjustments, promotions, or other budget decisions.

## Employee Relations

The Spokane County Medical Society administration and management believe that the quality of member care, patient care and services depends on the creativity, dedication, competence, and compassion of all employees. In order to provide member and patient care or related services in the most competent and compassionate manner possible, employees need a supportive and healthy work environment. To meet this need, management staff is expected to:

1. Maintain an open door policy, encouraging honest, two-way, and constructive communication between and among administration and employees.
2. Provide safe and healthy working conditions.
3. Provide access for problem resolution at the informal level first.
4. Follow procedures for resolving issues and complaints.
5. Motivate and enable employees to participate in decision-making, communication, problem solving and the creative process.

## Loans

The Spokane County Medical Society does not provide personal loans to employees. Furthermore, we do not grant advanced pay.

## Participation in Community Projects

The Spokane County Medical Society encourages its employees to participate in community projects and in organizations whose work is related to our mission. The organization may solicit employee participation in such groups, or employees may request to participate as part of their job responsibility. The organization does not pay overtime for these activities.

The CEO's participation in community activities is part of his or her responsibility to represent the organization in the community. Periodically, the CEO will report his or her community involvement activities to the Board of Directors.

## Children in the Office

Children in the office should be the exception to regular business practice.

The organization, however, recognizes that there may be rare times when childcare is not available or appointment schedules present challenges. In such cases, employees may bring their children to work.

With prior approval from the CEO and immediate supervisor, an employee may bring a child to work. Such approval may be rescinded at any point. Children, however, may not be in the office when they are ill.

If a child is disruptive to the parent, other employees or the organization's operations, the child will not be allowed to continue to be in the office.

## Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance

SCMS welcomes applications from people with disabilities and does not discriminate against them in any way. We comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Washington law prohibiting disability discrimination. For example, by:

- considering all applicants with disabilities for employment using the same criteria as are used for the employment of persons without disabilities;
- considering staff with disabilities for promotions using the same criteria that are used for the promotion of staff without disabilities;
- taking steps to make its facilities barrier-free and accessible according to appropriate federal and state statutes;
- making scheduling and other adjustments to reasonably accommodate staff with disabilities;
- educating staff to the fact that individuals with disabilities who are employed by SCMS should not be discriminated against;
- posting notices explaining the provisions of ADA and staff rights under the law.

## Reasonable Accommodation

It is the policy of SCMS to strive to provide a safe and healthful workplace for all staff members, and to make reasonable accommodation to qualified applicants and staff members who have a known, protected physical or mental handicap or disability.

Staff members who are otherwise qualified to perform a job should notify the chief executive officer of physical or mental disabilities that impede job performance. SCMS will provide reasonable accommodation to staff members with disabilities, provided these accommodations do not pose an undue hardship on us, or jeopardize the safety of the staff member or others.

If a staff member contracts a disease that is communicable to others and prevents him or her from performing the essential duties of his or her job, or threatens the health or safety of others at work, the staff member may be placed on leave of absence based on the advice of a physician, as well as our leave of absence policy and this policy on reasonable accommodation or be asked to work from home. Before returning to work, the staff member must provide the SCMS with a written physician's statement indicating that he or she can perform the required job duties and does not pose a threat to the health and safety of others at work. The note also should list any limitations that have been placed on the staff member, and where practicable, state the reasons for such limitations.

If a staff member contracts a non-communicable disease, he or she will be allowed to continue to work as long as physically and mentally able. SCMS will make reasonable accommodation to his or her work needs as long as this does not create an undue hardship for us. We may require a physician's statement verifying the ability of the staff member to safely perform essential job functions.

Management reserves the right to make all work-related decisions on reasonable accommodation, disabilities, handicaps, and diseases based on the business interests of our organization.

# Infectious Disease Guidelines

The organization recognizes that employees with infectious diseases may wish to continue their employment and, in fact, that continued employment may be therapeutically important to their recovery process. The organization also recognizes that it must satisfy its legal obligation to provide a safe work environment for all employees, clients, and other visitors to the premises. Employees who have infectious diseases (as with all other employees) must be able to maintain acceptable performance standards in keeping with established organizational guidelines.

In determining such an employee's ability to continue in employment, the organization will consider making reasonable accommodations to the employee's condition, consistent with applicable federal, state and local laws. (The agency will follow Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention guidelines.)

Since transmission of HIV does not occur through casual contact, the organization will require that employees will continue to work with coworkers and clients who have HIV disease.

As part of its overall Infectious Disease program, the organization may conduct training sessions with employees to provide information about the nature of this disease and to help alleviate the fear often experienced by employees.

If an employee has an infectious disease or any other life-threatening illness and voluntarily discloses the information, the organization will take all reasonable precautions, to the maximum extent possible, to ensure that information about the employee's condition remains confidential. The organization will also determine what information should be obtained from the employee's physician, so that the organization can explore the types of possible reasonable accommodations that may be recommended for the employee, consistent with the business needs of their program, established organizational guidelines, and applicable federal, state, and local laws. Employees must disclose any life-threatening illness if there is a compelling health or safety issue.

Employees will notify the CEO immediately in the event of a possible exposure (needle stick, injury, splash, etc.).

Staff working with a patient or staff member with an infectious or communicable disease must follow these guidelines:

- Pregnant staff members shall not engage in the direct care of a patient with an infectious or communicable disease because of the risk of their acquiring it.
- *Serological testing of staff members:* Staff who have sustained a parenteral (i.e., needlestick) or mucous membrane (mouth or eye) exposure to the blood or body fluids of hepatitis A or B-infected individuals will follow normal infection control procedures for parenteral and mucous membrane exposure.

These must be reported to your supervisor immediately.

## Return to Work After Illness

The work of each employee is vital to the people we serve and to the organization. If a staff member is absent because of illness or injury, the organization does not want the staff member to jeopardize his or her health or the health of others by a premature return to work. In the event of hospitalization or extended illness requiring absence of three or more days, the employee may be required to submit a release from his or her attending physician to CEO indicating that the employee is capable of returning to work with no restrictions.

## Sexual or Other Harassment

SCMS will not tolerate sexual or other harassment of its staff members. This means that the following behaviors are grounds for disciplinary action, including immediate termination:

- unwelcome sexual advances
- requests for sexual acts or favors
- insulting or degrading sexual remarks or conduct directed against another staff member
- threats, demands, or suggestions that a staff member's work is contingent upon toleration of or acquiescence to sexual advances
- retaliation against staff members for complaining about such behaviors
- any other unwelcome statements or actions based on sex that are sufficiently severe or pervasive so as to unreasonably interfere with an individual's work performance or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment
- comments or actions of a harassing nature (i.e., religion, racial, ethnic, or disability-related)

Any person who has a complaint of sexual or other harassment against a superior, a coworkers, a vendor, or a person we serve should immediately bring the problem to the attention of the chief executive officer.

The SCMS prohibits retaliation against anyone for having raised such a complaint in good faith or cooperating with an investigation of a complaint. Complaints will be investigated and handled as confidentially as possible in the manner described below.

Complaints of sexual or other harassment will be investigated as promptly as possible. The allegations of the complaint and the identity of the persons involved shall remain confidential in order to conduct a full and impartial investigation, remedy violations, monitor compliance, and administer the policy.

The investigation will include, but will not be limited to, discussion with both parties and witnesses. The CEO will review the recommendation, determine the corrective action, if any, notify all parties of the decision, and implement that decision.

## Background Checks

SCMS may conduct criminal, child protective service and credit background checks on all candidates selected for hire. The organization may conduct Department of Motor Vehicle checks for candidates whose positions require driving a vehicle.

Candidates may be hired on an introductory period status pending receipt of background check information. The individual will be terminated if the information received through a check reveals incompatibility with the organization.

## Credit Background Checks

It is important that those who handle our funds have records that are free of embezzlement, financial dishonesty, or mishandling of funds.

For this reason, SCMS reserves the right to conduct credit checks at any time in a manner consistent with applicable laws and regulations.

It is the intent of SCMS to conduct appropriate credit checks (in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations) on staff members and prospective staff members.

If a credit background investigation is to be conducted, the CEO will do the following:

- Provide notices required by the Fair Credit Reporting Act and any other applicable laws and regulations. The notices explain the staff member's or prospective staff member's legal rights.
- Ask the individuals to sign a release permitting us to conduct a credit background investigation.
- Ensure that any offer letters emphasize that the job offer is contingent upon satisfactory completion of a credit investigation.
- While safeguarding specific information about the individual's credit background, as required by law, inform the program director or supervisor should any information in these investigations warrant reconsidering the employment offer.

## Drug and Alcohol Abuse

To ensure a safe and efficient drug- and alcohol-free workplace and ensure compliance with federal regulations, the following company policy has been adopted and will be observed by all employees.

### IMPAIRMENT PROHIBITED

No employee will use, report for work or will work under the influence of any drug that has the possibility to cause impairment. Impaired means under the influence of a substance such that the employee's motor senses (i.e., sight, hearing, balance, reaction, reflect) or judgment either are or may be presumed affected. An employee may use a substance administered by or under the instructions of a physician who has advised the employee that the substance will not affect the employee's ability to safely perform his or her duties. For any controlled substance that is lawfully prescribed, i.e., administered under the instructions of a physician, the employee will notify his or her supervisor prior to the start of his or her shift. Any violation of this policy will result in discharge.

### USE PROHIBITED

No employee at any work site will use any quantity of any unlawful controlled substance or alcohol. For any controlled substance that is lawfully prescribed, i.e., that is administered under the instructions of a physician, the employee will notify his or her supervisor prior to the start of his or her shift. *Work site* means any motor vehicle, office, building, yard, or other property operated by the company, or any other location at which the employee is to perform work. Any violation of this policy will result in discharge.

# Substance Abuse Testing

SCMS has a significant business interest in ensuring the efficiency and productivity of its employees, and an obligation to ensure the health and safety of its employees on the job. To this end, SCMS has established the following rules and regulations regarding the use, sale or possession of illegal drugs or controlled substances on the job. These rules and regulations are mandatory and express conditions of employment.

In furtherance of its goal to ensure a drug-free workplace, the company has established the following drug-testing procedures for its employees and applications for employment.

The company may require blood and/or urine samples in the following situations:

1. As a precondition of employment, all applicants for employment may be required to submit blood and/or urine samples that will be used for drug testing.
2. At the sole discretion of the CEO, a current employee may be required to submit blood and/or urine samples for purposes of drug testing if an employee is involved in an accident at the workplace or on duty that indicates the possible illegal use of drugs or controlled substances.
3. When the company has reasonable cause to believe that an employee is using, selling, or in possession of drugs at the workplace, or is present on company premises under the influence of drugs, the company reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to require that such employee submit blood and/or urine samples for the purpose of drug testing. Reasonable cause to believe that an employee is using, selling or in possession of drugs at the workplace or is present on company premises under the influence of drugs may include, but is not limited to, excessive absenteeism, declining productivity, excessive tardiness, and/or other suspect behavior that is deemed by individuals trained in such detection to indicate the use, sale or possession of illegal drugs.
4. As previously stated, SCMS does not allow employees to be under the influence of alcohol. The standard SCMS will use to determine whether an employee has violated this rule is the standard used by the motor vehicle department for determining whether someone is "under the influence via a breathalyzer or blood test." For alcohol, this would be a blood alcohol level of 0.08 or greater.
  - A "negative" test is one that results in a level of the substance of less than one-half of the standard. For alcohol, this would be a blood alcohol count of 0.049 or less.
  - A level of substance of between one-half the standard (for alcohol, a count of 0.050 or 0.099) indicates conduct that is irresponsible and threatening to the safety of equipment, product, other employees, and the employee him or herself. Such conduct will be disciplined as a violation of a progressive discipline rule and the employee will be sent home without pay for the balance of the shift.

If an employee is required to submit to drug testing under these rules, the employee's refusal to submit to drug testing is grounds for immediate discharge.

# Electronic Monitoring

SCMS may periodically monitor, survey, or review staff members' work performance through the use of mechanical, electronic, or other devices and methods. Among the mechanical or electronic devices that SCMS may use are telephone and email monitoring, observation, beepers, pen registers and touch-tone decoders. These devices and other methods may be used to limit personal calls at the workplace, review performance, and investigate workplace problems.

## Email Policy

Company employees recognize and understand that the company's electronic mail (e-mail) systems are to be used for conducting the company's business only. Employee understands that all email on SCMS accounts (or hardware) is the property of SCMS. Extensive use of this equipment for private purposes is strictly prohibited. A password shall not be used that has not been disclosed to the company. Employees should not access a file or retrieve any stored communication other than where authorized unless there has been prior clearance by the chief executive officer.

The company reserves and will exercise the right to review, audit, intercept, access, and disclose all matters on the company's email system at any time, with or without employee notice, and that access may occur during or after working hours. The use of a company-provided password or code does not restrict the company's right to access electronic communications. Violations of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment.

## Security Inspections

SCMS wishes to maintain a work environment that is free of illegal drugs, alcohol, firearms, explosives, and other improper materials. To this end, we prohibit the possession, transfer, sale or use of such materials on its premises. SCMS requires the cooperation of all employees in administering this policy.

Desks, lockers, and other storage devices may be provided for the convenience of employees, but remain the sole property of SCMS. We will retain keys or combinations to the locks on storage devices. Employees may use their own locks or combinations but must give a key or the combination to us.

Desks, lockers and other storage devices, as well as any articles found within them, can be inspected by any agent or representative of SCMS at any time, either with or without prior notice, in accordance with applicable state laws.

## Licenses and Certification

Staff whose jobs require professional license or certification must present documentation of their license or certification, and re-license or re-certification prior to and during employment.

- Staff pays the cost of obtaining their license or certification, or maintaining it in a current state.
- Copies of the license or certification, plus copies of all renewals or changes, must be provided by the staff members for inclusion in his or her personnel file.
- Staff must notify their supervisors before the next scheduled workday of any changes in the status of their license or certification.

## Verification of Academic Credentials

SCMS may request verification of education credentials listed on employment applications and/or resumes for candidates and all entering employees for all positions of employment within our organization.

1. After supervisory staff have completed the interview process and have determined that a candidate possesses the qualifications for a particular position and is the best-qualified candidate, a conditional offer of employment will be made. The candidate will be offered the position contingent on completion of the Verification of Credentials.
2. Verification of Credentials may be completed for every position. This may include a high school education or GED certificate and post-high school degrees or transcripts from educational institutions listed on the job application.
3. Inability to verify listed credentials may result in the job offer to the candidate being withdrawn. Further, any evidence gathered during this process that indicated dishonesty by an applicant or staff member will be cause for immediate rejection or dismissal.
4. Any costs assessed by the educational institution for verification of credentials or transcripts shall be the sole responsibility of the applicant.

## SCMS Credit Cards

This organization may issue credit cards to certain staff who may require them in the course of nonprofit business, e.g., travel. Credit cards will be issued at the sole discretion of the CEO. Receipts for purchases must be turned in to accounting immediately as purchases are made.

Staff members who have been issued nonprofit credit cards must return them at the time of their separation from employment. If you feel that you may need a credit card, complete the Credit Card Request form and submit it to the CEO for review.

## **B. EMPLOYEE CONDUCT**

## Attendance and Punctuality

Prompt attendance on the job is an important part of the performance of employee responsibilities. Absence and tardiness not only disturb the smooth function of the employee's job but also inconvenience and interfere with other interrelated jobs and functions of the company. Good attendance is a condition of continued employment.

All employees must notify their department head or immediate supervisor of their expected lateness or absence and provide a reason prior to the beginning of the employee's shift. Subsequent written documentation supporting the reason for lateness or absence is required. (A PTO slip must be completed upon arrival.) Except in rare and unusual cases, a failure to report prior to or within fifteen (15) minutes of beginning their work shift will render the lateness or absence "unexcused," regardless of any later justification or reason that may be offered.

No request for "leave without pay" will be approved until all accrued leave (PTO) has been exhausted.

This policy states clearly that, when an employee will be late or absent to work, the employee must make the call to inform the supervisor – friends or co-workers can't make the notification on the employee's behalf. This is a condition of continued employment at the organization, per the policy.

After five unexcused absences by an employee, a warning notice by your supervisor begins with the next unexcused absence, resulting in termination. After returning to work from an unexcused absence, the employee must report to his or her supervisor and discuss the reasons for the absence. Furthermore, SCMS reserves the right to dock an employee's pay for problems with attendance and punctuality.

## Work Schedules ~ Traditional

Work schedules will be defined in the letter of appointment. Staff should be at their desks, ready for work, on time. Office hours are from 8 AM to 5 PM. All staff are entitled to a 60-minute lunch break and two 15-minute coffee breaks, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Staff members will be notified in writing of any changes to this schedule.

Exempt staff may be required to work beyond the designated work schedule in order to adequately fulfill their duties.

Staff finding they are unable to report to work on time or unable to report for a full day must inform their supervisor within 15 minutes of the beginning of their work shift. All absences not due to illness need to be scheduled in advance. PTO slips must be completed in advance for time off and upon return to work for illness.

Some departments may need to be in operation on an irregular basis. These special requirements may be discussed with the supervisor if problems arise.

## Work Schedules ~ Flexible

This policy offers guidelines for administering alternative work schedules and applies to all regular full-time staff members who work a five-day/40-hour week, Monday through Friday.

### *Procedure*

1. At the SCMS' sole discretion, certain departments or individuals may be required to deviate from the normal working hours. SCMS will notify you if this pertains to your position.
2. Because of a significant change in circumstances, a staff member can request a change in schedule by submitting a written request for change to the supervisor explaining the reason. If a supervisor initiates a change in the staff member's work schedule, the staff member must be notified in writing five working days prior to the effective date of the change. If a staff member's performance is negatively affected by his or her choice of work schedules, it is the supervisor's responsibility to address the issue with the employee and, if necessary, to change the schedule to another approved alternative. If a supervisor has reason to believe that a staff member is abusing the selected work schedule, the supervisor is responsible for addressing the issue with the staff member and, if necessary, taking disciplinary action up to, in appropriate cases, termination.

## Telecommuting

The Spokane County Medical Society has determined that its mission is best fulfilled if all employees work on the premises. Occasionally, circumstances may make it more suitable for some employees to telecommute, i.e., work out of their homes. Therefore, at the discretion of the CEO, part time or full time employees who have successfully completed their introductory period may, in rare cases, be allowed to telecommute.

SCMS may supply equipment, perform maintenance on it, provide supplies, and reimburse the telecommuting employee for long-distance phone calls, Internet use, or any other business-related communication. In addition, SCMS may install and pay for any adaptations to the employee's home related to telecommuting.

Communication between the office and the telecommuter may take place via telephone, fax, Internet, voice mail, etc. Telecommuters will be required to participate in their department or program staff meetings in person.

## Break Periods / Lunch Periods

Full-time, nonexempt staff are to be granted two work breaks during the workday. These work breaks are to be limited to not more than 15 minutes each and should not be allowed earlier than one hour after the beginning of the workday or later than one hour before the close of the workday. Staff who are less than full time will be allowed work breaks based on their work schedule.

Specific times for taking work breaks by staff will be contingent on the workload and are at the discretion of the supervisor.

If for any reason a staff member is unable to take a work break during the workday, the break time will not be carried forward so as to become cumulative and taken at a later time unless authorized in writing in advance.

Should a staff member be on a work break and be asked to return to his or her workstation due to an emergency or any other valid reason, failure to do so will be justification for appropriate disciplinary action.

All employees are given a one-hour lunch break (generally 12-1pm). State law requires that non-exempt employees working over 5 hours must take at least a 30-minute unpaid lunch break. If you are required to work during your scheduled lunch break (example: meeting), you must take at least a

½-hour lunch break. Employees are not allowed to skip lunch and leave one hour earlier at the end of their shift.

## Code of Conduct

As an employee of the Spokane County Medical Society, you have responsibilities. Most of these, such as regular and prompt attendance, good productivity, and a pleasant and cooperative attitude, are known to everyone. Other responsibilities, however, may not occur to people. SCMS believes it is helpful, therefore, to specify as clearly as possible all types of conduct that are unacceptable, and that may result in the termination of employment. Giving this information is part of our responsibility to you as an employee. It is hoped that this will help you have a more satisfying employment experience because it will better enable you to know what is expected by the organization.

The following conduct is prohibited and will result in immediate termination of employment.

1. Any form of threat of physical assault toward a supervisor or business visitor of the Spokane County Medical Society.
2. Being under the influence of, using, selling, distributing, or possessing alcohol or a controlled substance (e.g., marijuana, narcotics, barbiturates) during working time, whether on or off the premises. Limited alcohol may be consumed at SCMS functions. See page 14 for policy.
3. Theft or dishonesty, including a breach of SCMS security or confidentiality, or falsification of any business record.
4. Conviction of a crime (arrest for the alleged commission of a felony may result in an unpaid suspension until the charge is resolved).
5. Intentional damage to the property of the SCMS, another employee, or a business visitor of SCMS.
6. Carrying or otherwise possessing firearms or other deadly weapons on the premises.
7. Absence from work for three (3) consecutive workdays without proper notification.
8. Willful violation of safety rules that endangers the safety of any person or SCMS property.
9. Refusal to perform work assigned by a supervisor or willful disobedience of a reasonable instruction or direction of a supervisor.
10. Deliberate interference with or delaying or restricting of production or the production of others.

Violation of any of the following rules could result in immediate termination or may subject an employee to progressive discipline (absenteeism and tardiness are covered by the separate attendance policy):

1. Willful neglect of duty
2. Abuse language or conduct directed at a supervisor or other employee
3. Fighting, horseplay, disorderly or unsafe conduct on SCMS premises
4. Temporarily leaving SCMS during working time without permission of a supervisor or other employer representative (leaving SCMS without permission)
5. Loan-sharking, gambling, or working numbers on SCMS premises
6. Failure to be ready to work and at the assigned workstation on time following rest and meal periods
7. Bad attitude or offensive personal conduct resulting in an adverse effect on SCMS work, safety, and health or employee morale
8. Poor performance or productivity
9. Negligence or carelessness that causes or could cause damage to equipment or create a safety hazard

10. Posting, altering, or removing any matter on bulletin boards or organization property unless specifically authorized
11. Abuse of or conduct indicating an intent to abuse the attendance policy
12. Loafing, unnecessary absence from workstation, or other abuse of working time
13. Performing personal work on SCMS time or equipment without permission
14. Failure to turn in daily, weekly or monthly records or reports
15. Failure to report accidents immediately
16. Violation of safety rules

## Standards of Employee Conduct

The following conduct is unacceptable and subject to disciplinary action, and it may result in dismissal in accordance with the disciplinary procedure if the conduct is not corrected:

1. attempts to defraud the organization by:
  - drawing pay for time not worked
  - falsifying expense vouchers
  - selling agency property
  - receiving kickbacks
  - failing to report errors in payments
  - drawing pay from another source for work that was paid for by the agency
  - committing any other such act that results in personal monetary gain that is not specifically authorized
2. insubordination
3. conviction of a criminal act that impairs the employee's ability to perform his or her job
4. acceptance of a gift or gratuity by an employee or a member of the employee's immediate family from a client or other person who may benefit from the employee's action; however, gifts of small value may be accepted on special occasions or out of normal courtesy
5. public criticism of the organization or displaying behavior that is inconsistent with the mission of the organization and detracts from the image of the organization within the community
6. engagement in lobbying activities prohibited by law
7. intentionally lying, falsifying reports, misrepresenting information, or disregarding policy
8. circumvention of proper lines of authority
9. failure to perform job duties as outlined in the job description or failure to meet objective performance standards as established by the CEO
10. absence without proper notice, absence without leave, or absence without proper excuse
11. failure to carry on a suitable working relationship with coworkers, program participants, committee members or board members
12. making public comments that express disapproval of the behavior of an organization employee, unless the comments are made to the employee involved, in private, or are directed upward through the proper lines of authority
13. making public comments that express employee disapproval of decisions made by the organization or those in authority of the employee, unless such comments are made to the employee's supervisor or are made through the grievance procedures
14. violation of dress code requirements (See page 24 for policy.)
15. sexual harassment.
  - Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination that violates a person's civil rights. According to the Civil Rights Act, verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature is harassment when it interferes with the person's employment or academic study.

For more on sexual or other types of harassment, see material on page 13.

Every single violation of a rule could lead to discipline, up to and including termination. SCMS will, in its discretion, apply progressive discipline (i.e., warnings first, then write-ups or termination), but SCMS is not obligated to use progressive discipline.

## Personal Conduct: Smoking

SCMS offers a smoke-free work environment to all staffers. No smoking is allowed inside the building or within 50 feet of the entrance. The designated smoking area on the grounds is outside. Smokers are responsible for keeping the area clean and free of smoking debris. Violation of this policy shall result in disciplinary procedures and, ultimately, termination.

## Telephone Usage

Any employee answering the telephone must abide by the following rules:

- All telephone calls must be answered promptly and courteously. If a person has requested to be put on hold, frequently check the line to assure the caller they have not been forgotten.
- Use a cheerful, helpful voice. Use "please" and "thank you" liberally.
- Answer the phone by saying "Spokane County Medical Society, this is your name."
- When a staff member is on the phone, always let them know when a physician is waiting on the line for them.

## Personal Telephone Calls

Staffers are encouraged to keep local personal calls on SCMS telephones to a minimum. Personal use of telephones for long-distance calls by staff at SCMS is not allowed, except in the case of emergency. For this reason, staff are encouraged to obtain the use of a personal telephone calling card to bill calls to their home telephone. If this is not possible, the staff member must ask his or her supervisor for approval and notify the accounting department of the call, including date and telephone number called. Payment to SCMS for any personal calls must be made monthly, upon receipt of an itemized bill.

## Personal Use of Organizational Resources

Employees are expected to reimburse the organization for personal use of copiers, fax machines, or telephones for unauthorized long-distance calls, supplies and other items. Prior approval is required for extensive personal use of any SCMS resources.

## Music at Work

The organization hopes to provide pleasant working conditions for all employees. Use of radios, CDs, iPods, etc., in a department is at the discretion of the department director. The operation of such devices must not disrupt the work of any other employee. Suggested guidelines for use of these devices are as follows:

- Devices are never appropriate in "public" spaces, such as reception areas.
- Where employees share a common or open work area, devices without earphones may be played only by the consent of all those in the work area and should not be heard outside that work area.

- In a private office, the devices should not be heard outside that office.
- If any colleague says that a device is too loud, it is, by definition, too loud.

## Visitors

All visitors should be instructed to check in at the receptionist's desk as soon as they arrive at the facility.

## Appropriate Dress

As representatives of the Spokane County Medical Society, staff is expected to exhibit a neat, well-groomed appearance. Radical departure from conventional dress or personal grooming (including, but not limited to, excessively long hair, bleached, ungroomed hair, untrimmed facial hair on males, excessive makeup, short dresses or skirts, tank tops or low cut tops, shorts, and shower thong-type footwear) is not permitted.

If the CEO or supervisor decides that a staff member is in violation of the dress code, the staff member will be asked to go home and change.

SCMS will not be held liable for damage to clothing or accessories while staff are on duty.

*Casual Friday:* The CEO, at his or her discretion, may designate Fridays as "casual dress day." Casual dress does not include frayed or holey jeans, cutoff jeans or farmers' overalls. A clean, neat and suitable appearance is required. This privilege may be withdrawn at any time without reason, temporarily or permanently, by the CEO.

## Body Piercings / Tattoos / Body Markings

Visible body piercing, body markings, or tattoos shall be limited as described below:

1. While on duty, and while off duty immediately before or after work while still on SCMS property, the only pierced body part that shall be permitted to have an item inserted into it shall be each or either ear lobe. No other pierced body part shall have an earrings, stud, hoop, or other object inserted into it during the workday.
2. While on duty, and while off duty immediately before or after work while still on SCMS property, a tattoo or other body marking may remain visible if it does not have an objectionable or obscene working or illustrations. Any tattoo, group of tattoos, or other body marking that may be questionable as to its appropriateness, shall be fully covered by a bandage, clothing, or other appropriate materials. Any visible gang tattoos are strictly forbidden.

Appropriateness of body markings and compliance with the intent of this policy shall be determined by a reasonable person standard. The decision of the staff member's supervisor will be final.

## Acceptable Use of SCMS Equipment and Property

Staff members will not directly or indirectly use or allow the use of property, equipment, or supplies belonging to SCMS or located on our premises for any purpose other than our business, unless special permission is obtained from the CEO. Further, no staff member shall willfully alter, mutilate, abuse, or waste any property, equipment, or supplies belonging to the nonprofit or located on the

property. The improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use or operation of equipment or vehicles can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

If, in the course of normal business use, a staff member notices that any equipment, machines, tools or vehicles appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair, he or she should notify the supervisor in writing as soon as possible. Prompt reporting of damages, defects, and the need for repairs could prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to staff or the members and patients we serve.

## Computer Software

The purpose of this policy is to ensure compliance with license agreements and applicable copyright laws regarding the purchase and use of computer software. This policy applies to all employees of SCMS and any software purchased by SCMS for use with any of its computers.

In some cases, the organization does not own the computer software but is only licensed to use it. Any duplication of software, except for backup purposes, may violate both the license agreement and copyright law. This may subject the organization and the individual to civil damages of up to \$100,000 per violation and criminal penalties that include fines and imprisonment. For these reasons, all computer software operated by the organization must be approved by the CEO.

No individual may copy any software for any use on any other computer at the organization or elsewhere, nor may any individual bring software from home or elsewhere for use on the organization's computers without prior approval. Anyone using software on a Spokane County Medical Society computer is responsible for complying with that software's license.

## Condition of Facilities

Staff members are responsible for the condition of areas they use and the equipment therein. Staff members are responsible for leaving the work area clear of clutter, food, and other items. Upon leaving the work area at the end of the workday, employees are to turn out all lights, secure confidential files, and close and lock doors. If the organization's equipment or property is damaged or destroyed because of a staff member's negligence, that person may be held responsible for repairs or replacement.

## Keys

For security reasons, certain areas of SCMS are locked. Keys and combination numbers have been issued to those staff members who should have access to these areas. Keys or combination numbers are not to be lent or given to any person other than those designated to have them.

Lost keys should be reported immediately to the SCMS receptionist, who will notify the appropriate parties. Keys must be turned in to the Associate Director prior to receiving a final paycheck.

## Information Policy

Security and confidentiality of information are matters of utmost concern to members and staff alike. Individuals who have access to organization information are in positions of trust relative to this information and must recognize the responsibilities entrusted to them in order to maintain the

confidentiality and integrity of the organization. Similarly, individuals with access to organization equipment and technology are also entrusted with the appropriate use of these resources. For these reasons, the organization hereby adopts this Information Policy ("the Policy") to become effective immediately to establish standards for the use of SCMS information, equipment and technology.

#### *Definitions*

- **Member information** includes all information that tends to directly or indirectly identifies a member, any and all records, any and all financial information, and any other information obtained from or about a member in which the member has an expectation of privacy.
- **Patient information** includes all information that tends to directly or indirectly identifies a patient, any and all records, any and all financial information, and any other information obtained from or about a patient in which the patient has an expectation of privacy. (See HIPAA Guidelines below.)
- **Information that tends to directly or indirectly identify a member or patient** includes, but is not limited to, name, social security number, address, telephone number, age, date of birth, race/ethnic status, and any other identifying characteristics.
- **Proprietary information** means any information that is used in the organization's business, which, if disclosed, would be detrimental to the organization, its employees, or members. For example, this includes organization personnel and financial records.
- **Organization information** means any information within the possession, care, custody, or control of the organization.
- **Organization equipment and technology** means any equipment or technology within the possession, care, custody, or control of the organization, or is created with the organization's funds.

### **HIPAA Guidelines**

#### *Confidentiality, Security and Access to Protected Health Information*

#### *Purpose*

Protected health information is in many forms: written, verbal, or stored in paper, photographic, video, or electronic format. In all these media, protected health information may be used for a variety of legitimate purposes; for example, patient care, quality review, education, research, public health, legal, and reimbursement. Regardless of its use, patients must be assured the information they share with Spokane County Medical Society employees will remain confidential.

#### *Policy*

In keeping with the values of the Spokane County Medical Society, we respect and will protect every patient's right to have all the information they share with Spokane County Medical Society employees to be kept confidential.

#### *Scope*

This policy applies to all Spokane County Medical Society employees, consultants, interns, students, volunteers, and Board members. It presents guidelines that can be used to determine what protected health information is, and the access and proper use of that information.

#### *Definitions*

1. **Protected Health Information (PHI):** Health information (medical record) that is identifiable to a specific individual and that is maintained or transmitted by a covered entity in any form, whether in oral, paper, or electronic form. Information is considered to be individually identifiable if it identifies the individual or there is a reasonable basis to believe that the information can be used to identify the individual.

### *Confidentiality and Security of PHI*

1. Employees may access patient information **only** when it is necessary to perform their job.
2. Care needs to be taken to ensure that oral communication among Spokane County Medical Society employees occurs in an area and manner that ensures patient privacy. Gossip, careless remarks, and idle chatter regarding patient information obtained under "1" above are violations of trust and the patient's right to privacy.
3. Patient information must be disclosed only upon written authorization by the patient or his/her legal representative or where such disclosure is authorized by federal or state law, subpoena, or court order, and in accordance with the Release of Information Policy.
4. Patient-identifying information must **not** be put or displayed in areas within view of the public. Logs, computer screens, printers, medical records, and patient records must be treated as confidential and kept away from public view.

### *Access to PHI (Medical Records)*

1. Legal original records shall not be removed from the Spokane County Medical Society facilities.
2. Hard/paper copies of PHI should be stored in a secure location at all times.
3. Printed material that contains PHI should be disposed of properly by shredding. Information containing confidential patient information should **not** be discarded in waste paper baskets.
4. No patient or employee personnel information, such as Social Security numbers or PHI, can be taken off the premises without approval and proper safeguards, such as encryption and password protection.

## C. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

# Employee Recruitment

SCMS fills job openings with qualified applicants. The following paragraphs summarize the major elements of our hiring policies.

- **Preference for internal candidates:** Job openings may be filled by qualified persons from within this organization when possible. Preference is given to internal candidates over external candidates when both are equally qualified. However, internal candidates are not guaranteed the position for which they apply.
- **Testing/screening:** Applicants for certain positions may be required to fill out a standard screening instrument and take a test as a condition of being considered for employment. All such tools will not discriminate against any ethnic, religious, disabled, or other minority groups.
- **Interviewing:** Applicants will be screened to determine who should become candidates for a job. Job candidates may be interviewed by more than one person, including the position's supervisor.
- **References:** Prior to a job offer, references will be checked on all candidates to whom job offers may be made, *before* the offers are made. Police records and credit checks also may be required. The organization will check a minimum of two references. The organization will contact current or former supervisors, and will use consistent questions. Reference checks need not be restricted to those references listed by an applicant. Problems arising when checking references will be brought to the CEO. References are sometimes checked in advance of interviews as a screening device.

## Offer and Letter of Employment

The offer of employment will be made by the CEO or immediate supervisor to the applicant selected. Prior to the new employee signing a letter of employment, a current job description will be given and must be reviewed by the applicant.

The applicant and the CEO or Associate Director will sign a letter of employment, which includes: date of hire, position, title, introductory period, wage, and position's job description.

Within 5 days of employment, the employee must review the current personnel policies and guidelines and sign that they have read and understood the organization's personnel policies and guidelines. The signed Receipt of the Policy Manual form must be turned in to the Associate Director.

## The Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The Chief Executive Officer is selected by and reports to the Board of Trustees. Each employee of the Spokane County Medical Society, Spokane County Medical Society Foundation, Spokane County Medical Society Library and Physicians Services, Inc., either directly, or indirectly through his or her supervisor, reports to the CEO of SCMS.

## Orientation

The Spokane County Medical Society orientation process is designed to acquaint and guide the new employee in becoming an effective and successful member of the staff. The employee will learn the purpose, function and objectives of the organization, and specific programs. The orientation will include instructions, observation, and supervised practice for all new employees. New employees will receive orientation to the specific duties of their positions by their supervisor or his or her designee.

Specific content to be covered in orientation includes, but it not limited to, the following:

- the organization's mission and goals
- the organization's and program's policies, procedures, and guidelines
- confidentiality policies
- payroll practices
- benefits administration
- employee's health and safety
- program descriptions
- employee's role in public relations

Employees shall use this orientation program to familiarize themselves with the organization, its guidelines, and its benefits. We encourage employees to ask questions during this process so they will understand all guidelines that affect and govern their employment relationship with the organization.

## Job Description and Training

SCMS will provide a job description to each employee. The job description will explain the functions, duties and responsibilities of the job. The supervisor will explain the job description and the employee will be asked to acknowledge receipt of the job description. Each employee should fully understand his or her job description. The supervisor will answer any questions the employee may have.

Employees will receive supervised, on-the-job training during and after the orientation. Employees may also be required to participate in any on-going scheduled in-service education programs. These programs are designed to increase the employee's knowledge and to improve performance. Employees are encouraged to advise their supervisor when a need is identified for additional training.

## Introductory Period

Whenever the term *Introductory Period* is used in this personnel policies manual, it shall mean up to the first six months of employment of a newly hired staff member. Staff whose service is satisfactory in the introductory period may become full-time or part-time staff, subject to availability of funds, the continued existence of the position, and their continued satisfactory work performance in the position.

Medical benefits are available after three months of employment. When the introductory period is over, the staff member is also given a non compensation-related performance evaluation. The review is conducted by the staff member's immediate supervisor and includes written goals based on the new staff member's strengths and weaknesses. In the event a supervisor determines that an employee needs additional training, the reasons for extending the introductory period shall be presented to the employee in writing. Successive appraisals will be given annually, at the end of the calendar year.

## Performance Appraisals

All staff shall receive, at least once per year, a performance appraisal that will objectively assess their performance and accomplishments relative to the job description. Appraisals generally occur prior to the end of the calendar year.

Standardized forms will be used to record all formal performance appraisals, and all individuals supervising the staff member being evaluated will contribute to the review. These records will be

used to help determine salary reviews, advancements, transfers, layoffs, and other personnel actions that are based on merit.

All staff should be given the opportunity to review and make copies of performance reviews. Staff is encouraged to include written comments on the review, if appropriate. Staff who disagree with appraisals are encouraged to discuss areas of disagreement with their supervisor. Extreme difficulties may be taken to the CEO. Staff should sign and date their appraisal after all comments have been noted. Requests for copies of past performance appraisals should be directed to the immediate supervisor.

Performance appraisals become a permanent part of the staff member's personnel file. This information will be held in strict confidence and may be released to a third party only with the prior written approval of the staff member.

## Professional Development

In-service training is designed to provide staff members with the skills, training, and experience necessary for their continued development. Training will be the subject of these conditions:

- Attendance at conferences, educational meetings, workshops, and institutes must have the approval of the immediate supervisor or the CEO.
- Each full-time professional staff member may be permitted to attend conferences as funds permit, including registration and reimbursement for lodging, meals and travel. Attendance at such a conference shall be requested by the staff member by submitting an estimated cost to the supervisor or CEO, who will determine the value of the conference, amount of time lost from duties, cost, and value to the organization.
- Each individual who attends a conference, seminar and/or in-service is expected to submit a written one-page summary of relevant course material with the final paragraph containing suggestions for improvement or change in operations.

## Progressive Discipline

SCMS, at its discretion, may use progressive discipline to ensure staff compliance with performance standards, ethics, and conduct. If a supervisor finds it necessary to use formal disciplinary measures, it is intended that the discipline be administered fairly, without prejudice and only for cause.

Disciplinary actions may be at several levels, including oral and written warnings, disciplinary probation, suspension, and termination. The frequency and/or severity of misconduct determines which level of disciplinary action is required.

Progressive discipline will not be used for all offenses. SCMS reserves the right to terminate staff for commission of serious infractions.

## Warnings

Warnings may be used to correct inappropriate behavior, conduct or deficiencies. If they are used, documentation of both oral and written warnings will be signed by the supervisor and the staff member and kept in the staff member's personnel file. If a staff member refuses to sign, the supervisor should have a witness sign that a copy was given to the staff member. The staff member's signature indicates receipt of the document, but not necessarily his or her agreement with it. This

document should include identification of the date, violation, indication of necessary improvement, and information concerning further disciplinary action that could result from failure to show improvement.

The document should also include the timeline for completion and the consequences of failure to make the required improvements.

The original of the formal disciplinary notice and supporting documentation will be placed in the employee's personnel file. Employees will receive a copy of the notice and documentation.

If a notice cannot be issued in person, it will be delivered by certified mail.

## Informal Corrective Action Counseling

The employee's supervisor may discuss a minor infraction in private with the employee. The purpose of this informal verbal counseling is to explain the infraction and to give the employee an opportunity to correct performance. Such counseling is not part of the formal disciplinary procedure and is not subject to the grievance procedure. Written documentation is encouraged, but not required.

## Disciplinary Probation

A staff member may be placed on disciplinary probation by the supervisor in order to allow the staff member to show improvement on the problem(s) specified at the time of probation.

This disciplinary probation period begins when the supervisor provides the staff member with a written and signed document that:

1. identifies the problem(s)
2. indicates the necessary improvement
3. specifies the length of probation period
4. informs the staff member of further disciplinary action that could result from failure to show satisfactory improvement within the specified probation period

## Suspension

The CEO may suspend a staff member for disciplinary reasons without pay. A staff member who is suspended will be given written notice of the reasons for the action and expected time frame; a copy will be made a part of the staff member's personnel record.

A staff member can be suspended for incidents that merit termination if the staff member's participation is suspected, but unclear. Under these circumstances, the CEO can suspend the staff member with pay while an investigation is conducted.

Supervisors will meet formally with suspended staff members upon their return to work and define clearly and specifically the improvements in job-related behaviors required as a condition of their continued employment. This meeting will be documented and records of it submitted to the CEO. A copy of the suspension record will also be added to the staff member's personnel file.

## Workforce Reduction

Flexibility is a key requirement for managing our organization. Occasionally the organization may need to restructure to take advantage of new opportunities, meet competitive challenges, react to shifts in the type of services we provide to our members, change the way we conduct business or change the skill requirements of some positions.

If your position is eliminated because of a reduction in workforce or a change in the skill requirements, you will be eligible to apply for vacant positions within the organization, for which you are qualified. Every effort will be made to give employees as much notice as possible when their employment with the organization will be eliminated due to restructuring or reduction in workforce.

## Resignations

Staff who voluntarily resign from their positions at SCMS are required to give at least two weeks' notice in writing of their intent to resign. At the option of SCMS, such staff may be given two weeks' pay and may be required to discontinue work immediately, in lieu of working during the two-week notice period. Failure to give two weeks' notice will result in our refusal to rehire or furnish references. Any employee leaving without notice will be considered as voluntarily terminating his or her employment. Any employee leaving without notice will not be eligible for re-employment.

PTO hours awarded but not used will be paid with the employee's last regularly scheduled payroll check. However, if 10 working days' notice is not given, the employee will forfeit any unused PTO. PTO hours cannot be used to extend the staff member's date of termination, nor can they be used to qualify as part of the employee's notice of termination without prior written approval of the CEO or the Associate Director.

The official date of an employee's termination is the last day the employee is present for work.

## Exit Interview

SCMS has a considerable investment in its staff. Therefore, it is of interest to the organization to evaluate the circumstances surrounding the separation of a staff member, whether voluntary or involuntary. Exploring a staff member's reasons for resigning or the factors resulting in termination enables us to better evaluate whether the work environment is conducive to staff satisfaction or whether changes can or should be made. Your supervisor or the CEO may request an exit interview.

## Procedures for Departing Employees

Employees leaving the organization's employment must complete a written exit checklist with their supervisor before their final day.

Departing employees must return office keys, credit cards, any organizational equipment in their possession, and any other SCMS property. (See policy on page 36.)

## D. COMPENSATION

## Exempt and Nonexempt Staff

Employee classifications are determined by the Fair Labor Standards Act. They are "exempt" and "nonexempt." The CEO designates staff as "exempt" or "non-exempt" based on current laws.

- "Exempt staff" includes those who are not subject to the overtime provisions defined by the FLSA.
- "Nonexempt staff" must comply with the overtime pay provisions of the FLSA, regardless of individual titles or duties. Any staff member who does not meet the qualifications for exemption is included as "nonexempt."
- If you have questions regarding your status, please consult your supervisor.

## Overtime Work and Approval

In order to meet schedules, overcome emergencies, and to compensate for peak workload periods, it may be necessary that employees work overtime. Employees are expected to cooperate by working overtime when requested. Reasonable, documented reasons for not working overtime will be given full consideration by supervisors. Where skills or other factors permit, a reasonable attempt will be made by the supervisor to spread overtime work as evenly among a given group of employees as possible so as not to overburden any individual with overtime hours. Overtime hours are to be worked only at the request of the employee's supervisor and must be authorized in advance.

All nonexempt staff members, e.g., those whose jobs are classified as being subject to the Fair Labor Standards Act's overtime pay provisions, are eligible for overtime compensation. All overtime, however, must be approved by the staff member's immediate supervisor in written form and submitted to the CEO or the Associate Director for approval prior to working the overtime hours. Failure to seek approval before working overtime hours may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

## Pay Period and Confidentiality of Earnings

Your salary is a confidential agreement between you and the Spokane County Medical Society. Pay (Direct Deposit) will be placed in your account twice each month (on the 15<sup>th</sup> day and on the last day of each month). When payday falls on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday, pay will be issued on the preceding Friday.

## Payroll Deductions and Statements

At each scheduled pay date, you will receive a personal statement of earnings and deductions. This information indicates all deductions for the particular pay period, such as federal income tax, other required taxes, any funds withheld by judicial or administrative order, voluntary deductions (upon written authorization of employee) for health insurance, dental insurance, employee's retirement plan, and similar deductions. Also included on your statement is your currently paid time off balance.

Please note that the following payroll deductions are required by law:

- federal income tax
- Social Security tax

If an employee wishes to take additional payroll deductions, or if you have any questions regarding your paycheck or deductions, please feel free to discuss them with the Associate Director.

# Garnishments, Liens and Wage Assignments

Federal and state laws require that the SCMS accept and process legal garnishments, wage assignments, and court orders specifying that it must withhold all or part of a staff member's wages to satisfy indebtedness.

Documents pertaining to garnishments, liens, and wage assignments may be accepted only by the CEO and Associate Director and will be treated with confidentiality. Any other person asked to accept such documents must immediately refer the server, or the document if it is received through mail, to the CEO.

The following will be accepted and processed:

- garnishments
- government liens
- wage assignments (friend of the court)
- any other wage assignments

Staff members are expected to handle their financial affairs so as to avoid inconvenience and expense to the corporation and lost work time.

According to the Federal Wage Garnishment Act, three or more garnishments may be cause for dismissal. SCMS, however, will not terminate staff members solely for garnishments for court orders of child support or court orders for similar payments.

## Final Pay

Staff who leave the service of SCMS for any reason shall receive all pay that may be due them, with the following qualifications:

- Regular staff will be paid for all accrued PTO days. However, they will not be paid for any balance in their medical leave account. Staff who leave before completing the introductory period do not accrue any PTO and are, therefore, not entitled to any payout upon leaving.
- Regular staff who are dismissed after committing a criminal offense against SCMS, or for other gross violations of company policies as determined by the CEO, will not receive notice pay.
- Separation date for all staff is the last day of actual work or approved leave. Final pay received by a staff member will not be construed to extend his or her employment with the Spokane County Medical Society beyond the separation date.
- Failure to return SCMS-issued equipment, keys, credit cards, material, or other items will result in delay in payment of final pay until all property is returned. If these items are damaged or missing, their value may be deducted from the staff member's final check.

## Salary Increases / Compensation

1. Salary increases are based on merit and performance as indicated in the written evaluation, as well as available funds. The fulfillment of a certain period of time in a position does not, in itself, justify a salary increase.
2. Salary increases depend on the SCMS' ability to meet its budget. Understand, however, that income is not entirely dependent on the organization itself and its operation, since the sources of income include contributions and interest earned from invested funds. Therefore, any changes to income by these sources will affect the organization's ability to provide raises.

3. The provisions of this section do not apply to temporary staff. The salaries of such staff are individually determined by the CEO.

Pay levels are determined by the CEO after considering funding availability, duties and responsibilities of the job, experience, education, and skill level of the employee.

The organization attempts to provide salary increases, pending funding availability. The CEO may recommend a pay increase based on employee performance or increased responsibilities. Again, raises are contingent on performance and funding availability.

## Pay for Temporary Employees

To allow the organization to attract employees for specific, short-term needs, temporary employees may be compensated differently than regular employees. The CEO establishes the wages and benefits. The CEO will consider market rates, the organization's salary scale, the budget, and prior compensation for similar assignments.

## **E. BENEFITS**

# Insurance

## *Health Care and Dental Plan*

A health care and dental plan for staff and their dependents is provided on the first of the month following three months' employment. A more detailed description of coverage is provided in a separate handout.

Dependents are defined by carrier policy and can be added only when the employee enrolls or at the yearly open enrollment. See the Associate Director for details.

The cost of dependent coverage will be the responsibility of the staff member. Before your coverage or that of your dependents becomes effective, you must authorize payroll deductions for such coverage.

## *401(k) Plan*

After completing one full year of service, an employee becomes eligible (if age 21) to have SCMS make contributions to a 401(k) plan. The employee enters the plan at the next open entry, which is the following January or July. SCMS contributes a percentage of your salary to the Plan twice a month. However, the employee can make personal contributions through payroll deduction after completing 3 months of service.

A summary of the Plan is available from the Associate Director.

## *Long Term Disability Insurance*

An employee becomes eligible to participate in the SCMS Long Term Disability Insurance Plan after completing one year of service. Acceptance into this plan requires meeting physical and health standards. Employees who do not pass do not receive extra compensation.

A summary of this Plan is available from the Associate Director

## *Workers' Compensation*

Staff are protected under the state workers' compensation law (L&I) against loss of income due to injury or death that occurs during work activities. The Spokane County Medical Society pays the entire cost of the workers' compensation insurance premium. Staff must report all job-related accidents, injuries, and illness immediately after experiencing symptoms. L&I will determine the benefits, if any, the staff member deserves.

- Reporting – Any staff member injured on the job will report the injury immediately to his or her supervisor or the CEO, regardless of whether the injury is minor or of no apparent significance.
- Incident report – An incident report will be completed promptly by the supervisor or CEO to ensure documentation and expedite compensation.

## *COBRA*

SCMS does not qualify for COBRA due to the number of persons we employ.

# Leaves of Absence

You may be granted a leave of absence without pay for as long as one year for reasons of a personal, family, education, civic or military-service nature in compliance with USSERA. All accrued PTO may be used as part of the leave. This leave must be approved by the CEO. If you do take an approved leave of absence, SCMS will make every effort to place you in your former or comparable position when you return. Paid Time Off does not accrue during a leave of absence. Insurance benefits

continue, providing you assume responsibility for all premiums. All other benefits are held in abeyance until you return.

## Maternity / Paternity Leave

A leave of absence without pay will be granted to all employees. Washington law allows the maternity/paternity leave to be taken during the pregnancy, as well as after childbirth. Leave will be extended for three months, provided the employee returns to work full-time at the end of the three-month period. An extension of this leave will be allowed upon a doctor's written note establishing disability related to pregnancy or childbirth.

All accrued PTO benefits may be used by the employee when her maternity/paternity leave begins.

All employees who wish maternity/paternity leave are requested to submit to the CEO a statement from their physician as to the anticipated delivery date as soon as possible and before the sixth month.

Employee benefits of medical insurance, disability insurance, retirement benefit, and paid time off will be extended for the length of the leave, up to three months.

## Jury Duty

If you are subpoenaed to appear in court as a witness or called for jury duty, you will be granted paid leave. SCMS will pay you the difference between any fees you receive for jury duty and your regular salary. If your jury duty days are partial, you will be expected to report for work for the remainder of the day.

## Paid Time Off (PTO)

Once an employee has successfully completed their introductory period, he or she becomes eligible to use our Paid Time Off (PTO) benefit, which provides you with paid time away from your job. PTO represents a combination of traditional vacation, sick and bereavement leave. You can use PTO for any personal business that requires you to take time away from work (for example, you can spend time to care for a family member who is sick). You can take PTO in ½-hour increments. Except for emergency or illness, all PTO must be scheduled in advance (two weeks if possible) with your supervisor.

PTO cannot be "cashed in" during your employment at SCMS; it must be taken as time off. An employee who leaves SCMS will be paid for any PTO which has been earned but not used (up to 10 days). Regular staff who are dismissed after committing a criminal offense against SCMS, or for other gross violations of company policies as determined by the CEO, will not receive notice pay.

SCMS provides paid PTO for rest and relaxation, which we believe is important for staff members' physical and mental health. Towards that end we encourage employees to use their PTO time yearly. If all of your PTO is not used up by year-end, only 10 days PTO can be held over in your PTO account; the balance will be moved into your medical leave account. At year-end, any PTO balance above 10 days will be rolled into a medical leave account which can be used for extended sick periods, surgeries, etc (5 days or more). When employment is discontinued, you will not be paid the balance in your medical leave account, nor paid for PTO above 10 days. The maximum number of days you can accrue in your medical leave account is 45.

The schedule on the next page shows the PTO hours you can earn each month and the maximum PTO days you can earn for each year of full time equivalent service.

<u>Years of Service</u>	<u>Monthly Accrual Rate in Hours</u>	<u>Yearly Accrual in Days</u>
0-1	8.667	13 days
2-3	12.000	18 days
4-5	15.333	23 days
6-10	18.667	28 days

If you are a part-time employee, the PTO you earn is adjusted to reflect your part-time status.

## Holidays

SCMS observes 7 paid holidays, 1 personal day, and 2-1/2 rotational holidays. The offices will be closed on the holidays and left open on the rotational holidays:

New Years Day	<u>Rotational Holidays</u>
Memorial Day	President's Day
Independence Day	Veterans Day
Labor Day	Good Friday afternoon
Thanksgiving Day	
Friday after Thanksgiving	
Christmas	Personal Day

Any holiday that falls on a Saturday is observed on the preceding Friday. Any holiday that falls on a Sunday is observed on the following Monday. Additionally, employees will receive time-off up to one-half day on Christmas Eve and New Years Eve, providing they fall on a regularly scheduled workday. If a paid holiday occurs during your vacation, vacation will be extended one day. We also observe 2-1/2 rotational holidays. This means the office is kept open during these days and staff rotates coverage of the office.\* If you end up working on one of these days, your supervisor will work with you to schedule another day off.

\* *That day must be taken within the same week.*

### *Personal Day*

The personal day is one day that the employee may choose to take off with pay for personal use. Personal days must be taken as a full day off. Personal days are awarded every January to permanent employees. For a new employee, the personal day is awarded after satisfactory completion of their introductory period. If the new employee starts by June 30<sup>th</sup>, they will be entitled to a personal day for that year. If hired after July 1<sup>st</sup>, they will not receive a personal day until the following year. Personal days do not accumulate or carry forward. If employment is discontinued, you will not receive pay in lieu of your personal day; it must be taken off.

## Donation of Annual Leave

Employees who have completed their introductory period may donate unused medical leave hours for use by a designated employee who does not have sufficient leave accrued to receive pay during an extended absence. Employees may donate up to 40 hours of annual leave to an individual employee.

The donation is calculated at the recipient's wage rate, and a corresponding number of hours of annual leave will be credited to the recipient.

Employees are eligible to receive donations of annual leave if they have a serious illness, injury, or family emergency, and they have exhausted their paid leave, have approval for the donated leave, and are ineligible for Workers' Compensation. Employees may receive a total of 160 hours (one month) of donated leave in a 12-month period.

## F. WORKPLACE SAFETY

## Office Security

The SCMS cannot be held responsible for the safety of your personal belongings; therefore, you are strongly advised to keep purses, money, keys, and other valuables hidden from sight. If you are working late or on weekends, please be certain to keep all outside doors locked.

## Workplace Safety

The health and well being of each employee is important to SCMS.

*Accidents:* Should any employee have an accident on the premises, it must be reported immediately to his or her supervisor to permit timely medical attention and reporting. The area or instrument(s) involved in the incident should be placed off-limits to all employees and persons who receive services until properly inspected. Failure of a staff member to document job-related injuries may result in disciplinary action, including termination. Reporting job-related injuries protects SCMS and the staff member.

Employees will notify the CEO immediately in the event of a possible exposure (needle stick, injury, splash, etc.).

The organization is concerned for the personal safety of its employees and the members we serve. Should an employee see a safety hazard, it should be corrected, if possible, by the employee and reported immediately to the employee's program manager.

The department supervisor is responsible for checking any corrected hazard and reporting to the CEO.

## Inclement Weather and Emergency Closures

The CEO may close SCMS due to inclement weather or emergency on days other than regularly scheduled holidays. Should this occur, every attempt will be made to notify staff. Unless otherwise requested, staff are not expected to work during an emergency closing.

The absence will be considered an excused absence for all staff, and will not be charged to PTO. Should an emergency closing occur while a staff member is already on earned leave time (sick, vacation, personal), he or she is not entitled to additional wages, time off or reduction in PTO.

Staff members who do not report for work because of the weather, in the absence of an official closing that day, will be charged one day of personal time off (PTO).

## G. OFFICE MANAGEMENT

## Open Door

Employees are encouraged to share their concerns with their supervisors. They are expected to listen to employees' concerns, to encourage employees' input, and to seek resolution to problems and issues that an employee may raise. All employees are strongly encouraged to assist the organization in finding ways to improve the services provided for the people we serve and to find ways to operate more efficiently.

## Problem Solving

It is the organization's policy to treat all employees equitably and fairly, and to establish policies that meet that standard. The organization is aware that whenever a group of people work together, there are bound to be situations involving misunderstandings and/or misinformation which arise from time to time. At all times, and particularly in such instances, employees are encouraged to exercise free and open communication with their immediate supervisor in order to seek a resolution using this process.

1. The employee should talk with their immediate supervisor. The immediate supervisor will then give his or her verbal response within three days.
2. If this meeting does not resolve the issue, either party may notify the immediate supervisor in writing that they are of the opinion that further discussion cannot contribute to settlement. If the problem is between an employee and his or her immediate supervisor, then the CEO will have the final determination.

It is important to resolve problems or complaints quickly. While the organization cannot guarantee a solution to every complaint or problem, it is the organization's desire to be fair with individuals and groups of employees, and its personnel policies are designed to achieve that objective.

## Media Requests and Media Releases

A staff member may not speak to the news media as an official or unofficial spokesperson of the nonprofit without prior clearance from the CEO. All inquiries from the media should be referred to the CEO or SCMS President. However, Project Access most often handles its own media requests.

Should a staff member receive a media inquiry, he or she should respond: "I have no authority to respond to your request. You should refer your question to the CEO."

Furthermore, it is the organization's goal to coordinate all media releases in an organized and clear manner. Any and all information, releases, and/or mailing to the media (TV, radio, newspaper, magazines, the Internet, etc.) and the public, both within and outside the organization, need to be submitted to and approved by the CEO prior to any release or mailing.

## Cellular Telephone Reimbursement

When SCMS requires employees to carry cell phones, SCMS will pay the cost. Any additional charges, other than the monthly charge, will not be reimbursed unless the employee is out of town on business.

If you are asked to use your personal cell phone for short term business use, the organization will reimburse employees for personal cellular telephones as follows:

- For business-related communication when traveling or receiving training.
  - If there are no excess time charges, the organization will reimburse for the organization's prorated portion based on the percentage of organization usage of the basic time.
  - If there are excess time charges, the organization will reimburse for each minute of organization use at the per-minute additional use rate for that telephone contract. The organization will not prorate the basic charges, but rather reimburse for each minute of organizational use.
  - The organization will pay for actual long distance charges for organizational charges.

Employees are expected to be prudent in their use of cellular telephone calls for organization business, and to use organization telephone when calls will be more than a few minutes, particularly when both long distance and cellular charges will be incurred.

To request reimbursement within 30 days of receipt of the bill, employees must submit copies of their cellular telephone bill, with organization calls highlighted. SCMS will reimburse on its regular schedule.

## Use of Personal Automobiles

Staff members may routinely or occasionally be required to use their personal automobiles to complete their assigned duties, to attend meetings, or to conduct other organization business. Staff members will be reimbursed for business use of personal automobiles at a rate allowed by this organization's policy. Mileage logs should be kept and reported quarterly or whenever necessary. Requests for reimbursement should be submitted to the appropriate supervisor for approval. Employees who use their personal vehicles for organization business are encouraged to contact their personal insurance company regarding coverage. The organization does not cover employees' personal vehicles.

## Travel

From time to time, staff members of SCMS will be required to travel on official business. Any travel must be approved in advance by your supervisor. Every expense must be accompanied by a receipt. Expense forms are available from the Associate Director. To contain the cost of travel and lodging, all staff will meet the following requirements:

1. Report all expenses such as meals, lodging, tips, travel to and from the destination, and car rentals on a Travel Reimbursement Form. Mileage on personal vehicles will be reimbursed at the current company per-mile rate.
2. Buy airline tickets as far in advance of a trip as possible. Seek discount fares. Consult a travel agency and/or the Internet for the best fares based on time of arrival and departure, booking restrictions, and comparison of various carriers.
3. Choose rental cars (only when required) and rental car companies by price, not by frequent flier affiliation. Price should be moderate.
4. Obtain prior approval from immediate supervisor for any overnight out-of-town travel plans.
5. Buy only the type of gasoline recommended in the car manufacturer's specifications.
6. Purchase gasoline where cash discounts are offered and pump your own.

7. Stay in moderately priced motels. For safety reasons, staffers may stay in a more expensive motel or the motel where a meeting or conference is held.
8. When attending a meeting within a three hours' drive of your home, seek approval from your supervisor for an overnight stay.
9. Use discretion with meal costs, and provide a receipt for all meal expenditures.

## Expense Advances

SCMS employees should plan to use their company credit card for expenses and travel. If a cash advance is needed, listed below is the policy:

If you request advance funds to conduct organization business, you must submit a written request to your immediate supervisor as soon as possible but at least two weeks in advance. You must keep track of advances and rectify immediately, confirming outstanding balances due to the organization.

All expense advances must be completed with full details, providing the particulars of the trip, including its purpose. You should use advances immediately and return any unspent money to the Associate Director as soon as possible.

## Travel Advances

SCMS employees should plan to use their company credit card for expenses and travel. If a cash advance is needed, listed below is the policy:

In anticipation of travel expenses, meeting registration, and lodging, advance reimbursement to staff is authorized to the extent that financial hardship is documented. Advance funds will be provided *only* for travel, meeting registration and lodging and remitted on the day of travel.

Request for advance payment must be submitted through the CEO at least seven days prior to the expected date of departure. Requests for advance payment must be approved by the individual's supervisor on forms provided by SCMS. On returning, staff must show receipts of expenses and return any excess funds advanced.

## Travel Hours and Compensation

Employees traveling on organization business will be compensated for their travel time. To the extent possible and reasonable, employees are encouraged to adjust their workweek schedules to avoid working in excess of 40 hours per week.

Employees traveling on the organization's business are compensated for their time spent in meetings, conferences, training classes, workshops, and other work-related activities.

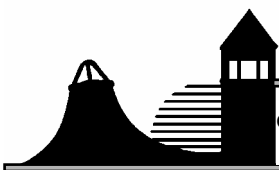
## A Closing Message on Personnel Policies

These are the policies for all of the organization's employees. In addition to being understood as incorporated in our position descriptions, they represent our practice, procedure, policy, philosophy, and way of working together and with those we serve.

All of us are expected to:

- Be courteous. Be friendly, helpful, and supportive. Whenever appropriate, use phrases such as "Please," "Thank you," and "May I help you?"
- Promote team spirit. Work together, cooperate. Promote quality services and enhance staff relationships. Share responsibilities. Recognize others' achievements.
- Participate in making the quality of our work better. Suggest improvements. Help others. Be open to new ideas and methods. Maintain current knowledge in your area of skill and expertise. Strive to improve your own work.
- Make efficient use of your time. Be ready to begin at the scheduled time. Establish priorities with your supervisor. Use time wisely.
- Communicate effectively. Be open, honest, and truthful with yourself and others. Talk to your supervisor. Let your supervisor know what's going on in your area. Ask questions. Give your supervisor pertinent information, giving the facts without concealment or exaggeration.
- Maintain confidentiality. Keep information about members, patients and co-workers confidential.
- Maintain an appropriate appearance. It is important to present a positive image. Clothing should be clean and appropriate to the position; you should be neatly groomed.
- Know the structure, philosophy, and purpose of the organization. Know how you fit into the structure and the organization's purpose. Maintain and promote its mission.

We hope that this manual will help you to understand and enjoy your position with the Spokane County Medical Society.



# Spokane County MEDICAL SOCIETY

Orange Flag Building • 104 S. Freya St., Suite 114 • Spokane, WA 99202-4868 • (509) 325-5010 • Fax (509) 325-5409

## Employee Handbook Receipt

I have received a copy of the Spokane County Medical Society (SCMS) Employee Handbook and understand that I am responsible for becoming familiar with the policies described in it. I understand that the information contained in it represents management guidelines only, which may be modified from time to time. This handbook is not a contract. I understand that neither the handbook's policies nor any other representations made by a management representative, at the time of hire or at any time during employment, are to be interpreted as a contract between the Company and any of its employees. I further understand that my employment is voluntarily entered into, that I am free to resign at any time, and that the Company may terminate the employment relationship whenever it determines that it is in its best interests to do so, and may do so with or without notice or cause. I understand that I am employed at will. I have asked for and received to my satisfaction an explanation of anything I did not understand.

The Employee agrees that upon separation, any debts owed to the SCMS must be paid in full or they will be withheld from Employee's last paycheck. Additionally, the Employee agrees that part or all of the last paycheck may be withheld until all company property is returned and to cover the cost of canceling credit cards, changing locks, etc., if property is not returned. The Employee agrees that if 10 work days' notice of resignation is not given, the Employee shall forfeit his/her unused PTO.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Confidentiality Acknowledgment

I shall respect the privacy concerns of the people we serve, and I shall hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of professional service, whether that information is obtained through written records or daily interaction with the person. Therefore, I will not disclose an individual's confidences to anyone, except (1) as mandated by law, (2) to prevent a clear and immediate danger to a person or persons, (3) where I am compelled to do so by a court of pursuant to the rules of a court.

I shall store or dispose of professional records in ways that maintain confidentiality.

I shall possess a professional attitude that upholds confidentiality toward the people we serve, colleagues, applicants, and any sensitive situations arising within the organization.

I, upon my termination, shall maintain client and coworker confidentiality and I shall hold confidential any information about sensitive situations within this organization.

I understand that violation of this confidentiality agreement may be grounds for immediate dismissal.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date