



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Rev. July 2026. The policies and procedures in this handbook are revised once a year at a minimum. Yearly changes will be communicated to employees in a timely manner. The printed version of the manual may not be updated regularly for immediate distribution; however, an updated copy will be posted on RCMA's intranet at all times.

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SECTION 1 - WELCOME

This handbook is not a contract. It is only a tool that employees should use to understand the personnel policies of the Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA). The handbook contains the most important policies for employees. If at any time employees wish to review the Personnel Policy Manual or other policies and procedures of RCMA relating to administration, programs, human resources, fiscal, health, safety, transportation, community relations, and fundraising, they can be found in the RCMA Policy and Procedure Manual located at each RCMA center and office as well as on RCMA's intranet.

1.1 *RCMA MISSION STATEMENT*

RCMA opens doors to opportunities through quality child care and education from crib to high school and beyond.

Within the framework of this mission, RCMA will:

1. Provide quality child care and education;
2. Provide children and their families with support services;
3. Provide educational opportunities and improve the health and general welfare of children and their families;
4. Involve parents in the educational process and in public policy decisions affecting their children and families;
5. Increase public awareness of the lifestyle of migrant and seasonal farm workers;
6. Provide opportunities and encourage the professional development of staff hired from the farm worker and other communities served

Our values are quality, opportunity, respect, and compassion.

"WE OPEN DOORS TO OPPORTUNITIES"

1.2 *INTRODUCTION*

To Each Staff Member:

This booklet has been prepared for all employees so that employees will know what to expect from RCMA as well as what RCMA expects from an employee. Employees will also learn about RCMA's background and the programs that are operating today.

In order for any organization to function properly, it has to have a set of policies and procedures. This booklet contains the general rules and regulations of RCMA, which will guide employees to success within RCMA.

We ask that all employees read this Employee Handbook carefully and keep it in a place where it can easily be found when employees need to refer to it.

Remember, the policies and procedures exist to keep the children under our care safe, to keep employees safe, and to keep RCMA safe so that it can continue thriving for years to come. Policies should be followed as written at all centers. Charter Academy staff should refer to the Charter Academy employee handbook in addition to the district regulations, as their policies and procedures may differ at times.

RCMA is constantly evolving, and so these policies and procedures could change. When policies and procedures change, every effort will be made to ensure employees are aware of the change.

1.3 *HISTORY OF RCMA*

RCMA was founded in 1965 as part of a partnership with the Mennonite church in the Homestead area of Dade County. It was created solely for the health and safety of farm worker children who were accompanying their parents to the fields. RCMA comes from our legal name, Redlands Christian Migrant Association. “Redlands” is from the rich agricultural land, red in color, in one section of South Dade County, where RCMA was founded. Its use of “Christian” signifies no affiliation with any one church, but does signify the principles of the organization’s founders and indicates clearly the spirit in which its services are rendered. The word “Migrant” was chosen to indicate that the organization’s original primary purpose was to serve migrant farm worker families. Over the years, as RCMA has grown and developed, the words behind RCMA no longer encompass RCMA’s reality, and so, we no longer address RCMA as Redlands Christian Migrant Association, and keep to only using RCMA.

From our humble roots, we have grown in both numbers and geography. We have strengthened the quality and scope of services that we provide internally, and through strong partnerships with Head Start, Division of Early Learning, the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Florida Agriculture, United Way, and other community-based organizations, school districts, and individual donors and volunteers. RCMA provides services in most counties in Florida by invitation, as a result of our proven track record and credentials.

Today, RCMA is the largest provider of early childhood education in the state of Florida. Creating centers has been a necessity in order to provide services in the rural communities where no facilities existed. We have been a Migrant Head Start delegate agency since 1981 and have been a grantee since 2009, a Head Start Grantee since 1991, and an Early Head Start Grantee since 1996. The majority of our centers are accredited either through NAEYC, NAC, or other agencies with goals for all to follow. Our inclusion of children with disabilities, beginning with infants and toddlers, has been recognized as a model within our state. Our staffing is reflective of the ethnicity of the children served, and hiring from within the community has been our practice since 1968.

The RCMA Board of Directors is composed of a diverse group of members, including parents and community representatives from various fields, such as business, education, law, social service providers, job service employees, and others. Each county in which we operate is represented on the Board. The officers of the Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council and Migrant Head Start Policy Committee automatically sit on the Board of Directors as parent representatives and meet four times a year. This shared governance has provided for excellent communication between the three policy groups and a clear understanding of the roles of each.

Since its founding in the Redlands area of Homestead in Dade County, RCMA has expanded from serving seventy-five children in two child development centers in that region to serving over 6,500 children in more than fifty centers, along with 3 Charter Schools, 14 partner family childcare homes, and several school-age programs.

SECTION 2 – WORKPLACE COMMITMENTS

2.1 *OPEN DOOR POLICY*

RCMA's priority is to establish a positive work-life environment for all employees. To help us meet this goal, our organization has an open-door policy, by which employees are encouraged to report work-related concerns. If something about an employee's job is bothering him/her, or if an employee has a question, concern, idea, or problem related to their work, the employee should discuss it with the immediate supervisor as soon as possible. If for any reason an employee does not feel comfortable bringing the matter to his/her supervisor, the employee may reach out to Human Resources for further guidance at hr@rcma.org

We encourage employees to come forward and make his/her concern known to us. There will be no negative repercussions or retaliation for voicing a concern.

2.2 *EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY*

As an employee of RCMA, we want everyone to feel that they have a place where they can work free of prejudices and harassment, including sexual harassment.

With regard to prejudices, RCMA does not tolerate any discrimination because of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, religion, or disabilities. RCMA is fully committed to giving employees a pleasant environment in which to work. We expect employees to be dedicated to their work and to treat everyone with respect.

If everyone followed the guideline "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," we would never have any problems with how people are treated. Unfortunately, people need to be reminded, or given examples of what could be offensive, rude, unpleasant, or nasty to others. The list below is only a guide. Employees should remember that what may seem harmless fun to someone may be offensive or irritating to others. Employees should not:

- Criticize or make fun of a person's language
- Criticize or make fun of how a person looks
- Criticize or make fun of how a person dresses

If an employee believes he/she has been discriminated against because of his/her race, color, beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age, country of origin, religion, or disability, he/she is to submit a grievance by following the steps listed under the "Grievances" section of this handbook.

2.3 *AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT*

Employment with RCMA is voluntary and on an at-will basis, consistent with Florida law. This means that either the employee or RCMA may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice, and with or without cause.

Nothing in this Employee Handbook, personnel policies, benefit plans, performance evaluations, disciplinary procedures, or any other RCMA practice or communication—whether written or verbal—creates or is intended to create an express or implied contract of employment, guarantees employment for any specific period of time, or limits RCMA's right to terminate employment.

RCMA reserves the right to interpret, revise, suspend, modify, or discontinue policies, procedures, benefits, job duties, assignments, compensation, and other terms and conditions of employment at its discretion, subject to applicable law.

Exceptions to at-will employment may apply where required by federal, state, or local law. RCMA will not terminate employment for unlawful reasons, including but not limited to discrimination, retaliation, exercising legally protected rights, taking approved protected leave, reporting suspected violations of law, or any other activity protected under applicable law.

2.4 *SEXUAL HARASSMENT*

All employees and volunteers must ensure that their workplace is free of sexual harassment. RCMA does not tolerate any conduct that is sexually offensive or inappropriate. All employees must avoid any action or behavior that may be perceived as sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment includes:

- Any repeated uninvited, unwelcome sexual advances or offensive behavior, comments, demands, requests for sexual favors, or physical or sexual contact initiated by any individual at the workplace
- The use of this behavior to control, influence, or affect the employment (career, salary, promotion, etc.) of an individual
- Misconduct that creates an offensive, intimidating, or hostile work environment and interferes with the employee's work performance

If an employee believes he/she has been sexually harassed:

If an employee has a complaint regarding sexual harassment by anyone at work, including supervisors, co-workers, volunteers, or visitors, the employee must follow these steps:

1. First, the employee should inform the harasser that his/her behavior is offensive and unwelcome and ask him/her that he/she stop behaving in the same manner. An employee may skip this step if he/she does not feel comfortable addressing the behavior with the harasser.
2. If the harasser's conduct continues, the employee must immediately contact the harasser's supervisor.
3. If the employee's immediate supervisor is the harasser, the employee must report the behavior to the Director of Human Resources at the Rollason Office in Immokalee at (800) 282- 6540 or (239) 658-3560.

The immediate supervisor or the Director of Human Resources or her designee will take immediate action in order to remedy the situation. If the harassment involves any type of physical threat, the alleged harasser could be suspended without pay. During the suspension period, RCMA will conduct a comprehensive and detailed investigation. If the results of the investigation confirm the charges, the harasser will be disciplined up to and including termination. If the charges the employee made are unfounded or made in bad faith, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

For RCMA to take action and correct any problems, it must be aware of discrimination, sexual harassment, or related retaliation. Therefore, if an employee believes that he/she has experienced or witnessed discrimination, sexual harassment, or related retaliation, the employee must directly report it to his/her supervisor, the Director of Human Resources, or her designee at the Rollason Office in Immokalee.

All complaints and information will be investigated and kept confidential to the extent possible.

2.5 *ADA, ADAAA, AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION*

RCMA is committed to ensuring that a person with disabilities is not discriminated against and that he/she has equal opportunity and equal access to all the rights and privileges enjoyed by those who are not disabled. RCMA will comply with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA).

RCMA will provide, upon request, reasonable accommodations to individuals who are qualified for a job, with or without reasonable accommodations, so that he/she may perform the essential job duties of the position unless doing so causes a direct threat to these individuals or others in the workplace and the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation or if the accommodation creates undue hardship to RCMA.

A reasonable accommodation request will not cancel any prior performance improvement plan or disciplinary action.

Individuals who are currently using illegal drugs are excluded from coverage under this policy.

Medical Documentation and Confidentiality

If the disability is not obvious and there is no other medical information already on record for the employee, RCMA will require the employee to provide documentation from a physician or other medical professional concerning the existence and extent of the disability.

The employee's medical information will be maintained in a separate confidential file. Any information regarding the employee's condition will only be made available on a need-to-know basis.

Procedures

1. The employee or supervisor notifies the area's Human Resources Generalist about the request.
2. The assigned Human Resources Generalist will meet with the requestor, document the information provided, and explain the process to the person requesting the accommodation as part of the interactive process.
3. If there are financial considerations for the accommodation, the Human Resources Director will take the necessary steps to obtain quotes for the work.
4. After the quotes are received, the Director of Human Resources, in conjunction with the Associate Executive Director for Business & Finance and/or Controller, will meet to discuss the request and whether a reasonable accommodation can be made.
5. The Human Resources Director or Human Resources Generalist will contact the requestor

to inform them of the decision.

Complaints

If an employee believes that he/she has been subjected to unequal treatment as prohibited by the ADA may file a written complaint with the Director of Human Resources in Immokalee within 180 days of the alleged occurrence.

Accommodation Equipment Return

Employees who are provided equipment, devices, technology, furniture, or other materials as part of a workplace accommodation are responsible for maintaining and safeguarding these items through the duration of their accommodation period. All ADA-related equipment provided by RCMA remains our property unless otherwise stated in writing.

Upon separation of employment for any reason, including resignation, retirement, or termination, employees must return all ADA accommodation equipment to their supervisor or designated RCMA representative no later than their final day of employment, unless alternative arrangements have been approved by Human Resources.

2.6 DRUGS/ALCOHOL-FREE WORKPLACE

RCMA is committed to protecting the safety, health, and well-being of all employees and other individuals in our workplace. We recognize that alcohol abuse and drug use pose a significant threat to our goals. We have established a drug and alcohol-free workplace program that balances our respect for individuals with the need to maintain an alcohol and drug-free environment. This organization encourages employees to voluntarily seek help with drug and alcohol problems.

Covered Workers

Any individual who conducts business for the organization, is applying for a position, or is conducting business on the organization's property is covered by our drug and alcohol-free workplace policy. Our policy includes, but is not limited to, executive management, managers, supervisors, full-time employees, part-time employees, off-site employees, volunteers, applicants, contractors, and interns.

Applicability

Our drug and alcohol-free workplace policy is intended to apply whenever anyone is representing or conducting business for the organization. Therefore, this policy applies during all working hours, whenever conducting business or representing the organization, while on call, while on organization property, and at company-sponsored events.

Prohibited Behavior

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, use, or sale of illegal drugs/controlled substances or alcohol is prohibited at RCMA. Any of these actions is a serious violation of this drug- and alcohol-free workplace policy.

Searches

Entering the organization's property constitutes consent to searches and inspections. If an individual is suspected of violating the drug- and alcohol free workplace policy, he or she may be asked to submit to a search or inspection at any time.

Searches can be conducted of pockets and clothing, lockers, wallets, purses, briefcases, lunchboxes, desks, equipment, parking lots, and personal vehicles.

Drug Testing

To ensure the accuracy and fairness of our testing program, all testing will be conducted according to Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) guidelines where applicable and will include a screening test; a confirmation test; the opportunity for a split sample; review by a Medical Review Officer, including the opportunity for employees who test positive to provide a legitimate medical explanation, such as a physician's prescription, for the positive result; and a documented chain of custody. All drug-testing information will be maintained in separate confidential records.

As a condition of employment, employees will be required to participate in pre-employment, random, post-accident, reasonable suspicion, return-to-duty, and follow-up testing upon selection or request of management.

All suitable candidates/employees will be directed to comply with pre-employment drug testing at one of our third-party, Vault-approved facilities and provided with the applicable drug testing form.

Pre-employment Drug Test

As a condition of employment and before the start of employment, candidates will be required to participate in and pass a pre-employment drug screening.

In the event an applicant does not pass the pre-employment testing, the offer of employment can be withdrawn. The applicant may not reapply.

Random Drug Test

Our drug testing program complies with and aligns with Federal US DOT regulations for professional drivers, also known as CDL drivers.

All drivers required to possess a CDL license to operate commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) (i.e., motor vehicles with a GVWR of 26,001 pounds or more; transporting 16 or more passengers, including the driver) on public roadways must be USDOT drug and alcohol tested. Furthermore, drivers are subject to unannounced random drug & alcohol testing. Random testing selection must be done using a scientifically valid method to make it truly random.

Procedure

Following our third-party administrator process, a quarterly selection of "random" individuals will be provided to RCMA for compliance with a random drug and/or alcohol screening.

Each quarter, HR, in conjunction with our third-party administrator, Vault Health, will review the current quarter's list of selected candidates. HR will notify the supervisor for each candidate to

provide notice and guidance for sending the candidate for proper testing. Upon notification, the employee must proceed immediately for completion of screening.

Positive results will be managed confidentially, and all drug-testing information will be maintained within the employee's personnel file in their "Restricted" folder. RCMA will comply with the notification and reporting of all applicable outside government agencies as required by law.

Post-Accident Drug Test

Employees who are injured at work are required to report their injuries immediately to their supervisor. Guidelines have been put into place to ensure safe behaviors are followed to prevent incidents that can result in a serious injury or fatality at one of our locations.

Employees will be required to take a post-accident drug test on the day of the injury for any significant work-related injury or any on-the-job driving accident.

If an employee's responsibilities require that he/she drive certain types of RCMA vehicles for the purpose of carrying a specific number of children, the employee must be tested in accordance with the United States Department of Transportation testing rules before the employee is allowed to drive an RCMA vehicle.

Reasonable Suspicion

Should we suspect that someone in the workplace is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol at work, the completion of the steps outlined below should be taken. All "Safety Sensitive Functions¹" should be suspended pending the completion of the steps outlined in the Reasonable Suspicion Procedures for Supervisors. The procedure covers:

1. **Complaint Intake:** All complaints made by co-workers, clients, and vendors should be taken seriously and responded to accordingly. Verify and document the following information from the complainant to properly assess and respond to the concern.
2. **Steps for Establishing Reasonable Suspicion:** The supervisor will observe the employee in question at their work area directly. The supervisor will use the guidelines outlined in RCMA's HR82 "Documentation of Reasonable Suspicion" form.
3. **Corrective Actions:** The supervisor will take the appropriate steps to send the employee for testing and work with HR for the management of results and return to work status.
4. **Pay:** If the test results are negative, the employee will be asked to return to work and will be paid for all hours of work missed.

Five-panel Drug Test

The substances that will be tested for are: Amphetamines, Cannabinoids (THC), Cocaine, Opiates, and Phencyclidine (PCP). Testing for the presence of the metabolites of drugs will be conducted by the analysis of urine.

An employee will be subject to the same consequences of a positive test if he/she refuses the screening or the test.

¹ A safety-sensitive position refers to a job where an employee's performance directly affects the safety of themselves or others, including roles where inadequate task performance or failure to perform could lead to safety incidents. Some common safety-sensitive positions include: Drivers, Medical care providers, Child care providers

Consequences

One of the goals of our drug and alcohol-free workplace program is to encourage employees to voluntarily seek help with alcohol and/or drug problems.

If, however, an employee violates the policy, the consequences are serious; he/she will be terminated from employment.

In the case of applicants who do not pass the pre-employment testing, the offer of employment can be withdrawn. The applicant may not reapply.

Resources

RCMA offers free benefits to all employees through First Stop Health, which includes counseling and has a substance abuse and awareness program.

2.7 BACKGROUND SCREENING AND ARRESTS

To protect staff and children served in all programs, RCMA requires background screening of all its employees. This mandate is also consistent with the requirements of the Florida Department of Children and Families. Background screening results are processed in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Initial and continued employment is contingent upon successful results. All costs are the responsibility of RCMA.

Re-screening

All employees are required to undergo re-screening of criminal background checks every five (5) years prior to the anniversary date of an employee's initial background screening check and thereafter.

All employees will be required to repeat the background screening if there is a ninety (90)-day lapse in his/her employment. If the employee's employment is voluntarily or involuntarily terminated and later reapply for employment, the employee will need to be rescreened prior to coming back to work for RCMA.

Arrests

All employees are required to notify the organization within forty-eight (48) hours of being arrested for any criminal offense. Federal and/or contracting agencies, including the Division of Early Learning, will be notified in writing, when appropriate, within forty-eight (48) hours of an employee being arrested.

RCMA will review the alleged offense within forty-eight (48) hours of notification, determine if the offense is one that would exclude the employee under a level 2 screening and, if so, will remove the employee from work and will not allow the employee to return to work until he/she is cleared of all charges.

If an employee fails to notify his/her supervisor within forty-eight (48) hours of an arrest, it will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Refer to the complete policy on the Intranet.

2.8 TEAM LEADERSHIP - HIRING FROM THE COMMUNITY

RCMA has a unique staffing policy in all its child development work. It is one which at times has received high praise from experienced child development experts who have given time to assess its results. It begins with a staff of former farm workers and members of the community who receive the necessary support and training to be in charge of virtually all of RCMA's child programming and supervision. They are teamed with degree professionals with early childhood education and health backgrounds. Our professionals have the self-assurance to serve in subordinate capacities to individuals whose formal education is less than theirs. For the most part, in RCMA, this is the team-staffing pattern. We have a core of unusual individuals, strongly supportive of this system.

SECTION 3 – EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATION & CATEGORIES

3.1 *CLASSIFICATION*

Exempt Employees

These employees are not eligible to receive overtime pay. They are paid a salary based on the number of days worked, not the number of hours.

Non-Exempt Employees

These employees are paid by the number of hours they work, and they receive overtime pay if they work more than 40 hours in a workweek.

3.2 *EMPLOYEE CATEGORIES*

RCMA hires the following categories of employees:

Executive Staff (Appointed Positions)

The Executive Director is appointed by and serves at the discretion of the Board of Directors. All director positions under the Management Team classification are also appointed Executive Staff positions. All Executive Staff members agree to serve at the discretion of the Executive Director. (Executive Staff are also regular employees).

Full-time Regular Employees

Full-time employees are hired to work a minimum of 30 hours a week.

Part-time Regular Employees

Part-time employees are hired to work less than 30 hours a week and are not eligible for certain RCMA benefits.

Temporary Employees

Temporary employees are hired to fill positions that are available for a certain period of time.

Substitutes

Substitute employees are hired to work when regular employees are absent.

SECTION 4 - GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

4.1 *ADVERTISEMENT*

RCMA advertises all full-time (FT) and part-time (PT) employment opportunities to ensure a fair, consistent, and compliant hiring process. Employees interested in applying for open positions are encouraged to review available opportunities and submit an application by the posted deadline.

Employees in substitute or temporary assignments who wish to obtain a regular position must apply through the posted recruitment process. Internal applicants may receive consideration based on organizational needs, qualifications, and job-related requirements.

To be considered for an internal transfer or promotion, employees must generally meet the qualifications for the position, maintain satisfactory job performance, and have completed at least 12 months of employment and six months in their current position.

Advertising may **not** be required for:

- Temporary or substitute assignments
- Internships or volunteer positions
- Workforce reductions or restructuring
- Outsourced or contracted services
- Seasonal staffing adjustments

RCMA is committed to equal employment opportunity and administers all hiring and employment actions in compliance with applicable federal and state employment laws.

Refer to the complete policy on the Intranet.

4.2 *NEW HIRE ORIENTATION*

During the first 30 days of an employee's employment, his/her supervisor (or designee) will be responsible for providing the employee with necessary information regarding the performance requirements, critical policies, safety guidelines, and any other basic information an employee needs to help him/her familiarize themselves with their job at RCMA.

At the request of supervisors, Human Resources may also conduct a new hire orientation that will include a review of RCMA's mission, critical policies in the employee handbook, and an overview of the benefits offered.

Employees are encouraged to ask any questions regarding their employment and RCMA from their supervisor.

4.3 *PROBATIONARY PERIOD*

To determine if an employee can meet the standards and expectations for the position, each employee has to complete a probationary period after hire.

If an employee is a new hire or rehire:

New or rehired non-exempt (hourly) employees will be on a 6-month probationary period starting

on their first day of work. New or rehired exempt (salaried) employees will be on a 12-month probationary period. The 6-month or 12-month period may be extended if additional time is necessary in order to assess their performance.

During the 6-month, 12-month, or extended probationary period, an employee may be terminated without cause. New or rehired employees within the probationary period may not appeal a decision regarding their employment through the RCMA grievance process. There is no requirement that an unsatisfactory employee be retained for the entire probation period. Termination may take place at any time during the period.

If an employee is promoted or transferred to a new job:

If an employee is promoted or transferred to a new job, he/she will also begin their new assignment with a probationary period of 6 months or 12 months from the start date. The probationary period is important to ensure that an employee can perform their new duties and responsibilities well. If the employee does not meet the expectations RCMA has, the employee may be transferred to another available position for which he/she has the required skills, demoted, or terminated.

* Employees returning from furlough are not considered rehires.

**The furlough period will not be counted towards the calculation of the probationary period for seasonal staff.

4.4 PROMOTIONS AND DEMOTIONS

Promotions

RCMA is committed to all employees' career growth and will provide opportunities for promotion to qualified and deserving employees to positions with increased responsibilities and higher pay. The position must be advertised first so that everyone who is interested and has the necessary qualifications may apply.

Some promotions are automatic based on the attainment of specific educational credentials.

However, supervisors may, at their discretion, choose not to promote the employee when the employee's current performance does not meet the expectations of the higher-level position or when budgetary constraints exist.

NOTE: 1. Certain positions do not require a credential or degree higher than the one specified in the job description. Therefore, no automatic promotions will take place. 2. The change in status for an employee in a FT or PT position going into a substitute position is not considered a demotion, but rather a transfer.

Promotions based on skills or the attainment of specific credentials will result in an increase in salary. The increase will typically bring an employee's salary to the minimum of the new pay range, or he/she will receive a 5% increase of his/her current salary, whichever is higher. Substitutes will be brought up to the minimum of the new pay range.

Involuntary Demotions

RCMA recognizes two types of demotions:

Without Cause:

This type of demotion is involuntary. It may take place when employees, through no fault of their own, are moved to positions that have a lower pay range than that of the position they had before.

With Cause:

A demotion with cause takes place when an employee who has been given the time and help to improve his/her performance still cannot perform the job as expected, or when an employee who has been allowed sufficient time to obtain a mandated requirement for the position fails to meet such requirement.

When a demotion without or with cause is appropriate, but there is no lower position available, the employee may be terminated.

Voluntary Demotions

In addition to the two types of demotions described above, employees may choose to consider voluntary demotions and apply for available positions in lower pay ranges. Reasons for voluntary demotions include the following:

- a. An employee feels that his/her skills do not align with his/her current position
- b. An employee feels he/she needs a different work-life balance
- c. An employee feels that his/her current position is too stressful, or
- d. An employee realizes that a lower-level position is more enjoyable

NOTE: The change in status for an employee in a FT or PT position going into a substitute position is not considered a demotion, but rather a transfer.

Demotions and Pay

Involuntary Demotions Without Cause	• No salary change if the demotion is initiated by RCMA because it is beneficial to the organization. • Reduction to the new range maximum if the current rate of pay is higher than the maximum. This action will take place in situations when the employee's current position is eliminated, and the only alternative to maintaining his/her employment is to offer a non-competitive position in a lower salary range.
Involuntary Demotions With Cause	• 5% reduction • Reduction to the new range maximum if the current rate of pay is higher than the maximum.
Voluntary Demotions	• 5% reduction • Reduction to the new range maximum if the current rate of pay is higher than the maximum.

4.5 INTERNAL PROMOTIONS VS. EXTERNAL HIRES

RCMA is committed to fair and competitive compensation practices that support employee growth, maintain internal equity, and attract qualified candidates.

Internal Promotions

Employees promoted to a higher-level position will receive:

- A minimum 5% increase to their current base salary, or
- Placement at the minimum salary of the new position's pay range, whichever is greater.

Additional increases may be considered for employees with exceptional performance, specialized skills, or significant experience, subject to HR and leadership approval.

External Hires

Starting salaries for external candidates are based on:

- Relevant experience and qualifications
- Market conditions
- The established salary range for the position

External candidates may be hired above the minimum of the salary range when justified by experience or market competitiveness.

Pay Equity

Compensation decisions are reviewed to help ensure fairness and consistency across similar roles.

RCMA periodically reviews salary ranges and compensation practices and may make adjustments based on organizational needs, budget availability, and market conditions. Exceptions to standard compensation practices require appropriate approval.

Refer to the complete policy on the Intranet.

4.6 TRANSFERS

Lateral Transfers

A lateral transfer occurs when an existing employee is competitively (position was advertised) selected as the most qualified candidate for an existing vacant position within the same pay grade as their current job.

RCMA understands an employee's desire to transfer at certain times during their employment. Likewise, supervisors should be supportive of staff who have the desire to enhance their skills or develop new competencies to pursue different or greater responsibilities internally.

An employee must have completed their initial probationary period and be in good standing before he or she is eligible to apply for a transfer. The 6-month or 12-month waiting requirement may be waived by the employee's current supervisor, such as in cases of a position elimination or situations where the department may need the employee to fill a critical vacancy.

Employees may be eligible for a voluntary transfer if he/she does not have any disciplinary action beyond a second warning (#2) and/or has not been on a performance plan as a result of unsatisfactory performance, conduct, or behavior during the preceding annual review period. Exceptions to this eligibility restriction may be made with the approval of the hiring manager.

All transfers are subject to a new probationary period. See Section 4.3 for details on probationary periods.

Types of Lateral Transfers:

Voluntary: This type of lateral transfer occurs when an employee voluntarily elects to apply for a position advertised.

Involuntary: This type of transfer occurs when a supervisor determines that the move is beneficial to RCMA. The transfer may be within the same geographical area or to a different RCMA location.

Temporary Transfers

A temporary transfer occurs when an existing employee is scheduled to be furloughed or is on furlough, and RCMA identifies that there is a need to cover vacations, unforeseen leaves of absence, and/or the need to work on temporary projects, etc.

In addition to the lateral transfer described above, employees may choose to consider a temporary transfer and could apply for available positions in lower pay ranges if the position is advertised. For the positions that are not advertised, employees may communicate directly with the hiring supervisor.

If an exempt employee accepts a non-exempt position, the employee's status and salary will be adjusted to non-exempt and paid on the hours worked. The employee's benefits will not be impacted during this transition.

Transfers and Pay:

Lateral Transfer	• Transfers to positions within the same salary range do not require a salary change.
Temporary Transfers	• If the employee's current salary aligns with the internal equity of the new pay grade, the employee's salary will not be impacted. • If the employee's current salary does not align with the internal equity of the new pay grade, the employee's salary will be decreased. An internal equity analysis will be conducted to determine the appropriate pay rate. • If an employee temporarily transfers to a substitute teacher position, the employee will receive the substitute teacher rate of pay.

4.7 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND WORK RULES

RCMA employees are expected to behave in a proper and professional manner **on and off** the job. Employees are expected to respect the rights and feelings of others at all times. Employees are never to behave in ways that might be harmful to the children/families served and co-workers, or may have a negative impact on the mission or reputation of RCMA.

RCMA is supported by public funds and, therefore, it has an obligation towards the general public, particularly migrant and seasonal farm workers, rural poor, and their families. All employees must be gracious, helpful, and considerate to all members of the public. Employees are expected to use good judgment with regard to their behavior and conduct and be sure that their behavior will not affect RCMA's credibility.

It is not possible to list all forms of unacceptable behavior at work. The rules and regulations listed below, as well as others that may be established from time to time, are just a guide to what is considered unacceptable conduct. In addition, employees must always remember to follow the Standards of Conduct, which he/she agreed to follow when the employee began his/her employment at RCMA. Specifically, the employee agreed to respect each family and child, and every RCMA staff member regardless of their gender, race, culture, ethnicity, age, religion, or disability.

Employees also signed and acknowledged his/her understanding that any information an employee may have about anyone associated with RCMA, such as children, families, and employees, must remain confidential; that children always need an adult with them, and that employees will treat children with respect using positive ways to guide them.

RCMA's work rules and regulations include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Conflict of Interest:** Employees shall not engage in any activity directly or indirectly that will contribute to an employee's personal or financial benefit as a result of RCMA employment. Employees must disclose any financial interest they or their immediate family have in any company that does business with RCMA. Engaging in other employment or personal activity during program work hours, or using the program's name, letterhead, supplies, equipment, or other property for personal purposes, can be deemed a conflict of interest.

Refer to the complete Conflict of Interest Policy on the Intranet.

- **Outside Employment:** Outside employment, which is employment performed by an employee in addition to that performed for RCMA, shall not interfere with efficient job performance at RCMA. Such employment shall not present a conflict of interest, nor conflict with the employee's job duties with RCMA. Employees are required to notify their supervisors prior to such employment.
- **Political Activities:** RCMA employees are encouraged to become registered voters, to participate in each election, and in community affairs. However, employees may not use RCMA time for these purposes and may not involve RCMA in any political campaign or in support of any candidate.
- **Firearms and Other Weapons:** Ensuring a safe work environment and the prevention of workplace violence is of paramount importance to RCMA. Firearms and other weapons inside the workplace pose a potential threat to the safety and security of our employees. The carrying of firearms and other weapons while inside an RCMA building or leased space, on RCMA property, inside a RCMA-owned vehicle, or while conducting RCMA business, on or off-site, is strictly prohibited, is a violation of RCMA policy, and will subject an employee to discipline, up to and including termination.
- **Controlled Substances:** No controlled substances (alcohol or drugs) may be stored, made, used, distributed, or brought to any property used by or under the control of RCMA.

This does not include controlled substances prescribed by a physician.

- **Acceptance of Gifts, Gratuities, and Fees:** Employees are prohibited from personally soliciting or accepting gifts, gratuities, or fees for services rendered by parents. Employees are prohibited from receiving benefits from individuals or companies who have or are presently doing business with RCMA. It is acceptable to receive minor advertising giveaways or allow vendors or companies to provide sponsorships of RCMA events or activities.
- **Gift Giving:** Employees are prohibited from giving, making a donation to, or asking for contributions for a gift to his/her supervisor or anyone above him/her in the chain of command.

4.8 *NEPOTISM*

It is the policy of RCMA not to hire employees into positions that will cause the new employee to be within the supervisory chain of an immediate family member. Prohibited relationships include spouse, child, parent, brother, sister, step-parent, step-children, step-brother, step-sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, niece, nephew, cousin, and any other member of the employee's household.

The policy is intended to ensure effective supervision, corrective action, and positive morale in the workplace. It also seeks to avoid the perception of favoritism, conflicts in loyalty, discrimination, the appearance of impropriety, and conflicts of interest.

4.9 *DRESS CODE*

Employees are expected to use good judgment in their choice of clothing and/or footwear.

RCMA expects all employees to maintain a professional appearance, including appropriate clothing based on their position, personal hygiene, and overall presentation. These standards align with our commitment to providing a positive and professional environment for young children, families, and colleagues.

Employees are expected to adhere to established hygiene requirements, which ensure that employees are presenting themselves appropriately and that the employer is being properly and professionally represented as an organization.

The following guidelines, however, should help employees determine what is appropriate to wear to work:

Shoes

- To reduce the risk of on-the-job accidents, shoes with non-slip soles, a back strap, and heels not to exceed two (2) inches in height must be worn at all times.
- Employees in direct contact with children in classrooms and playgrounds are strongly encouraged to wear closed-toe shoes at all times.
- Cooks must wear closed-toed and rubber-soled shoes at all times.
- Beach flip-flops, clogs (e.g., Crocs), and home slippers are not appropriate in a professional setting.
- Administrative employees physically working at the Rollason State Office may wear shoes/sandals without a back strap, and heels may exceed two (2) inches.
- All employees attending conferences and meetings offsite (taking place away from RCMA

sites) may wear sandals with no back strap. These must be appropriate for the event being attended.

Clothing

- Skirts and dresses must be no more than six (6) inches above the knee when sitting.
- Shorts may be worn but must be no more than six (6) inches above the knees.
- Spandex shorts are not acceptable at work.
- No tube tops, halter tops, midriff blouses, or any other clothing that is appropriate at the beach or at a gym may be worn.
- No clothing that has words, terms, or pictures that may be offensive to others may be worn.
- Cooks must wear hairnets at all times.
- Clothing must be clean and in good condition.
- Clothing must not interfere with the operation of any equipment and/or power tools.
- No dangling or large hoop jewelry that may create a safety hazard to children.
- Commonly accepted small, visible body piercings are allowable but must be appropriate and professional for the workspace.
- Tattoos that are offensive and hostile must be covered and not visible to staff, visitors, or children.

Responsibilities

All employees are responsible for adhering to this dress code policy. Supervisors and managers are responsible for ensuring compliance and addressing any violations of the policy.

4.10 PERSONAL PROPERTY

RCMA does not assume responsibility for the loss of personal belongings that an employee brings to or leaves on RCMA property. Additionally, RCMA does not assume responsibility for any damage to personal vehicles while on RCMA property.

4.11 PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

RCMA recognizes that an employee may wish to use social media in his/her personal life. This policy does not intend to discourage an employee nor limit his/her personal expression or online activities. However, employees are expected to recognize that problems can arise when a personal posting identifies or appears to be associated with RCMA or when a personal posting is used in ways that violate RCMA's Standards of Conduct.

If an employee chooses to express himself/herself by posting online on a social media network, the employee needs to recognize the potential for damage that may be caused (either directly or indirectly) to RCMA, parents, children, volunteers, or other employees, in certain circumstances. Therefore, to ensure that the risk of such damage is minimized, RCMA requires that employees follow these guidelines:

No Postings Using RCMA Resources

Employees may not use RCMA resources, including an employee's RCMA email address, to create or maintain a personal social media account, upload content, or make personal postings online, nor may an employee do so during working hours.

Online Posting

- All RCMA policies apply to anything an employee writes in a post or uploads to the internet. Employees are legally responsible for the content he/she post on any social media network. Employees can be held personally liable for posting material that may be interpreted as offensive, obscene, profane, defamatory, embarrassing, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexually explicit, or unlawful toward an RCMA child, parent, volunteer, or other employee. Unkind comments about an RCMA child, parent, volunteer, or employee are also inappropriate.
- If, in the process of making a personal post or upload to the internet, an employee identifies himself/herself as an employee of RCMA, the employee must clearly state that the views expressed in the employee's post are his/her own, and do not reflect the views of RCMA.
- Employees may not use RCMA logos or other RCMA-related images, nor may an employee make false or misleading statements about RCMA's philosophy.
- Employees are not authorized to post pictures of RCMA children, buildings, and classrooms on personal social media networks.

Employees need to keep in mind at all times that the employee's personal postings may be read not only by the employee's friends and family, but possibly by the employee's coworkers and supervisors, as well as RCMA's donors, parents, or staff from other organizations associated with RCMA. Remember also that even if an employee posts anonymously or under a pseudonym, the employee's identity can be discovered relatively easily.

Employees are encouraged to use common sense when deciding what to include in a post. Failure to follow these guidelines is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

4.12 EMPLOYEE FILES

RCMA recognizes an employee's right to privacy and will implement safeguards to ensure that information in his/her personnel file is kept in accordance with the law.

Employee personnel files are the property of RCMA and may not be removed from RCMA premises without authorization from Human Resources. RCMA recognizes employees have certain privacy rights, and RCMA implements safeguards to help ensure that information in employee personnel files is kept in accordance with the law. As such, access to personnel files is restricted. Generally, only those who have a legitimate reason to review information in an employee's personnel file are allowed to do so, such as an employee's supervisor, certain administrative staff, human resources staff, and DCF licensing agents (if applicable). RCMA will comply with legal subpoenas, court orders, law enforcement orders, government agency orders, and as otherwise legally required.

4.13 WHISTLEBLOWING

RCMA's Standards of Conduct require the Board of Directors and all RCMA employees and volunteers to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of RCMA, everyone must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws, regulations, as well as internal policies and procedures. Board of Directors members and

all RCMA employees and volunteers are responsible for complying with all published Standards of Conduct and for reporting violations or suspected violations without fear of suffering harassment, retaliation, or adverse employment consequences. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

What an employee needs to do:

RCMA wants to maintain a positive and pleasant environment for all of our employees. To help us meet this goal, an employee may share questions, concerns, suggestions, or complaints with his/her immediate supervisor. However, if an employee is not comfortable speaking with his/her supervisor or is not satisfied with the supervisor's response, the employee is encouraged to speak with the Director of Human Resources, any HR representative, or anyone in management that the employee is comfortable approaching. Complaints may be submitted on a confidential basis or anonymously. Reports will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

Acting in Good Faith

When filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation of the Standards of Conduct, an employee must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation of the Standards. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

4.14 GRIEVANCES

RCMA encourages open communication between employees and management to address concerns. Therefore, it is committed to resolving employee concerns through a grievance process whenever possible.

Definition of a Grievance: A grievance is a written request for the resolution of an issue.

Eligible Employees: All RCMA employees, with the exception of new hires/rehires during their probationary period, substitutes, temporary staff, directors, and executive staff members. Individuals who are not RCMA employees do not have standing under this policy to pursue a grievance.

Grievance Process: All eligible employees who feel that they have been unfairly disciplined or terminated have the right to present a grievance to management by following the RCMA Grievance Steps on the next page for prompt consideration and a fair decision. Employees have the right to express grievances without the fear of restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, reprisal, or retaliatory action. This also applies to any employee witness who may be taking part in the presentation of the grievance.

Some examples of actions that are Not Grievable: Employees shall not have the right to file grievances concerning the following:

- Performance evaluations
- Constructive feedback

- Performance Improvement Plan
- Administrative leave
- Voluntary reductions in pay
- Voluntary demotions
- Removal of pay additives
- Correction of overpayment
- Reduction of pay to the maximum of the pay range

Please note that RCMA has an Open-Door Policy by which employees are encouraged to report work-related concerns that are not covered by this Grievance Policy. For any issues related to harassment, discrimination, safety, workplace, and employment law violations, and hostile work environment, please follow the appropriate reporting policy for the particular issue or report the issue immediately to Human Resources at hr@rcma.org.

RCMA has a zero-tolerance policy for harassment, safety violations, workplace and employment law violations, and hostile work environments. RCMA will investigate such offenses in accordance with RCMA's applicable policies. Any crimes will be reported to law enforcement.

Grievance Steps

	Employee		Immediate Supervisor (e.g., Center Coordinator, Manager, Director)
Step 1	• Tries to resolve the issue informally with the immediate supervisor <u>within 5 working days</u> of incident, concern, or event.	→	• Meets and informally responds to the employee <u>within 5 working days</u>.
	Employee		Next Level Supervisor
Step 2	• If concern is not resolved informally at Step 1, the employee may file a written grievance with the next supervisor in the chain of command using form HR39 <u>within 5 working days</u> of receiving Step 1 response.	→	• Meets with the employee, <u>within 7 working days</u> of receiving the written grievance. • Responds to the employee, in writing, <u>within 5 working days</u> of meeting with the employee.
	Employee		Regional Director and/or Director of Department
Step 3	• If concern is not resolved at Step 2, the employee may file a written appeal with the Regional Director (if applicable) <u>within 5 working days</u> of receiving Step 2 response.	→	• Meets with the employee, <u>within 7 working days</u> of receiving the written grievance. • Responds to the employee, in writing, <u>within 10 working days</u> of meeting with the employee.
	Employee		Executive Director, Associate Executive Director, or Designee
Step 4	• If the concern is not resolved at Step 3, the employee may file a written appeal with the Executive Director or Associate Executive Director, or Designee using form HR 39 <u>within 5 working days</u> of receiving Step 3 response.	→	• Meets with the employee <u>within 15 working days</u> of receiving the written grievance. • Responds to the employee, in writing, <u>within 7 working days</u> of meeting with the employee. • This is the final response and the case will be closed.

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At the conclusion of the grievance process, the grievance will be forwarded to RCMA's Board Chair along with an explanation of the decision made or upheld.

If a supervisor in any of the steps listed above is incapacitated, subject to the grievance, or otherwise unavailable, the grievance will be forwarded to the next supervisor in the chain of command.

Confidentiality

All complaints and investigations are treated confidentially to the extent possible, and information is disclosed strictly on a need-to-know basis. The identity of the complainant is usually revealed only to the parties involved in the grievance process, and adequate steps will be taken to ensure that the complainant is protected from retaliation during and after the grievance process and/or investigation. All information about the grievance will be maintained in the employee-restricted file.

Employment Status, Pay, And Benefits

During the grievance investigation, and while employed, the employee will continue to receive a paycheck for any time worked.

During the grievance investigation, and if the employee was terminated as a result of the investigation, the former employee will not receive a paycheck unless for any time worked.

If the result of the grievance investigation shows that no policies were violated or that the disciplinary action or termination should otherwise be overturned, the employment will be reinstated, pay will be retroactive, and all benefits, including seniority, will be reinstated.

If the result of the grievance investigation shows a policy was violated but that the disciplinary action should be lessened or the termination overturned, employment will be reinstated, the termination will change to a corrective action, and all benefits will be reinstated. The employee will receive retroactive pay only if the termination or the disciplinary action was reduced to a feedback; otherwise, the employee will not be compensated for missed time.

The employee will be responsible for any missed insurance premiums during the grievance process.

4.15 INVESTIGATION LEAVE

A leave from work is appropriate when an investigation into an incident that may have violated RCMA policies or procedures, or into a report of inappropriate employee conduct. It is best for RCMA and the employee if the investigation is done with the employee away from RCMA. The investigation may take some time, and the work of RCMA must continue. An investigation is not a disciplinary action or a termination of employment.

During an investigation, the employee placed on leave may or may not be paid. The pay decision will be determined based on the nature of the incident or the seriousness of the situation being investigated.

If the result of the investigation shows that no policies were violated, the employee will be asked

to return to work and will be paid for all regularly scheduled work missed during the investigation leave.

If the results of the investigation show a policy was violated and result in a corrective action, the employee will not be paid for missed time.

The employee will be contacted within 5 working days with an update regarding the investigation or to inform the employee of the outcome of the investigation.

4.16 CONTACT WITH THE MEDIA

All media inquiries regarding RCMA and its operation must be referred to the Executive Director. Only the Executive Director is authorized to make or approve public statements pertaining to RCMA and its operations. No employee, unless specifically designated by the ED, is authorized to make these statements.

Additionally, any posts, comments, or other forms of communications on all social media sites, online newspapers, magazines, blogs, and other online material about RCMA should not be written by or responded to unless directed by the ED or the Director of Development.

Confidentiality

RCMA is committed to protecting the confidentiality, security, and integrity of all confidential information in accordance with federal and state laws, including FERPA and the Florida Public Records Act. Employees, contractors, and volunteers may access confidential information only when it is necessary to perform their job duties and must protect all personally identifiable information (PII), including child, family, employee, health, assessment, payroll, and personnel records.

All individuals with access to confidential information are required to follow RCMA confidentiality procedures and complete required confidentiality agreements and training. Confidential information may only be shared through approved secure methods and may not be stored or transmitted using personal or unauthorized devices. Unauthorized access, disclosure, or misuse of confidential information may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

RCMA also complies with public records requirements. Requests for employee records must be directed to Human Resources, and only records permitted by law may be released. Confidential or exempt records will not be disclosed except as authorized by law. All employees share responsibility for safeguarding RCMA records and reporting suspected breaches immediately.

Refer to the complete policy on the Intranet (Policies and Procedures Manual, Section 1.9).

4.17 EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEER

RCMA supports volunteer service that aligns with its mission and community values.

Employees may volunteer for RCMA only when:

- Participation is completely voluntary.
- Volunteer activities occur outside normal work hours.
- Services are provided without expectation or receipt of compensation.
- Volunteer activities support RCMA's mission and do not replace paid staff positions.

Employees may not:

- Volunteer to perform the same or similar duties as their regular paid job.
- Waive pay for work they are normally compensated to perform.
- Volunteer in RCMA commercial or revenue-generating activities.

Employees must receive prior approval from their supervisor and Human Resources before volunteering for RCMA.

Volunteer hours must be documented separately from paid work hours. Volunteers will not receive wages, bonuses, stipends, or overtime credit for volunteer service.

Approved expense reimbursements may be allowed in accordance with RCMA policy.

RCMA's volunteer practices are designed to comply with federal wage and hour laws and applicable Department of Labor guidance.

Refer to the complete policy on the Intranet.

SECTION 5 – ATTENDANCE-RELATED POLICIES

As an employee of RCMA, it is his/her responsibility to meet the expected standards for attendance. Chronic, habitual, and/or excessive lateness or absenteeism affects RCMA's ability to provide administrative services as well as services to the children and families served. Additionally, it places an undue burden on co-workers who report for work as scheduled.

Under some circumstances, absence or tardiness may be excused, but the employee is required to give his/her supervisor proper notice.

5.1 WORK SCHEDULES

At RCMA, a workweek starts on Sunday and ends on Saturday. The typical work schedule for regular full-time employees consists of 30-40 hours per week, not including lunch hours. If an employee works at an RCMA center, the employee's specific work schedule may vary depending on the operational requirements of that center. If an employee works at an area office or at the Rollason Center, regular hours are normally 8 am-5 pm, including lunch.

5.2 EMPLOYEE BREAKS

As an employee of RCMA, he/she has the privilege of taking two short paid breaks (one in the morning and one in the afternoon) during an employee's workday. Each break may not exceed fifteen minutes, and the time is not to be used as an add-on to the lunch break or for coming in later or leaving earlier.

Employees are required to communicate with his/her supervisor to establish appropriate break times. This communication is particularly important in scheduling appropriate coverage of ratios in classrooms. Break times must not interfere with educational programs or the completion of tasks that are subject to deadlines.

5.3 SCHOOL VISITS

RCMA is strongly committed to parent involvement in the education of their child(ren). This policy aims to support employees by providing paid time off to attend important school-related activities for their children and applies to all regular full-time and part-time employees of RCMA.

Each visit should be no more than one and a half (1 ½) hours maximum each month, regardless of the number of children. Additional time off may be requested using PTO or unpaid leave, subject to approval.

School-related activities include, but are not limited to:

- Parent-teacher conferences
- School enrollment or registration appointments
- School performances or assemblies
- Field trips or classroom volunteering
- Graduation ceremonies
- Special events (e.g., award presentations)

Employees must provide reasonable advance notice to their supervisors when requesting time off for school-related activities. Time off will not count against attendance or disciplinary actions when properly requested.

Supervisors should make every effort to accommodate these requests unless it creates undue hardship.

5.4 *PROPER NOTICE*

"Proper notice" means that an employee must notify his/her immediate supervisor or designated personnel about the expected or necessary absence or tardiness, in advance, unless a verifiable emergency makes it impossible for an employee to do so.

When an employee is unable to attend work on the same day of an unexpected conflict or illness, the employee must contact his/her immediate supervisor (or another member of the management team if the immediate supervisor is unavailable) not less than one hour prior to the employee's scheduled reporting time.

It is not sufficient for an employee to call in and leave a message with a coworker or anyone else who is not in a supervisory position or who has been authorized by the employee's supervisor to receive attendance-related calls.

If an employee does not give proper notice of attendance problems in advance, as explained in this policy, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Failure to report to work and failure to provide proper notice for (2) consecutive workdays may be considered a "no call/no show." Two consecutive no-call/no-show occurrences may be considered job abandonment and may result in termination.

5.5 *EXCUSED ABSENCES/LATENESS*

An excused absence from work would be considered a day or several days that an employee is allowed to miss work without a penalty. In general, this is approved by the supervisor in advance (for example, vacation, doctor's appointment, jury duty, religious observance). However, a family emergency or an unforeseen event is also considered an excused absence.

Excused absences and tardiness are typically granted for the following types of needs and will be deducted from an employee's personal leave balance:

- Illness and/or doctor appointments
- Funerals of immediate family members
- Unavoidable conflicts (automobile accident or breakdown, occasional work conflict, etc.)

Repeated requests for excused absences/lateness that interfere with RCMA's ability to conduct efficient operations may be denied at the discretion of an employee's supervisor.

5.6 *UNEXCUSED ABSENCES/LATENESS*

An unexcused absence occurs when an employee is absent from work, arrives late, leaves early, or misses scheduled work time without obtaining prior approval when required and/or without following RCMA's call-in and notification procedures.

Examples of unexcused absences and tardiness include, but are not limited to:

- An employee does not obtain advance approval or fails to follow the proper notification procedures
- An employee requested approval, but supervisors denied the request for valid reasons

Unexcused absences and lateness will result in disciplinary actions up to and including termination.

Occurrences

An unexcused absence counts as one occurrence for the purposes of discipline under this policy in a 12-month period. All supervisors are advised to take disciplinary action as follows:

- Up to 4 unexcused absences/lateness = first warning or next level disciplinary action if one is already on file.
- unexcused absences/lateness = second warning or next level disciplinary action if one is already on file.
- unexcused absences/lateness = 3-day suspension without pay
- 7 unexcused absences/lateness = termination

SECTION 6 - EMPLOYEE LEAVE POLICIES

6.1 PAID TIME OFF (PTO)

RCMA values its employees and understands that taking time away from work is important for personal matters, illnesses, or vacation time. Personal leave is paid time off that an employee earns based on the hours or years an employee has worked at RCMA. If an employee is a substitute or a temporary employee, the employee does not earn PTO.

In order to take PTO, an employee must request it in advance, and his/her supervisor must approve it. If no PTO is available, approval for unpaid time off is at the discretion of an employee's supervisor.

The only time an employee does not require advance approval is when a leave is covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) described later.

Non-exempt employees earn PTO as follows:

Accrual of Hours Worked	Maximum earned in the 12-month FY
>2080	88 hours
>2080-10,401	136 hours
>10401+	200 hours

Exempt employees earn PTO as follows:

Years of Service	Maximum earned in the 12-month FY
1	88 hours
2, 3, 4	136 hours
5 and every year thereafter	200 hours

Annual PTO Cash-Out

Employees may request one annual PTO cash-out up to 40 hours, have an available PTO balance, and must be actively employed. Cash-outs are subject to the budgetary period, end date of the applicable funding source, and approval by the Executive Director, CFO, and/or the Associate Executive Director of Business and Finance.

Seasonal Furlough PTO Cash-Out (Seasonal MSHS and Head Start Employees): Employees placed on regular seasonal furlough will be paid out all available accrued PTO.

Unplanned Furlough PTO Cash-Out: In rare or unforeseen circumstances (e.g., government shutdowns, funding loss), employees may be placed on furlough outside the regular season.

- PTO payout may be limited or suspended based on funding availability and organizational capacity.

- The Executive Director, in consultation with the CFO and/or the Associate Executive Director of Business and Finance, will determine payout eligibility in such cases.

Carried-Over PTO

The fiscal year at RCMA begins July 1 and ends June 30. An employee may carry over up to 320 hours of accumulated PTO into the next fiscal year.

Banked PTO hours

If an employee has any hours beyond 320 hours of PTO at the end of the fiscal year, the hours will be banked. Banked PTO hours may only be used when all PTO hours have been used.

The maximum number of hours that may be banked is 320. If an employee leaves RCMA, any banked PTO hours will be lost.

Refer to the complete policy on the Intranet.

6.2 *FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE*

Employees dealing with a serious health condition may be absent from work for up to five (5) consecutive business days without initiating a formal leave of absence (LOA). During this time, employees may elect to use available PTO or take unpaid leave, in accordance with RCMA's policies. Employees remain responsible for notifying the supervisor about their absence due to their medical condition.

If the absence extends beyond five (5) consecutive business days, the employee is required to initiate RCMA's formal leave of absence (LOA) process.

By law, RCMA will allow an employee to take leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) for a serious health condition, for the birth and care of a newborn child or adoption (or foster care placement) of a child, and for the care of an immediate family member (parent, spouse, or child) who has a serious health condition.

To be eligible for FMLA leave, an employee must have worked at RCMA for at least twelve (12) months (not required to be consecutive) and at least 1,250 hours in the twelve (12) month period before the beginning of the leave.

An employee is able to use up to twelve (12) weeks of job-protected leave in a 12-month period on a continuous, intermittent, or reduced schedule basis.

Continuous leave is when an employee takes leave without interruption, running for consecutive days, weeks, or months. Intermittent leave is when the employee takes leave in separate non-consecutive blocks of time, and reduced schedule is when the employee reduces his/her usual number of working hours per workweek or workday.

Married couples who work for RCMA may be limited to a combined total of twelve (12) weeks of FMLA leave for the birth, adoption, foster placement of a child, or to care for a parent with a serious health condition. This combined leave limitation does not apply to leave taken by either spouse for their own serious health condition or to care for a spouse or child with a serious health condition. In such cases, each eligible spouse may take up to twelve (12) weeks of FMLA leave individually.

If RCMA temporarily ceases operations and employees are not expected to report to work for one

or more full workweeks (e.g., a full-week shutdown), such time will not be counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement, provided the employee would not otherwise have been scheduled or expected to work during that period.

Before Family Medical Leave Begins

- An employee must provide his/her supervisor and HR at least thirty (30) days' advance notice before the FMLA leave begins unless a verifiable emergency makes it impossible to do so. Failure to do so could result in a delay or denial of the employee's request.
- An employee must complete and sign a Leave Request Form (HR 52).
- An employee must also provide a medical certification (HR53 or HR53fm) completed in full.
- An employee must return all RCMA equipment, car, credit cards, keys, badges, etc., on their last day worked, unless otherwise approved by the immediate supervisor.

Approval for Family Medical Leave

After the completed medical certification is received and reviewed, the employee will be formally approved for a leave of absence (LOA) if the serious health condition falls under the FMLA.

Human Resources will send documentation to inform the employee about the leave approval, return-to-work requirements, and benefits coverage while on FMLA leave.

If an employee begins their FMLA leave earlier than the anticipated or previously approved start date, RCMA reserves the right to designate the leave retroactively in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

In such cases, the employee may be required to provide updated medical documentation to support the revised leave period. This documentation will be used to ensure that RCMA's records accurately reflect the timing and duration of the employee's FMLA leave.

Failure to provide requested documentation in a timely manner may impact the continuation or designation of FMLA leave, consistent with our policies and legal requirements.

During Family Medical Leave

- An employee must keep periodic contact with his/her immediate supervisor and HR Leaves Specialist to inform RCMA of any changes affecting the duration of their leave and/or return-to-work plans.
- An employee must refrain from entering any RCMA premises unless requested by his/her supervisor or Human Resources representative.
- An employee must refrain from doing any tasks related to RCMA business.
- An employee must not use the RCMA email to communicate while on leave.

Pay during FMLA: Under the law, FMLA leave is unpaid. However, a non-exempt or exempt employee on continuous, intermittent leave, or reduced schedule may choose to be paid accrued PTO hours and banked leave hours. Once an employee has used up all his/her available PTO hours and banked leave hours, the balance of the leave will be without pay.

When an employee elects to use Paid Time Off (PTO) and banked leave hours during a FMLA leave period, the Paid Time Off (PTO) and banked leave hours will run concurrently with FMLA leave, and RCMA will apply the employee's available leave balances in the following order:

1. **Accrued PTO Hours:** Any available accrued PTO hours will be used first to provide paid time during the FMLA leave period.
2. **Banked Leave Hours:** Once all accrued PTO hours have been exhausted, any remaining approved leave will be covered using the employee's banked leave hours.

Employees are responsible for notifying their supervisor and/or Human Resources of their intent to use paid leave or unpaid leave prior to the beginning of the FMLA leave, or at the time requested by RCMA.

Once an employee elects to use or not to use accrued PTO and banked leave hours during a specific FMLA leave period, that election is final and may not be changed, revoked, or reversed for that leave period.

Note that if the employee elects not to use accrued PTO and banked leave hours during their FMLA leave, any unused PTO and banked leave hours will remain available for future use in accordance with RCMA's PTO policy. However, any request to take Paid Time Off or Unpaid Time Off following the protected leave may be denied based on the needs of the center/office/department.

Under no circumstances may accrued PTO or banked leave hours be used to extend, delay, or otherwise modify the designated FMLA leave period. The total duration of FMLA leave will be calculated based solely on the qualifying reason for leave and applicable legal requirements.

Holidays during FMLA: An employee will not be paid for holidays that fall during the FMLA leave period unless the holiday falls on a day covered by accrued PTO hours, banked leave, or shared leave.

Benefits during FMLA: FMLA will not affect an employee's health insurance coverage during the leave period. RCMA will continue its contributions to maintain his/her health coverage. The employee will continue to be responsible for his/her portion of the health coverage and any other employee-elected contributions even if choosing not to use PTO or banked leave hours while on leave.

If an employee takes family medical leave, the employee will be able to return to his/her same position or to an equivalent position unless the position has been eliminated based on business necessity or as a result of a reduction-in-force or a furlough. An equivalent position means a position that is identical in terms of pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions. If an employee cannot perform the essential functions of his/her job or the equivalent position, the FMLA does not require reassignment to another job.

While on FMLA, an employee may also be eligible for short-term disability (if on continuous leave), shared leave benefits, and/or workers' compensation pay.

FMLA and Workers' Compensation Leave

Note that if an employee is absent from work due to a work-related injury or illness that qualifies as a "serious health condition" under the FMLA, and the employee otherwise meets the eligibility requirements for FMLA leave, RCMA will designate the absence as FMLA leave and run it

concurrently with Workers' Compensation leave to the extent permitted by applicable law, and the leave will count against the employee's available FMLA entitlement during the approved absence.

While on concurrent FMLA and Workers' Compensation leave, employees must comply with all applicable policies and procedures, including requirements relating to medical certifications, fitness-for-duty certifications, periodic status updates, and return-to-work procedures.

The use of paid leave during a FMLA and Workers' Compensation leave will be governed by applicable law, RCMA policy, and Workers' Compensation regulations. RCMA will maintain group health insurance benefits during a FMLA and Workers' Compensation leave in accordance with the FMLA and applicable benefit plan terms.

After Family Medical Leave Ends

An employee will be required to have his/her healthcare provider complete the Fitness for Duty Certification and submit it to the HR Leaves Specialist at least 5 business days before the day he/she is due to return to work. Doctor's notes will be accepted only if the employee is being released to full duty.

If the healthcare provider releases the employee to full duty (no restrictions), the employee may return to work upon submission of the required documentation and approval from Human Resources.

If the healthcare provider releases the employee to work with restrictions (limitations), the employee must not return to work until RCMA has completed an interactive process to evaluate the restrictions and determine whether a reasonable accommodation can be provided. After this process is done, approval by Human Resources is needed prior to the employee resuming any work duties.

Failure to provide the required documentation or to comply with this process may delay the employee's return to work and could result in appropriate corrective action, in accordance with RCMA's policies.

If the employee does not return to work at the end of his/her FMLA leave and fails to inform his/her supervisor of the intention not to return, the employee will be considered to have quit without notice.

Qualifying Exigency Leave under FMLA: Eligible employees are entitled to take up to 12 work weeks of FMLA leave in a 12-month period for a "qualifying exigency" related to the foreign deployment of the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent.

Military Caregiver Leave: Eligible employees who are the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of a covered service member (current member or veteran of the National Guard, Reserves, or Regular Armed Forces) with a serious injury or illness incurred or aggravated in the line of duty are entitled to take up to 26-workweeks of FMLA leave during a single 12-month period to care for the employee's family member.

6.3 NON-FMLA MEDICAL LEAVE

Employees dealing with a serious health condition may be absent from work for up to five (5) consecutive business days without initiating a formal leave of absence (LOA). During this time,

employees may elect to use available Paid Time Off (PTO) or take unpaid leave, in accordance with RCMA's policies. Employees remain responsible for notifying the supervisor about the absence due to their medical condition.

If the absence extends beyond five (5) consecutive business days, the employee is required to initiate RCMA's formal leave of absence (LOA) process.

If an employee does not meet the requirements of those mandated by federal and/or state laws such as FMLA and Workers' Compensation Leave, and the employee is unable to work during an extended period of time for his/her own severe medical, catastrophic, or life-threatening illness, the employee may be eligible to apply for Non-FMLA Medical Leave.

To be eligible for Non-FMLA Medical Leave, an employee must have been employed at RCMA for a minimum of two (2) years or two (2) full consecutive seasons before the beginning of the leave.

An employee is able to use up to twelve (12) weeks of job-protected leave in a 12-month period only continuously. Note that intermittent leave is not permitted under this policy.

Continuous leave is when an employee takes leave without interruption, running for consecutive days, weeks, or months.

Elective Procedures Exclusion

Non-medically necessary elective procedures or surgeries are not eligible for leave under RCMA's Non-FMLA Medical Leave policy. Elective procedures are defined as those that are planned in advance and are not required to treat a serious health condition or prevent significant deterioration of an employee's health, as determined by a qualified healthcare provider.

Employees seeking time off for elective procedures must use available paid time off (PTO) or request unpaid personal leave, subject to supervisor approval and business needs.

Before Non-FMLA Medical Leave Begins

- An employee must provide his/her supervisor and HR at least thirty (30) days' advance notice before the Non-FMLA Medical Leave begins unless a verifiable emergency makes it impossible to do so. Failure to do so could result in a delay or denial of the employee's request.
- An employee must complete and sign a Leave Request Form (HR 52).
- An employee must provide a Non-FMLA Medical Leave form (HR78) completed in full.
- An employee must return all RCMA equipment, car, credit cards, keys, badges, etc., on their last day worked, unless otherwise approved by the immediate supervisor.

Approval for Non-FMLA Medical Leave

After the completed Non-FMLA Medical Leave form is received and reviewed, the employee will be formally approved for a leave of absence (LOA) if the serious health condition meets the criteria under RCMA's internal leave policy.

Human Resources will send documentation to inform the employee about the leave approval, return-to-work requirements, and benefits coverage while on Non-FMLA Medical Leave.

If an employee begins their Non-FMLA Medical Leave earlier than the anticipated or previously

approved start date, RCMA reserves the right to designate the leave retroactively.

In such cases, the employee may be required to provide updated medical documentation to support the revised leave period. This documentation will be used to ensure that RCMA's records accurately reflect the timing and duration of the employee's Non-FMLA Medical Leave.

Failure to provide requested documentation in a timely manner may impact the continuation or designation of Non-FMLA Medical Leave, consistent with our policies.

During Non-FMLA Medical Leave

- An employee must keep periodic contact with his/her immediate supervisor and HR Leaves Specialist to inform RCMA of any changes affecting the duration of their leave and/or return-to-work plans.
- An employee must refrain from entering any RCMA premises unless requested by his/her supervisor or Human Resources representative.
- An employee must refrain from doing any tasks related to RCMA business.
- An employee must not use the RCMA email to communicate while on leave.

Pay during Non-FMLA Medical Leave: Under state law, medical leave is unpaid. However, a non-exempt or exempt employee on continuous leave may choose to be paid accrued PTO hours and banked leave hours. Once an employee has used up all his/her available PTO hours and banked leave hours, the balance of the leave will be without pay.

When an employee elects to use Paid Time Off (PTO) and banked leave hours during a Non-FMLA Medical Leave period, the Paid Time Off (PTO) and banked leave hours will run concurrently with Non-FMLA Medical Leave and RCMA will apply the employee's available leave balances in the following order:

1. **Accrued PTO Hours:** Any available accrued PTO hours will be used first to provide paid time during the FMLA leave period.
2. **Banked Leave Hours:** Once all accrued PTO hours have been exhausted, any remaining approved leave will be covered using the employee's banked leave hours.

Employees are responsible for notifying their supervisor and/or Human Resources of their intent to use paid leave or unpaid leave prior to the beginning of the Non-FMLA Medical Leave, or at the time requested by RCMA.

Once an employee elects to use or not to use accrued PTO and banked leave hours during a specific Non-FMLA Medical Leave period, that election is final and may not be changed, revoked, or reversed for that leave period.

Note that if the employee elects not to use accrued PTO and banked leave hours during their Non-FMLA Medical Leave, any unused PTO and banked leave hours will remain available for future use in accordance with RCMA's PTO policy. However, any request to take Paid Time Off or Unpaid Time Off following the leave may be denied based on the needs of the center/office/department.

Under no circumstances may accrued PTO or banked leave hours be used to extend, delay, or otherwise modify the designated Non-FMLA Medical Leave period. The total duration of Non-FMLA Medical Leave will be calculated based solely on the qualifying reason for leave and applicable legal requirements.

The Non-FMLA Medical Leave policy may not be used to extend, supplement, or otherwise continue leave taken under the Family Medical Leave (FML) policy.

Holidays during Non-FMLA Medical Leave: An employee will not be paid for holidays that fall during the Non-FMLA Medical Leave period unless the holiday falls on a day covered by accrued PTO hours, banked leave, or shared leave.

Benefits during Non-FMLA Medical Leave: Non-FMLA Medical Leave will not affect an employee's health insurance coverage during the leave period. RCMA will continue its contributions to maintain his/her health coverage. The employee will continue to be responsible for his/her portion of the health coverage and any other employee-elected contributions even if choosing not to use PTO or banked leave hours while on leave.

If an employee takes Non-FMLA Medical Leave, he/she does not have job restoration rights. However, RCMA will generally reinstate the employee to the same position or a position with equivalent status, pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions. In the event RCMA is not able to reinstate the employee, he/she will receive notice from HR.

While on Non-FMLA Medical Leave, an employee may also be eligible for short-term disability (if on continuous leave), shared leave benefits, and/or workers' compensation pay.

Non-FMLA and Workers' Compensation Leave

Note that if an employee is absent from work due to a work-related injury or illness that qualifies as a "serious health condition" under RCMA's internal leave policy, and the employee otherwise does not meet the eligibility requirements for Non-FMLA Medical Leave, RCMA will designate the absence as Non-FMLA Medical Leave and run it concurrently with Workers' Compensation leave to the extent permitted by applicable law, and the leave will count against the employee's available Non-FMLA Medical Leave during the approved absence.

While on concurrent Non-FMLA Medical Leave and Workers' Compensation leave, employees must comply with all applicable policies and procedures, including requirements relating to medical certifications, fitness-for-duty certifications, periodic status updates, and return-to-work procedures.

The use of paid leave during a Non-FMLA Medical Leave and Workers' Compensation leave will be governed by RCMA policy and Workers' Compensation regulations. RCMA will maintain group health insurance benefits during a Non-FMLA Medical Leave and Workers' Compensation leave in accordance with our internal leave policy and applicable benefit plan terms.

After Non-FMLA Medical Leave Ends

An employee will be required to have his/her healthcare provider complete the Fitness for Duty Certification and submit it to the HR Leaves Specialist at least 5 days before the day he/she is due to return to work. Doctor's notes will be accepted only if the employee is being released to full duty.

If the healthcare provider releases the employee to full duty (no restrictions), the employee may return to work upon submission of the required documentation and approval from Human Resources.

If the healthcare provider releases the employee to work with restrictions (limitations), the employee

must not return to work until RCMA has completed an interactive process to evaluate the restrictions and determine whether a reasonable accommodation can be provided. After this process is done, approval by Human Resources is needed prior to the employee resuming any work duties.

Failure to provide the required documentation or to comply with this process may delay the employee's return to work and could result in appropriate corrective action, in accordance with RCMA's policies.

If the employee does not return to work at the end of his/her Non-FMLA Medical Leave and fails to inform his/her supervisor of the intention not to return, the employee will be considered to have quit without notice.

6.4 *PREGNANT WORKERS FAIRNESS ACT (PWFA)*

RCMA is committed to complying with the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and other applicable laws by providing reasonable accommodations, including leave when appropriate, to qualified employees with known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, unless doing so would create an undue hardship.

Employees may request accommodations verbally or in writing through Human Resources. RCMA will engage in a timely interactive process to identify effective accommodations, which may include modified duties, schedule adjustments, temporary work modifications, or leave when no other reasonable accommodation is available. Employees will not be required to take leave if another effective accommodation can be provided.

Medical documentation may be requested when necessary and will be kept confidential in accordance with applicable laws. Employees are expected to maintain communication with their supervisor and Human Resources regarding accommodation needs, leave status, and return-to-work requirements.

RCMA strictly prohibits retaliation, discrimination, interference, or coercion against any employee for requesting or using accommodations under this policy.

Refer to the complete policy on the Intranet.

6.5 *EMPLOYEE SICKNESS*

RCMA is committed to operating effectively while ensuring the safety of employees. We provide information about the nature and spread of contagious illnesses, including symptoms and required steps to be taken.

DEFINITION

Contagious Illness: An illness that can be transmitted from one person to another.

Teleworking: Working remotely from home or another location outside the office.

1. Preventing the Spread of Infection and Other Contagious Illnesses:

- Ensure regular cleaning of frequently used objects and areas (ex., bathrooms, breakrooms, conference rooms, door handles, railings).

- Employees should frequently wash their hands with soap and water, cover their mouths when sneezing or coughing, and discard used tissues in wastebaskets.
- Wearing a mask is recommended when unsure about health status.
- When sick, obtain medical clearance through First Stop Health or another healthcare provider prior to returning to work in the office. First Stop Health offers free 24/7 virtual health services to all staff.

2. Sick Leave:

- Employees unable to work due to illness should submit a request for PTO. Normal attendance and leave policies remain in place unless otherwise notified.
- Employees who are out sick or who show symptoms of being ill for longer than three (3) days will need to provide a doctor's note to their direct supervisor to confirm their need to be absent and to determine when it is appropriate to return to work.
- If the healthcare provider releases the employee to work with restrictions (limitations), the employee must not return to work until RCMA has completed an interactive process to evaluate the restrictions and determine whether a reasonable accommodation can be provided. After this process is done, approval by Human Resources is needed prior to the employee resuming any work duties.
- RCMA expects employees who contract an infectious disease or who are exposed to infected family members or other persons to stay home and to seek medical attention if needed. RCMA also expects these employees to notify their supervisor as soon as possible of their exposure or illness.

3. Teleworking:

- Telework requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Not all positions are eligible. Requests for temporary teleworking should be submitted to the supervisor for consideration.

4. Staying Home When Sick:

- Employees should not report to work while ill or while experiencing symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, etc.
- Employees who report to work ill may be sent home at the discretion of the supervisor, in accordance with health guidelines.
- Employees should follow the Stop the Spread of Respiratory Infections Guidance, which is available on the Intranet.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Human Resources: Collaborate with the Health & Mental Health Services Advisory Committee to monitor and coordinate events around an illness and to create work rules to promote safety through prevention and control.

Employees: Cooperate in taking steps to reduce transmission of contagious illnesses, use good judgment, and be considerate of others in the workplace.

Supervisors: Ensure absences are recorded, monitor patterns of absence, provide support, and potentially adjust workloads or schedules. They also need to ensure the employee understands company policies and procedures related to absences.

Confidentiality of Medical Information:

Medical information will be treated as a confidential medical record. Disclosure of medical

information is limited to human resources, direct supervisors or managers, first aid and safety personnel, government officials (if required by law), and any disclosure required by law or by a lawful subpoena or court process.

Additional Protocols:

Emergency protocols may be implemented based on current events and guidelines from the CDC or government authorities.

6.6 *PROTECTION OF PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION*

RCMA is committed to protecting the privacy of employees' personal health information while maintaining a safe, compliant, and inclusive workplace.

All medical information—including health conditions, medical history, treatment records, and disability-related information—will be kept confidential and handled with care, and will be kept separate from general personnel records.

Access to employee medical information will be limited strictly to authorized staff members who have a legitimate business need to know the information in order to perform their job duties. This may include Human Resources staff, safety personnel, or management officials involved in administering leave, workplace accommodations, benefits, or legal compliance obligations.

6.7 *FURLOUGHS*

RCMA primarily operates through federal funding and understands that certain programs and operations may require closure. RCMA recognizes two types of furloughs: seasonal furlough and temporary furlough.

Employees placed on furlough are not considered terminated and will remain in active status with RCMA. Employee benefits will also remain active during this period.

It is the employee's responsibility to notify their supervisor if he/she is not planning to return after the furlough period. Failure to return to work when the program resumes may be considered a voluntary resignation.

Seasonal Furlough

Employees who work in a Head Start program, such as Early Head Start, Migrant Seasonal Head Start, and Migrant Early Head Start, operate on a seasonal schedule. Seasonal furloughs occur at the end of the program season, and if funding permits, employees will be recalled to return to work at the beginning of the new season.

Temporary Furlough

RCMA may implement temporary furloughs when unforeseen circumstances arise, such as funding issues or closures beyond the program's control. RCMA will make efforts to call employees to their positions once it becomes feasible.

If such circumstances persist beyond a reasonable period, the affected employees may be subject to termination.

Summer Deductions

Employees who are expected to be placed on furlough during the summer and are enrolled in RCMA's insurance plans will automatically be set up for summer deductions each year, beginning with the January 31st paycheck through the June 15th paycheck. During this time, summer deductions are taken in addition to any regular deductions (Medical, Dental, Vision, Life, and Short-Term Disability) to ensure insurance premiums are paid throughout the summer months.

Employees are responsible for covering any missed pay periods during which regular deductions were not taken due to a furlough. If an employee enrolled in RCMA's insurance does not see the appropriate deductions prior to furlough, they must contact the Benefits Office promptly to arrange for proper deductions. Any outstanding amounts will be collected in a lump sum from the employee's final paycheck at the end of the season.

Reemployment Assistance Program

Employees may be eligible to apply for unemployment benefits through the Florida Commerce website. Eligibility and benefit determinations are made solely by the State of Florida.

6.8 *UNPAID PERSONAL LEAVE*

An unpaid personal leave of absence may be granted at the sole discretion of an employee's supervisor. The approval would be dependent on current or anticipated center/office needs during the requested time of absence. A request for time during a mandatory training previously scheduled may also be denied.

This type of leave is intended to be used for certain personal matters and may only be requested after an employee has exhausted his/her accrued PTO. If approved by the employee's supervisor, the employee will be allowed to take up to 7 working days off. For any medical-related absences, please refer to sections 6.2, Family Medical Leave, and 6.3 Non-FMLA Medical Leave. For any non-medical reasons, refer to the Proper Notice policy section 5.4.

Examples include:

- Religious holiday
- Family event
- Death of a loved one
- Home relocation

Failure to return on the expected date will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

6.9 *CIVIL LEAVE*

If an employee is subpoenaed to serve on a jury or as a witness for the federal, state, or local government, the employee will be granted leave with regular pay minus the amount of compensation an employee receives as a juror or witness. Employees will also be granted Civil Leave if he/she is subpoenaed in litigation that is work-related. Civil Leave will not be deducted from an employee's accumulated PTO balance.

When subpoenaed in a private litigation that is not work-related, an employee may choose to be paid accrued PTO hours or banked PTO hours. Once an employee has used up all his/her

available PTO hours, the balance of the leave will be without pay.

6.10 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE

If an employee has worked for RCMA for three (3) months or longer, the employee is eligible for up to three (3) days' leave per year for a variety of activities connected with domestic violence issues.

During Domestic Violence Leave, an employee may choose to be paid accrued PTO hours or banked PTO hours. Once an employee has used up all his/her available PTO hours, the balance of the leave will be without pay.

Specific activities connected with domestic violence include:

- Seeking an injunction for protection against domestic violence or repeat violence, or sexual violence;
- Obtaining medical care or mental health counseling or both for the employee or a family or household member to address injuries resulting from domestic violence;
- Obtaining services from victim's services organizations such as a domestic violence shelter or rape crisis center;
- Making the employee's home secure from the perpetrator of domestic violence or finding a new home to escape the perpetrator;
- Seeking legal assistance to address issues arising from domestic violence or attending or preparing for court-related proceedings arising from the act of domestic violence.

Notification Requirement

When requesting domestic violence leave, an employee must provide his/her supervisor at least seven (7) days' advance notice of the need for the leave, unless prevented from doing so because of imminent danger to an employee's health or safety or the health and safety of a family member. Proof of the situation may be required. Any information provided will be kept confidential.

SECTION 7 - PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

7.1 EVALUATIONS

New employees, or current employees who are hired into a new position, have been promoted or transferred, the employee and his/her supervisor must agree on what the expectations are regarding the employee's work. Both also have to be clear about what training or other help the employee may need to do his/her job well. The employee needs to make sure he/she understands the job description so that he/she is clear about what the employee needs to do, why his/her work needs to be done, and how well it should be done.

The employee and his/her supervisor should meet regularly throughout the year so that the employee's supervisor can provide feedback as to whether the employee is meeting performance expectations. When performance improvement is needed, a performance improvement plan (PIP) may be developed.

Once a year, employees may receive a formal written performance evaluation, provided they have been employed for a minimum of 12 months for regular employees and 6 months for seasonal employees, and only prior to going on seasonal furlough. Formal evaluations are conducted annually, and employees may be eligible for a merit increase based on the evaluation results. Informal evaluations are not required but are encouraged. They may be conducted at the discretion of supervisors and are not eligible for a merit increase.

Employees are encouraged to complete a self-evaluation and provide it to his/her supervisor. If an employee communicates with his/her supervisor about how the employee is doing throughout the year, there will be no surprises when the employee receives the written evaluation. An employee's overall job performance rating and current rate of pay will be taken into consideration to determine if the employee is eligible for a merit increase.

Promotion and Transfer Evaluations

If an employee is promoted or transferred into another position, the employee should receive a performance evaluation during the month in which he/she completed his/her probationary period in the new position. If an employee successfully completes his/her promotion or transfer probationary period, the employee will have his/her annual performance evaluation date adjusted to be conducted during the same month of each subsequent year of service in that position.

If an employee is a teacher trainee, 1, or 2, the employee will receive his/her evaluation on the regular evaluation schedule at the end of the season or 12 months from the employee's previous evaluation.

Merit Increase

A merit increase is defined as an increase in pay based on an employee's work performance during the performance evaluation period. Merit increases are generally issued 12 months from the previous merit increase. An employee whose pay is at the maximum of the salary range may not be granted an increase, as it would cause the base salary to exceed the maximum of the range for that position.

If an employee is a seasonal employee, the employee will be:	- evaluated before the season ends - eligible for a merit 12 months from the previous merit
If an employee has been in a position	evaluated 12 months from the previous evaluation

for at least 12 months, the employee will be:	• eligible for a merit 12 months from the previous merit
If an employee has changed position due to a promotion, the employee will be:	• evaluated by all assigned supervisors 12 months from the previous evaluation or hire date • evaluated before transferring to another position if the employee has been in the position for a minimum of six months (not eligible for a merit increase) • eligible for a merit 12 months from the new position start date
If an employee has changed position due to a lateral transfer or has a dual position, the employee will be:	• evaluated by all assigned supervisors 12 months from the previous evaluation or hire date • evaluated before transferring to another position if the employee has been in the position for a minimum of six months (not eligible for a merit increase) • eligible for a merit 12 months from the new position start date

7.2 PERFORMANCE RATINGS

There are five (5) performance rating categories at RCMA. These categories are in the Performance Evaluation form to evaluate an employee on different areas of his/her job performance. The description of each rating is listed below:

5	A "5" means that the employee <u>consistently</u> performs well above expectations (goes above and beyond). An employee who is given a "5" rating demonstrates an exceptional knowledge of the job, works with little or no supervision, and his/her performance is exceptionally high in quality, quantity, and timeliness. The employee also assumes a very high level of responsibility for his or her performance.
4	A "4" means that the employee performs consistently above expectations, and shows that he/she has the desire and ability to perform his/her job at a level above average. He/she works with minimal supervision.
3	A "3" means that the employee consistently meets or to some extent exceeds expectations. This rating indicates that the employee is a competent, productive, and a valued member of the team.
2	A "2" means that the employee <u>does not consistently meet expectations</u> <u>or</u> regularly meets expectations in some areas, but does not regularly meet expectations in others. However, there is potential for improvement which is needed to reach the fully successful level. When performance is at this level, corrective action is warranted.
1	A "1" means that the employee clearly and consistently fails to meet overall expectations. The employee shows either unwillingness or an inability to improve. When performance is at this level, disciplinary action will be taken.

If an employee's performance deserves a merit increase and he/she has not had a performance-related increase during the previous 6 months, the employee will typically receive an increase that is calculated following a specific formula and the current merit table.

SECTION 8 - DISCIPLINARY ACTION POLICIES

8.1 *DISCIPLINARY ACTION*

The purpose of disciplining employees is to provide a course of corrective action to improve and prevent a recurrence of undesirable employee behavior and performance issues. RCMA will adhere to a progressive disciplinary process when immediate termination is not warranted.

RCMA's progressive discipline process consists of the steps listed below; however, steps may be omitted upon review of the circumstances and the seriousness of the violation. Some violations may require immediate termination. Factors that will be considered are whether the offense is repeated despite coaching, counseling, or training, and the impact the conduct and performance issues have on RCMA as well as its programs and services.

The employee will be asked to sign this document to demonstrate his or her understanding of the issues and the corrective action. Refusal to sign the document will not change the course of action, and the disciplinary action will remain on file.

A completed copy of any disciplinary action form (HR31) must be placed in the employee's file, and another copy must be sent to the Human Resources Department. The form is available on the intranet under the Human Resources section.

Step #1: First Warning

The first warning is an opportunity for the employee's supervisor to bring attention to the undesirable performance, conduct, or other issues. The supervisor should discuss with the employee the nature of the problem or the violation of RCMA policies and procedures. The supervisor is expected to clearly describe expectations and steps the employee must take to improve his or her performance or resolve the problem.

Step #2 - Second Warning

During the second warning, the employee's supervisor will meet with the employee to review any additional related incidents or any new conduct or performance issues. The supervisor will discuss the consequences for the employee of his continued failure to meet performance or conduct expectations.

Step #3 - Final Warning

The final warning is the next step as part of the normal sequence of the Progressive Disciplinary Action Policy when previous violations are repeated, or new non-severe violations occur.

Step #4 - Termination

The last step in the progressive disciplinary action process is termination. Generally, an employee will first receive feedback, warnings, or suspension as opportunities to correct performance or conduct. However, when feedback or previous disciplinary actions have failed, termination may be necessary.

Supervisors may omit the first three steps and terminate employees without prior notice, depending on the circumstances of each situation and the severity of the violation.

Appeals Process

Employees will have an opportunity to present information to dispute the information used for disciplinary actions. Refer to the “Grievances” section of this handbook for steps to follow.

Disciplinary Suspension

Some violations may be so problematic or harmful that the most effective action may be a temporary disciplinary suspension of the employee from RCMA. Disruption of normal RCMA operations and extremely serious violations of rules, policies, or standards of conduct may require a disciplinary suspension. When immediate action is necessary to ensure the safety of employees, children, or others, the supervisor may also suspend the employee. Disciplinary suspensions are without pay.

Disciplinary Probation

When progressive discipline steps are skipped, and an employee receives a written warning or disciplinary suspension for a serious violation, he or she will be immediately placed on disciplinary probation. The disciplinary probation period will be the same as the regular probation period, six (6) months for non-exempt employees and twelve (12) months for exempt employees.

Retention of Progressive Disciplinary Actions

It is the policy of RCMA to retain formal disciplinary action-related documents describing violations of RCMA’s Standards of Conduct and policies and procedures as follows:

- o **A first warning (#1) or a second warning (#2)** resulting from any violation will be active in the employee’s file for **three years** from the date of the incident. After three years, such documents will be retained in the employee file, but will not be used to determine the next course of action for any future misconduct, performance issues, or violation of existing policies and procedures.
- o **Any violation that leads to a final warning (#3) or employment termination (#4)** as part of the progressive disciplinary process will be active and retained for **seven years** from the date of the incident or from the date of the employment termination. After seven years, such documents will be retained in the employee file, but will not be used to determine the next course of action for any future misconduct, performance issues, or violation of existing policies and procedures.
- o **Any severe violation that leads to a final warning (#3)** requiring disciplinary probation or immediate termination will remain in the employee’s file permanently. Disciplinary probation cases may be the result of a reinstatement of employment after termination.
- o In cases where an employee is alleged to have violated a policy, and the investigation results in one adult’s word against another’s, a written record of the incident will be maintained in the employee’s file.

8.2 VIOLATIONS REQUIRING IMMEDIATE TERMINATION

It is not possible to list or anticipate all possible severe violations, but the following are examples of those that would be subject to immediate termination:

Child care violations

Disregard of policies, procedures, and regulations that result in a threat to the safety and/or health of a child. This includes the following behaviors, all of which are strictly prohibited:

- a) The use of corporal punishment, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Hitting, spanking, shaking, slapping, twisting, pulling, squeezing, or biting;
 - ii. Demanding excessive physical exercise, excessive rest, or strenuous or bizarre postures;
 - iii. Compelling a child to eat or have in his/her mouth soap, food, spices, or foreign substances;
 - iv. Exposing a child to extremes of temperature.
 - v. Rough or harsh handling of children, including but not limited to: lifting or shaking by one or both arms; pushing; forcing or restricting movement; lifting or moving by grasping clothing; covering a child's head.
- b) Isolating a child in an adjacent room, hallway, closet, darkened area, play area, or any other area where a child cannot be seen or supervised;
- c) Binding, tying to restrict movement, or taping the mouth;
- d) Using or withholding food or beverages as a punishment;
- e) Toilet learning/training methods that punish, demean, or humiliate a child;
- f) Any form of emotional abuse, including rejecting, terrorizing, extended ignoring, isolating, or corrupting a child;
- g) Any abuse or maltreatment of a child;
- h) Abusive, profane, or sarcastic language or verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks in front of the child or about the child or child's family;
- i) Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment;
- j) Physical activity/outdoor time taken away as punishment;
- k) Placing a child in a crib for a time-out or for disciplinary reasons.
 - Cigarette or vapor/e-cigarette smoking on RCMA premises and/or surroundings where children are present.
 - Unauthorized absence from the assigned area or abandonment of responsibilities when adequate relief coverage is not available

General safety violations

- Possession of firearms or other weapons on RCMA property, including vehicles;
- Reporting for work under the influence, followed by a positive drug test.
- Refusal to take a drug/alcohol test

Other violations

- Felony charges
- Refusal to perform assigned work, follow the assigned work schedule, or accept a transfer within the same geographical area
- Absence for two (2) consecutive scheduled working days without notification to the supervisor or failure to return from an authorized leave of absence within two (2) working days after the expected return date
- Theft
- Physical fighting with another employee or parent
- Proven discrimination or sexual harassment following an investigation
- Malicious gossip or false accusations
- Falsifying records or any document for the purpose of personal or financial gain. This includes falsifying E-time records and logging in while not yet at work
- Fraudulent reports of injuries or accidents for the purpose of workers' compensation benefits.
- Taking RCMA equipment, time, or resources for personal use or gain;
- Walking off the job without appropriate authorization;
- Misusing, neglecting, or willfully damaging or destroying RCMA property

8.3 VIOLATIONS SUBJECT TO PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Regarding child care

- Inadequate child care practices that include leaving a child alone or unsupervised

General safety violations

- Sleeping while on duty
- Failure to report accidents, injuries, or incidents involving self, children, or co-workers on

any RCMA premises or vehicles this including failure to follow the unusual incident procedure

- Failure to comply with federal regulations when preparing foods
- Fighting, or acting in any manner that may endanger the safety of oneself or others. This includes threats of violence.

RCMA general policies, work rules, regulations, or Standards of Conduct violations

- Computer abuse, including but not limited to misuse of computer accounts, unauthorized destruction of files, and possession of unauthorized passwords;
- Conducting oneself in any manner that is offensive, abusive, or contrary to common decency or morality;
- Displaying disrespectful and/or inappropriate behaviors toward a child, parent, co-worker, supervisor, volunteer, visitor, or any other individual associated with RCMA;
- Repeated absenteeism and tardiness that interfere with assigned responsibilities;
- Excessive personal calls that interfere with assigned responsibilities;
- Failure to comply with published policies or published procedures, and standards;
- Failure to notify the supervisor not less than one hour prior to the scheduled reporting time when unable to report to work;
- Insubordination (refusal by an employee to carry out a direct and proper instruction (verbal or written) from his/her supervisor);
- Improper release of confidential or privileged information;
- Operating RCMA-owned vehicles or equipment without a proper license or operating any vehicle on RCMA property or on RCMA business in an unsafe or improper manner;
- Smoking where prohibited (see details in Section 9.4 of this Handbook);
- Removing any equipment, materials, or other RCMA property or attempting to remove them from the premises without appropriate approval or permission;
- Negligence in performing duties

SECTION 9 - EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

9.1 SAFETY AND CARE OF PREMISES, MATERIALS, AND EQUIPMENT

The safety and care of buildings occupied by RCMA and all property and materials belonging to RCMA are the responsibility of all employees. Employees shall not take or use RCMA material or equipment for personal use without the permission of management staff. To use materials and equipment for service in another non-RCMA program, permission of the executive director is required.

9.2 FINGERNAIL LENGTH

If an employee's job involves regular or occasional contact with children and their families, the employee's fingernails should be no more than ¼ inch long and kept clean, trimmed, and filed smoothly to avoid unintentional scratches on children.

If an employee is a cook or has any other food service-related job, the employee's fingernails should be no more than 1/8 inch long. Additionally, cooks are not allowed to have artificial nails, as it is shown to have more germs than natural nails.

9.3 EMPLOYEES' CHILDREN

Employees may not bring his/her child(ren) to work while on duty. This is to avoid possible accidents and to allow the employee and co-workers to perform their jobs without the interruptions and distractions that may be caused by the child(ren).

9.4 SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE

RCMA is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for all its employees, children, families served, and visitors while respecting individual choices. Therefore, it prohibits smoking in any indoor facility, playground, entry, exit, and RCMA-owned vehicles. As an organization where services to children are provided, RCMA is also required to restrict smoking in such areas. Cigarette and vapor/e-cigarette smoking is strictly prohibited.

Failure to comply with this policy is subject to disciplinary actions up to and including termination.

9.5 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION

RCMA is committed to the prevention of Workplace Violence and will respond promptly to any threats and/or acts of violence. For purposes of this Policy, Workplace Violence is defined as any physical assault or acts of aggressive behavior occurring where an employee performs any work-related duty in the course of his or her employment, including but not limited to:

- i. An attempt or threat, whether verbal or physical, to inflict physical injury upon an employee; Any intentional display of force that would give an employee reason to fear or expect bodily harm;
- ii. Intentional and wrongful physical contact with an employee without his or her consent that entails some injury;
- iii. Stalking an employee in a manner that may cause the employee to fear for his or her physical safety and health when such stalking has arisen through and in the course of employment.

Workplace Violence presents a serious occupational safety hazard to RCMA and its employees. RCMA will respond promptly to threats and/or acts of violence. All employees are responsible for helping to create an environment of mutual respect and for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

Employees who violate this Policy may be removed from RCMA property and are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination, consistent with RCMA policies and rules, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities for criminal prosecution. Incidents involving Workplace Violence will be given the serious attention they deserve.

Employees are responsible for reporting any incidents of Workplace Violence of which they become aware. The procedures for reporting acts or threats of Workplace Violence are as follows:

Emergency Situations

If an emergency exists and the situation is one of immediate danger, an employee shall initiate a "Lockdown" of the location and contact the local police officials by dialing 9-1-1, taking whatever emergency steps are available and appropriate to protect the employee and any children present from immediate harm, such as leaving the area.

Non-emergency Situations

If the situation is not one of immediate danger, an employee shall report the incident to the appropriate supervisor or manager as soon as possible and complete the RCMA Workplace Violence Incident Report Form.

RCMA, at the request of an employee, or at its own discretion, may prohibit members of the public, including family members, from seeing an employee on RCMA property unless necessary to transact RCMA-related business. This policy particularly applies when an employee anticipates that an act of violence may result from an encounter with said individual(s).

9.6 CELL PHONE USE WHILE DRIVING

Employees must drive defensively and make safety their first priority on all occasions; refrain and/or limit the use of cell phones and/or other electronic smart devices while driving. The use of any personal or RCMA-provided communication devices (cell phone, smart watches, etc.) to text or join virtual meetings while operating a vehicle to conduct RCMA business is prohibited. Safety must come before all other concerns.

Employees are required to use hands-free devices, such as Bluetooth, AUX ports, and/or adapters, to answer or make limited phone calls while driving. Good judgment should be used so that the phone calls do not interfere with an employee's judgment to drive defensively.

Hands-free devices are not allowed to be used while driving through school zones, construction sites, or while transporting children, parents, and staff. Please note that this does not include using a device or system for navigation purposes and/or radio broadcasts.

All RCMA employees must follow all applicable laws while driving an RCMA vehicle and/or are on a business trip. For more information on drivers' responsibilities, please refer to the Motor Vehicle Drivers 1.29.

Procedures

Regardless of the circumstances, employees are instructed to proceed to a safe location and stop the vehicle before placing or accepting any calls, texts, etc., unless employees are using hand-free devices for limited phone calls. Under no circumstances are the employees allowed to place themselves at risk to fulfill business needs.

Employees must comply with all applicable federal, state, and/or local laws governing the use of communication devices while operating a motor vehicle. Employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of communication devices while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions.

Consequences

Violations of this policy will be subject to corrective action up to and including termination of employment and revocation of an employee's right to drive an RCMA-provided vehicle.

9.7 *UNSAFE DRIVING PRACTICES*

RCMA is committed to promoting safe driving practices and protecting the safety of employees, passengers, and the public. Employees are required to comply with all traffic laws and posted speed limits while operating RCMA-owned, leased, rented, or personal vehicles for RCMA business. Unsafe driving practices, including speeding, reckless driving, or other traffic violations, are strictly prohibited during work hours or while conducting RCMA business.

RCMA may monitor driving behavior through lawful sources such as vehicle cameras, GPS systems, traffic cameras, law enforcement reports, and witness statements. Employees must immediately report unsafe driving incidents to management.

Consequences

Violations of this policy may result in progressive disciplinary action, up to and including termination, depending on the severity and frequency of the offense. Severe violations, including excessive speeding or reckless conduct, may result in immediate termination and loss of vehicle privileges. RCMA may also require employees to complete additional driver safety training when appropriate.

Refer to the complete policy on the Intranet.

9.8 *ELECTRONIC DEVICE USE*

To maintain a safe, attentive, and professional learning environment, employees are expected to limit personal distractions while supervising children and performing job duties.

Employees are prohibited from using personal cell phones, smartwatches, wireless Bluetooth devices (including earbuds, headphones, or headsets), or similar electronic devices while working directly with children in classrooms, playgrounds, buses, or other child supervision areas.

The following expectations apply:

- Personal calls, texting, social media use, streaming, gaming, or other non-work-related device use is prohibited during working hours in any location where children are present.

- Wireless Bluetooth devices, earbuds, or headphones may not be worn while supervising children, unless specifically authorized by management for work-related purposes or approved as a reasonable accommodation in accordance with applicable law.
- Employees must remain fully attentive, actively engaged, and able to hear and respond to children, staff, emergencies, and announcements at all times.
- Personal devices must be silenced and stored away during working hours unless specifically authorized by a supervisor.
- Employees may use personal devices during approved breaks in designated non-child supervision areas only.
- Employees may not use personal devices to photograph, video record, or share images or information involving children except as authorized for business purposes.
- In the event of an emergency, employees may use personal devices with their direct supervisor's approval when appropriate.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

9.9 *BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS*

Universal Precautions are the steps taken to reduce the spread of bloodborne diseases from one person to another. It is very important that these steps be fulfilled within RCMA to protect children, staff members, vendors, visitors, and others who have contact with the facilities.

- It is a requirement to wear nitrile gloves when touching body fluids.
- Wash hands before and after all emergency procedures. If skin comes in contact with blood, wash the affected area immediately with soap and water.
- If an employee's skin comes in contact with blood, report the incident at once to the Supervisor. Not all reported situations will automatically be considered "exposure incidents." Each situation will be handled on an individual basis, including the determination by OSHA standards whether or not the Hepatitis B vaccine will be offered.
- Never recap, bend, or break needles. Dispose of needles/syringes in red "sharp" containers provided in restrooms and health rooms.

If an employee has any questions about the prevention of the spread of bloodborne pathogens, he or she may speak to the Supervisor.

SECTION 10 - EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The health and well-being of employees are one of RCMA's top priorities. Therefore, some of the benefits offered to employees include medical, dental, and vision insurance, short-term and long-term disability, virtual telemedicine/mental health, and life insurance. Some of these benefits are also available for eligible dependents. Please refer to the RCMA Employee Benefits Guide in the Employee Self-Service Portal and on the Intranet.

Full-time employees are eligible for all benefits listed above.

Part-time employees are only eligible for PTO and holiday pay on a pro-rated basis, retirement plans, and virtual telemedicine/mental health, as well as medical coverage under the Affordable Care Act. Any part-time employee who previously worked full-time for 3 years or more and had their scheduled hours reduced to at least 20 hours per week would be eligible for long-term disability benefits.

Substitutes and temporary employees are eligible for retirement plans, and virtual telemedicine/mental health, as well as medical coverage under the Affordable Care Act.

Coverage will be effective on the 1st day of the month following 60 days of employment. For example, if an employee starts on July 15th, the employee's coverage will be effective on October 1st. If an employee starts on July 31st, the employee's coverage will also begin on October 1st.

- As an RCMA regular full-time employee, employees may be eligible to participate in the RCMA benefit plans. The benefits plan is subject to change annually. Benefit Plan eligibility requirements and terms of coverage are described in detail on the plan documents published online and made available to all eligible employees each year.
- Premiums are deducted from an employee's paycheck in accordance with IRS regulations, but most are on a pre-tax basis. Specific details about medical, dental, vision, disability, life, and other benefits may be obtained by contacting the Human Resources Department.
- If an employee does not desire to participate, the employee is still required to waive the election online through the Employee Self-Service Portal.
- This handbook only summarizes the benefits RCMA offers. Details of the specific benefit plans can be found in Summary Plan Descriptions (SPDs) or other relevant plan documents. For information on how to obtain plan documents, an employee may contact the Benefits Office.
- Benefits described in this handbook may be modified or discontinued at RCMA's discretion, and proper notification will be provided to all employees.

10.1 EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT PLANS

RCMA encourages all staff to prepare for retirement. RCMA employees are eligible to save money by contributing to the retirement plans through payroll deductions. Any contributions an employee makes are automatically deducted from the employee's paycheck. Employees can enroll in a pretax 403B plan or an "after-tax" Roth Plan. There are no age or service requirements to participate. Employees may apply at any time during the year and choose to save from as little as 1% to the maximum percentage or dollar amount permitted by the IRS.

Employer Match

RCMA matches contributions of employees who are at least 21 years old after their first year of employment and have worked a minimum of 1000 hours. The matching contribution percentage is based on an employee's years of service as follows:

If an employee has worked at RCMA	RCMA Match
1 – 4 years	2%
5 – 9 years	3%
10 years or more	5%

10.2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

RCMA recognizes the importance of supporting and encouraging employees in career and professional development activities that are related to their employment. Work-related professional development opportunities may include staff credentials such as the FCCPC, AA/AS, and BA degrees. Any training, technical, or financial assistance will be provided, provided that it will benefit RCMA and the employee in terms of increased knowledge, skills, and abilities. The provision of professional development assistance will be made available to eligible employees to the extent that funding and resources will allow, and will be based upon organization priorities.

To be eligible to apply for assistance, year-round employees require one year of employment. Seasonal employees require one full season of employment.

Partial Tuition and Textbook Reimbursement

RCMA may pay up to 50% on tuition and books after the course/term has been completed and the employee has passed the class with a C or better. Employees receiving assistance must complete the Tuition Reimbursement/Professional Development Plan Expenses Agreement and turn it in to their immediate supervisor for review. Supervisors will gather the documentation and submit it to Human Resources for final review and approval.

Reimbursement is provided after submission of all required documentation, including proof of payment and final grades. All reimbursements are processed through payroll and may be subject to applicable tax regulations.

- Up to \$5,250 per calendar year in tuition reimbursement may be excluded from taxable income, in accordance with federal tax regulations.
- Any amount exceeding \$5,250 in a calendar year will be treated as taxable wages and subject to applicable payroll taxes.
- All tuition reimbursements are processed through payroll to ensure compliance with federal regulations.

Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) Program

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Scholarship Program is a program sponsored by the Children's Forum, Inc. and the State of Florida, Agency for Workforce Innovation. It provides the majority of the cost of tuition and books, a per-semester stipend for travel or for internet access, a bonus for caregivers and other eligible participants who complete their T.E.A.C.H. contract, counseling, and administrative support.

As long as funding is available, RCMA agrees to sponsor a scholarship recipient by contributing a

portion of the cost of tuition, giving participating recipients 3 hours of paid release time while classes are in session, and awarding the participant a bonus upon completion of the contract requirements.

Refer to the complete policy on the Intranet.

10.3 WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Unfortunately, regardless of the best safety efforts, job-related injuries and accidents may still happen. It is the policy of RCMA to provide workers' compensation insurance benefits at no cost to employees who sustain job-related injuries or illnesses while at work. All job-related injuries and accidents that require medical treatment require a drug test.

Reporting Accidents and Incidents

Employees are responsible for reporting all occurrences of accidents and injuries immediately to his/her supervisor. This will allow the completion of the appropriate reports prior to the end of the employee's shift. If an employee fails to immediately report accidents and injuries, it may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment as well as forfeiture of benefits. If an employee is hurt on the job, no matter how slight the injury, please perform the following:

1. Employees must immediately report the injury to the supervisor. If the employee's supervisor is not available, then the employee must immediately report the injury to the Workers' Compensation Specialist at the Rollason State Office.
2. The employee's supervisor will report the accident to the Workers' Compensation Specialist and provide him/her with the Incident Report, including the date and time of injury, position, description of the accident, witnesses, etc.
3. Before any medical treatment or examination for all work-related injuries, an employee must get approval from the Workers' Compensation Specialist. If an employee fails to get prior approval from Human Resources for any medical treatment, the employee may be responsible for the expense.
4. Employees must keep the Workers' Compensation Specialist informed of the status of the injury. Employees are required to deliver the medical documentation he/she receives after every visit to the physician and to the Workers' Compensation Specialist.
5. If an employee is out of work for one or more days because of a workplace injury, the employee must have a signed work release from a physician before the employee can return to work.
6. If the employee's injury was caused by an infraction of safety rules, the employee may be required to attend safety training and be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Please note that in the absence of the Workers' Compensation Specialist, all the required documentation or communication should be sent to the Human Resources Leaves Specialist at the Rollason State Office.

Modified Duty and Temporary Alternative Duty

If an employee is involved in a workplace accident and the authorized Workers' Compensation treating physician (Authorized Doctor) has released the employee to return to work, the employee

must immediately notify his/her Supervisor and the Workers' Compensation Specialist. The employee should provide them with a copy of the employee's release from the Authorized Doctor and/or Form DWC-25, which is a two-page form that should be given to the employee by the Authorized Doctor at the end of each visit. If the employee is not given a written work release or Form DWC-25 by the Authorized Doctor, make sure to request it before the end of the medical appointment.

RCMA will help injured employees get back to productive work by identifying available light-duty assignments that can be done with temporary medical restrictions. If an employee is assigned restrictions or limitations by the Authorized Doctor, the Workers' Compensation Specialist, in collaboration with the Human Resources Generalist/Manager of the area/location, will review the restrictions and determine the best option for placement. Once the employee returns to work following a workplace accident, the employee will remain subject to all the same work rules and regulations. Refusal to accept these assignments may result in the denial of workers' compensation insurance benefits.

Benefits: If an employee is unable to work for more than 7 days, the employee may be eligible to receive money to replace part of what he/she was not able to earn after the accident.

The first 7 days lost from work are only paid by the insurance carrier if an employee loses more than 22 days of work.

If an employee cannot work at all, based on the doctor's instructions, the employee may receive about 66 2/3% of the employee's regular pay at the time of the accident/injury. That benefit will be paid starting on the 8th day the employee loses time from work. The employee will have the option to use the remaining 33 1/3% of his/her PTO balance to receive 100% of the employee's pay.

Zero tolerance for fraud

Workers' compensation fraud is a punishable crime. RCMA and our insurer have a "zero tolerance" policy for fraud. If an employee thinks he/she sees fraud happening, tell a supervisor or manager right away, or call the Workers' Compensation Specialist at the Rollason Center in Immokalee. The employee's tip will be investigated and kept strictly confidential.

10.4 SHARED LEAVE CLUB

The purpose of the Shared Leave Club is to provide employees with the opportunity to support coworkers who are experiencing a serious non-work-related health condition by donating accrued Paid Time Off (PTO) hours or banked leave hours to a centralized Shared Leave pool.

The Shared Leave Club is designed to provide temporary partial salary and benefits continuation for eligible employees who are unable to work due to a serious non-work-related health condition and who are on an approved medical leave of absence.

A serious non-work-related health condition is a catastrophic, unplanned illness, injury, or other major impairment of the employee or the employee's immediate family member (**spouse, child, or parent only**) that creates a financial hardship because the employee has exhausted all available accrued PTO and banked leave hours.

All requests for Shared Leave benefits will be reviewed and evaluated by the Shared Leave Club Committee in accordance with RCMA's policy.

DEFINITIONS

Serious health condition – a condition involving a period of incapacity that is permanent or long-term for which treatment may be effective. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Stroke
- Heart attack
- Cancer treatment
- Car accident with serious injuries
- Domestic violence injury, or threat, with shelter/counselor/advocate confirmation
- Life-threatening complications to the employee during childbirth
- Traumatic injury to the newborn during childbirth
- Hip/knee joint replacement surgery
- Amputations
- Attached to life support systems

Non-qualifying condition – a non-catastrophic condition such as maternity/paternity leave, cosmetic procedures that are not medically necessary or for restorative purposes, accidents causing mild to moderate injury, illness/hospitalization for acute or chronic infections such as pneumonia, urinary tract infection, influenza, or asthma, even if worsened by an underlying chronic condition.

Eligible Donor – a full-time or part-time employee (year-round or seasonal), or a rehire, after being employed for one year as of April 16. Substitutes and temporary employees are not eligible donors.

Eligible Recipient – a full-time or part-time employee who is a member of the Club, and:

- a. Has exhausted all accrued PTO and banked leave hours
- b. Is not currently receiving Workers' Compensation payments

Immediate Family Member – a child, a spouse, or a parent

Shared Leave Club Committee – a diverse group made up of five (5) RCMA employees from different areas, ethnicities, and positions who volunteer for a 2-year term and that verify that Club requirements are met before approval.

Policy and Limitations

1. Participation in the Shared Leave Club is on a voluntary basis and does not guarantee receipt of Shared Leave hours.
2. To join the Shared Leave Club and become an eligible donor or eligible recipient, an employee must donate four (4) hours of PTO or banked leave hours to the Shared Leave Club during the enrollment month in April.
3. Membership will run from July 1st of the current year through June 30th of the following year.
4. To remain a Club member each year, following the original enrollment, the same 4-hour donation will be automatically deducted on each May 15 pay date.
5. The policy allows Club members to donate extra hours in addition to the annual required 4-hour donation if a member chooses to do so.
6. Donations are not tax-deductible.

7. Once processed, donations may not be reversed. Donated hours will also remain in the Club when a Club member terminates voluntarily or involuntarily.
8. Shared Leave benefits must be requested in conjunction with an approved medical leave of absence. Refer to sections 6.2 & 6.3 for additional information.
9. Club members are required to exhaust any accrued PTO and banked leave hours prior to receiving donations through the Club. Electing not to use accrued PTO and banked leave hours during the approved medical leave period will automatically disqualify the member from requesting Shared Leave benefits.
10. A Club member may receive a combination of up to 12 weeks in a 36-month period for themselves and/or a family member. When shared leave is requested to care for an immediate family member, the Club member may receive up to 6 weeks only.
11. A Club member who has been approved for Long-Term Disability benefits is not eligible to receive Shared Leave benefits.
12. Employees currently receiving Shared Leave benefits and who still have PTO or banked leave hours available by the time the annual deduction takes place will first have those amounts applied toward their regular earnings instead of the Shared Leave Club membership.
13. Employees currently receiving Shared Leave benefits who are unable to donate for the upcoming fiscal year will have their Shared Leave benefits end effective June 30th of the current fiscal year.
14. Employees who have been approved to receive Shared Leave benefits and subsequently resign from employment while on an approved medical leave of absence will have their Shared Leave benefits terminated on the effective date of separation from employment.
15. Employees participating in or applying for Shared Leave benefits are prohibited from attempting to identify, contact, influence, or retaliate against committee members regarding committee matters.
16. If the Club runs out of leave hours, requests for Shared Leave will not be accepted.
17. RCMA reserves the right to modify, suspend, or discontinue the Shared Leave Club at any time.
18. The Shared Leave Club is not subject to RCMA's grievance procedure.

Donating Shared Leave

1. Employees who donate four (4) hours of PTO or banked leave hours will do so every May 15 or through the last paycheck before furlough by completing form HR-49 and submitting it to the Payroll Department no later than May 1. If an eligible employee wishes to donate more than the required 4-hour donation, he/she can state so on form HR-49.
2. HR-49 forms submitted after that date will not be processed, which will result in the employee not being eligible to participate in the Club or to request Club benefits.
3. To remain in the Club, members will be automatically deducted 4 hours of PTO or banked leave hours on each May 15 pay date. The Payroll Department will verify that the donor has sufficient hours available to make the donation.

Submitting a Shared Leave Request

1. After the approval of the medical leave of absence (refer to sections 6.2 or 6.3 as applicable), the HR Leaves Specialist will send the request to the Shared Leave Club Committee for review to determine benefits eligibility. The Club member's name will not be disclosed to maintain his/her privacy.
2. The Committee will notify the HR Leaves Specialist of the approval or denial of the request.
3. If approved, the HR Leaves Specialist will notify Payroll. Payroll will then verify that the member has exhausted all PTO and banked leave hours before the Shared Leave benefits will become effective.

Shared Leave Requests and Short-Term Disability Coordination

The intent of the Shared Leave Club is to ensure that RCMA-sponsored disability benefits are utilized appropriately before employees access Shared Leave hours, which are intended for situations in which other income replacement options are unavailable or exhausted.

Employees who are enrolled in and eligible for Short-Term Disability (STD) benefits are expected to utilize those benefits during qualifying medical absences.

Employees who choose not to file or pursue an available STD claim for a qualifying condition or medical leave period will not be eligible to request or receive Shared Leave benefits for the same absence.

A Club member who is enrolled in Short-Term Disability (STD) insurance may apply for Shared Leave benefits; however, eligibility for Shared Leave cannot be finalized until RCMA receives the insurance carrier's final determination regarding the employee's STD claim.

If an STD claim is pending review, approval, denial, or additional documentation requests by the carrier, processing of Shared Leave benefits may be delayed. In addition, payment of Shared Leave benefits may also be delayed until all required documentation, including a completed medical certification, has been received and approved by Human Resources.

In an effort to support the fair and equitable distribution of Shared Leave hours among eligible employees, Shared Leave benefits will be distributed as follows:

- Employees enrolled in STD coverage who have exhausted accrued Paid Time Off (PTO), or who do not have PTO available, may receive up to 40% of Shared Leave hours for any unpaid days, provided the employee has been approved for STD benefits.
- Employees not enrolled in STD coverage who have exhausted accrued Paid Time Off (PTO), or who do not have PTO available, may receive up to 60% of Shared Leave hours for any unpaid days.

Note: Not all approved medical leaves of absence are eligible for Shared Leave benefits. RCMA strongly encourages employees to enroll in one of the Short-Term Disability plans offered through Sun Life. These plans provide an affordable source of income protection during medical leaves of absence, while also offering employees peace of mind and the ability to focus on recovery.

Withdrawal from Shared Leave Club

- A Club member who chooses not to continue membership must submit a resignation letter via e-mail to the Payroll Department by May 1.

- A Club member who does not have the required four (4) PTO or banked leave hours by the time the annual deduction takes place will be removed automatically.

Shared Leave Committee Responsibilities

Committee members shall serve a two-year term beginning July 1 and ending June 30 of the second year.

Prior to the start of each new term, all newly appointed committee members are required to attend an orientation session to review and understand their duties, responsibilities, confidentiality obligations, and the Shared Leave Club procedures.

During their two-year term, committee members are responsible for:

- a. Discussing whether an employee's medical condition meets the definition of a serious health condition under the Shared Leave Club guidelines.
- b. Reviewing Shared Leave requests and approving or denying requests.
- c. Notifying the HR Leaves Specialist of all committee decisions in a timely manner.
- d. Ensuring the fair, impartial, and consistent administration of all Shared Leave requests.
- e. Maintaining strict confidentiality regarding all Shared Leave requests, supporting documentation, committee discussions, and deliberations.

Upon completion of a two-year term, outgoing committee members may be eligible for reappointment to the Shared Leave Club Committee after two full subsequent committee terms have concluded.

To protect the privacy and integrity of the Shared Leave Club process, the identities of the Shared Leave Club Committee members shall remain confidential and will not be disclosed to employees except as authorized by Human Resources.

Conflict of Interest due to direct report's request

Any Shared Leave Committee member who directly supervises an employee submitting a Shared Leave request will be recused from all discussions, deliberations, reviews, recommendations, and voting related to that employee's request.

An alternate committee member may be appointed when necessary to maintain quorum and unbiased review procedures.

Conflict of Interest due to member's own request

Any Shared Leave Committee member who submits a request for Shared Leave benefits will be recused from all discussions, deliberations, reviews, recommendations, and voting related to their request. The committee member will not have influence over the decision-making process concerning their request.

The remaining committee members will evaluate the request in accordance with established Shared Leave Club guidelines and procedures to ensure fairness, impartiality, and confidentiality. If necessary to maintain quorum and unbiased review procedures, Human Resources may appoint a temporary replacement committee member for that specific request.

10.5 HOLIDAYS

Regular employees have twelve (12) paid holidays a year. In order to be paid, an employee has to work a scheduled workday before and after the holiday.

If an employee has an excused absence (**with PTO only**) on the day prior to or the day after a holiday, the employee will be eligible for the holiday pay. The employee is expected to use their full PTO amount. However, if the PTO balance is not enough to cover the employee's scheduled hours for the day(s) absent, the employee must have and use at least one (1) hour of PTO or their balance before and after the holiday.

In the event no program was scheduled before or after the holiday, the employee will not be required to use PTO before or after in order to receive holiday pay.

RCMA holidays are:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Good Friday
- 4th of July
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day plus four (4) days after Christmas

10.6 NURSING MOTHERS

RCMA provides reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child. Breaks are provided for up to one (1) year following the child's birth, each time the employee has the need to express breast milk.

RCMA is not required to pay nursing mothers for breaks taken specifically for the purpose of expressing milk. However, an employee may use her regular paid employee breaks for that purpose. RCMA will provide a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public, which may be used by an employee to express breast milk. It is the employee's responsibility to advise his/her supervisor when such breaks are needed.

10.7 EMPLOYEE SERVICE AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

RCMA honors each long-service employee at a statewide annual service awards ceremony and presents him/her with a service award plaque and/or an appropriate gift.

Employees who have completed fifteen years of service and each succeeding five years of service will be honored.

Employees are also recognized after 1, 5, and 10 years of service. These recognition activities take place in the specific area and/or office of the individual employee's work.

SECTION 11 - COMPENSATION

RCMA pays salaries and wages based on the duties and responsibilities of each position.

All employees are paid twice a month. Pay dates are generally the fifteenth (15th) and the last workday of the month. If a scheduled payday falls on a weekend, employees will be paid the Friday before. If the payday falls on a holiday, employees are usually paid on the day before the holiday. All required federal deductions and any voluntary deductions an employee authorized, such as health insurance contributions, are withheld automatically from the employee's paycheck.

11.1 E-TIME

RCMA's official timekeeping system is E-TIME, a time and attendance system that collects actual time entered by employees.

To request any time off, employees must communicate with the supervisor in advance unless unforeseen circumstances do not allow that.

Non-Exempt Employees (hourly)

The non-exempt employee is required to clock in and clock out daily. Regular hours worked, overtime, holidays, personal leave, and any other leaves must be recorded in the system. At the end of each pay period, the employee's supervisor must approve the information the employee entered. If an employee misses clocking in, the employee should notify his/her supervisor or designee immediately of any edits that need to be made to the timecard. Clocking in or out using a cell phone or any other non-RCMA electronic device is prohibited.

Exempt Employees (salary)

If an employee is exempt, the employee must request PTO through the E-time system.

At the end of each pay period, exempt employees are required to review their time cards for accuracy of hours worked and/or any PTO and/or unpaid PTO before approving them. Then, the supervisors are required to review their time cards for accuracy of hours worked and/or any PTO and/or unpaid PTO before approving them.

Misrepresenting hours worked and/or PTO hours in E-time will result in immediate termination.

11.2 OVERTIME COMPENSATION

An employee's job may periodically require overtime work. If so, the employee's supervisor will give him/her as much advance notice as possible. Employees should not work overtime hours without prior approval by his/her supervisor. Working overtime without prior approval will result in disciplinary action.

If an employee is a non-exempt employee who is required to work more than forty (40) hours in one week, the employee is entitled to overtime compensation at a rate of one and one-half for each hour of work in excess of the regular forty (40) hours.

Unlike hourly non-exempt employees, exempt salaried employees are not eligible for extra compensation for overtime under federal law.

11.3 *INCENTIVES*

RCMA may offer employee incentive programs to support recruitment, retention, professional development, employee recognition, and organizational success. Incentive programs are designed to recognize employee contributions and encourage continued growth and commitment to the organization.

Eligibility

Participation in an incentive program is subject to the specific eligibility requirements established for each program.

Unless otherwise stated, employees must:

- Be actively employed on the payment date,
- Meet all eligibility requirements,
- Be in Good Standing,
- Meet retention requirements, if applicable,
- Complete required documentation,
- Have all required approvals

Types of Incentives

RCMA may offer the following incentive programs:

- Loyalty Incentives for employees returning from qualifying seasonal furloughs
- Retention Incentives to encourage continued employment in critical roles
- Staff Development Incentives such as T.E.A.C.H. and 9-credit incentives
- Referral Incentives for successful employee referrals
- Sign-On Incentives for hard-to-fill positions
- End-of-Year Incentives based on organizational performance and funding
- Performance recognition incentives for exceptional contributions

Tax Information

All Incentives are taxable income and are subject to applicable payroll tax withholdings.

Important Information

- All incentive payments are discretionary and are not part of an employee's regular salary, wages, or future compensation.
- Incentives are subject to available funding, budget approval, applicable laws, grant or donor requirements, and organizational financial resources.
- RCMA reserves the right to establish, modify, suspend, or discontinue any incentive program at any time, subject to applicable law.
- Receiving an incentive does not guarantee future incentives or continued employment.

Refer to the complete policy on the Intranet.

11.4 *DIRECT DEPOSIT PAYMENT*

RCMA requires that all employees elect how to receive their pay by completing the HR36 Direct Deposit form. Employees can elect to receive his/her pay via direct deposit to a bank account, to a Wisely Pay card, or to a Wisely Pay by ADP check. The bank account where RCMA sends payments must be active at all times, or the deposits made will be sent back to RCMA. **If an**

employee closes his/her account, the employee must notify the Payroll Office immediately.

All new employees will be issued a Wisely Pay Card for their first payroll earnings. After the first payroll earnings, the employee's pay will be issued to the option the employee selected on the HR36 Direct Deposit form.

11.5 *PAY CALCULATIONS*

For new hires and rehires: An employee's initial rate of pay is calculated based on RCMA's pay ranges. An example of a pay range is the following:

\$15.00/hr. - \$19.95/hr. - \$24.89/hr.

The start of the range is \$15.00, the midpoint of the range is \$19.95, and the maximum of the range is \$24.89. As a new employee, the pay rate will normally be at the start of the range. However, if an employee provides documentation of prior experience doing the same kind of job for which he/she is hired, it will be taken into consideration. The employee's supervisor, with guidance from the Human Resources Department, will determine the employee's initial rate of pay.

If an employee has prior experience but is unable to submit the required documentation within the timeframe indicated by the employee's supervisor, the employee will be paid at the start of the pay range.

11.6 *REACHING THE SALARY RANGE MAXIMUM*

If an employee's salary has reached the maximum of the position's salary range, the employee is only eligible for Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA).

11.7 *GARNISHMENT OF WAGES*

RCMA honors any wage garnishments that are mandated under the Florida and Federal Wage Garnishment Laws. Mandated garnishments will be deducted from each of the employee's paychecks until the amount owed is paid off or the garnishment is dissolved.

11.8 *ADMIN PAY*

The Admin Pay policy ensures that employees are compensated during temporary closures of RCMA offices, centers, and schools due to natural and non-natural disasters. This policy applies to all RCMA employees, including those in substitute capacities, during periods of temporary closure due to natural or non-natural disasters.

RCMA may temporarily close its offices, centers, and schools due to natural or non-natural disasters. During such closures, employees will be compensated with administrative pay for their scheduled work hours, subject to specific conditions outlined in this policy.

DEFINITION

Natural Disaster: Events such as major hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires, or other severe weather events that pose a threat to safety.

Non-Natural Disaster: Events that disrupt regular business operations, such as utility outages (air conditioning, water, electricity), septic tank issues, gas leaks, etc.

1. Closure Determination:

- Depending on the extent of the damage, interruption of services, as well as resources, the Executive Director or designee will determine the number of days the location will remain closed.

2. Compensation During Closure:

- Employees will receive admin pay for all or the remainder of their scheduled work hours.
- Substitute employees will be compensated based on their scheduled hours.
- Employees on leave during the closure will not be eligible for administrative pay.
- Employees who have resigned, but whose last date falls on the admin pay date, will be compensated as follows:
 - o If the employee is staying for the required timeframe (2 weeks if the employee is hourly and 4 weeks if the employee is salaried), then the employee will be paid.
 - o If the employee is not staying for the full timeframe, the employee will not receive admin pay if he/she is not working the day after.

3. Post-Closure Expectations:

- Employees are expected to return to their regular schedule once the administrative period ends.
- If circumstances prevent an employee from working their usual scheduled hours during the disaster recovery period, they are expected to work at least 50% of their regular schedule to qualify for their full, regular pay.

4. Absence Beyond Admin Period:

- Employees not reporting to work beyond the admin period, regardless of the reason for their absence, the employee will not be eligible for regular pay unless the employee contacts their supervisor and requests personal leave and it is approved.
- If an employee has no available PTO balance, they will not receive pay. In such cases, the employee's supervisor will apply the Unpaid Personal Leave code for each day in E-time.

5. Disciplinary Actions:

- If an employee fails to communicate with their supervisor or refuses to report to work immediately after the admin period, the employee may be disciplined up to and including termination.
- Refer to Section V of the Employee Handbook for details on attendance-related policies, specifically under the Proper Notification policy section.

Reference Section 4.15 in the Employee Handbook for admin pay related to investigation leaves.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Director/Designee: Determine the duration of closures and communicate decisions.

Supervisors: Ensure accurate application of administrative pay and manage employee attendance and leave requests.

Employees: Communicate with supervisors, adhere to post-closure work expectations, and request leave as necessary.

11.9 ACTING PAY

Acting pay may be awarded to an RCMA employee who temporarily assumes significant responsibilities of a higher-level job. These responsibilities are usually performed in addition to a staff member's primary duties. Employees who are placed on acting status for 30 consecutive

days or longer are eligible to receive a 5% increase. The acting pay will automatically cease at the end of the temporary assignment. If the employee assumes full responsibilities for the new role, the employee will receive a 5% increase or the minimum of the new pay range, whichever is higher. If an hourly employee performs duties or responsibilities of an exempt position, he/she will remain an hourly employee and will be eligible for overtime.

Temporary responsibilities for a period shorter than 30 consecutive working days to cover while the regular employee attends meetings, takes personal time off, is out for medical treatment/appointments, or other temporary leaves are considered opportunities for professional development, and no additional pay should be awarded. However, recognition of the additional efforts should be made at the time of the employee's annual performance evaluation and salary review.

11.10 PERSON-IN-CHARGE PAY

Employees in child development centers who are assigned Person-In-Charge (PIC) responsibilities for 30 consecutive days or longer, and have received PIC formal training, are eligible for a 3% increase at the time of the assignment. The PIC increase will automatically be removed when the employee is relieved of the PIC responsibilities.

11.11 INTERIM PAY

The employee may be asked to serve in interim roles or assignments, assuming the duties of a higher-level position that is vacant. The interim pay is only meant to be for vacancies for the higher-level positions at the director level and above.

If the position falls:

- Within the same pay band, the employee will receive an increase to base salary for the duration of the interim role or assignment. For example, if the employee's new role is at the same salary level and involves substantial additional work, RCMA will offer interim pay of 5%-15%, depending on the nature and amount of the additional work. The amount of interim pay may be based on whether the employee functions in both his or her current position as well as the vacant position, or only in the vacant position.
- Within a higher-level pay band, the employee will receive an increase to the base salary. The employer may pay the employee a salary appropriate to the level position for the duration of the assignment.

Once an interim assignment ends, the employee's salary will return to the original pay plus any other increase and/or adjustments (merit, COLA, etc.) warranted during this time.

During an interim assignment, the employee will be given a courtesy title, such as "interim," followed by the title of the position for which the employee is performing the duties and responsibilities.

11.12 ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

RCMA may assign employees additional responsibilities to meet organizational needs. When assigned duties significantly increase the scope, complexity, skill level, effort, or accountability of an employee's position, the employee's compensation may be reviewed for a potential pay adjustment. Any adjustment will be evaluated by Human Resources in collaboration with the employee's supervisor and will consider internal equity, market factors, and organizational requirements.

During periods of fiscal constraint, organizational restructuring, position eliminations, role

consolidations, or the redistribution of responsibilities, employees may be required to assume additional duties without additional compensation unless specifically authorized by the Executive Director.

All additional duty assignments and any approved compensation adjustments must be properly documented and approved. Employees assigned additional responsibilities may be required to sign an acknowledgment confirming their understanding of the assigned duties and expectations.

SECTION 12 - TERMINATION POLICY

RCMA employees' terminations may be either voluntary or involuntary.

12.1 VOLUNTARY TERMINATION

Voluntary terminations include resignations, retirement, and quitting with or without notice.

Resignations

A resignation is a voluntary termination from RCMA with notice on the part of the employee.

Proper notice

An hourly-paid employee is expected to give at least two (2) weeks' notice, and a salaried employee is expected to give at least four (4) weeks' notice. All resignations should be in writing.

An employee who resigns is entitled to payment for any unused personal leave. If the effective date of resignation is a holiday or falls during RCMA's December holiday break, the employee is not eligible for payment for the holiday(s) unless the staff member works the workday following the holiday or December break.

It is the responsibility of the employee's supervisor to submit the resignation letter along with the proper termination form to the Human Resources Department.

Quitting Without Notice

An employee who fails to give proper notice of resignation or abandons the job is considered to have quit without notice. In addition, an employee who is absent for two (2) consecutive workdays without proper justification is also considered to have quit without notice.

12.2 INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION

Involuntary terminations include:

- End of approved leave
- End of temporary employment
- Failure to certify I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification
- Ineligibility for employment (such as MVR, drug testing, background screening)
- Lack of required credentials/DCF trainings
- Staff reduction/reorganization/position elimination
- Termination during the probationary period
- Threat to the safety and/or health of children
- Unsatisfactory job performance
- Violation of standards of conduct, policies, and procedures

All employees who have not completed their original six-month or one-year probationary period may be terminated without cause, and such termination is not subject to the rights of appeal through the grievance process.

It is the policy of RCMA not to release the reason for termination to anyone except when an employee is terminated for violating the childcare requirements of the State. In this case, the reason for dismissal may be released to other childcare organizations.

When job references are requested by individuals outside RCMA, the organization will only provide dates of employment and title, and will also verify ending salaries if requested.

12.3 FINAL PAY CHECK

Employees who either resign or are terminated will receive a final check for any time worked plus any unused accrued paid time off (PTO), less the mandated and voluntary deductions in compliance with state laws, on the next scheduled pay date.

To ensure that an employee receives his/her final paycheck and the employee's end-of-year tax forms required for filing his/her tax return, the employee's address should be kept updated, and if it changes at any time before the end of the current year, please update it on the employee self-service.

12.4 CONTINUATION OF HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS (COBRA)

Under Federal law, an employee and his/her covered dependents have the opportunity for a temporary extension of medical coverage up for up to 18 months, depending on the event. This type of coverage is called COBRA continuation coverage and is available at group rates in instances where coverage under the RCMA plan ends as a result of qualifying events such as divorce, reduction in hours, employment termination, death, etc. Information about COBRA continuation coverage will be provided following a termination. Details may be obtained by contacting the Benefits Office.

12.5 EXIT INTERVIEW

When employees voluntarily leave our organization, he/she is given the opportunity to provide information pertaining to their work experience and the factors that contributed to their separation. Exit interviews are voluntary and kept confidential.

The exit interview can be completed through an online survey link from a third-party provider available on the Intranet. It also may be conducted over the telephone, in a video conference, or in person, depending on the preference of the departing employee and the availability of both the employee and the HR Generalist conducting the interview.

12.6 REHIRE POLICY

It is the policy of RCMA to consider former employees in good standing. Employees who leave RCMA either voluntarily or through no fault of their own, and who apply for an open position for which they qualify, will be given consideration. Re-employment, however, is not guaranteed. Refer to the section "Time Eligibility to Apply" below. If the rehired employee had an active disciplinary action that has not expired upon his/her return, the disciplinary action will remain in their file until the retention date expires. Former employees who were terminated for cause, including gross misconduct, are not eligible for rehire.

Rehired employees are subject to all pre-employment requirements, including, but not limited to, a probationary period.

RCMA is not required to rehire former employees at their former rate of pay.

PTO Accrual:

- PTO will accrue at the same previous rate if employees are rehired within one year from termination (or one season).
- Employees rehired after one year from termination will accrue as a new hire.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Former Employees Absent for Longer than One Year:

Former employees returning after one year from termination will be regarded as a new employee.

Time Eligibility to Apply:

The reasons for a prior termination and the circumstances surrounding the termination will be evaluated by the Human Resources Department in determining whether a previous employee is eligible for re-employment. Prior satisfactory performance, excellent attendance, and work references, and clean disciplinary records will be a positive consideration in determining fitness and match with the job opening.

a) Immediate

A former employee, with a satisfactory work record on file, who was terminated due to voluntary resignation, lack of work, completion of temporary work, or restructuring of position/work duties may apply immediately or at any future time for open positions. A former employee, with a satisfactory work record on file, who was terminated as a result of not meeting certain requirements of the position (e.g., valid driver's license or valid credential), may apply immediately after providing evidence that the specific requirement has been met.

A former employee who was terminated due to inability to perform the essential functions of the job, as determined by his/her medical provider, may reapply immediately upon submission of acceptable medical documentation certifying that he/she is able to perform the functions with or without reasonable accommodation.

b) Deferred

A former employee who was terminated due to a mutually agreed-upon resignation or to inappropriate performance or actions may, depending upon the circumstances of their termination, apply for an open position after a reasonable period of time as determined by the hiring supervisor and Human Resources. A returning employee must provide satisfactory work references.

c) Ineligible

A former employee who was terminated for a serious conduct or performance violation is no longer eligible to apply. Serious violations include but are not limited to theft, carrying a weapon on RCMA property (including vehicles), sexual harassment, violence in the workplace, a conviction of a felony or a misdemeanor that is materially related to his/her work or listed on the Affidavit of Good Moral Character (DCF form CF- 1649), deliberate conduct involving physical abuse of children such as hitting, spanking or harshly grabbing or shaking a child, emotional abuse of children such as denying basic care, food, humiliation or isolation. (This list of serious violations is not all-inclusive.)

Former employees who are terminated twice due to conduct, performance, or attendance issues are no longer eligible to reapply.

Refer to the complete Rehire Policy on the Intranet.
