

# INTRODUCTION

Welcome,

On behalf of the *Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests*, herein known as the *Forest Society*, we welcome you as a member of the staff. One of the greatest assets of our organization is the people who are associated with it. We look forward to having you as our representative.

We have prepared this handbook to set forth not only the specifics of our employment policy, but to provide you with a better understanding of the nature of the *Forest Society* - its mission, its goals, and how we work together to accomplish our objectives. The specifics of our employment policy are set forth in the Employment and Personnel Information section of this handbook.

We hope and expect you will keep the following points in mind.

1. We are a member organization. Every employee is a representative of the *Forest Society*, to our members and to the public at large. Your actions and attitudes can say more about the *Forest Society* than anything else we do.
2. Become familiar with our goals. Annual and long-range plans are important elements in the success of the *Forest Society*. Know where we are headed and how we plan to get there. We welcome and need your involvement in the planning process.
3. There's much to be done. The protection of New Hampshire's resources, particularly its forests and land, is an ambitious mission. We can't do it all, and we can't do it alone. With dedication and enthusiasm, a sense of humor, and a willingness to be creative, we can accomplish a lot.
4. We value flexibility, openness, and informality. We want your job to be rewarding and enjoyable. We strongly encourage open and thoughtful communication and an informal atmosphere among staff, trustees, and members. Mutual respect and civility is core to our culture.
5. We have many partners. The *Forest Society* works cooperatively, on an informal and formal basis, with many other groups and public agencies. We encourage you to become familiar with these groups and their missions.

Members of the Board of Trustees, the President/Forester, other staff members, and our members are invaluable resources in helping to get the job done. Please do not hesitate to consult them.

Welcome and best wishes for success in your work at the *Forest Society*.

Cordially,

Board of Trustees and  
Jane A. Difley, President/Forester

# WHO WE ARE

## WHAT IS THE *FOREST SOCIETY*?

### *Mission Statement*

***To perpetuate the forests of New Hampshire through their wise use and their complete reservation in places of special scenic beauty.***

The *Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests* (the *Forest Society*) is a not-for-profit organization that was founded in 1901 and is devoted to the protection and responsible use of the State's natural resources. With innovative programs in land protection, easement stewardship, forest management, resource education, and advocacy, the *Forest Society* is the State's oldest and largest conservation organization.

The unusual blend of responsible use and preservation makes the *Forest Society* unique among conservation and environmental groups. It means advocating ecologically based forest management, including timber harvesting in some areas, as well as promoting wilderness preserves for other special areas.

Under the direction of elected officers and trustees, our programs emanate from headquarters in the award-winning passive solar Conservation Center in Concord, and from the Rocks Estate in Bethlehem.

[www.forestsociety.org](http://www.forestsociety.org)

[www.therocks.org](http://www.therocks.org)

## WHAT DOES THE *FOREST SOCIETY* DO?

**Land Protection:** Every year, the Forest Society helps private landowners conserve thousands of acres through two primary methods: conservation easements and land acquisitions. Easements leave the land in private hands and on the local tax rolls. The easements contain typical restrictions preventing development of the land, while generally allowing agriculture, forestry and private recreation. The long-term protection of these lands is guaranteed through the Forest Society's comprehensive stewardship program which includes on-going monitoring of these lands to ensure they're conserved in perpetuity. Permanent land acquisitions become part of the Forest Society's reservation system and are managed for recreation, timber, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and scenery. Land protection projects are selected based on criteria described in regional plans, which are developed in concert with our conservation partners.

**Reservation Stewardship:** Reservation Stewardship manages more than 53,000 acres of land owned in fee by the Forest Society; demonstrating ecologically based, sustainable silviculture while providing recreational opportunities, enhancing wildlife habitat, maintaining water quality and protecting areas of rare, threatened and endangered species, and unique ecological features. The Forest Society pays property taxes on its reservations which are usually enrolled in current use, and timber taxes on stumpage income. Department foresters collaborate with personnel from other agencies, and are members of the broader forestry community within New Hampshire through co-sponsorship of the New Hampshire Tree Farm Program, and providing volunteer members to numerous statewide natural resource committees.

Public Policy: The *Forest Society* is active in a range of public policy issues at both the state and federal levels, including land protection, forest management, public land management, environmental regulation, current use tax assessment, growth management, and water resources.

Education: The *Forest Society* promotes responsible and sustainable use of natural resources through education programs for all ages. We conduct courses, workshops, field trips, and seminars, and work closely with volunteers, landowners, land managers, and State and local officials to provide tools to protect our State's natural resources.

Communications: The *Forest Society* engages our members, partners, stakeholders, and the general public proactively to promote our mission and build relationships with those who share our values. **Forest Notes**, our quarterly journal, keeps members informed of *Forest Society* programs and provides up-to-date information on natural resource issues and activities. Through multiple websites and social media platforms we seek to provide useful information and receive valuable feedback. We interact regularly with media outlets to inform and educate.

Volunteers: It was volunteers who formed the *Forest Society* in 1901 and it is volunteers who have continued to contribute to the growth and success of the organization. By performing many important tasks, *Forest Society* volunteers enable us to carry out our current level of activity in all areas of operation including education, maintenance, land protection, community outreach, advocacy, administration and fundraising. Volunteers do not replace existing paid staff but enhance the work that paid staff accomplishes. Our organization recognizes the value of its volunteers.

Interns: In addition to volunteers, the *Forest Society* utilizes interns. These interns are often college students who need to fulfil an academic requirement while gaining real world work experience. Internships are generally short-term but the knowledge gained by the students, and the value of their work, is long-term.

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## **EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION**

## GETTING STARTED

The employee handbook is intended to serve as a guideline, describing the basic personnel policies and practices of the *Forest Society*; it is **not** a contract of employment. This handbook confers no contractual rights to the employee; its provisions shall not constitute contractual obligations enforceable against the *Forest Society*.

The *Forest Society* reserve the right to make changes, with or without notice, in the policies and practices described within the handbook. Moreover, because it is impossible to anticipate every situation that may arise, the *Forest Society* reserves the right to address a situation in a manner different from that described here, if, in our discretion, the circumstances so warrant.

If you have questions about the policies and procedures described in this handbook, or suggestions for improvements, please see the Human Resources department.

## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The *Forest Society* is proud to hire based upon the individual qualifications, merits and achievements of people. All decisions to recruit, hire, promote and release from employment are made without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, physical or mental disabilities, veteran status, genetic information, or other legally protected status.

## A SAFE WORKPLACE

The *Forest Society* is committed to furthering the safety and health of its employees while they are at work. Employees will not be required to work under conditions of immediate danger to safety and health, and share responsibility to make all operations as safe as possible. The *Forest Society* maintains a Safety Committee to promote safety and health at the *Forest Society*. The Safety Committee comprises staff from all levels of the organization and continually assesses the safety program and makes recommendations for changes where needed. Quarterly meetings of the Safety committee are held in order to uphold the State of NH's requirement for reporting and to maintain a written safety program which is available to all staff. For more information on the Safety committee please see the Human Resource department. For a list of current members please refer to **Addendum #1**.

## PERSONNEL ADVISORY TEAM (PAT)

The *Forest Society* has a Personnel Advisory Team, which reviews and recommends to the Board of Trustees personnel policies including all amendments to this Employee Handbook. It may review certain personnel issues, and is available to assist employees with any questions or concerns. This committee consists of representatives from all employment categories. Please refer to **Addendum #1** for current members.

- The Personnel Advisory Team (PAT) is composed of:
  - President/Forester, ex officio
  - One Vice President
  - One Director/Senior Specialist
  - One Administrative Assistant/Administrative Coordinator
  - One Specialist
  - One staff member at large
  - Human Resource Specialist, Chair

Members will be appointed by the President/Forester on a rotating basis and usually serve on the team for four years. Please indicate your interest in this team to the President/Forester or the HR Specialist.

## HIRING INFORMATION

Employees of the *Forest Society* are employed at will, which means that they are not hired for any definite period of time and either they or the Forest Society may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause and with or without advance notice. The only exception to this rule would be an employee who, due to unusual circumstances, has been provided a promise of employment for a particular length of time, which is in writing and signed by the President/Forester.

Only the President/Forester has the authority to make any promises to employees regarding the duration of employment; to be binding, such promises must be in writing and signed by both the President/Forester, and the employee. If you believe that you have been made any promises to the effect that your employment will continue for some definite period of time, and that you are not an at-will employee, please consult with Human Resources immediately.

It is the policy of the *Forest Society* that relatives of regular (not temporary) employees are not eligible to be hired as regular employees. For the purpose of this policy, relatives include the following: spouse (or equivalent), parent or parent-in-law; sibling or sibling-in-law; and natural, step and adopted children.

All employees who are required to drive for the *Forest Society* in any capacity will provide a copy of a valid driving license, and proof of automobile insurance with minimum limits of \$100,000.00/\$300,000.00.

Rehired employees: Employees who leave the Forest Society, and are rehired to work an average of at least 18.75 hours per week, will receive benefits as stated under "Types of Employees."

## MOVEMENT WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION

Notice of job openings will be circulated within the *Forest Society* before being publicly advertised. Internal promotion is encouraged, and an employee will not be penalized for applying for an open position. In the event an employee does apply for an open position within the *Forest Society*, the employee should notify his or her supervisor of the application.

## ORIENTATION

Employees will be provided with access to the employee handbook when hired. The new employee will meet with the Human Resources department and will be provided specific written payroll and benefit information, an introduction to time sheet management and answers to any questions the new employee may have. Each supervisor will review the new employee's salary status, and answer questions about the job description. The supervisor will also develop an orientation and training plan in concert with the new employee. Additional orientation includes introduction to staff and, where appropriate, visits to other *Forest Society* facilities and land. The *Forest Society's* organizational by-laws are available on our website.

## TYPES OF EMPLOYEES

Benefited full-time employees: Employees assigned to ongoing positions which are normally scheduled to work between 37.5 hours and 40 hours per week (1950 hours per year and 2080 hours per year respectively). These employees are entitled to all of the benefits provided by the *Forest Society*.

Benefited part-time employees: Employees assigned to ongoing positions which are normally scheduled to work at least 18.75 hours but less than 37.5 hours per week (975 hours – 1949 hours per year),. These employees are entitled to pro-rated benefits.

Non Benefited part-time employees: Employees who are normally scheduled to work fewer than 18.75 hours per week (975 hours per year) and are not eligible for benefits.

Temporary employees: Temporary employees are those hired with the understanding that their employment will not continue beyond a stated date or completion of a specified project. Employees in this category may be full or part-time, short or long term, and do not receive benefits unless otherwise stipulated.

Seasonal employees: Seasonal employees are those hired to work a specific season and are not entitled to benefits. Seasonal employment is short term and temporary.

Interns: Interns are hired with the understanding that their employment will last for a specific period of time, with either a single duty or a variety of assignments. Interns may or may not be paid depending on the terms of their internship, but in no case are they eligible for benefits.

All employees will be covered by worker's compensation insurance and are eligible for unemployment compensation, subject to the entitlement criteria under applicable laws, regardless of their employment type. All benefits are also subject to the eligibility terms and conditions of the particular benefit plans, as described in the benefit plan documents.

## DEFINING EMPLOYEES

Independent Contractors (non- employees): Independent Contractors are those individuals who are paid on a fee-for-service basis to perform certain specified services. Further definition of what constitutes an independent contractor can be found at the NH Dept. of Labor website (<http://www.nh.gov/labor/documents/employee-contractor-poster.pdf>). Independent contractors are not considered employees of the *Forest Society* and are not covered by this Handbook.

Exempt and Non-Exempt Employees: All employees of the *Forest Society* shall be designated either "exempt (not eligible to receive overtime)" or "non-exempt (eligible to receive overtime)" at the time of hire or promotion, in accordance with the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The definitions associated with exempt and non-exempt are based on, (a) how much the employee is paid, (b) how the employee is paid, and (c) what kind of work the employee does. Typically Forest Society positions fall into one of three categories; executive, professional and administrative (see Addendum #2). The *Forest Society* utilizes the criteria within these categories to determine exempt versus non-exempt. Every position's exemption status is listed in the job description. If a position is exempt the nature of the exemption is clearly documented in an exemption worksheet completed by Human Resources and filed in the personnel file. If you have questions regarding exempt versus non-exempt please see the Human Resource Department. For a brief explanation of exemption categories please refer to **Addendum #2**



## SALARY ADMINISTRATION

### PAY DATE

Benefited employees are paid monthly, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. In the event the 20<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend, checks will be distributed on the Friday immediately preceding the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. The Forest Society understands that being paid monthly can cause financial difficulties for some employees; therefore employees may request a pay advance through the Human Resources department. Non Benefited employees are paid weekly, on Friday, for the previous week's work. The use of direct deposit of paychecks is encouraged.

### SALARY RANGES

The Forest Society's established salary ranges are reviewed and modified based on data gathered through salary surveys on an ongoing basis. The data compares salaries for similar positions in non-profits and public agencies. Please refer to **Addendum #2** for position descriptions and **Addendum #3** for current salary ranges.

Management will review salary ranges and benefits at least annually. Recommended salary range and benefit matching changes will be reviewed and acted upon by the Board of Trustees. Individual salaries will be adjusted by the President/Forester as follows:

Salary Increases: Salary increases may be awarded by the President/Forester, in consultation with employees' supervisors, based on formal and objective performance evaluations. The Forest Society may elect to pay for salary increases with an addition to base pay, single payments or awards.

Employees are not automatically eligible for such increases. Increases are intended to reward performance; therefore they are based on merit not cost of living. Increases will be dependent on fulfillment of goals as mutually agreed upon between the employee and supervisor at the time of the annual performance evaluation, overall performance, position in salary range, and length of service, recommendation of supervisor and needs of the organization. The *Forest Society* has the right to decrease individual salaries or wages if in its judgment doing so is necessary in the interests of the organization.

Any increases will normally be made retroactively to the beginning of the fiscal year (May 1<sup>st</sup>); as soon as possible once the budget has been approved by the Board of Trustees.

Range Change: The Board of Trustees may change the salary range for any or all positions either to increase or decrease them. Employees whose salaries fall outside the salary range stipulated for their positions will automatically have their base pay adjusted. This adjustment will be effective the beginning of the fiscal year.

Employees are expected to be familiar with their job descriptions and assigned salary range. Job descriptions may be obtained from your supervisor or Human Resources.

Advancement Between Ranges: Recognizing that the *Forest Society* is a relatively small organization, we wish to encourage professional growth and advancement, as appropriate and within our means. Advancement within a given position range, or from one range to another, may be based on the proven ability to assume new responsibilities in certain areas including, but not limited to: negotiating on behalf of the *Forest Society*; representing the *Forest Society* externally; fund raising success; supervision of other personnel; managing contracts, contractors, and vendors; project management and program

development. Advancement may also be based on consistently exemplary performance or professional education as it relates to the *Forest Society's* needs. The decision to advance between ranges is made through the supervisor, human resources and the President/Forester.

Time Sheets: All employees (including exempt, non-exempt, full-time, part-time, interns and temporary) are responsible for completing and submitting time sheets. Employees paid on an hourly basis are also required to record start times, stop times and meal breaks.

## PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Federal law requires that the *Forest Society* deduct FICA and Medicare (MED) taxes from paychecks and to withhold federal income tax as appropriate. Deductions are made according to standard government tables and are reported on pay checks.

In addition to these mandatory deductions, employees may elect deductions for other purposes, including medical and dental plans, flexible spending accounts, retirement plan, and charitable contributions. Such deductions and deduction changes will be made **only** if authorized by the employee in writing.

## OVERTIME

The work week begins Saturday at 12:01 A.M. and ends Friday at midnight.

Non-exempt employees will be paid 1 1/2 times their regular hourly rate for each hour worked beyond 40 hours in one work week. The *Forest Society* may alter regular work hours according to its program demands, *e.g.*, the Annual Meeting, or other events. This means, for example, that if an employee is asked to work during Annual Meeting on a Saturday, that employee will be offered a different day off between Monday – Friday of the following week. In no instance should a non-exempt employee work more than 40 hours in a given work week without prior approval from the supervisor. Overtime is not paid to exempt employees based on the definition of exemption.

## BONUSES

Bonuses, when paid, are a matter of discretion, not of right. The *Forest Society* makes no promise regarding the payment of bonuses.

## REIMBURSEMENTS

Employees who incur expenses in connection with their employment by the *Forest Society* will be reimbursed for the payment of the expenses within 30 days of the presentation of proof of payment. Reimbursable expenses, which must be supported by receipts or other documentation and must be approved by the employee's supervisor, include:

- \* Transportation costs, which may include mileage reimbursement if the employee uses a personal vehicle, at the current IRS rate.
- \* Tolls, parking fees.
- \* Meals/lodging away from home.
- \* Meals for *Forest Society* guests.
- \* Phone charges for *Forest Society*-related business.
- \* State imposed license fees for activities or professions substantially beneficial to employment by the *Forest Society*. [However, when the employee performs professional services for pay outside the *Forest Society* the fee will be pro-rated to account for personal benefit. In most cases voluntary professional association dues or fees are the responsibility of the employee and are, therefore, not reimbursed. The

organization may pay for professional association dues or fees for staff if the expense has been discussed with their supervisor and has been accounted for within the departmental budget. ]

\* Other reasonable business-related expenses.

To access the expense report, follow the link below and chose the current year:

<G:\Forms\Expense Reports>

## MATERIALS, DISCOUNTS, AND PASSES

All *Forest Society* staff receive free copies of *Forest Notes*; a 20% discount on all *Forest Society* Gift Shop items; and one, annual free pass per employee and their immediate family members to Lost River.

## ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILES

The Human Resource department will maintain personnel files for each employee.

Personnel files are confidential and may be reviewed by persons other than the employee only on a demonstrated need to know basis and at the discretion of the Vice President for Finance and the Human Resource department.

Employees have the right to review their own personnel files and may request copies of any documents in their own file. If an employee disagrees with any of the information in his or her personnel file, and there is no agreement upon removal or correction of such information, then the employee may submit a written statement with Human Resources, to be included in the file, explaining his or her version of the information at issue.

## PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Performance evaluations of employees are conducted at least twice a year, at the anniversary of hire and six months later. New employee also will be evaluated at the end of their first six months on the job.

The purpose of the performance evaluation is

- To promote clearer communications between employees and supervisors with regard to work performance and expectations as related to the goals and work plans of the organization.
- To provide supervisors with data to develop training opportunities, assess future job assignments, and recommend compensation.
- To provide employees with an opportunity to take a personal inventory, pinpoint strengths and weaknesses and develop career objectives.
- To help foster a climate for employee growth at all levels of the Forest Society.

The process begins by the employee writing a self-evaluation which he/she brings to the meeting with their supervisor. Performance evaluations are intended to provide a forum in which both the employee and the supervisor can discuss the employee's performance over a period of time. It is not the *Forest Society's* intention that performance evaluations be the only time employees and supervisors meet. Ongoing communication is encouraged whether it pertains to job performance, goal setting, or professional growth.

The annual evaluation focuses on how the employee has done throughout the year, what they have done well, which areas or skills need improvement, what new goals they have set, and how they have done meeting previously set goals. After each annual evaluation meeting, a summary will be written by the supervisor and presented to the employee for signature, after which it will be placed in the employees personnel file. These summaries are referenced when salary increases are being considered. The following link provides guidance to both supervisors and employees regarding the performance evaluation steps and outcomes.

<G:\HumanResources\Handbook Documents linked to HB\Performance Evaluation Guide.docx>

Semi-annual evaluations are a mid-year check in, are less formal, and are generally shorter in length. Semi-annual evaluations may or may not include a written summary; if a written summary is prepared, it will be placed in the employee's file.

The President/Forester's performance will be evaluated by the Board of Trustees.

## PAY UPON TERMINATION

Upon the voluntary or involuntary termination of employment, regardless of the reason, the employee will be paid any wages earned but not yet paid, including any accrued but unused vacation pay. The employee will not be paid for accrued but unused sick leave or other types of paid leave aside from vacation pay. If an employee leaves voluntarily the earned wages and vacation time will be paid as part of the next normal payroll cycle. If an employee is terminated, the earned wages and vacation time must be paid within seventy-two (72) hours, based on State law. The *Forest Society* does not have a policy or practice of providing severance pay or other severance benefits. However, in its sole discretion, and based upon specific circumstances that may arise, the *Forest Society* may offer severance packages under terms and conditions that it deems appropriate.

## CONDUCT AS AN EMPLOYEE

### WHAT IS EXPECTED OF AN EMPLOYEE?

In addition to expecting jobs to be performed competently and reliably, the *Forest Society* expects employees to conduct themselves in a professional, ethical, and responsible manner that reflects well upon the *Forest Society*, and promotes a spirit of cooperation and teamwork within the organization. Employees must treat all co-workers, members, volunteers, and external parties equally, with honesty, integrity, respect, and fairness in all regards. Failure to do so may lead to corrective action, including suspension or dismissal.

Although it is impossible to anticipate in advance every possible kind of misconduct that would be of concern to the *Forest Society* and that could lead to corrective action, including dismissal, the following are examples.

1. Violation of any of the policies described within this handbook or otherwise communicated to employees.
2. Conduct, including speech that physically harms or threatens others or that is abusive to, or disrespectful of, the *Forest Society's* trustees, employees, contractors, volunteers, interns, donors, or other persons involved with the *Forest Society*.
3. Failure to adhere to the work schedule that has been established for you. This includes absence without notice to the *Forest Society*, *except* where an emergency prohibits the giving of notice, and that notice was then given as soon as reasonably possible.
4. Failure to be honest in your communications with the *Forest Society*; falsifying records or other documents.
5. Theft or misappropriation of property and/or information owned by the *Forest Society*, a co-worker, a donor, vendor, or anyone else who has property and/or information that you may come into contact with through your employment.
6. Unlawful conduct during non-work hours that might lead our members, donors or the public at large to lose confidence in you or in the *Forest Society*.

7. Insubordination.
8. Failure to conduct yourself in a professional and cooperative manner while carrying out your duties.
9. Neglect of duty; failure to perform your responsibilities in a manner acceptable to the *Forest Society*.
10. Any other conduct which renders the employee's continued employment problematic to the *Forest Society*.

It is important for all employees of the *Forest Society* to project a professional image while at work by being appropriately attired. *Forest Society* employees are expected to be neat, clean and well groomed while on the job.

Due to the nature of the office space at the Conservation Center, and the Rocks Estate, employees work in close proximity to each other. Scents can distract or disrupt colleagues. Natural and artificial scents may be offensive or illness or allergy inducing so employees are asked to minimize the use of scented products. Sounds may also distract and disrupt and can include, but are not limited to, music, cell phone ringers, and loud conversations. In all cases employees should conduct themselves professionally and respectfully toward their coworkers and avoid disrupting their work.

#### A SUBSTANCE-FREE WORKPLACE

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 requires the *Forest Society*, as a Federal grant recipient, to certify that it will provide a drug-free workplace. As a result the following is prohibited:

- Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or substances, including the illegal use of prescription drugs;
- The illegal use, sale, manufacture, distribution or possession of drugs while on organization business or premises and while operating vehicles on organization business;
- The use, sale, possession, transfer or purchase of alcoholic beverages on organization premises or while performing organization business, except in connection with organization-authorized events; and
- Working under the influence of prescription or nonprescription drugs that could impair judgment or motor functions and potentially place persons or property in jeopardy.

The *Forest Society* will not condone criminal activity on its property, or on property under its direct control.

As a condition of employment, employees must abide by the terms of this policy and must notify the *Forest Society* of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace not later than five days after such conviction. The *Forest Society*, in turn, is required to notify, as appropriate, the organization that provides federal grant money or with which the *Forest Society* has a federal contract.

The *Forest Society* has the right to conduct a search of all organizational owned property (desks, cabinets, etc.) and employee property on the facilities, such as handbags and briefcases, if there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a violation of the substance abuse control policy has occurred. The *Forest Society* may, but is not required, to obtain the employee's consent when property belonging to an employee is to be searched.

The *Forest Society* will help any employee who, in the *Forest Society's* judgment, requires assistance through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or other appropriate organization. Employees who violate this

Substance-Free Workplace policy or are convicted of drug violations, in the *Forest Society's* discretion, will either be disciplined, up to and including discharge from employment, or be required to satisfactorily participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program. Legal consequences may also follow the disciplinary action or dismissal.

## ANTI-HARASSMENT AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

The *Forest Society* wants to provide all employees a work environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. Therefore, it is the *Forest Society's* policy to prohibit discrimination or harassment of employees based on race, religion, color, gender, age, national origin, citizenship, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, pregnancy or any other basis protected by state, federal or local laws.

The *Forest Society* expects that all relationships among persons in the workplace will be business-like and free of bias, prejudice and harassment. Sexual harassment is one form of unlawful and prohibited harassment. It typically involves *serious offensive conduct* directed towards an individual and is *unwelcome* by the individual.

Federal law defines sexual harassment as unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- submission to such conduct is made a term or condition of employment (explicitly or implicitly); or
- submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as basis for employment decisions; or
- such conduct interferes with an individual's work performance; or
- such conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

The following list provides some examples of conduct that *could be viewed as* sexual harassment. This list does not cover every type of behavior that could constitute sexual harassment. It is meant to provide employees with examples of the type of conduct that is prohibited under this policy.

- Sexually oriented verbal "kidding," "teasing," or jokes
- Foul or obscene language or gestures
- Physical contact such as patting, pinching, or brushing against another's body
- Pressuring someone to go on a date
- Comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or cartoons
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, body gestures, suggestive or insulting comments
- Inquiries into one's sexual experience and discussion of one's sexual activities.
- Communication of any harassing material by e-mail, social media, telephone, voice mail, organization bulletin boards or any other method of communication is a violation of the *Forest Society's* policy against harassment.

## REPORTING HARASSMENT

The *Forest Society* encourages employees to report, in writing, any problems they experience or observe concerning harassment, including sexual harassment, discrimination or retaliation. Whenever possible employees should report harassment **before** it becomes severe or pervasive, to their supervisor, a member of the Personnel Advisory Team (PAT), or the Human Resource department.

- Any employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to objectionable conduct prohibited by this policy is encouraged (but not required) to let the offending person know immediately and firmly that the behavior is offensive.
- Any employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to objectionable conduct, or believes they have observed objectionable conduct, prohibited by this policy must report it to any of the following; Human Resources, their immediate supervisor, a member of the Personnel Advisory Team, or any other member of the leadership team. Every reported incident of unlawful harassment or discrimination will be investigated.
- Individuals reporting complaints or providing information in good faith in connection with an investigation will not be retaliated against for their participation in this procedure.

## INVESTIGATING HARASSMENT

The *Forest Society* will promptly undertake an investigation of all complaints of harassment, discrimination or retaliation. The investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint, and with witnesses if applicable. The person alleged to have engaged in harassment will also be interviewed.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent consistent with an adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action.

## RESPONSIVE ACTION REGARDING HARASSMENT

Employees found to have engaged in conduct in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

No employee will be disciplined or otherwise retaliated against for filing in good faith a written and signed complaint or participating in the investigation of a bona fide complaint. All employees are required to cooperate in the *Forest Society's* investigation of complaints.

## SUPPORTING *FOREST SOCIETY* POLICIES

Internal and external policies on varying subjects are formulated and modified regularly by the Forest Society Board of Trustees and staff. Some policies may be controversial. In dealing with and communicating with third parties and stakeholders regarding issues of interest to the *Forest Society*, it is important that the organization speaks with one cohesive voice.

If you disagree with a policy or other organizational decision you should:

1. Seek clarification of the issue and feel free to express your views to your supervisor.

2. If you still disagree, express your views to the next higher level within the organization as appropriate, with the President/Forester being the highest authority.
3. At that point you should either support the policy/decision, or when asked about it by a third party, politely refer discussion of the issue to someone within the organization who can support it.

This policy does not apply to employees' discussion of the terms and conditions of their employment; employees are permitted to discuss such topics consistent with applicable law.

## SMOKING

Smoking of any kind, including the use of E-Cigarettes, is prohibited in all *Forest Society* owned buildings, including the Conservation Center and the buildings on the Rocks Estate, and on all *Forest Society* owned property.

## CORRECTIVE ACTION

When performance issues are identified with respect to an employee, or when instances of unacceptable conduct occur, or when for any reason the employment relationship has become problematic from the point of view of the *Forest Society*, any of a variety of steps might be taken. In some cases, the employee might be given an oral or written warning; in other cases, immediate probation, suspension (with or without pay), demotion, dismissal or other corrective action might take place. The *Forest Society* reserves its right to implement what it believes is an appropriate response.

## GRIEVANCES

The *Forest Society* is committed to providing the best possible working conditions for its employees. In any work situation, questions or problems are bound to arise. Part of the *Forest Society's* commitment is to foster an atmosphere of openness and trust so that employee grievances and suggestions are heard and acted upon quickly.

In pursuing a grievance, the employee has the opportunity and responsibility to express his or her views in a fair, respectful and honest manner.

When a grievance other than summary discharge arises, the *Forest Society* follows the procedure set forth below:

1. An employee with a grievance should seek first to resolve the matter with his or her supervisor. The employee may approach one or more members of the Personnel Advisory Team (PAT) or the Human Resource staff to solicit advice to prepare for the discussion with his or her supervisor.

If an employee, who has been continuously employed by the *Forest Society* for at least six months, and is not a temporary employee, feels that inappropriate corrective action has been taken against him or her, and if the employee has been unable to resolve the matter informally by speaking with the supervisor, then the employee may file a written grievance with the supervisor of the person who took the action within ten (10) work days of the taking of the action.



The supervisor with whom the grievance was filed will then conduct an investigation of the incident, where appropriate, and will generally provide a written response to the employee within 30 days. If more time is needed to respond to the complaint, the person filing the complaint will be notified.

2. If the problem still has not been settled satisfactorily, the employee may request a meeting with the supervisor and a member of the Human Resources department. The employee may request a written decision.
3. If the problem is not resolved, the employee may request a meeting with the supervisor and the President/Forester. The President/Forester's written decision will be final.
4. If the grievance involves the President/Forester, and/or the Human Resource department the President/Forester may elect to refer the issue to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, and the Chair will determine if, and how, the grievance will be heard by the Board or a designee of the Board.

If an action of the *Forest Society* results in the filing of a grievance, such filing does not operate to suspend the action being complained of. For instance, if the employee is complaining that s/he was unfairly suspended without pay, s/he will remain suspended without pay for the period initially determined, unless and until the issue is resolved or the decision leading to the suspension is reversed.

Similarly, the *Forest Society* has no obligation to keep an employee whose employment has been terminated on the payroll or enrolled in any benefits not ordinarily available to such employees, pending completion of the grievance process.

However, if the action is reversed, the *Forest Society* may determine at its discretion, to reimburse the employee some or all of the pay and/or benefits lost during the interim.

Temporary employees and employees who have not completed at least six months of continuous employment with the *Forest Society* are not entitled to use the Grievance Procedure outlined above, but are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have with their supervisor.

## RESIGNATION

If an employee wishes to resign, he or she is asked to give at least two weeks' notice. In the case of a senior level staff member a longer notice would be appreciated. At the end of the notice period, the departing employee will receive whatever regular pay and vacation pay is due on the next regular payroll cycle.

The *Forest Society* reserves the right to pay a resigning employee for the notice period, but to prohibit the employee from working during the notice period.

## REFERENCES

Anyone who provides a reference is acting on behalf of the *Forest Society*. Because of this, employees need to understand that there are liability implications to giving references. When contacted for a reference for a current or former employee, the Human Resources staff should be contacted for guidance.

## SEVERANCE PAY

The *Forest Society* does not have a policy or practice of providing severance pay or other severance benefits. However, in its sole discretion, and based upon specific circumstances that may arise, the *Forest Society* may offer severance packages under terms and conditions that it deems appropriate.

## VACATION AND LEAVES

### VACATION

Vacation leave accrues monthly, calculated from date of hire, and may be taken in advance of its accrual, with the approval of your supervisor. Accrual and use of vacation leave is tracked on the employee's time sheet, and any carryover from one fiscal year to the next, must be moved by the employee to their new time sheet. Employees who resign or whose employment is terminated by the *Forest Society* will be paid for accrued and unused vacation leave.

Vacation leave for full-time employees is as follows:

- Years 1 through 3 - three weeks of vacation
- Years 4 through 9 - four weeks of vacation
- Years 10 and beyond - five weeks of vacation

Vacation leave for benefited part-time employees (those working at least 18.75-hours per week) will be prorated according to the schedule for full time employees, based on the number of hours worked in a month.

If the job requires, and the employee performs, regular and significant work outside ordinary working hours (such as attending evening meetings and working nights and weekends) the supervisor, with the approval of the President/Forester, may grant exempt employees one extra week of vacation leave per fiscal year. This extra week shall be granted for only one fiscal year at a time.

The *Forest Society* strongly encourages employees to use all their accumulated vacation each year. In the event the vacation time is not used, no more than 10 days may be carried over from one fiscal year to the next, unless written permission is given by the President/Forester. Due to organizational liability carrying over time is discouraged and must fit into the following parameters to be considered. An employee must have a specific plan to use their time, for example, a wedding and honeymoon, upcoming maternity leave, or an extended vacation, or because of extenuating circumstances such as a larger than expected work load making it impossible for vacation to be taken within the current fiscal year. Vacation leave will be scheduled with the supervisor with due consideration for an employee's preference and the *Forest Society's* needs. If two or more employees request vacations for the same time, priority will be determined by their supervisor.

Vacation leave accrual for employees moving from part-time to full-time positions, or full-time to part-time will be adjusted on the date the new position is assumed. Vacation time is tracked on your timesheet so the transition should be noted on the day it occurs and the vacation time accrual rate should be changed as of that date. Time accrued and unused prior to the change in hours will be converted to hours and re-stated based on the new day length. For example if you have been working a 5 hour day and have 4 days of accrued vacation time when you increase to 7.5 hour day the 4 days you have accrued are translated to hours (20hrs) then converted back to days based on the new day length ( $20/7.5=2.7$  days) If you have questions, need help making the changes on your timesheet or require additional information, please see Human Resources.

### HOLIDAYS

Full and part-time benefited employees will be paid for the holidays listed below. Benefited part-time employees (those working at least 18.75 hours per week) will be prorated based on hours worked. If the employee works a flexible or alternative schedule (less than five days per week) and their normal work schedule does not include the day the holiday falls on, a different day during the week may be taken as a paid day off, after making arrangements with their supervisor. The Conservation Center will be closed on all holidays. The Rocks Estate, due to the nature of its business, may be open on certain holidays requiring some employees to work. In this case, the benefited working employee will be able to take a different day off in place of the official holiday. Holidays that fall on a Saturday will be recognized on the previous Friday, and holidays that fall on a Sunday will be recognized on the following Monday.

The *Forest Society* observes the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King Day/Civil Rights Day	Columbus Day
President's Day	Veteran's Day
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving
Fourth of July	Day after Thanksgiving
	Christmas

In addition, the President/Forester may in her discretion designate an additional paid day off.

## SICK LEAVE

All full time benefited employees are entitled to sick leave benefits. This benefit accrues at the rate of one day per month, irrespective of length of service. The maximum amount of sick leave any employee may accrue is 60 days.

Part-time benefited employees working an average of 18.75 or more hours per week will be eligible for prorated sick leave benefits according to the same schedule as full-time employees.

## ***Family and Medical Leave Act***

The following link provides employees notice required by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) on the Employee Rights and Responsibilities under the Family and Medical Act (FMLA).

<G:\HumanResources\Handbook Documents linked to HB\FMLA Employee Rights and Responsibilities.pdf>

The function of this handbook is to provide employees with a general description of their FMLA rights. In the event of any conflict between this handbook and the applicable law, employees will be afforded all rights required by law.

### General Provisions

Under FMLA, the *Forest Society* will grant up to 12 weeks (or up to 26 weeks of military caregiver leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness) during a 12-month period to eligible employees. Eligible employees are required to utilize both accrued sick and vacation time concurrently with their FMLA leave, to the extent permitted by law. Upon exhausting accrued sick and vacation time, the employee may remain on FMLA leave, unpaid, as long as required, and allowed by law.

### Procedure for Requesting Leave.

In all cases, an employee requesting leave must complete an “Application for Family and Medical Leave” form and return it to Human Resources. The completed application must state the reason for the leave, the duration of the leave, and the starting and ending dates of leave.

An employee intending to take family or medical leave because of an expected birth or placement, or because of a planned medical treatment, must submit an application for leave at least thirty (30) days before the leave is to begin. If leave is to begin within thirty (30) days, an employee must give notice to his or her supervisor and to Human Resources as soon as the necessity for the leave arises.

### Medical Certification.

An application for leave based on the serious health condition of the employee or the employee’s spouse, domestic partner, child, parent, dependent or household member, must also be accompanied by a “Medical Certification Statement” completed by a health care provider. The certification is available from Human Resources.

### Benefits Coverage During Leave.

During a period of family or medical leave, an employee will be retained on the *Forest Society’s* health insurance plan under the same conditions that applied before leave commenced. To continue health coverage, the employee must continue to make any contributions that he or she made to the plan before taking leave. Failure of the employee to pay his or her contribution of the health insurance premium may result in loss of coverage.

If the employee fails to return to work after the expiration of the leave, the employee will be required to reimburse the *Forest Society* for payment of health insurance premiums during the leave, unless the reason the employee fails to return is the presence of a serious health condition which prevents the employee from performing his or her job or to circumstances beyond the employee’s control.

An employee taking FMLA leave, like an employee taking any other approved leave or absence, is not entitled to the accrual of any seniority or employment benefits that would have accrued if not for the taking of leave. An employee who takes family or medical leave will not lose any seniority or employment benefits that accrued before the date leave began.

### Restoration to Employment Following Leave.

An employee eligible for family and medical leave -- with the exception of those employees designated as “key” employees as defined in the FMLA – upon timely return from an FMLA leave, will be restored to his or her old position or to a position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. The *Forest Society* cannot guarantee that an employee will be returned to his or her original job. A determination as to whether a position is an “equivalent position” will be made by the Supervisor in consultation with Human Resources.

### Failure to Return from Medical Leave.

The failure of an employee to return to work upon the expiration of a family or medical leave of absence will subject the employee to immediate termination of employment. An employee who is unable to return to work due to the continuation, recurrence or onset of his/her own serious health condition, or of the serious health condition of the employee’s spouse, child, parent or household member, may submit a written request for a

leave extension to Human Resources. This written request should be made as soon as the employee realizes that he or she will not be able to return at the expiration of the leave period. Approval of this request is at the sole discretion of the *Forest Society*.

## VICTIM OF CRIME LEAVE

The *Forest Society* will grant reasonable and necessary leave from work, without pay, to employees who are victims of a crime to attend court or other legal investigative proceedings associated with the prosecution of the crime. Affected employees must give the *Forest Society* reasonable notice that leave under this policy is required. Employees may use vacation or sick time.

Exempt employees may be provided time off with pay when necessary to comply with state and federal wage and hour laws.

## REPORT OF ABSENCE

If an employee must be absent from work because of medical or non-medical reasons, his or her supervisor should be notified before the start of the workday. Any time taken away from work for a medical reason can be charged against sick leave, but staff is encouraged to arrange those medical appointments before or after work whenever possible.

Failure to report for work for 2 (two) consecutive days without notice will be viewed as a voluntary resignation unless there are mitigating circumstances.

The *Forest Society* encourages employees to remain at home while they are sick with a cold, flu or other contagious illness. If there is some urgent work that needs to be attended to the employee is encouraged to do that from home. Sick employees are encouraged to minimize work time and get as much rest as possible. Time spent working from home will be counted as work time, not sick time. Employees who report to work sick may be sent home.

## MATERNITY LEAVE

All female employees may take an unpaid leave of absence for the period of temporary physical disability resulting from pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions.

An employee who has notified the *Forest Society* of her intent to return at the end of her maternity leave will be reinstated to her original job or a comparable position with comparable pay and accumulated seniority, retirement, fringe benefits and other service credits unless the employer's circumstances have so changed as to make it unreasonable or impossible to do so.

This leave will run concurrently with family and medical leave, if applicable.

## JURY DUTY

Upon notice of jury duty, an employee should notify his or her supervisor and work together to make a short term work plan to cover the projected absence. Because the *Forest Society* continues to pay an employee while they are on jury duty, accepting additional pay from the court system is not allowed. Any payment received for fulfilling jury duty must be signed over to the *Forest Society*.

In the unusual circumstance of a long trial, the employee, his or her supervisor and Human Resources will work together to devise a work plan for the jury duty period.

## MILITARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The *Forest Society* is committed to protecting the job rights of employees absent on military leave. In accordance with federal and state law, it is the *Forest Society's* policy that no employee or prospective employee will be denied employment, reemployment, promotion or other benefit of employment on the basis of that person's membership in or obligation to perform service for any of the Uniformed Services of the United States. Furthermore, no person will be subjected to retaliation or adverse employment action because such person has exercised his or her rights under applicable law or this policy. If any employee believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination in violation of this policy, the employee should immediately contact Human Resources.

Employees taking part in a variety of military duties are eligible for benefits under this policy. Such military duties include leaves of absence taken by members of the Uniformed Services, including Reservists and National Guard members, for training, periods of active military service, as well as time spent being examined to determine fitness to perform such service. Employees will be eligible for up to two (2) weeks paid leave, calculated as the difference between their regular pay at the *Forest Society* and their military pay. Military pay vouchers must be submitted to receive the paid leave.

Employees requesting leave for military duty should contact Human Resources to request leave as soon as they are aware of the need for leave. Human Resources will provide additional information about military leave and reinstatement rights under applicable law.

## WEATHER LEAVE

If the Conservation Center is closed due to weather, or power outages, employees will be paid for the balance of time left in their normal work day. Employees are not required to use their sick or vacation time in these instances. The President/Forester, or in her absence whoever is "in charge," makes the decision for this closure and staff are notified via the Telephone Tree. In Bethlehem, at the Rocks Estate, the Director will make the decision to close based on weather and other programmatic considerations. The Director will also be notified when the Conservation Center closes by a person designated on the Telephone Tree.

## BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

If there is a death in an employee's family (spouse, domestic partner, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, stepparent, step-child, step-sibling, step-grandchild, household member, godparent, godchild, and in-laws) the employee will be eligible for a paid leave of a maximum of 3 days. If there is a death of a relative other than those specified above, the employee may receive one day of paid leave. If additional time is desired, it must be requested as either vacation time or time off without pay.

## SPECIAL LEAVE

An employee may request time off without pay. The President/Forester, along with the employee's supervisor, will decide whether to grant the request in their discretion. Factors to be considered include the applicant's reason for the leave, the amount of time requested, the ability of the Forest Society to arrange coverage for the absent employee and other relevant considerations.

## PROFESSIONAL LEAVE

After five consecutive years of full-time employment, an employee may be granted an unpaid professional leave of absence for the purpose of professional advancement. Written request for professional leave must be submitted to the employee's supervisor and the President/Forester. All such leaves are subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees in its discretion. The following criteria will be considered:

- a) Ability of the *Forest Society* to function effectively without the employee for an extended period.
- b) Benefit of leave of absence to employee.
- c) Future benefit of the leave of absence to the *Forest Society*.
- d) Other relevant factors.

The maximum available professional leave shall be one calendar month of leave for each full year of employment, starting after 5 years up to a maximum of 12 months of leave.

## BENEFITS

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### GENERAL

The following is a brief summary of available employee benefits. For more benefits information employees should check with Human Resources. For quick reference to benefits follow this link. <G:\HumanResources\Handbook Documents linked to HB\Benefits Summary.docx> All benefits are subject to change or discontinuance by the *Forest Society* in its discretion to the extent permitted by applicable law. The terms and conditions of benefits, including but not limited to eligibility requirements may also be set forth in benefit plan documents. To the extent there may be any inconsistencies between the descriptions in this handbook and the benefit plan documents, the benefit plan documents will control.

### SOCIAL SECURITY

The Forest Society matches the employee contribution-to the national retirement system.

### HEATH INSURANCE

Health insurance, based on the *Forest Society's* choice of provider, will be offered to all employees eligible for benefits. Please refer to **Addendum #4** for more information on premium cost and deductible coverage.

Domestic partner coverage is available. For information on tax consequences of this coverage please refer to **Addendum #5**.

The *Forest Society* offers health insurance as a benefit to its employees. If an employee has other group medical insurance coverage in force through a parent, a spouse or a second employer and they wish to continue that coverage in addition to enrolling in our medical insurance plan, the employee may do so but he or she will be responsible for the full cost of our medical plan with no contribution toward the cost by the *Forest Society*. With the high cost of insurance this benefit is not intended to supplement or be secondary to an existing health insurance plan that you may have in place now or at any time in the future.

The *Forest Society* reserves its right to change this policy, including but not limited to reducing or eliminating premium sharing arrangements and the amounts the *Forest Society* may pay toward premiums, at its discretion.

For further information on health insurance, please consult Human Resources or the Summary Plan Description.

### FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT

Employees may participate in the *Forest Society's* flexible spending plan at his or her own expense. This plan allows employees to contribute pre-tax dollars for certain expenditures such as childcare, dental costs, medical co-payments, and other eligible expenses.

### SAFETY AND WORKER'S COMPENSATION

The *Forest Society* is committed to furthering the safety and health of its employees while they are at work. A Safety Committee, consisting of employees, in management and non-management positions, meets at least quarterly. Employees will not be required to work under conditions of immediate danger to safety and health. Employees share responsibility to make all operations as safe as possible. If an employee has safety concerns please speak with a member of the Safety Committee. A list of members, and other safety related documents can be found at the following link. <G:\ConservationCenter\Safety\SafetyCommittee>

Employees are covered for on-the-job accidents by worker's compensation insurance in accordance with New Hampshire law. The employee should report all job-related accidents to his or her immediate supervisor, and Human Resources, immediately. Reporting forms are available by going to Human Resources or by following this link: <G:\HumanResources\ACCIDENT REPORT DOCS\Staff documents> Failure to report an accident to the N.H. Department of Labor within 5 days of its occurrence will result in a fine, so it is vital that employees report accidents to Human Resources promptly.

It is the policy of the *Forest Society* to assist with the cost of CPR, AED and First Aid Training for those who may need these skills in the course of their work. A list of currently trained staff is located at the front desk.

At the Conservation Center an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) is on site in the mail room.  
At the Rocks Estate an AED is on site in the office.

### 403(b) RETIREMENT PLAN

Employees may elect to participate in the *Forest Society's* 403(b) Retirement Plan. Employees may participate in the plan immediately upon hiring. After six months of employment participants will receive a *Forest Society* match of their contributions up to a maximum of 4% of their salary. Contributions to the retirement plan are done pre-tax and are immediately vested. Additional information is available through Human Resources.

### LIFE INSURANCE



The *Forest Society* provides group life insurance to all full-time and benefited part-time employees, at no cost to employees. This insurance coverage is in effect only during employment at the *Forest Society*. Please see Human Resources for further details.

## LONG TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE

Long term disability insurance will be provided to all full time and benefited part-time employees at no cost to employees. Long term disability insurance provides 60% of your total monthly earnings, but will not exceed the maximum monthly benefit of \$4,000. The employee must be totally or partially disabled for 90 days in order to qualify for long term disability benefits. Benefits will continue until your normal retirement age under the Federal Social Security Act if you are under age 60 when disabled. If you are over age 60 when you become disabled see Human Resources to determine the length of your benefit.

## SICK BANK

In lieu of short term disability insurance, the *Forest Society* maintains a sick bank sustained by donations made by employees. Any benefit eligible employee in need of additional paid sick time for an emergency situation may submit a request through the Human Resources department. Approval or denial of the request will be determined at the discretion of the *Forest Society*. An employee must exhaust all of his/her accrued sick and vacation time in order to apply for sick bank time. The intention of the sick bank is to assist employees in maintaining an income while dealing with an unforeseen illness to themselves or a family member in their care. It is not intended to provide unlimited sick leave, or take the onus off employees to use their sick time judiciously and plan for expected medical leaves. It can also be a bridge until long term disability insurance benefits begin. It will not continue once an employee is eligible for apply for long term disability.

## DENTAL INSURANCE

An employee-may elect to enroll him or herself, his or her spouse, domestic partner or children in the *Forest Society's* dental insurance plan. The employee will pay the full premium. Eligibility will be determined by the dental plan in place.

## LIVING ACCOMMODATIONS

In certain instances it may be required or appropriate for an employee to live in a *Forest Society*-owned building. Such living arrangements will be determined according to the particular circumstances of the job and will be fully explained during the employment interview.

## EDUCATIONAL/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It is the policy of the *Forest Society* to encourage and foster the educational and professional growth of its regular employees. The *Forest Society* will strive to encourage each employee to achieve professional development goals that will be mutually beneficial to the employee and the *Forest Society*.

It is appropriate for each department to consider professional and educational growth and to build the associated expense into their annual operating budget. Employees are encouraged to discuss goals for professional and/or educational growth with their supervisor before the budget is established.

## EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Employee Assistance Program is available for all employees and their families without charge. It is available for individual use by our employees and their families, as well as for use of the staff as a group (227-7125). You may use this service for any type of problem: financial, marital, work-related, or just to talk out something that is bothering you with a neutral listener in an anonymous setting. A more in-depth description of the program can be obtained through the Human Resources department.

## OTHER EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

### WORKING AT HOME

The opportunity for employees to occasionally work at home can benefit both the employee and the *Forest Society*. While productivity may increase with the quiet of working at home, the absence of the employee from the office may decrease productivity for colleagues and the organization.

A supervisor may grant permission, in his or her discretion, for an employee to work at home if certain conditions are met. These include:

1. The specific task must demand the quiet and concentration that is sometimes not possible in the office. Examples include, but are not limited to, extended writing projects, financial and program analysis, and preparation for important meetings or presentations.
2. Travel needs are extraordinary in terms of distance or severe weather; or working at home dovetails with travel needs for the *Forest Society*.
3. The employee must not have daily responsibilities that require him or her to be in the office or must arrange for such responsibilities to be covered by a colleague.
4. Whenever possible, the employee must plan ahead to get approval from his or her supervisor and inform appropriate colleagues when he or she will be working at home.
5. The employee is expected to be available by telephone and check email throughout the day.

### FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULE

The *Forest Society's* regular business hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. At their supervisor's discretion, employees may be permitted to work their specified number of hours outside of these regular business hours, if certain conditions are met:

1. The employee is attending an event, meeting or work day as part of his/her job that is scheduled outside of regular business hours.
2. Work schedule does not interfere with daily assigned duties that require the employee to be in the office during business hours.
3. Work schedule does not cause difficulties for colleagues.
4. The employee requests and receives permission from his or her supervisor and notifies all appropriate colleagues of the schedule.
5. The employee is accountable to the supervisor for the work accomplished.

### OTHER EMPLOYMENT

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that no employee becomes involved in a conflict of interest, or impairs his or her ability to perform his or her job with the *Forest Society*, due to his or her work with another entity,

whether paid or volunteer. What constitutes a conflict of interest is something that would undermine the position, policies, and interests of the *Forest Society*, or would confuse donors or the public about which organization they are dealing with. For example, an employee who raises money for the *Forest Society* would be unable to raise money for another organization because doing so might cause confusion with a donor as to which organization they are donating to. If an employee is unsure whether or not there may be a conflict, please speak with the Human Resources department for clarification.

All employees of the *Forest Society* must consult with the President/Forester before accepting other work or volunteer opportunities to be performed concurrently with their work here. For the full Board approved Forest Society Conflict of Interest Policy please refer to **Addendum #6**

## ACCEPTANCE OF PERSONAL GIFTS

*Forest Society* staff may not accept cash gifts of any amount or accept more than \$50.00 worth of noncash gifts during any twelve (12) months from any customer, vendor, supplier, land owner or any other person or business with which the *Forest Society* has or seeks have a business relationship. Under no circumstances may a staff member accept any gift, regardless of value, for special favors or specific actions.

## SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF THE *FOREST SOCIETY*

It is often the case that the public will perceive opinions expressed by a Forest Society employee as representative of the organization's formal position on a given issue. Employees must exercise good judgment with regards to what they express in public (verbally, in writing, or online), especially when working. If you have any questions about what may or may not be appropriate, ask your supervisor. Please review Addendum #8 with regards to email and social media.

## SOLICITATION

Any solicitation of colleagues for financial contributions is discouraged. If a staff member is involved with other not-for-profit organizations or their children are participating in a fundraising event, staff should first secure the approval and guidance of the President/Forester before asking for contributions.

## POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

Under the Internal Revenue Code, all section 501(c)(3) organizations are absolutely prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office ([www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)). Contributions to political campaign funds or public statements of position (verbal or written) made on behalf of the organization in favor of or in opposition to any candidate for public office clearly violate the prohibition against political campaign activity. Violating this prohibition may result in denial or revocation of tax-exempt status and the imposition of certain excise taxes.

An example of prohibited activities would be voter education or registration activities with evidence of bias that (a) would favor one candidate over another; (b) oppose a candidate in some manner; or (c) have the effect of favoring a candidate or group of candidates, will constitute prohibited participation or intervention. Employees should not:

- Engage in political activity while at work
- Engage in political activity while identifying oneself as an employee of the *Forest Society* including endorsing a political candidate.
- Engage in political activity while using *Forest Society* property, including computers, printers, copiers, telephones and fax machines.

- Solicit, accept, or receive political contributions while representing oneself as an employee of the *Forest Society*.
- Allow *Forest Society* property to be used in connection with political fund raising activities.

## HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1996 – HIPAA

The *Forest Society* is required by law to take certain measures to maintain the privacy of your health information and to give you notice of its privacy practices, legal duties and your rights concerning your private health information. All health information is housed in a locked, fireproof cabinet in the Human Resources department. No health information is contained within an employee's file; it is maintained within a separate file. For more details on HIPAA see the Human Resources department.

## PET POLICY

The Conservation Center is a public building with frequent guests of all ages who have varying opinions about and reactions to pets. Pets create potential liability risks for the *Forest Society*.

In general pets are not allowed inside the Conservation Center. However, there is an exception for bringing them into the Conservation Center under special circumstances.

With the advance permission of the President/Forester, the recommendation of their supervisor and the approval of any other employee(s) with whom they share office space, employees may bring their pets into the Conservation Center under the following conditions:

- ✓ Unexpected extreme hot or cold weather if the pet must travel with the employee.
- ✓ During the pet's recuperation from unusual medical conditions (non-infectious) that requires careful monitoring by the employee/owner.

The President/Forester may exclude a pet if an employee or tenant suffers severe allergies or fears.

Safety for the pet, owner, staff and other individuals, inside or outside the Conservation Center, is of utmost importance. Recognize and respect that some staff and guests may not like dogs in particular, or may be fearful or allergic to them. The pet must be under the *owners' control* at all times.

Pet owners are responsible for disposing of pet waste. All local ordinances and state laws apply.

If permission is granted for your dog, or other pet, to enter the Conservation Center, based on the conditions of this Policy, the following guidelines apply:

1. Dogs must be leashed outside of the Conservation Center at all times. Dogs and other pets must be leashed or crated anywhere inside the building; whether that is an office, or work area. A gate in front of an office door is not sufficient containment and owners must make sure that their pet is not a nuisance or disruptive to other staff or visitors. Pets are not allowed in common areas, such as the lobby, meeting rooms and the area in front

of the building. Pets should not interact with other pets in the building, and co-workers should be alerted when there is a pet in their vicinity. Owners must keep the area where the pets stay clean at all times.

2. Any dog entering the Conservation Center must be licensed pursuant to State of NH RSA 466:1 that requires that every owner or keeper of a dog four months old or older shall annually cause it to be registered, numbered, described, and licensed in the office of the clerk of the city or town in which the dog is kept, and shall cause it to wear around its neck a collar to which shall be attached a metal tag with the following information thereon: the name of the city or town, year of issue, registered number. All pets must also be vaccinated as is appropriate for their species, and free of fleas, mange or other contagious conditions. Copies of the dog's license and current vaccinations for all pets must be on file in advance in the pet owner's personnel file in Human Resources.

3. Owners of disruptive pets will be required to remove their pet. Consistently disruptive pets may be banned.

Employees who have concerns about pets that are allowed in the Conservation Center under these special circumstances should feel comfortable raising those concerns with their supervisor, the Human Resources department, a member of the Personnel Advisory Team, or any member of the Leadership Team.

All service animals are exempt from this policy.

## WHISTLEBLOWERS POLICY

The *Forest Society's* whistleblower policy covers staff members, interns, volunteers, committee members, and Board members who report an activity that he/she considers to be illegal or dishonest. The whistleblower is not responsible for investigating the activity or for determining fault or corrective measures; appropriate management officials are charged with these responsibilities. Employees are encouraged to be familiar with the policy and to report concerns promptly so that they may be investigated. For a copy of the *Forest Society's* Whistleblowers policy please refer to **Addendum #7**.

## PERSONAL COMPUTERS, CELL PHONES, EMAIL, INTERNET, USAGE

Please refer to **Addendum #8**

## **ADDENDUM**

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### **ADDENDUM #1**

#### **CURRENT PERSONNEL ADVISORY TEAM MEMBERS:**

Jane Difley, President/Forester (ex officio)  
Michelle Morse, HR Specialist (Chair)  
Denise Vaillancourt, Vice President for Finance (vice president)  
Wendy Weisiger Lead Forester (specialist)  
Maria Stewart, Executive Assistant (administrative)  
Nigel Manley, Director, North Country Properties (director/senior specialist)

#### **CURRENT SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

Michelle Morse, HR Specialist (Chair)  
Denise Vaillancourt, Vice President for Finance (vice president)  
George Frame (director)  
Jason Teaster (specialist)  
Carrie Deegan (specialist)

## **ADDENDUM #2**

**Exemptions:** With few exceptions, to be exempt an employee must (1) be paid at least \$23,600 per year (\$455 per week), *and* (2) be paid on a salary basis, *and also* (3) perform exempt job duties. These requirements are outlined in detail in the FLSA Regulations (available on the Department of Labor website, or through the HR department). Most employees must meet all three "tests" to be exempt. Of the three, 'exempt job duties' can be the trickiest and there are seven categories of exemption that can apply.

### ***Exempt executive:***

Regularly supervises two or more employees and has management as the primary duty of the position and also has genuine input into the job status of other employees such as hiring, firing, promotions, or assignments.

### ***Exempt professional:***

These are 'learned professions' such as lawyers, doctors, and accountants, and any other profession that requires advanced knowledge and involves the exercise of discretion and judgment. Positions requiring bachelor's degrees or most masters degrees are not sufficiently specialized to qualify for this exemption based solely on the degree requirement.

### ***Exempt administrative:***

Employees, who perform non-manual, or office, work which is directly related to management or general business operations of the employer. The employee's *primary duty* includes the exercise of discretion and independent judgment with respect to *matters of significance*.

**Position Categories:** These are summaries of position categories that correspond to the salary bands listed in **Addendum #3**. The detail of each staff position is contained in the job description for that position. Job descriptions should be on file for all staff members and reviewed annually as part of the performance evaluation process. Your specific job title will reflect your actual job and may differ from the position category names below.

Administrative Assistant/Custodial – Provides administrative support, including clerical services; shares reception desk responsibilities with receptionist; schedules meetings, maintains office machines, and works with other staff on organizing functions.

Or

Provides grounds and janitorial support including building upkeep, grounds upkeep, cleaning; assists staff with moving furniture and supplies.

Administrative Coordinator – Provides advanced administrative and executive support, possibly including data base management and day-to-day project administration. Regularly interacts with outside stakeholders including donors, members, neighbors and members of the public to answer questions, schedule executive meetings and manage programs. May work with other staff on departmental or organizational functions.

Specialist – Provides specialized support which requires specific training, skills, experience or certification/licensure. May supervise temporary workers, volunteers or part time staff.

Director/Senior Specialist – Directs one or more programs, including planning and budget preparation and control; represents and/or negotiates on behalf of the Forest Society; analyzes, evaluates and presents technical or specialized information at a high level A director has supervisory responsibility for staff, a senior specialist does not.

Senior Director – Directs one or more major programs, including planning, budget preparation and control, and supervises staff.

Vice President – Responsible for directing one or more of the Forest Society’s main functional areas; supports the work of Board Committees, shares development of the organizational budget, planning and procedures; and supervises staff.

President/Forester – Chief executive officer with responsibility for all staff, programs and affairs of the Forest Society; responsible for supporting the Board of Trustees, and maintains relationships with the membership of the Forest Society, and the public-at-large.

### **ADDENDUM #3**

#### ANNUAL SALARY RANGES\*

*FY2016 ranges approved by the Board of Trustees on August 5, 2015*

	<u>LOW:</u>	<u>HIGH:</u>
Administrative Assistant/Custodial	26,000	35,000
Administrative Coordinator	32,000	38,000
Specialist	33,000	48,000
Director/Senior Specialist	43,000	57,000
Senior Director	55,000	70,000
Vice President	75,000	100,500



## **ADDENDUM #4**

### HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUM COST AND EMPLOYER MATCH

The Forest Society's health insurance plan consists of age based premiums as allowed by the ACA (Affordable Care Act). The Forest Society will pay 85% of the individual premium for all benefits eligible employees (those who work at least 18.75 hours per week).

The Forest Society will pay 60% of the premium for the first family member on the plan and 50% of the premium for all additional family members on the plan.

The employee will pay the first \$300 of the deductible for each person insured; the Forest Society will pay the remaining deductible.

Employees' portions of the cost will be deducted from their monthly paychecks.

The employee will be reimbursed for the *Forest Society's* portion of the deductible by submitting the Explanation of Benefits provided by the Insurer. See Human Resources for guidance with this process.

#### Plans and Rates in effect through 11/30/2016

Two plan choices are available, both offered by Anthem and both are the ACA silver level. The 1M15 Matthew Thornton Blue HMO (MTNH) which provides access to New Hampshire providers and the 1LZW Access Blue New England (ABNE) that provides access to providers throughout New England. Both plans include a \$4,000 per person/\$8,000 per family annual deductible with the employee paying the first \$300 and the *Forest Society* reimbursing the employee for the remainder as needed.

## **ADDENDUM #5**

### HOW WILL OFFERING A DOMESTIC-PARTNER BENEFIT AFFECT EMPLOYEES' TAXES?

The value of benefits paid by the Forest Society and provided to an unmarried employee's domestic partner is generally considered additional taxable salary to the employee. This amount is subject to all payroll taxes, including income tax withholding, FICA and FUTA. The extra amount included in the employee's income is the actual cost to the Forest Society of the benefit. This tax rule applies to both same-sex and opposite-sex domestic partners. Experts estimate providing corporate-sponsored health benefits for an employee's domestic partner can add at least \$1,000 to the worker's tax bill.

The only time a domestic partner's coverage may be excluded from an employee's income is when the partner qualifies as a dependent for federal tax purposes. The partner must be an individual who is a member of the employee's household and who receives more than half of his or her support from the employee. This exemption is invalid, however, if the relationship is in violation of local law regarding domestic partners.

## **ADDENDUM #6**

*Board approved Feb. 6, 2013*

### **SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE FORESTS (Forest Society) CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

**Preamble:** The Forest Society's effectiveness is dependent upon its credibility. It is essential to maintain our reputation for objectivity and fairness. At the same time, it is predictable that individual staff members, board, board constituted committee members, and other insiders may be potential participants in Forest Society

programs and transactions. Therefore, it is appropriate for the Forest Society to adopt specific policies and rules to deal with real or apparent conflicts of interest.

One of the principal purposes of the Conflict of Interest Policy is to help Forest Society staff, board members, committee members and others identify and avoid or resolve conflicts of interest. For that reason, Forest Society employees, board members and committee members must read and retain a copy of this Conflict of Interest policy at the outset of their tenure with the Forest Society and at such time as the policy is amended. The Conflict of Interest Policy will be a part of the employee handbook and will be discussed with all new board and committee members. The Forest Society requires annual confirmation from board members and other insiders that they know of no conflicts needing disclosure. Any questions concerning the scope or possible impact of the Conflict of Interest Policy upon any insider should be addressed to the President/Forester or a designated staff member.

Accordingly and in light of the requirements of RSA 7:19-a (attached) regulating certain transactions involving officers and trustees of charitable trusts, the Board formally adopted the following policy:

#### Section I: Definitions:

1. Conflict of Interest: a potential conflict of interest exists when a covered person (as defined below) proposes to act on any issue, matter or transaction in which the Forest Society has an interest and the covered person may have an interest separate from Forest Society. A conflict of interest exists when a covered person has a financial interest in a transaction or project under consideration by the Board of Trustees of the Forest Society. This includes but is not limited to payment for services rendered to the Forest Society, payment for real estate sold to the Forest Society, donation of land or conservation easements to the Forest Society, or employment by or service on a board of an entity doing business with the Forest Society. A conflict of interest may also exist in a situation where there is an appearance that a covered person is utilizing inside information (as defined below) that is proprietary to the Forest Society for his or her benefit, is acting in his or her own interests rather than the best interests of the Forest Society, has the ability to exercise undue influence over the Forest Society's decisions, or is receiving favorable treatment by Forest Society because of his or her status as a covered person.
2. Covered Persons: all employees, board members, committee members and as defined below, close relatives, substantial contributors, and other insiders.
  - a. Insiders: insiders include board of trustees, committee members, staff members, substantial contributors, parties related to the above, those who have an ability to influence decision of the organization and those with access to information not available to the general public. The IRS further considers insiders under IRC 4958 to be persons who, at any time during the five-year period ending on the date of the transaction in question, were in a position to exercise substantial influence over the affairs of the organization.
  - b. Related persons: spouse, child, (natural, adopted and foster) parent, and stepparent, in-laws, grandchild, grandparent, brother or sister of a covered person, and any person with whom a covered person shares living quarters under circumstances that closely resemble a marital relationship or who is financially dependent upon the covered person.
  - c. Substantial Contributors: an individual, corporation or foundation that makes a gift or a pledge of \$25,000 or more at any one time or cumulatively \$50,000 within a 5 year period prior to the occurrence of the conflict.

- d. **Other Insiders:** individuals such as volunteers or former employees, who, by virtue of their continued involvement with the Forest Society, either have access to inside information that could place them within a conflict situation or could give the appearance of such persons having the ability to unduly influence the Forest Society. Depending on the facts and circumstances, an independent contractor may be an “other insider” where that person has access to inside information.
3. **Financial Interest:** a financial interest for any officer, trustee, or committee member means an interest in a transaction exceeding Five Hundred Dollars (\$500) in value on an annual aggregate basis.
4. **Inside Information:** any material information that is identified as confidential and proprietary, pertaining to the business and affairs of the Forest Society, whether related to a specific transaction or to matters pertaining to the Forest Society’s interests, activities and policies.

## Section II. Trustee, Officer and Board Committee Member Obligations:

Each officer or member of the board of trustees or board committees has the following responsibilities and obligations:

1. The material facts about any possible conflict of interest, on the part of any member of the Board, officer or committee member, shall be disclosed in writing to the Board and made a matter of record through an annual procedure and also as and when such interest involves a specific issue or transaction before the Board.
2. Officers, board or committee members must abstain from board or committee discussions, except only as the committee or board may require the member to answer questions regarding the transaction, and must abstain from voting on any issue in which they have a conflict of interest. The minutes of the meeting shall reflect that a disclosure was made; that the interested officers, trustees or committee members were absent during both the discussion and the voting on the transaction.
3. Any payment received by a board or committee member must be reasonable for the services rendered and necessary to carry out the organization's purpose. However reasonable compensation for the services of the President/Forester and expenses incurred in connection with official duties of a trustee, officer or committee member do not constitute a financial interest.
4. No person shall use his or her position on the board or a board committee to secure a pecuniary benefit transaction (a transaction in which such board or committee member has or will have a financial interest) for him/herself or for a third party with whom that person has a financial or fiduciary relationship.
5. If so requested by the Board, the board or committee member with a conflict of interest will take a temporary leave of absence from the board or committee until such time as the matter giving rise thereto has been resolved.
6. Every new member of the board or a board committee shall be advised of this policy upon entering the duties of his or her office, and shall sign a statement acknowledging understanding of and agreement to this policy.
7. Trustees and officers shall serve on the Board only for the charitable purposes of the Forest Society and if serving for any other expressed or intended reasons, they shall not serve thereon.

Section III. Board Obligations:

1. If a transaction or project of the Forest Society involves a conflict of interest, whether real or apparent, the Board shall approve of such transaction or project only after specifically finding that the transaction or project is fair and benefits the Forest Society and its objectives. The Board's approval shall then be voted only with full knowledge of the economic or other benefit to the interested individual and when that individual is absent both during the discussion and at the time of the vote.
2. When the transaction involving a board member, or officer (but not including committee members who are not officers or board members), combined with all other transactions in the same fiscal year involving the same person, exceeds Five Hundred Dollars (\$500) but is less than Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000), a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board not including any trustees with such an interest in the transaction is required to approve the transaction. Where the transaction involved, combined with all other transactions in the same fiscal year involving the same person, exceeds Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) in a fiscal year, then such a two-thirds (2/3) vote approving the transaction and publication of a legal notice in the *Concord Monitor* is required, together with written notice to the Director of Charitable Trusts, NH Attorney General's Office. A record of the action taken shall be made and recorded in the minutes of the Board's meetings.
3. The Board will assure that the Forest Society shall (a) not loan any money or property to any officer or trustee and (b) not sell, lease for a term of greater than five (5) years, purchase, or convey any real estate or interest in real estate to or from an officer or trustee, without the prior approval of the probate court, except this prohibition shall not apply to a bona fide gift of real estate or interest therein to the Forest Society by an officer or trustee.
4. The Board will assure that (a) the Board shall have at least five (5) voting members who are not of the same immediate family or related by blood or marriage and (b) no employee of the Forest Society shall hold the position of chairperson or presiding officer of the Board.

Section IV. Other insider obligations:

1. Any non-voting participant (including staff members and others as defined in 2b, 2c and 2d above) attending a committee meeting or Board meeting at which a transaction is being discussed or considered, and where the participant has a potential conflict of interest, that person shall disclose to the committee or Board the nature of the potential conflict of interest. Should the Board or committee chair deem that a conflict exists; the non-voting participant shall be required to leave the meeting room and may not participate in the discussion or consideration of the proposed transaction. The reason for the conflict and the participants' departure shall be noted in the meeting minutes.

Section IV. Compliance with New Hampshire Pecuniary Benefits Law:

A copy of RSA 7:19-a is incorporated hereby into this policy and shall be provided to each board and committee member.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [print name], hereby acknowledge receipt and understanding of, and agree to the foregoing Policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Please sign and return to  
Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests*

## **ADDENDUM #7**

**SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NH FORESTS WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY:** *(Revised with approved BOT changes on 8.10.15)*

### **General.**

The Society for the Protection of NH Forests (“Society”) is committed to maintaining a workplace where employees are free to raise good faith concerns regarding the Society’s practices, specifically (1) reporting suspected violations of law, (2) providing truthful information in connection with an inquiry or investigation by a court, agency, law enforcement agency or other governmental body, and (3) identifying potential violations of the Society’s policy, including the policies contained in the Employee Handbook.

### **Reporting Responsibility.**

It is the responsibility of all employees to report suspected violations of law or Society policy in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy.

### **Acting in Good Faith.**

Anyone reporting a suspected violation of law or Society policy must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed. Any allegations that are unsubstantiated and that prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be cause for termination.

### **No Retaliation.**

The Society expressly prohibits any form of retaliation against employees who raise in good faith suspected violations of law, cooperate in governmental hearings, inquiries or investigations, identify potential violations of the Society’s policies, or who refuse to carry out an illegal directive. The Society will not discharge, demote, suspend, threaten, harass, or in any manner discriminate or retaliate against any such employee. Anyone who engages in such prohibited retaliatory conduct will be subject to disciplinary action. Any conduct which is perceived as retaliatory should be reported immediately as set forth herein.

## **Reporting Violations.**

Employees may make written (non-electronic) reports under this Whistleblower Policy to their supervisor or a Vice President, provided, however, that any complaint involving a supervisor shall be reported directly to the President/Forester, provided further, that any complaint involving the President shall be reported to the Chair of the Audit Committee or Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Any supervisor who receives a complaint under this Whistleblower Policy must notify the President, except where the complaint in question involves the President, in which case, the supervisor must notify the Chair of the Audit Committee or Chair of the Board of Trustees.

All complaints will be investigated promptly in the manner and to the extent deemed reasonably necessary.

## **Confidentiality.**

Reports of violations or suspected violations under this Whistleblower Policy may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant. Such reports will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need of the Society to conduct an adequate investigation.

## **ADDENDUM #8**

### **Computer, Email, Internet and Social Media Policy**

The Forest Society uses its computer and communications systems to support its mission. These systems include individual personal computers provided to employees, centralized computer equipment, mobile devices, all associated software, and the organization's telephone, voice mail, electronic mail systems.

All data in the organization's computer and communication systems (including documents, other electronic files, e-mail, texts, social media posts, and voice mail) are the property of the Forest Society and may be inspected and monitored at any time. No individual should have any expectation of privacy for messages or other data recorded in or files contained in the organization's systems.

Although limited personal use of these systems is allowed, no use of these systems should ever conflict with the primary purpose for which they have been provided (i.e. the furtherance of the Forest Society's mission), the organization's ethical responsibilities, or with applicable laws and regulations. Each user is personally responsible to ensure that these guidelines are followed. The organization's systems must not be used to create or transmit material that is derogatory, defamatory, obscene or offensive, such as slurs, epithets, or anything that might be construed as harassment or disparagement based on protected status. The organization's systems must not be used to transmit personal comments through e-mail, websites, or social media sites that may be mistaken as the position of the organization. Similarly, the organization's systems must not be used to solicit or proselytize others for commercial purposes, causes, outside organizations, chain messages, or other non-job-related solicitation purposes.

### **Security**

Security procedures in the form of unique user sign-on identification and passwords have been provided to control access to the organization's host computer system, networks, laptop computers, company-owned mobile

devices, voice mail, online-software, websites and social media accounts. In addition, security facilities have been provided to restrict access to certain documents and files for the purpose of safeguarding information.

The following activities, which present security risks, should be avoided.

- Attempts to bypass, or render ineffective, security facilities provided by the organization
- Sharing passwords unless it is the only way to insure business continuity
- Accessing the specific employee document files of other users in the absence of legitimate business reasons
- Changing or modifying hardware or software configurations of computer equipment without IT staff approval
- Loading personal software (including outside email services, games, instant messaging software) to organizational computers
- Downloading programs or installing programs copied from computers not owned by the organization without IT staff approval
- Loading unlicensed software on the organization's computers
- Attempting to obtain unauthorized access to or use of other organizations' computer systems and/or data
- Copying organizational software (whether developed internally or licensed) onto other media other than for legitimate business reasons
- Allowing family or friends to use Forest Society owned computers or mobile devices
- Removing software documentation from the organization's offices
- Changing the location or installation of computer equipment in offices and work areas without approval from IT staff

Individual users should:

- Exercise judgment in assigning an appropriate level of security to documents stored on the organization's networks, based on a realistic appraisal of the need for confidentiality or privacy.
- Verify that moveable storage devices (USB drives, etc.) are empty before copying documents onto such devices for delivery outside the organization.
- Create strong passwords for Forest Society accounts that are different from the employee's personal account passwords.
- Report suspected account or password breaches promptly to IT staff.

### **Personal Use of Forest Society Systems**

The Forest Society expects the full attention of its employees while they are working. Although employees may occasionally have to take care of personal matters during the workday, employees should try to conduct such personal business either before or after the workday or during breaks. While working, employees are expected

to exercise discretion in using the internet for personal uses (including online purchases), taking personal phone calls, sending/receiving personal emails, texts, or posts on social media sites. Excessive personal use of the internet, personal calls, texts, or emails during work time can interfere with staff productivity and be a distraction. All employees are encouraged to obtain and use a personal email account for their personal correspondence, rather than use their Forest Society account.

Should you have any questions about any of the above policy guidelines, please speak with your supervisor.

### **Appropriate Use of the Internet and Email Systems provide by Forest Society**

Access to the Internet—including social media platforms—is provided to employees to support its mission. No use of the Internet should conflict with the primary purpose of the Forest Society, its ethical responsibilities or with applicable laws and regulations. Each user is personally responsible to ensure that these guidelines are followed. Serious repercussions, including termination, may result if the guidelines are not followed.

The Forest Society reserves the right to monitor Internet usage by employees, including reviewing a list of sites accessed. No individual should have any expectation of privacy in terms of his or her usage of the Internet. In addition, the organization may restrict access to certain sites that it deems are not necessary for business purposes.

The organization's Internet connections may not be used for any of the following activities:

- To download or disseminate copyrighted material that is an infringement of copyright law
- To transmit personal comments or statements through e-mail or to post information that may be mistaken as the position of the organization
- To disclose confidential information
- To send or participate in chain letters, pyramid schemes, or other illegal schemes
- To solicit for commercial purposes, causes, outside organizations, chain messages, or other non-job related solicitation purposes

### **Email**

Email messages that are created, sent, or received using the organization's e-mail system are the property of the organization, and the Forest Society reserves the right to monitor this system and retrieve the contents. Employees may not retrieve or read e-mail that was not sent to them unless authorized by appropriate staff.

Internal and external email (as well as voice mail and text messages) are considered business records and may be subject to discovery in the event of litigation. Employees must be aware of this possibility when communicating electronically.

Employees should endeavor to use work email addresses for job-related purposes only. Personal business conducted via any work email address should be occasional and minimal and is subject to monitoring.



Information that is not directly work related but may be of general interest to other staff members may be sent with NWR (not work related) at the beginning of the subject line to allow for easy screening. Solicitations must be pre-approved by the President/Forest, even under the NWR subject line.

### **Websites, Social Media and Public Commentary**

Postings and commentary on Forest Society websites and social media accounts, including but not limited to blogs, Facebook and twitter, carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary by Forest Society employees. All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that Forest Society employees must otherwise follow.

Forest Society employees should consult with their supervisors and the Communications Dept. before posting any work-related statements or commentary on any Forest Society website or social media platform. Employees should not use Forest Society email or other work-related electronic communications to express personal opinions.

When expressing personal opinions—online or elsewhere on non-work owned sites—employees may not use their association with the Forest Society. Employees must use discretion and good judgment when expressing personal opinions in venues in which it may not be clear whether or not they are speaking on behalf of the Forest Society. If in doubt, employees should check with their supervisors. So long as employees makes clear that their personal opinions do not represent the opinions of the Forest Society, employees remain free to express on non-Forest Society systems and websites their own personal opinions, and remain free to engage in legally protected expression such as discussion of the terms and conditions of their employment, so long as those opinions and expressions are not defamatory or otherwise wrongful under applicable law.

### **Personal Electronics**

The Forest Society understands that many employees have cell phones and other mobile communication devices. The organization prohibits the use of cell phones in any way that violates federal, state, or local laws or that is otherwise unsafe. While at work, employees are expected to exercise the same discretion in using their personal devices as is expected for the use of Forest Society-owned devices.

Policies pertaining to harassment, discrimination, retaliation, confidential information and ethics apply to employee use of personal devices for work-related activities.

Employees whose job responsibilities include driving are expected to follow all applicable laws related to use of mobile devices. Safety must come before all other concerns.

Forest Society employees may be reimbursed \$40/month for use of a personal cell phone for Forest Society business. It is preferred that personal cell phones are used for phone calls, texting, photos and email only. If an employee needs to collect data on a mobile device on behalf of the Forest Society the employee will be provided with a Forest Society owned phone.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RELEASE FORM

I understand that I am an at-will employee, and I therefore understand that my employment may be terminated at any time, with or without prior notice, and with or without cause or reason by the *Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests* (the *Forest Society*). Likewise, I understand that I am free to resign at any time, for any reason. No employee, agent, or representative of the *Forest Society* other than its President/Forester has authority to enter into any agreement guaranteeing employment for any specified period of time, or to make any representations, promises or agreements to the contrary. I further understand that any such agreement authorized by the President/Forester shall not be enforceable unless it is in writing and signed by both the President/Forester and me.

No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policies. As the *Forest Society* changes, the need may arise to change policies described in this handbook. The *Forest Society* reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portions of the handbook from time to time as it deems appropriate in its sole and absolute discretion. As soon as practical, the *Forest Society* will notify all employees of such changes. This handbook supersedes any previous employee handbook.

My signature below indicates that I have read and understood this statement and have access to a copy of the employee handbook. My signature further acknowledges and agrees that I have familiarized myself with its contents and that I will follow the policies and rules indicated.

---

Employee Printed Name

---

Employee Signature

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Date

# CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT FORM

Protecting the confidential information of the *Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests* (the *Forest Society*) is the responsibility of every employee. Employees will sometimes have access to confidential information, including, but not limited to, information concerning members, donors, and potential donors, philanthropy and development, real estate transactions, negotiations, certain financial information, personnel information and other proprietary information. All such information constitutes valuable, special and unique property of the *Forest Society* and the disclosure to or use by others outside of the organization could substantially harm it.

Consequently, employees are required to keep all such information confidential and, other than as reasonably necessary to perform their job duties, are required not to disclose any such confidential information to any person without the prior written authorization of a Vice President or the President/Forester. In addition, employees may not use any confidential information for their own benefit or for the benefit of any other person or organization, and, other than as reasonably necessary to perform job duties, they may not remove any such confidential materials, documents, or other information from the *Forest Society* premises without the prior permission of a Vice President or the President/Forester. Upon termination of employment, employees **must** return all records, lists, files and other documents, including computer records, in their possession that relate to the organization.

Under some circumstances, information is subject to legal privilege or other legal confidentiality rules. This could include, but is not limited to, information related to communications with the organization's legal counsel or private health information. Employees with access are expected to protect the confidentiality of this information.

I understand that maintaining confidentiality is a condition of employment and that any unauthorized disclosure of such information may result in the termination of my employment. I further understand that these confidentiality obligations will continue after the termination for any reason of my employment with the *Forest Society*.

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Employee Printed Name

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Employee Signature

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Date