



**POR VIDA ACADEMY**  
**CHARTER DISTRICT**  
**FOR LIFE**

## 2018-2019 Personnel Handbook

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*Bringing together a charter school's personnel procedures and  
job-related information for employees*

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**DISCLAIMER:**

This handbook does not create an employment contract. Employees are **terminable at-will** by the school. Similarly, employees may resign their positions without penalty. No individual board member or employee has the authority to alter any employee's at-will status, or guarantee an employee's employment for a specific period of time, unless it is approved by the board of directors, is in writing, and is signed by both the employee and the chair of the board of directors.

Por Vida Academy reserves the right to amend or withdraw any or all provisions of the personnel handbook at any time with or without notice.

# **1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1. Welcome to Por Vida Academy**

Welcome you to Por Vida Academy. You have elected to join an organization that is dedicated to a positive and challenging teaching and learning environment that leads to higher achievement for each student. We hope this will be a long, productive, and satisfying career at one of Texas 'finest public charter school.

This employee manual was prepared to help you become familiar with Por Vida Academy and its personnel standards and procedures. Please read it carefully and if you have questions or concerns speak with your supervisor. If you need further information or assistance please contact Por Vida Academy's Human Resources Department at (210) 532-8816.

On behalf of our Por Vida Academy extended family, thank you for joining us. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Joseph G. Rendon  
Superintendent

## **1.2. About this Personnel Handbook**

The purpose of this personnel handbook is to provide employees with a source of information about Por Vida Academy's procedures and policies. The policies and procedures in this handbook are to serve as guidelines. Although Por Vida Academy has tried to be comprehensive, the handbook does not, and cannot, include procedures and policies, which address every situation that may arise. Such a list would be limitless.

Por Vida Academy has, and reserves, the right to adopt new procedures and policies, or modify, alter, change or cancel existing policies and procedures at any time. Violation of any provision within this handbook may lead to disciplinary action up to and including discharge from employment.

Questions regarding this handbook or any of the policies/procedures should be directed to your supervisor or to the Human Resources Department.

### **1.3. About** Por Vida Academy

Welcome to the Por Vida Academy Charter District, one of the original charter districts in the state of Texas. Por Vida, which translates to "for life," defines our commitment to our students to educate young adults and provide them with knowledge, self-respect and skills that will be with them for life. When our students graduate from one of our schools, they know they will not be forgotten and that they will always have our resources to support them in their life path.

Our Charter District has grown significantly since we first opened the doors of our San Antonio campus - Por Vida Academy - in 1995. Since then, we have added Corpus Christi College Preparatory (2001) and Cesar E. Chavez Academy (2007). Although we have grown, we strive to keep a cohesive group of students, parents and staff members across the district. We keep the spotlight on student success, community involvement and fiscal responsibility.

Charter schools were designed to offer parents and students an alternative to traditional public schools to meet varying social and educational needs. We here in the Por Vida district work very hard to provide you with an excellent alternative.

#### Mission Statement

To prepare students for life beyond high school.

#### Vision Statement

We support success through education by providing our students an innovative educational experience.

#### Core Values

High Expectations  
Nurturing Strengths  
Closing Gaps

#### **1.4 Acknowledgement of Receipt of Personnel Handbook**

The information contained in this personnel handbook is important and I should consult with Human Resources Director if I have a question that is not answered in this handbook.

I acknowledge that the Por Vida Academy personnel handbook does not create an employment contract or otherwise modify my at-will employment status. I understand that no one has the authority to alter an employee's at-will status, or guarantee an employee's employment for a specific period of time, unless it is approved by the board of directors, is in writing, and is signed by both myself and the chair of the board of directors.

I understand that Por Vida Academy may amend or withdraw any or all portions of this handbook at any time. I understand that it is my responsibility to comply with the provisions in this handbook, including any revisions, and that failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action. I further acknowledge that any revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminating existing provisions within this handbook. By remaining employed by Por Vida Academy following any modifications to this handbook I thereby accept and agree to such changes.

I acknowledge that I have read this handbook and agree to read any amendments of the handbook. I understand that I am required to sign and date this Acknowledgment of Receipt and return it to Human Resources Director. I understand that a copy of this form will be retained in my personnel file.

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Signature of Employee

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Date

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Print Employee's Name

## **2. STARTING YOUR JOB**

### **2.1. Accuracy of Information**

Por Vida Academy relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other information presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Employees are expected to provide truthful and accurate information in connection with their employment at Por Vida Academy.

Any falsification or misrepresentation in connection with application materials, or during the course of employment, is a serious offense and may lead to discharge from employment or non-selection of an applicant.

### **2.2. Employment Application & Other Forms**

New employees are asked to complete the following forms:

- a. Employment Application
- b. W-4 Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate
- c. I-9 Employment Eligibility Form
- d. Employee Election Form to Withhold Certain Information from Public Access
- e. Acknowledgement of Receipt of Personnel Handbook
- f. Authorization for Direct Deposit
- g. Applicable Healthcare/Benefit Forms
- h. Fingerprint authorization form

Current employees may be required to update or execute any of the above forms. Any employee who fails or refuses to complete the above forms or to provide Por Vida Academy with requested documentation may be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge from employment.

### **2.3. Fingerprint Authorization Agreement**

A person offered employment as a teacher, substitute teacher, librarian, educational aide, administrator, or any other position in the district will be subject to a fingerprint applicant services of Texas screening. Each individual serving or expected to serve in the aforementioned roles will be expected to comply and submit the necessary information for the fingerprint based search and must complete the process prior to their first day of employment.

Additionally, volunteers are subject to criminal background checks and will be required to comply and submit the necessary information for the background check.

## **2.4. New Employee Orientation**

During the first few weeks of employment, an employee must attend an orientation that will include the following subject areas:

- a. A review of this personnel manual;
- b. A tour of the campus;
- c. Receipt of credentials necessary for access to the school building, keys (if applicable), and other materials as appropriate;
- d. Prevention techniques for, and recognition, of sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children.

### **3. REPORTING TO WORK**

#### **3.1. Por Vida Academy School Office Hours**

Please see Principal of each campus school for standard hours of operation in the administrative office.

#### **3.2. Regular Work Schedules**

Por Vida Academy has a standard workweek of forty(40) hours per week, excluding time off for lunch or other personal breaks. Scheduled hours for employees may vary from department to department.

All full-time, non-exempt employees generally work a Monday through Friday schedule of forty (40) hours divided into (5) eight-hour workdays, unless a different schedule is approved in writing by the employee's supervisor.

Exempt employees are expected to work the hours necessary to complete their assigned work to the satisfaction of their supervisor without regard to scheduled hours and without expectation of additional compensation.

All employees are expected to be at work during Por Vida Academy official office hours unless otherwise required or approved by the employee's supervisor.

#### **3.3. Attendance**

Por Vida Academy employees are expected to be reliable and punctual in reporting for work each scheduled day. If an employee will be late to work or is unable to work as scheduled, the employee should notify their supervisor in advance as soon as possible.

Por Vida Academy recognizes there will be occasions when an illness or other personal event may result in an unscheduled absence. As such, Por Vida Academy has a leave policy (see Section 4.2.)

Poor attendance and/or repeated tardiness are disruptive to the operations of Por Vida Academy and may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge from employment.

## **4. TIME AWAY FROM WORK**

### **4.1. Holidays & School Breaks**

*Please see applicable school year calendar for current holidays and school breaks.*

### **4.2. Personal Paid Leave/Sick Leave**

Each employee is allowed a certain number of days to use for personal, sick, funeral, etc. use per year based on the number of days worked to be taken during your work year. Any days that exceed the allowed certain number of days will be considered "Leave without Pay" i.e. docked pay. The employee will not be allowed to carry days over to the next year, as defined in each Employee's Change Form. An employee that does not use his/her leave will lose their personal leave days.

Please contact your supervisor for the number of personal leave days to which you are entitled and for any other questions you may have.

It is the responsibility of each employee to monitor their personal leave. Keep in mind that the personal leave balances on paychecks are one month behind and do not reflect days taken during the current month.

Leave requests should be submitted to your supervisor three (3) business days in advance, when possible. Your supervisor will determine if a leave request will be approved for the time requested.

Exempt Employees: An absence of one (1) work day will constitute one (1) leave day.

Non Exempt Employees (hourly employees): An employee requesting time off must submit a staff leave request. All leave requests must be submitted in increments of 15 minutes.

### **4.3. Family Medical Leave Act**

Employees can take up to a maximum of 12 weeks of unpaid leave each work year for the following reasons:

- The birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child.
- To care for a spouse, parent, or child with a serious health condition.
- An employee's serious health condition.

Employees unable to return to work after exhausting their 12 weeks of unpaid leave will be automatically terminated from employment.

A husband and wife who are both employed by Por Vida are subject to limits in the amount of leave that they can take to care for a parent with a serious health condition or for the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child.

Employees are entitled to continue their health care benefits under the same terms and conditions as when they were on the job and are entitled to return to their previous job or an equivalent job at the end of their leave. Under some circumstances, teachers who are able to return to work at or near the conclusion of a semester may be required to continue their leave until the end of the semester.

Family and medical leave runs concurrently with accrued sick and personal leave. Accumulated leave will be used as family and medical leave, except in the case of employees who are receiving workers' compensation wage benefits.

Employees on leave under the FMLA for a job-related illness or injury who are receiving Workers' Compensation lost wage benefits under a Workers' Compensation plan are not eligible to use accrued sick leave, personal leave or other paid benefits to supplement such benefits.

In some circumstances, employees may take family and medical leave in blocks of time or by reducing their normal weekly or daily work schedule. Intermittent leave may be taken under the following circumstances:

- To allow an employee to care for a seriously ill spouse, child, or parent.
- When an employee requires medical treatment for serious illness.
- When an employee is seriously ill and unable to work.
- When an employee becomes a parent or has a foster child placed in his or her home.

When the need for family and medical leave is foreseeable, employees who want to use it must provide 30-day notice of their need. When the need for leave is not foreseeable, employees must contact their supervisor as soon as possible. Employees may be required to provide the following:

- Medical certification from a qualified health care provider supporting the need for leave due to a serious health condition affecting the employee or immediate family member.
- Second or third medical opinions and periodic re-certification of the need for leave.
- Periodic reports during the leave regarding the employee's status and intent to return to work.
- Medical certification from a qualified health care provider at the conclusion of leave of an employee's ability to perform the essential job functions.

Employees requiring family and medical leave should contact their supervisor for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

#### **4.4. Military Leave Of Absence**

Por Vida Academy is committed to protecting the employment rights of employees serving in the uniformed services who must be absent due to military leave. Por Vida Academy will comply with applicable state and federal laws regarding an employee's absence due to service in the uniformed services.

#### **4.5. Jury Duty/Court Appearance**

Por Vida Academy will grant employees time off for mandatory jury duty or for court appearances as a witness when the employee must serve or is required to appear as a result of a court order or subpoena. A copy of the court order or subpoena must be supplied to the employee's supervisor when requesting time off. The employee is entitled to full pay for each day of jury duty or service as a witness up to a maximum of ten (10) days per year, in addition to any other paid leave.

However, if the employee is court-ordered or subpoenaed for court appearances as a party to any civil or criminal litigation, it shall not be compensated and the employee must arrange for time off without pay or use accrued vacation or personal leave for such appearances.

## **5. BENEFITS**

### **5.1. Health**

Por Vida Academy provides group health insurance coverage for all full time employees. The district contributes the first \$225.00 toward each full time employee's health coverage. Health insurance is administered through TRS Active Care. Additional information can be accessed at [www.trs.state.tx.us/trs-activecare](http://www.trs.state.tx.us/trs-activecare).

All new hires have the option to enroll for TRS-Active Care coverage effective dates (actively-at-work date or the first of the month following the actively-at-work date).

### **5.2. Dental**

Dental plans will be made available to employees during open enrollment.

### **5.3. Vision**

Vision plans will be made available to employees during open enrollment.

### **5.4. Teacher Retirement System of Texas**

Employees who plan to retire under TRS should notify their supervisor as soon as possible. Information on application procedures for TRS benefits will be available from your supervisor upon request. Additional inquiries should be addressed to: Teacher Retirement System, 1000 Red River Street, Austin, TX 78701-2698, or call (800)223-8778 or (512)397-6400

### **5.5. Additional Benefits**

Por Vida participates in the cafeteria plan. Employees have the option to participate in or waive the cafeteria plan. If an employee participates in the cafeteria plan the employee is not allowed to **cancel** the plan and/or insurance/benefits until the next open enrollment period, unless certain circumstances occur. Contact your supervisor for clarification of these certain circumstances. If an employee waives the cafeteria plan the employee may cancel their insurance/benefits at any time.

Por Vida Academy offers all full-time employees \$50,000 in basic life insurance.

In addition employee may also participate in Disability protection, life insurance group term, and cancer plan and identity theft.

## **6. WAGES & EXPENSES**

### **6.1. Payday**

Por Vida Academy pays its employees on a semi-monthly basis.

Exempt and Non-exempt employees: Paychecks will be distributed on the 15<sup>th</sup> and last day of each month, coinciding with the current operating payroll schedule (See Central Administration Website for current payroll schedule).

August New Hires first paycheck will be August 31.

The following schedule applies to mid-year new hires.

If start date is between the 1<sup>st</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> paycheck will be on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the current month

If start date is between 8<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> paycheck will be on the end of the current month

If start date is between 23<sup>rd</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> paycheck will be on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month.

All employees will be given an employee change form (ECF) for each school year. The ECF will have information such as position, campus, role ID, number of leave days, start and end of work year, number of workdays and salary. All employee salaries and bonuses will be awarded at the end of the employees work year, before the work year begins. Por Vida Academy Charter District will not re-negotiate with any employee during the school year or before the employees work year ends. The only exception to this policy is if an employee changes positions or jobs during their work year. At the time of changing positions or jobs, the employee may negotiate the remainder of their work year. In addition, employees who are part of new grants that include extra duty and bonuses may be an exception to the policy.

## **6.2. Direct Deposit**

Direct deposit is Por Vida Academy's required method of payment for all employees paid by Por Vida Academy. Direct deposit enables Por Vida Academy to facilitate the distribution of pay to employees in a safe, secure, and timely manner. Employee must submit to the Human Resources Department a voided check/deposit slip attached to the Direct Deposit Form. Contact your supervisor for more information about the payroll direct deposit service.

## **6.3. Mistake in Payroll or Expense Reimbursement**

Employees are required to immediately notify their supervisor in the event of a suspected mistake in their payroll or expense reimbursement. Failure to report an overpayment in payroll or in an expense reimbursement may result in disciplinary action.

## **6.4. Hours Worked: Exempt Employees**

All exempt employees who are compensated on a salary rather than hourly basis are paid their salary for all hours worked during the work week, regardless of the actual number of hours worked.

## **6.5. Hours Worked: Non-Exempt Employees**

Non-exempt employees will be paid at the rate of 1.5 times their regular hourly rate of pay for all time worked in excess of 40 hours in any one workweek. Overtime is never at the employee's discretion. An employee may work overtime only after receiving authorization from the employee's supervisor. Working overtime without prior authorization may result in disciplinary action.

A non-exempt employee is never permitted to work "off the clock". While all hours will be compensated appropriately, an employee's failure to report hours accurately whether too low or too high is cause for disciplinary action. Employees should immediately report to Human Resources Director any effort by a supervisor to participate, encourage, or even permit an employee to work "off the clock" in violation of this overtime provision.

## **6.6. Attendance Records**

Employee attendance records must be kept complete and accurate. Attendance records are subject to unannounced reviews to ensure proper use. Falsification of time records is a serious offense and may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge from employment.

## **6.7. Travel Expense Reimbursements**

**All travel within the designated headquarters**, which is defined as the incorporated municipality in which an individual is employed, requires a Mileage Reimbursement Form. All travel must be listed as a strategy/activity in each campus improvement plan. Your supervisor will approve on a daily basis the employee's travel and submit to the Accountant for payment. Employees will be reimbursed at the rate of .54 cents per mile on pre-approved travel. Employees traveling to and from San Antonio to Corpus Christi will be reimbursed 280 miles round trip and will not be required to submit a map. Employee must submit and keep a current personal **Drivers License** on file with Human Resources. Employees who do not have a current drivers license on file with Human Resources, may NOT drive on behalf of Por Vida. Based on the Employee's driving record, Por Vida's insurance may exclude you from driving company vehicles and the use of personal vehicles for company business on behalf of Por Vida.

Non-employee i.e. parents, students, others travel must be approved by the Superintendent prior to travel.

Registration costs within designated headquarters will require an expense authorization form and a Purchase Requisition if applicable.

**All travel outside the designated headquarters** of the employee that is associated with conferences, seminars, workshops, etc., will require an Expense Authorization Form **PRIOR** to travel and an Expense Reconciliation Form upon your return. The Expense Authorization Form must be signed by your supervisor **BEFORE** expenses are incurred. All employees must select the most economical method of travel to all work related activities.

Purchase Orders are not required for the Expense Authorization Form and the Expense Reconciliation Form.

***A Hotel Occupancy Tax Exemption Certificate must be taken on each trip.***

## **6.8. Deductions in Pay**

Por Vida Academy will only deduct wages from an employee's pay under circumstances that are allowable under state and federal law. Additionally, any wages that an employee has requested and authorized in writing will be deducted. If there is a deduction that has been made that the employee believes is in error, the employee should immediately contact the Human Resources Director. Retaliation against an employee who has questioned what he/she believes may be an incorrect deduction in pay is prohibited.

### **Expense Authorization Forms**

**Employee's Responsibility:** Each employee is responsible for arranging their own transportation, lodging, meals and any other expenses related to official business, i.e., car rental, parking meter, taxi, tolls, bus fares, conference registrations and other items approved by your supervisor. Employees will receive a check for the expenses as per their approved Expense Authorization Form.

Employees without company credit cards may either use their personal credit card, if they have one, or have their supervisor reserve the hotel on his credit card **(BUT NOT PAY FOR**

**THE ROOM WITH THE SUPERVISOR'S CREDIT CARD).** Employees with an approved Por Vida credit card may reserve their room with their Por Vida credit card, **but payment CAN NOT be made on the Por Vida credit card because you'll be receiving a check for this expense.**

The Expense Authorization Form must be submitted to supervisor for approval **8** business days prior to the first day of travel.

**Supervisor Responsibility:** Supervisor must verify the accuracy of the report such as:

- a. Destination/Purpose – This information must be filled out on form.
- b. Transportation – Mileage, auto rental, airfare, gas for school vehicles and gas for school maintenance equipment. Employees are encouraged to ride together when possible, however, they are not required to ride together when traveling by car to the same function.
- c. Lodging – Texas – As determined by U.S. General Services Administration, maximum daily rate excluding taxes, verify out of state lodging rates with the Accountant. Verify number of days. Employees are encouraged to share a room when possible, however, they are not required to share a hotel room.
- d. Meals – Texas – Per Diems, as determined by U.S. General Services Administration, verify with Accountant for out of state per-diem rates. Verify number of days.
- e. Other Expenses/Information – Seminar Fees and materials, Taxi, Parking Meter, tolls, bus fares, etc.
- f. Ensure that all general ledger accounts are accurate.

Sign and submit the Expense Authorization Form to the business office within one (1) business day of receipt.

### **Expense Reconciliation Form**

**Employee's Responsibility:** Employee must attach all original receipts (airfare, lodging, car rental, parking meter, taxi, tolls, bus fares, conference registrations and other expenses related to business travel) to the Expense Reconciliation Form. Meal receipts are required for meal per diem advances or reimbursement.

The Expense Reconciliation Form must be submitted to your supervisor for approval no later than two (2) business days after returning from travel.

Upon completion of the Expense Reconciliation Form, if any monies are owed to the school, please attach a check to the report. If any monies are owed to the employee, a check will be cut within 8 business days after the report is received.

**Supervisor's Responsibility:** Supervisor must verify:

- a. All original receipts are attached to the Expense Reconciliation Form.
- b. All dates and amounts are entered correctly on the Expense Reconciliation Form.
- c. Insure a check is attached from employee if monies are due to the school.
- d. Sign and submit the Expense Reconciliation Form to the business office within one (1) business day of receipt from the employee.
- e. Supervisors will be responsible for ensuring their staff has completed their Expense Reconciliation Form as required.

### **Athletic/UII Activity Travel Procedures**

All coaches participating in any Athletic/UII Activity Travel Expense such as meals, lodging, parking, mileage, van rental, gas, and tournament fees must complete an Athletic/UII Activity Expense Reconciliation Form. This form must be submitted with attached receipts to each coach's supervisor the **FIRST** business day the coach returns to work. Supervisors must sign and submit each Athletic/UII Activity Expense Reconciliation Form to the business office within one (1) business day of receipt.

Purchase Orders are not required for the Athletic/UII Activity Expense Reconciliation Form. Payment for referees will be included on your Athletic/UII Activity Expense Reconciliation Form for each event.

## **7. NON-DISCRIMINATION & ANTI-HARASSMENT**

### **7.1. Non-Discrimination**

Por Vida Academy is committed to honor the laws that prohibit discrimination based upon an applicant or employee's race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status or other protected class recognized by applicable law. Employees are prohibited from discriminating against other employees, against applicants, or against students based upon the aforementioned protected classes.

### **7.2. Reasonable Accommodation**

In the event an employee needs to request a reasonable accommodation or a variance in Por Vida Academy's stated policies and/or procedures due to the employee's disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, or the employee's sincerely held religious belief, the employee should notify his or her supervisor and/or the Human Resources Department.

### **7.3. Anti-Harassment**

Por Vida Academy is committed to creating and maintaining a work environment free of all forms of unlawful harassment. Employees are prohibited from engaging in all forms of unlawful harassment, including harassment based on race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual harassment, and any other protected class status.

Harassment based on any of the aforementioned protected classes may include, but is not limited to, many different types of actions: verbal (e.g. derogatory comment), physical (e.g. assault), or visual (e.g. internet materials). Sexual harassment does not have to be of a sexual nature, however, and can include offensive remarks about a person's sex. Both victim and harasser can be either a woman or a man, and the victim and harasser can be the same sex. The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or someone who is not an employee of the employer.

### **7.4. Reporting Discrimination and/or Harassment**

This section applies to both incidents of harassment and discrimination.

Employees should promptly report an incident of discrimination or harassment to Supervisor. If the Supervisor is unavailable or the employee believes it would be inappropriate to contact that person, the employee should immediately, preferably within one hour, contact the Superintendent or Board of Trustees. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of retaliation.

The employee should not assume that witnesses to the incident will know the conduct is unwelcomed; an employee should not rely on a witness to report the conduct for the

employee. Informing the harasser that the conduct is unwelcomed is not a report of harassment since the harasser may not self-report the violation to management or the Human Resources Department.

If the alleged harasser is the employee's supervisor, a manager, or even one of the individuals designated to receive harassment reports, the employee does not have to directly report the incident to that individual, but instead must notify the Human Resources Department in order to ensure that the matter is promptly and appropriately addressed.

Any supervisor/manager who receives information indicating a concern about harassment or discrimination must report it to the Human Resources Department, even if the information comes from someone other than the target of the harassment or discrimination, or even if the person expressing the concern indicates that they do not wish to have the harassment or discrimination reported.

Por Vida Academy will promptly investigate any report and take appropriate remedial action. If the harassment or discrimination continues, the employee must immediately report the incident so that the matter can be reopened and addressed.

Retaliation for reporting what an employee believes to be harassing or discriminatory conduct or for participating in an investigation of alleged harassment or discrimination is prohibited. Any retaliation should be reported according to the same procedures as reporting discrimination or harassment.

Any employee engaging in any type of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Any supervisor who has knowledge of such behavior yet takes no action to report it is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

## **8. EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS**

### **8.1 Expected Employee Conduct**

All employees are expected to:

- Meet established expectations of job performance;
- Comply with attendance policies;
- Be responsible in the performance of job duties;
- Be efficient;
- Respect the personal and property rights of all individuals one comes in contact with during the course of Por Vida Academy business;
- Follow job instructions;
- Maintain a courteous and professional demeanor;

**Employees who do not adhere to these standards** are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All employees will be required to participate in an annual job performance evaluation/observation. Each Principal will guide you on this matter.

## **8.2. Violence in the Workplace**

Por Vida Academy is committed to providing a safe workplace that is free from violence or threats of violence. Any and all acts of violence in the workplace are prohibited and subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Additionally, any and all threats of violence, direct or indirect, serious or said in jest, are prohibited. All threats will be taken seriously and are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Employees concerned about family violence being brought into the workplace or onto the work parking lot are encouraged to notify their supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

Any employee who receives a protective or restraining order that lists Por Vida Academy as a protected area is required to provide Supervisor with a copy of the order and information requested by Por Vida Academy to identify the individual subject to the order.

## **8.3. Drug-Free Workplace**

Por Vida Academy is committed to maintaining a drug-free work environment and each employee is responsible for the maintenance of such an environment. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, or use of a controlled substance (i.e. drugs) and/or the use of alcohol or tobacco in the workplace, or while conducting Por Vida Academy business, are prohibited.

Additionally, an employee must notify Por Vida Academy of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace, or while conducting Por Vida Academy business, no later than five days after such conviction. A report of a conviction must be made to Human Resources Director.

Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Por Vida Academy may ask an employee to submit to a drug or alcohol test whenever it reasonably believes that the employee may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the work place in violation of this Drug-Free Workplace policy, including, but not limited to the following circumstances: evidence of drugs or alcohol on or about the employee's person or in the employee's vicinity; unusual, bizarre or erratic conduct that suggests the employee is impaired by, or under the influence of, drugs or alcohol; or an on-the-job accident or injury under circumstances that suggest the possible use or influence of drugs or alcohol in the injury.

Nothing in this policy prohibits, or in any way limits, the lawful use of prescription or Nonprescription drugs. However, an employee must inform his/her immediate supervisor if he/she is using a prescription or nonprescription drug which could impair work performance or pose a risk of harm to the employee, to others, or to property. It is the employee's responsibility to determine from his or her physician(s) if the medication can impair work performance or pose such a risk. If the lawful use of lawful prescription or nonprescription drugs does limit or otherwise impair the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of his or her position or otherwise creates a safety risk, the Human Resources Department will meet with the employee to determine whether a reasonable accommodation is available.

#### **8.4. Suspicious Behavior**

Employees are encouraged to report any suspicious behavior observed at school or at any school-related or school-sponsored activity. Strangers or former employees walking unaccompanied in areas not generally open to the public should be pointed out to a supervisor.

#### **8.5. Former Employees**

Former employees may not enter areas that are not open to the public after they are no longer employed by Por Vida Academy

#### **8.6. Employee Dress Code**

Employee dress should be neat and clean and appropriate for a professional appearance. While shoes must be worn at all times, house shoes (e.g. slippers) and flip-flops are not allowed. Denim jeans are allowed on Fridays so long as the jeans are free from holes and frays. If an employee is unsure of the appropriateness of a particular item of clothing, the employee should choose not to wear it.

An administrator may require an employee to cover tattoos and/or remove facial jewelry. Additionally, because it is difficult to establish a specific dress standard, a Por Vida Academy administrator may require an employee to change their dress if in their best judgment the dress is inappropriate.

Exceptions to the dress code may be considered in order to make reasonable accommodations for an employee's disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act or an employee's sincerely held religious belief.

#### **8.7. Outside Employment**

Employees of Por Vida Academy are expected to work solely for Por Vida Academy. Any outside employment, whether self-employment or working for another employer should be immediately disclosed to and approved by Supervisor. In some circumstances such outside employment may be permitted by Por Vida Academy, however, Por Vida Academy retains the right to review and evaluate each situation on an individual basis.

#### **8.8. Employee Monitoring**

Employees do not have an expectation of privacy in any work areas (e.g. offices, desks, file cabinets, etc.) or in any Por Vida Academy property, either owned or leased. Work areas and Por Vida Academy property are subject to search at any time. Any of the following may be monitored if they occur during business hours and/or on school property: phone calls, voice-mail, e-mail (work and personal), and internet activity.

#### **8.9. Audio & Video Recordings**

An employee is prohibited from making any audio or video recording while acting in the course and scope of their employment or while on school property without the written consent of all parties subject to the recording. School functions such as athletic activities or performances are exempt from this prohibition.

### **8.10. Office Dating**

Employees who are in administration/management/supervisory roles are prohibited from dating any employee over whom they have direct or indirect supervision. Also, individuals who work within the Human Resources Department are prohibited from dating any Por Vida Academy employee.

If two employees are involved in a dating relationship it will be presumed by Por Vida Academy that the relationship is welcomed by both parties unless one or the other notifies Por Vida Academy to the contrary. Public displays of affection and favoritism in the course of employment are prohibited.

Conduct that occurs during a disagreement or following a termination of the relationship must not violate Por Vida Academy harassment policy.

### **8.11. Workplace Investigations**

There are instances Por Vida Academy may wish to investigate personnel matters. Employees are required to cooperate in any investigation. Refusal to participate, or actions taken to compromise the effectiveness of any investigation, may result in termination. If the employee is instructed not to discuss the matter being investigated, failure to abide by this instruction may also result in termination. This restriction excludes the employee's privileged communications with his or her own private legal counsel.

### **08.12. Updated/Current Employee Information**

Employees are required to regularly update:

- A change in home address or telephone number;
- A change in marital status or in the number of dependents;
- A change of insurance beneficiary;
- A change in the number of exemptions claimed for income tax purposes;
- The driving record or status of an employee's driver's license, if the employee operates any POR VIDA ACADEMY vehicle or operates his or her own vehicle for work-related duties, not including driving to and from work.
- A legal change of name.
- The Public Information Act form indicating whether certain personal information may be released to the public.

Updates should be made by notifying Supervisor or Human Resources Director.

### **8.13. Allowable Uses of POR VIDA ACADEMY Property**

Employees may use Por Vida Academy property only for a purpose that is consistent with applicable law and to implement a program that is described in Por Vida Academy's charter.

Employees of Por Vida Academy may use local telephone service, cellular phones, electronic mail, Internet connections, and for incidental personal use under the following conditions:

- Such incidental personal use must not result in any direct cost paid with state funds. If this does happen, the employee who caused the direct cost to be incurred by POR VIDA ACADEMY must reimburse POR VIDA ACADEMY;
- Such incidental personal use must not impede the functions of POR VIDA ACADEMY;
- The use of POR VIDA ACADEMY property for private commercial purposes is strictly prohibited; The use of PVA property for private personal use is allowable at the discretion of the Superintendent. Prior approval and discussion are required.
- Only incidental amounts of an employee's time for personal matters, comparable to reasonable coffee breaks during the day, are authorized under this section.

An employee may be required to compensate POR VIDA ACADEMY for any damage and/or destruction the employee causes to POR VIDA ACADEMY property.

A violation(s) of this section may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

#### **8.14. Computer & Internet Use**

With the exception of the incidental personal use described in Section 8.13, access and use of POR VIDA ACADEMY's computers, computer networks, electronic mail, and the Internet is only for educational and administrative purposes. The access of material that is obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors is prohibited.

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

#### **8.15. Administration of Medication to Students**

The administration of medication to students must be done in accordance with POR VIDA ACADEMY BOARD policy. All employees, agents, and volunteers are prohibited from administering any medication to a student unless expressly authorized by POR VIDA ACADEMY.

#### **8.16. Reporting Child Abuse/Child Neglect**

An employee, volunteer, or agent that believes a child has been adversely affected by physical, sexual, or mental abuse or neglect must make a report within 48 hours of first suspecting such abuse or neglect. The report must be made to law enforcement or the Department of Family and Protective Services, Child Protective Services.

#### **8.17. Traffic Violations**

If an employee, during the course of POR VIDA ACADEMY business, receives a traffic violation, the employee will be personally liable for any expenses incurred from that violation. If during the course of transporting a student(s) an employee receives a traffic violation, that employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

## **8.18. Workers' Compensation**

### Workers' Compensation Insurance

Por Vida, in accordance with state law, provides workers' compensation to employees who suffer a work-related illness or are injured on the job. Benefits help pay for medical treatment and make up for part of the income lost while recovering. Specific benefits are prescribed by law depending on the circumstances of each case. All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to your supervisor and an incident report must be submitted to Human Resources within 24 hours. Worker's Compensation employees must visit an "in-network physician" for a treatment of an injury. Employees who choose not to visit an "in-network physician" are not covered under Por Vida, Inc.'s worker's compensation insurance. Therefore, they will be required to pay all out of pocket expenses. Employees who are unable to work due to a work-related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code.

Por Vida subscribes to workers' compensation insurance. If you have incurred a work-related injury, you must report such injury to your supervisor immediately, **no matter how minor the injury is.**

Absences for job-related injuries or illnesses under workers' compensation plans will be counted towards your 12 weeks of Family and Medical leave, provided that the employee meets the eligibility requirements for FMLA and the injury or illness is a serious health condition. Employees receiving lost wage benefits and qualifying under the FMLA are not allowed to use accrued sick, personal or other paid leave to supplement such benefits.

## **9. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Employees who have a complaint about their terms or conditions of work are encouraged to resolve their concerns informally with their co-workers and/or supervisors at the lowest level possible. If the employee is not satisfied with the outcome of the informal resolution, then the employee may file a formal complaint according to the procedures below.

With the exception of a complaint against the Superintendent, each complaint must initially be brought at the lowest level of review, at the Campus Principal Review level. If the complaint is against the principal, then the complaint may be initially brought at the Executive level.

### **9.1. Campus Principal Review of Complaint**

Where an employee has a complaint or concern regarding their terms or conditions of work, the individual shall first bring their complaint or concern in writing to the appropriate campus principal or to the employee's direct supervisor if the employee does not work on a school campus. The complaint must be brought within 15 school days of the date that the complainant knew or should have known of the alleged harm. The complaint must be specific, and where possible suggest a resolution. The principal/supervisor must hear the complaint, attempt to remedy the complaint in the best interest of the affected parties, and document the outcome. The principal/supervisor must respond to the complainant and issue a final decision in writing within 10 days of the principal's/supervisor's receipt of the complaint.

## **9.2. Superintendent Review of Complaint**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the final decision of the campus principal/supervisor, then the individual may file a written appeal to the Superintendent. This written appeal shall be filed with the Superintendent's office within 10 days of the individual's receipt of the final decision from the campus principal/supervisor. The complaint shall include a copy of the prior written complaint along with a copy of the final decision of the campus principal/supervisor. A copy of the appeal shall also be delivered to the campus principal/supervisor.

The appeal must be specific, and where possible suggestion a resolution. The complaint shall not include any new issues or complaints unrelated in the original complaint.

The Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee, shall respond to the complaint and issue a final decision in writing within 15 days of receipt of the written appeal.

## **9.3. Board of Directors Review of Complaint**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the Superintendent's final decision, then the individual may appeal their complaint in writing to the Board of Directors within 10 days of receiving the Superintendent's final decision. The complaint shall be directed to the President of the Board, and shall include a copy of the written complaint to the Superintendent. A copy of this appeal shall also be delivered to the Superintendent.

The President of the Board, at the next regular meeting of the Board, shall provide a copy of the complaint record to all board members. The Board's decision shall be decided on a review of the record developed at the Superintendent's level. Any action of the Board of Directors regarding the complaint shall be taken in compliance with the Texas Open Meeting Act.

### **OR**

Individuals who are dissatisfied with the response of the Superintendent may present their complaint to the Board of Directors during the time of CITIZEN'S PRESENTATIONS at the next regular meeting of the board of directors. The board shall "stop, look, and listen" to the complaint, but may not deliberate or act on the complaint except in compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

A complaint against a Superintendent shall begin at this level of review and shall follow the complaint process in accordance with this policy section and the Texas Open Meetings Act.

The failure of the Board of Directors to act on a complaint has the effect of upholding the Superintendent's decision.

## **10. DISCIPLINE**

In an effort to correct employee misconduct at the earliest stage possible, POR VIDA ACADEMY administration may implement a stair-step disciplinary procedure. Such procedure may begin first with a verbal warning. The next offense would proceed to a written warning; the next step is suspension; followed by termination of employment.

Though POR VIDA ACADEMY may utilize such stair-step disciplinary procedures, POR VIDA ACADEMY reserves the right to skip any or all steps and immediately discharge the employee.

The stair-step disciplinary procedure does not forfeit the at-will status of its employees and POR VIDA ACADEMY preserves the at-will nature of the employment relationship. Accordingly, discharge may be initiated by POR VIDA ACADEMY at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice.

## **11. SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT**

### **11.1. Resignation**

An employee is expected, but not required, to give as much advance notice as possible regarding their resignation from POR VIDA ACADEMY. Typically, two weeks (10 business days) is considered sufficient notice time. POR VIDA ACADEMY requests that employees submit their resignation in writing to their supervisor; the writing should include the employee's anticipated last work day.

POR VIDA ACADEMY reserves the right to require the employee to resign immediately rather than work during the notice period.

### **11.2. Discharge**

In an effort to reduce the risk of employee violence or vandalism, upon an employee's discharge from employment, POR VIDA ACADEMY administration may request that an employee leave the facility immediately upon separation from employment. If accompanied by a POR VIDA ACADEMY administrator, the employee will be permitted to gather his/her personal belongings before being escorted to the exit.

The exiting employee is prohibited from taking any POR VIDA ACADEMY property or information with him/her; the employee is not to retain in hard copy or soft copy any POR VIDA ACADEMY information. POR VIDA ACADEMY reserves the right to examine any boxes, briefcases, or other receptacle of an exiting employee to ensure these rules are being followed.

An exiting employee who has been discharged is not to return to the premises of POR VIDA ACADEMY without prior written approval from the Human Resources Department or the principal of the school campus.

# Por Vida Inc. / Independent School District District Wide Parental Involvement Policy

## PART I. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

The **Por Vida Inc. / ISD** agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Those programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- Consistent with section 1118, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental involvement policies meet the requirements of section 1118(b) of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA.
- The school district will incorporate this district wide parental involvement policy into its LEA plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A parental involvement requirements, to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 of the ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the State Department of Education.
- The school district will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental involvement is spent, and will ensure that not less than 95 percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the schools.
- The school district will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and expects that it's Title I schools will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition:

*Parental involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring—*

*(A) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;*

*(B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;*

*(C) that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child;*

*(D) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA.*

- Title I Statewide School Support/ Parental Involvement Initiative

- Introduction

The Title I Statewide School Support/Parental Involvement Initiative at Region 16 Education Service Center is responsible for implementing an effective system of networking between the 20 education service centers. Each service center has designated a person to serve as the primary parental involvement contact. The ESC parental involvement contacts serve as the resource for requesting information in their region.

- Goal

The goal for the Title I Statewide School Support/Parental Involvement Initiative is to increase collaboration between TEA, the ESCs, and LEAs to impact student achievement and build the capacity of parents to better meet the academic needs of their children. It is our desire to provide the ESC parental involvement contacts with networking opportunities, as well as quality professional development opportunities for all parental involvement stakeholders in the state.

## **PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICT WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS**

1. The **Por Vida Inc. / ISD** will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district wide parental involvement plan under section 1112 of the ESEA:

- *Maintain a District Parental Involvement Team (DPIT) of parents, teachers, and administrators.*
- *Create a parent resource center and an atmosphere that enables parents to ask questions, share comments and concerns and provide ideas for helping the district address student needs.*
- *Continue to utilize campus personnel and district parent liaison to assist in identifying potential DPIT parent members.*
- *Continue to invite and recruit parents from each campus to serve on the DPIT*
- *Continue to highlight the important role parents hold as their children's first teachers, through campus parent nights, and parenting workshops.*
- *Continue to communicate information about SISD parental involvement activities in both English and Spanish to the extent possible*
- *Continue to schedule meetings that are brief, well organized and consider the best time for parents to attend.*

2. The **Por Vida Inc. / ISD** will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:

- *Continue to invite parents and the community to participate in meetings designed to inform, review, suggest, and brainstorm SISD improvements. Examples are but not limited to: Open Houses, STAAR Night, College Night, and Thanksgiving Luncheon.*
- *Continue to encourage and promote volunteerism and capacity building in areas where additional district/campus support is needed*
- *Enable parents to assist the district in prioritizing needs and functions for expenditure of Title I funds*

3. The **Por Vida Inc. / ISD** will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:

- *DPIT will continue to support Por Vida Academy as a Title I Part A school by working with the campus to study best practices for effective parental involvement activities*
- *Develop action plans that best meet campus/district needs and also address the Six Types of Parental Involvement (Parenting, Communicating, Volunteering, Learning at Home, Decision Making, and Collaborating With the Community) and recommend plans to the campus.*

4. The **Por Vida Inc. / ISD** will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies in Part A with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs: **Fatherhood Campaign, Parents Academy, School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), and Homeless Awareness**, by:

- *Providing program descriptions and opportunities for parents to learn more about them and how they can receive training and participate on different advisory committees.*
- *Informing families of school district and community programs for students such as mentoring, tutoring, Summer school, nutrition, health, recreation and other intervention activities.*
- *Provide conference information to parents about local, regional and state conferences related to specific programs.*

5. The **Por Vida Inc. / ISD** will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parental involvement policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). The school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parental involvement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parental involvement policies.

- *Create and update (when necessary) an evaluation tool designed by and under the direction of the PVA Parental Involvement Team.*
- *Provide the evaluation in both English and Spanish.*
- *Distribute and collect the evaluation tool from the campus during the Spring before the end of the semester.*

- *PVA Parental Involvement Team will analyze evaluation results and compile a report to be distributed to school and district administration and the campus.*
- *PVA instructional and administrative leadership will consult and recommend actions to implement more effective parental involvement.*

6. The **Por Vida Inc. / ISD** will build the schools' and parent's capacity for strong parental involvement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:

A. The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph --

- the State's academic content standards,
- the State's student academic achievement standards,
- the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments,
- the requirements of Part A,
- how to monitor their child's progress, and
- how to work with educators:

List of Activities

- *Individual campus parent nights*
- *Regional and state conferences*
- *Bilingual parent liaison when necessary*
- *Bilingual district personnel*

B. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy training, and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement, by:

List of Activities

- *Bilingual Parenting workshops*
- *Bilingual Parenting materials*
- *Bilingual parent liaison when necessary*
- *Guest speakers*

C. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, instructional aides, principals and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by:

List of Activities

- *Guest speakers*
- *Tips for campus administrators for how to motivate campus staff to build parent involvement*
- *Updates for promoting parent involvement during district/campus staff development, faculty meetings involvement*
- *Use interoffice mail and electronic distribution of tips, ideas and articles about*

*how campuses and educators can build parent involvement*

D. The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with **Fatherhood Campaign, Parents Academy, School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), and Homeless Awareness** and public preschool and conduct other activities that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children, by:

List of Activities

- *Create and maintain parent resource centers on each campus*

E. The school district will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent- programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand:

List of Activities

- *Review district procedures for how we currently disseminate information.*
- *Create a district process for translating materials from English to Spanish*
- *Identify key people to serve as translators on individual campuses*
- *Provide uniform translation training and guidelines for translators*

**PART III.**

**ADOPTION**

This District Wide Parental Involvement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs, as evidenced by the following Por Vida Academy and Por Vida Inc. / I.S.D. Parental Involvement Team signatures:

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This policy was adopted by the Por Vida Academy / Por Vida ISD on 2010-2011 and will be in effect for the period of 2014-2015. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before the end of the 2013-2014 school year.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Authorized Official)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)