



# Employee Handbook

**Approved by Board of Trustees  
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## Table of Contents

<b>Welcome</b>	4
Mission	4
Organizational Goals	4
About This Handbook	5
At-Will Employment and Contract Disclaimer	5
<b>Employment</b>	5
EEO Statement and Non-harassment Policy	5
Disability Accommodation	7
<b>Hiring</b>	8
Posting and Recruitment	8
Appointments	8
Employment of Minors	8
Employee Classifications	8
Exempt and Non-exempt Employees	9
Job Description	9
Employment Authorization Verification	9
Introductory Period	9
Orientation and Training	10
<b>Compensation</b>	10
Wages	10
Paycheck Deductions	10
<b>Hours of Operation and Work Schedules</b>	11
Library Hours	11
Work Schedules and Breaks	11
Lactation Breaks	12
Remote Working	12
Attendance and Punctuality	12
Holidays	13
Emergency Closings	13
Recording Time	13
Business Expenses	14
Other	15
<b>Paid Leave Benefits</b>	16
Vacation	17
Personal Leave	17
Bereavement Leave	17
Sick Leave	17
New York Family Paid Leave	18
Workers' Compensation Benefits	18

New York State Disability Benefits	18
Crime Victim and Witness Leave	19
Voting Leave	19
Jury Duty	20
Military Service	20
<b>Medical Health Insurance Benefits</b>	20
<b>Retirement Benefits</b>	21
<b>Professional Development</b>	21
<b>Customer Service</b>	22
Customer, Client, and Visitor Relations	22
Awareness of Services and Programs	22
Feedback or Suggestions	22
Personal Appearance	22
<b>Code of Conduct – Safety</b>	23
Standards of Conduct	23
Safety and Security	24
Anti-Violence	24
Drug and Alcohol Policy	25
Conflict of Interest	26
Outside Employment	26
Confidentiality and Nondisclosure	27
Personal Cell Phone/Mobile Device Use	27
Mail Use Policy	27
Computer Security and Software	28
<b>Performance Evaluations</b>	28
<b>Departing Employees</b>	29
<b>Closing Statement</b>	29
<b>Appendix I – Sexual Harassment</b>	30
<b>Appendix II – New York Pail Family Leave</b>	36
<b>Appendix III – Electronic Data and Telecommunications</b>	39
<b>Appendix IV – Privacy Policy</b>	41
<b>Appendix V – Records Retention &amp; Disposition</b>	43
<b>Appendix VI – Remote Work Policy</b>	45
<b>Appendix VII – Whistleblower Policy</b>	49

## **I. WELCOME**

Welcome to the Bedford Hills Free Library (the "Library" or the "BHFL"), an association library serving the Town of Bedford and hamlet of Bedford Hills, as well as communities in Westchester County. Founded in 1915, the Library is accredited by the New York State Board of Regents and is a member of the Westchester Library Association (WLS). The Library is a 501(c)(3), not-for-profit organization funded by the Town of Bedford, as well as foundations, businesses, and individuals.

### **Mission**

The mission of the BHFL is to provide equal and uncensored access to cultural, educational, recreational, and informational materials and services, as well as to offer programs that enhance learning, creativity, engagement, and responsible citizenry.

Our Library is committed to life-long learning, and we provide immersive programming that reflects a range of intellectual resources, evolving technologies, and creative experiences. Many of our programs draw from a wellspring of local talent and expertise, and we often collaborate with other service providers to expand their impact. We hold our collection, services, and programs to the highest standard of quality in response to constituency needs. As the "heart of the hamlet," the BHFL is a gathering place that bridges connections, nurtures the individual, strengthens families, and actively revitalizes our community.

### **Our organizational goals are to:**

- 1) Instill a love of reading, learning, imagination, and connection for children and families.
- 2) Stimulate lifelong learning, creative pursuits, and social engagement for adults and seniors.
- 3) Strengthen connections among Bedford Hills' various community groups and residents of all backgrounds to facilitate the sharing of needs and ideas.
- 4) Celebrate our hamlet's culturally and economically diverse population (both historically and today) as a unique strength and foster the positive role our Library plays in supporting all of our residents.
- 5) Guide patrons in navigating our collection of materials, information sources, and new technologies.

The Library is governed by a Board of Trustees, which appoints an Executive Director to carry out the day-to-day operations of the Library, including personnel. The Library employs well-qualified and dedicated individuals committed to working as a team to provide the best possible programs and services for our patrons and community. We strive to offer employees an opportunity to serve with quality and integrity, to be satisfied in their job situation, to grow professionally and personally, and to be recognized and appreciated for the contribution they make to our Library and community.

To this end, the Library:

- respects the dignity and contribution of each employee
- encourages development of professional capacities and skills; provides and continually reviews a balanced program of employee benefits

- maintains open channels of communication and seeks ways of maintaining high morale through fair and equitable treatment of all employees and
- administers the Library personnel policies fairly and consistently.

### **About This Handbook**

The BHFL complies with all applicable federal, state, and local employment laws, and this handbook generally reflects those laws. BHFL prepared this handbook to help new and current employees find answers to questions that you may have regarding your employment with the Library.

Please take the necessary time to read through the handbook in its entirety and understand the policies contained within it. If you have any questions, please contact the Executive Director. Sign the acknowledgment at the end to show that you have read, understood, and agree to the contents of this handbook.

### **At-Will Employment and Contract Disclaimer**

Your employment with BHFL is on an "at-will" basis. This means your employment may be terminated at any time, with or without notice and with or without cause. Likewise, we respect your right to leave the BHFL at any time, with or without notice and with or without cause. BHFL requests, however, that employees provide at least two weeks' notice of departure where possible.

Nothing in this handbook or any other BHFL document should be understood as creating a contract, guaranteed or continued employment, a right to termination only "for cause," or any other guarantee of continued benefits or employment. Only the Executive Director has the authority to make promises or negotiate regarding guaranteed or continued employment, and any such promises are only effective if placed in writing and signed by the Executive Director.

Many matters covered by this handbook, such as benefit plan descriptions, are also described in separate plan documents. These plan documents are always controlling over any statement made in this handbook or by any member of management.

## **II. EMPLOYMENT**

### **EEO Statement and Non-harassment Policy**

#### Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

BHFL is dedicated to maintaining a work environment that is free from harassment and discrimination on the basis of age, race (including hair texture and protective hairstyles), creed, color, national origin (including ancestry), religion, gender or sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy (including childbirth and related medical conditions, including, but not limited to lactation), alienage or citizenship status (unless required by law), disability, marital status, partnership status, caregiver status, credit history, domestic violence victim status, familial status, military status, unemployment status, genetic information (including genetic

characteristics), predisposing genetic characteristic, or any other protected status under federal, state, or local laws. The BHFL is dedicated to the fulfillment of this policy with respect to all aspects of employment, including, but not limited to, recruiting, hiring, placement, transfer, training, promotion, compensation, termination, and all other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

The BHFL will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of all allegations of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or any violation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy. To the extent possible, the investigation will be done in a confidential manner. The BHFL will take appropriate corrective action, if and where warranted. The BHFL prohibits retaliation against employees who provide information about, complain about, or assist in the investigation of any complaint of discrimination or violation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy.

### Sexual Harassment

The BHFL is committed to maintaining a workplace free from sexual harassment, which is unlawful and subjects the BHFL to liability. The BHFL prohibits any form of sexual harassment, and all employees are required to work in a manner that prevents sexual harassment. For additional information on sexual harassment, including how to file a claim, see the Sexual Harassment Policy in the handbook appendices. BHFL's Sexual harassment policy is discussed in more detail in Appendix I.

### Other Harassment

All forms of harassment of, or by, employees, vendors, visitors, customers, and clients are strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. While it is not possible to list all the circumstances that may constitute other forms of workplace harassment, the following are some examples of conduct that may constitute workplace harassment:

- The use of disparaging or abusive words or phrases, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts that relate to the above protected categories.
- Written or graphic material that insults, stereotypes, or shows aversion or hostility toward an individual or group because of one of the above protected categories and that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, email, voicemail, or elsewhere on our premises, or circulated in the workplace.
- A display of symbols, slogans, or items associated with hate or intolerance toward any select group.

### Reporting Discrimination and Harassment

If you feel that you have witnessed or have been subjected to any form of discrimination or harassment, immediately notify the Executive Director.

The BHFL prohibits retaliation against employees who provide information about, complain, or assist in the investigation of any complaint of harassment or discrimination. We will promptly and thoroughly investigate any claim and take appropriate action where we find a claim has merit. To the extent possible, we will retain the confidentiality of those who report suspected or alleged violations of the harassment policy. Discipline for violation of this policy may include, but is not limited to, reprimand, suspension, demotion, transfer, and discharge. If the

BHFL determines that harassment or discrimination occurred, corrective action will be taken to effectively end the harassment. As necessary, the BHFL may monitor any incident of harassment or discrimination to assure the inappropriate behavior has stopped.

## **Disability Accommodation**

The BHFL complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, and all applicable state and local fair employment practices laws and is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with disabilities, including disabilities related to pregnancy, childbirth, and related conditions. Consistent with this commitment, the BHFL will provide reasonable accommodation to otherwise qualified individuals where appropriate to allow the individual to perform the essential functions of the job, unless doing so would create an undue hardship on the Library. If you require an accommodation because of a disability, it is your responsibility to notify your supervisor.

You may be asked to provide relevant information such as:

- A description of the proposed accommodation.
- The reason you need an accommodation.
- How the accommodation will help you perform the essential functions of your job.

After receiving your request, the BHFL will engage in an interactive dialogue with you to determine the precise limitations of your disability and explore potential reasonable accommodations that could overcome those limitations. Where appropriate, we may need your permission to obtain additional information from your medical provider. All medical information received by the BHFL in connection with a request for accommodation will be treated as confidential.

The BHFL encourages you to suggest specific reasonable accommodations that you believe would allow you to perform the essential functions of your job. However, the Library is not required to make the specific accommodation requested by you and may provide an alternative accommodation, to the extent any reasonable accommodation can be made without imposing an undue hardship on the BHFL.

If leave is provided as a reasonable accommodation, such leave may run concurrently with leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act and/or any other leave where permitted by state and federal law.

The BHFL will not discriminate or retaliate against employees for requesting an accommodation.

### **III.     HIRING**

#### **Posting and Recruitment**

Open recruitment for all positions is standard practice. New job openings are posted within the Library and on public job listing sites. Employees are informed about new job openings and may be eligible for consideration or promotion based on demonstrated ability. The Library seeks to promote from within whenever possible however, the Library will select the most qualified candidate for each position. Promotions are made on an equal opportunity basis according to employees possessing the needed skills, education, experience, and other qualifications that are required for the job.

#### **Appointments**

Each employee hired to fill a position receives an appointment memo from the Executive Director of Library which sets forth her/his salary or hourly rate, regular hours, employment status, any benefits, and introductory period (if applicable). Nothing in this appointment memo shall be construed to destroy the “at will” employment relationship between the Library and the employee, unless the letter states, "This letter specifically *disclaims* the “at will” employment relationship and provides for the following term: \_\_."

#### **Employment of Minors**

Only minors over 14 years of age may be employed by the BHFL and must have applicable working papers. Minors may work after school and during vacation, in accordance with applicable law. Minors 16 and 17 years of age may work full time if not attending school.

#### **Employee Classifications**

The Library classifies its employees into the following categories:

##### Full-time Regular

Full-time regular employees work a regular schedule of 40 hours within a standard workweek\*.

##### Part-time Regular

Part-time regular employees work a regular schedule of at least 20 and less than 40 hours within a standard workweek\*.

##### Hourly Employees

Individuals who work less than 20 hours within a standard workweek\*. These schedules may vary to meet the needs of the Library.

##### Temporary

Individuals retained to work on a temporary, occasional, or seasonal basis, as a substitute, or for the duration of a specific project.



\*A standard workweek is defined as time worked from Monday through Saturday.

## **Exempt and Non-Exempt Employees**

The Library complies with the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) regarding the classification of employees regarding their exempt or non-exempt status:

### Exempt Employees

An employee is classified as exempt if he or she is paid on a salary basis and performs duties consistent with an exempt status in the FLSA. Individuals who are classified as exempt employees are not eligible for overtime and are responsible for completing the duties of their position regardless of the number of hours worked above the standard workweek.

### Non-Exempt Employees

Employees who are not classified as exempt are considered non-exempt and perform duties consistent with the FLSA. Any non-exempt employee approved and required to work over 40 hours per week will be paid overtime at a rate of time and a half of their base hourly pay for all overtime hours worked. Calculation of overtime working hours does not include paid meal breaks.

If additional time within an employee's pay period is required of a non-exempt employee, that employee may choose, if approved by a supervisor, to shift hours from another scheduled day of work to avoid exceeding their usually scheduled weekly hours. This shift in hours must be taken within the same work week.

## **Job Descriptions**

BHFL maintains a job description for each employee position. Job descriptions prepared by the BHFL serve as an outline only. Due to organizational needs, you may be required to perform job duties that are not within your written job description. Furthermore, the BHFL may have to revise, add to, or delete from your job duties per the Library's needs, perhaps without advance notice to employees. If you have any questions regarding your job description or the scope of your duties, please speak with your supervisor.

## **Employment Authorization Verification**

New hires will be required to complete Section 1 of federal Form I-9 on the first day of paid employment and must present acceptable documents authorized by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services proving identity and employment authorization no later than the third business day following the start of employment with the BHFL.

Inform your supervisor if you have not complied with this requirement or if your status has changed. If you are authorized to work in this country for a limited period of time, you will be required to submit proof of renewed employment eligibility prior to expiration of that period to remain employed by the BHFL.

## **Introductory Period**

The first three months of employment is considered an Introductory Period. New employees should use this introductory period to determine whether the position is meeting your expectations. The BHFL also uses this period to evaluate your capabilities, conduct and work habits. If retained after this period, the employee's length of service will be calculated from the first day of work. Employee eligibility for any benefits during this period, including insurances and paid time off, is set forth in the policies within this handbook. The Introductory Period does not alter the employment at-will relationship.

## **Orientation and Training**

In most cases, staff orientation and training is done on an individual basis by senior staff. Even if you have had previous experience in the specified functions of your job duties, it is necessary for you to learn the policies and procedures for the BHFL, as well as the responsibilities of the specific position. If you believe you require additional orientation and training, please consult the Executive Director. Additional training may be provided through staff retreats, workshops, or webinars offered by the BHFL or the Westchester Library System, New York Library Association, or other professional associations.

## **IV. COMPENSATION**

### **Wages**

At BHFL, pay depends on a wide range of factors, including pay scale surveys, individual effort, or fundraising and market forces.

The Bedford Hills Free Library is compliant with minimum wage levels for Westchester County and/or the State of New York, whichever is greater.

Wage levels and/or beginning salaries for all employees, increases, and any bonuses, are recommended by the Executive Director and approved by the Board of Trustees. Wages, bonuses, and other benefits are reviewed and possibly revised as part of the annual organizational budget approval process, completion of an employee's annual performance evaluation, or prior to retaining a new employee.

Nothing in this section shall be construed as a guarantee for any wage increases or bonuses, as all changes in wages or bonuses are discretionary.

### **Paycheck Deductions**

BHFL is required by law to make certain deductions from your pay each pay period. The amount of your tax deductions will depend on your earnings and the number of exemptions you list on your federal Form W-4 and applicable state withholding form.

You may also authorize voluntary deductions from your paycheck, including contributions for

insurance premiums, retirement plans, spending accounts, or other services. Your deductions will be reflected in your wage statement.

Statutory Deductions Include:

#### Federal, State & FICA Taxes

Automatic deductions are made for Federal, State, and FICA (Social Security) withholding taxes for all employees. Other taxes will also be deducted where applicable.

#### New York Paid Family Leave

The BHFL offers the New York Paid Family Leave to all eligible employees. The benefit is funded by employee payroll deductions until the maximum annual deduction is reached. Employees who are not eligible must submit an optional and revocable waiver form to be kept on file. Paid Family Leave is discussed in more detail in Section V below.

#### Deductions from Pay and Safe Harbor

Exempt Employees are paid a fixed weekly salary and are not eligible for overtime pay. The BHFL will not make deductions from the salary of Exempt Employees except for reasons permitted by federal, state, and local law. In addition, the BHFL and its employees may agree to make deductions from pay for other permissible purposes in accordance with relevant laws.

If an employee believes that a deduction from his or her salary is improper, the employee should immediately contact the Executive Director. If the BHFL, upon investigation, determines that the deduction was improper, it will reimburse the employee and take steps to assure that such improper deductions do not reoccur.

## **V. HOURS OF OPERATION AND WORK SCHEDULES**

### **Library Hours**

The Library is open to the public Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday 10:00 am to 6:00 pm; Tuesday 10:00 am to 7:00 pm; Friday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, and Saturday 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. The Library typically closes on Saturdays in August.

### **Work Schedules and Breaks**

Schedules for staff are determined by the Executive Director and may vary depending upon the operational needs of BHFL. BHFL hours and work schedules will be posted on the Library shared digital calendar. The work schedules are done monthly and are typically posted two weeks prior to the new month. If, by the last week of the current month, you are uncertain of your next monthly work schedule, please contact the Executive Director.

All time worked in excess of an employee's scheduled hours must have prior approval of the Executive Director. Working more hours than scheduled without prior approval may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Employees may be requested to work evenings and/or Saturdays.

Regular employees typically work one evening per week and/or are on a rotation to work at least one Saturday per month. Request for paid or unpaid leave should be made in writing to the Executive Director.

Employees working a shift of seven or more hours are entitled to one paid half-hour meal break per day, as well as two paid 15-minute breaks. Staggered meal breaks may be necessary, and employees may be requested to provide coverage for other employees on a meal break. Part-time regular and hourly employees may take one paid 15-minute scheduled break for every 3.5 hours worked during a given day.

### **Lactation Breaks**

Eligible employees may take a reasonable amount of break time to accommodate the employee's need to express breast milk for the employee's nursing child, pursuant to New York State Labor Law Section 206-c. Eligible employees should notify their direct supervisor of the frequency, timing, and duration of lactation breaks they need to take.

BHFL has designated a lavatory within the Library as the lactation room. Eligible employees may reserve the lactation room by placing the designated "In Use" notice on the door. The procedure, including the location of the "In Use" sign, will be discussed with the nursing mother to ensure a smooth accommodation.

Lactation breaks under this policy are paid breaks.

### **Remote Working**

Remote working is defined as regularly working a full or partial workday from home or some other alternate work site. Remote working is only available to an employee when it benefits organizational needs. Any remote working schedule must be approved by the Executive Director in advance. If permission for remote working is granted, you will be subject to the same safety and performance standards as if you were working in the Library. See Appendix IV for more details.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

Given the Library's limited resources, attendance and punctuality are important factors for the Library's success. Employees are expected to be present and ready to work at the start of their assigned shifts, and to return from meal breaks on time.

If you are going to be late for work or absent, you must notify your supervisor or the Executive Director as far in advance as possible under the circumstances, but before the start of your shift. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

If you fail to show up for work or communicate with your supervisor with an acceptable reason for the absence for a period of three consecutive days, you will be considered to have abandoned your job and your employment will be terminated.

## **Holidays**

The BHFL is closed to the public in observation of the following official holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Indigenous Peoples' Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. In addition, the Library may close early the day before Thanksgiving, New Year's Eve, or on any other day as recommended by the Executive Director and approved by the Board of Trustees each year.

When the BHFL is closed for a full day due to a holiday, full-time regular employees will receive their regular level of pay for each holiday. Part-time regular employees with more than one year of service may select six (6) of the above-listed holidays as "paid holidays" for the upcoming year. Each part-time regular employee must submit a list of his/her selected days to the Executive Director by December 15<sup>th</sup> each year.

If the BHFL is closed for a holiday during an employee's scheduled paid vacation, that day will not be counted as a vacation day, but as a holiday. Holiday pay does not count as hours worked for the purpose of calculating overtime under any circumstances. If a holiday occurs while a full-time regular employee is attending a conference or event which s/he has been approved to attend, compensatory time will be granted.

## **Emergency Closings**

When the BHFL is closed for inclement weather, breakdown of heating or air conditioning equipment, or other adverse situations which temporarily affect working conditions, exempt employees and non-exempt part-time regular employees scheduled to work that day will receive their regularly scheduled level of pay.

Although staff are expected to make an effort to get to work during inclement weather, there will be no obligation to travel placed on anyone who deems it unsafe to do so. However, an employee who is absent on a day when an emergency closing has not been officially declared will be required to use paid leave benefits or forfeit pay. If an employee is not scheduled to work when the BHFL is officially closed, the employee will not receive pay for that day, nor will s/he be awarded with an additional day off.

In the event of emergency closings, the BHFL's Executive Director will make the final determination if the BHFL will be closed and will announce the closing as soon as possible prior to the scheduled work or opening time. Employees are prohibited from closing the Library without the Executive Director's consent.

## **Recording Time**

### Timesheets

BHFL is required by applicable federal, state, and local laws to keep accurate records of hours worked by certain employees. Non-exempt employees must record the time they start and stop working, including any overtime. Non-exempt employees must not be performing any work during meal breaks. Non-exempt employees must not start working prior to their

scheduled start time. At no time may non-exempt employees work "off the clock". Any violation of this will result in discipline, up to and including, discharge. Additionally, non-exempt employees must submit a signed timesheet with total hours prior to the requested deadline. Hours must be submitted for each pay period on time and be approved by a supervisor.

#### Overtime

Non-exempt employees will receive one and a half times his or her regular hourly wage for any hours worked above 40 hours per work week. Non-exempt employees may not work any

overtime without prior authorization. Any violation of this policy may result in discipline, up to and including, termination. Exempt employees should record their daily work attendance and report any full days of absence from work.

These time records must be completed accurately. Please report any errors in your time records to your supervisor. Altering, falsifying, or tampering with time records is prohibited and subject the employee to discipline, up to and including, discharge.

#### Pay Periods

The workweek runs from Saturday at 12:00 a.m. through Friday at 11:59 p.m. The pay period covers two weeks. Salaries for all full-time and part-time regular and hourly employees are paid bi-weekly on the Friday following the end of the pay period.

Time sheets are to be turned in to your supervisor on the Wednesday prior to the pay period ending date.

#### Direct Deposit or Paper Checks

Employees are paid through direct deposit or paper checks, if requested. The BHFL encourages all employees to enroll in direct deposit. If you would like to take advantage of direct deposit, the Executive Director will provide you with an application form. Typically, the bank will begin the direct deposit of your payroll within 30 calendar days after you submit your completed application. If you have selected the direct deposit payroll service, a written explanation of your pay and deductions will be given to you on paydays described in the preceding sections in lieu of a check.

#### **Business Expenses**

Approved business expenses are the reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by employees to achieve legitimate business purposes that are not covered by normal BHFL procurement processes.

#### Out-of-Pocket Expenses

If employees need to cover out-of-pocket expenses (such as supplies, materials, postage, food/beverages), for work-related activities or events, s/he will be reimbursed. Receipts or other documentation must be submitted with a *Reimbursement Request* form. Expenditures over \$100 require prior approval from the Executive Director.

### Mileage Reimbursement for Use of Personal Vehicle

Employees will be reimbursed for mileage driven in a personal vehicle, due to work-related activities, at the standard rate as determined by the IRS. Mileage reimbursement encompasses expenses like fuel, maintenance/repairs, and operating costs so these separate and specific expenses are not reimbursed. In addition to the mileage allowance, tolls and necessary parking charges may be reimbursed. The Library does not assume liability for damage, deductibles or any other insured loss to the vehicle. Parking fines or fees for traffic violations are not reimbursed. Employees must provide documentation of all travel expenses (including the dates, mileage, and purpose of travel) with a *Reimbursement Request* form on a quarterly basis.

### Use of Employer Credit Cards

Employees in the possession of a credit card issued by the BHFL will adhere to the strictest guidelines of responsibility for the protection and proper use of that card. Credit card purchases over \$100 must receive prior approval from the Executive Director.

Submit a *Credit Card Expense Report* and all receipts generated by use of the BHFL credit card to the Executive Director at the time of the transaction.

The BHFL credit card may *not* be used for personal reasons. Use of the BHFL credit card is restricted to approved business-related expenses.

Immediately report lost or stolen BHFL cards to the Executive Director. Failure to follow this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

## **Other**

### Employee Notifications

The BHFL maintains an official bulletin board located in the administrative office for posting of official BHFL notices, including wage and hour laws, changes in policies, and other employment-related notices. At times the BHFL may also post information of general interest to staff on the bulletin board. You are responsible for being informed about this material by periodically reviewing the bulletin board. Only authorized personnel may add and remove notices from the bulletin board.

### Personal Data Changes

It is your obligation to provide the BHFL with your current contact information, including current mailing address, email address, and telephone number. Inform the BHFL of any changes to your marital or tax withholding status. Failure to do so may result in loss of benefits or delayed receipt of W-2 and other mailings. To make changes to this information, contact the Executive Director.

### Access to Personnel and Medical Records Files

All matters relating to individual employees are kept in the employee's personnel file stored apart from any business-related records in a safe, locked, inaccessible location. Typical documents in a personnel file include the employee's resume and application cover letter, documentation of above, employee handbook and *at will* employer sign off sheets, and references.

An employee's medical file is the repository for sensitive and confidential information related to an individual's health, health benefits, health-related leave and/or accommodations, and benefits selections and coverage. Medical records are kept confidential in compliance with applicable laws and access is on a "need-to-know" basis only.

Personnel records are maintained by the Executive Director in a confidential manner and only duly authorized persons have access to them. An employee may request to view his or her personnel file with reasonable advance notice. Inspection must be done in the presence of a person authorized by the Executive Director. No employee may alter or remove any document in his or her personnel file.

## **VI. PAID LEAVE BENEFITS**

### **Vacation**

Paid vacation time is available to full-time regular employees as of January 1 each year.

Employees accrue vacation days month by month starting on the date of hire, but no days may be taken during the first 3 months of employment.

Employees will accrue vacation as per the following schedule:

0-2 years of continuous service – 12 days/year or (1 day/month)

3-4 years of continuous service – 15 days/year (1.250 days /month)

5 or more years of continuous service – 20 days/year (1.667 days/month)

New employees will accrue vacation days as below:

Employment Date	3 Month Eligible Date	Eligible Vacation Days	
		Remainder of Year #1	In Following Calendar Year
January	April	11	12
February	May	10	12
March	June	9	12
April	July	8	12
May	August	7	12
June	September	6	12
July	October	5	12
August	November	4	12
September	December	3	12
October	January*	0	14
November	February*	0	13
December	March*	0	12
* Of the following calendar year			



Employees will receive their total annual vacation allotment in advance of accruing the days. If employment is terminated, either voluntarily or involuntary, and the employee has taken paid vacation time that has not yet been accrued, the employee must reimburse the BHFL for the cost of the advanced vacation time used by the employee.

Employees are encouraged to use their accrued vacation time within the calendar year. However, if the employee does not use all accrued days, he/she may carryover the accrued but unused days up to a maximum accrual limit of two times the annual allowance.

For example, an employee who is entitled to 12 days per year may carryover up to 12 days into the following year for a total of 24 days. Please note, no additional days will be accrued until the employee uses all or some of the accrued days.

Vacation time may be taken in full or half day increments and scheduling of time off is done in consultation with the Executive Director considering the needs of Library, other employees, the degree of coverage needed to maintain the BHFL's optimum level of service, and other factors. Requests should be made in writing one month or more in advance, if possible, and approved by the Executive Director before scheduled.

### **Personal Leave**

Regular full-time employees are allowed up to two paid personal days for each calendar year. Personal leave days must be requested in advance and approved by the Executive Director. Unused personal days may not be carried over to a subsequent calendar year nor will they be paid out upon termination of employment.

### **Bereavement Leave**

Regular full-time employees are entitled to paid bereavement leave of up to four days for a death in the immediate or close family (spouse, mother, father, child, sibling, grandparents, aunt, or uncle). In determining paid bereavement leave eligibility and duration, the Executive Director will consider each situation's unique circumstances.

### **Sick Leave**

Under the terms of the New York State Paid Sick Leave Law, all employees accrue paid sick leave time at a rate of one hour for every 30 hours worked, up to a limit of 40 hours per calendar year. Any sick leave of five days or more requires a doctor's statement.

Any accrued paid sick leave time not utilized within the calendar year may be carried over to the subsequent year. However, such carryovers may not result in the employee's maximum paid sick leave time exceeding 40 hours for any given calendar year.

Employees who voluntarily resign or retire, or whose employment is separated for any other reason will not be paid for any accrued and unused sick days. Employees should refer to the full text of the Law for additional information.

## **New York Family Paid Leave**

The BHFL offers the New York Paid Family Leave to all eligible employees. Paid Family Leave provides job-protected, paid time off so that an employee can: bond with a newly born, adopted, or fostered child; care for a family member with a serious health condition; or assist loved ones when a family member is deployed abroad on active military service. Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks of job-protected, paid time off.

Full-time employees who work a regular schedule of 20 or more hours per week are eligible after 26 consecutive weeks of employment. Part-time employees who work a regular schedule of less than 20 hours per week are eligible after working 175 days, which do not need to be consecutive. Employees are eligible regardless of citizenship and/or immigration status.

For additional information on the New York Paid Family Leave, including how to file a claim, see the New York Paid Family Leave policy in the handbook appendices. BHFL's New York Paid Family Leave policy is discussed in more detail in Appendix II.

## **Workers' Compensation Benefits**

In the event that you suffer a work-related injury, disease, or illness, you may be eligible to receive benefits from the BHFL's Workers' Compensation policy, paid for entirely by the BHFL. This program provides for coverage of medical expenses and weekly compensation payments. To ensure your well-being and the correct processing of these claims, you must notify the Executive Director immediately about any injury occurring during and as a result of employment.

## **New York State Disability Benefits**

If you are unable to work for more than seven consecutive days due to a non-work-related illness or injury, or pregnancy-related disability, you may be eligible for disability benefits. Disability benefits provide up to 26 weeks of partial wage replacement benefits during any 52-consecutive-week period. Benefits are payable beginning on the eighth consecutive day of disability.

If you have been disabled for more than seven days, the BHFL will provide you with a Form DB-271S, *Statement of Rights*, within five days of learning that you are disabled. The *Statement of Rights* provides information on how to file a claim for benefits. You must file a claim within the first 30 days of your disability or all or part of your claim may be rejected. You must be under the care of a physician, chiropractor, podiatrist, psychologist, dentist, or certified nurse midwife to qualify for disability benefits.

Disability benefits are a wage replacement benefit, not a protected leave benefit. If you are temporarily disabled, you may be eligible for job-protected leave under the New York Paid Family Leave.

To learn more about the New York Disability Benefits law, including eligibility requirements and benefits, or to obtain a claim form (Form DB-450), contact the New York State Workers' Compensation Board ([www.wcb.ny.gov](http://www.wcb.ny.gov)).

## Crime Victim and Witness Leave

The BHFL will provide eligible employees with time off from work, without pay, for any of the following reasons:

- To comply with a subpoena to testify in a criminal proceeding (including time off to consult with the district attorney);
- To give a victim impact statement at a pre-sentencing proceeding;
- To give a statement at a sentencing proceeding; or
- To give a statement at a parole board hearing.

You are eligible for time off under this policy if you are:

- The victim of the crime at issue in the proceedings;
- The victim's next of kin;
- The victim's representative if the victim is deceased as a result of the offense;
- A "Good Samaritan"; or
- Pursuing an application or the enforcement of an order of protection as provided under relevant law.

For purpose of this policy:

- **Good Samaritan** means someone who acts in good faith to apprehend a person who has committed a crime in his or her presence, to prevent a crime or an attempted crime from occurring, or to aid a law enforcement officer in effecting an arrest.
- **Victim's representative** means a person who represents or stands in the place of another person, including but not limited to, an agent, attorney, guardian, conservator, executor, heir, or parent of a minor.

If you are required to attend a criminal proceeding either as a witness or as a crime victim (or a close family member of a crime victim), you must notify your supervisor or the Executive Director as soon as possible and at least one day before taking leave to make scheduling arrangements. The BHFL reserves the right to require employees to provide proof of the need to attend the criminal proceedings to the extent authorized by law.

The BHFL will not retaliate against employees who request or take leave in accordance with this policy.

## Voting Leave

BHFL encourages all employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities and to vote in public elections. You will be provided with up to three hours of paid time off at the beginning or end of your work shift, as designated by the Library, to vote in any election. If you require working time off to vote, you must notify your supervisor at least two working days prior to Election Day. The BHFL will not retaliate or tolerate retaliation against employees who request or take leave under this policy.

## **Jury Duty**

Employees who are selected for jury duty will be paid for up to 5 days in an amount equal to what they would have earned had they worked their regularly scheduled shifts. The number of days paid may be extended based on the nature of the situation.

The Library reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to discontinue such payments, in accordance with applicable law. Employees must make arrangements with their supervisor as soon as they receive a jury summons. The Library reserves the right to request proof of jury service issued by the Court.

## **Military Service**

The Library complies with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act ("USERRA") and applicable state and local laws. The BHFL does not discriminate against an employee based on his or her past or present membership in the uniformed services, application for membership in the uniformed services, performance of service, application for service, or obligation to serve in the uniformed services. The BHFL will not deny an individual initial employment, reemployment, retention, promotion, or any employment benefit based on this status. Nor will the Library retaliate against anyone assisting in the enforcement of USERRA rights, including testifying or making a statement in connection with a proceeding under USERRA, even if that person has no service connection. USERRA protects the job rights of individuals who voluntarily or involuntarily leave employment positions to undertake military service or certain types of service in the National Disaster Medical System. USERRA also prohibits employers from discriminating against past and present members of the uniformed services, and applicants to the uniformed services. If called to active military duty or to Reserve or National Guard Training, or if volunteering for same, employees should submit copies of military orders to the Executive Director as soon as possible.

## **VII. MEDICAL HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS**

The Library currently offers **individual** major medical health insurance to full-time regular employees who are not yet eligible for Medicare. This coverage is provided through the Town of Bedford group plan. The Library also offers **individual** dental insurance to full-time regular employees through the Town of Bedford's group plan. Employees should refer to the specific plan documents for more information regarding the benefits offered.

The Library covers the medical and dental premiums charged for full-time regular employees.

Employees who elect to participate in the health and/or dental plans for themselves may additionally elect family coverage, however, they will be charged 100% of the additional premium cost.

Part-time regular employees may elect to participate in the group health and/or dental insurance plans and be charged 100% of the applicable premiums. Payment to the Library for these premiums must be made on a monthly basis.

The Board of Trustees reserves the right to adjust the level of the Library's major medical and dental insurance premium coverage for all employees at any time.

Full-time regular employees who are eligible for Medicare may be reimbursed for their **individual** health care premiums. These include premiums charged for Medicare Parts A, B and D; Medicare Advantage (Medicare Part C); and/or a supplemental/Medigap plan. To the extent that any premium charged is a function of total income, the Library will reimburse the employee only for that portion of the premium attributable to the employee's salary with the Library. Furthermore, total reimbursements may also be subject to a maximum dollar amount, applicable to all employees, to be determined by the Board of Trustees each year.

Premium reimbursements are paid to employees by the Library on a monthly basis. Employees are required to submit documentation for all premiums charged by the Social Security Administration and any private insurance company prior to reimbursement. The Library does not provide guidance or make recommendations as to Medicare or supplemental health care coverages. The Library is not responsible for contributing to any other health insurance plans not outlined in the paragraphs above. The Library will not reimburse employees for medical expenses not covered by the health insurance plans outlined above, such as co-pays or deductibles.

## **VIII. RETIREMENT BENEFITS**

The Library offers retirement benefits to eligible employees through the IRS Simplified Employee Pension SEP-IRA Plan (IRS Form 5305-SEP). Eligible employees are at least 21 years old, have performed service for the Library in at least 3 years of the immediately preceding 5 years, and have earned a minimum annual compensation as specified by the IRS.

## **IX. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### Learning Opportunities

The BHFL is committed to professional development for employees. Full-and part-time regular employees are encouraged to attend peer group meetings hosted by the WLS, as well as workshops to increase awareness about issues or to build skills that may improve performance or contribution to the Library. Employees wishing to attend conferences and/or workshops must submit a written request to the Executive Director and receive advanced approval before taking leave with pay. In addition, requests for payment or reimbursement for fees, travel costs, and other out-of-pocket expenses must be submitted with a *Reimbursement Request Form* along with receipts and other documentation.

### Books and Other Library Materials

Employees may place orders for books and other materials through the Library and take advantage of any institutional discount that is available.

### Staff Library Card and Borrowing Privileges

Library employees are entitled to receive a staff library card that waives fines for any overdue

materials. The staff library card is issued in addition to an employee's home library card and active during the time of their employment. Library staff members may not manipulate the circulation system for personal benefit (e.g., by changing due dates or renewing non-renewable items).

## **X. CUSTOMER SERVICE**

### **Customer, Client, and Visitor Relations**

The BHFL strives to provide the best services and programs possible to our patrons and community. Staff members are expected to treat every patron or visitor with respect and courtesy. You should never argue or act in a disrespectful manner towards a visitor or patron during your working time.

If you are having problems with a patron or visitor, notify your supervisor or the senior staff member on duty immediately. Make every effort to be prompt in following up on patron requests or questions. If a patron or visitor has a suggestion, complaint, or concern regarding our programs or services, or if the problem is not immediately resolved, report the situation to the Executive Director.

### **Awareness of Services and Programs**

As a representative of the BHFL, you are expected to be familiar within the services and programs we offer. Take every opportunity to learn about all aspects of the BHFL, beyond your specific area of responsibility and to be familiar with resources with the Westchester Library System and Town of Bedford community.

### **Feedback or Suggestions**

At BHFL, we encourage an environment where we may discover and share ideas and strategies derived from seminars, magazines, or other sources of information that may add value to the Library. Staff members are welcome to suggest ideas for better ways to do our jobs, produce programs or services of our BHFL, or meet patron needs.

### **Personal Appearance**

The personal appearance of all BHFL employees reflects the public image of the BHFL. All employees are expected to be neatly groomed and dressed and to maintain personal hygiene habits generally accepted in the community, including clean and appropriate attire for the workplace and the work being performed. This may include wearing comfortable clothing depending upon the job. Use common sense and good judgment in determining what to wear to work. Fragrant products, including but not limited to perfumes, colognes, and scented body lotions or hair products, should be used in moderation out of concern for others with sensitivities or allergies. The BHFL, in accordance with applicable law, will reasonably accommodate employees with disabilities or religious beliefs that make it difficult for them to comply fully with the personal appearance policy unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the BHFL. Contact the Executive Director to request reasonable accommodation.

## **XI. CODE OF CONDUCT - SAFETY**

### **Standards of Conduct**

The BHFL wishes to create a work environment that promotes job satisfaction, respect, responsibility, integrity, and value for all our employees, patrons, audience members, donors, and other stakeholders. We all share the responsibility of improving the quality of our work environment. By deciding to work here, you agree to follow our rules.

While it is impossible to list everything that could be considered misconduct in the workplace, what is outlined here is a list of common-sense infractions that could result in discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment. This policy is not intended to limit our right to discipline or discharge employees for any reason permitted by law. Examples of inappropriate conduct include:

- Violation of the policies and procedures set forth in this handbook.
- Possessing, using, distributing, selling, or negotiating the sale of illegal drugs or other controlled substances.
- Being under the influence of alcohol, drugs and/or marijuana during working hours on BHFL property or on BHFL business.
- Inaccurate reporting of the hours worked by you or any other employee.
- Providing knowingly inaccurate, incomplete, or misleading information when speaking on behalf of the BHFL or in the preparation of any employment-related documents including, but not limited to, job applications, personnel files, employment review documents, intra-company communications, or expense records.
- Taking or destroying BHFL property.
- Possession of potentially hazardous or dangerous property (where not permitted) such as firearms, weapons, chemicals, etc., without prior authorization.
- Fighting with, or harassment of (as defined in our EEO policy), any fellow employee, vendor, or customer.
- Disclosure of BHFL proprietary and confidential commercially sensitive information (i.e., financial or sales records/reports, marketing or business strategies/plans, product development information, customer lists, patents, trademarks, etc.) of the Library or its customers, contractors, suppliers, or vendors.
- Refusal or failure to follow directions or to perform a requested or required job task.
- Refusal or failure to follow safety rules and procedures.
- Excessive tardiness or absences.
- Smoking in any area of the library or on BHFL's premises.
- Working unauthorized overtime.
- Solicitation of fellow employees on BHFL premises during working hours.
- Failure to dress according to BHFL policy.
- Use of obscene or harassing (as defined by our EEO policy) language in the workplace.
- Engaging in outside employment that interferes with your ability to perform your job at BHFL.
- Gambling on BHFL premises.
- Lending keys or keycards to BHFL property to unauthorized persons.

Nothing in this policy is intended to limit your rights under the National Labor Relations Act, or to modify the at-will employment status where at-will is not prohibited by state law.

## **Safety and Security**

The BHFL strives to provide a safe and healthy working environment, free from occupational hazards. Safety and security are the responsibility of all employees, and we rely on you to be aware and help us keep our BHFL a secure work and public-use environment.

Immediately advise the Executive Director of any known or potential security risks and/or suspicious conduct of employees, patrons, or guests of the BHFL.

Incidents of lost or suspected stolen property caused by theft, misappropriation, malicious destruction, or other criminal act should be immediately reported to a supervisor or the Executive Director.

When a work-related injury or illness occurs, it is the employee's responsibility to inform the Executive Director immediately.

Upon leaving work, lock all doors, offices, filing cabinets, protect valuable or sensitive material and report any lost or stolen keys, passes, or similar devices to the Executive Director immediately. Refrain from discussing specifics regarding the BHFL security systems, alarms, passwords, etc. with those outside the Library.

## **Anti-Violence**

As the safety and security of our employees, patrons, vendors, contractors, and the general public is in the best interests of the BHFL, we are committed to working with our employees to provide a work environment free from violence, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior.

### Zero Tolerance Policy

The BHFL has a zero-tolerance policy regarding workplace violence and will not tolerate acts or threats of violence, harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior, either physical or verbal, that occurs in the workplace or other areas. This applies to management, co-workers, employees, and non-employees such as contractors, patrons, and visitors.

Workplace violence can include oral or written statements, gestures, or expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical harm, damage to property, or any intentional behavior that may cause a person to feel threatened.

### Prohibited Conduct

Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Physically injuring another person.
- Threatening to injure a person or damage property by any means, including verbal, written, direct, indirect, or electronic means.
- Taking any action to place a person in reasonable fear of imminent harm or offensive contact.



- Possessing, brandishing, or using a firearm on BHFL property or while performing BHFL business except as permitted by state law.
- Violating a restraining order, order of protection, injunction against harassment, or other court order.

#### Reporting Incidents of Violence

Report to your supervisor or the Executive Director, in accordance with this policy, any behavior that compromises our ability to maintain a safe work environment. All reports will be investigated immediately and kept confidential, except where there is a legitimate need to know. You are expected to cooperate in any investigation of workplace violence.

Victims and witnesses of workplace violence will not be retaliated against in any manner. In addition, you will not be subject to discipline for, based on a reasonable belief, reporting a threat or for cooperating in an investigation. If you initiate, participate, are involved in retaliation, or obstruct an investigation into conduct prohibited by this policy, you will be subject to discipline up to and including termination. If you believe you have been wrongfully retaliated against, immediately report the matter to the Executive Director.

#### Violations

Violating this policy may subject you to criminal charges as well as discipline up to and including immediate termination of employment.

#### **Drug and Alcohol Policy**

BHFL is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and productive work environment. Consistent with this commitment, it is the intent of BHFL to maintain a drug and alcohol-free workplace. Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs (as classified under federal, state, or local laws), including marijuana, while on the job may pose a serious health and safety risk to others, which will not be tolerated.

#### Prohibited Conduct

The BHFL expressly prohibits employees from engaging in the following activities when they are on duty or conducting BHFL business or on BHFL premises (whether or not they are working) except for reasonable and responsible consumption of alcohol provided by BHFL at BHFL events:

- The use, abuse, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or other impairing substances.
- The possession of alcohol and/or marijuana, absent a medical exemption, in the workplace.
- The possession, sale, purchase, transfer, or transit of any illegal or unauthorized drug, including prescription medication that is not prescribed to the individual or drug-related paraphernalia.
- The illegal use or abuse of prescription drugs.

While the use of marijuana has been legalized under some state laws for medicinal [and/or recreational] uses, it remains an illegal drug under federal law and its use, as it impacts the workplace, is prohibited by BHFL policy. The BHFL does not discriminate against employees solely on the basis of their off-duty use of marijuana in compliance with state marijuana law. You

may not consume or be under the influence of marijuana while on duty or at work, even if you have a valid prescription for medical marijuana.

Nothing in this policy is meant to prohibit your appropriate use of over-the-counter medication or other medication that can legally be prescribed under both federal and state law, if it does not impair your job performance or safety or the safety of others. If you take over-the-counter medication or other medication that can legally be prescribed under both federal and state law to treat a disability, inform your supervisor if you believe the medication may impair your job performance, safety, or the safety of others or if you believe you need a reasonable accommodation before reporting to work while under the influence of that medication.

#### Treatment and/or Rehabilitation

The BHFL may assist you in seeking treatment or rehabilitation for drug or alcohol dependency. In such cases, the BHFL may consider your continued employment as long as concerns regarding safety, health, production, communication, or other work-related matters are adequately addressed. The BHFL may also require you to obtain a medical clearance and agree to random testing and a "one-strike" rule as a condition of continued employment.

#### Violations

A violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

#### Nonsmoking Policy

BHFL is concerned about the effect that smoking and secondhand smoke inhalation can have on its employees and clients. Smoking in any area inside the BHFL building or on its property is prohibited.

#### **Conflicts of Interest**

The BHFL is concerned with conflicts of interest that create actual or potential job-related concerns, especially in the areas of confidentiality, patron, or donor relations, safety, security, and morale. If there is any actual or potential conflict of interest between you and a competitor, supplier, or contractor to the BHFL, you must disclose it to your supervisor or the Executive Director. If an actual or potential conflict of interest is determined to exist, the BHFL will take such steps as it deems necessary to reduce or eliminate this conflict.

#### **Outside Employment**

Outside employment that creates a conflict of interest or that affects the quality or value of your work performance or availability at the BHFL is prohibited. The Library recognizes that staff may have additional employment outside the BHFL hours, but this should not affect job scheduling or otherwise adversely affect your performance. Any conflicts should be reported to your supervisor. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in discipline up to and including termination.

## **Confidentiality and Nondisclosure**

As a condition of employment, the BHFL employees are required to protect the confidentiality of the BHFL's proprietary information, and confidential and sensitive information (i.e. financial records/reports, marketing or strategies/plans, donor and patron information, etc.) related to the BHFL. Access to this information should be limited to a "need to know" basis and should not be used for personal benefit, disclosed, or released without prior authorization from management. If you have information that leads you to suspect that employees or competitors are obtaining such information, you are required to inform your supervisor or the Executive Director.

Violation of this policy may result in discipline or termination and may subject the violator to civil liability.

## **Personal Cell Phone/Mobile Device Use**

While the BHFL permits employees to bring personal cell phones and other mobile devices (i.e., smart phones, tablets, laptops) into the workplace, you must not allow the use of such devices to interfere with your job duties or impact workplace safety and health.

Use of personal cell phones and mobile devices at work can be distracting and disruptive and cause a loss of productivity. Thus, you should primarily use such personal devices during nonworking time, such as breaks and meal periods and during this time, in a manner that is courteous to those around you. Outside of nonworking time, use of such devices should be minimal and limited to emergency use only. Excessive personal use during worktime may lead to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

If you have a device that has a camera and/or audio/video recording capability, you are restricted from using those functions on Library property unless authorized in advance by management or when they are used in a manner consistent with your right to engage in concerted activity under section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA).

You are expected to comply with BHFL policies regarding the protection of confidential and proprietary information when using personal devices.

While operating a vehicle on work time, the BHFL requires that the driver's personal cell phone/mobile device be turned off. If you need to make or receive a phone call while driving, pull off the road to a safe location unless you have the correct hands-free equipment for the device that is in compliance with applicable state laws.

## **Mail Use Policy**

You are required to limit usage of the BHFL mail service to business purposes only. You may not use the BHFL address to receive personal mail. Immediately report any suspicious packages or envelopes to your supervisor or the Executive Director.

## **Computer Security and Software**

Software programs provided by the BHFL or Westchester Library System are to be used only for creating, researching, and processing materials for BHFL use. By using BHFL or WLS hardware, software, and networking systems you assume personal responsibility for their use and agree to comply with this policy and other applicable WLS policies, as well as city, state, and federal laws and regulations.

All software acquired for or on behalf of the BHFL, or developed by the BHFL, WLS, employees, or contract personnel on behalf of the BHFL, is and will be deemed Library property. It is the policy of the BHFL to respect all computer software rights and to adhere to the terms of all software licenses to which the BHFL is a party.

You may not illegally duplicate any licensed software or related documentation. Unauthorized duplication of software may subject you and/or the BHFL to both civil and criminal penalties under the United States Copyright Act. All software acquired by the BHFL must be purchased through the Executive Director.

You may not duplicate, copy, or give software to any outsiders including clients, contractors, customers, and others. You may use software on local area networks or on multiple machines only in accordance with applicable license agreements entered into by the BHFL and WLS.

## **XII. PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS**

The BHFL will conduct annual performance reviews of all employees as a means for increasing awareness and to continually improve the quality and value of work performance. An employee's initiative, effort, attitude, job knowledge, and other factors will be addressed.

Additional evaluations may be performed at any time if either the supervisor or the employee has reason to believe that the previous evaluation is no longer applicable. All performance evaluations must be signed by the employee as an indication that the employee has read it. All performance evaluations are maintained in the employee's personnel file.

A positive job performance review does not guarantee a pay raise or continued employment. Pay raises and promotions are based on numerous factors, only one of which is job performance.

### **Problem Solving Procedures**

To maintain an orderly, safe, and efficient work environment, the BHFL may have to respond to and correct inappropriate employee behavior or conduct. When appropriate disciplinary action will be progressive, beginning with an oral warning, followed by a written warning, culminating with termination of employment.

Nothing in this section shall bind or in any way mandate that management shall use progressive discipline, and at the discretion of the Executive Director, the progressive discipline process may be bypassed and immediate action, up to and including termination, may be taken.

If an employee has a concern that s/he would like to have addressed, s/he should speak with the employee's direct supervisor in an attempt to agree upon a satisfactory resolution. In the event a satisfactory resolution is not reached with the supervisor, the employee should request that the Executive Director review the matter and attempt to find a mutually agreeable solution to the problem. The employee making a complaint or raising an operational issue should provide a synopsis of the problem as well as suggestions for resolving his or her concern. If necessary, the Executive Director will bring the issue and proposed resolutions before the Library Board of Trustees. If there is an egregious complaint about the Executive Director that would be hard to discuss directly, the employee may bring the matter to the Chair of the Human Resources Committee of the Library Board of Trustees. Information gathered during each step of this procedure will be treated discreetly and as confidentially as possible by all parties involved.

### **XIII. DEPARTING EMPLOYEES**

#### Resignations

A written letter of resignation, addressed to the Executive Director, is requested of all employees intending to resign. Letters of resignation are filed in the employee's personnel file. To ensure a smooth transition for a small library, the BHFL requests that notice be provided at least one month in advance and not less than two weeks in advance.

#### Termination

Although the BHFL endeavors to have good working relationships with each of its employees, sometimes termination is necessary. Termination for misconduct will result in forfeiture of benefits except those required by law.

#### Final Paychecks

Final paychecks for resigning or terminated employees will be made available on the next regular payday or sooner, consistent with applicable law.

#### Exit Interview

Employees may be asked to participate in an exit interview prior to leaving the BHFL. Exit interviews are conducted to help provide insight into your decision to leave employment; identify any trends or opportunities for improvement; and to assist the Library in developing effective recruitment and retention strategies. Your cooperation in this process is appreciated.

#### Last Workday

Employees are responsible for ensuring that all paper and electronic files are accessible to the BHFL prior to the last day of employment. All information created by the employee for BHFL is the property of BHFL and cannot be shared with any parties outside the BHFL. Employees must return any BHFL issued keys and other property by their last workday.

### **IV. CLOSING STATEMENT**

Thank you for reading our handbook. We hope it has provided you with an understanding of our mission, history, and structure as well as our current policies and guidelines. We look forward to working with you to create a successful Library and a safe, productive, and pleasant workplace.

## APPENDIX I: SEXUAL HARASSMENT

### Introduction

The BHFL is committed to maintaining a workplace free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of workplace discrimination. Sexual harassment is unlawful and subjects the BHFL to liability. The BHFL prohibits any form of sexual harassment, and all staff members are required to work in a manner that prevents sexual harassment in the workplace. This policy is one component of our commitment to a harassment-free and discrimination-free work environment.

You have the right to a workplace free from sexual harassment and can enforce this right by filing a complaint internally with the BHFL, with an administrative agency, or in a federal, state, or local court (if applicable).

### Policy

- **Application.** This policy applies to all staff, applicants for employment, interns (paid or unpaid), and "non-employees," regardless of immigration status. A non-employee is someone who is (or is employed by) a contractor, subcontractor, vendor, consultant, or anyone providing services pursuant to a contract with the BHFL. Protected non-employees include persons commonly referred to as independent contractors, "gig" workers, and temporary workers. Also included are persons providing equipment repair, cleaning services, or any other services pursuant to a contract with the employer.
- **Sexual Harassment Prohibited.** Sexual harassment is prohibited. Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct and will not be tolerated. All staff or other individuals covered under this policy who engage in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- **Retaliation Prohibited.** The BHFL will not take an adverse employment action against any person covered by this policy who in good faith reports an incident of sexual harassment, provides information about an incident of sexual harassment, or otherwise assists in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint. The BHFL will not tolerate retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports or provides information about suspected sexual harassment. Anyone who retaliates against another individual involved in a sexual harassment investigation will be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. All staff, interns, or non-employees in the workplace who believe they have been subjected to such retaliation should inform their immediate supervisor or the Executive Director. All staff, paid or unpaid interns, or non-employees who believe they have been a target of such retaliation may also seek relief in other available forums, as explained below.
- **Liability for Sexual Harassment.** Sexual harassment is offensive, is a violation of BHFL policy, is unlawful, and subjects the BHFL to liability to victims of sexual harassment. Sexual harassers may also be individually subject to liability. Any individual, including management, who engages in sexual harassment or who allows such behavior to continue, will be penalized for such misconduct.

- **Investigation of Sexual Harassment Claims.** The BHFL will conduct a timely investigation when management receives a complaint about possible sexual harassment or otherwise knows of possible sexual harassment occurring. The BHFL will keep the investigation confidential to the extent possible. The BHFL will take corrective action when sexual harassment is found to have occurred. All staff members, including managers and supervisors, are required to cooperate with any investigation of sexual harassment.
- **Reporting Sexual Harassment.** All staff members and any other individuals covered by this policy are encouraged to report any behavior or conduct that violates the BHFL sexual harassment policy. A complaint form is provided below.
- **Reporting for Managers and Supervisors.** Managers and supervisors are required to report any sexual harassment complaint that they receive and any sexual harassment that they observe to their immediate supervisor or the Executive Director.

#### Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. Sexual harassment includes harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, self-identified or perceived sex, gender expression, gender identity, and the status of being transgender.

Sexual harassment means unwelcome conduct that is either of a sexual nature or that is directed at an individual because of that individual's sex when:

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment, even if the complaining individual is not the intended target of the sexual harassment;
- Such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; or
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting an individual's employment.

A sexually harassing hostile work environment consists of words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation, or physical violence that are of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment also consists of any unwanted verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements, or sexually discriminatory remarks made by someone that are offensive or objectionable to the recipient, that cause the recipient discomfort or humiliation, or that interfere with the recipient's job performance.

Unlawful sexual harassment is not limited to the physical workplace itself. It can occur while employees are traveling for business or at employer-sponsored events or parties. Calls, texts, emails, and social media usage by employees can constitute unlawful workplace harassment, even if they occur away from the workplace premises or not during work hours.

Sexual harassment also occurs when a person in authority tries to trade job benefits for sexual favors. This can include hiring, promotion, continued employment, or any other terms, conditions, or privileges of employment. This is called "quid pro quo" harassment.

Sexual harassment can occur between any individuals, regardless of their sex or gender.

Although it is not possible to identify every act that constitutes sexual harassment, the following are some examples:

- Physical acts of a sexual nature, such as:
  - Touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another employee's body or poking another employees' body; or
  - Rape, sexual battery, molestation, or attempts to commit these assaults.
- Unwanted sexual advances, requests, or propositions, such as:
  - Requests for dates after being informed that interest is unwelcome;
  - Offers of employment benefits such as promotions, favorable evaluations, favorable duties, or shifts in exchange for sexual favors;
  - Requests for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning the victim's job performance evaluation, a promotion, or other job benefits or detriments; or
  - Subtle or obvious pressure for unwelcome sexual activities.
- Sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks, jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality, sexual experience, sexual behavior, or physical appearance, which create a hostile work environment.
- Sex stereotyping occurs when conduct or personality traits are considered inappropriate simply because they may not conform to other people's ideas or perceptions about how individuals of a particular sex should look or act.
- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the workplace, such as displaying emails, pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional material, reading materials, or other materials that are sexually demeaning or pornographic (this includes sexual displays on workplace computers or cell phones and sharing these displays while in the workplace).
- Hostile actions taken against an individual because of that individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and the status of being transgender, such as:
  - Interfering with, destroying, or damaging a person's workstation, tools, or equipment, or otherwise interfering with the individual's ability to perform the job;
  - Sabotaging an individual's work; or
  - Bullying, yelling, or name-calling.

### Retaliation

Unlawful retaliation can be any action that could discourage a worker from coming forward to make or support a sexual harassment claim. Adverse action need not be job-related or occur in the workplace to constitute unlawful retaliation (for example, threats of physical violence outside of work hours).

The BHFL prohibits retaliation against an employee who engages in "protected activity," which occurs in the sexual harassment context when an employee has:

- Filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment either internally with the BHFL or externally with an administrative agency or a court of law;
- Testified or assisted in an administrative or court proceeding involving sexual harassment;



- Opposed sexual harassment by making a verbal or informal complaint to management or by informing a supervisor or manager of harassment;
- Complained that another employee has been sexually harassed; or
- Encouraged a fellow employee to report harassment.

The BHFL anti-retaliation provision is not intended to protect persons making intentionally false charges of sexual harassment.

#### Reporting Sexual Harassment

Preventing sexual harassment is everyone's responsibility. The BHFL cannot prevent or remedy sexual harassment unless we know about it. Reports of sexual harassment may be made verbally or in writing. If you believe you have been subjected to sexual harassment, or if you witness or become aware of potential instances of sexual harassment, complete a complaint form (at the end of this policy) and submit it to your immediate supervisor or the Executive Director. If you are reporting sexual harassment on behalf of other staff members, use the complaint form in this policy and note you are reporting on another's behalf.

#### Supervisory Responsibilities

Supervisors and managers who receive a sexual harassment complaint or who observe sexual harassment are required to report that complaint or observation to the Library's Executive Director. Supervisors and managers who knowingly allow sexual harassment to occur and fail to report the sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Supervisors and managers will also be subject to discipline for engaging in retaliation against anyone who reports sexual harassment.

#### Investigation of Sexual Harassment Complaints

All complaints or information about sexual harassment will be investigated, whether that information was reported in verbal or written form. Investigations will be conducted in a timely manner and will be confidential to the extent possible.

An investigation of any complaint, information, or knowledge of suspected sexual harassment will be prompt and thorough, will commence immediately, and will be completed as quickly as possible. All persons involved, including complainants, witnesses, and alleged harassers will be accorded due process, as outlined below, to protect their rights to a fair and impartial investigation.

Any individual may be required to cooperate as needed in an investigation of suspected sexual harassment. The Library will not tolerate retaliation against employees who file complaints, support another's complaint, or participate in an investigation regarding a violation of this policy.

While the process may vary from case to case, investigations will generally include the following steps:

- Upon receipt of complaint, the Executive Director will promptly review the allegations and take any interim actions (such as instructing the respondent to refrain from communications with the complainant), as appropriate. If the complaint is verbal, you will be encouraged to complete the Complaint Form in writing. If you refuse, the BHFL may prepare a Complaint Form based on the verbal reporting.
- If documents, emails, or phone records are relevant to the investigation, the Library will take steps to obtain and preserve them.
- The BHFL will request and review relevant documents, including electronic communications.
- The BHFL will interview the parties involved, including any relevant witnesses.
- The BHFL will create a written documentation of the investigation (such as a letter, memo, or email) containing the following:
  - A list of documents reviewed, along with a detailed summary of relevant documents;
  - A list of names of those interviewed, along with a detailed summary of their statements;
  - A timeline of events;
  - A summary of prior relevant incidents, reported or unreported; and
  - The basis for the decision and final resolution of the complaint, together with any corrective action(s).
- The BHFL will keep the written documentation and associated documents in a secure and confidential location.
- The BHFL will promptly notify the individual who reported and the individual(s) about whom the complaint was made of the final determination and implement any corrective actions identified in the written document.
- The BHFL will inform the individual who reported of the right to file a complaint or charge externally as outlined in the next section.

#### Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

The EEOC enforces federal antidiscrimination laws. Complaints can be filed with the EEOC within 300 days of the harassment. There is no cost to file a complaint with the EEOC. The EEOC will investigate the complaint and determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that discrimination has occurred and will issue a "right to sue" letter permitting you to file a complaint in federal court. Federal courts may award you remedies if discrimination is found to have occurred, including back pay, front pay, and compensatory and punitive damages. The EEOC does not award relief but may take other action including pursuing cases in federal court on behalf of complaining parties.

If you believe you have been discriminated against, file a "charge of discrimination" with the EEOC. The EEOC has an office at 33 Whitehall Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10004. You can also contact the EEOC by phone (1-800-669-4000) or email ([info@eeoc.gov](mailto:info@eeoc.gov)). The EEOC's website is [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov).

**BEDFORD HILLS FREE LIBRARY**  
**COMPLAINT FORM FOR REPORTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

New York State Labor Law requires all employers to adopt a sexual harassment prevention policy that includes a complaint form for employees to report alleged incidents of sexual harassment.

If you believe that you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you are encouraged to complete this form and submit it to the Executive Director. You will not be retaliated against for filing a complaint. If you are more comfortable reporting verbally or in another manner, your employer should complete this form, provide you with a copy, and follow its sexual harassment prevention policy by investigating the claims as outlined at the end of this form.

**Complainant Information**

Name:

Work Address:

Work Phone:

Job Title:

Email:

Select Preferred Communication Method: (Email, Phone, In person)

**Supervisor Information**

Immediate Supervisor's Name:

Work Phone:

Work Address:

**Complaint Information**

Your complaint of sexual harassment is made against:

Name:

Title:

Work Address:

Work Phone:

Relationship to you: (supervisor; subordinate; co-worker; other)

1. Please describe the conduct or incident(s) that is the basis of this complaint and your reasons for concluding that the conduct is sexual harassment. Please use additional sheets of paper if necessary and attach any relevant documents or evidence.
2. Date(s) sexual harassment occurred:
3. Is the sexual harassment continuing? (Yes/No)
4. Please describe what you would like the desired outcome of our investigation to be.
5. Please list the name and contact information of any witnesses or individuals that may have information related to your complaint.
6. Please produce copies of all documentation that supports or relates to your complaint.
7. Have you previously complained or provided information (verbal or written) about sexual harassment at Bedford Hills Free Library? If yes, when and to whom did you complain or provide information? If you have retained legal counsel and would like us to work with them, please provide their contact information.

The last question is optional but may help facilitate the investigation.

Signature:

Date:

## APPENDIX II: NEW YORK PAID FAMILY LEAVE

New York's Paid Family Leave (PFL) program provides eligible employees with job-protected, paid time off to:

- Bond with a newly born, adopted, or fostered child;
- Care for a family member with a serious health condition; or
- Assist with family situations when a family member is deployed abroad on active military service.

### Eligibility

Eligible employees may take PFL leave as follows:

- If you work a regular schedule of 20 or more hours per week, you are eligible after 26 consecutive weeks of employment.
- If you work a regular schedule of less than 20 hours per week, you are eligible after working 175 days, which do not need to be consecutive.

### Amount and Duration of Benefit

- You will be provided up to 12 weeks of leave at 67 percent of your weekly pay (capped at 67 percent of statewide average pay). This benefit is subject to change based on NYS law.
- You may use accrued leave, if applicable, in order to receive full pay while on PFL.

### Funding

PFL is funded through employee payroll contributions that are set each year to match the cost of coverage. The rate of employee contributions is reviewed annually and is subject to change by the New York State Department of Financial Services. If you are not eligible for PFL, you will be provided a waiver to sign and PFL contributions will not be deducted from your wages.

### Qualifying Events

If you are eligible, you may use family leave benefits for the following types of leaves:

- **New child:** You may take PFL during the first 12 months following the birth, adoption, or fostering of a child. Expectant mothers cannot take PFL for their own pregnancy. PFL for the birth of a child begins after the child's birth and is not available for prenatal conditions.
- **Serious health condition:** You may take PFL to care for a close relative with a serious health condition. The relative may live outside of New York State and even outside the country. You cannot take PFL for your own health condition.
- **Military active service deployment:** You may take PFL to assist with family situations arising when your spouse, domestic partner, child, or parent is deployed abroad on active military service or has been notified of an impending military deployment abroad. You cannot use PFL for your own qualifying military event.

Definitions as used in this policy:

- **Close relatives** include a spouse, domestic partner, child and stepchild, parent and stepparent, parent-in-law, grandparent, and grandchild.
- **Serious health condition** is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition, including transplantation preparation and recovery from surgery related to organ or tissue

donation, that involves inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical facility; or continuing medical treatment or continuing supervision by a healthcare provider.

### Health Insurance

Your health insurance will continue while you are on leave; however, if you contribute to the cost of your health insurance, you must continue to pay your portion of the premium cost while on leave.

### Interaction with Other Laws

PFL may be taken by employees who are eligible for time off under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act. PFL will run concurrently with designated FMLA leave when the reason for leave qualifies under both PFL and FMLA. Eligible employees must then apply for both PFL and FMLA.

You may not receive short-term disability and PFL benefits at the same time. You may not take more than 26 combined weeks of short-term disability and PFL in a 52-week period. If you are unable to work and qualify for workers' compensation benefits, you may not use PFL benefits at the same time as you are receiving workers' compensation benefits. If you are receiving reduced earnings, you may be eligible for PFL.

### Notice and Required Documentation

Notify the Executive Director if you intend to claim entitlement to PFL. If your family leave is foreseeable, give at least 30 days' advance notice so the Library can plan for your absence. If the event was not foreseeable, notify the Executive Director as quickly as possible. If you fail to give notice without unusual circumstances justifying the failure, PFL may be delayed or partially denied.

You must provide documentation in support of your PFL request within 30 days after the leave begins. The Library may require additional proof from time to time but not more often than once a week. Proof must include a statement of disability from the leave recipient's health care provider.

To receive the benefit, employees must fill out the *Request for Paid Family Leave Form*

The insurance carrier will either pay or deny your claim, in most cases, within 18 days of receiving your completed request or your first day of leave, whichever is later. After you receive your initial payment, subsequent payments will be made biweekly. The insurance carrier may also provide options for how you will be paid such as direct deposit, debit card, or paper check.

### Returning to Work

On return from PFL, you will be reinstated to your original position, or if no longer available, an equivalent position with equivalent terms and conditions of employment, including pay and employment benefits. Use of PFL will not result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued before the start of your family leave that was not used during your family leave.

### Retaliation

The BHFL will not retaliate against employees who request or take leave in accordance with this policy.

### Additional Information

If you have additional questions regarding PFL, contact the Executive Director or visit <https://paidfamilyleave.ny.gov/>.

## APPENDIX III: ELECTRONIC DATA AND TELECOMMUNICATION

BHFL's computers, networks, communications systems, and other IT resources are intended for business purposes only (except for limited personal use as described below) during working time and at all other times. To protect BHFL and its employees, it is the BHFL's policy to restrict the use of all IT resources and communications systems as described below. Each user is responsible for using these resources and systems in a productive, ethical, and lawful manner.

BHFL's policies prohibiting harassment, applies to the use of BHFL's IT resources and communications systems. No one may use any communications or computer system in a manner that may be construed by others as harassing or offensive based on race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religious beliefs, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.

The use of BHFL's IT resources and communications systems by an employee shall signify their understanding of, and agreement to, the terms and conditions of this policy, as a condition of employment.

**No Expectation of Privacy.** All contents of BHFL's IT resources and communications systems are the property of the company. Therefore, employees should have no expectation of privacy whatsoever in any message, file, data, document, facsimile, telephone conversation, social media post, conversation, or any other kind or form of information or communication transmitted to, received, or printed from, or stored or recorded on the company's electronic information and communications systems.

You are expressly advised that to prevent against misuse, **BHFL reserves the right to monitor, intercept, and review, without further notice, every employee's activities using the company's IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to email (both outgoing and incoming), telephone conversations and voice mail recordings, instant messages, and internet and social media postings and activities, and you consent to such monitoring by your acknowledgement of this policy and your use of such resources and systems.** This might include, without limitation, the monitoring, intercepting, accessing, recording, disclosing, inspecting, reviewing, retrieving, and printing of transactions, messages, communications, postings, logins, recordings, and other uses of the systems as well as keystroke capturing and other network monitoring technologies.

BHFL may also store copies of such data and communications for a period of time after they are created and may delete such copies from time to time without notice.

Do not use BHFL's IT resources and communications systems for any matter that you desire to be kept private or confidential from BHFL.

BHFL's IT department is to be consulted before the adoption of any new software for production use. Further, unauthorized duplication of copyrighted computer software or any violation of federal copyright laws is strictly prohibited.

BHFL's policy prohibiting harassment applies to the use of its electronic communications systems.

Electronic communication systems may not be used to solicit for religious or political causes.

No one may access, or attempt to obtain access, another individual's electronic communications without appropriate authorization. Passwords to individually assigned accounts should not be shared.

Personal use of BHFL equipment including, but not limited to its computers, telephone and Internet systems is permitted if usage does not interfere with the employee's responsibilities or interfere with the availability of BHFL systems and must be kept to a minimum and as short as possible. Employees should be aware that usage, including email messages, is logged. Email is discoverable and as such should be maintained in accordance with BHFL's Records Retention Schedule (see Appendix V). Personal use of BHFL email systems should be avoided whenever possible.

BHFL provides resources and equipment including, but not limited to, cellular telephones, computers, printers, and Internet connectivity to employees for mobile and remote work, as necessary. BHFL recognizes that employees may use these systems for personal use; however, all users must adhere to Federal, State, and local laws as well as BHFL policies.

Any employee found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, immediate termination of employment and BHFL may pursue criminal charges based upon the nature of the violation.

If there is any uncertainty regarding the Electronic Communications and Telecommunications Policy, employees should speak with the Executive Director for further clarification.



## **APPENDIX IV: PRIVACY POLICY FOR PATRONS**

BHFL is committed to protecting the privacy of our staff, donors, patrons, and other external contacts. The BHFL privacy policy defines our commitment not to collect any personal information about our users when patrons visit our websites or register for a program or a library card unless s/he chooses to provide such information. Any information provided will only be used to more effectively provide and better target library services throughout the County. This confidentiality extends to information sought or received, materials consulted, borrowed, acquired; and includes database search records, circulation records, interlibrary loan records, and other personally identifiable uses of library materials, facilities, or services.

BHFL places account information on the secure portion of its computer system. For this reason, patrons are asked to input their barcode number and PIN each time they want to access their account information on the website.

### Cookies

Users accessing the BHFL website will need to enable cookies in order to access a number of resources available through BHFL. BHFL's servers use cookies solely to verify that a person is an authorized user to allow access to licensed library resources and to customize Web pages to that user's specification. Cookies sent by BHFL servers will disappear soon after the user's computer browser is closed.

### Emails and Web Forms

Identifying information that you provide by e-mails or web forms will be used only for such purposes as are described at the point of collection (for example on a web form), such as to send information or provide library services to you, update your membership record or to better target library services to meet constituent demands.

BHFL may contact a patron to clarify a comment or question, or to learn about your level of customer satisfaction with library services. To do so requires contact information provided by the patron. BHFL will not use patron/customer emails for commercial purposes, nor will it provide such information to external organizations.

### Information Collected and Stored Automatically

BHFL does not collect information which identifies you personally. However, when a patron visits the WLS website to browse through the web site, read pages, or download information, certain information will be automatically gathered and stored about the visit to these pages:

- The Internet domain (for example, "xcompany.org" if a private Internet access account, or "aschool.edu" if connected from a university) and IP address (an IP address is a number that is automatically assigned to a computer whenever it is connected to the Internet) from which access to the BHFL web site is gained;
- The type of browser and operating system used to access the BHFL website;
- The date and time of access to the website;
- The pages visited and for how long; and
- The address of the website from which the initial visit to the website was launched, if any.

BHFL uses this information to help make its site more useful to visitors and to learn about the number of visitors to the site and the types of technology used. The data that is collected is not connected to a patron's personal information or identity.

#### Links to Other Sites

WLS's website contains links to other sites. BHFL is not responsible for the privacy practices of other sites, which may be different from the privacy practices described in this policy. It is the patron's responsibility to become familiar with privacy practices of websites external to BHFL, including linked sites.

#### Customer Circulation Records

WLS nor BHFL uses a paper process to collect and track customer circulation records. It is done electronically. WLS and BHFL maintain information provided by our customers from the registration form they complete when they register for a library card. When an item is checked out, that item is then tied to that customer's record in the WLS system. At the moment that library material is returned to the library, the link between the customer and the material is broken – the BHFL system does not retain information on what materials were taken out by whom, the moment the item is returned assuming there are no existing fines or lost/overdue items on record.

#### Privacy & Confidentiality of Library Records

Library records that are deemed confidential are covered by New York State Law signed on June 13, 1988 (I CPLR 4509). These records are related to the circulation of library materials that contain names or other personally identifying details regarding the users of public, free association, school, college and university libraries and library systems, of this state, including but not limited to records related to the circulation of library materials, computer database searches, interlibrary loan transactions, reference queries, requests, or the use of audio-visual materials, films or records. These records shall be confidential and shall not be disclosed except that such records may be disclosed upon the request or consent of the user or pursuant to subpoena, court order or where otherwise required by statute.

#### Revisions

BHFL reserves the right to change or modify this privacy statement at any time. If BHFL revises this privacy statement, changes will be posted on the BHFL homepage.

*A cookie is very small text file placed on your hard drive by a Web Page server. It is essentially your identification card and cannot be executed as code or deliver viruses. It is uniquely associated with the computer on which it is placed.*

## **APPENDIX V: RECORDS RETENTION & DISPOSITION**

### Temporary Records

Temporary records include documents that are intended to be superseded by Final Records or Permanent Records, or which are intended to be used only for a limited period of time, including, but not limited to written memoranda and dictation to be typed in the future, reminders, to-do lists, reports, drafts, and interoffice correspondence regarding a client or business transaction. Temporary records will be destroyed or if in electronic format, permanently deleted when a project or matter is closed. However, before temporary records are destroyed or deleted, there should be retained a copy of the final record pertaining to the project or matter. Upon destruction or deletion, the final records should be marked "Final" and stored appropriately.

### Final Records

Final records include business documents which are not superseded by modification or addition, including but not limited to records given (or sent via electronic form) to any third party not employed by the BHFL, or to any government agency. These include final memoranda and reports, correspondence, handwritten telephone memoranda not further transcribed, minutes, specifications, journal entries, etc. All accounting records shall be deemed Final Records.

### Permanent Records

Permanent records include all business documents that define the Library's scope of work. These include but are not limited to contracts, proposals, financial statements, tax returns, payroll registers, and formal minutes of meetings. Except as provided in the attached Document Retention Schedule, all permanent documents are to be retained indefinitely.

### E-mail Policies

All electronic communication systems as well as all communications and stored information transmitted, received, or contained on WLS's information systems are the property of the WLS. Employees using this equipment for personal purposes do so at their own risk. Such usage is discouraged. E-mails relating to audit work papers and financial controls should be retained for at least 7 years. Any messages exchanged between the BHFL and third parties (such as consultants and auditors) should be archived, regardless of their content. Instant messages and voice mail have the same status as e-mails and should be treated identically.

### Storage

Active records and records that need to be easily accessible may be sent to a secure off-site storage facility and, as necessary for operations, stored in the Library facility.

### Destruction/Deletion

Records should be destroyed by shredding or some other means that will render them unreadable.

## Records Retention Schedule [National Council of Nonprofit Association]

Accounts payable ledgers and schedules	7 years
Audit reports	Permanently
Bank Reconciliations	2 years
Bank statements	3 years
Checks (for important payments and purchases)	Permanently
Contracts, mortgages, notes and leases (expired)	7 years
Contracts, mortgages, notes and leases (still in effect)	Permanently
Correspondence (general)	2 years
Correspondence (legal and important matters)	Permanently
Correspondence (with customers and vendors)	2 years
Deeds, mortgages, and bills of sale	Permanently
Depreciation Schedules	Permanently
Duplicate deposit slips	2 years
Employment applications	3 years
Expense Analyses/expense distribution schedules	7 years
Year End Financial Statements	Permanently
Insurance Policies (expired)	3 years
Insurance records, current accident reports, claims, policies, etc.	Permanently
Internal audit reports	3 years
Inventories of products, materials, and supplies	7 years
Invoices (to customers, from vendors)	7 years
Minute books, bylaws, and charter	Permanently
Patents and related papers	Permanently
Payroll records and summaries	7 years
Personnel files (terminated employees)	7 years
Retirement and pension records	Permanently
Tax returns and worksheets	Permanently
Timesheets	7 years
Trademark registrations and copyrights	Permanently
Withholding tax statements	7 years

## **APPENDIX VI: REMOTE WORK POLICY**

Remote Work is work performed by employees in furtherance of routine duties at places other than the Library's business address.

The Library provides three types of Remote Work:

1. When determined per American with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations to be a reasonable accommodation
2. Remote Work during an emergency
3. Remote Work as part of a routine "Remote Work Program"

### **Remote Work as a Reasonable Accommodation**

Remote Work as a reasonable accommodation is governed by the ADA and New York State Laws and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis for the specific duration necessary.

### **Remote Work During an Emergency**

For purposes of this Policy, an "emergency" is determined solely by the Library.

Remote Work during an emergency is a temporary way to continue essential BHFL operations and sustained service to our patrons and community. During an emergency, the BHFL may require certain employees to work remotely.

To the greatest extent possible during the emergency, BHFL will use the guidelines in Section II below when Remote Work is required due to an emergency. However, it will be understood that employees may not have the ability to meet the requirements regarding a professional work environment in their home, and that factor will not be considered for performance evaluation purposes when the employee is required to work from home during an emergency. Further, typical eligibility requirements may be waived.

If a technical concern prohibits productive access to working remotely during scheduled worktime during an emergency, an affected employee must notify the Executive Director by telephone as soon as possible. An employee who has been required to work remotely should not report to the BHFL site, even if there are technical concerns, unless directed to do so.

### **Remote Work Program**

Working remotely can be beneficial for employees for a number of reasons. It can help employees balance their work/home life if they have long commutes, pre- or post-work activities, and can also enable employees to work from home when it is of benefit to the BHFL. However, serving our patrons and community is our first priority and therefore, the BHFL prefers all employees be onsite whenever possible. Therefore, any request to work remotely will be carefully considered before approving the request. This program will be most successful for those employees who are self-disciplined and have a remote work environment free from distractions.

All remote work schedule/hours must be pre-approved by the Executive Director. Working remotely is not a replacement for appropriate child or dependent care or for otherwise attending to personal needs or obligations. The focus of the arrangement must remain on job

performance, meeting business demands, or dates set by the Executive Director. Errands, home maintenance, and all other non-work-related activities are prohibited during the employee's work hours unless approved by a supervisor and accounted for appropriately on the employee's timesheet.

## **Eligibility**

The Executive Director will determine which roles within the organization are eligible for remote work. Recognizing that some roles require an employee to be present at the BHFL either at all times or on occasion, eligibility for remote work is not inherent to all positions.

## **Equipment and Tools**

Prior to remote work being approved, the employee must discuss with the Executive Director how the work will be performed, including whether the employee has the necessary tools/equipment to perform their duties satisfactorily. In some instances, the BHFL may provide the required tools.

Office supplies may be obtained at the BHFL Office. Out-of-pocket expenses for office supplies will not be reimbursed unless approved by the Executive Director in advance and in writing. The use of equipment and software provided by the BHFL or WLS for use at the remote work location is limited to the employee for purposes relating to BHFL business. All BHFL or WLS provided equipment, data, information, and resources remain the property of the BHFL or WLS.

If the employee is unable to log into computer system or otherwise connect to required software within one hour during the scheduled work time, the employee must inform their supervisor and either return to the office, except in the case of an Emergency as described in this Handbook, or request to perform the work outside on the employee's regularly scheduled hours. If the employee is not able to perform the required duties, the employee will not be paid for that time.

## **Requirements**

The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within their home for work purposes that is free from distractions. The employee shall maintain this workspace in a safe condition, free from hazards and other dangers to the employee and equipment.

Employees must ensure that service provided to library patrons, vendors, and partners is not adversely affected. Remote work productivity and performance must be effective, and this policy should not create inequity for other employees. If performance standards are not being met by the individual or department, as observed by the Executive Director, the necessary changes to an individual or department schedule will be made, including, but not limited to, returning the individual to a schedule and work location that best serves the business needs of the BHFL.

Consistent with the BHFL's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, employees working from home will be expected to ensure the protection of WLS and member libraries and vendor information accessible from their home office. Steps may include use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other steps appropriate for the environment.

Employees are expected to work their entire schedule and are required to record all hours worked and major tasks accomplished on a daily basis on the BHFL timesheet.

### **Maintaining a Professional Work Environment**

Employees who participate in the Remote Work Program are expected to create a positive and professional experience for patrons. It is each employee's responsibility to ensure they have established a work area in the home that is free from domestic noise and interruptions during the full length of their assigned workday to be able to deliver exceptional customer service and a high-quality interaction.

During verbal or video communication with patrons, vendors, partners or other professional/business related entities, domestic noise and interruptions are not permitted. Examples of such include, but are not limited to: TV, radio and other electronic noise emitting devices; audible household member conversations or activities; pet noise, etc.

### **Program Provisions**

The BHFL reserves full discretion to amend, terminate, or suspend any and all provisions of the Remote Work Program.

### **Performance Expectations & Evaluations**

Employees participating in the Remote Work Program are to complete all assigned work according to procedures and expectations mutually agreed upon by the employee and the Executive Director, and according to the job expectation and description.

A decline in performance may be grounds for removal from the Remote Work Program participation, and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination. Participating employees will be required to meet in the office as necessary, appropriate, or requested. This includes, but is not limited to, attending training sessions, participating in meetings, reviewing work products and performance, and receiving assignments.

### **Liability and Worker's Compensation**

The employee's home workspace will be considered an extension of BHFL's workspace. Therefore, the BHFL may continue to be liable for job-related accidents that occur in the employee's home workspace during the employee's working hours.

During work hours and while performing work functions in the designated work area of the home, employees are covered by worker's compensation. WLS nor the BHFL assumes any liability for injuries occurring in the employee's home workspace outside the agreed-upon work hours.

Neither WLS nor the BHFL is liable for loss, destruction or injury that may occur in or to the employee's home. This includes family members, visitors or others that may become injured within or around the employee's home.

In the event a job-related injury occurs during working hours at the employee's home, the employee shall notify WLS and/or the BHFL as soon as possible, and in no event no later than 48 hours after the event occurred.

### **Income Tax**

It will be the employee's responsibility to determine any tax implications of maintaining a home office area for a not-for-profit employer. The BHFL will not provide tax guidance, nor will the library assume any additional tax liabilities. Employees are encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional to discuss tax implications.



## **APPENDIX VII: WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY**

The Bedford Hills Free Library requires its directors, officers, employees, and volunteers (“BHFL Individuals”) to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of BHFL, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this whistleblower policy (the “Policy”) is to: (1) encourage and enable BHFL individuals to raise concerns regarding suspected illegal or unethical conduct or practices or violations of the BHFL’s policies on a confidential and, if desired, anonymous basis; (2) protect BHFL Individuals from retaliation for raising such concerns; and (3) establish policies and procedures for the BHFL to receive and investigate reported concerns and address and correct inappropriate conduct and actions.

### **Reporting Responsibility**

Each BHFL Individual has the responsibility to report in good faith any concerns about actual or suspected violations of the BHFL’s policies or any federal, state, or municipal law or regulation governing the BHFL’s operations. Appropriate subjects to report under this Policy include but are not limited to financial improprieties, accounting or audit matters, ethical violations, or other similar illegal or improper practices, such as fraud, theft, embezzlement, bribery or kickbacks, misuse of BHFL’s assets, and undisclosed conflicts of interest.

### **No Retaliation**

No director, officer, employee, or volunteer who in good faith reports an actual or perceived violation of the Policy or any action or suspected action taken by or within BHFL that is illegal, fraudulent, or in violation of any other BHFL policy shall suffer intimidation, harassment, discrimination, or other retaliation, or, in the case of employees, adverse employment consequence. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment. This Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns within BHFL rather than seeking resolution outside of BHFL.

### **Reporting Violations**

BHFL maintains an open-door policy and suggests that employees share their questions, concerns, suggestions, or complaints with someone who can address them properly. In most cases, an employee’s supervisor is in the best position to address an area of concern. However, if you are not comfortable speaking with your supervisor or you are not satisfied with your supervisor’s response, you are encouraged to speak to the Executive Director or anyone in senior management whom you are comfortable in approaching. Any suspected violation of the Policy will be referred to BHFL’s Executive Director, who has specific and exclusive responsibility to investigate all reported violations.

## **Compliance**

BHFL's Executive Director is responsible for investigating and resolving all reported complaints and allegations concerning violations of the Policy and, at their discretion, shall advise the Board of Trustees on such complaints and allegations. The Executive Director has direct access to the Board of Directors and is required to report at least annually on compliance activity. If you are not comfortable speaking with the Executive Director, or they are unavailable and the matter is urgent, you may contact the Human Resource Committee. Any allegations or complaints involving the Executive Director must be reported directly to the Human Resources Committee.

## **Accounting and Auditing Matters**

The Board of Directors shall address all reported concerns or complaints regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls, or auditing. The Executive Director shall immediately notify the Board of Trustees of any such complaint and work with them until the matter is resolved.

## **Acting in Good Faith**

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation of the Policy must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation of the Policy. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

## **Confidentiality**

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

I acknowledge that I have received and fully read a copy of the BHFL Employee Handbook.

I understand it is my responsibility to read this manual and to abide by the policies, procedures and regulations described therein (including, but not limited to the Library's policies on sexual harassment, discrimination and electronic communication). I agree to talk with the Executive Director if any item is unclear. I also understand that the BHFL expressly reserves the right to amend, modify, suspend, or terminate any of the policies contained therein without notice at any time, and I am responsible to adhere to these revised policies.

I understand that neither this Handbook, nor any other communication by a management representative, unless expressed in writing and signed by myself and the Executive Director of the BHFL, is intended in any way to constitute a contract of employment. **I also understand that my employment with the BHFL is at will, which means either the BHFL or I may terminate my employment at any time, with or without reason and with or without prior notice.**

I understand that I must comply with all of the provisions of this manual to have access to and use Library resources. I also understand that if I do not comply with all provisions of this manual, my access to Library resources may be revoked, and I may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

I further understand that I am obligated to familiarize myself with the Library's safety, health, and emergency procedures as outlined in this manual or in other documents.

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Signature

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Date

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Name Printed