CARBON CONSERVATION DISTRICT

EMPLOYEE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

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A MESSAGE TO CONSERVATION DISTRICT EMPLOYEES:

This Handbook has been developed to provide employees with a general understanding of the personnel policies and procedures of the Carbon Conservation District. You are encouraged to familiarize yourself with the contents of this Handbook. It will answer many common questions concerning employment with the District.

All employees, regardless of their work location, are considered Conservation District Employees, falling under all District policy.

Variations of these policies may be necessary due to the work requirements relative to the different District Programs. Any such variations that apply to your work will be approved by the Conservation District Directors and communicated to you in writing by the District Manager or the Chief Naturalist.

Once you have read this information, if you still have questions that remain unanswered, please feel free to discuss them with your supervisor.

The Board will review this handbook every three (3) years and reserves the right to make changes at any time to the contents.

Carbon Conservation District Board of Directors

Working Hours

The regular hours shall be Monday through Friday, from 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., with a thirty (30) minute unpaid lunch break. All full-time employees will follow a forty (40) hour work week.

There will be no distinction between exempt and non-exempt employees. Full-time employees are paid an annual salary that is based on a forty (40) hour work week, which computes to an hourly wage.

The employee will complete the District's "Time and Attendance Report" bi-weekly to record all time that includes Regular Time, Annual Leave (vacation), Sick Leave, Holiday Time, Compensatory Time Earned, Compensatory Time Used, and Other Time Used (personal leave, holiday time, etc.). If an employee does not work a forty (40) hour week and has no available time off, their salary will be reduced accordingly.

Employees are paid on a Bi-weekly basis (26 pay periods per year). The pay period begins on Friday and ends the second (2nd) Thursday. Time reports must be turned in by 10:00 a.m. Friday immediately following the end of pay period. After review and verification of hours, payroll checks will be issued on Friday by close of business day.

All newly hired employees will be subject to a Probationary Period of One Hundred Twenty (120) days, unless otherwise specified.

Compensatory Time

Employees required to work over and beyond their normal scheduled hours of work will be given compensatory time. Compensatory time (comp-time) will be given at the rate of 1-1/2 hours comp time for every hour over forty (40) hours worked in accordance with P.L. 99-150, Fair Labor Standards Amendments of 1985.

The employee shall record all comp-time relative to job, day, and amount accrued on their time report. The employee must have the signature of their immediate supervisor on the time report approving the accrual of comp-time.

Any comp-time earned may be applied to the following week after it's been accrued and is to be used in the calendar year in which it was granted. There shall be no accrual of comp-time beyond the calendar year. An eligible employee shall receive pay equivalent to their accrued comp time in their final paycheck when their employment terminates for any reason.

Attendance and Punctuality

To maintain a safe and productive work environment, the District expects employees to be reliable and to be punctual in reporting for scheduled work. Absenteeism and tardiness place a burden on the District and on other employees. In the rare instances when employees cannot avoid being late or are unable to work as scheduled, they should notify their supervisor (a supervisor shall notify at least one (1) staff member at their work location of their absence) as soon as possible in advance of the anticipated

tardiness or absence.

Poor attendance and excessive tardiness are disruptive. Either may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Equal Opportunity

In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at the Carbon Conservation District will be based on merit, qualifications, and abilities. The District does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Holidays

The following eleven (11) days are observed as paid holidays:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday	Presidents Day
Veterans Day	Good Friday
Memorial Day	Independence Day
Thanksgiving Day	Christmas Day
Day after Thanksgiving	

Friday will be recognized for all holidays occurring on a Saturday, and Monday will be recognized for all holidays occurring on a Sunday. If an employee is required to work on a Holiday, compensatory time will be paid in addition to regular time.

Personal Days

One Personal Leave Day, equivalent to one working day (8 hours) shall be earned during each of the following periods: January through April, May through August, and September through December.

There shall be no accrual of Personal days beyond the calendar year. Personal Leave must be used within the period earned. The employee will not be compensated for Personal Leave if employment is terminated.

Vacation (Annual Leave)

Vacation time is credited during a calendar year for use during the following calendar year. Vacation leave is credited as follows for regular full-time employees:

During the **First Calendar Year** of employment (January through December) the employee shall accrue 1.1 days per month for each continuous month of employment in which the employee is compensated, not to exceed a total of 13 days. New employees accrue vacation credits during the Probationary Period (120 days). New, full-time employees working less than 12 months during the First Calendar Year of employment will be credited with vacation days on a pro-rated schedule. The pro-rated schedule shall be based upon the number of months worked during the First Calendar year of Employment. The pro-rated schedule is calculated by dividing the total number of months worked in the First Calendar Year by 12 months and multiplying the result by 13 days. For example, if an employee works 6 months during their First Calendar Year of employment, they will be credited one-half of the total annual vacation provided for 1-3

years of service (i.e.: 6.5 days). Fractions of days shall be rounded to the nearest whole number of days.

Vacation leave is credited according to the schedule below for periods of service as a regular full-time employee. Vacation accrued is available to be used in the following year.

Completed Years of Service	Vacation Credit
1 - 3 years	13 days (4 hours per pay period)
4 - 15 years	20 days (6 hours per pay period)
15 Years & over	26 days (8 hours per pay period)

Vacation pay is based on your regularly scheduled straight time hours and your base rate of pay in effect when your vacation leave starts or when your employment terminates. The Carbon Conservation District believes that in order to remain healthy and productive, every employee needs to take full advantage of the time-off this vacation policy offers. Vacation leave credited for a calendar year must be taken by March 1st of the following calendar year. The only exception to this policy will be cases when an employee is absent from work on a physician substantiated, extended sick leave, during the months of November and/or December. This sick leave may prevent employees from utilizing credited vacation leave before the end of the calendar year. In these situations, the employee shall make a request to the Conservation District Board to extend the unused vacation leave into the next calendar year. Such extensions shall be granted only upon approval by the Board.

No unused vacation leave shall extend beyond March 1st of the next calendar year. Any vacation leave unused as of March 1st of the next calendar year shall be forfeited by the employee.

Scheduling is fundamental to many of our service areas and for this reason your vacation schedule of three or more days must be pre-approved by your supervisor. Although every effort will be made to accommodate your requested vacation schedule, final approval will be determined by both the District's need to have adequate staffing to accommodate public service requirements and by requests from other employees for vacation at the same time. In the event of conflicting vacation requests, the supervisor/department head will approve vacation requests in consideration of both the District's needs and the affected employee's needs. The further ahead you plan for your vacation time, the more likely the District will be able to accommodate your wishes.

Employees who become ill during vacation leave shall charge that sick time to vacation leave.

When a Conservation District observed Holiday falls during your vacation period, you will be paid for the Holiday instead of vacation pay for that day.

An eligible employee shall receive their pay for accrued vacation leave in their final paycheck when their employment terminates for any reason.

Parental/Family Leave

Employees who have completed their probationary period who wish to take time off from work duties to fulfill family obligations resulting directly to the birth or adoption of a child, or to the illness of a child, spouse, or parent will be entitled to ninety (90) days of parental/family leave without pay. The employee may use any accumulated sick leave, vacation leave, or personal days during this period.

Requests for leave will be evaluated on a number of factors, including anticipated operational requirements and staffing considerations during the proposed period of absence. The Conservation District will continue to offer health insurance to the employee and covered dependents and life insurance until the end of the month in which the approved leave begins. At that time, you will become responsible for the full costs of the medical and life insurance benefits if you wish to continue coverage.

Accruals of benefits, such as personal days, annual leave, sick leave, retirement and pension will be suspended during the parental/family leave and will resume when the employee returns to active employment.

When parental/family leave ends, the employee will return to the same or a similar position for which he or she is qualified. If the return to the same or similar position or a comparable one is not available, an effort will be made to offer another position that is available and suitable. Although every reasonable effort will be made to place an employee in a position at the end of parental/family leave, the Conservation District can make no guarantee of reinstatement in all cases.

If you fail to notify the Conservation District and do not report to work promptly at the end of an approved family leave period, the District will assume that you have resigned.

Bereavement Leave

Employees who need to take time off due to the death of an immediate family member should notify the District Manager immediately. Up to four days of paid bereavement leave will be provided to full-time District employees. The District defines "immediate family" as an employee's spouse, parent, child, mother, father, stepmother, stepfather, or stepchild.

Following the death of any other member of your family, up to 3 days of paid bereavement leave will be approved. The District defines "other family members" as an employee's brother, sister, stepbrother & sister, grandparents, grandchildren, mother & father-in-law, daughter and son-in-law. Following the death of any other relative of your family, the District will grant one paid bereavement leave day to attend the funeral.

Sick Leave

Sick Leave time is credited during a calendar year for use during the following calendar year. Sick Leave may be accumulated beyond the end of the calendar year. The total maximum accrual of sick leave may not exceed 90 days (720 hours).

During the **First Calendar Year** and years to follow of employment (January through December), the employee shall accrue 4 hours every pay period (13 days per year). New full-time employees accrue sick leave credits during the Probationary Period (120 days)

but will not receive pay for any sick leave time until successful completion of the Probationary Period. New full-time employees will be credited for sick leave time on a pro-rated schedule of four (4) hours for every two week pay period actually worked.

Employees unable to report to work due to illness or injury are expected to notify their supervisor within one hour of the normally scheduled starting time each day that they are unable to report. An employee in a supervisory position shall notify at least one (1) staff member of their absence as soon as possible in advance of the absence. Employees are expected to keep their supervisor advised as to their expected return date. Sick leave may be charged in 2-hour increments, or at the discretion of the employees' immediate supervisor.

Any absence of three (3) or more days must be substantiated by a doctor's statement for sick leave pay to be paid and turned in with the Time and Attendance Report. Employees may, at any time, be required to undergo examination by a doctor selected by the Conservation District to substantiate any aspect of a disability when sick leave pay is being claimed. Also, if requested, employees are expected to authorize their physician(s) to release medical information regarding the absence, to a physician selected by the Conservation District.

Sick Leave pay is based on an employee's regularly scheduled straight time hours and their base rate of pay in effect when their sick leave starts. When a Conservation District Holiday falls during a sick leave period, the employee will be paid for the holiday instead of sick leave pay for that day.

No employee whose employment with the District has ceased, shall receive sick leave pay for any accrued but unused sick days for any reason. This includes, but is not limited to, termination, resignation, and retirement.

Medical Leave

The Conservation District provides unpaid medical leave to regular full-time employees who are temporarily unable to work due to a medical disability and who have completed 120 days of service with the District.

As soon as you are aware of the need for a medical leave of absence, a physician's statement must be provided verifying your medical disability and its beginning and expected ending dates. Any changes in this information should be promptly reported to your immediate supervisor.

Eligible employees will be granted leave for up to a maximum of ninety (90) calendar days in a 24-month period. The Employee will take any available sick days, personal days, vacation days, and compensatory time prior to the medical leave of absence. If this period of ninety (90) calendar days absence proves to be insufficient, consideration will be given to a written request to the Conservation District Board of Directors for a single extension of not more than thirty (30) calendar days.

If you fail to notify the Conservation District and do not report to work promptly at the end of the 90th day (120th day with an approved extension) of a medical leave, the

Conservation District will assume that you have resigned.

The Conservation District will continue to offer health and life insurance benefits until the end of the month next following or coincident with the expiration of ninety (90) days of unpaid medical leave. At that time, you will become responsible for the full cost of your medical insurance benefits for yourself and any covered dependents and any life insurance which you wish to continue during your leave. The District will resume payment of its portion of these costs of these benefits on the first day of the month next following your return to active employment.

Benefit accruals such as personal days, vacation days, sick leave, retirement and pension will be suspended during any medical leave and will resume on return to active employment with the District. Employees returning from medical leave are required to provide a physician's verification of the employee's fitness to return to work.

Employees who sustain a work-related injury may be eligible for a medical leave of absence for the period of disability with all applicable laws covering occupational disability.

Employees returning at or prior to the expiration of a medical leave will return to the same or a similar position for which he or she is qualified. If the return to the same or similar position or a comparable one is not available, an effort will be made to offer another position that is available and suitable. Although every reasonable effort will be made to place an employee in a position at the end of the medical leave, the Conservation District can make no guarantee of reinstatement in all cases.

If you fail to notify the Conservation District and do not report to work promptly at the end of an approved medical leave period, the District will assume that you have resigned.

COVID POLICY

Updated COVID policy, as of August 22, 2024, the Carbon Conservation District COVID policy previously approved, November 18, 2021:

POSITIVE COVID

Employees that are positive for COVID must immediately inform their supervisor and the Chairman of the Board. Employees will need to follow CDC guidelines. If an employee is symptomatic and it affects their job performance, it is strongly recommended that employees use benefit leave time until symptoms improve. Wearing of masks in the office should also follow CDC guidelines.

DIRECT COVID EXPOSURE

An employee that has been in direct contact with a person who is positive for COVID is considered a Direct COVID Exposure. The employee who is a Direct COVID Exposure must immediately contact their supervisor and the Chairman of the Board. Employee will need to follow CDC guidelines regarding quarantine and social distancing. Any required absence from work will follow CDC guidelines.

PAYROLL/TIMESHEET REPORTING
Employees who are absent from work due to either POSITIVE COVID or a DIRECT COVID EXPOSURE will need to use available benefit time (Compensatory time, Annual Leave, Sick Leave, Personal Time, carried over time) before going without pay.

Jury Duty
It is the policy of the Conservation District to provide regular full-time employees who have completed 120 days of employment with the opportunity to serve with no loss in pay, service or any other benefits, when called for jury duty. Your immediate supervisor should be notified as soon as possible so that work schedules in your area(s) are reassigned if necessary. You are required to provide proof of Jury Service and to turn in any monetary compensation you received for your court service.

Pay Deductions
The law requires the Conservation District to make certain deductions from every employee's compensation. Among these are applicable federal, state, and local income taxes. The District must deduct Social Security taxes on each employee's earnings up to a specified limit set by the Federal Government. The district matches the amount of Social Security tax paid by each employee.

Adverse Weather Closings
At times adverse weather can disrupt District operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of the District office or EEC.

The closing of an office for a partial or full day will be determined by the following: The partial day or day will be called off if the County declares a closing. If the County is not closed and adverse conditions prohibit the District or EEC from opening for normal business hours, partial or full day closures will be discussed by the District manager and Chief Naturalist. Final decisions will also be discussed with District Chairman. If the office is closed and an employee has scheduled leave (sick, comptime, annual leave, personal leave, bereavement leave, special leave, family leave, etc.) hazardous leave cannot be used. The employee will charge the appropriate leave category as scheduled.

If an employee goes to work and works a partial or full day when hazardous leave has been declared, the employee will be granted an hour for hour pay for the time worked. Comp-time cannot be accrued in this situation.

During bad weather conditions, when an employee does not come into work and the office(s) are open, the employee cannot determine that he or she will do work from home. Working at home for "work" must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor prior to the partial or full day requested. This will be granted on a case-by-case basis. It is preferred that if an employee stays home and the CCD/CCEEC offices are open, the employee should use annual or comp-time. (The "working at home" procedure also applies to requests anytime throughout the year).

Notification of office closing procedure(s): If a partial day will be determined to be hazardous leave and the office(s) close, the CCD will contact the CCEEC as soon as possible to advise of the closing and time of closing. If a closing occurs in the morning

of a day of hazardous weather conditions, the District Manager will contact the Chief Naturalist at the CCEEC as soon as possible that morning. The CCD Manager will then contact the CCD Staff and the Chief Naturalist will contact the CCEEC Staff accordingly. It is requested that all employees wait until they hear from their supervisor before driving to work on a morning of hazardous weather in case the offices are deemed closed. If an employee goes to work before the contacts are made and the office closes the employee will be granted an hour for hour pay for the time worked. Comp-time cannot be accrued in this situation.

Expenses

Employees shall be reimbursed for legitimate expenses incurred while on official District business. Required travel (personal vehicle mileage) will be paid at the rate of fifty cents ($.50) per mile (subject to change with federal standards). Attendance at conventions, special meetings, training sessions, or other affairs pertaining to the District must have the approval of the Conservation District Board of Directors. The Conservation District (or CCEEC) will reimburse employees for reasonable business travel expenses incurred while on assignments away from the normal work location. All business travel must be approved in advance by your immediate supervisor and/or the District Board.

The District will reimburse necessary and reasonable expenses you incur in the performance of your job when the expenses are submitted with proper explanations and receipts documenting the expenditures.

The employees should use District vehicles for travel relative to job related activities. In the event that a personal vehicle will be used for District business, the employee must receive authorization from his or her immediate supervisor prior to using their personal vehicle.

Insurances

Life Insurance - A $25,000 term policy will be provided by the District after the full-time employee successfully completes the 120-day probationary period.
Workman's Compensation Insurance - The Conservation District provides Workman's Compensation Insurance for all employees.

Work Related Injuries

If you are injured on the job or require medical treatment due to a work-related illness or injury, you must use the following procedure claims to be paid through the Conservation District's Workers Compensation carrier.

Any accident or injury on the job is to be reported to the District Manager and/or Board Chairman within twenty-four (24) hours. Failure to follow the proper reporting procedures may result in disciplinary action.

If you are faced with a medical emergency, you may secure assistance from a hospital or physician of your choice.

Once you qualify to receive a benefit payment from the Conservation District's Worker Compensation carrier, you are ineligible to receive any compensation under any other program. (I.e. annual leave, personal leave, sick leave, compensatory time, etc.)

Benefit accruals such as personal days, annual leave, sick leave, retirement and pension will be suspended during any leave and will resume on the return to active employment with the Conservation District.

Employees returning from absences due to work-related injury or illness are required to provide a physician's verification of the employee's fitness to return to work.

Employees returning at or prior to the expiration of a work-related medical leave will return to the same or a similar position for which he or she is qualified. If the return to the same or similar position or a comparable one is not available, an effort will be made to offer another position that is available and suitable. Although every reasonable effort will be made to place an employee in a position at the end of the medical leave, the Conservation District can make no guarantee of reinstatement in all cases.

If you fail to notify the Conservation District and do not report to work promptly at the end of an approved work-related medical leave period, the District will assume that you have resigned.

Medical/Prescription/Dental/Vision

This coverage is provided by the Conservation District after the employee has completed ninety (90) days of the required one hundred twenty (120) day probationary period. This coverage is available to Employee, Spouse and Family. The Conservation District will provide the necessary information and enrollment forms to the employees.

Pension Plan/Retirement

The Conservation District will provide a pension plan under the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System for all permanent full-time employees. All full-time employees are required to participate in this plan. The District will match the employee's contribution to the Pension plan up to 5%.

A retirement plan with Nationwide Retirement Solutions is available to the employee and is strictly the employee's choice. This is a straight deduction from the employee's payroll.

Positions and Salaries

Positions and salaries will be established, or eliminated, by the Conservation District Board of Directors. Any promotion or cost of living adjustment will be reviewed and granted at the discretion of the Carbon Conservation District Directors.

CARBON CONSERVATION DISTRICT SALARY RANGE BY POSITION

	STARTING SALARY	SALARY CAP
DISTRICT MANAGER	$ 50,000.00	$ 75,600.00
DISTRICT TECHNICIAN	$ 40,000.00	$ 60,500.00
DISTRICT AG/E&S TECHNICAN	$ 40,000.00	$ 60,500.00
DISTRICT SECRETARY	$ 36,000.00	$ 54,500.00
CHIEF NATURALIST	$ 45,000.00	$ 68,100.00
NATURALIST	$ 38,000.00	$ 57,500.00
PROGRAM ASSISTANT	$ 38,000.00	$ 57,500.00

DISTRICT SALARY RANGE NOTES:

1) Salary ranges will be reviewed every 3 years by the District Personnel Committee along with the District Manager and Chief Naturalist.

2) The District Board reserves the right to review the Salary Range sooner than the 3 years time frame if it's deemed necessary by the Board.

3) Cost of living increases will be reviewed and considered for approval by the District Board on a yearly basis. District staff that have reached the salary cap for their position will still be eligible for the yearly cost of living increase but their percentage will be based on the cap salary not the staff person's current salary.

4) Eligibility for any yearly salary increase will be contingent on a satisfactory performance evaluation by either the District Manager or Chief Naturalist. District Manager and Chief Naturalist performance evaluations will be conducted by the Personnel Committee.

5) The District Board reserves the right to give an additional salary increase to any District staff person as long as the specified increase does not exceed the Salary Cap for the staff position.

Employee Performance Evaluations

The Carbon Conservation District recognizes that Performance Evaluations give an opportunity to identify their employee's work performance. This gives both the District and the Employee an opportunity to identify their performance level, growth potential and development needs. They also serve to clarify the employees' duties and

responsibilities. They help to develop a productive work relationship between the employee and supervisor and help to give the employee the opportunity to present their views about their performance. Normal timing of this review will be conducted annually in August before a new yearly budget is submitted to the Commissioners.

Performance Evaluations will be conducted orally and/or in written form using an approved Evaluation Form. Since the Carbon Conservation District has two main functions (Carbon Conservation District and Carbon Environmental Education Center) the following will indicate the evaluation procedure:

- Carbon Conservation District Personnel Committee will evaluate the District Manager.
- The District Manager will evaluate the District Secretary.
- The District Manager will evaluate the District Soil Conservation Technicians.
- Carbon Conservation District Personnel Committee will evaluate the Chief Naturalist.
- The Chief Naturalist will evaluate the Assistant Naturalist.
- The Chief Naturalist will evaluate the Program Assistant.

After annual reviews of staff are complete, the Board Personnel Committee will review the evaluations.

Dress Code/Personal Hygiene

- Employees shall strive at all times to ensure that their clothing, appearance, and hygiene are businesslike and contribute to a pleasant office atmosphere for both co-workers and visitors.
- Employees shall present a clean, professional appearance. Employees are expected to be well-groomed and to wear clean, appropriately fitting clothing, free of stains, holes, tears, or other signs of wear. When employees work directly with clients, customers or visitors, employees are a reflection of the Conservation District and Environmental Center.
- When attending departmental meetings or conferences, business casual attire or District/EEC logo shirts shall be worn (two (2) logo shirts will be provided to each employee.)
- Clothing with offensive, graphic or inappropriate designs or text is not allowed.
- Clothing should not be too revealing. No low-cut tops/blouses; no short shorts. Pants should be worn at the waist, using a belt or suspenders if necessary.
- Employees shall maintain personal cleanliness by frequent bathing/showering and hair washing.
- Employees shall maintain good oral hygiene by daily teeth brushing.
- Employees shall use deodorant/antiperspirant to prevent unpleasant body odors.
- Employees shall not use heavily scented perfumes, colognes, and lotions. These can cause allergic reactions and respiratory difficulty for some employees.
- Employees shall maintain clean hands and trimmed fingernails. Practice good grooming habits.
- Employees shall wash hands before and after eating or using the restroom.
- Employees shall use good hygiene when using a shared restroom.
- Clothing and grooming styles dictated by religion or ethnicity are exempt.

Office/Workspace Cleanliness

- The office space should be a professional and welcoming environment.
- Each employee shall maintain a clutter free and organized workspace or office.
    - Remove unnecessary trash, and unused items. These should be thrown out in a timely manner and recycled when appropriate.
- Files should be appropriately stored for easy retrieval and potential security issues.
- Each employee shall strive to keep common areas sanitary and clutter free.

Smoking Policy

In keeping with the CCCD's intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment, smoking is prohibited throughout any workplace location, and District vehicles. This policy applies equally to all employees, Board members, volunteers, customers, and visitors.

Drug and Alcohol Use

It is the Districts' desire to provide a drug-free, healthful, and safe workplace. To promote this goal, employees are required to report to work in appropriate mental and physical condition to perform their jobs in a satisfactory manner.

Employees are to report to work free of alcohol and other drugs and remain in this condition while they are on-duty. "On-duty" for purposes of this policy includes lunch and other breaks and periods during which employees are assigned to work, traveling to and from work, or representing the District in any capacity. This includes operating a District vehicle or personal vehicle while "on-duty".

Employees violating these rules are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Use of District Vehicles

The appropriate department supervisor authorizes use of District vehicles. Personal use of District vehicles is prohibited. **Conservation District staff (full time employees appointed by the District Board) and Board members are eligible to use the District's vehicles.**

Employees and Board members are expected to exercise reasonable care when operating a District vehicle or when driving their personal vehicle on District business. Employees and Board members are required to observe all traffic laws and will be personally responsible for any violations or citations that they might receive. Employees will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal in the event they operate a District vehicle or personal vehicle while on District business in an unsafe manner.

Employees and Board members are required to wear their seat belt and to ensure that passengers wear their seat belts. The use of any portable electronic communication device while operating a vehicle during working time or otherwise while conducting the District's business is prohibited. This includes making phone calls, texting, e-mailing or other messaging, and Internet browsing. Employees and board members should direct any calls or messages to voicemail while they are on the road for the District. All employees and Board members must ensure that their use of portable electronic communication devices does not pose a safety hazard and complies with all applicable

federal, state, and local laws governing the use of cell phones and other portable electronic communication devices. A District vehicle shall always be locked when it is unattended.

A District Employee or Board member that uses a District vehicle, or his or her own vehicle on behalf of the District, must possess a valid Pennsylvania Drivers' License. In addition, employees must provide the District with evidence that they have public liability and property damage insurance in amounts acceptable to the District, before a personal vehicle is used for District business. The District is not responsible for any traffic violations, citations, accidents, theft or damage to an employee's vehicle.

No employee or Board member may drive a District vehicle or personal vehicle while on District business, while under the influence of alcohol or any controlled substance.

If employees or Board members violate this policy or have an accident using a District vehicle, they will be held responsible for any damage or injury to themselves, their occupants and contents, and real or personal property, regardless of whether the accident is determined to be their fault. Further, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge and they will be required to make financial reimbursement to the District, its insurance carriers and/or third parties.

If an employee is authorized to use a District vehicle in the performance of their job, they will receive additional information about its operation, applicable rules, regulations, and reporting from their supervisor. Employees and Board members are encouraged to review all appropriate manuals describing all operating and maintenance procedures for the vehicle that they use.

Use of District Phones

You are permitted to use District telephones for personal calls, incoming and local outgoing, only to the extent that you use good judgment so that there is no interference with the normal business activities of the District. Any employee abusing this privilege is subject to disciplinary action.

Computer/E-mail

Computers, computer files, the E-mail system, and software furnished to the employees are District property intended for District business use. Employees should not use a password, access files, or retrieve any stored communication without authorization.

District computers and District issued email addresses shall not be used by employees for the exchange of personal information. Do not use District email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use.

Social Media

Professional Use

All official District-related communication through social media outlets should remain professional in nature. Employees and volunteers must not use official District social media sites for political purposes, to conduct private commercial transactions, or to engage in private business activities.

District employees and volunteers should be mindful that inappropriate usage of official

District social media sites can be grounds for disciplinary action. If social media sites are used for official District business, the entire District site, regardless of any personal views, is subject to best practices guidelines, and standards. Only individuals authorized by the District may publish content to a District Web site or social media site.

Employees and volunteers representing the District through social media outlets or participating in social media features on District websites must maintain a high level of ethical conduct and professional decorum. Failure to do so is grounds for revoking the privilege to participate in District social media sites, blogs, or other social media features.

District employees and volunteers may not publish information on District social media sites that includes: • Confidential information • Copyright violations • Profanity, racist, sexist, or derogatory content or comments • Partisan political views • Commercial endorsements or SPAM

All photographs taken of District or Environmental Center employees and volunteers must have prior permission. No photographs may be posted on any Social Media site, exchanged in email or otherwise transmitted electronically without the express written consent of the employee or volunteer, the employees' or volunteers' supervisor or the District Board. No photographs may be taken of any wildlife that is brought in for rehabilitation without the express consent of the Chief Naturalist. No photographs of injured/rehabilitating wildlife may be posted to any Social Media site, exchanged in email or otherwise transmitted electronically without the express written consent of the Chief Naturalist.

Employees and volunteers should not expect that they have privacy when making internet postings. Even when content or posting are deleted or erased it may still be possible to retrieve and view that content or posting. Further, the use of passwords for security does not guarantee confidentiality.

The District reserves the right to monitor Internet activity and employees and volunteers should be aware that their posts may be brought to the District's attention by third parties. The District also reserves the right to request that employees and volunteers remove postings that are in violation of this policy. Inappropriate postings are those that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct. Any employee and volunteer who discovers a violation of this policy should notify their immediate supervisor. Any employee and volunteer who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including termination.

<u>Personal Use</u>
All District employees and volunteers may have personal social media sites. These sites should remain personal in nature and be used to share personal opinions or non-work-related information. Following this principle helps ensure a distinction between sharing personal and District views.

District employees and volunteers must never use their District e-mail account or password in conjunction with any personal social media site. District employees and volunteers who decide to have a personal social media site should not comment or post

about official District business. Use of a personal social media site shall be limited during the workday. Abuse could result in revoking access privileges.

The Conservation District strives to maintain a workplace free of harassment and sensitive to the diversity of its employees. Therefore, the District prohibits the use of computers, E-mail, and all social media platforms in ways that are disruptive, offensive to others, harmful to morale or of a derogatory nature to the District, the District Board, other employees, and/or affiliates.

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT
This policy does not prohibit and will not be interpreted or enforced in a manner that could interfere with, restrain, or coerce employees from engaging in activities protected by the national Labor Relations Act. This means that employees are not limited or restricted, in any way, from discussing the Carbon Conservation District's working conditions, including perceived harassment, discrimination, safety, compensation, wages, benefits, or other issues that relate to working conditions. This includes the working conditions of the employee or his/her co-workers.

Sexual Harassment Policy

I. Policy Against Harassment

The Carbon Conservation District will not permit or ignore sexual harassment in the workplace and is committed to providing a workplace free of sexual harassment in any form and by any person. Violations of this policy will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action.

II. **Prohibited Conduct**

A. Quid Pro Quo Harassment

No Board member, supervisor, other employee, volunteer or outside contactor shall threaten or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that another employee's or applicant's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect that person's employment, work status, evaluation, wages, advancement, assigned duties, shifts, benefits, opportunities, or any other condition of employment. Similarly, no employee shall promise, imply, or grant any preferential treatment conditioned upon another employee or applicant engaging in sexual conduct.

B. Hostile Environment Harassment

No Board member, supervisor, other employee, volunteer or outside contactor shall engage in any form of sexual harassment, including unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions, verbal abuse of a sexual nature, subtle pressure or request for sexual activities, preferential or derogatory treatment based on gender, unnecessary touching of an individual, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, a display
in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, sexually explicit or offensive jokes, or physical assault.

III. Complaint and Investigatory Procedure

A. Initial Complaint

An employee who feels that he or she is the victim of sexual harassment, including, but not limited to, any of the conduct listed above, by any supervisor, manager, other employee, or any other person in connection with his or her

employment with the Carbon Conservation District should bring the matter to the immediate attention of the District Manager. (In the event the complainant is the District Manager or the complaint is against the District Manager, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Board Secretary who shall immediately notify the Carbon Conservation District Board of Directors.) Any questions about this policy or potential sexual harassment should also be brought to the attention of these same persons.

B. Investigation

An investigation into sexual harassment will be conducted by the District Manager or the Board of Directors as appropriate, in as confidential a manner as is possible and as soon as is reasonably possible. Evidence will be collected and evaluated to identify any inconsistencies in the statements of the parties interviewed about the alleged sexual harassment behavior, circumstances, location, dates and times, etc. The District Manager after review with the Board of Directors, will make a final determination based upon facts gathered through the investigation and take appropriate corrective action.

C. Disciplinary Action

Any supervisor, manager, or other employee who has been found, after appropriate investigation, to have engaged in sexual harassment of another employee in violation of this policy, will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including possible termination, depending upon the circumstances involved.

D. Promise of Confidentiality

Given the nature of this type of discrimination, the Carbon Conservation District recognizes that victims of sexual harassment may feel uncomfortable about discussing their grievance and also that false accusations of sexual harassment can have serious effects on innocent women and men. For these reasons, all complaints under this policy and all employees involved in the investigation of a complaint under this policy, are required to maintain all information relating to a complaint or to its investigation in a strictly confidential manner, except as a "need to know" so requires the dissemination of certain facts. Violation of this requirement of confidentiality will be subject to appropriate discipline.

CONSERVATION DISTRICT THREAT POLICY

PURPOSE:

This section describes actions to be taken when a Conservation District employee receives a written or verbal threat at the District Office, as well as verbal threats while in the field inspecting sites.

Threats in the Field - Recommendations before entering the site:

1. Always carry your identification card and be prepared to show it.
2. If possible, attempt to contact home/land owner prior to entering their property. If the property is in a designated Agricultural Security Area, do not attempt to enter and try to first obtain permission by landowner. If permission has not been granted, immediately leave the property and contact the NERO Compliance Support staff/Regional Director.
3. When visiting a site, the District vehicle should be positioned in a way that allows for a safe, easy and quick exit if a threat occurs.

While on-site/follow up Inspections:

1. When an employee is threatened during the course of their official duties, do the following:
   a. Immediately leave the area to a safe distance.
   b. Immediately call the local state police barracks and the District Manager to report the threat. Use of cell phone is recommended when available.
   c. State the facts as you know them; do not embellish the story. If possible, create written notes of the encounter while the event is fresh in your mind. A copy of any notes should also be given to the District Manager.
2. Once threat has been reported to the local authorities, it is the responsibility of the District Manager to notify the Department of Environmental Protection's Regional Director of the incident. Any further local or state agency reporting will be conducted as per recommendations from the DEP Regional Director. A note in the official project/landowner file should be made of all relevant occurrences.
3. After being threatened by someone, and if a follow-up visit is required, contact the local state police and request they assign a trooper to accompany you on your next visit. If a trooper is not available, an alternate solution could be to contact a local WCO for the area to accompany you to the site. Never re-enter a property at which a threat has occurred without this type of support.
4. After an appropriate amount of time, contact the state police and ask for a status report on the investigation, offering any further assistance to them that they might need, especially if the case is referred to the County District Attorney's Office for further prosecution.

Threats received at the District Office:

1. Any district employee who receives a telephone or voicemail threat should immediately notify the District Manager, who will contact the local or state police to report the incident. Do not delete the voicemail. Also, if the threat was made during a phone conversation, document as much of the conversation as you can along with any pertinent information about the caller if possible (i.e. name, physical address, phone # etc.) A copy of this information should be also be provided to the District Manager.
2. If a threat is received either by email or written letter, save all documentation (letter, envelope, etc.) and/or print said email and immediately give it to the District Manager. The District Manager will then notify the proper authorities and DEP.
3. If a district employee at any time feels threatened by a visitor's demeanor and/or they become verbally hostile, ask visitor to sit or stay in the reception area, excuse yourself from the situation and notify the District Manager immediately. Find an office with a locking door and join up with other district staff.
4. If visitor threatens physical violence, repeat steps in item 3, but then also call the local state police and lock the door of the office you are in. Also, if needed, look for an alternate means of exiting the building (i.e. possibly through an office window).

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER THREAT POLICY

PURPOSE:

This section describes actions to be taken when a Carbon County Environmental Education Center employee receives a written, verbal, or physical threat at, or on the grounds of CCEEC, as well as threats while conducting environmental education classes or programs off-site, and while performing wildlife rescues/pick-ups in the field.

Threats in the Field:

Recommendations before leaving for any off-site activity:

1. Always carry your county identification card and be prepared to show it.
2. Attempt to contact home/land owner if possible prior to entering their property.
3. When visiting a site, the EEC vehicle should be positioned in a way that allows for a safe, easy and quick exit if a threat occurs. Lock the vehicle, and keep the keys on your person.
4. Always have a charged cell phone on your person to call for help if needed.

While off-site:

When an employee is threatened during the course of their official duties, do the following:

1. Immediately leave the area to a safe distance.
2. Immediately call the local police and the Chief Naturalist to report the threat.
3. State the facts, as you know them. Do not embellish the story or inject emotion. If possible, create written notes of the encounter while the event is fresh in your mind. A copy of any notes should also be given to the Chief Naturalist.
4. Once a threat has been reported to the local authorities, it is the responsibility of the Chief Naturalist to contact the wildlife caller or organization requesting the educational program to notify them that program/visit/rescue has been terminated.
5. After being threatened by someone, and if it is necessary to return to the site to retrieve rescue equipment or educational materials, notify the police and request that they accompany the employee to the site.
6. After an appropriate amount of time, contact the police and ask for a status report on the investigation, offering any further assistance to them that they might need, especially if the case is referred to the County District Attorney's Office for further prosecution.

Threats received at the EEC:

1. Any district employee who receives a telephone or voicemail threat should immediately notify the Chief Naturalist, who will contact the local police to report the incident. Do not delete any voicemail messages. Also, if the threat was made during a phone conversation, document as much of the conversation as you can along with any pertinent information about the caller if possible (i.e. name, physical address, phone # etc.) A copy of this information should be also be provided to the Chief Naturalist. Upon hanging up, immediately dial *69 to retrieve the caller telephone number.
2. If a threat is received either by email or written letter, save all documentation (letter, envelope, etc.) and/or print said email and immediately give it to the

Chief Naturalist. The Chief Naturalist will then notify the proper authorities and the District Manager.

3. If a district employee at any time feels threatened by a visitor's demeanor and/or they become verbally hostile, ask visitor to sit or stay in the immediate area, excuse and remove yourself from the situation. Notify the police from a safe location. If necessary, find an office with a locking door and join up with other EEC staff. The EEC library is recommended.
4. If a visitor threatens physical violence, repeat steps in item 3 and, if needed, look for an alternate means of exiting the building (i.e. possibly through an office window).
5. If a visitor becomes physically violent in any way, immediately remove yourself from the situation, call 911, and pull the nearest fire alarm pull station handle. Pull station handles are located at the front, rear, and side (kitchen) doors. Follow steps in Step 3.

Employment, Termination, and Resignation Restrictions

There is no restriction on employment outside the Conservation District other than the following conditions:

1. That other employment may not in any way interfere with District employment in that the employee's first responsibility is with the Conservation District. If the Conservation District determines that outside work interferes with the employee's performance or the ability to meet the requirements of the Conservation District, as they are modified from time to time, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if they wish to remain with the Conservation District.
2. Outside employment that constitutes a conflict of interest is prohibited. Employees may not receive any income or material gain for materials produced or services rendered while performing their jobs for the Conservation District.

Employment and termination of employees is at the discretion of the Conservation District Board of Directors. All employees must serve a one hundred twenty (120) day probationary period. At the end of this probationary period, the Board shall decide if continuation of employment is applicable. Resignation is a voluntary act initiated by the employee to terminate employment with the Conservation District or the Environmental Education Center. Although advance notice is not required, the District requests that written notice be given to the District Board at least two (2) weeks in advance of departure.

Prior to the employee's departure, an exit interview will be scheduled with the District Board Personnel Committee and the employees' supervisor (District Manager or Chief Naturalist) to discuss the resignation, explain benefits, and for the employee to turn back all property of the Conservation District or the Environmental Education Center, discuss information regarding existing work projects, etc. The employee will be requested to provide a mailing address to the Conservation District to which final paycheck(s) or other information can be mailed.

Disciplinary Action and Termination

Step 1: When an employee's performance is deemed to be unsatisfactory by his supervisor, that supervisor will request a meeting with the employee at which time the supervisor will explain the areas of unsatisfactory performance or behavior, remedial steps the employee can take to facilitate improvement in his/her performance, the employee's expectations to achieve satisfactory performance and the consequence if improvement is not achieved.

Step 2: Three such meetings with the employee will be held and the supervisor will carefully document the proceedings. The employee will review and sign this documentation.

Step 3: If, after three such meetings, the employee's performance has not improved to the satisfaction of the supervisor, the employee will be placed on probation for a two-week period.

Step 4: If, at the end of the two-week probationary period, the employee's performance has not improved to the satisfaction of the supervisor, the employee will be suspended for a thirty-day period, without pay. After the employee returns to work following the 30-day suspension period, if the employee's performance has not improved, the employee will be terminated.

Step 5: At any time during the thirty-day period of suspension, the employee may request and will be granted a hearing before the entire Board of Directors of the Carbon Conservation District.

Step 6: At the conclusion of the hearing, upon concurrence of a majority of the directors present the employee will either be reinstated, or his/her employment will be terminated.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District at all times retains and reserves the right to immediately terminate, suspend, or otherwise discipline any employee.

THE CARBON CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS EMPLOYEE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK AT A REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 2024, AND WILL BE EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.

DISTRICT CHAIRMAN: _____ **ROGER SHOENBERGER**

DATE_____

DISTRICT VICE CHAIRMAN:_____ **MERLE HUNSICKER**

DATE_____

DISTRICT SECRETARY:_____ **ROBIN CRESSLEY**

DATE:_____

REVISIONS TO POLICY:

SECTION REVISED & PAGE #	DATE APPROVED	CHAIRMAN'S SIGNATURE
Compensatory time – 4		
Sick time - 7		
Covid Policy – **Added** – 9		
Adverse Weather Closings – 10		
Salary Range – **Added** – 12		
Board Policy Adoption – 24		

Employee Acknowledgement Form

Carbon Conservation District
5664 Interchange Road
Lehighton, PA 18235

Please carefully read the attached document. Please read, sign, and return this form to your supervisor immediately upon receipt. Your supervisor will then forward the signed acknowledgement to the District Office for inclusion in your personnel file.

I acknowledge receiving a copy of the Carbon Conservation District Employee Policies and Procedures Handbook.

I understand that the Handbook describes important information about the Conservation District AND Environmental Education Center, and I understand that I should consult the District Manager or the Chief Naturalist regarding any questions not answered in the Handbook.

I understand that the information, policies, and benefits described in the Handbook are subject to change. In the event that updates are made, it will be my responsibility to keep the information described in the Handbook current.

I understand that this Handbook is property of the Carbon Conservation District and I agree to return it to my supervisor in the event my employment terminates.

Further, I acknowledge that this Handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I have entered into my employment relationship with the District voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no specific length of employment. Accordingly, either the District or I may terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time.

I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this Handbook and other policies and procedures specific to my work site and any revisions made to them.

_____ _____

Employees' Signature Date