

|  |
| --- |
| Employee Handbook |
| Adopted 2015 |

Table of Contents

[WELCOME 5](#_bookmark0)

[INTRODUCTION 5](#_bookmark1)

[HISTORY 7](#_bookmark2)

[MISSION/VALUES 7](#_bookmark3)

[HIRING PRACTICES 8](#_bookmark4)

[EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT 8](#_bookmark5)

[EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS 8](#_bookmark6)

[EMPLOYMENT REFERENCE CHECKS 8](#_bookmark7)

[NEPOTISM 8](#_bookmark8)

[HIRING LETTER (OR CONDITIONAL OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT) 9](#_bookmark9)

[IMMIGRATION LAW COMPLIANCE 9](#_bookmark10)

[NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION 9](#_bookmark11)

[EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES/POLICIES 10](#_bookmark12)

[AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT 10](#_bookmark13)

[INTRODUCTORY PERIOD 10](#_bookmark14)

[OPEN COMMUNICATION (OPEN DOOR POLICY) 11](#_bookmark15)

[ACCOMMODATION 11](#_bookmark16)

[ATTENDANCE 11](#_bookmark17)

[INCLEMENT WEATHER AND NATURAL DISASTERS 12](#_bookmark18)

[PERSONNEL DATA CHANGES 12](#_bookmark19)

[ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILES 12](#_bookmark20)

[MEDICAL RECORDS 13](#_bookmark21)

[PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS 13](#_bookmark22)

[INTERNAL TRANSFERS 13](#_bookmark23)

[EMPLOYEE TRAINING/TRAVEL 13](#_bookmark24)

[TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT 14](#_bookmark25)

[PURCHASING 15](#_bookmark26)

[PURCHASING CARD USAGE 16](#_bookmark27)

[EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION INCENTIVES, AND AWARDS 17](#_bookmark28)

[TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT WITH DISTRICT 18](#_bookmark29)

[EXIT INTERVIEWS 18](#_bookmark30)

[ANTI-HARASSMENT AND NON-DISCRIMINATION 18](#_bookmark31)

[POLICY AGAINST HARASSMENT 18](#_bookmark32)

[EMPLOYEE DISCLOSURE ACT (Whistle Blower) 21](#_bookmark33)

[NO SMOKING POLICY 23](#_bookmark34)

[SOLICITATIONS 23](#_bookmark35)

[POLITICAL DO’S & DON’TS FOR STATE AND LOCAL EMPLOYEES 23](#_bookmark36)

[EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS/HOURS OF WORK 24](#_bookmark37)

[EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS 24](#_bookmark38)

[Executive Personnel 24](#_bookmark39)

[Professional Personnel 24](#_bookmark40)

[Administrative Personnel 24](#_bookmark41)

[OTHER CLASSIFICATIONS 24](#_bookmark42)

[Introductory Employee 24](#_bookmark43)

[Regular Full-Time 24](#_bookmark44)

[Regular Part-Time 25](#_bookmark45)

[Temporary (limited duration) 25](#_bookmark46)

[Intern/Project Employee 25](#_bookmark47)

[Volunteer 25](#_bookmark48)

[OFFICE HOURS/HOURS OF WORK 26](#_bookmark49)

[FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES 26](#_bookmark50)

[TELECOMUTING POLICY 26](#_bookmark51)

[BREAKS 26](#_bookmark52)

[COMPENSATION 27](#_bookmark53)

[PAY PERIOD 27](#_bookmark54)

[TIME RECORDS/TIME KEEPING 27](#_bookmark55)

[PAY UPON SEPARATION 27](#_bookmark56)

[OVERTIME PAY/EXCHANGE TIME 27](#_bookmark57)

[COMPENSATORY TIME 28](#_bookmark58)

[PAY ADVANCES 28](#_bookmark59)

[PAY DEDUCTIONS 28](#_bookmark60)

[GARNISHMENTS 29](#_bookmark61)

[BENEFITS 29](#_bookmark62)

[MEDICAL BENEFITS 29](#_bookmark63)

[DENTAL INSURANCE 29](#_bookmark64)

[TUITION/CONTINUING EDUCATION REIMBURSEMENT 30](#_bookmark65)

[RETIREMENT PROGRAMS 30](#_bookmark66)

[Washington State Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) 30](#_bookmark67)

[Deferred Compensation 31](#_bookmark68)

[Voluntary Employees Beneficiary Association (VEBA) 31](#_bookmark69)

[COBRA INSURANCE CONTINUATION 32](#_bookmark70)

[LIFE INSURANCE 32](#_bookmark71)

[PAYROLL DEDUCTION LIFE INSURANCE 32](#_bookmark72)

[LONG TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE 32](#_bookmark73)

[PAID AND UNPAID LEAVE 33](#_bookmark74)

[HOLIDAYS 33](#_bookmark75)

[VACATIONS 34](#_bookmark76)

[SICK LEAVE AND PERSONAL DAYS 35](#_bookmark77)

[BEREAVEMENT LEAVE 36](#_bookmark78)

[PREGNANCY DISABILITY LEAVE 36](#_bookmark79)

[JURY DUTY 37](#_bookmark80)

[WITNESS DUTY 37](#_bookmark81)

[MILITARY LEAVE 37](#_bookmark82)

[MILITARY SPOUSE LEAVE 38](#_bookmark83)

[LEAVE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS 38](#_bookmark84)

[LEAVE WITHOUT PAY/LEAVE OF ABSENCE 39](#_bookmark85)

[HEALTH AND SAFETY 40](#_bookmark86)

[ACCIDENTS 40](#_bookmark87)

[GENERAL SAFETY 40](#_bookmark88)

[VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE 40](#_bookmark89)

[DRUGS AND ALCOHOL 41](#_bookmark90)

[DISTRICT PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT 44](#_bookmark91)

[DISTRICT PROPERTY 44](#_bookmark92)

[VEHICLE USE 44](#_bookmark93)

[PERSONAL PROPERTY 46](#_bookmark94)

[WORKPLACE SEARCHES 46](#_bookmark95)

[DISTRICT CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS, AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA 46](#_bookmark96)

[Personal Telephone Calls 46](#_bookmark97)

[District Cell Phones, Laptops, And Electronic Equipment Use 46](#_bookmark98)

[FILE AND WEBSITE ACCESS AND SECURITY POLICY 49](#_bookmark99)

[District File Access 49](#_bookmark100)

[Website Accounts 49](#_bookmark101)

[SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES 50](#_bookmark102)

[NON-DISCLOSURE 52](#_bookmark103)

[INVENTIONS AND CREATIVE OUTPUT 52](#_bookmark104)

[ETHICS/EMPLOYEE CONDUCT 54](#_bookmark105)

[CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND SELF-INTEREST 54](#_bookmark106)

[OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS ACTIVITIES 56](#_bookmark107)

[DISTRICT COST-SHARE 57](#_bookmark108)

[EMPLOYEE CONDUCT 57](#_bookmark109)

[DISCIPLINE FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR 58](#_bookmark110)

[DISCIPLINE AND TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT 59](#_bookmark111)

[RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT 60](#_bookmark112)

[OF SNOHOMISH CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S 60](#_bookmark113)

[EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK 60](#_bookmark114)

[PAYCHECK DEDUCTION AUTHORIZATION 61](#_bookmark115)

# WELCOME

Welcome to employment with the Snohomish Conservation District (SCD or the District).

We believe that, as part of our team, you will play a meaningful role in our future growth and success, and we're pleased to have you on board. At the same time, we hope you will find your work here to be a source of pride and satisfaction. You are joining a group of employees who are skilled and dedicated to quality workmanship, high productivity, and a commitment to team objectives. We believe that each employee contributes to Snohomish Conservation District’s growth and success and hope you will take pride in being a member of our team.

We operate with an emphasis on the importance of each employee's contribution to the total performance of the District. We have adopted an “open-door” policy, where questions about your employment are always welcomed. Your concerns are important to us and we want to hear them. Snohomish Conservation District relies on its employees to provide comments and suggestions so that we continue to improve services and products to our customers.

Snohomish Conservation District believes that the working conditions, wages, and benefits offered its employees are competitive with those offered by other employers in our industry and geographical area. Occasionally, concerns and questions regarding conditions of employment or compensation may arise and employees are encouraged to voice their concerns to their manager or supervisor. While the District may not be able to change what concerns an employee, we will listen to questions and hopefully provide additional information to aid the employee in understanding the reason for the program/policy as a public sector employer.

Snohomish Conservation District desires to demonstrate its commitment to its employees by listening to and responding to employee concerns.

This handbook was developed to assist you in understanding the District's basic philosophy. Our emphasis is on teamwork and we encourage cooperative decision- making among employees and management. Snohomish Conservation District actively seeks to create a positive, respectful work environment in which every employee can realize his or her full potential.

## INTRODUCTION

This Employee Handbook is intended to provide employees of SCD with a summary of key district personnel policies for ease of use. The District defers to the State Merit Rules (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=357>) and the Washington State Conservation Commission Grants Procedure Manual ([http://scc.wa.gov/grants- finance/gp-manuals/](http://scc.wa.gov/grants-finance/gp-manuals/)) for issues not otherwise highlighted or addressed here. You should read, understand, and comply with all provisions of the handbook. It describes your

responsibilities as an employee and outlines the programs developed by SCD to benefit you. Should you have questions about policy application, please check with your supervisor, Human Resources or the Administrative Assistant.

Snohomish Conservation District is a subdivision of state government with the purpose of helping landowners to address natural resource issues. As a subdivision of state government, the District is considered a public employer. District organization consists of a Board of Supervisors who oversee District activities. The District Manager directs day- to-day district activities and reports directly to the Board of Supervisors. District's staff, which may include engineers, technicians, other professionals and support staff as determined by the District from time to time, report directly to the Manager. The Board of Supervisors holds monthly board meetings attended by the Manager, a support person to take minutes and at times, other staff. The District works closely with its federal partners, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Farm Service Agency (FSA). As of the date of the publication of this handbook, NRCS shares an office with the District, provides technical support and administers USDA programs that the District makes available to landowners. FSA works closely with the District to implement the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).

This handbook is presented as a matter of information only, to help employees get acquainted with the District and its operations, and should not be interpreted as making any promises of specific treatment in specific situations.

No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policy. As we continue to grow, the need to change policies described in the handbook may arise. Therefore, SCD reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portions thereof, from time to time, as it deems appropriate, at its sole and absolute discretion. The only recognized deviations from the stated policies are those authorized and signed by the Chair of the Board of Supervisors. New policies or revisions may be distributed to all employees as a new or revised page of the Handbook.

**This Employee Handbook and any of its policies do not constitute an employment contract or a guarantee of employment for any specific period of time. Unless an employee has a written employment contract to the contrary, employees of Snohomish Conservation District are employed for an indefinite period of time, and both the employee and Snohomish Conservation District may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without reason or notice. Only the District Manager or the Board, in writing, can alter the “at-will” status of an employee’s employment.**

After reviewing the handbook, please sign the Receipt and Acknowledgment of Snohomish Conservation District’s Employee Handbook form included at the end of this handbook confirming that you have received and understand the contents of the Snohomish Conservation District’s Policy/Employee Handbook. It is your responsibility to read, understand, and place the new or revised policies in your own Handbook. The signed Receipt and Acknowledgment form will become a part of the employee's

personnel file.

## HISTORY

Snohomish Conservation District is a non-regulatory, political, subdivision of Washington State. Conservation Districts were established by RCW 89.08, an enabling statute adopted by the State of Washington in 1939.

The District has been working with farmers and landowners since 1941. District boundaries include Camano Island (added in 1961) and most of Snohomish County.

The District is governed by a five-member Board of Supervisors. Three of the supervisors are elected locally, and at least two of the three must be landowners or farm operators.

Two of the five supervisors are appointed by Washington State Conservation Commission. At least one of the appointees must be a landowner or farm operator. Supervisors serve staggered terms of three years.

The District provides the following services to its constituents:

* Classes and workshops
* Engineering assistance
* Farm Planning
* Stream and wetland restoration
* Volunteer opportunities
* Model Farm Tours
* An annual Conservation Plant Sale
* Educational opportunities
* Internships
* Storm water and Low Impact Development Services
* Youth Education

## MISSION/VALUES

Snohomish Conservation District’s mission is to work cooperatively with others to promote and encourage conservation and responsible use of natural resources.

It is the Snohomish Conservation District’s goal to do the following:

* To identify and understand the unique needs of each consumer, and go beyond the expected in meeting those needs;
* To provide each employee with the training and support needed to grow professionally and personally;
* To adhere to the highest standards of honesty and ethical behavior toward consumers, employees, suppliers and the community.

# HIRING PRACTICES

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT

Snohomish Conservation District is an equal opportunity employer and it is our policy that employees and applicants will not be subjected to unlawful discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, age, creed, national origin, honorably discharged veteran’s status, marital status, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or any other basis prohibited by applicable state, federal or local laws. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including hiring, placement, promotion, termination, reduction in force, recall, transfer, and leaves of absence, compensation and training. The District complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws that prohibit discrimination in employment.

Any District employee who is found to have violated the District’s strict policy against any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS

SCD relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the completed employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process. Misrepresentations, falsifications, or omissions in an employment application or the application process may result in the exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment, or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

## EMPLOYMENT REFERENCE CHECKS

To ensure that individuals who join SCD are well qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, it is the policy of SCD to verify information provided on each job application form.

Therefore, following a conditional offer of employment, a **Washington State Patrol** (or equivalent) **Search** will be conducted. Applicants who apply for a position that involves driving on District business must hold a valid driver’s license, and the District reserves the right (as a condition to employment and periodically during the employment relationship) to request from the employee and/or the appropriate governing agency, a copy of the employee’s current driving abstract (Motor Vehicle Report)**.**

It is SCD’s general policy and practice to respond to reference requests involving its employees by confirming the employee’s dates of employment, position held, and compensation as of the request date.

## NEPOTISM

SCD is committed to providing a working environment, which fosters the equitable treatment of all employees. Hiring of members from the same family is not prohibited; however, certain restrictions apply. Family members are prohibited from exercising

supervisory authority over other family members and will not be employed in positions that may create a conflict of interest or any other problem resulting from patronage or favoritism.

## HIRING LETTER (OR CONDITIONAL OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT)

Upon the District completing its initial evaluation of a qualified candidate-- i.e. all relevant non-medical information, such as educational qualifications, reference checks, valid driver's license (as applicable) are completed and the applicant is deemed to meet the minimum qualifications of the position-- a written offer of employment is made. The offer of employment will include the position the applicant is being appointed to, hire date, starting salary, probationary period, and other relevant information. Both the employee and the District Manager sign the hiring letter.

It is recommended that the applicant not quit their current employment until after the successful completion of the above requirements.

## IMMIGRATION LAW COMPLIANCE

In compliance with the United States Immigration and Reform Control Act of 1986, SCD is committed to employing only those who are legally authorized to work in the United States. As a condition of employment, each new employee must properly complete, sign, and date the first section of the Immigration and Naturalization Service Form I-9.

In accordance with the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service's requirements, SCD will require verification of employment eligibility by requesting appropriate documents that verify identity and eligibility for employment in the United States. Appropriate documents may include a United States passport; or driver's license and social security card; or voter's registration and social security card; or driver's license and original or certified copy of birth certificate issued within the United States. All employees are required to submit this information within three days of their date of hire. Failure to do so may result in termination of their employment.

## NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

SCD’s Administrative Assistant (or designee) will provide an orientation for all new employees. Orientation includes the completion of all paperwork, an explanation of employee benefits, and explanation and presentation of the District's Employee Handbook. The employee's manager or supervisor will generally provide a tour of the facility, including introductions to fellow employees. Managers or supervisors will also be responsible for the explanation of the employee's job responsibilities. A formal job description will be outlined for each position. Questions or comments should be addressed to the employee's manager or supervisor.

# EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES/POLICIES

## AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT

Employment at Snohomish Conservation District is at-will, which means that either the employee or Snohomish Conservation District may terminate the employment relationship at any time with or without cause or notice. This at-will relationship can be modified only in writing, as approved by the Board. The at-will relationship cannot be modified by any oral statements or promises, by anything in this Policy/Employee Handbook or in any other handbooks, or by any other materials except in writing signed with the approval of the Board.

## INTRODUCTORY PERIOD

While the District makes every effort to hire the most qualified candidate for a position, the District considers the introductory period to be a training, and an opportunity for the District to observe each newly-hired employee to ensure that he/she is a good fit to the position and the organization.

The District’s introductory period is typically six months from the date of hire. Prior to completion of the six-month introductory period, the District may in its discretion conduct a three month review. At the end of the six-month introductory period an employee evaluation is typically conducted and the District Manager will make a determination as to whether (1) the employee will become a regular employee; (2) the introductory period will be extended for further evaluation; or (3) the employment relationship will be terminated.

During an employee's introductory period vacation and sick leave will accrue; however, an employee may not use accrued vacation until he/she has successfully completed his/her introductory period. Leave without pay will be allowed during the introductory period for a pre-planned vacation that is disclosed by the employee to the District during the hiring process. Any leave without pay, will extend the employee's introductory period by those number of days.

If Snohomish Conservation District determines that the designated introductory period does not allow sufficient time to thoroughly evaluate the employee’s performance, the introductory period may be extended solely at the discretion of the District. The introductory period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. Snohomish Conservation District uses this period to evaluate employee capabilities, work habits, and overall performance. **Satisfactory completion of the introductory period does not create a contract or a guarantee of employment for any specific period of time and as set forth above, either the employee or Snohomish Conservation District may end the employment relationship at will at any time during or after the introductory period, with or without cause or notice.**

During the introductory period, new employees are eligible for those benefits that are required by law or by Snohomish Conservation District’s benefit programs or plans. Employees should read the information for each specific Benefit program for the details on eligibility requirements.

## OPEN COMMUNICATION (OPEN DOOR POLICY)

At SCD, communication is synonymous to good relationships both between employees, as well as with customers. Employees are encouraged to share their concerns, seek information, provide input, and resolve work-related issues by discussing the work related issue in a professional manner with their immediate supervisor. It may not be possible to achieve the results an employee wants, but the supervisor is encouraged to explain in each case why a certain course of action is preferred. If an issue cannot be resolved at this level, the employee is encouraged to discuss the issue with their manager. If the employee’s concern cannot be resolved with their manager, the employee may discuss it with the District Manager.

The Snohomish Conservation District Board has assigned the daily operations and daily personnel matters to the District Manager (or his or her designee). Accordingly, employees should make every effort to resolve the issue using the above chain of command. Only if resolution has not been reached in the above manner should the employee bring the matter to the Board.

If an employee has a concern about discrimination and/or harassment, SCD has set up special procedures to report and address those issues. The proper reporting procedures are set forth in the District’s Anti-Harassment and Non-Discrimination policy and employees should follow those procedures for those types of complaints or concerns.

## ACCOMMODATION

Snohomish Conservation District will make reasonable accommodations for the known physical or mental disabilities of an employee, unless an undue hardship would result. The employee should advise either the District Manager or Human Resources representative of any accommodations he or she believes are medically necessary in order to perform the essential functions of the job. Snohomish Conservation District may request medical certification and related information from the employee’s health care provider and generally engage in an interactive process with the employee. As part of the interactive process, Snohomish Conservation District will determine what, if any, reasonable accommodation may be appropriate. Snohomish Conservation District may take other action regarding employee accommodation, as appropriate, in accordance with state, federal or local laws.

## ATTENDANCE

Regular and timely attendance is essential for Snohomish Conservation District to function productively. Absences and tardiness (or leaving early) are disruptive to the efforts of co-workers and the District. Unexplained or unexcused absences and excessive tardiness, or leaving early, will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

If an employee is unable to attend work, or must arrive late or leave earlier than the scheduled shift, the employee is required to contact his or her immediate supervisor or manager prior to start or end of the scheduled shift (notifying another co-worker is not sufficient), and as far in advance as possible. If advance notice is not possible due to an emergency situation, the employee should contact his or her supervisor or manager as soon as reasonably practicable. The employee should indicate the reason for his or her absence or lateness and when he or she expects to return to work. Employees who do not report to work on time and do not call may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including the termination.

Employees who fail to report for work as scheduled or properly report their absence to their supervisor or manager will be subject to disciplinary action, including termination. Employees who are absent from work for *three (3)* consecutive days, without providing proper notice, will be considered to have abandoned their positon and *voluntarily terminated their employment.*

In the event an employee suffers a serious illness or injury that causes or is anticipated to cause an absence of more than five (5) consecutive days from work, Snohomish Conservation District requires employees to provide *original* medical certification from a health care provider for such absences due.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER AND NATURAL DISASTERS

Conditions such as severe weather, fire, flood, earthquake, or other natural disasters can disrupt SCD operations as well as endanger the health and welfare of SCD employees. In certain circumstances, the Manager may, in his or her discretion, declare the office to be officially closed due to unusual or inclement conditions. In such cases, the Manager may grant administrative leave or allow employees to work at home or another location as deemed appropriate. If the office is open but an employee is unable to reasonably report to work due to inclement conditions, the employee may elect use available paid leave in connection with such absence. If the employee does not have available paid leave, the absence will be unpaid.

## PERSONNEL DATA CHANGES

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify the Administrative Assistant and Payroll of any changes in personnel data. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, and number and names of dependents, individuals to be contacted in an emergency, educational accomplishments, and other such status reports must be kept current at all times. Unless otherwise required by law, SCD will not release employment information unless the employee signs a statement authorizing the release of confidential information.

## ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILES

Personnel files are the property of SCD and access to the information they contain is restricted. Generally, only those who have a legitimate reason to review information in a file are allowed to do so. Employees may review their personnel files, but only with

reasonable advance notice, and only in the presence of the District Manager or the SCD Human Resource representative. Employees may not remove any information or documentation in their personnel file, but may request that a letter of rebuttal or correction prepared by the employee be placed in the file.

## MEDICAL RECORDS

Documents containing an employee’s medical information shall be kept in a file that is separate from the employee’s personnel file. Access to an employee’s medical information shall be restricted to only those District personnel with a need to know, or as may be otherwise required by law.

## PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Performance evaluations are used to communicate employee performance and to set goals by conducting and documenting an annual performance evaluation or review. A newly hired employee will typically receive a performance review at the completion of their first six months of employment. In addition, a new promotion, demotion or a significant job change may trigger the performance review process, in the District’s discretion. The successful completion of the period of review does not alter or change the at-will status of the employee’s employment.

A performance evaluation is an interactive process and the manager/supervisor may also solicit input from others who have worked with the employee such as NRCS staff, senior district staff, partners, etc. The employee will generally be given an opportunity to respond to any comments in the evaluation. Performance Evaluations are used, among other factors, to determine annual salary or wage adjustments and to determine whether work performance requirements have been met.

SCD strives to review employees on an annual basis. Generally, reviews are conducted during the month of November, with the intention of completing all employee evaluations by the end of the calendar year, although dates and times of employee reviews may be conducted at any time, at the sole discretion of SCD.

## INTERNAL TRANSFERS

SCD will give consideration to employee requests for internal transfers. Job openings may be posted internally for a period of five days when the position becomes available. Employees interested in a posted position, for which they are qualified, must inform their manager or supervisor of their interest. Transfers are accomplished with the manager's approval and in the District’s discretion. Transfers may also be initiated by SCD if it is determined that the move will not only broaden the range of skills within the organization but also enhance individual versatility.

## EMPLOYEE TRAINING/TRAVEL

SCD provides training to employees in a variety of ways. The NRCS provides training opportunities that are open to district employees. Local organizations and agencies offer training, as does the Washington Association of District Employees (WADE). Courses offered at local colleges and universities may be approved as paid training for district

employees or some tuition costs may be covered by the district on a case-by-case basis depending on relevance and need for the position.

The District will follow the existing Travel Reimbursement Policy, in order to meet the requirements of RCW 42.24.090. SCD also follows the existing U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) reimbursement breakdown for meals and incidental expenses. See the Administrative Assistant for more information.

## TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

All staff is required to submit a Travel Approval voucher prior to any travel outside of the District Boundaries. All such travel shall be approved by the District Manager or Program Manager.

Travel expenses are reimbursable when incurred in carrying out the business of the District, or for prior approved job related training employees must obtain prior approval from the District Manager before incurring in-state travel expenses, excluding mileage incurred in performing normal and usual district business. The District Manager and board of supervisors are exempt from obtaining prior approval, excluding out of state travel. All out-of-state travel requests by employees and board members must be preapproved by the Board.

Travel expenses will be reimbursed at actual costs and require receipts, and these expenses shall not exceed per diem expenses at the current state rate for in-state travel or current federal rate for out-of-state travel in effect at the time the expenses are incurred. The preferred vehicle choice is a district vehicle; however, exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis if the district vehicle is not available, or there is a more cost effective method of travel. Mileage will be incurred from the district to the official destination and back, unless other arrangements have been made in advance. Mileage expenses will be reimbursed at the current state rate at the time the expense was incurred.

To attend an in-state conference, workshop, etc., employees will submit a request form to the District Manager for approval. If traveling out of state, the Board must approve the request. If the request is approved, purchase order forms will need to be completed for the travel expenses. Other travel expenses, such as ferry and parking, will be reimbursed with the completion and submittal of an expense voucher request with original receipts attached. The expense voucher should be submitted to the Administrative Assistant for approval and reconciliation with purchase orders and/or the training request form.

District employees and board members are eligible for government rates at hotels when traveling on district business. The staff assistant can make transportation and lodging reservations for employees and board members. If it has been approved transportation expenses can be charged to the District credit card. If the District Manager has given approval lodging reservations can be held using the district credit card; however, if neither the District Manager nor the Chair will be present when the credit card is to be charged, either a check for the exact amount of the lodging plus tax can be requested, or the traveler may pay for the lodging and be reimbursed by submitting an expense voucher

to the Administrative Assistant. The original receipts must be attached to the voucher for the Administrative Assistant to reconcile and approve the expenses.

Large ticket items (such as airfare, hotel, etc.), when purchased on a personal card may be reimbursed prior to completion of training course, session or meeting upon Board approval.

The District shall reimburse employees for reasonable and customary meal expenses incurred while on District business; provided, that an employee shall not claim reimbursement when a meal is included in the registration fee of a meeting or conference (reimbursement will not be made if the employee chooses not to eat at the meeting or conference when meals are included in the registration). Any tip or gratuity included within the reimbursement request shall not exceed twenty percent (20%) of the cost of the meal. Alcohol costs shall not be reimbursed.

## PURCHASING

Credit (Purchasing) Card. The proper usage and control of a purchasing card is the responsibility of the District Manager. To aid in the reasonable assurance that a purchasing card is used properly and effectively, each cardholder must adhere to the following policy.

1. Authorized employees may use a purchasing card to procure goods and services for job related activities when and only when a credit card expenditure request has been made to and approved by the District Manager. This is subject to an individual transaction purchase authorization limit of $1,000.
2. Use of a purchasing card is to be handled in such a manner to:
   1. Ensure it is used only for authorized purposes; and,
   2. Follow laws, rules, and regulations governing the disbursement.
3. A purchasing card must **NOT** be used to:
   1. Obtain cash advances from financial institutions;
   2. Make personal purchases;
   3. Purchase equipment, materials, or supplies restricted by policies, guidelines, or contractual agreements;
   4. Purchase materials or services from any member of the cardholder’s immediate family.
   5. Purchase fuel for a personal vehicle.
4. All users of a card must have familiarity with these procedures, and knowledge of the location of a written reference copy of these procedures.
5. The District Bank-- the purchasing card provider-- shall send the Purchasing Card Manager a statement that displays detailed transaction activity for each card during the current billing cycle.
6. The District Manager must report lost or stolen purchasing cards immediately after the loss is discovered by calling the District Bank customer service center and notifying the Purchasing Card Manager in writing.
7. Any transactions that are deemed to be not job-related and disallowable are the fiscal responsibility of the employee. If the employee is unable to reimburse the District in cash immediately for the disallowed charges plus any interest accrued, the corresponding amount will be deducted from the employee’s pay.

Additionally, unauthorized transactions may in certain cases have criminal implications, in which case the District Manager, in his/her discretion, may involve law enforcement and/or the State auditor’s office.

1. Card-Users with a history of card misuse or who fail to observe this policy will have their purchasing card privileges revoked and will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment.

## PURCHASING CARD USAGE

1. Employee duties in the handling of disbursements, including purchasing card use, are to be separated to the extent possible with regard to the:
   1. Initiating of purchase requests;
   2. Safeguarding and use of the card; and,
   3. Monitoring and approval of purchases and statements.
2. Employee duties in regard to purchases are to be complementary to or reviewed by the District Manager.
3. The District Grants Administrator will be the Purchasing Card Manager. The Purchasing Card Manager is responsible for:
   1. Securing the card from card provider;
   2. Monitoring the usage of the card on a monthly basis or more frequently if required;
   3. Taking prompt, necessary, and appropriate measures to solve disputes and correct any misuse;
   4. Initiating resolution action regarding discrepancies or disputes;
   5. Resolving disputes within 60 days from discovery of the disputed item;
   6. Notifying the employee, in writing, of the discrepancy and the action required if the organization is unable to successfully resolve the discrepancy of dispute;
   7. Reviewing and signing the reconciliation;
   8. Designating and training the Purchasing Card Custodian;
   9. Designating individuals to have electronic access to purchase card information; and,
   10. Establishing card renewal procedures.
4. The District Manager will be the Purchasing Card Custodian. The Purchasing Card Custodian is responsible for:
   1. Keeping the purchasing card in a secure, lockable place;
   2. Issuing the card to authorized users;
   3. Maintaining the Purchasing Card Transactions Log for all transactions made according to procedures;
   4. Securing and retaining original documentation supporting purchases charged to the purchasing card;
   5. Reporting lost or stolen card immediately to the Purchasing Card Manager; and,
   6. Surrendering the card to the Purchasing Card Manager upon termination or change of employment.
5. The District Administrative Assistant will be responsible for:
   1. Reconciling purchases to the transaction log and monthly statement;
   2. Notifying the Purchasing Card Manager promptly of any known or suspected inappropriate use of the purchase cards
6. Card is to be kept in a secure, locked place with limited access.
7. When an employee has a need for the purchasing card, the employee must request the card from the Purchasing Card Custodian. The employee, upon completion of their need for the purchasing card, must turn the card back in to the Purchasing Card Custodian within one (1) workday.
8. The Purchasing Card Custodian must maintain a purchasing card transaction log. The log must contain the following information:
   1. Purchase date;
   2. Vendor’s name;
   3. Item(s) purchased;
   4. Purchaser’s name;
   5. Total amount of purchase;
   6. Detail on the grant and task to be billed;
   7. Original detailed documentation of transaction;
   8. The initials of the person reconciling the log to the purchasing card statement; and,
   9. Any other information the Purchasing Card Manager may specify.
9. The Purchasing Card Custodian must submit to the Administrative Assistant the purchasing card log with original documentation within one (1) business week of the expense(s) being incurred. If in travel status, the cardholder must submit the purchasing card log with original documentation within one (1) workday upon return to regular work status.

District staff members are generally authorized, to purchase items included in grants they administer; provided, that they have been approved by the District Board of Supervisors. District staff may make other incidental purchases up to $250 per purchase with a monthly combined maximum of $1,000 upon prior authorization by the District Manager.

## EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION INCENTIVES, AND AWARDS

Snohomish Conservation District may identify an "Employee of the Year" based on exceptional performance or work completed above and beyond their job description.

Additionally, the District may, in its discretion and from time to time, establish certain recognition and/or incentive programs designed to recognize and reward employees who demonstrate the values of the District, which include longevity and high levels of professionalism, customer service, safety, and productivity. Incentives shall be based on pre-established criteria and will not exceed $200 in value per award. Awards may include cash or noncash items such as pen and desk sets, plaques, pins, framed certificates, clocks, and calculators.

Any incentive awarded by the District shall not become a permanent salary increase, but will be considered to be income for recognizing (pre)-documented exceptional work and performance results. The District reserves the right to alter, amend, or eliminate any recognition or incentive program at any time, in its sole discretion.

## TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT WITH DISTRICT

A termination of employment with the District may be voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary termination includes resignations and layoffs due to work or staff reduction. Involuntary termination is a termination by the District, with or without cause.

All employee resignations, including retirement, should be in writing. Two weeks notice of voluntary resignation is required. Upon receiving notice of a voluntary resignation, the District in its discretion may elect to accept such resignation effective as of an earlier date, in which case the District shall pay the resigning employee an amount equal to that which the employee otherwise would have earned had the employee worked his/her normal schedule through the resignation date (up to two (2) weeks of the employee’s regular wages).

Employees whose employment is terminated, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, shall be paid at the end of the next-regularly scheduled payroll period for all hours worked by the employee up to the date of termination.

An employee whose employment is terminated shall return to that employee’s immediate supervisor all District property in the employee’s possession, including but not limited to all keys, electronics, equipment, etc., prior to leaving SCD. All SCD property must be returned in good condition, normal wear and tear excepted.

## EXIT INTERVIEWS

Employees who leave SCD may be requested to participate in an exit interview with a designated representative of the District prior to the employee’s last work day.This is to document the reasons for the employee’s leaving and to solicit constructive feedback designed to improve the District.

## ANTI-HARASSMENT AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Snohomish Conservation District prohibits any form of unlawful harassment or discrimination in the workplace. All employees are expected to be sensitive to and respectful of their coworkers and others with whom they come into contact with while representing the District. Harassment or discrimination based on an individual’s sex, race, color, national origin, religion, creed age, sexual orientation, marital status, honorably discharged veteran’s status, physical or mental disability, or any other characteristic protected by state, federal or local law is unacceptable and *will not be tolerated*. Conduct that demonstrates mutual respect is expected of all employees in the workplace.

Retaliation against any person who complains in good faith of harassment or discrimination in good faith, or who participates in an investigation in good faith, is also prohibited.

## POLICY AGAINST HARASSMENT

This policy states the Snohomish Conservation District’s commitment to prevent harassment in the working environment, to establish guidelines for reporting harassment, and to provide procedures for eliminating sexual harassment should it occur in violation of this policy. The SCD does not tolerate harassment by anyone in the workplace—

whether by board members, managers, supervisors, employees or non-employees. Employees who violate this policy are subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

#### *What is harassment*?

Examples of harassment based on race, national origin, religion, age or disability can include, but are not limited to:

* Memos, e-mails, cartoons or other visual displays of objects, pictures or posters that depict such groups or individuals in a derogatory way; or
* Verbal conduct, including making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs and jokes towards individuals or such groups.
* Sexual harassment is generally defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
* Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; or
* Submission to or rejection of such conduct affects employment opportunities; or
* The conduct interferes with an employee's work or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment includes harassment based on another person's gender or harassment based upon pregnancy, childbirth or other related medical conditions. It also includes harassment of another employee of the same gender as the harasser.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following types of behavior:

* Unwelcome sexual advances, like requests for dates or propositions for sexual favors;
* Excessive, one-sided, romantic attention in the form of love letters, telephone calls, e-mails or gifts;
* Offering or conditioning an employment benefit, such as a raise, a promotion or a special job assignment, in exchange for sexual favors;
* Making or threatening reprisals, or changing performance expectations after an employee has turned down a sexual advance;
* Visual or physical conduct, like leering, making sexual gestures, or displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons, calendars or posters in the workplace;
* Verbal conduct or written material (including emails or other electronic documents), like making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, teasing and jokes of a sexual nature;
* Graphic verbal or written comments (including emails or other electronic documents) about an individual’s sex life or body;
* Sexually degrading words used to describe an individual
* Suggestive or obscene letters, emails, notes or invitations; and
* Unwelcome physical conduct, including pats, hugs, brushes, touches, shoulder rubs, assaults, or impeding or blocking movements.

This policy is also violated if an employee is fired, denied a job or denied some other employment benefit because the employee refused to grant sexual favors, complained about harassment or assisted in an investigation of harassment.

The District is committed to taking reasonable steps to prevent harassment from occurring and will take immediate and appropriate action when unlawful harassment is reported. To do this, however, the District needs the cooperation of all employees at all levels.

#### *What to do if harassment occurs.*

Each employee is responsible for reporting and adhering to this policy. Employees should never tolerate inappropriate behavior. They should make their feelings known to the offending employee. In many cases, if an employee makes his/her feelings known to the offending person(s), tells him/her that the conduct is not appropriate and asks him/her to stop, this may take care of the situation. However, if any employee is not comfortable doing this, then the employee must promptly report any offending behavior, whether such behavior is directed towards the employee personally or towards other employees of SCD, to the Manager or, if the Manager is the subject of the complaint, to the Board of Supervisors. Employees are required to report concerns about discrimination or harassment before behaviors become severe or pervasive as SCD prefers to stop discrimination or harassment before it rises to the level of a violation of the anti- discrimination laws.

SCD will promptly and appropriately investigate all claims of harassment. Complaints of discrimination or harassment will be handled with sensitivity, discretion and confidentiality to the extent allowed by the circumstances and the law. Generally, this means that the allegations of discrimination or harassment are shared with those who have a need to know so that SCD can conduct an effective investigation and take appropriate action to prevent any further violation of this policy; however, as a public agency subject to certain disclosure laws, SCD cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality in all cases.

The complaining employee will usually be requested to provide as many details as possible, such as the date(s), location(s), name(s) of witnesses, or information about the alleged harasser(s). Persons with relevant information will be interviewed. During the investigation, steps may be taken, when appropriate, to minimize contact between the complaining employee and the alleged harasser. After the investigation is completed, SCD will share its findings with the complaining employee, the alleged harasser, and if appropriate other employees directly concerned with the incident.

If SCD concludes that unlawful harassment has occurred, prompt and effective remedial action will be taken. This may include discipline of the harasser and other actions to remedy the effects of the harassment and to prevent further harassment. No action will be taken against any employee who in good faith files a complaint of harassment or who

assists in the investigation of such complaint by providing information. Employees who believe they have been retaliated against for having reported harassment or participated in an investigation of a harassment complaint are urged to promptly notify the Manager or Board of Supervisors so their concerns may be investigated. Appropriate corrective measures will be taken if allegations of retaliation are substantiated.

## EMPLOYEE DISCLOSURE ACT (Whistle Blower)

It is the policy of the Snohomish Conservation District, (1) to encourage reporting by its employees of improper governmental action taken by Snohomish Conservation District officers or employees and (2) to protect Snohomish Conservation District employees who have reported improper governmental actions in accordance with the Snohomish Conservation District's policies and procedures.

Definitions:

* *Improper Governmental Action* means any action by an employee that violates state law, abuses authority, wastes public funds, or endangers public health or safety.
* Improper Governmental Action does not include personnel actions, including but not limited to: employee grievances, complaints, appointments, promotions, transfers, assignments, reassignments, reinstatements, restorations, reemployment, performance evaluations, reductions in pay, dismissals, suspensions, demotions, relations to collective bargaining or civil service laws, alleged violations of labor agreements, or reprimands to any action that may be taken under RCW 41.56 or RCW 53.18.
* *Retaliatory Action* means any adverse change in the terms and conditions of a Snohomish Conservation District employee's employment.
* *Emergency* means a circumstance that if not immediately changed, may cause damage to persons or property.
* *Whistle blower* means a reporting employee, who in good faith, reports allegedly improper governmental action, initiating an investigation. The term whistle blower also means a reporting employee, who in good faith provides information in connection with an investigation and/or an employee who is believed to have reported allegedly improper governmental action or to have provided information with connection to an investigation, but who in fact, has not reported such action or provided such information.

Procedure:

A Snohomish Conservation District employee who becomes aware of improper governmental action should raise the issue first with their supervisor. If requested by the supervisor, the employee shall submit a written report to the supervisor stating in detail the basis for the employee's belief that an improper governmental action has occurred.

Reports must be made in writing to the District Manager. If the District Manager is the subject of the report, the report should be made to any member of the Board of Supervisors. In addition, employees may report improper governmental action to the:

**Snohomish County Prosecuting Attorney**

Snohomish County Courthouse 3000 Rockefeller

Everett, WA 98201

(425)388-3333

**Snohomish County Council**

3000 Rockefeller

Everett, WA 98201

(425)388-3494

Except in the case of an immediate threat to persons or property, employees must submit a written report of improper governmental action to the District Manager before providing information of such action to a person who is not a public official or a person listed in this section. Employees who fail to make a good faith attempt to follow this policy and procedure in reporting improper governmental action shall not be eligible for the protections against retaliation as outlined under the whistleblower laws. The District will promptly investigate all reports made pursuant to this policy. The District will keep an employee’s identity confidential to the extent possible under the law, unless the employee authorizes disclosure in writing. An employee may be advised of the results of the investigation. However, any personnel actions taken as a result of the investigation may be kept confidential.

An employee who believes that he/she has been the subject of retaliatory action for reporting an improper governmental action should:

* Provide the Board of Supervisors with a written notice of the charge of retaliatory action within thirty (30) days after the occurrence of the alleged retaliatory action specifying the alleged retaliatory action and the relief requested. The District shall response to the charge and request for relief within thirty (30) days.
* If the employee is not satisfied with the District’s response, he/she may request a hearing to establish that a retaliatory action occurred and to obtain relief. The employee must make such request within 15 days of the delivery of response, or within 15 days of the last days on which the District could respond.
* Within five (5) days of the employee’s request for a hearing, the District shall apply to the State Office of Administrative Hearings for an adjudicative proceeding before an administrative law judge. The administrative law judge shall issue a final decision within 45 days of the employee’s request for a hearing unless such time period is extended by the administrative law judge.
* ***If the decision is in the employee’s favor*** the employee ***may*** be granted relief as

follows:

* + Reinstatement with or without back pay;
  + Injunctive relief to return the employee to the position he/she held before and to prevent recurrence of retaliation;
  + Cost and reasonable attorney’s fees; and/or
  + The imposition of a civil penalty personally upon the retaliator(s) of up to

$3,000.00 payable by each person who has retaliated against the employee. The administrative law judge may also recommend to the District that the offending person(s) be suspended without pay or dismissed. All penalties recovered shall be paid to the local government administrative hearing account created pursuant to RCW 42.41.060.

**For employee complaints about harassment or discrimination, the employee should follow the Anti-Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy found in the Employment Practices Section of this Employee Handbook.**

## NO SMOKING POLICY

In keeping with SCD’s commitment to provide a safe and healthy work environment, smoking is prohibited throughout the workplace. SCD has designated an outside area for smoking, and smoking is not permitted within 25 feet of the office building.

## SOLICITATIONS

SCD believes that its employees should be able to work without interference from solicitation. Therefore, SCD does not allow any individual to come upon the premises for the purpose of soliciting or distributing literature or other materials. Furthermore, employees of SCD are prohibited from soliciting other employees, customers, or vendors during their assigned working time or in their work area.

## POLITICAL DO’S & DON’TS FOR STATE AND LOCAL EMPLOYEES

Employees are generally advised that any individual principally employed by a state or local executive agency in connection with a program financed in whole or in part by federal loans or grants.

* **May** be a candidate for public office in partisan and non-partisan elections
* **May** campaign for and hold elective office in political clubs and organizations
* **May** actively campaign for candidates for public office in partisan and nonpartisan elections
* **May** contribute money to political organizations or attend political fundraising functions
* **May** participate in any activity not specifically prohibited by law or regulation
* **May not** use official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the results of an election or a nomination for office
* **May not** directly or indirectly coerce contributions from subordinates in support of a political party or candidate

# EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS/HOURS OF WORK

SCD administrative policies and procedures are as follows. Any questions or concerns may be addressed with Administrative Assistant.

## EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

All management, professional, and some administrative employees who receive a salary are considered *exempt* employees and are excluded from federal and state overtime pay wage requirements.

### Executive Personnel

Employees whose primary duty is directing and controlling program operations of an agency or division or customarily recognized subdivision thereof: who regularly and customarily exercise independent judgment and discretion; and who supervise two or more employees.

### Professional Personnel

Employees whose primary duty consists of performing work that requires consistent application of knowledge of an advanced type in a field of science or learning that is normally gained through a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction and who regularly exercise independent judgment and discretion.

### Administrative Personnel

Employees who customarily and regularly exercise discretion and independent judgment and whose primary duty consists of work directly related to management policies or the general business operations of the District or the District’s customers. The above is only a summary, and additional positions may be classified as exempt from time to time, as the District determines appropriate.

Employees who are not classified as *exempt* are classified as *non-exempt* and are subject to provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). *Non-exempt* employees are subject to the federal and state overtime pay requirements and will be paid a rate of one and one half (1½) times their regular rate of pay for hours worked in excess of forty (40) per week.

## OTHER CLASSIFICATIONS

In addition to exempt and non-exempt categories, each employee will belong to one of the following employment classifications:

### Introductory Employee

An employee who has not yet completed his/her initial six (6) month trial period with the District.

### Regular Full-Time

An employee who is regularly scheduled to work a standard forty (40) hours or more per week. Generally, a regular full-time employee is eligible for Snohomish Conservation

District's benefits package, subject to the terms, conditions, limitations and eligibility requirements of each benefit program.

### Regular Part-Time

An employee who is regularly scheduled to work less than forty (40) hours per week but at least (20) hours per week. Regular part-time employees may be eligible for some benefits offered by Snohomish Conservation District, subject to the terms, conditions, limitations and eligibility requirements of each benefit program. Holiday, vacation and sick leave will be prorated based on the number of hours worked per month.

### Temporary (limited duration)

Employees who are hired as interim replacements, to temporarily supplement the work force, or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Employment assignments in this category are of a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status. Temporary employees retain that status until notified of a change. Temporary employees are ineligible for any of SCD’s benefit programs.

### Intern/Project Employee

An employee hired for a period of limited duration to complete special projects, or to provide coverage during temporarily heavier workloads or in an emergency. Unless otherwise approved by the Manager, interns and Project Employees shall be hired for no longer than five (5) months.

### Volunteer

Volunteers may be appointed by the District. Individuals who serve as District volunteers receive only those benefits expressly conferred in writing or by law. Volunteers must abide by all applicable rules, policies, and practices of the District, and are held to the same standard of performance as Regular Employees. Volunteers serve at the pleasure of the District and either party may end the volunteer arrangement at any time.

The District will create a file for each volunteer which will contain, at a minimum, the appropriation position description, orientation checklist form, time sheets, notes and correspondence regarding the volunteer, and emergency contact information. The District does not allow volunteers to operate District vehicles.

Volunteers will be asked to sign a release for a reference check and a standard “Volunteer Agreement” form provided by the District.

Each volunteer will keep a record of hours worked for the District. The time sheet and mileage record will be turned in two days before the last workings day of the month to the District Manager, or his or her designee.

District employees are not ‘volunteers’ under this Policy, and must obtain approval from their supervisory for participation in activities outside their normal employment that may create overtime obligations for the District.

## OFFICE HOURS/HOURS OF WORK

The District office is officially open to the public from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday. The District's normal workweek is defined as commencing on Sunday morning at 12:01 a.m. and ending the following Saturday evening at midnight.

The standard work week at Snohomish Conservation District is 40 hours. The standard work day for all regular full-time, exempt employees, is eight (8) hours a day (Monday through Friday).

Workday lengths for exempt employees are determined primarily by their current workloads although general working hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily. Starting and ending times may vary, an employee's supervisor or manager determines schedule.

Staffing needs and operational demands may, from time to time, necessitate variations in starting and ending times as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week.

## FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES

Flexible scheduling is available in some cases to allow employees to vary starting and ending times each day, within established limits. Employees who wish to vary their work schedules must consult with their supervisor and manager. All alternate work schedules require supervisory pre-approval. Attendance and punctuality will be judged against that schedule.

## TELECOMUTING POLICY

Employees may be able to work from home with prior approval by either the District Manager or Program Manager. Either manager reserves the right to ask for documentation of completed work when the employee returns to the office. Employees are expected to be available for calls or questions during time away from the office during regular business hours. The employee must sign a work at home agreement with their manager outlining work expected to be completed away from the office prior to telecommuting scheduling.

## BREAKS

Non-exempt employees are entitled to two (2) ten minute rest breaks each four hours of work. Normally these rest breaks will be scheduled in mid-morning and mid-afternoon. At least a thirty (30) minute unpaid meal period is provided to any non-exempt employee who works a minimum of five (5) hours per day. Non-exempt employees are expected to take their full allotted time for lunch within 4 hours of the beginning of the work day. In the event that non-exempt employees are requested to work beyond eight hours, they may be entitled to a second meal break or another rest period. Exempt employees should schedule their lunch to accommodate the needs of the Snohomish Conservation District.

# COMPENSATION

The following paragraphs outline SCD general pay practices. Additional information may be obtained from the Financial Administrator. State or federal law requires several benefits, i.e. Social Security, Worker's Compensation Insurance and Unemployment Insurance. Eligible employees should be aware that these benefits have been paid for by SCD and are available should the need arise.

## PAY PERIOD

All employees are paid monthly, on the 10th day of the preceding month, minus any draws. Each paycheck will include earnings for work performed through the end of the prior month. Each paystub also includes a statement itemizing gross pay, deductions, and net pay. Full-time employees will get a draw on the 25th of the month. If the 10th or the 25th falls on a weekend or, in the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a holiday, employees will be paid on the last workday prior to the regularly scheduled payday. Questions should be directed to the Financial Administrator.

## TIME RECORDS/TIME KEEPING

Each employee and volunteer is required to accurately record time worked on District business. Accurate recording of time worked is the responsibility of every employee and is the basis for the District’s calculation of employee pay and benefits. Time sheets and expense claims should be complete, accurate, and submitted to the Program Manager or Manager before the last working day of the month, or as directed by the Manager.

Falsification or alteration of time records, or having other individuals complete your time records is prohibited and will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Corrections or other necessary changes to submitted time records may be made only with the consent of the employee’s manager or supervisor.

Personal time spent in the District office outside regular working hours should not be recorded.

## PAY UPON SEPARATION

An employee separating from service with the District will be paid for all hours worked through the date of termination at the end of the next-regularly scheduled payroll period. Regular Employees who separate from service will be paid for their accrued but unused vacation leave, at the employee’s base rate of pay; provided, that in the case of a voluntary resignation, the employee has provided at least two (2) weeks advance notice of such resignation. Additionally, the District shall pay the employee any accrued compensatory time.

## OVERTIME PAY/EXCHANGE TIME

From time to time, it may be necessary for employees to perform additional or overtime work in order to complete a project or duty. Non-exempt employees will be paid overtime at the rate of one and one half (1½) times the employee’s regular rate of pay for *hours worked* (not including time paid but not worked such as sick/vacation leave) in excess of 40 hours per week. All worked overtime must be pre-approved by his/her

supervisor or manager. Failure to obtain prior approval for overtime hours may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Although not eligible for overtime pay under the federal and state wage and hour laws, exempt employees may accrue exchange time, one hour of exchange time for one hour worked, upon pre approval and not to exceed 40 hours per year. Exchange time hours must be used within the following month of accrual.

## COMPENSATORY TIME

Compensatory time may, upon request by the employee and approval by an employee’s manager, be given to an employee in lieu of overtime pay for the overtime work performed by a non-exempt employee. Exempt employees are not eligible for compensatory time. If approved, an employee shall be given compensatory time off at a rate of 1½ hours for each hour worked beyond 40 hours in a work week. Paid time not actually worked, such as sick leave, vacation and holidays do not count as time worked. The following provisions apply to compensatory time:

* Compensatory time may be accumulated up to a maximum of 40 hours. Any overtime worked above this amount shall be paid in the employee’s next regular pay check.
* Use of compensatory time will be allowed unless the compensatory time off will unduly disrupt agency operations.
* Compensatory time shall be taken before vacation leave.
* The District encourages overtime compensatory time to be taken as soon as possible after it is earned (ideally within the month).
* If an employee separates from the District before using compensatory time, the time shall be paid in a lump sum along with accrued but unused vacation leave.

## PAY ADVANCES

In the event of a personal emergency, an employee may submit a written request for a pay advance to his or her manager, indicating the nature of the emergency involved. The request will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and is subject to written approval by the District Manager following approval by the Board, in their discretion. Employees may receive *one pay advance per year.* Pay advances are not a right of employment with SCD. Pay advances constitute a debt of the employee and shall be repaid by deduction(s) to the employee’s subsequent paychecks, including the employee’s final paycheck, if applicable.

## PAY DEDUCTIONS

The law requires that SCD make certain deductions from every employee's compensation. Among these are Federal Income taxes, Social Security taxes (FICA), and State of Washington Industrial Insurance. Social Security taxes are deducted on each employee's earnings up to a specified limit that is called the Social Security wage base.

SCD matches the amount of Social Security taxes paid by each employee. In accordance with Washington State Law, the District also deducts Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) contributions from the employee's paycheck.

## GARNISHMENTS

By law, the District is required to honor legal garnishments of an employee's wages. The employee will be notified of any garnishment received by the District.

# BENEFITS

It is SCD’s policy to offer eligible employees a comprehensive plan of benefits. A number of the programs (Unemployment Insurance, Workers' Compensation, and Social Security) cover all employees as prescribed by law. Benefits eligibility is dependent upon a variety of factors, including employee classification. Employees will be informed of the programs for which they are eligible. SCD’s benefit package includes vacation benefits, paid holidays, medical insurance, dental insurance, life insurance, participation in the state retirement system and a deferred compensation savings plan. SCD reserves the right to change the benefit plans at any time, in its discretion, to ensure quality plans at reasonable cost. Each of these plans is set forth in more detail as follows:

## MEDICAL BENEFITS

SCD provides insurance coverage through the Washington State Health Care Authority (WSHCA). This program offers insurance through a number of carriers, typically about 10 per year. These may change from year to year depending on the contracts established by the WSHCA. Vision coverage may be included within the chosen medical plan.1 Employees may choose one plan each year for their coverage. The SCD Board decides each year what plan premium amount the District will pay and at what percentage of premiums for employees and their dependents. If an employee chooses a plan that costs more than what the District has authorized, the employee will pay the difference through

payroll deduction. If an employee chooses a plan that costs less, no rebate is offered to the employee; however, the district will cover the full premium amount for the plan. See the Administrative Assistant for more information.

For those employees who waive medical insurance coverage and provide proof of coverage under another employer-sponsored medical insurance plan, the District offers a VEBA contribution in lieu of the District-sponsored medical coverage. The District’s contribution is two-hundred fifty dollars ($250) per month to an eligible employee’s VEBA account.

It is a goal of the Snohomish Conservation District Board of Supervisors to support the majority of the costs associated with medical insurance coverage for district employees that qualify for coverage. The Board of Supervisors will determine the level of support for medical insurance coverage for spouses and children on an annual basis. The District will not support coverage for spouses and/or children as a "second insurer."

## DENTAL INSURANCE

The Washington State Health Care Authority provides employees of SCD and eligible

Please see individual plan booklets

dependents dental coverage. There is not an option for opting out of dental coverage. Typically, the employee is offered a choice of three plans. All premiums are covered by SCD. Refer to the complete plan description booklet available from the Administrative Assistant.

## TUITION/CONTINUING EDUCATION REIMBURSEMENT

SCD recognizes that employees are its most valuable resource. Towards this end, SCD, in its discretion, may reimburse or subsidize the cost of continuing or advanced education that is job related. In order to qualify for tuition reimbursement, including but not limited to college degrees, classes, trainings, Ag Forestry, etc., employees must obtain their supervisor or manager's approval prior to registering for a class or seminar, certification or degree program.

Any reimbursement or subsidy made by the District is expressly contingent upon the employee: (1) achieving at least a passing level grade (C- or better) in the course, to the extent applicable; and (2) remaining employed with the District for a minimum of (1) year following the employee’s successful completion of the course. If Employee fails to successfully complete the class, seminar or training (whether because the employee does not finish the course or because the employee does not achieve at least a passing level trade), or if the Employee voluntarily resigns his/her employment with the District within one (1) year following the employee’s successful completion of the course, the Employee shall be obligated to repay the District the amount of the reimbursement or subsidy made by the District in accordance with the following schedule:

**Failure to successfully complete the course:** 100% of reimbursement or subsidy

**Failure to remain employed with the District for at least one year following completion of the course:**

A prorated amount based on the employee’s separation date. For example, if an employee receives $4,000 in tuition reimbursement and resigns 265 days following the employee’s successful completion of the course, the employee would be obligated to repay to the District a prorated amount of $1,096.00 (365 days – 265 days = 100 days remaining on obligation / 365 days = 27.40% x $4,000= $1,096.00.

An employee’s acceptance of any tuition or continuing education reimbursement or subsidy from the District shall be evidence of the employee’s acceptance and agreement to the terms of this policy, including but not limited to the repayment obligation set forth above.

## RETIREMENT PROGRAMS

### Washington State Public Employees Retirement System (PERS)

Snohomish Conservation District participates in the Washington State Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). Both the District and the employee contribute a percentage of the employee's pay into the employee's retirement account. The contributed percentage

is set by the State Legislature. Participation in the retirement program is mandatory for both employer and regular full-time and some regular part-time employees, depending upon the number of hours worked per month.

### Deferred Compensation

SCD offers a State of Washington Deferred Compensation Plan for the benefit of its employees. SCD’s program does not offer a match for deferred income. Regular part- time and temporary employees, and interns are not eligible for the Deferred Compensation program.

Deferred Compensation is an agreement between the employee and employer to postpone part of their income, until separation from service for the purpose of supplementing future retirement or social security benefits an employee may receive. Deferrals are invested in one or more options offered by the Program, which provide the advantages of reducing current taxable income, and allowing the employee's Deferred Compensation account to grow on a tax deferred basis until withdrawn. All employees who meet eligibility requirements are encouraged to participate. Any questions should be directed to the Administrative Assistant.

## Voluntary Employees Beneficiary Association (VEBA)

The Snohomish Conservation District adopted the HRA VEBA plans offered and administered by the Voluntary Employees' Beneficiary Association Trust for Public Employees in the Northwest (collectively the "Plans"). The Plans consist of: (1) a standard HRA plan, which is integrated with the District's group medical plan and to which the District shall remit contributions only on behalf of eligible employees who are enrolled or covered by the District's group medical plan; and (2) a post-separation HRA plan to which the District may remit contributions on behalf of all eligible employees, including eligible employees who are not enrolled or covered by the District's group medical plan, and which shall provide benefits only after a participant separates from service or retires. The District shall contribute to the Plans on behalf of all non- represented employees ("Group") defined as eligible to participate in the Plans. Each eligible employee must submit a completed and signed Enrollment Form to become an eligible participant and become eligible for benefits under the Plans.

Contributions on behalf of each eligible employee shall be based on the following selected funding sources/formulas:

**Sick leave cash-out upon separation from service or retirement** Eligibility is limited to employees who retire or separate from service with sick leave cash-out rights during the term hereof. The District contributions shall include twenty-five (25%) of the total cash-out value of all unused sick leave days accrued and available for cash-out upon retirement or separation from service per District policy if enrolled in VEBA.

**District contribution in lieu of medical insurance**

Eligibility is limited to employees waiving medical insurance coverage and

providing proof of coverage under another employer-sponsored medical insurance plan. District contributions shall be two-hundred fifty dollars per month ($250) on behalf of such employee.

## COBRA INSURANCE CONTINUATION

In the event of separation from employment with the District, employees enrolled in SCD’s health plan are eligible to continue with medical coverage through COBRA. COBRA is a federal regulation that permits individuals who would otherwise lose employer-provided health coverage to continue that coverage at their own expense. Under the continuing coverage plan all premiums are the responsibility of the separated employee. Employees are notified when they are eligible and provided with information on how to continue their benefits. Generally, employees may continue coverage for 18 months.

## LIFE INSURANCE

Employees of SCD are automatically enrolled in a group life insurance plan with Washington State Health Care Authority that provides term life insurance at no cost to the employee. SCD pays the coverage. This includes:

* $25,000 for death from any cause.
* An additional $5,000 in case of accidental death or dismemberment.

All regular, full-time employees are eligible for life insurance coverage and accidental death and dismemberment coverage beginning the first working day of the month, following employment. Coverage and qualifications are outlined in the plan booklet. Questions should be directed to the Administrative Assistant.

## PAYROLL DEDUCTION LIFE INSURANCE

In addition to life insurance offered by SCD, employees have an option of enrolling in a supplemental life insurance for self, spouse, and dependents through Washington State Health Care Authority through payroll deductions, employees can select either Term Life or Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance or both depending on your personal needs. Employees can have self-coverage up to 5 times of his/her salary; spouse and children coverage up to 50% of the employee’s coverage. Employee may need to provide evidence of insurability, depending on what coverage you apply for and when. Additional information may be obtained from Administrative Assistant.

## LONG TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE

There is an opportunity for additional long term disability insurance that is a voluntary program. See Administrative Assistant for voluntary options for additional Long Term Disability insurance. Employee must sign up during hiring process.

# PAID AND UNPAID LEAVE

## HOLIDAYS

Snohomish Conservation District will be closed for eleven holidays per year. Regular full-time employees who would have normally been scheduled to work will receive a paid day off for the following:

 New Year’s Day .......................................................January 1

* Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday ............................third Monday in January

 Presidents Day ..........................................................third Monday in February

 Memorial Day ...........................................................last Monday in May

 Independence Day .....................................................July 4th

 Labor Day .................................................................first Monday in September

 Veteran's Day ............................................................November 11

 Thanksgiving Day .....................................................fourth Thursday in November

* The day following Thanksgiving ..............................fourth Friday in November

 Christmas Day ...........................................................December 25

 Personal Holiday .......................................................Employee's choice, subject to

management approval

A recognized holiday that falls on a Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday. A recognized holiday that falls on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday.

SCD, at its option, may designate additional paid holidays. Regular part-time employees will be paid holiday pay on a pro-rata basis, based on the number of hours the employee would have worked on the designated holiday. For example, if an employee would normally be scheduled to work four hours on the holiday, the employee will receive four hours for the paid holiday

If a recognized holiday falls during an eligible employee's paid leave, holiday pay will be provided instead of the paid-time-off benefit that would otherwise apply. If an eligible employee works on a recognized holiday, that employee will be paid at a rate of one and one half (1½) times the employee’s regular rate of pay. Employees who have alternative schedules, e.g. four 10-hour days, will receive 8 hours for the holiday and will work four 8-hour days in that week.

Additionally, each employee shall be entitled to two (2) unpaid holidays per calendar year for a reason of faith or conscience or an organized activity conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church or religious organization. An employee, in consultation with his/her supervisor, may select the days on which the employee desires to take the two unpaid holidays; provided, that such holidays are taken in a manner consistent with the purpose of this leave. Employees may use their personal days in connection with these otherwise unpaid holidays. Requests for an unpaid holiday provided for by this policy should be submitted in writing to the employee’s supervisor a minimum of four (4) weeks prior to the requested day. Requests for such holidays shall be considered on a case-by-case basis, based on the specific objective facts and

circumstances presented at the time of the request. The District reserves the right to disallow any holiday request if it would unduly disrupt operations or otherwise impose an undue hardship for the District, or the employee is necessary to maintain public safety.

For the purposes of this policy, the term “undue hardship” shall have the same meaning established by rule by the Office of Financial Management, as codified in WAC 82-56-

1. The unpaid holidays provided herein shall not carry over from one year to the next.

## VACATIONS

All regular full-time employees are eligible for paid vacation. Part-time employees accrue vacation time on a pro-rated basis. Temporary employees are not eligible for vacation leave.

Exempt employees must take vacation time in whole day increments. Non-exempt employees must take vacation in at least one hour increments.

Probationary employees will accumulate vacation during their probationary period but will not be allowed to use this leave until after successful completion of their probationary period. If a probationary employee is not able to successfully complete their probationary period, accumulated vacation leave will be forfeited and will not be cashed out upon termination of employment.

Vacation leave will accumulate at the following rate unless a different starting rate is agreed to in writing at date of hire:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| COMPLETED YEARS OF SERVICE | AVAILABLE VACATION LEAVE | RATE OF ACCRUAL |
| 1 year | 96 hours (12 days) | 8 hours per month |
| 2 years | 104 hours (13 days) | 8.66 hours per month |
| 3-4 years | 112 hours (14 days) | 9.33 hours per month |
| 5-7 years | 120 hours (15 days) | 10 hours per month |
| 8-10 years | 128 hours (16 days) | 10.66 hours per month |
| 11-13 years | 136 hours (17days) | 11.33 hours per month |
| 14-16 years | 144 hours (18 days) | 12 hours per month |
| 17-19 years | 152 hours (19 days) | 12.66 hours per month |
| 20+ years | 160 hours (20 days) | 13.33 hours per month |

“Completed years (and months) of service” shall be measured from each employee’s anniversary date. Vacation accruals for part-time employees shall be prorated based upon the employee’s normal work schedule. Vacation leave will accrue only when an employee is in paid status (which includes paid leave but does not include unpaid leave or worker’s compensation).

Vacation benefits will be paid at the employee’s regular rate of pay based upon the number of hours the employee would have worked had the employee worked the employee’s regular schedule during the vacation leave.

Vacation requests should be made at the beginning of each calendar year as far in advance as possible, and in no event less than forty-eight (48) hours before the requested leave, except in emergency circumstances. The District Manager (or designee) must approve vacation leave requests in advance. Requests will be evaluated based on various factors, including anticipated operating requirements and staffing considerations during the proposed period of absence. Questions regarding accrual or eligibility must be referred to the Administrative Assistant.

Employees are strongly encouraged to take earned vacation leave during the benefit year. In the event that employees do not use all their vacation benefits by the end of the benefit year, 240 hours may be carried over to the next year. Generally, time accrued in excess of 240 hours will be forfeited.

An employee, at the employee’s election, may use accrued vacation leave instead of or in addition to accrued sick leave for reasons that sick leave would be approved. Employees using vacation leave for these purposes must inform their supervisor of their absence in the same manner as is expected of those who are using sick leave.

Upon termination of employment, employees will be paid for vacation leave that has accrued through their last day of work; provided that accrued vacation will not be paid if an employee fails to give at least two weeks prior notice in the event of a voluntary resignation. If an employee is re-hired within 30 days of leaving the company, the employee's original hire date will be used to calculate paid leave eligibility.

## SICK LEAVE AND PERSONAL DAYS

For all regular full-time employees, 8 hours of unused sick leave will be credited to employee's sick leave bank at the end of each full month for a total of 96 hours per year, which equates to 12 days per year. Sixteen (16) hours, or 2 of those 12 days, may be used as personal days, which are primarily intended to cover emergencies and unanticipated situations. They may also be used for religious holidays not observed by SCD. Sick leave, other than the 2 personal days, may be used for the following reasons:

* + The employee’s own bona fide illness or incapacitating injury, or disability, including temporary disability caused by pregnancy or childbirth.
  + Medical or dental appointments; provided, that the employee must notify their supervisor or manager of such appointment at least three (3) days in advance and obtain prior approval for the use of such leave; provided, further that this notice requirement may be waived by the District in the event of an unforeseen medical emergency or other circumstances which may reasonably prevent the employee from providing the notice required herein.
  + To care for a child of the employee with a health condition requiring treatment or supervision. For purposes of this policy, “child” is defined as a biological, adopted or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child residing with a person who is standing in for a parent.

Sick leave may not be used for non-medical reasons, vacation or for pets, livestock, etc. Personal days can only be taken in whole or half day increments. If all accrued sick leave hours are used, any additional sick leave absences will be charged against vacation time, and then as leave without pay.

Sick leave is not cashed out upon termination of employment, except as follows: VEBA Sick Leave Cash Out

Eligibility is limited to employees who retire or separate from service with sick leave cash-out rights during the term hereof and are enrolled in VEBA. The District contributions shall include twenty-five (25%) of the total cash-out value of all unused sick leave days accrued and available for cash-out upon retirement or separation from service per District policy.

Regular part-time employees accrue pro-rated sick leave hours based on the number of hours the employee is normally scheduled to work per month.

Snohomish Conservation District, at its sole discretion, after three days, may require employees to provide medical documentation from a health care provider for absences due to illness or injury.

## BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

SCD provides its employees with three days of paid bereavement leave, which will be charged to the employee’s accrued sick leave balance, in the event of the death of an immediate family member. (If an employee does not have any accrued sick leave, the leave shall be unpaid). Immediate family includes the employee's spouse, children, grandchildren, siblings, parents and grandparents; the employee's spouse's children, grandchildren, siblings, parents, and grandparents. Leave will typically be given upon the death of any other person whose relationship with the employee is similar to any of the foregoing associations. Bereavement leave extending beyond three days may be taken as unpaid leave or available paid leave may be used.

## PREGNANCY DISABILITY LEAVE

A leave of absence will be granted to a female employee for the period of time that she is actually ill or disabled due to pregnancy or childbirth. For purposes of this policy, the District will assume that a female will be certified as disabled for six (6) weeks following a healthy childbirth; if an employee requires leave in addition to this presumed period of disability, the employee shall provide medical documentation from her physician setting forth the medical necessity for the leave and the expected duration of the leave.

An employee taking a leave of absence for the period of disability relating to pregnancy and childbirth has the right to return upon expiration of such leave to the same position, or a similar position of comparable pay and benefits, unless business necessity prevents the company from returning the employee to such position. If an employee extends her pregnancy-related leave beyond the period of actual disability, the employee has no right to return to the same or similar position upon expiration of such leave.

Maternity leave is typically unpaid, unless the employee elects to use all accrued sick leave and accrued vacation time during maternity leave.

The request for maternity leave should be made in writing to the District Manager or Program Manager of District Operations/HR at the earliest possible date.

Employees returning to work after childbirth who wish to express breast milk will be provided a reasonable break time in a private, secure location other than a bathroom in which to do so pursuant to the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Employees interested in this benefit should contact the Program Manager of District Operations/HR.

## JURY DUTY

SCD encourages employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by serving on jury duty when summoned to do so. Employees who are absent from work to serve on jury duty will receive their regular District compensation for up to fifteen (15) days, less any compensation received by the employee as jury duty pay. Jury duty leave which extends beyond fifteen days shall be unpaid. The employee may keep parking and mileage reimbursement they receive. Employees must show their jury duty summons to their District Manager as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made to accommodate the employee's absence.

Employees are expected to report for work whenever court is not in session or if they are dismissed from duty with four (4) or more hours left in their normal work day. Either SCD or the employee may request an excuse from jury duty if, in the judgment of SCD, the employee's absence from work would create serious operational difficulties.

## WITNESS DUTY

SCD encourages employees to appear in court for witness duty whenever summoned to do so. Employees will be granted unpaid leave for absences due to witness duty.

Employees are free to use any available vacation leave to be compensated for this absence. Employees must show the witness summons to their supervisor or manager immediately after it is received so that staffing requirements can be adjusted, where necessary, to accommodate the employee's absence. If any employee is summoned as a witness for SCD as a result of a job-related event, the employee will receive paid time off for the entire period of witness duty.

## MILITARY LEAVE

Any employee who is a member of a military reserve force of the United States or of the Washington National Guard will be entitled to military leave with pay not to exceed twenty one (21) working days during each October 1 through September 30 time period. Such leave will be granted when the employee is ordered to report for active duty, when called, or when ordered to take part in active training duty. Paid military leave will be in addition to any compensatory time, vacation or sick leave to which the employee might otherwise be entitled, and will not involve the reduction of any benefits, performance rating, privileges or pay. During the period of paid military leave, the employee will

receive his or her normal base pay. Unless prohibited by military necessity, employees must provide the District with a copy of their orders at the time they request military leave.

Requests for military leave must be made as soon as reasonably practical or within two weeks after the employee learns of the need for such leave.

In addition to paid military leave, employees will be granted an unpaid military leave of absence for service in the armed forces of the United States or the State of Washington, to the extent required by applicable state and federal law.

## MILITARY SPOUSE LEAVE

An employee whose average work week consists of at least twenty (20) hours shall be entitled to up to fifteen (15) days of unpaid military leave per deployment after the employee’s spouse or domestic partner has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty and before the military spouse is deployed, or when the military spouse/domestic partner is on leave from deployment. Employees intending to take this leave must notify ESCA within five (5) days after receiving official notice of a call or order to active duty or of a leave from deployment. Employees may elect to use accrued vacation or sick leave in conjunction with this military leave.

This leave is available only during a time of war, meaning the President or Congress has declared war or military reserves have been called to active duty.

## LEAVE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS

Employees who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking may bake reasonable unpaid leave from work to take care of legal or law enforcement needs or to get medical treatment, social services assistance or mental health counseling, or to participate in safety/relocation planning. Employees who are qualifying family members of a domestic violence victim are also eligible for leave under this policy. For purposes of this policy, the term “qualifying family member” means child, spouse/domestic partner, parent, parent-in-law, domestic partner parent, grandparent or person the employee is dating. Employees may elect to use accrued paid personal leave for this leave.

Employees wishing to take leave under this policy must give as much advance notice of the need for the leave as possible. Leave requests must be supported with one or more of the following:

* + A police report indicating that the employee or the employee’s qualifying family member was a victim;
  + A court order providing protection to the victim;
  + Documentation from a healthcare provider, advocate, clergy or attorney;
  + The employee’s written statement that the employee or employee’s qualifying family member is a victim and needs assistance.

Upon return from this leave, employees will be reinstated to their same position or another position with substantially equivalent benefits and terms and conditions of employment.

## LEAVE WITHOUT PAY/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Leave without pay may be allowed upon the approval of the District Manager when, in the District Manager’s discretion, such leave is not expected to be detrimental to the District operations or programs. Guidelines in the state merit rules will be applied when granting such leave. Generally Leave without pay/Leave of Absence is allowed only in extraordinary circumstances.

Employees on unpaid leave will not receive benefits and will not accrue vacation or sick leave during that leave. Failure to return from an unpaid leave of absence on the date specified for the end of that leave will constitute a resignation from the District.

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

SCD is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all employees. SCD asks that employees do their part to meet this commitment by consistently practicing safe working habits and exercising caution on the job.

## ACCIDENTS

All accidents resulting in an injury must be immediately reported to the employee's manager or supervisor, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear. The District shall make a timely report to the Department of Labor and Industries, as required by law. If an injured employee should require medical treatment, the doctor's staff will complete the required Washington State Labor and Industries forms. The doctor's staff will then mail the L&I form to the District for further processing. The employee must also immediately notify his/her supervisor.

## GENERAL SAFETY

SCD has an active Safety Committee that holds monthly safety meetings as required. All staff is required to be at all safety meetings unless pre-approved by District Manager or Program Managers. Employees are expected to observe all safety protocols and procedures implemented or recommended by the Safety Committee.

Employees driving district vehicles or personal vehicles on district business should keep in mind that they represent this agency and drive accordingly. Employees are also asked to immediately report to their manager or supervisor, any safety problems or unsafe working practices they observe.

Employees are not allowed to operate all equipment (tractors, back hoe, dozer, bob cat, weed whackers, chainsaws, etc.) unless they are properly trained and certified to do so and such operation has been approved by their supervisor. Employees around such equipment (including saws, weed whackers, construction supplies and materials, or on job-sites with heavy equipment are required to wear all appropriate personal protective equipment PPE (hard hats, boots, gloves, glasses etc.). The District will also supply other protective gear, such as hardhats, gloves, goggles, etc. that is the exclusive property of the District and shall be used for District purposes only. Employees are expected to provide their own field gear (long sleeved shirts, jeans, work boots).

If an employee is issued any District-owned safety gear, the employee shall promptly return such gear in good condition, normal wear and tear excepted, upon separation from employment for any reason.

## VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Snohomish Conservation District is committed to maintaining a workplace that is free from violence and threats of violence.

Importantly, the District will not tolerate violent acts or threats of any kind, whether by customers, family members, other members of the public, or District employees. Any

employee who is the recipient of or a witness to any act or threat of violence, must notify the District Manager or the HR representative, regardless of the perceived “seriousness” of the act or threat. The reporting of an act or threat of violence is not discretionary; employees failing to report a known incident of violence and thereby violating this policy shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Upon receiving a report of a violent act or threat that affects the workplace or a District employee, the District shall investigate the incident and undertake all measures it deems appropriate to respond to the incident and to protect potentially affected employees.

Some situations may require the intervention of local law enforcement agencies. In other situations, the District may deem it appropriate to provide support and guidance to employees so that threats or acts of violence can be recognized and prudently addressed. The District shall promptly respond to all reported incidents of violence by undertaking those measures that it deems appropriate, in the District’s sole discretion.

Employees should learn to recognize and respond to behaviors by potential perpetrators that may indicate a risk of violence. Employees shall also place safety as the highest concern. The District, in its discretion, may from time to time train its employees on workplace safety issues, in an effort to reduce workplace violence.

## DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

SCD is committed to protecting the safety, health and well-being of its employees and all people who come into contact with the District and the services it provides. Drug and alcohol abuse poses a direct and significant threat to this goal, and to the goal of providing a productive and efficient work environment in which all employees have an opportunity to reach their full potential. Accordingly, SCD is committed to providing a work place free from alcohol and illicit drugs.

SCD therefore strictly prohibits the illicit use, purchase, possession, sale, conveyance, distribution or manufacture of illegal (whether under federal and/or state law) drugs, intoxicants, controlled substances and/or drug paraphernalia associated with illegal drug use while on the job, while on District property, while operating District vehicles or equipment or while otherwise representing SCD. SCD further prohibits employees from being under the influence of alcohol (defined as having an alcohol concentration level of

* 1. or greater) or controlled substances (any detectable trace in the body system) while on duty. This policy applied to all District employees.

Prescription medications or nonprescription medications are not prohibited when taken in accordance with a lawful prescription or consistent with standard dosage recommendations. Prescription medication means a drug or medication lawfully prescribed under both federal and state law by a physician or other health care provider licensed to prescribe medication for an individual and taken in accordance with the prescription; but specifically excludes, without limitation, medical marijuana, which remains a controlled substance prohibited by federal law. Employees who are taking a prescription or over-the-counter medication that may impair their ability to perform their duties safely and effectively (including their ability to operate a motor vehicle or

equipment) must notify their supervisor and should provide written notice from their health care provider with respect to the effects of such medication.

Employees may be subject to a drug and alcohol urinalysis test when there is reasonable cause to believe that drug use or alcohol abuse exists. If an employee appears to be under any influence of drugs or alcohol, SCD may require the employee to submit to appropriate tests, including urinalysis or breath tests, to confirm the existence of such alcohol or prohibited drug substance in his or her system. Failure to promptly permit such tests upon management’s request shall be grounds for immediate termination.

Employees shall further be subject to post-accident, return to duty, and follow-up drug testing, as follows.

**Post-accident testing**. Following an accident involving an District employee, vehicle or equipment, the employee involved in the accident may be required to submit to a post- accident drug and alcohol test if any of the following factors are present: (i) a fatality occurs as a result of the accident; (ii) the accident causes bodily injury to any person who, as a result of the accident, immediately receives medical treatment at or away from the scene of the accident; (iii) the employee receives a citation under state or local law arising from the accident; and (iv) the accident causes damage to one or more vehicles which requires removal of the vehicle by towing or is otherwise estimated to exceed

$2,000.00. The District Manager may also require post-accident testing when the District Manager, in his or her discretion, determines that it is appropriate under the circumstances to do so. Testing shall occur as soon as possible, and must occur within eight (8) hours after the accident for alcohol testing and 32 hours after the accident for drug testing. An employee required to take a post-accident alcohol test may not use alcohol for eight (8) hours following the accident, or until a post-accident test is given, whichever comes first. An employee who is subject to post-accident testing must remain readily available for such testing and may not take any action to interfere with testing or results of testing. Drivers who do not comply with post-accident testing requirements will be considered to have refused to submit to testing.

**Return to duty testing**. Employees who have violated this policy, including those who have tested positive on a drug or alcohol test, and who under ESCA’s disciplinary policy are allowed to return to work, must test negative prior to being released for duty.

**Follow-up testing**. An employee who is referred for assistance that is related to alcohol misuse and/or use of drugs is subject to unannounced follow-up testing for a period not to exceed 60 months as directed by a substance abuse professional and SCD. The number and frequency of follow-up testing will be determined by the substance abuse professional and SCD, but will not be less than six tests in the first 12 months following the employee’s return to duty.

Employees who test positive for drugs may request a second test of the remaining portion of the split sample within 72 hours of notification of a positive test result by the medical review officer responsible for receiving and interpreting the drug test.

Employees violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. A refusal to take a drug or alcohol test as required by SCD, an undue delay in reporting for testing as instructed by SCD, and/or utilizing any means designed to “cheat” the test, adulterate/dilute the sample or otherwise render a false negative report shall be deemed the equivalent of a positive test result and an employee engaging or assisting in such measures shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employees who are found to have violated this policy but who are allowed to return to work under SCD’s disciplinary process shall be required to first submit to an evaluation by a qualified substance abuse professional acceptable to SCD and shall receive a one- time opportunity to enter a treatment program, if so recommended by the substance abuse professional. Upon return to work, the employee will be required to accept and comply with the terms of a “last chance agreement” and will be subject to the follow-up testing requirements set forth above.

SCD considers drug addiction and alcoholism to be treatable diseases. Employees are encouraged to seek treatment voluntarily before an alcohol or drug abuse problem affects their job performance or employment status. The District will accommodate employees who voluntarily seek treatment for a drug or alcohol addiction before they are the subject of an investigation and/or disciplinary action for a potential violation of this or of any other policy or other performance issue. Employees are encouraged to “self report,” and their job status with SCD will not be jeopardized as a result of such report; provided, that the report is made prior to SCD initiating an investigation and/or disciplinary action into suspected policy violations or related performance issues.

*The passage of Initiative 502, which amends Washington state law effective December 6, 2012, to decriminalize the possession and private use of a limited amount of marijuana by adults over the age of 21, shall have no effect or impact upon this policy. Pursuant to the Controlled Substances Act of 1970, 21 U.S.C. § 801 et seq., “marijuana” remains a “Schedule I” controlled substance, and its possession and/or use is illegal under federal law. Employees should recognize and understand that the “legalization” of marijuana under state law (for both medical and recreational purposes) will not excuse or otherwise constitute a “defense” to a positive drug test administered by SCD in accordance with this policy. Any positive test for marijuana shall constitute a violation of this policy and shall be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination*

# DISTRICT PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

## DISTRICT PROPERTY

Desks, chairs, computers, workstations, tools or other equipment are the property of SCD and as such the District reserves the right to inspect all such property with or without notice. Employees are prohibited from installing their own locks on any District Property. Employees are further prohibited from setting their own passwords or codes to District computer systems and programs. Employees are also responsible to safeguard and properly use all property, materials, and equipment issued to them or otherwise in their possession and control. Upon termination of employment for any reason, an employee must return to his/her manager or supervisor all SCD property in his/her position, in good condition, normal wear and tear excepted, prior to or on the employee's last day of work. Any damage beyond reasonable wear and tear shall be the financial responsibility of the employee, shall constitute a debt of the employee and may be deducted from the employee’s final paycheck.

District property also includes: laptops, Ipads, electronics, boots, gloves, hardhats, survey gear, restoration supplies, fencing supplies, or anything needed to do the job at hand.

## VEHICLE USE

The District provides vehicles for certain business use, to allow employees to drive on District business and to reimburse employees for business use of personal vehicles according to the guidelines below.

Employees operating a District vehicle or their own vehicle for District business must at all times hold a valid Washington State Driver’s License. The District reserves the right to periodically verify that an employee holds a valid driver’s license and to request from the employee and/or appropriate governing agency a copy of the employee’s current driving abstract (Motor Vehicle Report). Employees must provide the District with proof of such insurance upon initial employment and/or assumption of driving duties and periodically thereafter, as requested by the District. Employees who drive on District business are required to promptly inform their supervisor of any changes that may affect either their legal ability to drive or their continued insurability.

Employees operating their own vehicle for District business must carry automobile liability insurance for bodily injury and property damage per Washington State minimum requirements, as currently set forth in Chapters 46.29 and 46.30 RCW, as may be amended from time to time. Employees should consult with their personal insurance agent to determine whether a special endorsement for Business Use is appropriate or necessary in connection with their use of their personal vehicle for District business.

Employees may not drive any vehicles for District business without prior approval of their supervisor.

Employees who drive a vehicle on District business must exercise due diligence, drive safely and maintain the security of the vehicle and its contents. As required by Washington State law, seat belts must be worn at all times while driving or riding in a

District vehicle or on District business. Employees are strictly prohibited from using cellular phones while operating a motor vehicle (this includes talking, texting, emailing or surfing the internet). Employees should safely pull over prior to using a cell phone for any purpose. Employees are also responsible for any driving infractions or fines as a result of their driving.

Authorized passengers are limited to District employees, Board Members, individuals participating in the District Volunteer Program, clients and colleagues from allied agencies. Non-employee, non-business passengers are prohibited from riding in District vehicles or in the employee’s personal vehicle while on District business without prior approval.

Employees must not drive, and must promptly notify their immediate supervisor and/or request an accommodation, when any physical or mental impairment causes the employee to be unable to drive safely. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, circumstances in which the employee is temporarily unable to operate a vehicle safely or legally because of injury, illness, or medication. In the case of medication, an employee should consult with the employee’s medical treatment provider or pharmacist to determine whether the medication may impact or impair the employee’s ability to safely operate a vehicle and must promptly notify their immediate supervisor if the medication impairs the employee’s ability to safely drive.

On occasion, an employee may be permitted to take a District vehicle home overnight, when a business necessity or practicality, such as an evening meeting or specific job site location, justifies such use. Any overnight use of the District vehicle must be pre- approved by the District Manager. In such case, the employee shall be permitted to engage in normal commuting activities while operating the District vehicle.

Employees who use their personal vehicle for approved business purposes will receive a mileage allowance equal to the Internal Revenue Service optional mileage allowance for such usage. This allowance is to compensate for the cost of gasoline, oil, depreciation and insurance (including any deductible obligations).

Employees must report any accident, theft or malicious damage involving a District vehicle, or the employee’s personal vehicle if such accident, theft or damage occurs while the employee is using the vehicle for District business purposes, to their supervisor, regardless of the extent of damage or lack of injuries. Such reports must be made as soon as possible but no later than forty-eight hours after the incident. Employees are expected to cooperate fully with authorities in the event of an accident.

Employees shall not operate any District vehicle at any time or operate any personal vehicle while on District business while using, consuming or under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. The District has a zero tolerance policy prohibiting operators of vehicles from drinking alcohol or consuming illegal drugs, or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, while on District time or conducting business. (Refer to the District’s drug and alcohol policy).

## PERSONAL PROPERTY

In some instances employees may provide their own tools and equipment, and when not in use this equipment should be locked or kept in a secure place. SCD does not assume responsibility for loss, theft, or damage to personal property, including vehicles, on District premises. SCD retains the right to inspect baggage, packages, or parcels brought to or taken away from the premises by any employee.

## WORKPLACE SEARCHES

For the safety of the employees and/or the welfare of SCD, the District may, in its discretion, search and inspect both District property and personal items brought onto District property, which includes owned or leased facilities, surrounding grounds and parking areas. Refusal to cooperate in a search, inspection or investigation will result in a disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

All District property is eligible for search and shall include but is not limited to: individual lockers, desks, filing cabinets and computers. Personal property brought onto SCD property is subject to search and shall include but is not limited to: pockets, purses/wallets, briefcases, cars/trucks, lunch boxes, toolboxes, shopping bags/boxes and coats. Employees have no reasonable expectation of privacy as to SCD’s premises and/or any property brought thereupon.

The District Manager will immediately report to the appropriate authorities any illegal items that are found.

## DISTRICT CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS, AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA

### Personal Telephone Calls

Telephones are provided to accommodate District business. Employees are asked to limit personal phone calls and inform friends and family of SCD’s telephone procedure and call only if necessary. In an emergency, the call will be transferred to the appropriate employee immediately or every effort will be made to locate the employee.

### District Cell Phones, Laptops, And Electronic Equipment Use

It is the policy of Snohomish Conservation District to provide the communication services, computers, and other equipment necessary for the conduct of its business. It is the further policy of SCD to reserve the right to monitor its employees’ use(s) of these communication services, computers, and other equipment to ensure that professional and business performance and conduct standards are maintained.

SCD respects the individual employee's privacy. However, employee privacy does not extend to employees’ work-related conduct or to the use of company-provided equipment or supplies. Employees should be aware that the following policy might affect their privacy in the workplace:

Cell phones, cameras, and laptop computers provided for employee use are for District

*business purposes*. The following policies govern cell phones, cameras, computers, e-

mail and Internet use, hardware, software, the e-mail system and access to the Internet are the property of the SCD, which has full ownership.

As owner of the e-mail system, the District reserves and may exercise the right to monitor access retrieve and delete any matters stored in created received or sent over the email system, for any reason and without the permission of any employee. **Employees should not assume any right of privacy.**

Cell phones, cameras, computers, software, email and access to the Internet are for District use, not personal use or entertainment. While incidental and/or limited personal use of District electronic equipment is permitted during non-District work time, such use should not interfere with the employee’s duties or otherwise violate District policy (including, as discussed more fully below, the District’s non-discrimination/non- harassment policy). Employees should also understand that their personal use of the District’s electronic system or equipment is subject to review by the District.

Messages sent or received via email may be considered public records and must meet the same standards as if they were tangible documents or instruments. Users must manage their email in accordance with record retention policies and procedures.

Individual passwords may be utilized within applications software for business purposes and for the protection of confidential or sensitive information. All passwords must be pre- approved and authorized by the District and must be kept on file with the District's network administrator. The District generally recommends that approved passwords be changed quarterly to ensure security. An employee must immediately notify the District’s network administrator of any change in a password. An employee should not share an assigned password with any unauthorized coworker or other individual.

Computer users are not to install any type of programs or software onto District computers or onto the network without written notification and approval from District management.

Employees are not to copy software packages from District computers or the original discs.

All documents, images, graphics, photographs, data customized macro programs, etc. placed on the system become the property of the District.

Employees should be aware that deletion of email messages or files would not truly eliminate the message from the system.

As permitted by law, SCD monitors system use in order to safeguard district information and to detect and protect against improper use. The following activities are specifically prohibited:

* + - engaging in unauthorized Peer to Peer networking by linking District computers with other computers for file sharing;
    - downloading unauthorized software or multimedia files;
    - unauthorized disclosure of District information;
    - unauthorized disclosure of private cooperator or employee information;
    - gambling, auction related materials or games;
    - threats of violence;
    - any activity that may harm SCD's network or property;
    - inappropriate use of the Internet and email. Examples include accessing or sending:
      * pornographic, obscene. offensive, harassing or discriminatory content;
      * chain letters, pyramid schemes, or commercial ventures;
      * unauthorized mass distributions;
      * large personal files containing graphic, audio or other multimedia material;
      * violation of others' intellectual property rights;
      * malicious software or instructions for compromising the district security. The District's policy against sexual or other harassment applies fully to the email and Internet systems. No email messages should be created, sent, referred, or received if they contain material that violates the District's policy against harassment. Foul, inappropriate, or offensive messages such as racial, sexual, or religious slurs are prohibited. Defamatory remarks about competitors, customers, and other employees also will not be tolerated. Additionally, use of the District’s Internet system to view, download or share harassing or discriminatory images or webpages is strictly prohibited.

The email system may not be used to solicit for religious or political causes, commercial enterprises, outside organizations, or other non-job-related solicitations.

Employees may not use the District's Internet connection to download games or other entertainment software, including wallpaper and screen savers, or to play games over the Internet.

Violation of the District's electronic use policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Any employee who discovers misuse of the District's computer system must immediately contact district management.

*Employees are not to notify supervisor of their tardiness or absence through e-mail. All absences and tardiness must be telephoned in to supervisor or receptionist.*

The use of any business equipment (including, but not limited to, software programs, facsimiles and copy machines) for private purposes is strictly prohibited. Employees need to be mindful that, as a public agency, the District’s facility, equipment and supplies are to be used for public purposes only in furtherance of the District’s business purpose.

Employees are expected to listen to and respond to their e-mail and telephone messages promptly. If they are out of town or away from work, employees should change their telephone message to reflect that and create an “out of office” automatic email response. Employees are expected to use the voice-mail and e-mail system to increase productivity,

reducing wasted time with telephone tag or lost memos. However, e-mail and voice mail are not a substitute for direct conversations for important or difficult issues. When sending e-mail or phone messages employees are expected to be polite and tactful (e. g. no "flame" messages) and use appropriate language, "tone", and diplomacy as if they were talking in person.

A violation of any of the standards and/or expectations set forth in this policy shall be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

SCD strictly adheres to the Public Records Act, Chapter 42.56 RCW. Towards this end, all District correspondence and work product should be conducted, created and stored on the District’s electronic system only. Employees and Board members should understand that, if they use their personal email addresses or electronic systems in conducting District business, this may subject their personal equipment to inspection by the District and/or a requestor in connection with a public records request.

## FILE AND WEBSITE ACCESS AND SECURITY POLICY

### District File Access

All files pertaining to official District business will be stored on the District's server to allow appropriate backup, data integrity and access. District Employees will utilize District equipment for District business when feasible and available over personal computers, tablets, mobile devices, etc. Files created or stored on personal computers and main hard drives of District equipment must be uploaded to the District server within 5 business days of creation.

Business Cloud services such as Google Apps allow the District technology administrator access to all files in that cloud and therefore do not need to be saved on the District server.

Personal Cloud services such as drop box do not allow that access and the files must also reside on the District server.

### Website Accounts

The District's network administration will, whenever possible, work to utilize business solutions for web based services. These solutions utilize central control over accounts and allow for best practices for access and integrity of District systems.

All Website logon names and passwords must be provided to the District technology administrator and the District Manager.

All Website admin and/or update procedures such as for our websites [www.snohomishcd.org](http://www.snohomishcd.org/) and [www.bettergrounds.org](http://www.bettergrounds.org/) must be provided to the District technology administrator.

Any website accounts created for the purpose of District business will follow these guidelines:

* Login Name will, whenever possible, be a group email account such as: it@snohomishcd...; outreach@....; ccteam@...; habitat@....' or other accounts created for the purpose of routing emails to multiple staff email accounts.
* If the above email addresses are not feasible, individual staff email accounts can be used to sign up for online accounts. When signing up for these accounts, record the username, email address, security questions, and whatever else is required to reset the account. The employee will send this information to the District technology administrator and the District Manager.
* Under no circumstance will an employee use a personal e-mail account to sign up for services utilized by or paid for by the District.

## SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

“Social media” refers to a wide range of applications and services that are accessed from a computer or mobile device**.** Social Media such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, You Tube, tweeting, and blogging have an ever increasing presence as a way to keep in touch with family and friends. With increased usage however, comes the increased potential for the accidental or intentional inclusion of inappropriate information. In some cases, information conveyed through social media has led to legal liability for the person posting the information. In recognition of the large role that social media plays in our society, SCD is providing these guidelines to assist you in utilizing social media in a safe and responsible manner.

The District encourages employees to use social media to help promote positive conversations about the conservation of natural resources and to fairly represent the programs and services that the District provides. However, using social media is a very public form of conversation and is inherently more risky than having in-person conversations, so employees must remain aware at all times that anything they post online can have negative repercussions. Employees who use social media must exercise discretion, restraint, and common sense. Once posted, social media content and comments may be impossible to retract or remove.

The District understands that some employees may include their work affiliation in the biographical information made available to others. While this is permissible, it is important that employees make it clear that they are not representing the District while using own social media accounts, and that the views expressed by the employee are the employee’s alone and do not reflect the views of the District (unless otherwise authorized/approved in advance by the District Manager). For example, “The views expressed in this [blog, posting or article] are my own and have not been reviewed or approved by the District.” The District Manager will explicitly authorize employees to represent the District, as needed.

Employees who use social media must refrain from making in the public media any comments or statements about employees, representatives or customers of the District that would violate the District’s Non-Discrimination/Non-Harassment policies, including

statements that are insulting, offensive, derogatory, profane, discriminatory, sexually explicit or disparaging towards any District employee, representative or customer on the basis of their sex, race, age, national origin, creed, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, disability or any other class protected by law.

Publication of false, defamatory facts about another individual on a social networking site that is viewable by others can give rise to a claim for libel, slander or defamation by the person discussed. Although it can be very tempting to vent about another person through a social networking site, extreme caution should be used when deciding what information to include.

District employees may have access to confidential information about clients and coworkers, such as medical conditions, home addresses and work schedules. Existing District guidelines that restrict the disclosure of such confidential information apply with equal force to social media postings

Employees should be generally mindful that the things they say and do within social media may reflect poorly on them as an employee and damage the District’s credibility and reputation in the community. Employees should also keep in mind that they are more likely to resolve complaints about work by speaking directly with their coworkers, supervisors or managers rather than by speaking publicly or by posting complaints over the Internet. If an employee nonetheless decides to post a complaint or criticism, the employee must avoid doing so in a way that is defamatory to the District or to District employees, representatives or customers.

A violation of this policy shall be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, nothing in this policy shall be construed to restrict legally protected activity.

# NON-DISCLOSURE

Some employees of SCD may receive and have access to information that is confidential in nature to the District, its consumers and vendors.

Employees are bound to hold in strictest confidence information that is not generally known and that is proprietary to SCD, except for all intellectual property made prior to the employee's association with SCD. Employees are also bound to maintain confidential third-party information. At the request of SCD, or upon separation from the District, the employee will provide to his/her manager or supervisor materials furnished to the employee by the SCD, such as papers, notes, data, drawings, photographs, etc.

Employees are bound to maintain the confidentiality of any other party with whom they have confidentiality or proprietary rights including intellectual property, inventions, works of authorship, confidential information. If this policy is breached, SCD is entitled to injunctive relief to enforce the policy.

Employees are not to disclose any such confidential information to (a) any other person in the agency unless there is a legitimate business reason for doing so; or (b) any person outside the District unless management has expressly stated that the information can be disclosed to that person.

This obligation exists even after the employee leaves the organization. Compliance with the Public Disclosure Requests must be handled according to the law and by following the District's policy for dealing with such requests.

Any questions related to disclosure or non-disclosure should be directed to the Public Records Officer.

## INVENTIONS AND CREATIVE OUTPUT

Employee inventions, creative output, and other such intellectual property created using District equipment, supplies, facilities, or trade secrets, is considered the property of SCD and such information is to be maintained in confidence. Employees will not disclose any confidential or proprietary information without the express permission of management.

Intellectual property includes inventions, patents, copyrights, and works of authorship and any other confidential information belonging to the District.

Intellectual property made prior to an employee's employment or association with the District is excluded from the scope of this policy.

SCD intellectual property must be held in a confidential and proprietary manner and not disclosed to any person or used for the benefit of anyone other than the District. Upon termination, employees must deliver to their manager or supervisor all papers, notes, data, reference materials, drawings, photographs, or any other documentation of a proprietary nature, software, tools, or other materials.

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Inventions and creative output developed by the employee not on company time, not using company equipment, supplies or facilities, and having no connection with SCD is not considered to be District property.

# ETHICS/EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Employees are expected to use good judgment, adhere to high ethical standards and avoid situations that create an actual or perceived conflict between their personal interests and those of the District. Snohomish Conservation District requires that the transactions employees participate in are ethical and within the law, both in letter and spirit.

Snohomish Conservation District recognizes that different agencies have different codes of ethics. However, just because a certain action may be acceptable by others outside of Snohomish Conservation District as “standard practice,” that is by no means sufficient reason to assume that such practice is acceptable at our agency. There is no way to develop a comprehensive, detailed set of rules to cover every business situation. The tenets in this policy outline some basic guidelines for ethical behavior at Snohomish Conservation District**.** Whenever employees are in doubt, they should consult with their manager.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND SELF-INTEREST

Employees and Board Members shall not use District assets for personal profit, nor shall they award District business to related parties. Likewise, within District boundaries, employees and Board Members shall not accept any remuneration or gift from any person for any activity related to the performance of District tasks.

Employees and Board Members shall not use District assets for personal profit or gain, nor shall they award District business to related parties or for personal benefit. Likewise, within District boundaries, employees and Board Members shall not accept any remuneration or gift from any person for any activity related to the performance of District tasks.

Additionally, the following acts are specifically prohibited:

* + - Use of intangible assets, such as the District's name, logo, intellectual property, mailing list, computer file, or any other intangible asset for any purpose for which the individual is compensated by someone other than the District.
    - Use of any physical asset, such as a District vehicle, or a tool, or office space, for any purpose for which the individual is compensated by someone other than the District.
    - The award of a contract or other District business, including any services/products/projects for which any remuneration will be paid by the District, to any person or entity that shares a professional or personal relationship with a District employee or District Board member.
    - The award of a contract or other District business, including any services/products/projects for which any remuneration will be paid by the District, to a relative of a District employee or Board member. Relative is defined as immediate family, including husband, wife, child, mother, father, sibling, and any other relatives if the appearance of conflict would be harmful to the District.
    - Accepting gifts from any person or entity that is awarded District business or is soliciting the District’s business.
    - Accepting remuneration or gifts from the public for performing acts one is required to perform as an authorized District function.
    - Engaging in activities which are in conflict, or which have the potential to create a conflict, with the employee’s performance of his or her official duties.
    - Any act that would cause the appearance of violating this policy to a reasonable member of the community within the District.

The following acts are allowed:

* + - Accepting food and refreshments which are consumed at hosted events where an employee’s attendance is related to the employee’s official duties
    - Accepting food and refreshments on infrequent occasions in the ordinary course of meals where attendance is related to the employee’s performance of his or her official duties.
    - Accepting promotional materials, such as pens, notepads, calendars, and other similar items having a small value. ($25 or under); provided, that it may reasonably be expected that the gift will not influence the action or judgment of the employee or be considered as a reward for action or inaction.
    - Accepting achievement awards from any entity provided the award has only nominal cash value.
    - Accepting informational material, publications or subscriptions related to the employee’s performance of his or her official duties.

Conflicts of interests or unethical behavior may take many forms including, but not limited to, the acceptance of gifts from vendors, potential vendors, or consumers of the District. Employees are cautioned not to accept any form of remuneration or non- business related entertainment, nor may employees sell to third parties any information, products, or materials acquired from the District.

If an employee has a financial or employment relationship with a vendor, potential vendor, or consumer of the District, the employee must disclose this fact in writing to the District Manager. The District will determine what course of action must be taken to resolve any conflict it believes may exist. If the conflict is severe enough, Snohomish Conservation District may be forced to ask the employee to tender his/her resignation.

Snohomish Conservation District has sole discretion to determine whether such a conflict of interest exists.

Employees are encouraged to seek assistance from their managers with any ethical concerns. However, Snohomish Conservation District realizes this may not always be possible. As a result, employees may contact the District Manager to report any ethical concern they cannot discuss with their manager. Employees should refer to the reporting procedures under the Anti-Harassment and Non-Discrimination policy for reporting unlawful harassment or discrimination.

## OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

The use of one's time outside of SCD is a personal matter; however, if other work is undertaken, it must neither interfere with employment at SCD nor create a conflict of interest. If the employee is unsure whether or not outside employment would create a conflict of interest, it should be discussed with their manager or supervisor and reviewed by the Board. All employees will be judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to SCD’s scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work requirements. There is to be no conflict with the employment requirements of SCD, including any requirements for overtime work. If it is determined that outside work interferes with the work performance of employees, or is identified as a conflict of interest, they may be asked to terminate the outside employment if they wish to remain with SCD.

Similarly, Employees may engage in outside business activities, provided such activities do not adversely affect the District or the employee’s job performance and the employee does not work for a vendor, or consumer. Employees are prohibited from engaging in financial participation, outside employment or any other undertaking that is prejudicial to the best interests of Snohomish Conservation District. Employees may not use proprietary and/or confidential information for personal gain or to the District’s detriment, nor may they use assets or labor for personal use.

# DISTRICT COST-SHARE

Cost share funding using **state** funds for conservation projects proposed or sponsored by conservation district municipal officers including District employees and/or associate supervisors or a business entity in which a District employee or associate supervisor have an interest, will be allowed only if the District Board has considered the ethics requirements for municipal officers set forth in RCW 42.23.030 and RCW 42.23.070.

The District Board must make a determination that funding the proposal is consistent with those requirements and the determination reported in the board meeting minutes. A copy of the minutes shall be sent to the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC).

WSCC cost share agreement forms for projects proposed by a District employee, associate supervisor, or a business in which the employee or associate supervisor has an interest, will include an informational section on cost share funding participation by district employees and associate supervisors and a signature block for designated district official to acknowledge receipt of information regarding the ethics requirements for a municipal officer.

## EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

SCD does not tolerate conduct that interferes with District operations, brings discredit to the District, or is offensive to customers or other employees. Employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner by practicing the following:

1. Consistently reporting to work as scheduled, being present at workstations at starting time and maintaining reliable attendance.
2. Notifying your manager or supervisor when unable to report for work. Calling in on a daily basis for sick leave or other unscheduled leave, at least one hour before the start of your work shift, unless an emergency situation prevents you from doing so.
3. Complying with safety and health regulations.
4. Maintaining a neat and orderly workplace.
5. Treating customers and other visitors as guests of the District, in a professional and courteous manner.
6. Treating co-workers, managers, and supervisors with respect, professionalism and courtesy.
7. Refraining from behavior that may be construed as offensive, undesirable, harassing, discriminating or otherwise in violation of any of the policies set forth in this Handbook.
8. Refraining from yelling, swearing, belittling, intimidating, or any other offensive behavior toward other employees, customers, or guests.
9. Complying with the District’s drug and alcohol policy at all times.
10. Personal appearance: District employees are expected to dress appropriately for the duties they expect to perform on a given day. Because we often work with the public, clothing should be neat and clean. Our staff quite often works outdoors so the office attire is generally casual. Jeans and shorts in the summer are acceptable provided they are in good condition. Cut-off shorts or severely

faded or worn pants or shorts are discouraged. *Site work*: If site visits are expected, suitable field clothes should be worn. The district provides knee-high boots that are generally used in muddy conditions. In some cases, hip boots or chest waders, or other such equipment is needed. The district will attempt to provide this equipment either by purchase or rental. *Meetings*: District staff is required to attend meetings at times and it is expected that they will wear clothing appropriate for representing the district.

## DISCIPLINE FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

The list set forth below indicates conduct that is prohibited. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive or to otherwise alter the at-will employment relationship. The following actions are strictly prohibited on district property:

1. Any act of dishonesty while on duty.
2. A violation of the District’s Drug and Alcohol Policy.
3. The use of profanity or abusive language.
4. The possession of firearms or other weapons on District premises, including vehicles parked in the District parking lot or on a District job site.
5. Fighting with others on District property or harassment or assault on another employee or a customer or a vendor.
6. The theft, damage, or misuse of District property or another employee's property while on the District’s premises, including the removal of District property without authorization.
7. Insubordination, including refusal to follow management's instructions concerning a job-related matter or failure to cooperate with management or co- workers with respect to SCD matters.
8. Gambling on District property.
9. Falsifying District records, including submitting inaccurate time records or punching in or out on the time clock for another employee.
10. Sleeping during working hours.
11. Unexcused absence of two (2) or more consecutive days, which shall be considered job abandonment.
12. Sick leave abuse.
13. Violating District safety rules.
14. Using rude and verbally abusive behavior towards coworkers, management, customers, and vendors, including yelling or derogatory comments.

SCD reserves the right to determine what conduct is not appropriate and what level of discipline such conduct warrants.

Questions concerning this policy should be directed to the District Manager.

# DISCIPLINE AND TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

The District believes that the principal purpose of disciplinary action is to correct the problem, prevent recurrence and prepare the employee for satisfactory performance in the future. Towards this end, and as the District deems appropriate under the circumstances, the District generally implements “progressive discipline,” which may include any one or more of the following steps:

* + - *Verbal Counseling (with Documentation)* – The employee may be counseled and issued a verbal warning, the issuance of which will be documented by the supervisor in writing.
    - *Written Warning*–A formal written warning of the offense, including a reference to any prior incident, may be issued. A copy of the warning will be given to the employee and one will be placed in the employee’s personnel file.
    - *Suspension Without Pay* – The employee may be placed on an unpaid suspension for a duration determined appropriate under the particular circumstances. A suspension without pay will usually be accompanied by a written warning outlining the terms of suspension and expectations for the employee moving forward.
    - *Termination of Employment* – The employee’s employment may be terminated by the District, with or without “cause.”

Notwithstanding the general progressive discipline process outlined above, disciplinary determinations are based on the District’s assessment of all relevant factors and the particular circumstances. The District, in its sole discretion, may apply advanced stages of discipline, up to and including termination of employment, without first engaging in lesser corrective action, if it determines that advanced discipline is warranted by the nature of the offense or the particular circumstances. Nothing herein should be construed as altering or modifying the “at-will” employment relationship.

While the District may elect to follow its progressive discipline procedure, the District is in no way obligated to do so. Using progressive discipline is at the sole discretion of the District and does not alter the District's "At Will" workplace.

When an employee violates a district rule or policy, the employee’s supervisor may follow this process:

# RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

**OF SNOHOMISH CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S** **EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

The contents of this Handbook are a summary of current employment policies of Snohomish Conservation District (SCD). The SCD reserves the right at any time to amend or terminate any of the policies, plans, or benefits, described in this Handbook. Any such changes, once approved by the Board and provided to you in writing, will supersede the current contents of this Handbook. Each employee is provided a copy of the Handbook. It is your responsibility to read the Handbook and when additional or replacement pages are provided, update your copy of the Handbook. If you have questions on Handbook provisions, ask your manager.

Your employment with SCD is “at will” and either party may terminate employment with or without notice and with or without cause. At SCD, we prefer to provide the employee with notice and reason for termination, however, it is not a requirement to provide such notice.

Employees are usually hired for indefinite terms of employment, however, SCD receives grant funds for many of its programs and the end of a grant may require that a position be terminated. An employee in that position may be separated from employment or if another position is available for which the employee is qualified, the employee may apply for the open position.

Because SCD does not receive dedicated funding from any source, but negotiates with Snohomish County for some funds and applies for grants annually, funding for all positions can change from year to year based on state and local priorities. In addition to this Handbook, the employee and SCD sign a conditional offer of employment that defines the position description and related funding issues. Nothing in this Handbook is intended to create an employment contract between SCD and any of its employees for any definite term of employment.

I, the employee, have read and understand the contents of this Handbook and understand that the contents and policies contained herein are intended to be general guidelines only and do not constitute an express or implied contract of employment. I understand that the provisions in this Handbook supersede any prior employee handbooks or other descriptions of SCD’s policies and benefits and that I am responsible for updating the Handbook when I receive amended or new information.

My signature below indicates that I have received and read the foregoing, and that I understand the policies contained in the Snohomish Conservation District's Employee Handbook.

**Employee’s Name**

(Please Print)

**Employee's Signature: Date:**

**Job Title: Date of Hire:**

# PAYCHECK DEDUCTION AUTHORIZATION

I, the undersigned employee, hereby authorize my employer, the Snohomish County Conservation District, to deduct from my final paycheck, as necessary, any and all debts, charges and expenses that I may owe to SCD as of the date of my employment termination, including, but not limited to, cash or benefit advances provided to me by SCD, reimbursement for any unreturned SCD property, all charges incurred by SCD as a result of my personal long distance telephone calls or personal cellular phone calls and any other monies that I may owe SCD, for whatever reason. I agree and acknowledge that the debt owed by me represents a benefit conferred upon me by SCD. I understand that SCD will provide me with an accounting of all deductions made to my final paycheck with my final paycheck and I expressly authorize all such deductions made by SCD.

Dated:

Signed:

Name of Employee: