



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Updated: 9/2023

Edited Jury Duty and Bereavement Leave to be paid time off; Added Personal Days for non-exempt staff

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FOREWORD

Forward Journey Adult Day Services began through the efforts of parents with children having severe, multiple disabilities; they were concerned about their future once they aged out of school programs. In the late 1990s these folks took a tour of what programs were available in the community. Finding nothing suitable, they partnered with school administrators, legislators, and other stakeholders to create a program that would be MORE than just a place to “spend the day” for their adult children. It took nine years for the vision to become a reality. The doors to Forward Journey, formerly known as C.E.R.T.S., first opened on October 16, 2006, with four participants in a rented Sunday school room at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in North Wilmington.

The mission of Forward Journey is **to enrich the lives of adults with multiple, severe disabilities, and in turn, their families through an active personalized day program.** Forward Journey provides a safe, nurturing, exciting environment plus individualized programming based on participant choice, all with a low participant-to-staff ratio.

Whether you have just joined our staff or have been at Forward Journey for a while, we are confident that you will find our company a dynamic and rewarding place in which to work, and we look forward to a productive and successful association. We consider the employees of Forward Journey to be its most valuable resource. This handbook has been written to serve as the guide for the employer/employee relationship.

There are several things to keep in mind about this handbook. First, it contains general information and guidelines. It is not intended to be comprehensive or to address all the possible applications of, or exceptions to, the general policies and procedures described. For that reason, **if you have any questions concerning eligibility for a particular benefit or the applicability of a policy or practice to you, you should address your specific questions to your supervisor or the Executive Director.** Neither this handbook nor any other company document confers any contractual right, either express or implied, to remain in the company's employ. Nor does it guarantee any fixed terms and conditions of your employment. Your employment is not for any specific time and may be terminated at will, with or without cause, and without prior notice by the company. Similarly, you may resign for any reason, at any time. No supervisor or other representative of the company (except the Executive Director) has the authority to enter into any agreement for employment for any specified period of time or to make any agreement contrary to the above.

The procedures, practices, policies, and benefits described here may be modified or discontinued from time to time. We will try to inform you of any changes as they occur. Some subjects described in this handbook are covered in detail in official policy documents. Refer to these documents for specific information. The handbook only briefly summarizes those guidelines and benefits. Please note that the plan documents governing health, workers compensation, or other insurance policies are controlling, and override any statements made in this handbook.

DIVERSITY

Equal Employment Opportunity Statement

Forward Journey provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, status as a veteran or volunteer emergency responder, or any other characteristic protected under federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies pertaining to the prevention of discriminatory employment practices. This policy applies to all terms, conditions or privileges of employment including hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training.

Forward Journey's Anti-harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure

Forward Journey is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits unlawful discriminatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, Forward Journey expects that all relationships among employees and the public will be professional and free of bias, prejudice and harassment.

It is the policy of Forward Journey to ensure equal employment opportunity without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, status as a veteran or volunteer emergency responder, or any other characteristic protected under local, state, or federal law. Forward Journey prohibits any such discrimination or harassment.

Forward Journey requires reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination or harassment. It is the policy of Forward Journey to investigate such reports promptly and thoroughly. Forward Journey prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or who participates in an investigation of such reports.

For more information, please refer to the Anti-harassment and Complaint Procedures Policy and the Protection from Workplace Retaliation (Whistleblower Policy)

Disability Accommodation

Forward Journey complies with all laws prohibiting discrimination against applicants and individuals with disabilities. Forward Journey is also committed to providing reasonable accommodations to applicants and employees who are qualified for a job, so that they may perform the essential job duties of the position.

This policy applies to all employment decisions, including application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

The company will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of a job unless doing so causes a direct threat to these individuals or others in the workplace and the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation and/or if the accommodation creates an undue hardship to Forward Journey. Employees are encouraged to come forward and request reasonable accommodations at the earliest opportunity, and before performance problems arise. Contact the Executive Director with any questions or requests for accommodation.

Pregnancy Discrimination

Delaware law prohibits discrimination against any employee based on pregnancy, childbirth, or related condition, including, but not limited to, lactation. (Refer to Delaware's Pregnant Workers Fairness Act at www.delaware.gov for more information). If you believe that you have been subject to pregnancy discrimination, please inform a member of management as soon as reasonably possible. The company is committed to providing a workplace free of discrimination and harassment and will take prompt action to investigate and address any such allegations.

Delaware law also entitles employees to reasonable accommodation of known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, and related conditions, provided that the accommodation does not impose an undue hardship on the company. An employee need not be disabled to request a reasonable accommodation related to pregnancy, childbirth, or a related condition(s). If you suffer from a limitation that prevents you from performing the essential functions of your job, please inform your supervisor so that we can promptly begin the process of identifying a reasonable accommodation. Employees are encouraged to request a reasonable accommodation as soon as possible before performance problems arise.

EMPLOYMENT

Employee Classification Categories

All employees are designated as either nonexempt or exempt under state and federal wage and hour laws. The following is intended to help employees understand employment classifications and employees' employment status and benefit eligibility. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time. The right to terminate the employment-at-will relationship at any time is retained by both the employee and Forward Journey

Nonexempt employees are employees whose work is covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). They are NOT exempt from the law's requirements concerning minimum wage and overtime.

Exempt employees are generally supervisors or professional, administrative or technical staff who ARE exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the FLSA.

Forward Journey has established the following categories for both nonexempt and exempt employees:

- **Regular, full time:** Employees who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work the company's full-time schedule of 35 hours per week. Generally, these employees are eligible for the full benefits package, subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefit program.
- **Regular, part time:** Employees who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than the full-time schedule each week. Part time workers are not eligible for company benefits unless specifically stated otherwise in company policy, with the exception of Mutual of America 403(b) plan.
- **Temporary, full time or part time:** Individuals who are hired for a specific period to assist in the completion of a specific project are temporary employees. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status. Temporary employees retain that status until they are notified of a change. They are not eligible for any of the Forward Journey benefit programs with the exception of the Mutual of America 403(b) plan without company match.

Background and Reference Checks

To ensure that Forward Journey maintains a safe and productive work environment with well qualified workers, and to be in contract compliance with the State of Delaware, the following pre-employment screenings must be done for all individuals accepting an offer of employment (in addition to the application, verification of employment and reference checks):

- Criminal Background – State and Federal
- Drug test – 5 Panel
- TB Test (PPD)
- Adult and Child Abuse Registry Check
- OMB Registry Check
- HPE/Physical (required for some, but not all positions)
- DMV Driving Record (required for some, but not all positions)

All offers of employment are conditioned on receipt of a complete background check report that is acceptable to Forward Journey. All background checks are conducted in conformity with applicable law. Reports are kept confidential and are only viewed by individuals involved in the hiring process.

We rely upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application and the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

If information obtained in a background check would lead Forward Journey to deny employment, the information from the background check report will be provided to the applicant, and the applicant will have

the opportunity to dispute the report's accuracy. Background checks include a criminal record check, although a criminal conviction does not automatically bar an applicant from employment. As noted, additional checks such as a driving record may be made on applicants for particular job categories if appropriate and job related.

Forward Journey also reserves the right to conduct drug testing and criminal background checks for current employees to determine eligibility for promotion or reassignment in the same manner as described above.

In addition to pre-employment screenings, background checks are required every 3 years for existing employees, and motor vehicle records are checked annually for employees who drive a company vehicle as part of their job duties. All employees must notify their direct supervisor and/or the Operations/Human Resource Manager if they commit a major violation that would appear on either of these screenings. Such violations include but are not limited to any felony or misdemeanor, DUI, suspended drivers' licenses, lapse of insurance. Depending on the severity of the violation and charge, an employee's driving duties may be suspended until a court decision is rendered and the employee's position at Forward Journey may be terminated.

New Employee Orientation

Orientation is a welcoming process that is designed to make the new employee feel comfortable, informed about Forward Journey, and prepared for their position. New employee orientation includes an overview of Forward Journey history, vision, and mission. The new employee's supervisor will go over a list of items developed to help a new worker to become acclimated smoothly. This includes items such as where to park, how to fill out a request for time off, training requirements, fire drills, and how to access needed items. In addition, the new employee will be given an overview of benefits, payroll and taxes, and legal matters such as company harassment and drug policies, along with being given an opportunity to become familiar with the workplace and his/her duties. New employees working directly with program participants will be paired with an experienced employee for job shadowing/training until the supervisor is convinced that the new employee is competent and comfortable enough with job duties to be able to work independently.

Professional Development/Staff Training

Forward Journey recognizes the value of professional development and personal growth for employees and encourages staff members with an interest in continuing education and job-specific training to research these opportunities and present them to their supervisor for approval. Preference is given to those training courses researched far enough in advance that monies are set aside in the annual budget for them. In-service training of staff is scheduled annually. In addition, there are mandatory training courses required by the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS). Both of these types of training are a condition of our contract with DDDS and are specific to our program needs.

Because in-service training comes at a cost to Forward Journey, a high value is placed on all staff attending each training course for the entire duration of the day. Once the date is set, staff will be notified during the morning team meeting and a note will be placed in the staff break room with a reminder that all employees must be in attendance. Ample time is given for other arrangements to be made in order for staff to attend the full day. This includes making arrangements with other employers, childcare, doctors' appointments, etc. **If an employee calls out or is late/leaves early, s/he will not be paid for the time missed, nor able to use PTO for the same.** Should an employee be absent on an in-service day, s/he is responsible for acquiring the missed training from their immediate supervisor/designee. True emergencies that preclude a person from attending an in-service day, or arriving late/leaving early for same, will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

For more information, please refer to the In-service Days for Staff Training policy.

Administration of Medication

Many participants at Forward Journey have medications that can be administered by unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP). In most instances the medications are given by Forward Journey licensed nurses, but there are times when employees other than nurses administer medication. Medication includes any item prescribed by a physician for a participant to use at Forward Journey

Any UAP who has direct care responsibility and may need to administer medication is required to successfully pass the 15 hour "Limited Lay Administration of Medication" (LLAM) class and be observed passing medications by a licensed professional or designee as allowed under the law. During the LLAM class and the review of Forward Journey medication administration policies, step-by-step processes are laid out to prevent medication errors, both while at the Forward Journey facilities and in the community.

Because of the serious, possibly deadly consequences of a participant not receiving their prescribed medications, or receiving them incorrectly, medication errors are subject to an immediate final warning and/or termination for failing to follow required safety precautions.

For more information, please refer to the Professional Administration of Medication Policy and the Lay Administration of Medication policy.

Internal Transfers/Promotions

Employees with more than twelve months of service may request consideration to transfer to other jobs as vacancies become available and will be considered along with other applicants. At the same time, the company may initiate transfers of employees between facilities to meet specified work requirements and reassignment of work requirements.

On occasion, employees may be asked to work at another Forward Journey facility for a short period of time to help resolve staffing shortages. This will only be done in extreme circumstances. Efforts will be made to take volunteers first, but if no one does so, the Program Managers/Coordinators and/or Executive Director can assign this responsibility to a specific employee so long as there is not undue hardship (must be documented). Expenses for travel to the alternate facility will be paid by Forward Journey if the distance to the alternate facility is further than the employee's usual facility.

Forward Journey offers employees promotions to higher-level positions when appropriate. Management prefers to promote from within and may first consider current employees with the necessary qualifications and skills to fill vacancies above entry level, unless outside recruitment is considered to be in the company's best interest.

To be considered, employees must have held their current position for at least 12 months, have a satisfactory performance record and have no disciplinary actions during the last 12 months and be deemed to have the appropriate skills and aptitude for the new position. Management retains the discretion to make exceptions to the policy.

Nepotism, Employment of Relatives and Personal Relationships

Forward Journey wants to ensure that agency practices do not create situations such as conflict of interest or favoritism. This extends to practices that involve employee hiring, promotion and transfer. Close relatives, partners, those in a dating relationship or members of the same household are not permitted to be in positions that have a reporting responsibility to each other. Close relatives are defined as spouse, father, mother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, grandfather, grandmother, son, son-in-law, daughter, daughter-in-law, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, step relatives, and cousins.

If employees begin a dating relationship or become relatives, partners or members of the same household, and if one party is in a supervisory position, that person is required to inform the Executive Director of the relationship.

Forward Journey reserves the right to apply this policy to situations where there is a conflict or the potential for conflict because of the relationship between employees, even if there is no direct-reporting relationship or authority involved.

Progressive Discipline

Every employee has the duty and the responsibility to be aware of, and abide by, existing rules and policies. Employees also have the responsibility to perform their duties to the best of their ability and to the standards as set forth in their job description, or as otherwise established.

Forward Journey supports the use of progressive discipline to address issues such as poor work performance or misconduct. Our progressive discipline policy is designed to provide a corrective action process to improve and prevent a recurrence of undesirable behavior and/or performance issues.

Outlined below are the steps of our progressive discipline policy and procedure. Forward Journey reserves the right to combine or skip steps in this process depending on the facts of each situation, and the nature of the offense. The level of disciplinary intervention may also vary. Some of the factors that will be considered are whether the offense is repeated despite coaching, counseling and/or training; the employee's work record; and the impact the conduct and performance issues have on our organization.

The following outlines Forward Journey progressive discipline process:

- **Verbal warning:** A supervisor verbally counsels an employee about an issue of concern, and a written record of the discussion is placed in the employee's file for future reference.
- **Written warning:** Written warnings are used for behavior or violations that a supervisor considers serious, or in situations when a verbal warning has not helped change unacceptable behavior. Written warnings are placed in an employee's personnel file. Employees should recognize the serious nature of the written warning.
- **Final warning/Performance improvement plan:** Whenever an employee has been involved in a disciplinary situation that has not been readily resolved or when he/she has demonstrated an inability to perform assigned work responsibilities efficiently, the employee may be given a final warning or placed on a performance improvement plan (PIP). PIP status will last for a predetermined amount of time not to exceed 90 days. *Within this time period, the employee must demonstrate a willingness and ability to meet and maintain the conduct and/or work requirements as specified by the supervisor and the organization.* At the end of the performance improvement period, the performance improvement plan may be closed or, if established goals are not met, the employee may be terminated.

Forward Journey reserves the right to determine the appropriate level of discipline for any inappropriate conduct, including oral and written warnings, suspension with or without pay, demotion and discharge.

Probationary Period

All employees are subject to a 90-day probationary period, beginning on the first day of employment. When an employee completes the 90-day probationary period, an interim performance review will be completed, during which the employee and his/her supervisor will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the employee, set goals for the future, and make sure working at Forward Journey is in the best interest for the employee and the company. Forward Journey reserves the right to extend a probationary period in the event a new employee has not met required training goals in the standard 90-day period. The decision to extend the probationary period if needed is made by a supervisor and approved by the Executive Director. The supervisor will discuss the extension and the reason for it will be discussed with the employee prior to being enacted.

Separation of Employment

Separation of employment within an organization can occur for several different reasons.

- **Resignation:** Although we hope your employment with us will be a mutually rewarding experience, we understand that varying circumstances cause employees to voluntarily resign employment. Resigning employees should provide a minimum of two weeks' written notice in order to facilitate a smooth transition out of the organization. Management reserves the right to provide an employee with two weeks' pay in lieu of notice in situations where job or business needs warrant such action. *If an employee provides less notice than required, the employer may deem the individual to be ineligible for rehire depending on the circumstances regarding the notice given.*
- **Retirement:** Employees who wish to retire should notify their supervisor and/or the Executive Director in writing, at least one (1) month before the planned retirement date.
- **Job abandonment:** Employees who fail to report to work or contact their supervisor for three (3) consecutive workdays shall be considered to have abandoned the job without notice, effective at the end of their normal shift on the third day. The supervisor shall notify the Executive Director at the expiration of the third workday and initiate the paperwork to remove the employee from the payroll. Employees who are separated due to job abandonment are ineligible to receive accrued benefits and are ineligible for rehire.
- **Termination:** Employees of Forward Journey are employed on an at-will basis, and the company retains the right to terminate an employee at any time.

Return of Company Property

The separating employee must return all company property at the time of separation, including keys, laptop computers, company credit cards and the like. Failure to return some items may result in deductions from the final paycheck.

Discontinuation of Benefits

Accrued PTO is earned through the last day of active employment, and if paid, will be at the employee's base rate of pay on their last day of active employment, and will be paid in the last paycheck. (See Employee Handbook Section "Paid Time Off" for additional details.) Health insurance terminates as of the last day of the month that employment ended unless the employee elects to continue coverage under COBRA. If an employee has dental coverage, it terminates as of the last day of the last month of employment. The separating employee shall contact the Operation and Human Resource Manager and/or the Executive Director as soon as notice is given to schedule an exit interview. The interview will be on the employee's last day of work or another day, as mutually agreed on.

Rehire

Former employees who left Forward Journey in good standing and were classified as eligible for rehire may be considered for reemployment. An applicant or employee who is terminated for violating policy or who resigned in lieu of termination from employment due to a policy violation will be ineligible for rehire.

An application must be submitted to the hiring supervisor, and the applicant must meet all minimum qualifications, requirements of the position and background checks.

Supervisors must obtain approval from the Executive Director prior to rehiring a former employee. Rehired employees begin accruing benefits just as any other new employee. Previous tenure can be considered in calculating leave/PTO accruals only; it is not considered for retirement plan contributions, or any other benefit offered by Forward Journey

WORKPLACE SAFETY

Drug-Free Workplace

Forward Journey has a longstanding commitment to provide a safe and productive work environment. Alcohol and drug abuse pose a threat to the health and safety of both employees and participants. For these reasons, Forward Journey is committed to the elimination of drug and/or alcohol use and abuse in the workplace.

This policy outlines the practice and procedure designed to correct instances of identified alcohol and/or drug use in the workplace. This policy applies to all employees and all applicants for employment of Forward Journey. The Executive Director is responsible for policy administration.

Employee Assistance and Drug-Free Awareness

Illegal drug use and alcohol misuse have a number of adverse health and safety consequences. Information about those consequences and sources of help for drug/alcohol problems is available from the Operations and Human Resource Manager, who can make referrals and assist employees with drug/alcohol problems.

Under this policy, an illegal drug is: (1) any controlled substance that is not available over the counter, and for which the employee does not possess a prescription, (2) any controlled substance for which the employee has a prescription, but that is not being used in accordance with prescription, or (3) any over-the-counter drug that is not being used in accordance with its recommended use.

Forward Journey will assist and support employees who voluntarily seek help for drug or alcohol problems before becoming subject to discipline and/or termination under this or other policies. Such an employee may be allowed to use accrued paid time off, be placed on leave of absence, referred to treatment providers and otherwise accommodated as required by law. Such an employee may be required to document that s/he is successfully following prescribed treatment and to take and pass follow-up tests under appropriate circumstances.

Employees should report to work fit for duty and free of any adverse effects of illegal drugs or alcohol. This policy does not prohibit employees from the lawful use and possession of prescribed medications. Employees must, however, consult with their doctors about the medications' effect on their fitness for duty and ability to work safely, and must promptly disclose any work restrictions to their supervisor. Employees should not, however, disclose underlying medical conditions unless directed to do so.

Work Rules

The following work rules apply to all employees:

- Whenever employees are working, are operating any company vehicle, are present on company premises, or are conducting related work off-site, they are prohibited from:
 - Using, possessing, buying, selling, manufacturing or dispensing alcohol or illegal drugs (to include possession of drug paraphernalia).
 - Being under the influence of alcohol or an illegal drug as defined in this policy.
- The presence of any detectable amount of any illegal drug in an employee's body while performing company business or while in a company facility is prohibited.
- Forward Journey will not allow any employee to perform their duties while taking prescribed drugs that adversely affect the employee's ability to perform their job duties safely and effectively. Employees taking a prescribed medication must carry it in the container labeled by a licensed pharmacist or be prepared to produce it if asked.
- Any illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia will be turned over to an appropriate law enforcement agency and may result in criminal prosecution.

Required Testing

The company retains the right to require the following tests:

- **Pre-employment:** All applicants must pass a drug test before beginning work or receiving an offer of employment. Refusal to submit to testing will result in disqualification from further employment consideration.

- **Reasonable suspicion:** Employees are subject to testing based on observations by a supervisor of apparent workplace use, possession or impairment. The Executive Director must be consulted before sending an employee for reasonable suspicion testing.
- **Post-accident:** Employees could be subject to testing when they cause or contribute to accidents that injure a participant, themselves or another employee requiring off-site medical attention or damage a company vehicle, machinery, equipment or property. In any of these instances, the investigation and subsequent testing must take place within two (2) hours following the accident, if not sooner.
- **Follow-up:** Employees who have tested positive, or otherwise violated this policy, are subject to discipline up to and including discharge. Depending on the circumstances and the employee's work history/record, Forward Journey may offer an employee who violates this policy or tests positive the opportunity to return to work on a last-chance basis pursuant to mutually agreeable terms, which could include follow-up drug testing at times and frequencies for a minimum of one (1) year. If the employee either does not complete his/her rehabilitation program or tests positive after completing the rehabilitation program, he/she will be subject to immediate discharge from employment.

Consequences

Applicants who refuse to cooperate in a drug test or who test positive will not be hired. Employees who refuse to cooperate in required tests or who use, possess, buy, sell, manufacture or dispense an illegal drug in violation of this policy will be terminated. The first time an employee tests positive for alcohol or illegal drug use under this policy, the result will be discipline up to and including discharge.

Employees will be paid for time spent in alcohol/drug testing and then suspended pending the results of the drug/alcohol test. After the results of the test are received, a date/time will be scheduled to discuss the results of the test; this meeting will include the immediate supervisor and the Executive Director. Should the results prove to be negative, the employee will receive back pay for the times/days of suspension.

Confidentiality

Information and records relating to positive test results, drug and alcohol dependencies and legitimate medical explanations provided to Forward Journey shall be kept confidential to the extent required by law and maintained in secure files separate from normal personnel files.

Inspections

Forward Journey reserves the right to inspect all portions of its premises for drugs, alcohol, or other contraband. All employees, contract employees, and visitors may be asked to cooperate in inspections of their persons, work areas, and personal property that might conceal drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, or other contraband. Employees who possess such contraband or refuse to cooperate in such inspections are subject to appropriate discipline up to and including discharge.

Medical Marijuana

Forward Journey complies with state law regarding the use of medical marijuana. Employees who possess a license permitting the possession and use of medical marijuana will be treated in a manner identical to any other employee possessing a valid medical prescription.

Workplace Bullying

Forward Journey defines bullying as "repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment." Such behavior violates our company code of ethics, which clearly states that all employees, participants, family members, agency staff, visitors and volunteers will be treated with dignity and respect.

The purpose of this policy is to communicate to all employees, including supervisors, managers, and executives, that the company will not tolerate bullying behavior. Employees found in violation of this policy will be disciplined up to and including termination. Non-employees found to be bullying others will be educated on the company policy against bullying. Further incidences of bullying by non-employees will lead to their being barred from the property.

Bullying may be intentional or unintentional. However, it must be noted that where an allegation of bullying is made, the intention of the alleged bully is irrelevant and will not be given consideration when administering discipline. As in sexual harassment, it is the effect of the behavior upon the individual that is important. Forward Journey considers the following types of behavior examples of bullying:

- **Verbal bullying:** Slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or his/her family; persistent name calling that is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as the butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.
- **Physical bullying:** Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault or threat of physical assault; damage to a person's work area or property.
- **Gesture bullying:** Nonverbal threatening gestures or glances that convey threatening messages.
- **Exclusion:** Socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities.

Violence in the Workplace

All employees, participants, parents, visitors, consultants, vendors, and business associates must be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from conduct that may be dangerous to others.

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, participant, parent, visitor, consultant, vendor, or business associate will not be tolerated. Forward Journey resources may not be used to threaten, stalk, or harass anyone at the workplace or outside the workplace. Forward Journey treats threats coming from an abusive personal relationship as it does other forms of violence.

Indirect or direct threats of violence, incidents of actual violence, and suspicious individuals or activities should be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor the Executive Director or any member of senior management. When reporting a threat or incident of violence, the employee should be as specific and detailed as possible. Employees should not place themselves in peril, nor should they attempt to intercede during an incident.

Employees should promptly inform the Executive Director of any protective or restraining order that they have obtained that lists the workplace as a protected area. Employees are encouraged to report safety concerns with regard to intimate partner violence. Forward Journey is committed to supporting victims of intimate partner violence by providing referrals to community resources and providing time off for reasons related to intimate partner violence.

Forward Journey will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of violence or incidents of actual violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as possible. Forward Journey will not retaliate against employees making good-faith reports of violence, threats, or suspicious individuals or activities. In order to maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, Forward Journey may suspend employees suspected of workplace violence or threats of violence, either with or without pay, pending investigation. Anyone found to be responsible for threats of or actual violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Forward Journey encourages employees to bring their disputes to the attention of their supervisors or the Executive Director before the situation escalates. Forward Journey will not discipline employees for raising such concerns in good faith.

General Safety

It is the responsibility of each employee to conduct all tasks in a safe and efficient manner complying with all local, state and federal safety and health regulations and program standards, and with any special safety concerns for use in a particular area or with a particular participant.

Although most safety regulations are consistent throughout each program site, each employee has the responsibility to familiarize her/himself with the emergency plan for his/her location. Each facility has fire and emergency evacuation plans posted in every room with detailed procedures in handling emergencies such as fire evacuations.

It is the responsibility of the employee to complete an Accident and Incident Report for each safety and health issue that occurs by an employee or that the employee witnesses. It is very important that these be completed, so we know where we need additional staff training.

Management requires that every person in the organization assume the responsibility of individual and organizational safety. Failure to follow company safety and health guidelines or engaging in conduct that places the employee, participant, or company property at risk can lead to employee disciplinary action and/or termination.

Supervisors and the Executive Director are responsible for continuing to monitor the safety of the work environment and, from time to time, to implement additional health and safety policies in the interest of a safer work environment. For more information on workplace safety, please refer to the Employee Workplace Safety Policy.

Building Security

All employees who are issued keys to the building are responsible for their safekeeping. The employee may incur a fee for replacement of a lost door key or key FOB and installing new door locks. The last employee, or a designated employee, to leave the program facility at the end of the business day is responsible to ensure that all doors are securely locked, and all appliances and lights are turned off with exception of the lights normally left on for security purposes. Employees are not allowed on property after hours or weekends without prior authorization from management.

Smoke Free Workplace

The Forward Journey Board of Directors voted during the February 25, 2020 meeting to make Forward Journey a smoke free workplace. Therefore, all forms of smoking (including vaping, e-cigarettes, etc.) is strictly prohibited on Forward Journey premises, in company vehicles, and in personal vehicles that are parked on the company premises.

The smoke free workplace policy applies to:

- All areas of company buildings.
- All company-sponsored off-site conferences and meetings.
- All vehicles owned or leased by the company.
- All visitors (customers and vendors) on company premises.
- All contractors and consultants and/or their employees working on the company premises.
- All full- and part-time employees, temporary employees, and student interns.

Employees who violate the smoking policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

WOKPLACE EXPECTATIONS

Standards of Conduct

The work rules and standards of conduct for Forward Journey are important, and Forward Journey regards them seriously. All employees are urged to become familiar with these rules and standards. In addition, employees are expected to follow the rules and standards faithfully in doing their own jobs and conducting Forward Journey business. Please note that any employee who deviates from these rules and standards will be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

While not intended to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace, the following are examples of misconduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property
- Any fraud against Forward Journey (theft, stealing funds, etc.)
- Medicaid non-compliance (Medicaid fraud)
- Falsification of timekeeping records
- Working under the influence of alcohol or any illegal substance
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or any illegal substance in the workplace
- Possession of weapons in the workplace
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to injury of others or damage of property owned by Forward Journey, its employees, or program participants
- Expression/display of insubordinate behavior or other disrespectful conduct
- Speaking irreverently about participants or about Forward Journey
- Not attending to participant needs for personal care, engagement, and safety during community outings and while at Forward Journey
- Violation of safety or health rules
- Smoking in the workplace, in a fleet vehicle, or with participants on outings
- Harassment, discrimination, or workplace bullying
- Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice
- Unauthorized use of telephones, or other company-owned equipment
- Using Forward Journey equipment for purposes other than business (i.e., Facebook, playing games on computers or personal internet usage other than while on break)
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information
- Violation of personnel policies
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct
- Use of personal cell phones, smart watches, air pods, and other like-manner personal communication devices (in any manner) during the work day, i.e., texting, internet, calling. An exception to this would be during an emergency while using a fleet vehicle, during an emergency and company phone lines are down, or while on break when off the program floor. Cell phones, smart watches and air pods CANNOT be used while on the program floor.

Confidentiality

Our participants, their families, and others with whom we do business entrust the company with important information, much of it private in nature, protected by HIPAA laws. It is our policy that hard copies of all information considered confidential will be held in secure, locked file cabinets for safekeeping. Only employees with a business need for confidential files will have access. In the course of the day, employees need to be aware of who is in their presence when discussing private information about participants. Discretion is necessary when parents or non-staff members are present. Do not speak openly about confidential issues regarding a participant or employee in the presence of a non-employee. The exception to this would be a discussion with a contracted vendor (such as a therapist) regarding the needs of a participant. This policy is intended to alert employees to the need for discretion at all times and is not intended to inhibit normal business communications. If an employee questions whether certain information is considered confidential, they should first check with their immediate supervisor.

All inquiries from the media must be referred to the Executive Director.

Conflicts of Interest

Employees must avoid any relationship or activity that might impair, or even appear to impair, their ability to make objective and fair decisions when performing their jobs. At times, an employee may be faced with situations in which business actions taken on behalf of Forward Journey may conflict with the employee's own personal interests. Company property, information or business opportunities may not be used for personal gain.

Conflicts of interest could arise in the following circumstances:

- Being employed by, or acting as a consultant to, a competitor or potential competitor, supplier or contractor, regardless of the nature of the employment, while employed with Forward Journey
- Hiring or supervising family members or closely related persons.
- Serving as a board member for a competing (or potentially competing) company or organization.
- Owning or having a substantial interest in a competitor, supplier or contractor.
- Accepting gifts, discounts, favors or services from a competitor, supplier, participant/potential participant or their family/guardian, unless the same is equally available to all company employees.

Employees with a conflict-of-interest question should seek advice from management. Before engaging in any activity, transaction, or relationship that might give rise to a conflict of interest, employees must seek review from the Executive Director. All staff and board members are required to complete a Conflict of Interest form upon hire, and annually thereafter.

Outside Employment

Employees are permitted to engage in outside work or to hold other jobs, subject to certain restrictions as outlined below.

Activities and conduct away from the job must not compete with, conflict with, or compromise the company interests or adversely affect job performance and the ability to fulfill all job responsibilities. Employees are prohibited from using Forward Journey supplies or equipment while working on another job. In addition, employees are not to use Forward Journey computers, printers, copiers, or other equipment to conduct any outside business during paid working time.

Employees are cautioned to carefully consider the demands that additional work activity will create before accepting outside employment. Outside employment will not be considered an excuse for poor job performance, absenteeism, tardiness, leaving early, refusal to travel, or refusal to work overtime or different hours. If Forward Journey determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action. In this instance, the employee may want to reconsider the benefits of balancing both jobs.

Attendance and Punctuality

Punctual and regular attendance is an essential responsibility of each employee at Forward Journey. Employees are expected to report to work on time as scheduled and remain at work for their entire shift unless prior arrangements were made to use PTO. Late arrivals, early departures or other absences from scheduled hours are disruptive and must be avoided with exceptions granted in rare circumstances.

Excessive absenteeism, tardiness, and/or unexpected early departures will result in discipline even if the employee has not yet exhausted available paid time off. (Updated policy effective 9/1/23.)

Absence is defined as the failure of an employee to report for work when he or she is scheduled. The two types of absences, Excused and Unexcused, are defined below:

Excused absence occurs when the following conditions are met:

1. The absence request is approved in advance by the employee's supervisor. Note: acknowledgement of the request does not necessarily equate approval.
2. The employee has sufficient accrued paid time off (PTO) to cover the absence.

Unexcused absence occurs when either of the following conditions are met:

1. The absence request was NOT approved in advance by the supervisor.
2. The employee does NOT have sufficient PTO to cover the absence.

An unexcused absence counts as one occurrence. The absence could last multiple days but is still counted as one occurrence if the absence is for the same reason. Employees with three or more consecutive days of absences *because of illness or injury* must give Forward Journey proof of physician's care and a fitness for duty release prior to returning to work. Employees must take earned PTO for every absence unless otherwise allowed by company policy (e.g., leave of absence, bereavement, jury duty, ADA accommodation) or approved by a manager.

Progressive Disciplinary Action: Unexcused absences will be reviewed with employees at their regularly scheduled supervisions. A fourth occurrence of unexcused absences in a rolling 12-month period will result in a discussion of the situation.

Excessive absenteeism is defined as more than four occurrences in a rolling 12-month period and will result in the following progressive disciplinary action:

- 5th occurrence = verbal warning
- 6th occurrence = written warning
- 7th occurrence = final written warning
- 8th occurrence = termination

Call Out: If it is necessary for an employee to be absent from work because of an illness or an emergency, the employee must call their supervisor **no later than 6:00 a.m.** on that same day. If the employee is unable to call, they must have someone make the call. **If the call out is not made by 6:00 a.m., the time will be unpaid.**

Tardiness & Early Departure: Employees are expected to report to work and return from scheduled breaks on time. If employees cannot report to work as scheduled, they must **notify their supervisor no later than their regular starting time.** This notification does not excuse the tardiness but simply notifies the supervisor. Employees who must unexpectedly leave work before the end of their scheduled shift must notify a supervisor immediately prior to leaving. This would be considered an unexcused early departure.

Excused tardiness or early departure occurs when the following conditions are met:

1. The request is approved in advance by the employee's supervisor. Note: Acknowledgement of the request does not necessarily equate approval.
2. The employee has sufficient accrued paid time off (PTO) to cover the time.

Unexcused tardiness or early departure occurs when either of these conditions are met.

1. The request was NOT approved in advance by the supervisor.
2. The employee does NOT have sufficient PTO to cover the time off.

Three unexcused tardiness and/or early departures equal one occurrence.

Accommodation: Accommodation can be requested in writing for specific and unusual circumstances (i.e., medical conditions), which normally may be considered an unexcused absence. This will be reviewed by the direct manager and forwarded to the Operations & HR Manager or Executive Director who have final authority to review and approve or deny the request.

No call/no show

Not reporting to work and not calling to report the absence is a serious offense. The first instance of a no call/no show will result in a final written warning. The second separate occurrence may result in termination of employment with no additional disciplinary steps. **A no call/no show lasting three days will be considered job abandonment and will be deemed an employee's voluntary resignation of employment.**

Part Time Staff Call Outs / Attendance: Part time employees do not qualify for PTO but call out procedures and guidelines are the same as for full time employees. Call outs due to sickness or emergency are permitted without prior scheduling by calling and speaking to or leaving a message for your supervisor no later than 6:00 a.m. on the day in question. Pre-arranged days off are also permitted with reasonable notice; however, any days not worked will not be paid for hourly, non-exempt, part-time employees. Call outs and pre-arranged days off for part time employees should not exceed 15 days (at their scheduled shift) within the calendar year (the same number of days allowed for full time staff before they are disciplined for excessive absenteeism). A pattern of excessive call outs and absences, even with proper notice, will be investigated and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Children in the Workplace

In order for Forward Journey to run effectively, staff are expected to make advanced child care arrangements in the event of school/day care closures, late openings or early dismissals. This could be due to inclement weather, teacher in-service days, election days, etc. Staff should also have a back-up plan in place in the event of an emergency, whenever possible. If Forward Journey is open, safe operations must be maintained for our participants until their departure each day. Safe operations include appropriate staffing levels.

Children are not to be brought to Forward Journey to wait unsupervised for their parent to finish working for the day. The arrival of a child on premises is distracting not only to the parent, but to other staff members, and takes away from time spent supporting participants. In addition, the agency's insurance does not include liability coverage for a child injured while unsupervised in the building.

Children can visit Forward Journey only when a parent is able to supervise the child at all times while on premises. These occurrences should be short in duration and are an exception to normal work practices. Senior management should be informed as soon as a child arrives for a visit.

For more information, please refer to the Children in the Workplace policy.

Attire and Grooming

It is important for all employees to project a professional image while at work by being appropriately attired. *Forward Journey employees are expected to be neat, clean and well-groomed while on the job.* Clothing must be consistent with the standards for our business environment and must be appropriate to the type of work being performed. Closed toe shoes are a requirement for all staff, interns, or agency aides regardless of job duties. Hair is to be nicely groomed every day or covered by a decorative head scarf (no bed-head). Due to allergies, natural and artificial scents are discouraged.

Program Associates are issued Forward Journey "uniform" shirts and sweatshirts. This is so that the Program Associates are easily identifiable and do not blend in with agency staff, visiting nurses, etc. Twice a year a new order of shirts is made. Because of this, older shirts must be retired when they start to show wear or become stained (including bleach stains). The shirts must be clean at the start of each workday. It is highly recommended that Program Associates keep a spare shirt at work in case the one being worn gets soiled. If additional shirts are requested, employees must purchase them; payment can be made by payroll deduction. To avoid confusion, no one other than an employee of Forward Journey can wear the company issued garments. Some staff wear jackets, sweatshirts or non-Forward Journey outerwear during the day. If so, please be sure a name badge with the Forward Journey logo is placed on the outer garment in a spot that is easy and comfortable to read for visitors.

Appropriate attire: Forward Journey “uniform” shirts, hoodies and zip-up sweatshirts worn over the **company shirt**, pants of any kind (jeans, sweatpants, yoga pants, leggings, scrubs), shorts can be worn as long as they fall just above the knee, and **hijabs, religious hair/head coverings and hair wraps**. All clothing must be clean, unstained and without holes.

Inappropriate attire: No short shorts. No clothing that exposes the midriff area or buttocks or low-cutting shirts that reveal cleavage. Employees must give thought to the work of lifting and bending and make sure that their attire complies with these standards of modesty. For safety reasons, no dangling earring should be worn. Hats are not allowed, and no see-through clothing is permitted at any time.

Attire during special days/celebrations: At times there are exceptions granted to wearing Forward Journey uniforms. On these special days/ celebrations, the same modesty standards apply.

Forward Journey is hopeful that employees will use their best judgment regarding attire and appearance. Management reserves the right to determine appropriateness. Any employee who is improperly dressed will be counseled or, in severe cases, may be sent home to change clothes in order to maintain high company standards. Continual disregard of this policy may be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Personal Property

Forward Journey assumes no risk for any loss or damage to personal property left at the office. It is recommended that staff use the available storage lockers. Items can be safely locked in the lockers if employees choose to bring in a lock. This is recommended, but not required. Locks are not supplied by the company.

Electronic Communication and Internet Use

The following guidelines have been established for using the Internet and e-mail in an appropriate, ethical and professional manner:

- Internet, company-provided equipment (e.g., laptops, computers, or cell phones) and services may not be used for transmitting, retrieving or storing any communications of a defamatory, discriminatory, harassing, or pornographic nature.
- The following actions are forbidden: using disparaging, abusive, profane or offensive language; creating, viewing or displaying materials that might adversely or negatively reflect upon Forward Journey or be contrary to the company’s best interests; and engaging in any illegal activities, including piracy, extortion, blackmail, copyright infringement, and unauthorized access of any computers and company-provided equipment such as computers and laptops.
- Employees may not copy, retrieve, modify or forward copyrighted materials, except with permission.
- Employees must not use the system in a way that disrupts its use by others. Employees must not send or receive large files that could be saved/transferred via thumb drives. Employees are prohibited from sending or receiving files that are not related to work.
- Employees must not use Forward Journey equipment for purposes other than Forward Journey business (e.g., Facebook, playing games on computers or personal internet usage) other than when on break or at lunch.
- Employees should not open suspicious e-mails, pop-ups or downloads. They should notify their immediate supervisor, who will contact IT with any questions or concerns to reduce the release of viruses or to contain viruses immediately.
- Internal and external e-mails are considered business records and may be subject to discovery in the event of litigation. Be aware of this possibility when sending e-mail within and outside the company.

Right to Monitor

All company-supplied technology and company-related work records belong to the company and not to the employee. Forward Journey reserves the right to routinely monitor the use of company-supplied technology. Inappropriate or illegal use or communications may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Social Media—Acceptable Use

Employees may not post financial, confidential, sensitive or proprietary information about the company, participants or their families, fellow employees, or applicants online. Employees may not post obscenities, slurs, or personal attacks that can damage the reputation of the company, participants or their families, fellow employees or applicants. Employees may not post pictures of Forward Journey participants on their individual social media pages (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.). Instead, they can post pictures to the Forward Journey Facebook page, which is set up so that posts are individually approved by the Assistant Executive Director before being viewable by the public. The employee is welcome to “share” the link/page with their friends after the posting of the picture is approved.

When posting on social media sites about Forward Journey, employees must use the following disclaimer when discussing job-related matters, *“The opinions expressed on this site are my own and do not represent the views of Forward Journey”*

Forward Journey reserves the right to monitor content out on the Internet. Policy violations may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Solicitations, Distributions and Posting of Materials

Forward Journey prohibits the solicitation, distribution and posting of materials on or at company property by any employee or non-employee, except as may be permitted by this policy. The sole exceptions to this policy are charitable and community activities supported by Forward Journey management and company-sponsored programs related to Forward Journey products and services.

Provisions:

- Except for company sponsored vendors (such as AFLAC or Mutual of America), non-employees may not solicit employees or distribute literature of any kind on company premises at any time.
- Employees may only admit non-employees to work areas with management approval, or as part of a company-sponsored program. These visits should not disrupt workflow.
- Employees may not solicit other employees during work times, except in connection with a company-approved or -sponsored event. An exception to this would be a catalog party for Pampered Chef, Thirty-One, Girl Scout Cookies, etc. Management reserves the right to disallow these solicitations if they interfere with employee duties.
- Employees may not distribute literature of any kind during work times or in any work area at any time, except in connection with a company-sponsored event.
- The posting of materials or electronic announcements are permitted with prior approval from the Executive Director.

Violations of this policy should be reported to the Executive Director.

Debit Card Use

Forward Journey currently maintains an account at WSFS to which debit cards are linked. These cards are issued to Forward Journey employees who are routinely required to make purchases on behalf of the agency as part of their job description. The debit card may only be used for expenditures that fall within the approved budget. The debit card must be maintained securely to avoid loss or theft.

If an employee has a consistent pattern of losing receipts, forgetting to process receipts, using the wrong card or losing the debit card, s/he may lose debit card privileges. Any indication of inappropriate purchases using the debit card may also lead to the loss of debit card privileges and could lead to termination of employment and criminal investigation.

For more information on debit card use, including issues with the card, lost receipts, and returning the card, please refer to the Debit Card Use policy.

Employee Personnel Files

Employee files are maintained by the Executive Director and are considered confidential. Supervisors can have access to personnel files on a need-to-know basis. A supervisor considering the hire of a former employee or transfer of a current employee may be granted access to the file, or limited parts of it, as appropriate.

Current employees may generally review their own personnel files upon request, within three days of the request. Personnel files are to be reviewed in the Executive Director's office, or other designated area. Personnel files may not be taken outside the office or designated area.

Representatives of government or law enforcement agencies, in the course of their duties, may be allowed access to file information.

COMPENSATION

Performance and Salary Review

Performance appraisals are conducted at the end of an employee's probationary period, and on an annual cycle. The annual performance review is typically completed in the month of June each year. The performance appraisal will be discussed, and the employee will have an opportunity to provide a written response to the appraisal. Both the employee and the manager sign the document, signifying that both parties have reviewed and clearly understand the strengths, areas for improvement, and job goals for the next review period. Performance evaluation forms will be retained in the employee's personnel file.

Merit increases are not guaranteed but based on company performance and the availability of funds. A performance review does not always result in an automatic salary increase. In addition to budgetary concerns, the employee's overall performance and salary level relative to the responsibilities of his/her position are evaluated to determine if a salary increase would be warranted.

Budget allocations for merit increases are planned for and made before the start of each fiscal year. The annual salary increase program is designed to assist management in planning and allocating merit and promotional increases that reward individual performance, that are market competitive and that are internally equitable. The Board of Directors' Personnel Committee reviews proposed annual salary increase/adjustment requests to ensure internal equity and compliance with company policies, guidelines, and available funds.

Salary adjustments are occasionally requested or warranted at times other than the employee's scheduled annual salary reviews. Out-of-cycle salary increases must be approved by the supervisor and the Executive Director subject to satisfactory explanation of need and available funding.

Payment of Wages

Paydays are biweekly, every other Friday for the prior two-week period. Overtime payment (if any), which is included with the non-exempt employee's base salary payment, is also paid biweekly, with such payment covering hours worked in the prior two-week period. Wages are subject to deductions for taxes and other withholdings as required by law, by employee request, or by the company. If an employee's marital status changes or the number of exemptions previously claimed increases or decreases, a new IRS Form W-4 must be submitted to the Operations / Human Resource Manager.

If the normal payday falls on a company-recognized holiday, pay will be distributed one workday before the holiday. No salary advances will be made for unearned pay.

Wage Garnishment

Forward Journey will comply with all legally entered wage garnishments. An employee will not be subject to discrimination on the basis of a wage garnishment.

Time Reporting

A work hour is any hour of the day that is worked, and should be recorded to the nearest quarter of an hour. The workday is defined as the 24-hour period starting at 12:00 a.m. and ending at 11:59 p.m. The workweek covers seven consecutive days beginning on Sunday and ending on Saturday. The usual workweek period is 35 hours.

Overtime is defined as hours worked by an hourly or nonexempt employee in excess of 40 hours in a workweek, and should be recorded to the nearest quarter of an hour. Overtime must be approved in advance by the manager to whom the employee reports. Failure to obtain approval prior to working overtime may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employees are required to use the time clock to punch in each morning and out at the end of the workday. Each employee is responsible for clocking in and out as needed in order to maintain an accurate daily record of his or her hours worked. Anyone attending a training class for the day or leaving early/arriving late due to company business must submit a "time clock edit form" to the Operations / Human Resource Manager indicating why they were not able to punch in/out as required. After being approved by the supervisor, an online edit is made to reflect actual hours worked. Employees who do not have an approved edit will need to use accrued PTO. If PTO is not available, the time will be unpaid, and the employee may be subject to discipline. In the unusual circumstance that the time clock is not being used companywide (i.e., COVID pandemic to account for FFCRA pay), employees are responsible for completing, signing, and giving their hard-copy time sheet to their manager no later than the first business day following the payroll period end.

Meal/Rest Periods

The scheduling of meal periods at Forward Journey is set by the employee's immediate supervisor with the goal of providing the least possible disruption to company operations.

Mandatory Meal Period - Employee meal periods are important to company productivity and employee health. Full-time non-exempt employees will be provided with a meal break not to exceed 30 minutes. The meal period is included in the total hours of work per day and is paid. This means that, if needed, the employee can be required to work through the meal period in order to meet the needs of the participants. When employees are required to work through their normal meal periods, an equivalent break will be given at another time during the day. This would be done only in extreme circumstances. Please note that being paid for lunch is not legally required and Forward Journey Board of Directors reserves the right to discontinue this practice at any time in the future.

Rest Breaks – All full time hourly (non-exempt) employees are permitted a 5-minute rest break in the morning and a 10-minute break in the afternoon. These breaks may be limited to a specific time period at the discretion of the supervisor in order to ensure appropriate coverage on the program floor. Please note, rest breaks are paid, and employees can be required to work through a break period as needed in order to meet the needs of the participants. Salaried (exempt) employees may choose to take breaks as needed, as they are paid a weekly salary regardless of the hours they work.

Impermissible Use of Meal Period and/or Rest Breaks

As breaks are for the purpose of relaxing, neither the lunch period nor the rest break(s) may be used to account for an employee's late arrival or early departure or to cover time off for other purposes. For example, rest breaks may not be accumulated to extend a meal period, and rest breaks may not be combined to allow one long break.

Overtime Pay (Non-exempt Employees)

Non-exempt employees who exceed 40 hours of work time in a workweek will be paid time and a half. Time worked in excess of 35 hours, but less than 40 hours is not considered overtime. Paid time off (PTO) does

not apply toward overtime. As noted above, the workweek begins at 12:00 a.m. on Sunday morning and ends at 11:59 p.m. on Saturday night.

Overtime pay is not budgeted; therefore, supervisors are required to obtain approval from the Executive Director prior to approving overtime. Employees who anticipate the need for extra time to complete the week's work must notify the supervisor in advance and obtain approval before working hours that extend beyond their normal schedule.

Employees rarely work extended hours and only for special purposes – such as after-hours staff meetings, staying late on behalf of a participant waiting for the bus, etc.

Employee Travel and Reimbursement

Employees will be reimbursed for mileage and reasonable expenses incurred in connection with approved travel on behalf of the company.

Travelers seeking reimbursement should incur the lowest reasonable travel expenses and exercise care to avoid the appearance of impropriety. If a circumstance arises that is not specifically covered in the travel policies, the most conservative course of action should be adopted.

Travel for staff must be authorized in advance. Travelers should verify that planned travel is eligible for reimbursement before making travel arrangements. As soon as possible upon completion of the trip (within 30 days maximum), the traveler must submit an expense form with supporting documentation to obtain reimbursement of expenses. For more details, see Travel Policy for procedures, authorization and reimbursement forms.

Exempt employees will be paid their regular salary for weeks in which they travel. Non-exempt employees will be paid for travel time in accordance with federal and state wage payment laws.

PAID TIME OFF/LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Holiday Pay

Forward Journey recognizes several paid holidays each year: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day through December 31, plus one floating holiday which is chosen annually by staff vote.

All full-time employees are paid for holidays. Part-time exempt (salaried) staff are paid for holidays if they fall on a day when they normally work. Temporary and non-exempt (hourly) part-time staff are not paid for holidays. Should a holiday fall on a weekend, the holiday will be observed on the work day closest to the holiday.

If an employee calls out the day before or after a paid holiday, they will not be paid for the holiday unless they provide medical documentation from a physician excusing them from work that day. Any time off the day before or after a paid holiday must be pre-approved by the employee's supervisor at least one week in advance. PTO may not be used in place of holiday pay in the event of a last minute call out as noted above.

Paid Time Off

All full-time employees are eligible for Paid Time Off (PTO) benefits. A full-time employee is described as one who is scheduled to work 30 or more hours per week. Part-time exempt (salaried) employees working 21 to 29 hours per week will earn PTO on a prorated basis. Hourly, non-exempt, part-time employees do not accrue PTO. PTO will be paid at the employee's base rate at the time the leave is taken. For those who qualify, PTO accrues monthly, beginning on the first day of employment, but cannot be used until the

employee has been employed for 90 days. PTO is only accrued according to the schedule in this policy, can only be used after it is earned, and will not be earned during an unpaid leave of absence.

To schedule PTO, employees should submit a completed "Staff Time Off Request Form" to the supervisor at least one week before the requested leave whenever possible. Requests will be approved or denied based on a number of factors, including staffing requirements, mandatory meetings, etc. **Employees must ensure that they have enough accrued leave available to cover the dates requested.** Staff should not request paid time off if they have no accrued time available. The request will be denied if the employee does not have sufficient PTO. If the time off request is denied, the supervisor will speak directly with the employee within three business days to communicate the reason for the denial. Otherwise, the employee can assume the request has been approved.

If the employee does not have PTO available, they cannot take the time off. The only exception to this would be in urgent or extreme cases, which must be discussed with the supervisor in advance, when possible. Leave taken beyond an employee's available PTO balance will be unpaid unless otherwise required under state or federal law.

If the PTO requested is not approved and the employee takes the time off anyway, those hours will be unpaid. A pattern of unapproved days off will lead to progressive discipline up to and including termination.

In addition to accrued Paid Time Off (PTO), effective 9/15/2023, after one year of employment, all full-time non-exempt, hourly staff are allotted two (2) Paid Personal Days (14 hours) to use as needed. The first allotment will be prorated based on date of hire until the end of the fiscal year. After the first allotment, personal days will be available for use at the beginning of each fiscal year (July) and must be used within that year (by June 30 of the following calendar year).

The employee staff must complete a "Staff Time Off Request Form" at least one week in advance when possible, noting the requested date as Personal Day and submit it to their direct manager. Emergency requests for Paid Personal Days must be made by calling or texting the direct supervisor. The employee must complete the "Staff Time Off Request Form" for processing after returning to the office.

- Like PTO, Paid Personal Days can be used in time increments of 15 minutes. Employees do not need to take the entire day off to use Paid Personal Day time.
- Unlike PTO, Paid Personal Days cannot be carried over from year to year. All days must be used within the same fiscal year or else they will be forfeited.
- Unused Paid Personal Days are not eligible for payout at employee resignation or termination, regardless of the notice given.

For more information on Paid Time Off, please refer to the Paid Time Off policies.

Inclement Weather/Emergency Closure

If Forward Journey must close due to fire, flood, or other emergency condition, employees can expect to receive a telephone call or text from their supervisor advising them of the issue.

During the winter months, severe weather conditions such as snow and ice can lead to the closure of one or more Forward Journey sites. If this is the case, notice of such closure will be made before 7:00 a.m. and posted on WDEL 1150 AM and 101.7 FM and WSTW 93.7 FM via the SnoWatch program. Employees could possibly receive notification via telephone call or text from their supervisor as well. **Any employee who is scheduled to work on the day Forward Journey is closed due to weather conditions or emergencies will be paid their usual rate for their scheduled shift.**

If the program is not closed and an employee does not come to work, s/he will be charged PTO for that day, or it will be unpaid. If the program is open, please make every effort to be at work.

When inclement weather conditions force mid-day closings, Forward Journey may allow a small number of employees to leave as needed, with the understanding that staffing levels must remain at 60-67% of standard. It is up to the Program Associates to decide fairly among themselves who will leave and who stays during these weather events. If this cannot be done in a harmonious way, the policy will automatically change to one in which everyone must stay until the end of their workday, as required by job description.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) created FMLA for employers with more than fifty (50) employees. Because Forward Journey does not have fifty (50) employees, it does not qualify for FMLA, but does allow personal and/or military leave of absence (see below).

Personal Leave of Absence

Employees who have worked at Forward Journey for one year are eligible for Personal Leave of Absence. Eligible employees who require leave due to personal illness or to care for a family member may request a personal leave of absence without pay for a maximum of up to six weeks (30 business days), except as otherwise required by law. The employee does not have to exhaust PTO before taking the unpaid personal leave. The employee has the option of using available PTO concurrently with unpaid leave if s/he wishes to be paid for the time. If the unpaid leave is due to illness/injury of a full-time employee, an application for short term disability benefits is recommended. In this situation, the employee will need to complete the Security Life Short Term Disability application and provide documentation regarding the claim. The decision to approve the application for benefits is strictly up to the insurance company offering the benefit. Forward Journey has no authority to over-rule their decision.

A personal leave of absence cannot be used to account for unsubstantiated unpaid time during the work week (i.e., arriving to work late, leaving early, general doctor/dentist appointment, or a "just need a break" day). Approved reasons for taking this leave include:

- The birth of a child and in order to care for that child.
- The placement of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child.
- To care for a spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition.
- The serious health condition of the employee.

The request must be made in writing and submitted to the direct manager for review. The manager will provide the employee with a response within five business days. Job performance, absenteeism, and departmental requirements will all be taken into consideration before a request is approved. No paid time off will accrue during the unpaid leave of absence. The employee must return to work on the scheduled return date or be considered to have voluntarily resigned from his or her employment. Extensions of leave will only be considered on a case-by-case basis as required by law, to comply with the ADA or any extenuating circumstances. Medical documentation must be provided when the request is made. Company paid health insurance premiums will continue to be paid by Forward Journey, but employees on a personal leave of absence are still responsible to pay their portion of health care coverage and/or AFLAC premiums, if any. This 30-day leave is on a rolling calendar. This means that no more than 30 days can be taken in a 365-day period.

For more information on personal leave of absence, please refer to the Unpaid Medical/Family Leave policy.

Military Leave of Absence

Forward Journey is committed to protecting the job rights of employees absent on military leave. In accordance with federal law, it is the company's policy that no employee will be subjected to any form of discrimination or retaliation on the basis of that person's membership in or obligation to perform service for any of the Uniformed Services of the United States. Specifically, no person will be denied employment,

reemployment, promotion or other benefit of employment on the basis of such membership. Furthermore, no person will be subjected to retaliation or adverse employment action because such person has exercised his or her rights under applicable law or company policy. If any employee believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination in violation of company policy, the employee should immediately contact the Executive Director.

Employees taking part in a variety of military duties are eligible for benefits under this policy. Such military duties include leaves of absence taken by members of the uniformed services, including Reservists and National Guard members, for training, periods of active military service and funeral honors duty, as well as time spent being examined to determine fitness to perform such service. Employees requesting leave for military duty should contact the Executive Director to request leave as soon as they are aware of the need for leave.

For more information on military leave of absence, please refer to the Unpaid Service Member Leave policy.

Bereavement Leave

An employee who wishes to take time off for bereavement should notify his or her supervisor immediately. Employees will be granted three (3) paid bereavement days per year for the death of a family member as described below. If additional time is needed, employees can request an extension of this leave by speaking with the OPS/HR Manager or Executive Director.

- A family member is defined as a
 - spouse, partner, child (including miscarriage)
 - parent or parental-figure, mother-or father-in-law
 - grandparent, grandchild
 - sibling, step or half-siblings, sister- or brother-in-law
 - aunt, uncle, cousin, niece, or nephew
 - step relatives of the same degree

For other relationships, the employee can request time off but must use their accrued PTO days or take the time as unpaid, if approved by their direct manager.

Jury Duty

Employees will be granted three (3) paid days off for jury duty. The time will be paid based on the employee's typical work schedule and at their current wage rate, whether full-time or part-time. If an employee is not required to report for jury duty as stated on their original summons, they are expected to come to Forward Journey for the workday.

The employee must provide their direct manager or the OPS/HR Manager with a copy of the original jury duty summons, and if required to report for duty, a work certification stating that they served. The time off will not be paid unless these documents are provided. Certification can be obtained from the court by calling the Jury Services Office:

- New Castle County Jury Services Office: (302) 255-0824
- Kent County Office of the Prothonotary: (302) 735-1900, Ext. 58021
- Sussex County Office of the Prothonotary: (302) 855-7055

Regardless of the length of service, all employees will be kept on the active payroll until their civic duties have been completed. If additional days are needed due to an extended trial, the employee should speak with the OPS/HR Manager or Executive Director regarding their obligation.

Voting Leave

All employees should be able to vote either before or after regularly assigned work hours, therefore, no time off will be granted for voting.

Lactation/Breastfeeding

For up to one year after a child's birth, any employee who is breastfeeding her child will be provided reasonable break times as needed to express breast milk for her baby. When requested, Forward Journey will provide a room designated for this purpose at each location. This room is not necessarily used exclusively for nursing mothers, but once the request for special use is made, this need will take priority over any other uses. Nursing mothers wishing to use this room must request/reserve the room by contacting the Operations/Human Resource Manager at extension 101, who will ensure the room is prepared for this purpose and appropriate signage is in place to prevent unauthorized access when in use. Breaks of more than 20 minutes in length will be unpaid, and the employee should indicate this break period on her time record. Extensions to the one-year timeframe will be granted upon request, based upon available space and time.

Available refrigerator space can be used for storage of breast milk. Any breast milk stored in the refrigerator must be labeled with the name of the employee and the date. Employees storing milk in the refrigerator assume all responsibility for the safety of the milk and the risk of harm for any reason, including improper storage or refrigeration and tampering.

BENEFITS

For more specific information regarding benefits programs, please refer to Summary Plan Descriptions for each product. These documents are provided to employees upon hire; additional copies may be obtained from the Operations/Human Resource Manager.

Health Insurance – Full-time employees are eligible to enroll in medical coverage for themselves and their families. In 2015, Forward Journey adopted a Mandatory Spouse/Partner Coverage Rule, which requires spouses/partners of eligible employees to obtain coverage from their primary employer, if eligible. Strict adherence to this policy is required for eligible employees to obtain and/or retain health care benefits through Forward Journey. Spouses/partners must have an “Eligible Spouse/Partner Form” completed upon hire and at annual open enrollment thereafter.

Enrollment paperwork should be done within the first 30 days of hire, with coverage beginning the first day following 60 days of employment. Once made, elections are fixed until open enrollment in December of each year, unless there is an allowable change in family status (as defined in the plan document). Please contact the Operations/Human Resource Manager to determine if a family status change qualifies. Due to the high cost of health insurance, Forward Journey reserves the right to give notice to employees during open enrollment that for the coming year employees using the company sponsored health plans will need to contribute some portion of the cost of these plans, for reasons including but not limited to tobacco use, for the employee and/or his or her family.

Dental Insurance – Dental coverage is not subsidized by Forward Journey but is available to full-time employees. Payment for this policy is via payroll deduction. The HMO plan requires that beneficiaries choose from among a specific list of dentists. The PPO plan covers any dentist with 80% out-of-network coverage. Coverage begins the first day of the next month following 60 days of employment.

Vision Insurance – Vision coverage is not subsidized by Forward Journey but is available to full-time employees. Payment for this policy is via payroll deduction. Coverage begins the first day of the next month following 60 days of employment.

Long/Short Term Disability Insurance – This coverage is available for full-time employees. This benefit is 100% subsidized by Forward Journey and is at no cost to the employee. It is available for the employee only, not family members. Coverage begins 60 days after hire.

403(b) Retirement Plans – Forward Journey has set up a retirement plan for all employees. An employer match is available for all except temporary employees. The percentage match is set by the board of directors and is stated in master plan documents. Employees can select a mutual fund(s) of their choice and begin saving as soon as they begin working. The employer match begins after 90 days. Please refer to plan documents for additional information.

Aflac – Every employee has the opportunity to sign up for a wide variety of AFLAC products such as hospitalization, life insurance, sickness, etc. Coverage begins 60 days after hire. This is optional coverage and is not subsidized by Forward Journey; however, payments for any selected products are deducted from bi-weekly pay as long as the employee continues to work for Forward Journey

COBRA – The number of staff employed by a company in a given year determines what type of Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation (COBRA) coverage is applicable in the following year. Effective since 2018, those leaving Forward Journey can obtain continued healthcare coverage via COBRA. Forward Journey complies with all the requirements mandated through COBRA. For more information on COBRA coverage, please refer to Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985, which can be provided upon request.

Domestic Partnership / Same-Sex Marriages

Delaware state law recognizes marriages between same-sex Delaware couples as legal relationships. In addition, persons of the same gender who are in legal unions (marriages, civil unions, domestic partnerships, etc.) established in other jurisdictions have the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities as married persons under Delaware law. All state laws applicable to marriage, spouses, or children of married spouses apply equally to same-sex and opposite-sex married couples and their children.

Workers' Compensation Benefits

The company is covered under statutory state workers' compensation laws. Employees who sustain work-related injuries must immediately notify their supervisor.

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Forward Journey Adult Day Services Employee Handbook Acknowledgment and Receipt

I have received my copy of the Employee Handbook.

The employee handbook describes important information about Forward Journey, and I understand that I should consult my supervisor or the Executive Director regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. I have entered into my employment relationship with Forward Journey voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no specified length of employment. **Accordingly, either I or Forward Journey can terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time, so long as there is not violation of applicable federal or state law.**

I understand and agree that, other than the Executive Director of the company, no manager, supervisor or representative of Forward Journey has any authority to enter into any agreement for employment other than at will; only the Executive Director of the company has the authority to make any such agreement, and then only in writing with pen or electronic signature by the Executive Director and/or verified by the Operations/Human Resource Manager of Forward Journey

This handbook and the policies and procedures contained herein supersede any and all prior practices, oral or written representations, or statements regarding the terms and conditions of my employment with Forward Journey. By distributing this handbook, the company expressly revokes any and all previous policies and procedures that are inconsistent with those contained herein.

I understand that, except for employment-at-will status, any and all policies and practices may be changed at any time by Forward Journey, and the company reserves the right to change my hours, wages and working conditions at any time. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the Board of Directors of Forward Journey has the ability to adopt any revisions to the policies in this handbook.

I have received the handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

Employee's Signature

Employee's Printed Name

Date

TO BE PLACED IN EMPLOYEE'S PERSONNEL FILE