

# MASONIC HOME FOR CHILDREN AT OXFORD



## EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Note: This is an interactive TOC and the items are clickable.*

### SECTION I

INTRODUCTION .....	1
DISCLAIMER.....	1
MISSION STATEMENT .....	1
VISION STATEMENT.....	1
QUALITY STATEMENT .....	1
LOGO AND TAGLINE .....	1
INCLUSION STATEMENT .....	2
HISTORY.....	2
GOVERNANCE.....	2
PROGRAMS.....	2
PHILOSOPHY .....	2

### SECTION II

EMPLOYEE RIGHTS .....	2
CONFLICT OF INTEREST .....	3
NEPOTISM .....	3
FAIR AND EQUITABLE TREATMENT.....	4
HARASSMENT .....	4
PROTECTION OF SUSPECTED MISCONDUCT REPORTING.....	4
GRIEVANCES... ..	5
CONFIDENTIALITY .....	6
LEGAL ASSISTANCE .....	6
CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK .....	7
CODE OF ETHICS.....	7

### SECTION III

RELATIONSHIP TO RESIDENTS .....	8
RIGHTS OF SERVICE RECIPIENTS.....	8
ADDITIONAL RIGHTS OF RESIDENTS IN OUR CARE.....	9
MANDATED REPORTING.....	9

### SECTION IV

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE... ..	10
FACILITY USE .....	10
CONSERVATION.....	11
SMOKING.....	12
KEYS.....	12
CAMPUS DRIVING AND PARKING.....	13
VEHICLE USE .....	13

### SECTION V

PUBLIC IMAGE .....	15
TELEPHONE COURTESY.....	15
SOCIAL MEDIA .....	15
MEDIA INQUIRIES.....	15

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY .....	16
COMMUNICATION.....	18

SECTION VI

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY INFORMATION.....	19
WEAPONS.....	19
FIRE.....	19
INCLEMENT WEATHER .....	20
BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS AND INFECTIONS DISEASE.....	20
INCIDENT REPORTING .....	20

SECTION VII

EMPLOYMENT AT MHCO.....	21
EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS .....	21
WORK SCHEDULE.....	22
PAYROLL .....	22
HOLIDAYS.....	22
ORIENTATION PERIOD.....	23
SUPERVISION.....	23
PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS .....	23
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.....	24
WAGE AND SALARY REVIEW.....	24
PERSONAL APPEARANCE.....	24
WORKPLACE PRIVACY AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS .....	24
EMPLOYEE RECORDS .....	25
DISCIPLINARY ACTION .....	25
TERMINATION .....	25
RESIGNATION .....	26
BENEFITS AT MHCO .....	27
INSURANCE.....	27
VACATION LEAVE.....	27
SICK LEAVE.....	28
PROFESSIONAL LEAVE .....	28
PERSONAL LEAVE.....	28
401(K) .....	28
RETIREMENT (EFFECTIVE 1/1/2021).....	28
FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT .....	29
RETURN TO WORK.....	29
MILITARY SERVICE.....	29
COURT SERVICE .....	29
COBRA .....	29
HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	

## **INTRODUCTION**

The MHCO Employee Handbook brings together information about the history and philosophy of MHCO, employment policies and procedures, and employee benefits. The handbook is not, however, intended to be a complete and absolute statement of all aspects of your employment.

Please read this entire handbook carefully and review it periodically. You will be requested to sign a statement that you have received a copy of the handbook and that you have read and understand it to put in your personnel file. In some cases, this handbook is supplemented by insurance plans and legal documents, which are the first authority, should questions arise.

From time to time, it will be necessary to supplement and revise the provisions of this handbook. All supplements and revisions will be distributed by the HR Specialist and will have the same effect as the original provisions of the handbook.

This handbook supersedes any previous information on these topics. The contents of the handbook apply to all employees of MHCO and are effective as of February 19, 2025.

Please feel free to ask your supervisor or department head questions about anything in this handbook or about your duties as an employee of MHCO. This handbook can be found on the Y drive, or you can request an additional copy from your supervisor or the HR Specialist.

## **DISCLAIMER**

Neither the contents of this handbook nor any other communications, written or oral, made at the time of hire or during the time of your employment, create any type of employment contract. Nothing contained in this handbook shall be construed as a guarantee of continued employment or as a guarantee of hours or benefits. Employment with MHCO is on an “at will” basis, which means that the employment relationship may be terminated at any time by you or the company for any reason not expressly prohibited by law.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Providing and promoting a safe, nurturing home for children and young adults in need with opportunities to maximize their potential.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

MHCO is a haven where children, young adults, and families in need develop and flourish here and beyond.

## **QUALITY STATEMENT**

MHCO is committed to high quality care for children in need through:

- highly qualified personnel,
- continuously evolving evidence informed model of care, and
- active engagement with community and stakeholders.

## **LOGO AND TAGLINE**

The official logo, two oak trees that form a heart, symbolizes our commitment to providing a strong, safe environment for residents to grow and develop with the tagline “Growing Hearts, Brighter Futures”. Use of the MHCO logo or letterhead stationery is restricted to official business of MHCO.

## **INCLUSION STATEMENT**

MHCO is deeply committed to fostering an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and empowered to contribute regardless of their background, identity or circumstance. We actively strive to represent the communities we serve in our staff, leadership, and programming, ensuring that our services are accessible and tailored to meet the unique needs of all individuals. MHCO maintains several policies and procedures supporting Inclusion concepts related to residents, service recipients, families, employees, and other stakeholders. These are included in but not limited to Human Resources and Service Planning and Delivery. MHCO strives to provide fairly for all within the distinction of the Home's unique program structure.

## **HISTORY**

The Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, Inc. is the oldest Masonic home for children in the country still in its original location and one of few left in operation. Originally opened as an orphanage in 1873, MHCO has gone through an evolutionary transition from orphanage to its present state as a residential childcare facility offering a wide range of social services to children and their families. MHCO has been providing services to children and families for 152 years.

## **GOVERNANCE**

MHCO is governed by a Board of Directors and is licensed by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services to provide residential childcare. MHCO is accredited by the Council on Accreditation. MHCO is authorized by the NC Secretary of State to publicly solicit funding as a fully licensed non-profit organization. You are strongly encouraged to be involved and provide leadership in membership organizations.

## **PROGRAMS**

Currently, MHCO administers 3 programs:

- Direct Care serves children from birth until 21 years old who need placement, have been determined to be low to moderate risk level, and are capable of functioning in the public-school setting
- Independent Living Program/Transitional Living Care serves young adults from age 18 to 22 who need placement and assistance in obtaining independent living skills,
- Community Support Center serves children, adults, and families in the communities and connects them to essential services to assist with health, mental health, educational, skill building, and basic needs.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

MHCO strives to ensure the best possible care for its program residents and the community members it serves. MHCO provides residents with a homelike setting to develop into productive citizens. Every attempt is made to maintain the individuality and identity of each resident and service recipient.

## **EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION**

### **EMPLOYEE RIGHTS**

It is the policy of MHCO's Board of Directors that MHCO shall respect the rights and dignity of all personnel and endeavors to guarantee these rights through a policy of advocacy, enforcement, and espousal. No MHCO personnel shall restrict or deny any of these rights or protections. Employees shall be afforded the following rights:

- respect
- humane treatment
- freedom from harassment, including sexual harassment
- access the court system in matters regarding infringements of their personal rights by residents and other service recipients, personnel, or MHCO

- prompt notification of any formal allegations brought against them
- prompt investigation of allegations and knowledge of those findings
- supervisory and administrative support relating to the job, including an annual performance appraisal
- have false charges retracted in writing
- have written rebuttals to formal allegations, letters of reprimand, and appraisals placed in the employee file
- be made knowledgeable of residents who MHCO has specific reason to believe may present imminent danger to employees or other residents
- in-service training and staff development
- rights as described in applicable state and federal wage, hour, and employment law
- file a written grievance with the supervisor, the Administrator, or Chairman of the Board of Directors as directed in the Employee Grievance Policy and Procedure without fear of termination or other reprisal, if the employee reasonably believes that some policy, practice, or activity is in violation of law

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Per the National Council of Nonprofits, a conflict of interest is defined as “a conflict, or the appearance of a conflict, between the private interests and official responsibilities of a person in a position of trust.”

It is the policy of MHCO’s Board of Directors that Board of Directors members, BOD committee members, ambassadors, personnel, donors, interns, volunteers, community partners, consultants, advisors avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest, provide full disclosure of any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, and not participate in any discussion or vote taken with respect to an actual or perceived conflict of interest pertaining to them.

Individuals shall avoid conflicts of interest and any conduct which may suggest the appearance of impropriety in any transactions. Individuals are prohibited from employment in any position that has any influence in the supervision, evaluation, promotion, or pay decisions for family members or relatives. No special preference shall be given by personnel in accepting applications for admission to MHCO or service rendered.

Individuals shall not receive preferential treatment, consideration, or benefit regarding admissions, recognition, or compensation because of a charitable gift to MHCO.

Personnel shall not hold an ownership interest in a business that provides goods or services purchased by MHCO. Personnel shall not accept favors, gifts, gratuities, or take part in any activities or transactions that relate to, effect, or influence decisions made for, regarding, or on behalf of MHCO. MHCO shall not make low interest or forgiveness of personal loans to covered persons.

If a potential conflict of interest arises, the Administrator should be informed.

### **NEPOTISM**

It is the policy of MHCO’s Board of Directors that members of the board and employees shall avoid practicing nepotism in hiring, referral, or service delivery procedures. Nepotism is defined as favoritism shown to relatives or close friends by employers or supervisors. Employment of relatives or close friends of current employees or Board Members is discouraged. A relative is defined as a family member (i.e. spouse, child, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, stepparent, or stepchild) or household member of a current employee or Board Member. No employment or placement shall be made when it would result in an employee or Board Member having influence over a relative's employment, supervision, promotion, salary determination, service delivery decisions, or other personnel or residency considerations.

## **FAIR AND EQUITABLE TREATMENT**

It is the policy of MHCO's Board of Directors that applicants, service recipients personnel, and stakeholders shall be treated without regard to age, gender, sexual orientation, color, race, creed, national origin, ancestry, religious affiliation, marital status, political belief, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, military or veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law unrelated to the individual's ability to perform employment duties adequately or appropriateness for the level of care consistent with service delivery. Any individual who believes that he or she has been discriminated against should contact the Administrator or file a grievance. The Policy and Personnel Committee of the Board of Directors shall review this policy for compliance and interpret any issue of fair and equitable treatment.

MHCO shall not discriminate in the hiring of new employees, conditions of employment, evaluations, or termination of employees.

MHCO shall not discriminate in the decisions concerning all applicants and service recipients such as admission, deferral, discharge from services, or condition of the living environment (for residents). MHCO is committed to policies that are fair, equitable and in accordance with all existing laws applicable.

## **HARASSMENT**

It is the policy of MHCO's Board of Directors that the personnel work climate and resident living environment are free from harassment. MHCO promotes open communication where personnel, residents, and stakeholders can raise concerns regarding unethical or unlawful actions without fear of retaliation per the Protection of Suspected Misconduct Reporting Policy. Personnel and the Board of Directors shall ensure that this policy is strictly enforced through diligent efforts to create an environment that is free from the harmful effects of harassment.

MHCO ascribes to a policy of "zero tolerance" for all unlawful acts of harassment to include, but not be limited to, age, gender, sexual orientation, color, race, creed, national origin, ancestry, religious affiliation, marital status, political belief, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, and military or veteran status. Blatant acts of harassment by employees constitute grounds for immediate administrative action up to and including termination from employment. Acts of harassment from personnel are not restricted to the campus or workplace, but include any time that the individual is acting as a representative of MHCO.

Individuals wishing to lodge a complaint of harassment shall bring the matter to the attention of their supervisor as outlined in the grievance procedures. MHCO shall consult with the Policy and Personnel Committee of the Board of Directors or legal advisors for leadership and interpretation in matters relating to harassment. The Administrator shall clarify questions regarding what needs to be addressed by the Board of Directors or outside consultation regarding matters relating to harassment.

## **PROTECTION OF SUSPECTED MISCONDUCT REPORTING**

It is the policy of MHCO's Board of Directors that members of the board and personnel shall protect individuals who report suspected misconduct and prohibit retaliation against such reporters, even if the claim is unfounded. MHCO expects high standards of ethical conduct by board members, leadership, management, personnel, interns, volunteers, etc., and recognizes the value of providing personnel and stakeholders freedom to report wrongdoing or violation of established ethical conduct, standards, policies, and procedures within the organization and fully enforces protection of all who make such reports. This policy protects individuals who report wrongdoing such as theft, misleading financial reporting, improper records handling or destruction, improper use of resources, conflict of interest policy violations, and making grievances. Efforts to protect the confidentiality of the reporter shall be attempted to minimize potential for retaliation, except when disclosure

is legally required. Examples of prohibited retaliatory actions for reporting issues include firing, demotion, suspension, harassment, failure to consider the employee for promotion, deferral, dismissal from programs and services, or any kind of discrimination. Reports protected by this policy must include statements made in good faith and based on a reasonable belief that a violation has occurred. Knowingly making false reports may result in termination of employment or dismissal from services and programs. Violations of this policy should be reported per the Employee or Stakeholder Grievance Procedure. Substantiated grievances of retaliation or violations of this policy may result in termination or dismissal from services or programs.

## **GRIEVANCES**

It is the policy of MHCO's Board of Directors that each employee has the right to file any grievances connected with his or her employment and shall be allowed to exercise this right without fear of retaliation. An employee complaint is defined as "an expression of verbal dissatisfaction that can include, but is not limited to, services, manner of treatment, outcomes, or experiences. For employees, interns, or volunteers, dissatisfaction can include personnel matters such as supervision, evaluations, promotions or demotions, the work environment, and overall treatment (Council on Accreditation, 2008)." An employee grievance is defined as a written complaint submitted and investigated through a formal procedure. Not every complaint necessitates a grievance. MHCO encourages open and honest discussion between personnel and expects that most grievances can be addressed satisfactorily through such discussions. MHCO's employee grievance policy aims to promote the resolution of appropriate concerns lodged in good faith. If at any time an employee of MHCO believes that he or she has been unfairly evaluated, unjustly accused, or that a practice, philosophy, breach of policy, inappropriate behavior, or action of an individual or individuals is not in the best interest of service recipients, including the residents in care or has a detrimental effect on an individual or his or her work environment, that employee should follow the Employee Grievance Procedure.

Supervisors, the Program Clinical Coordinator, the HR Specialist, the Program Director, and the Administrator shall be responsible for responding to grievances in a professional, sensitive, and timely manner, and ensuring that parties involved in a grievance shall be informed of the process and protected from harassment, bullying, discrimination, victimization, or retaliation. Employees shall be responsible for cooperating and participating in attempts to resolve grievances. Employees shall be made aware of the grievance policy and procedure by the HR Specialist during orientation and when there are noteworthy changes to the policy.

The Grievance Form can be accessed from the Forms computer drive or in the St. John's Administration Building. Reports must include a complete and factual description of the behavior or event in question including dates, times, and sequences of events. Reports must also include how the decision, action, policy, or procedure has been detrimental to an individual's employment or care of residents and the action or remedy being sought. Grievances must be submitted within twenty (20) working days from the event that necessitated the grievance or the employee became aware of the issue. Employee grievances submitted to external regulatory or statutory authorities such as the Department of Social Services, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Industrial Relations Commission, or a law enforcement agency may not be deemed appropriate to be resolved through the MHCO employee grievance procedure. All parties named in a grievance are entitled to be informed of all allegations made against them and have the right to respond to those allegations.

All parties involved in a grievance must maintain confidentiality about the grievance unless supervisors, the Program Director, the Administrator, or the Board of Directors are discussing the matter for resolution with appropriate personnel or for legal advice or counsel. Employees who do not feel comfortable discussing a grievance without an advocate unaffiliated with MHCO shall be encouraged by supervisors to discuss the matter with legal counsel or another advocate. This advocate may accompany the employee or may be an

unaccompanied voice for the employee when discussing the grievance. Nothing shall discourage an employee from discussing a grievance or knowledge pertinent to a grievance with a supervisor, nor shall an employee be discriminated against for exercising this right.

Employees who submit a grievance can express intent to withdraw the grievance at any time in writing to the supervisor who received the grievance. A grievance that is subject to an internal or external investigation can only be withdrawn after conclusion of the investigation. However, the written intent to withdraw the grievance shall be noted and reported to the parties investigating the grievance. All parties involved in the grievance shall be informed of the withdrawal and closure of the grievance by the supervisor.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Personnel shall protect stakeholders (e.g., current and former residents, all service recipients, donors, current and former personnel, etc.) by keeping information confidential and secure with limited exceptions (i.e. imminent danger to the life of an individual, in response to a court order, discussions within a program team, or when a valid Consent to Release and Exchange Confidential Information Form has been obtained that is specific to that resident or service recipient and the information to be disclosed).

MHCO shall comply with federal and state laws and regulations regarding the confidentiality of records and other information pertaining to MHCO stakeholders. Access to records and discussions regarding stakeholder information shall be conducted in a professional and ethical manner. Personnel shall refrain from discussing a resident's or service recipient's progress, lack of progress, family situation, or incidents of behavioral difficulty in the presence of other residents, service recipients, personnel, or other individuals who do not have a specific need to know. Personnel shall take immediate corrective action whenever they observe a violation of this procedure or any other breach of confidentiality. Personnel shall not discuss any resident's or service recipient's information with or in the presence of another individual who does not have a legitimate need to know the information. This includes, but is not limited to, discussions about residents, other service recipients, or personnel in common areas or meetings, postings on the internet, phone calls, or leaving printed materials where personnel who have no need to know the information are in attendance or can access the information.

No employee, volunteer, intern, or Board Member may identify or release and disclose information about a current or former service recipient, resident, applicant, and the resident's or service recipient's family, or otherwise verify knowledge of residency, application, or participation in any MHCO program unless there is an imminent danger to the life of an individual, in response to a court order, or when a valid Consent to Release and Exchange Confidential Information Form has been obtained that is specific to that resident or service recipient and the information to be disclosed.

Information considered to be confidential includes, but is not limited to, identity, image, demographics, social history, psychological testing results, medical information, school information, custody information, contributions to the costs of care by family, and reasons for placement at or needs of services from MHCO. Release of information shall be discussed and verified with the Program Director, Program Clinical Coordinator, or Supervisor.

### **LEGAL ASSISTANCE**

MHCO will assume the cost of legal assistance to personnel in which legal claims are made related to conducting official MHCO business in a lawful, authorized manner within the course and scope of the individual's duties. No discussion concerning accusations against MHCO or involving court cases shall be made without specific approval from the Administrator, who shall consult with legal counsel prior to making any statements. Attorney

or court inquiries shall be directed to the Administrator. The Administrator shall ensure that legal assistance is provided to personnel representing MHCO in attorney or court inquiries.

### **CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK**

It is the policy of MHCO's Board of Directors that screening of applicants, employees, contractors, consultants, and interns include appropriate, legally permissible, and mandated reviews of criminal history records, driving records, credit reports, fingerprinting through the national database, sex offender registries, and child abuse and neglect registries. Driving records shall be checked to ensure insurability for MHCO vehicle use per the Vehicle Use Procedure. Personnel and applicants must possess sound physical and mental health, good character, and personal qualities that will allow them to work with personnel, children, families, referral sources, and the general public. Volunteers and guests of personnel staying overnight shall be screened using the Responsible Individuals List and sex offender registry.

Applicants who are considered dangerous to residents or who have a prior criminal conviction arising out of a charge of child or elder abuse, crime against children, rape, sexual assault, homicide, domestic violence, or other offenses are prohibited from employment. Applicants who have a prior criminal conviction arising out of a charge of driving under the influence, assault, battery, drug-related offense, or other offenses over seven (7) years from the date of application may be considered for employment. Applicants shall sign a statement that they do not have a criminal, social, or medical history that will adversely affect capacity to work with children, families, personnel, referral sources, and the general public prior to employment.

Personnel shall sign a statement that they do not have a criminal, social, or medical history that will adversely affect capacity to work with children, families, personnel, referral sources, and the general public annually. The HR Specialist shall conduct reviews of criminal history records, Responsible Individuals List, and sex offender registry biennially or more often. The HR Specialist shall conduct reviews of driving records annually or more often. If a current employee, volunteer, or intern is arrested or under investigation for criminal charges, he or she shall inform the Administrator or Board of Directors immediately. The Administrator or Board of Directors may place the individual on a suspension of duty with or without pay until resolution of the case. Confirmation of mental health or substance abuse treatment completion may be requested for certain charges. If the individual is found guilty, he or she may be terminated from employment. If the individual is found not guilty, he or she may be able to return to duty upon approval of the Administrator in consultation with the Policy and Personnel Committee of the Board of Directors. If a current employee, volunteer, or intern is found to have a new criminal conviction, arrest, or investigation upon regularly scheduled or random background check that was not previously disclosed, he or she shall be terminated from employment. The Administrator shall comply with the criminal history requirements of the Executive Director as described in 10A NCAC 70I .0302.

### **CODE OF ETHICS**

MHCO, by virtue of its affiliations with several state and national professional organizations, is committed to the adherence to a professional code of ethics and rules for professional conduct. Professional employees may be bound by the ethical codes of their personal affiliations and licensing or credentialing boards.

Employees are always expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and should be aware that they are ambassadors of MHCO both during working and non-working hours, to include, but not be limited to:

- Consumption of intoxicants or alcoholic beverages shall not be permitted at any time during working hours or for a period of eight (8) hours prior to working. Alcoholic beverages or intoxicants shall not be permitted on campus or in the presence of any resident or service recipient.
- The use of illegal drugs or the abuse of over-the-counter drugs is prohibited.

- Cohabitation of unmarried MHCO employees on campus is prohibited.
- Family members, visitors, and dependent children of employees are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner while on campus or at MHCO events off campus. When family members, visitors, and dependent children of employees attend events, the employee shall be responsible for paying for the guest and ensure that the guest does not accept donor gifts. The Administrator shall terminate visiting privileges for employee family members or visitors who abuse privileges or conduct themselves irresponsibly, to include denial of housing or meal privileges.
- Employees, volunteers, interns, and Board Members shall receive no preferential consideration regarding application for services or for MHCO purchases of goods or services.
- Employees and paid consultants shall not be permitted to accept payments or other favorable considerations for referrals to MHCO or for referring residents to other agencies.
- Only with the Administrator's written permission shall an employee engage in professional private practice (i.e. social work, medical, mental health, etc.) in the facilities of MHCO or provide their professional private practice services to children residing at MHCO. This allowance would only be allowed as part of the Community Support Center coordination of services to members of the community and MHCO residents.
- Employees who receive honorariums for services that require use of their expertise and skills are required to turn these fees and compensations for services over to MHCO. Employees not acting as representatives of MHCO may retain any honorarium fees or compensations. The Administrator shall determine the status of any honorarium fee or compensation in question.
- Employees shall use the IT systems and network appropriately.
- Profanity by personnel, particularly in the presence of or directed to residents, is prohibited.
- Disparaging or adverse comments shall not be made regarding residents, all individuals served, or their family. Employees must take precautions to ensure that they do not place themselves in compromising situations or in situations that could be misinterpreted by either residents or other stakeholders.
- Sexual relations between employees and MHCO residents, residents' family members, or other current or previous stakeholders are prohibited and constitute grounds for immediate termination and probable criminal prosecution, except in cases of sexual relations for married couples.
- Fraternalization between employees and MHCO residents, residents' family members, or other current or previous stakeholders is prohibited and constitute grounds for immediate termination and probable criminal prosecution, except in cases of fraternalization for married couples.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO RESIDENTS**

As an employee, your duties will bring you into frequent and close contact with residents. Please be familiar with basic information about the Direct Care and Transitional Living/Independent Living Programs so that you can answer general questions and direct residents. Please consult with program staff before advising about policies or procedures unless you are specifically directed to do so.

As with any situation where a person is involved with a number of people, you may find that you are more compatible with some residents than others. Be careful to avoid appearing to favor one resident over another. All service recipients must feel they are being treated with equal courtesy, respect, and dignity.

### **RIGHTS OF SERVICE RECIPIENTS**

It is the policy of MHCO's Board of Directors that MHCO shall respect the rights and dignity of all service recipients. No MHCO personnel shall restrict or deny any of these rights or protections except with the expressed, written approval of the Administrator. Within the limits of the law and safety, all service recipients shall be afforded the right to:

- privacy and confidentiality

- not be identified as a resident in care in any way
- decline participation in activities that in any way identify them as a foster child, a resident, or a service recipient at MHCO
- express opinions on issues concerning his or her care or treatment individually or with an advocate of his or her choice
- be free from coercion with regard to religious decisions and be assured that, whenever practical, the wishes of the parents or guardians with regard to a child's religious participation are ascertained and followed
- not be forced to acknowledge dependency on or gratitude to MHCO
- review their records with personnel present, unless the Administrator or Program Director deems that it would be extremely harmful to them
- decline participation in research projects
- be free from any form of harassment, including sexual harassment or exposure to other sexual advances or offenses
- file grievances per the Stakeholder Grievance Policy and Procedure without fear of discharge from services or other reprisal, if the stakeholder reasonably believes that some policy, practice, or activity is in violation of the law
- not be discriminated against for race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, color, gender, creed, national origin, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, political belief, ancestry, or age
- protection from physical or mental harm, intimidation, and restraint
- receive care and services that are respectful of and responsive to their culture, ethnicity, and differences in racial, cultural, linguistic, religious upbringing, and heritage
- not fear or be threatened with unwarranted discharge or discontinuation of services.

#### **ADDITIONAL RIGHTS OF RESIDENTS IN OUR CARE:**

- be provided food, clothing, and shelter that is sufficient and appropriate to the individual resident
- have access to family time and have telephone conversations with family members, when not contraindicated in the visitation and contact plan
- have personal property and space for storage
- participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities as appropriate and in accordance with N.C.G.S. 31D-10.2A
- refuse medication and medical treatment, but be informed of the consequences of the refusal of any treatment(s) that includes prompt discussion with the prescribing physician or representative
- not be punished, including by any of the following methods: corporal punishment, physical punishment, verbal abuse, humiliating acts, punishment by another resident, denial of meals, clothing, or shelter, denial of appropriate affection and nurturing, denial of family contact, extremely hard work or exercise, group punishment, or secluded or locked time-out
- living accommodations that are reasonably quiet and secure with appropriate places for sleep, study, or meditation
- space for bathing and caring for their health and hygiene needs
- hire attorneys or medical specialists at their own expense

#### **MANDATED REPORTING**

MHCO strives to protect service recipients, including residents from verbal, mental, physical, and sexual abuse, involuntary seclusion, neglect, exploitation or abandonment. All employees are mandated to report suspected abuse. MHCO will not tolerate any form of abuse and will promptly and thoroughly investigate any allegations of abuse, neglect, and misappropriation of resident property, and all resident injuries of known and unknown origin. Any employee who suspects a resident or any service recipient has been abused, neglected, exploited, or abandoned at any time, on- or off campus, by an employee or any other individual, shall report the suspicion to

his or her supervisor immediately. Any employee found to have participated in any such event would be subject to immediate termination.

### **DRUG FREE WORKPLACE**

MHCO acknowledges the issues of substance abuse (including alcohol) in our society. Furthermore, we see substance abuse as a serious threat to the safety of our employees, other individuals doing business with the community, and individuals we serve. Substance abuse and impairment on duty also adversely affects the service and dependability that persons we serve expect, and the general levels of job performance. To address this issue, MHCO strictly enforces a drug free workplace. The use of illegal drugs or the abuse of over-the-counter drugs by employees is prohibited. Employees are prohibited to use alcohol or drugs while on the job or while operating MHCO vehicles, and to report to work under the influence of such or with the odor of alcohol on their breath. Bringing alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or other intoxicants on campus or while conducting MHCO business is prohibited. Employees under a physician's care who are required to use prescription and non-prescription drugs are expected to take the medications as prescribed. Employees may not provide direct care to residents or drive MHCO vehicles while using prescription, over the counter, herbal, or a combination of medications that cause reactions of sleepiness, blurred vision, dizziness, slowed movement, fainting, inability to focus or pay attention, or would otherwise affect the ability to drive safely. Driving while using prescription, over the counter, herbal, or combinations of medications with a warning label or instructions that indicate caution when operating a car or dangerous machinery is prohibited. Personnel shall not operate vehicles when too tired or otherwise impaired. Abuse of prescribed medications will be dealt with in the same manner as the abuse of non-prescribed drugs. Failure to comply with this policy, including refusal of testing, will be grounds for termination.

All employees who are injured on the job, regardless of severity, are required to submit to a post-accident drug test within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident when sent to the physician's office per the Non-Critical Incidents Procedure. The injured employee shall arrange for testing. Failure to comply will be grounds for denial of benefits. In situations where an employee may be the cause of an injury to any person or property damage (e.g. driver of an MHCO vehicle during an accident, etc.), the employee shall arrange for drug testing and failure to comply will be grounds for disciplinary action. A drug test form for Granville Medical can be obtained from the HR Specialist. If the employee has to go to a different hospital or doctor for the drug test, the employee should request the results to be forwarded to the HR Specialist.

- "Legal Drug" includes prescribed drugs and over-the-counter drugs which have been legally obtained and are being used solely for the purpose for which they were prescribed or manufactured.
- "Drug" means alcohol, including a distilled spirit, wine, a malt beverage, or an intoxicating liquor; an amphetamine, a cannabinoid; cocaine; phencyclidine (PCP); a hallucinogen; methaqualone, an opiate, a barbiturate; a benzodiazepine; a synthetic narcotic; a designer drug; or a metabolite of any of the substances listed in this paragraph.

### **FACILITY USE**

The gymnasium, basketball court, playground, picnic shelter, fire pit, and garden are available for general use by personnel. The swimming pool is available for general use between Memorial Day and Labor Day by MHCO residents and personnel during times when a lifeguard is on duty. Additionally, families of residents may use the facilities on certain occasions. A Liability Release and Waiver Form must be signed for all individuals using MHCO facilities. Employee dependent children over the age of 15 may swim in the pool during open pool times while the employee is on duty and on campus with advance note to the Recreation Director. Employee guests and dependent children under the age of 15 may swim in the pool during open pool times with the employee in the

pool area with advance notice to the Recreation Director. All dependent children and guests must follow all pool rules.

Property of MHCO shall not be discarded without approval from the Maintenance Director and CFO. Furniture, electronics, and decorative items that are property of MHCO shall not be moved out of the assigned building without approval from the Maintenance Director and CFO. If items need to be moved or discarded, the Point of Contact for the building shall email a Maintenance Request Form to the Director.

The following routine maintenance activities can be performed by personnel other than Maintenance:

- tighten screws on hinges and cabinet knobs
- changing standard light bulbs (other than fluorescent)
- change air filters on lower campus quarterly
- apply felt bottoms to furniture
- unclog a drain
- apply Gulf Wax or soap to sticky drawers
- change batteries on electronics, fire detectors, or carbon monoxide detectors
- repair any personal items
- remove hard water build up

Maintenance Request Forms should be emailed to the Maintenance Director for all other activities including affixing items, signage, or markings to MHCO property (e.g. walls, cabinets, furniture, doors, etc.). Employees shall report any damages or items needing repairs by emailing a Maintenance Request Form to the Maintenance Director immediately. Employees shall follow up with the Maintenance Director about issues of safety concern or if greater damage or expense may occur until problems have been corrected. Personnel shall keep all parts of broken items and give them to Maintenance personnel when the item is to be repaired. Property damage that occurs due to more than normal wear and tear shall be documented per the Non-Critical Incidents Procedure.

CCWs, RAs, the Administrator, Program Director, Program Clinical Coordinator, Maintenance Director, and other essential employees have staff quarters on campus. Regulations about staff quarters and move in/move out can be found in the Facility Use Procedure.

Inspections of all buildings and areas on campus occur on a schedule.

## **CONSERVATION**

MHCO shall practice conservation methods to promote health and safety while reducing negative impact on the environment and resources. Conservation methods shall not be practiced in a way that compromises care provided or harms the living or work environment utilized as part of the MHCO mission. MHCO practices energy conservation or the reduction of waste of non-renewable energy sources. Examples include:

- Utilization of low wattage light bulbs
- Removal of steam boilers as sources of heat and energy
- Utilization of energy efficient heat pumps/air conditioning units and other appliances
- Conservation of water to include pool efficiency systems and leak maintenance
- Conservation of soil to include erosion control, limited construction, and land reclamation
- Preservation of cultural property such as that found in the museum and archives
- Preservation of buildings or other immovable objects, including renovation and preservation of historic structures on campus
- Conservation of resources in the form of recycling

MHCO personnel and residents shall recycle aluminum, plastic, paper, cardboard, batteries, used cooking oil, and other resources within the guidelines of accepted practice and NC laws. The following guidelines shall be observed when recycling materials:

- Rinse aluminum cans, plastic drink containers, and jugs
- Break down cardboard boxes to maximize space
- Use empty cooking oil jugs to recycle used cooking oil and grease created from cooked foods

Waste Industries picks up recycling every other Wednesday. The Kid\$Earn residents under CCW supervision shall collect recycling twice weekly as follows:

- Upper campus, administration residences, St. John's Administrative Building, Cobb Center, Critcher, and School of Graphic Arts on Monday afternoons
- Aluminum from lower campus on Tuesday afternoons
- Sort through recycling cans and cardboard from all other recyclables before collection

Conservation and restoration of cultural property shall be conducted per the Sallie Mae Ligon Museum and Archives Collections Management Policy and Procedure Manual in the Appendices.

### **SMOKING**

The MHCO campus is smoke and tobacco-free. Tobacco products will include, but will not be limited to, cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, dip, electronic cigarettes, and vapors. The use of any tobacco product by any resident is forbidden while on the campus or while under the direct supervision of personnel. Personnel are prohibited from using any tobacco product on the premises or in a vehicle belonging to MHCO. Additionally, personnel are prohibited from using any tobacco products in the presence of any residents, either on or off campus. Guests, visitors, and non-residential service recipients shall be informed of our regulations in a polite and considerate manner and are expected to comply with the same rules and regulations governing personnel or residents.

### **KEYS**

During orientation, employees will be issued keys necessary to grant access to facilities necessary to accomplish job-related responsibilities. Prior to receiving keys, employees will sign a Key Policy and Procedure Agreement Form with the Maintenance Director.

Keys remain the property of MHCO and are to be used by personnel only while employed by MHCO. Personnel shall not reproduce keys or obtain keys from any other source without the expressed, written permission of the Administrator. Other than CCWs at changeover, employees shall not transfer keys to another individual. Employees shall notify their supervisor and Maintenance Director of all keys that are lost or missing. Employees may be charged a \$25 key fee and up to \$150 for subsequent instances of lost keys or rekeying a lock.

The following guidelines shall be observed when handling keys for MHCO property:

- Keys shall not be loaned to anyone, even other personnel.
- If an employee unlocks a door, he or she shall lock it once entered and not allow unauthorized individuals to follow into the area.
- Personnel should never unlock a door for anyone unless authorized by the supervisor.
- An employee should never let anyone without a key follow into a locked room that was unlocked unless the person is accompanying the employee.
- Master keys shall not be utilized to gain entry to a building unless in an emergency or with authorization.

Primary CCWs shall be issued one cottage key for each CCW. Both cottage keys shall be exchanged with alternate CCWs at changeover.

The Maintenance Director shall complete all lock changes. Med cart keys shall be returned to the supervisor or HR Specialist upon ending employment. All other keys shall be returned to the Maintenance Director immediately upon leaving employment and after signing a receipt. Misuse, failure to return, or loss of keys shall result in appropriate disciplinary action and employees may be charged for any needed lock changes.

### **CAMPUS DRIVING AND PARKING**

The speed limit is posted and should not exceed fifteen (15) mph on the main part of upper campus or ten (10) mph in all other areas of campus. All drivers should be observant of walkers, bike riders, and other campus activities. Guest activity participants (e.g. VGCC Culinary, , Karate, etc.) shall enter and exit behind the School of Graphic Arts. Vehicles shall be parked in designated parking spots only, not on campus roads. Driving or parking on the grass is prohibited except for maintenance. Cobb Center staff shall park in the area between SJAB and Cobb Center. SJAB staff shall park in the area near the American flag. Individuals parking on lower campus shall park along the drive closest to the freezer building if parking is not available at the cottage. Vehicles may be temporarily parked in front of buildings for deliveries, loading, and unloading. Guests may continue to park on campus roads. Pedestrians, bicyclists, and others using campus roads are requested to use sidewalks, cross walks, and look both ways before crossing the street.

### **VEHICLE USE**

MHCO provides vehicles for use by employees conducting official MHCO business. These vehicles should be used for the transaction of all MHCO business. MHCO vehicles may not be used for conducting personal business without the prior approval of the Administrator. Employees authorized to use vehicles for personal business must reimburse MHCO at the current rate of reimbursement. Employees authorized to use MHCO vehicles as terms of their employment offer are exempt from this requirement. The Chief Financial Officer or the Administrator shall authorize reimbursement for use of personal vehicles used for MHCO business if a vehicle is unavailable upon prior authorization from the immediate supervisor. The rate of reimbursement shall be the current rate established by the Chief Financial Officer based on the IRS published Annual Reimbursement Rate.

All employees shall maintain a valid driver's license. Personnel who are new residents to NC must get a NC Driver's License and register their vehicles with the NC Division of Motor Vehicles within sixty (60) days of establishing a permanent residence, The HR Specialist shall review driver licenses records annually per the Background Checks Policy. Additionally, all drivers shall provide certification of personal automobile insurance with liability coverage amounts equal to or greater than \$100,000 bodily injury for each person and \$300,000 for each accident prior to transporting any resident in his or her personal vehicle. The HR Specialist shall review personnel insurance policies biennially. Employees should avoid transporting residents in personal vehicles unless an MHCO vehicle is unavailable and there are no other alternatives. Off duty-employees may not transport residents in a personal vehicle, unless in an emergency situation or otherwise authorized by the Administrator.

Collision, liability, and property damage insurance shall be provided by MHCO for all vehicles owned by MHCO. Insurance documents and vehicle identification certificates shall always be kept in each vehicle. The Maintenance Director shall ensure all MHCO vehicles have current inspections and registrations and are safe to operate.

Citations issued for improper use of a vehicle or for failure to obey regulations shall be paid for by the individual driver and are not the responsibility of MHCO. Employees with knowledge of vehicles being operated in an unsafe manner or abusing driving privileges shall notify the Administrator immediately. Citations for unsafe operation of a vehicle while transporting residents shall be grounds for termination from employment.

Any employee involved in an accident involving an MHCO vehicle, while transporting a resident or other service recipients, or while conducting MHCO business in a personal vehicle shall be responsible for notifying law enforcement officers immediately and obtaining a copy of the investigating officer's report. The driver shall provide information to law enforcement, exchange insurance information, and not admit to guilt or wrongdoing.

Any accident occurring while transporting residents in personal vehicles may be covered, at least partially, by the individual's insurance policy. Employees or residents shall not leave the scene of the accident until an authorized law enforcement officer arrives and dismisses the parties.

Employees and residents who have been involved in an accident and are injured shall go to the hospital, urgent care, or doctor's office as soon as dismissed from the accident scene to be medically screened, treated, and cleared. If there are no injuries that require medical attention, employees involved in an accident shall consult with the supervisor concerning the need for medical clearance. Employees involved in an accident while driving a MHCO vehicle or while transporting residents shall submit a drug and alcohol screening immediately following the accident. Employees involved in an accident shall take pictures (either digital or on the disposable camera located in the glove compartment) and video if possible. Employees should take notes about who they spoke to with contact information and what was said. Upon return to the campus, or as soon after the accident as possible, the driver shall complete a PQI Incident Report Form documenting such information as other vehicles involved, injuries, insurance information, citations issued, disposition, whereabouts of MHCO vehicle(s), towing bills or receipts, and extent of damages with dollar amounts per the Non-Critical Incidents Procedure. Pictures from the disposable camera shall be taken to a photo lab and attached to the report when processed. Copies of all reports shall be given to the Administrator, Chief Financial Officer, and Program Director promptly.

All vehicle operators shall abide with all state and local laws, regulations, and speed limits (NCGS Chapter 20). MHCO drivers shall ensure that:

- residents and other service recipients do not ride on the outside of vehicles;
- vehicles deemed to be unsafe are not operated;
- engines are shut off before filling with fuel;
- no smoking occurs in MHCO vehicles at any time;
- vehicles are not left idling without the driver in the seat, including warming up the vehicle;
- cell phones are not used while driving;
- parking structures are avoided for vans if possible;
- a pre-trip walk around visual inspection of the vehicle is completed after loading residents or other service recipients;
- the vehicle is turned off when loading or unloading residents other service recipients.

Drivers shall maintain MHCO vehicles that includes:

- conducting safety checks of the vehicle and engine maintenance,
- vacuuming and washing the vehicle they drive at least once per month,
- completing an annual inspection, and
- ensuring that a stocked first aid kit is available for immediate use.

Drivers shall complete a travel log for each trip in an MHCO vehicle and submit the logs to the supervisor monthly. The supervisor shall check the logs to ensure that trips are appropriate, and resources are used wisely.

Drivers shall email a Maintenance Request Form to the Maintenance Director for maintenance needs (i.e. regular service, oil change and tire rotation every five thousand (5,000) miles) on MHCO vehicles. The Maintenance Director shall turn in the receipts to the CFO.

Drivers shall report problems that could affect passenger or driver safety or could lead to further major expenses in repair if not expediently corrected to the Maintenance Director immediately. The vehicle shall not be used until necessary repairs have been made. If a vehicle incurs a major maintenance problem while on the road away from the MHCO campus, the driver shall contact the supervisor to discuss attempts to correct the problem or projected expense. The driver shall give receipts related to the repair to the supervisor immediately upon return to campus.

After the trip, employees should inspect the vehicle for maintenance issues and items left. Employees should dispose of trash and sanitize the door handles and steering wheel. Employees should wash their hands, ensure residents wash their hands, and sanitize door handles when returning to a cottage or campus building.

### **PUBLIC IMAGE**

Your appearance, attitude, actions, and behavior significantly affect the impression others have of MHCO. You are ambassadors of MHCO while on and off duty, and expectations are for all employees to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Clean, sanitary conditions contribute to quality resident care. Please set a good example by doing your part to keep the buildings and grounds in good working condition and clean at all times. This expectation includes off-duty housing areas as well as common areas used by staff, residents, other service recipients, and all stakeholders.

### **TELEPHONE COURTESY**

Telephone courtesy establishes good relations among coworkers and with stakeholders. A telephone conversation may be the only contact a person has with MHCO; therefore, we want to ensure it will be a pleasant experience. Good telephone courtesy expresses a feeling of genuine interest in serving the caller. A pleasant, businesslike tone of voice, as well as an efficient and cooperative attitude, is complimentary to you and to MHCO.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Whether or not you choose to create or participate in a blog, wiki, online social network, or any other form of online publishing or discussion is your own decision. However, emerging online collaboration platforms may fundamentally change the way employees work and engage with each other, residents other service recipients, families, donors, and community partners.

Employees should not post illegal activities or objectionable content, confidential information, or make derogatory comments about supervisors or coworkers on social media sites. Employees should not be friends or followers on social media with current residents, current residents' family members, or previous residents under the age of 18. MHCO filters access to most social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Club Penguin, Poptropica, Snapchat, Pinterest, and Instagram on the network.

### **MEDIA INQUIRIES**

The Administrator or Chairman of the Board of Directors are the only stakeholders to address the media in times of emergency. All other employees are prohibited from making news releases or from speaking for MHCO to the media at any time, except with the expressed permission from the Administrator.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

It is the policy of MHCO's Board of Directors that Information Technology (IT) provided by MHCO is intended to advance educational, administrative, and operational services and shall be used in a responsible, legal, and ethical manner. MHCO strives to maintain an ethical and responsible IT network and to conduct all IT generated business in the same manner. MHCO shall provide working computing services and IT networking whenever possible and feasible to all employees and residents and recognizes the importance of this system to overall operations. MHCO shall maintain the IT network and all accessories to that network on a regular basis, providing measures for security, control, efficient usage, and retention. All employees (i.e. full-time, part-time, and under contract), volunteers, and residents of MHCO must comply with this policy. Employees and residents shall sign an acknowledgement of and agree to this IT policy yearly and when policy changes occur. If any of the directives are violated or if actions are deemed as misuse or misconduct relating to MHCO computer equipment or network connections, the individual may be subject to suspension from use of the system for a period of thirty (30) days, sixty (60) days, ninety (90) days, indefinitely, or other disciplinary action including termination of employment, dismissal from residential living, or legal action including personal liability under civil and criminal law.

Confidentiality of electronic communications cannot be guaranteed to users of MHCO computer equipment or network connections. Those who use electronic resources and communications, including the use of MHCO or privately-owned computers and those connected to the MHCO network are duly notified that MHCO cannot protect individuals from the existence or receipt of offensive material. Incidents of receiving offensive material should be reported to the IT Point of Contact or to the Administrator via email or other written documentation. Users who suspect that their computer or network account has been accessed without permission must report the suspected activity to the IT Point of Contact and supervisor immediately via phone and/or email.

Network users shall not connect or provide access to connect to any illegal or unlawful internet or web connections nor connect by illegal means to gain access unlawfully via an MHCO owned device or personal device on the MHCO network. Unlawful computer use and network access includes defamation, obscenity, discrimination, violation of copyright trademarks or licenses, and other violations of local, state, and federal law. Downloading of illegally provided content is prohibited. Personnel and residents may not use MHCO owned computers or network services for personal or financial gain.

Any attempt to modify or extend resources without the written authorization of the MHCO IT Point of Contact and the Administrator using downloads, new software, new hardware, or connection to unauthorized networks could result in degradation of the system or performance elsewhere on the network. MHCO shall use firewalls, anti-virus, multifactor authentication methods, and related software, and other appropriate safeguards to protect against system degradation. Network users shall not use software or hardware that circumvents or alters protections, security, or other safety measures that are a part of the MHCO IT system. Employees and residents shall not attempt to subvert the restrictions and security measures associated with computer accounts and network access.

Copyrighted material and software must be used with respect for the copyright holder. Users must recognize, attribute, and honor the presence or accessibility of copyrighted and licensed software through the MHCO IT network. All software acquired for or on behalf of MHCO or developed by personnel is deemed MHCO property.

All software must be used in compliance with the applicable licenses, notices, contracts, and agreements and must not be copied. Users shall not access, distribute, or reproduce any information for which they are not explicitly authorized to view, download, print, or save.

Users shall return original and copies of any and all software, computer materials, or computer hardware deemed MHCO property upon resignation, termination, or discharge. Access to computers and the network will be disabled immediately.

Employees are responsible for reporting problems with the computer system and accessories or through use of the IT network, including email, internet, and use of shared system files within twenty-four (24) hours of discovering the problem. When reporting problems or making a request for additional computer services at MHCO, employees must submit a detailed email to TenPlus Systems at [priorityservice@tenplus.com](mailto:priorityservice@tenplus.com) with a carbon copy to the IT Point of Contact or by dialing 919-832-5799 and choosing option #3 for the help desk at TenPlus Systems. The IT Point of Contact shall follow up via visit, phone call, or email within ten (10) business days of determining that the problem was corrected.

Employees are responsible for all use of computers, equipment, and network accounts provided to them by MHCO. MHCO computers and network accounts may only be used by the user to whom they are assigned unless otherwise authorized. Employees should not disclose their computer password or any information that could be used to gain account access, nor use another user's password to gain account access. Access to confidential information is limited to authorized employees.

While content that appears on the internet is public, the use, creation, posting, or dissemination of information via the internet by an MHCO employee during on- or off-work hours related to employment at the MHCO, activities at the MHCO, or former, future, and current residents is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action. Employees are prohibited from appearing in images that contain the MHCO logo, related logos, or any location on MHCO property for activity that is not work-related unless previously approved by the Administrator. Accessing other users' files or MH files without authorization is prohibited. Any user who discovers a "hole" or access to unauthorized material of MH shall report the access to the MHCO IT Point of Contact or supervisor immediately via phone and submit a problem ticket on the approved MHCO system within twenty-four (24) hours of the report.

For security purposes, employees shall connect personal devices only to the MHCO Guest Network, and all MHCO computers and resident personal devices shall be connected to the MHCO network only. MHCO is not responsible for monitoring employee web activity while off duty and while using computers and internet access paid for by the employee. However, any information that is posted on a public domain by an MHCO employee, either on- or off-duty, is subject to review. Pictures of MHCO residents or events taken on an employee's personal cell phone or other device should be uploaded to the Y: drive by the end of his or her shift and deleted off the device.

Employees are responsible and financially liable for all computer activity related to their personal IT account or a departmental or residential account to which they have authorized access. Misrepresenting or willfully concealing identity through the use of the IT network or computers owned and operated by MHCO is prohibited and subject to disciplinary action. If an employee fails to return MHCO-provided computer equipment, including software, hardware or computer accessories upon termination, resignation, or at the request of the IT Point of Contact, the employee will pay MHCO the current market value of the product in question, as determined by MHCO. This amount may be garnished from remaining paychecks, reimbursements, expense accounts, personal accounts, or by other legal means. Upon ending employment with MHCO, personal information not removed from an employee's computer can be viewed and retained if it is in the best interest of MHCO. Generally, information that remains on a computer of a former employee will be destroyed. MHCO is not responsible for the content of accounts and other computer services provided. Employees are responsible for all information that is accessed, made available, or distributed using MHCO computer equipment or through the network.

Internet exploration for personal purposes should be performed on personal time. Due to bandwidth usage and the need for all employees to have the ability to access the internet at a reasonable speed, MHCO employees shall not spend an unreasonable amount of time on personal email and shall close software, internet sites, and email accounts when not in use.

MHCO employees shall have an official email address associated with their computer account. Employees shall be responsible for all email originating from the email account. Employees may not send email that misrepresents MHCO views or mission. All email originating from MHCO computer equipment must pass through the IT network. Employees of MHCO are prohibited from using the email system for the following:

- create or distribute chain letters, “junk”, or “spam” (mass unsolicited email)
- send anonymous email
- disrupt another person’s e-mail services
- harass or send unwanted or offensive emails
- forge email messages as though they are from another person
- read, delete, copy, or modify email under the control of another user without authorization
- pursue commercial activities, including “for-profit” messages or advertisements, unless on behalf of MHCO and authorized by the Administrator
- introduce viruses or other corrupted software
- download unauthorized software
- intentionally engage in illegal activity

## **COMMUNICATION**

MHCO promotes open communication among all departments and related external social services agencies. Employees shall be responsible for the information discussed in meetings for which they are scheduled to attend. If an employee is not able to attend a meeting, the employee should read the meeting minutes or discuss the topics with the meeting chairperson. Agendas for every meeting are distributed to those involved in the meeting beforehand. If desired, an employee can furnish potential agenda items to the meeting chairperson the Friday before the next scheduled meeting. Any suggestions or recommendations will be answered by the individual chairing the meeting in writing. Minutes shall be prepared for every meeting and shall be distributed to those involved in the meeting before the next scheduled meeting.

The Administrator chairs a quarterly meeting on changeover days for all staff to discuss agenda items and information pertaining to all employees.

Department heads shall hold regularly scheduled meetings with the group they supervise (e.g. monthly ILP program meeting, ILP interim meeting, Direct Care Program Team meeting, Direct Care staffing, monthly recreation meeting, etc.).

A Staff Advisory Council meets quarterly to provide support staff with an opportunity to process issues, make suggestions, ask questions, and voice concerns and appreciation in a collective anonymous manner.

The Administrator, Program Director, or other department heads may issue memorandums. Memorandums by employees other than department heads shall be approved by the supervisor. The IT Point of Contact emails a daily memorandum communicating important reminders and the upcoming week’s schedule. Employees are responsible for the information contained in all memorandums.

Employees shall be responsive to phone calls throughout the workday. They should check and respond to voicemail communication at least twice daily (i.e. beginning and end of the workday) while on duty. They should change voice mail messages to reflect extended stays out of the office to include a forwarding phone number and supervisor contact information. Employees are encouraged to forward office phone calls to their cell phone if they will be away from the office.

### **SAFETY AND EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Safe work practices are necessary to avoid injuries and property damage. Employees are required to use all safety equipment and protective equipment that is furnished for their particular job situation. Employees must follow safe work practices to help create safe working conditions for themselves, other employees, residents and other service recipients, and guests. The PQI Incident Review and Risk Management Committees comprised of employees from each department, meet regularly to recommend improvements to keep the campus safe. Disciplinary action, up to and including termination, may occur if an employee is not using all safety equipment appropriately and/or is not participating in safe practices. Any potentially unsafe condition shall be reported immediately as health and safety is a shared responsibility. Alertness can prevent accidents.

Personnel are encouraged to be diligent in observing what occurs on campus, at events, during travel, and weather changes for possible safety concerns or emergency situations. If personnel deem a situation dangerous and notifying supervisors for consultation is not possible or prudent, the individual is expected to contact 911. In the event of a serious illness or injury (e.g. severe bleeding, stopped breathing, etc.), contact 911 and render appropriate first aid per the Critical Incidents Procedure. If a resident is ill or injured, but the need is not as serious as indicated above, personnel shall render first aid, take the resident to a medical provider or the emergency room if needed and safe to do so, and document the incident per the Non-Critical Incidents Procedure.

Emergency Assembly Areas are clearly marked in each building. The Emergency Assembly Area location for the Picnic Shelter and Pool is the basement of the St. John's Administrative Building.

MHCO utilizes an emergency notification system through Code Red. Scenarios are developed through this program to reflect emergencies requiring personnel, resident, and other stakeholder notification for emergency preparation drills. An emergency notification can be sent to specific parties or campus wide. The Administrator, Program Director, or Administrative Assistant can initiate the system on a laptop or cell phone. An 'all clear' notification is sent by the system when an emergency has safely concluded. In cases where Code Red is not available, calls and texts shall be sent to personnel by the supervisor. The Administrator, Program Director, and Program Clinical Coordinator will account for the whereabouts of personnel and residents.

### **WEAPONS**

Weapons (e.g. include firearms, guns, BB guns, air rifles, knives, crossbows, slingshots, martial arts weaponry, etc.) are prohibited on any MHCO property. Any resident or visitor hearing shots fired or witnessing an individual on or near campus possessing a firearm or other prohibited weapon shall inform the nearest employee immediately. Any employee receiving such notification, hearing shots fired, or witnessing an individual on or near campus possessing a firearm or other prohibited weapon shall follow the lockdown procedure.

### **FIRE**

The Maintenance Director shall ensure that fire extinguishers, equipment, and warning systems are fully functional at all times. Nothing with an open flame may be used inside buildings (e.g. candles incense, torches, lighters, etc.). Birthday cake candles are allowed when presenting the cake to be extinguished immediately.

Fireworks are not permitted on campus. Temporary heating devices and space heaters must never be used in the cottages nor left unattended and must be unplugged when not in use.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Code Red shall be utilized to communicate campus closings or late arrivals due to weather to employees. The decision to close campus due to weather shall be determined by the Administrator in consultation with the Program Director, Chief Financial Officer, and Maintenance Director based on power outages and road conditions on campus and in the area. When campus is closed, cottages shall operate as normally as possible. The Recreation Director shall be asked to facilitate activities if safe to do so. When the campus is closed, employees living off campus are not expected to work and will not be required to use vacation leave. If the campus is open but employees feel it is unsafe to travel to work, they may choose to arrive at a later than scheduled time or not come to work and shall notify the supervisor. If the employee chooses not to work, then they may be required to use vacation leave.

### **BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS AND INFECTIONS DISEASE**

Universal precautions shall be observed to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. All blood or other potentially infectious materials shall be considered infectious regardless of the perceived status of the source individual. Engineering and work practice controls shall be utilized to eliminate or minimize exposure to employees. Cottage controls shall be examined monthly by the supervisor and documented on cottage inspection logs. Hand washing facilities are available in each building to employees who incur exposure to blood.

Personal protective equipment (i.e. rubber gloves, CPR mouth guards, masks, eye protection, face shields, red biohazard waste bags, and sharps containers) shall also be utilized where occupational exposure remains after the institution of these controls. Any incident of exposure shall be reported to the supervisor and the Administrator.

### **INCIDENT REPORTING**

An incident is defined as an unplanned, undesired event that hinders completion of a task and may cause injury, illness, or property damage or some combination of all three in varying degrees from minor to catastrophic.

Critical incidents include:

- Death of a resident or any service recipient
- Serious illness or injury and admission to a hospital
- Reports of abuse or neglect
- Dangerous and endangered residents (including suicide attempts)
- Missing resident or runaway lasting more than twenty-four (24) hours
- Arrest for violation of laws

Non-critical incidents may include:

- Resident illness or injury that is deemed not serious per the Critical Incidents Procedure
- Personnel, any service recipient, or guest injury
- Resident contraband seizure
- Resident altercation
- Property incident (e.g. fire department involvement, accident involving a resident or MHCO vehicle, etc.)
- Campus lockdown, hold and secure, evacuation, bomb threat, poison, fire alarm, animal control per the Safety Procedure
- Resident missing or runaway lasting less than twenty-four (24) hours

- Other incidents not otherwise described per the Critical Incidents Procedure (e.g. law enforcement involvement, etc.)
- A near miss to an incident (i.e. an unplanned event that did not result in injury, illness, or damage, but had the potential to do so)

Employees are expected to act in emergencies, and at all other times, as directed by various publications, policies, and procedures. The absence of a director or department head does not sanction inaction in emergencies. Employees should act in the best interest of MHCO and the residents jointly and should communicate as soon as feasible and practical after an incident has occurred. Employees may call for police assistance if it is reasonable to assume that a serious danger exists. Police intervention shall be used to assist in stabilizing the situation and not as a means for removal of a resident. The Program Director or the Administrator shall be notified immediately whenever law enforcement officials are summoned.

Whenever an incident occurs, documentation of the rationale for actions shall be made on a PQI Incident Report Form and in the resident's case record if involving a resident.

The employee who sought assistance and all other employees involved in or witnessing the incident shall document their points of view on a PQI Incident Report Form within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident.

The PQI Incident Report Form shall be emailed to the Program Director within twenty-four (24) hours. Incidents involving Direct Care residents shall be copied to the Program Clinical Coordinator and supervisor of the resident when emailing to the Program Director. Incidents involving ILP residents shall be copied to the Resident Advisor of the resident when emailing to the Program Director. Incidents involving personnel not working in Direct Care or ILP shall be copied to the individual's supervisor when emailing to the Program Director. Incidents involving a guest, visitor, or other individual on campus shall be copied to the Administrator when emailing to the Program Director. Incidents involving illness or injury to a resident shall be copied to the supervisor and the Program Clinical Coordinator when emailing to the Program Director.

## **EMPLOYMENT AT MHCO**

### **EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS**

MHCO has the following employee classifications:

- **Hourly Full-Time Employee (non-exempt):** A full-time employee is regularly scheduled for work 40 hours in a workweek. Full-time employees receive full benefits as outlined later in this handbook.
- **Hourly Part-Time Employee (non-exempt):** A part-time employee is employed on a regular basis in an established job, works less than 30 hours but more than 20 hours in a workweek. Part-Time employees receive some benefits as outlined later in this handbook.
- **Salaried Employee (exempt):** A salaried employee is generally scheduled for and works at least 40 hours in the workweek. The compensation is stated per pay period.

**Exempt Status:** An exempt employee is any employee whose compensation is paid and computed on a salaried basis and is otherwise exempt from overtime. Such employees are exempt because they meet the qualifications of exempt status as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

**Non-exempt Status:** A non-exempt employee is paid by the hour for actual hours worked. Such employees do not meet the qualifications of the FLSA and will receive overtime pay.

By classifying an employee as full-time or part-time, MHCO is neither guaranteeing an individual will be assigned a certain number of hours, nor limiting its authority to assign someone to a given number of hours per period.

If your employee classification changes from part-time to full-time, the effective date of the full-time employee benefit package is based on the change in classification date and not your original employment date. Waiting periods for benefits begin on the effective date of the change.

If your employee classification changes from full-time to part-time, you will no longer be eligible for the full-time employee benefit package. Accrued Vacation Leave will be paid out per policy. Full-time employee benefits will end on the date of the classification change. At that time, you will be eligible to continue medical coverage according to the provisions of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA).

## **WORK SCHEDULE**

On your first day at work, report to the HR Specialist who will begin orientation and training for your new position. During orientation, the HR Specialist should always be your first contact for guidance in case of any questions, problems, or concerns. If needed, your supervisor will be contacted for help.

The normal work period for full-time employees other than CCWs and RAs is five workdays in a workweek. The workweek is normally Monday-Friday beginning at 8 am and ending at 5 pm. Each 8-hour shift will include an unpaid one-hour meal break. Any time worked in excess of 40 hours by employees other than administration must have written approval from the supervisor. MHCO does not recognize compensatory time and employees are encouraged to schedule time so as not to exceed authorized hours worked.

CCWs work a rotating schedule of 20 ½ days, 24 hours per day on duty, followed by 9 ½ days off duty. Resident Advisors work a schedule of 5 days, 24 hours per day on duty, followed by 2 days off duty. All employees, respective of their job classifications, may be required to work as CCWs in a cottage to provide additional coverage.

## **PAYROLL**

Pay shall be computed monthly and deposited electronically on the last working day prior to the 28th of each month. Employees shall keep an accurate record of time worked on timesheets marked electronically by time clock or manually. Timesheets shall be required to receive pay from any given period of time worked. Employees shall present timesheets to supervisors for approval. Supervisors shall submit the timesheets to the Finance Office on the last working day prior to the 21st of each month, or earlier if requested. Paid employees wishing to work as a CCW when emergency coverage is requested by the Program Clinical Coordinator shall receive pay in accordance with the published scale for emergency childcare coverage. Providing emergency coverage shall be additional to the employee's regular job.

## **HOLIDAYS**

MHCO closes offices on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (Thursday & Friday)
- Christmas (December 24, 25, & 26)

Holidays that fall on Saturdays shall be observed on the preceding Friday. Holidays that fall on Sundays shall be observed on the following Monday.

Because of the responsibilities of operating a residential facility, MHCO is required to have staff coverage during all holidays. CCWs are not entitled to time off duty for holidays as they receive 9.5 consecutive days off duty each duty cycle and the nature of the scheduling ensures rotation and equality over an extended period of time. Holiday pay (\$100) shall be granted for CCWs and RAs required to work on holidays. Holiday pay shall not be paid to any employee who is receiving sick leave or Workers' Compensation benefits for the day on which the holiday occurs. If an employee resigns from employment on a holiday, no payment will be added for the holiday.

### **ORIENTATION PERIOD**

All employees are subject to a 6-month orientation period. This period is used as a time wherein the employee has an opportunity to demonstrate his or her capabilities in the position. At the end of the first 90 days, the supervisor will complete a performance appraisal with you, and you will be eligible to enroll in insurance coverage and earn leave. At the end of the 6-month orientation period, you and MHCO will decide whether you wish to continue or discontinue employment. The orientation period may be extended by the Administrator in a written statement specifying the duration of the extension, not to exceed 90 days. Following the orientation period, the working relationship will continue as at-will employment.

### **SUPERVISION**

All personnel are supervised to provide support and promote competence. Supervisors are required to demonstrate that they have skills in leadership and human or material resource management. A regularly scheduled supervisory session, an official meeting between the employees and their supervisor, will be held at least monthly for CCWs and quarterly for all other personnel to include topics such as:

- an official review of organizational goals,
- review of tasks and initiatives,
- a progress evaluation of the employee's Professional Development Plan,
- development of corrective action or improvement plans,
- progress from previous plans of corrective action or improvement, and
- any issues or concerns.

The supervisory session will be planned, scheduled, and documented with an agenda for the session and notes as to what took place in the session. Sessions are intended to be positive and open. Direct questions and concerns to your immediate supervisor before consultation with other employees. The immediate supervisor shall consult with his or her supervisor to discuss the issue and the process shall continue until an answer to the question or concern can be achieved. Additional supervision and training occur during monthly department meetings.

### **PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS**

Performance appraisals are an important part of the professional development of all employees. MHCO holds personnel accountable for work performance. You will have a performance appraisal provided by your supervisor after the first 90 days of the end of the orientation period. You will have your performance appraised annually by your supervisor. Supervisors also evaluate job performance informally between annual appraisals. Supervisors document unsatisfactory or exceptional performance in writing. CCWs are evaluated individually.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Newly hired employees can expect a two-tiered orientation process to include:

- New Hire Orientation  
Orientation by the HR Specialist to complete necessary paperwork to begin work and a campus tour during which you will meet with employees to review various aspects of working at MHCO, including policies and procedures.
- Department Orientation  
Orientation to the department by your supervisor.

This initial orientation will be supplemented by professional development and training throughout the year. Staff will be notified of training through flyers, email, and staff meetings. Employees must make up any missed trainings with the HR Specialist.

Supervisors will incorporate professional development in the employee's annual performance appraisal and update progress at performance reviews. Supervisors may require employees to attend courses to ensure that they have mandated licensure or certification, address a shortage of skilled workers in specific classifications, build specific high priority skills, or address performance expectations as specified in a performance improvement plan.

## **WAGE AND SALARY REVIEW**

MHCO maintains a wage and salary structure. This salary structure is reviewed at least annually to maintain a competitive and equitable program.

## **PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

MHCO strives to maintain a professional workplace environment. Personal appearance creates a positive or negative impression that reflects on MHCO. Thus, employees should keep in mind that personal appearance matters when representing MHCO in front of residents and other service recipients, visitors, and all stakeholders while on and off campus. MHCO recognizes the importance of individually held religious beliefs and ethnicity. Grooming and dress dictated by individual employees' religion and ethnicity shall be respected and accommodated unless the accommodation creates undue hardship or safety concerns. All employees shall be neat, clean, and well-groomed. The following guidelines may assist employees in determining the appropriateness of appearance in carrying out daily tasks. Employees are encouraged to use their professional judgment or ask a supervisor about appropriateness of appearance as written guidelines do not cover all situations.

MHCO's official dress code is business casual. All clothing must be appropriate, conservative, and project professionalism per the individual's job description. In all cases, MHCO employees should dress based on their duties that day. More dress code requirements and exceptions are available in the Manual.

## **WORKPLACE PRIVACY AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Employees do not have a right to privacy in their workspace, any other company property, or any personal property they bring to the workplace. MHCO reserves the right to search company premises at any time, without warning, to ensure compliance with our policies on employee safety, workplace violence, harassment, theft, drug and alcohol use, and possession of prohibited items. MHCO may search company property, including but not limited to desks, file cabinets, storage areas, and workspaces. MHCO may search personal property brought onto company premises, including but not limited to toolboxes, briefcases, vehicles, backpacks, purses, and bags. Personal belongings, including packages carried to and from MHCO by an employee, are to be made available for inspection upon request. Failure to comply with inspections of personal belongings may result in disciplinary

action. MHCO cannot be responsible for loss of money or personal belongings. Personal items should be stored out of sight and kept in a safe location.

### **EMPLOYEE RECORDS**

Up-to-date personnel records are important. It is the employees' responsibility to keep their department head and the HR Specialist informed of changes in their home address, name, marital status (when applicable, i.e. CCWs and RAs), emergency names and numbers, etc. Falsification of any information on personnel records will be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Employee medical records will be maintained separately from personnel files and are considered confidential. Employees may request access to their medical records with the HR Specialist's approval.

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

The purpose of progressive discipline is to protect residents, other service recipients, families, employees, and all stakeholders from negligence and improper performance of duties. When an employee is alleged to have violated a policy or procedure of MHCO, the matter will be investigated by the supervisor or the Administrator. MHCO employees strive for consistent and fair decision-making procedures that ensure resolutions that treat individuals equally, provide an opportunity to respond to claims, and protect open communication. Personnel have the right to be informed on aspects of the alleged violation that do not violate confidentiality, applicable law, and the rights of other employees, residents, and other service recipients. An investigation should begin, either internally or externally, immediately to collect and examine evidence.

There are several resolution options for substantiated violations of MHCO policy or procedure. The supervisor, the Administrator, or the Policy and Personnel Committee of the Board of Directors shall determine which resolution is warranted for a substantiated violation after investigation and based on severity of the offense, with assistance from the employee's supervisor. If an employee has been determined to be at fault for a substantiated violation, disciplinary action shall be taken, up to and including termination from employment.

### **TERMINATION**

An employee may be terminated at any time if his or her performance continually fails to meet minimum performance standards. Employment of an individual at MHCO is "at-will" and of indefinite duration. MHCO may terminate employment at any time, with or without notice and for any cause unless there is a specific law to protect employees or there is an employment contract providing otherwise.

Certain actions, among others, which shall lead to immediate termination include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal, physical, or sexual abuse of residents, all persons served, or employees
- Use of alcohol or drugs while on the job, while operating MHCO vehicles, or reporting to work under the influence of such or with the odor of alcohol on one's breath
- Bringing alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or other intoxicants on campus or while conducting MHCO business
- Fighting or attempting bodily injury to any person on MHCO property
- Engaging in any conduct violating common decency or morality
- Any conduct deemed to be grossly unprofessional
- Conviction of any felony
- Citations for unsafe operation of a vehicle while transporting residents and other persons served
- Sexual harassment or discrimination

- Sexual relations between employees and MHCO residents, residents' family members, or other current or previous stakeholders, except in cases of sexual relations for married couples
- Fraternalization between employees and MHCO residents, residents' family members, or other current or previous stakeholders except in cases of fraternalization for married couples
- Commission by the employee of any act of moral turpitude
- Certain actions, among others, which may lead to termination include, but are not limited to:
  - Absence from work without proper authorization
  - Excessive absenteeism or tardiness
  - Non-exempt employees working in excess of 40 hours per week without Administrator approval
  - Insubordination
  - Any action or behavior which jeopardizes the safety of a resident, service recipient, or employee
  - Violations of confidentiality of residents, their families, other service recipients, or employees
  - Theft or misappropriation of any property or funds of MHCO, a resident, any person served, or employee
  - Any conduct or behavior deemed to impact negatively on MHCO's image, staff morale, or funding constituency
  - Any willful falsification or misrepresentation of MHCO forms, case records, official documents or reports completed as an applicant or employee
  - Continued apathy and open display of disinterest relating to assigned job
  - Failure to follow MHCO directives including, but not limited to, approved policy, procedures, or job description
  - Failure to follow the authorized chain of authority, job description, organizational chart, or other directives
  - Failure to follow policies related to the filing of grievances (e.g. making false reports, retaliation for reporting, etc.)
  - Failure to follow policies related to human subjects research
  - Misuse of power by any employee with the intention of interfering with the legitimate reporting of suspected abuse of any kind, including sexual abuse or exploitation
  - Noncompliance with the MHCO Information Technology Policy
  - Restricting a resident's family contact and visitation or threats of restricting contact as a means of punishment

The Administrator shall conduct an investigation of a substantiated claim and determine if the actions listed above are terminable, as defined by the Department of Social Services, state law, policies or procedures, or other commonly acknowledged definitions. Terminated employees may not visit campus upon termination.

## **RESIGNATION**

Employees wishing to resign shall submit a notice of intent at least ten (10) working days prior to the effective date with forwarding address. The Administrator and department heads shall submit a thirty (30) day notice prior to resignation. Resignation is effective the last day the employee worked. Any employee who is absent for three (3) consecutive working days without reasonable cause or proper notification will be considered as having resigned effective at the close of the last full day the employee worked. Employees who resign may visit campus upon approval by the Administrator.

## BENEFITS AT MHCO

### INSURANCE

All insurance coverage begins immediately following a full 90 days after the date of employment. MHCO provides and pays for 85% of the premium of medical and dental coverage as part of the group plan for all full-time employees. You have the option of adding coverage for your spouse or children at your own expense through payroll deduction. MHCO pays for 10% of the premium of dependent medical and dental coverage. You have the option to upgrade dental coverage at your own expense through payroll deduction.

MHCO provides and pays for group life and accidental death and dismemberment coverage for full-time, permanent employees at no expense to the employee.

MHCO provides and pays for unemployment insurance as required by NC law at no expense to the employee. MHCO offers the following to purchase at your own expense through payroll deduction:

- Aflac short-term disability insurance, cancer protection assurance, accident advantage, and plus rider
- VSP vision coverage
- ID Shield identify theft and legal shield coverage

MHCO provides adequate professional or officer's and director's liability insurance and protection for all employees. Personnel are bonded against theft and misappropriation.

MHCO provides adequate Workers' Compensation insurance. This insurance applies to bodily injury by accident or by disease and includes bodily injury resulting in death. The covered bodily injury must occur during the policy period of that carrier and MHCO and the injuries must occur or be aggravated by the conditions of employment. The insurance does not include:

- injuries that result from a violation of the law,
- bodily injury intentionally caused or aggravated by the employee,
- injury occurring outside the United States of America
- fines or penalties imposed for violations of law, or
- accidents or injuries that occur while on time off.

### VACATION LEAVE

Paid vacation days are provided for all full-time, administrative, and support employees after completion of their first 90 days as an employee. Employees may carry over vacation days from year to year with a maximum accumulation of 30 days as of the last day of the calendar year. CCWs and RAs are not entitled to vacation leave as they receive consecutive days off duty for each duty cycle.

After the first 90 days as an employee, employees will earn paid vacation time at the end of each month employed at an accrual rate in accordance with the following schedule:

Employment at MHCO	Monthly	Accrual Number of Vacation Days
90 days – 5 years	0.83 days/month	10 days/year (prorated the first year)
6 – 10 years	1.25 days/month	15 days/year
11 + years	1.67 days/month	20 days/year

The number of vacation days earned each year will be based on the number of years of service completed on the last day of the preceding calendar year.

**SICK LEAVE**

Sick leave is earned by full-time employees at the end of each month employed at a rate of 8 hours per month beginning after the 90-day orientation period. Sick leave is intended to be used for personal illness of the employee, medical care, dental care, or funeral of an immediate family member.

**PROFESSIONAL LEAVE**

Time to attend professional meetings, workshops, certificate training programs, or visits to other campuses shall be arranged without loss of pay at the discretion of the supervisor. Requests for leave to attend professional meetings must be submitted in writing to the supervisor at least two (2) weeks before such leave commences. Professional leave will be utilized in a pursuit supportive of the employee's position at MHCO or for enhancement of a promotion opportunity related to the purpose of MHCO.

**PERSONAL LEAVE**

MHCO provides paid personal leave for employees to take time off for small necessities (e.g. attending school functions, urgent personal or family matters, etc.). Personal leave is earned at the end of each month employed at a rate of 2 hours of leave per month, with maximum accumulation of 24 hours. A maximum of 4 hours personal leave may be used at any one time, and a minimum of 30 minutes of personal time will be charged with a qualified absence. Personal leave can be used only within the calendar year earned and cannot be carried over into the next year. An employee's supervisor must approve all personal leave. Personal leave is not to be used in addition to or in conjunction with vacation leave.

**401(K)**

MHCO offers a 401(k)-approved retirement plan. MHCO matches 1% for every 1% each employee contributes to their 401(k) up to 6%, with a vesting schedule as defined in the 401(k) plan. After 10 years of employment, MHCO will put in 1.25% for every 1% the employee contributes, up to 7.5%. After 20 years of employment, MHCO will put in 1.5% for every 1% the employee contributes, up to 9%. Full-time employees who have completed the 6-month orientation period are eligible to participate in this benefit. You may elect to contribute a portion of your salaries to this plan in an amount determined by the plan administrators and the law.

**RETIREMENT (EFFECTIVE 1/1/2021)**

Full-time employees qualify for retirement when they meet all of the following:

- they are over the age of 62,
- they have over 10 years of tenure, and
- the sum of age and tenure is equal to or greater than 80 for employees other than CCWs, and 160 for CCW couples.

Age and tenure may be calculated each half year. CCWs may qualify if one member of the couple meets both criteria and the sum of age and tenure for both members of the couple is equal to or greater than 160. Employees who qualify for retirement will be offered a retirement package at the time they earn qualification, age 62, age 65, and age 67. The CFO will contact the employee for a meeting to discuss the offering with specifics before the qualification period.

The retirement package will include the following paid on a monthly payroll schedule through direct deposit until completion of the package payments:

- Accrued vacation leave up to 30 days
- 50% of sick time accrued not to exceed 60 days total
- 3 months of salary for 10 to 20 years of service or 4 months of salary 20 years of service or more

## **FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT**

MHCO's policy is intended to allow employees to take reasonable unpaid leave (up to 12 workweeks) for an employee's own serious health condition, for the birth or adoption of a child, for the placement of a child with an employee for foster care, or for care of a spouse or parent who has a serious health condition. FMLA applies to all full-time employees of MHCO who have worked at least 12 months with MHCO and who have worked a minimum of 1,250 hours during the 12 months immediately preceding the start of the leave. Employees are eligible to take up to 12 weeks leave at any time during a 12-month period. MHCO utilizes a 12-month rolling period to determine when the 12 weeks of leave entitlement occurs. Under the rolling 12-month period, each time an employee takes FMLA leave, remaining leave would be any balance of the 12 weeks that has not been used during the immediately preceding 12 months.

## **RETURN TO WORK**

Employees who have sustained work-related injuries may be provided modified work opportunities as soon as practical and possible. Ideally, employees will be returned to their pre-injury positions, with or without restrictions. If restrictions prevent employees from returning to their pre-injury positions, MHCO may, but is not obligated to, place the individual in a position which meets all of the restrictions set forth by the treating physician and is in the best interest of MHCO. Tenure, work record, skills, abilities, and facility needs will be taken into consideration when determining whether a person will be placed in such a position. MHCO will never place a person in a position where that individual is required to work beyond physician-ordered restrictions, and consistent with standard policy, will make reasonable efforts to place an individual in a modified duty position. Employees who cannot perform the essential functions of their jobs because of non-work-related injuries or conditions may take leave under FMLA or utilize sick or vacation leave. A report from the treating physician shall be forwarded to the HR Specialist.

## **MILITARY SERVICE**

Employees will be granted time off for active duty in the uniformed services for a period not to exceed 3 weeks annually. Employees are required to notify the supervisor as to the dates of the active-duty period(s) as required by law. Special provisions of FMLA, as amended by Section 585 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, apply to all employees associated with the military. Specifically, MHCO recognizes rights and duties under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) that provides employment and reemployment rights for members of the uniformed services, including veterans and members of the Reserve and National Guard. Under USERRA, service members who leave civilian jobs for military service can perform duties with the knowledge that they will be able to return to their jobs with the same pay, benefits, and status they would have attained had they not been away on duty. USERRA also prohibits employers from discriminating against these individuals in employment because of service.

## **COURT SERVICE**

Employees called to jury duty or to appear as a witness in a court case may keep per diem received by the court system for serving on jury duty.

Employees shall not be compensated for time lost away from duties for:

- court appearance as a defendant,
- through legal actions brought about by the employee against others, or
- as a witness for a person or for an organization operated for profit.

## **COBRA**

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) mandates that employers continue health care coverage for employees enrolled in the benefit plan for at least 18 months after the loss of health care benefits. The loss of benefits is usually caused by termination of employment or a reduction of hours that makes employees ineligible for the benefit plan. All persons covered by the plan, including spouses and children are

eligible for COBRA. The employee pays health care continuation coverage premiums in full, and the employer may charge the employee 2% of the premium for administrative costs. This Act determines the length of time employees have to elect COBRA benefits, response time for employers, and what notices must be provided.

## HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

MHCO retains the right to modify, interpret, or cancel, in whole or in part, any published or unpublished policies without advance notice to employees and without having to give cause or consideration to any employee. The policies set forth are not intended and should not be construed as an expressed or implied employment contract. These policies do not in any way guarantee employment to any employee for any specified period of time. Employees are “at-will” employees and either MHCO or the employee may discontinue employment with or without notice and with or without cause.

This handbook revokes and replaces all previous employee handbooks.

I agree to abide by MHCO’s policies and procedures. Any violation of these policies will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (printed full name), acknowledge that I have read the Employee Handbook or that it has been read to me, and that I understand its contents.

Date

Employee Signature