

Louisiana Planning District 5

RESOLUTION NO. 2280

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (SWLA-RPC) FOR LOUISIANA PLANNING DISTRICT 5 APPROVING AND ADOPTING AN AMENDMENT TO THE RULES OF POLICY AND PROCEDURE AS NOTED AND ATTACHED.

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors of the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission has reviewed proposed changes and adjustments to the Rules of Policy and Procedures: **AND**

**WHEREAS**, the organizational structure of the Commission office administration has been updated to reflect and incorporate changing social norms and demographics for staff benefit and clarity; **AND**

**WHEREAS**, expanding services and operations of the Regional Planning Commission necessitates an enhanced policy and procedural mechanism of current and potential personnel; **AND**

**WHEREAS**, the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission has determined a need for adjusted management procedures for applying new technologies in a rapidly changing and technological work environment; **AND**

**WHEREAS**, the Mission Statement of the SWLA-RPC is centered on engaging membership, identifying member needs and wants, planning for those needs and wants, and facilitating implementation of identified needs and wants; **AND**

**WHEREAS**, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) member governments are desiring to design and build an integrated Transportation Management Center (TMC) with layers of capacity to monitor, manage and facilitate traffic in the Urban Area; **AND**

**WHEREAS**, the establishment of the Traffic Management Center expands intergovernmental agreements and staffing;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVING AND ADOPTING AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF POLICY AND PROCEDURE AS NOTED IN ATTACHMENT A AND MADE A PART OF THIS RESOLUTION.**

**THIS RESOLUTION BEING APPROVED AND ADOPTED ON THE 20TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2024.**

ATTEST:

Michael Hollier  
Michael Hollier, Director

M.E. Renfrow  
Mayor Marcus Renfrow, Chair



Southwest Louisiana  
Regional Planning Commission  
&  
Lake Charles  
Metropolitan Planning Organization

# Personnel Policies & Procedures Manual

Created October 2013

Updated April 15, 2014, February 25, 2015, December 9, 2021, February 16, 2023 & October 16, 2024

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# WELCOME

Welcome to the staff of the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission (SWLA-RPC). Our mission is to ENGAGE our members, IDENTIFY their needs, wants and shovel-ready projects, PLAN for those projects, and IMPLEMENT those plans with sustainability and resiliency.

You are now an essential part of the Commission's efforts to serve our member entities. You may be the only contact some will have with SWLA-RPC, so it is important that you become familiar with the Commission and its operation, and that you always serve willingly, knowledgeably, conscientiously, and cheerfully.

As the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) for Southwest Louisiana, SWLA-RPC serves as the designated Economic Development District (EDD) for Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, and Jeff Davis Parishes, as well as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for greater Lake Charles census defined urban area. Our primary goal is the continued growth and development of Southwest Louisiana.

## **Purpose of the Handbook**

The purpose of this handbook is to provide team members with information that will assist them during their employment at SWLA-RPC. This handbook contains general statements and guidelines and is meant to provide an overview of the more common policies and procedures, as well as benefits available to our team members. All team members are responsible for abiding by the policies and procedures contained in this handbook and must also understand and follow all policies, rules and instructions that apply to his or her job.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity**

The Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission (SWLA-RPC) is committed to recruiting, hiring, developing, training, promoting, compensating, and recognizing all team members solely based on merit, qualifications, abilities, and attitude. To provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions will be made without regard to race, color, national origin, age, religion, union affiliation, veteran status, disability, sexual orientation, or any other basis prohibited by state, federal or local laws.

Any team member who has a question or concern regarding any type of improper discrimination or harassment in the workplace should voice his or her concern to their supervisor or management without fear of reprisal. Anyone found engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

# EMPLOYMENT OVERVIEW

## **Personnel Files**

All completed employment forms and records, together with supporting materials, become the property of SWLA-RPC and will be maintained in a confidential file and locked in a secure manner. Team members may inspect their personnel files in their supervisor's office during regular business hours. No files or materials may be removed from the office, but requests for copies of documents will be honored upon written request by either current or former team members.

## **Professional Exemption**

Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the classified pay plan lists administrative and professional full-time positions as exempt. Section 13(a)(1) of the FLSA provides an exemption from both minimum wage and overtime pay for team members employed as bona fide executive, administrative, professional, and outside sales team members.

Section 13(a)(1) and Section 13(a)(17) also exempts certain computer team members. To qualify for exemption, team members generally must meet certain tests regarding their job duties and be paid on a salary basis at not less than \$844 per week. Job titles do not determine exempt status. For an exemption to apply, an employee's specific job duties and salary must meet all the requirements of the Department's regulations.

To qualify for the learned professional team member exemption, all the following tests must be met:

- The team member must be compensated on a salary or fee basis (as defined in the regulations) at a rate not less than \$844 per week.
- The employee's primary duty must be the performance of work requiring advanced knowledge, defined as work which is predominantly intellectual in character, and which includes work requiring the consistent exercise of discretion and judgment.
- The advanced knowledge must be in a field of science or learning; and
- The advanced knowledge must be customarily acquired by a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction.

As such, SWLA-RPC team members who meet these criteria are exempt from overtime.

## **Personal Data Changes**

It is important to keep your employment records accurate. Immediately notify your supervisor of any changes in your mailing address, telephone number, names of your dependents, emergency contact information, educational accomplishments, or any other change in your information on file. Changes in benefit status, for instance, a marriage, divorce, or new child, are also required to be reported immediately and may affect you or your dependent's eligibility if not submitted in a timely manner.

## **Hours of Operation**

SWLA-RPC observes a five-day work week, and the office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. The administrative staff will adhere to these hours, except for release from duty performed under necessary circumstances, including but not limited to preparation of reports and correspondence under short deadlines, etc. The administrative staff for SWLA-RPC's purposes will be considered the Office Manager, Administrative Assistant, and Bookkeeper. The administrative staff must document all time worked on biweekly timesheets, which are then used for payroll purposes.

Professional team members, such as managers, planners, and community development, special projects, administrative assistant, business analyst, bookkeeper, and GIS staff, will also be expected to adhere to regular office hours, unless justified by time spent at meetings in various parts of the district, state, and nation. The professional staff must document all time worked on their biweekly timesheets, which are then used for payroll purposes. The professional staff will be allowed compensatory time at the discretion of the Executive Director but will not be entitled to cash reimbursement for any overtime.

## **Flex-Time Options**

SWLA-RPC has established a flextime work schedule. Those wishing to participate in the program shall contact his/her supervisor and arrange their work schedule, so that the office has coverage from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Flex-Time Operations are as follows:

1. Required work week/hours per day for full-time
  - a. Work week = 40 hours, plus optional breaks
  - b. Workday = 8 hours, plus optional breaks
2. Optional lunch breaks
  - a. 1 hour
  - b. ½ hour
  - c. No lunch
3. Flex schedule options
  - a. At the discretion of his or her supervisor, report no earlier than 7:00 a.m. and leave no earlier than 3:00 p.m.
  - b. At the discretion of his or her supervisor, report no later than 9:00 a.m. and leave no earlier than 5:00 p.m.

## **Paid Time Off (PTO)**

The Paid Time Off (PTO) benefit is offered in lieu of traditional vacation, sick leave and paid holidays and is available to eligible, full-time team members to use at their discretion. There is the equivalent of ten (10) federal holidays in each team member's PTO bucket. Team members who are unionized may be covered by different time off plan provisions. PTO accumulates from the first day of employment:

- Maximum accrual for 1<sup>st</sup> year of service = up to 120 hours
- Maximum accrual for 2<sup>nd</sup> year of service = up to 160 hours
- Maximum accrual for 3<sup>rd</sup> year of service = up to 200 hours
- Maximum accrual for 4<sup>th</sup> year of service = up to 240 hours
- Maximum accrual for 5<sup>th</sup> year of service = up to 280 hours
- Maximum accrual for 10<sup>th</sup> year of service = up to 320 hours

Team members may use PTO hours in two (2) hour increments up to an annual maximum based on tenure with the commission. Additionally, team members may be required to use a portion of the annual PTO accrual in daily or weekly increments in accordance with their schedule.

SWLA-RPC may designate certain peak business periods for which PTO may not be granted for unscheduled absences or sick days. Team members may request PTO for an unscheduled absence if the absence is not during a previously communicated peak period. The payment of PTO does not affect the tracking and performance counseling of team members who do not meet attendance standards. Exempt salaried team members will have hours deducted from their PTO bank for any unscheduled absence.

Team members must use all earned PTO prior to or concurrent with a personal leave of absence. Team members will be required to use PTO while on Family Medical Leave (FML), Bereavement, Maternity, Paternity, or Adoption or Military Leave. Payment of PTO may be used to supplement any payments received from a short-term disability program or during the short-term disability waiting period. PTO accrual will continue while you are being paid PTO. It will not accrue during an unpaid leave of absence.

Team members may accrue up to the annual maximum based on tenure with the commission. Unused PTO hours will be forfeited with the start of the new calendar year. Once PTO hours are exhausted, team members must take leave without pay.

Team members who have been employed for a minimum of twelve months and leave the commission will receive pay for their unused accrued PTO upon separation. There will be no payment for accrued PTO if separation occurs within the first year of employment.

### **Pay Schedule**

Team members will be paid bi-weekly. New hires will work three weeks prior to receiving their first check. Months that result in three pay periods will only have payroll deductions taken for the first two pay periods within that month.

Travel and expense vouchers must be submitted with timesheet during the payroll period travel occurred. Other expenses incurred must be submitted on an expense report, signed by the team member, and submitted during the pay period which it was incurred. Timesheets and travel/expense vouchers must be approved and signed by the Executive Director.

### **Claims Against Salary**

SWLA-RPC is required by law to accept legal assignments, wage deduction orders and garnishments that are properly filed against Team member compensation.

### **Resignation**

All team members in administration or professional planning positions are expected to provide not less than 14 days prior notice of resignation, except the Executive Director who is expected to give not less than 30 days prior notice of resignation. All notices of resignation shall be submitted to the Director, except that the resignation of the Director shall be submitted to the Chairman of the SWLA-RPC Board of Directors. Any team member who does not submit his/her resignation as required above, or who is absent from work for a period of three (3) workdays or more without notifying his/her supervisor of the reasons for his absence, may be considered to have resigned without notice and is not in good standing.

## **VIRTUAL/REMOTE OFFICE POLICY**

Recent events, including the Covid-19 Pandemic restrictions, a series of natural disasters and physical limitations of the commission office have resulted in operating adjustments that are incorporated into the Rules of Policy and Procedure.

### **Virtual/Remote Staffing**

Team members hired for permanent positions may be employed as a remote employee, hybrid in-office and remote team member in rotation or an in-office employee.

Flex-time operating rules apply to all staff positions regardless of status assigned or functioning as a remote, hybrid in-house Team member.

### **Virtual/Remote Team Member Procedures:**

- Maintain workspace in a safe environment free from hazards
- Maintain a quiet and distraction-free workspace
- Consumption of alcohol during work hours is prohibited
- Office work procedures and policies apply to offsite locations
- Be readily available during established work hours
- Meeting protocols for dress, attention, presentations, distractions, courtesy, and video/ audio conferencing
- Video background appropriate displays and views suitable to an office setting.

## **BENEFITS**

The following brief description of team member benefits is intended only as a summary. The terms and details of the benefit plans are contained in the plan documents and are summarized in the summary plan descriptions establishing the benefits, eligibility, terms of coverage and payment of benefits under those plans.

### **Health, Dental, Accidental Death & Disability Insurance**

SWLA-RPC offers medical, dental, and accidental death & disability insurance for team members and dependents. Team member contribution rates for health plans vary and are based on both personal and dependent coverage elected. Specific coverage information and contribution rates will be provided when eligible to enroll. A team member is eligible to elect coverage beginning at least one full month after being designated full-time.

The Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives eligible team members and qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage by paying a monthly premium when their eligibility ends due to a qualifying event. Some common qualifying events are resignation, termination of employment, death of a team member, a reduction in a team member's hours, leave of absence, a team member's divorce or legal separation, or a dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirement.

It is important to notify supervisors when any qualifying COBRA event occurs. Upon proper notification of a qualifying event, information will be sent to team member and/or dependents, if applicable, describing rights and obligations granted under COBRA.

### **Deferred Compensation Plan**

SWLA-RPC offers a deferred compensation plan that allows team members to invest in their future by saving for retirement. A team member can contribute up to the IRS contribution limit beginning the day they are designated a full-time employee.

On the second anniversary of employment, SWLA-RPC will match a team member's deferred compensation contribution up to a maximum of 6% of his or her gross salary.

Plan details, including eligibility information are included in each new hire packet.

### **Education Policy**

To assist team members in broadening their horizons and enhancing their abilities, SWLA-RPC offers comprehensive education opportunities upon submission of an application and approval from the Executive Director. Team members may receive funds for tuition and books, if the study program is job-related and funds are available. With approval of the Executive Director, team members may utilize SWLA-RPC flex time for educational opportunities.

### **Southwest Louisiana Credit Union Membership**

Team members and their families are invited to apply for membership in a full-service credit union, with full banking services, lower interest rates on loans, higher yields on savings, free financial counseling and resources and easy access with mobile app and online banking.

## **EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS**

### **Business Travel**

All travel must be pre-approved by the Executive Director before any conference or training classes, hotel rooms and/or airline tickets are booked. The team member must present an estimated cost of the travel and the grant to which it is to be charged. After the travel is completed, the team member must provide any receipts from activities such as taxi/Uber, luggage, parking, and miscellaneous charges. A per diem may be paid before any trips but must not duplicate any meals that may be included in training or conference programs. Any expenses that are not accompanied by a receipt will not be reimbursed to the team member and will be the responsibility of the team member.

Travel and expense vouchers must be submitted with timesheets for the pay period travel and expenses were incurred. The team member and the Executive Director must sign timesheets and travel vouchers.

All hotel rooms must be within the guidelines of either Louisiana state or GSA requirements unless it is a host hotel of a training or conference or there is difficulty booking a room. In that case, a memo accompanying the travel explaining the reason for the added expense must accompany the final travel expense documentation.

The expense formula for authorized SWLA-RPC personnel while performing official duties is as follows:

1. Tourist class or excursion airline travel to and from destination, unless unavailable. To obtain excursion fare, tickets must be purchased at least two weeks in advance, and include a Friday or Saturday night stay.
2. The IRS approved rate per mile will be allowed for use of personal automobiles.
3. Any registration cost associated with the conference.
4. Authorization Policy Under State Travel Regulations for the current year:

**Airfare:** The State Travel Office strongly encourages use of lowest logical airfares. The State always supports purchasing the “best value” ticket. REMEMBER – A ticket is not purchased until you confirm your reservations upon receipt of ticket.

**Mileage:** Reimbursement from the office to area of travel is based on the most direct route. Mileage shall be reimbursable per the IRS approved rate per mile for the use of personal vehicle. A mileage reimbursement must be accompanied by a google map showing the total mileage.

**Rental Cars** (Receipt Required)

**Out- Of- State Vehicle Rental** (Receipt Required)

### **Miscellaneous Expenses**

Any team member purchasing items with non-company funds, including but not limited to supplies, memberships, etc., must be pre-approved by his or her supervisor prior to purchase. Team members must retain a receipt or invoice for items purchased and must submit the original receipt with timesheet. Team member’s reimbursement will be paid separately, not through payroll.

### **Professional Memberships**

Team members are encouraged to participate in professional and professional licensee organizations. Fees and dues associated with such members will be paid by SWLA-RPC if such membership is directly related to team member duties and authorized by the Executive Director. Fraternal, civic and service organizations are not reimbursable.

### **New Team Member Relocation**

SWLA-RPC may provide reimbursements to new team members for relocation costs. Federal and state grants do not authorize relocation costs, so if a team member who receives relocation assistance voluntarily or involuntarily leaves SWLA-RPC employment within the first two years, the actual amount of this assistance is due and payable upon their departure shall be deducted from the team member’s final compensation or paid to SWLA-RPC by the team member.

### **Seminar and Conference Attendance**

Approval may be granted and expenses reimbursed for attendance at seminars and conferences when such attendance, in the opinion of a team member’s supervisor, is in the best interest of the Commission. Only the Executive Director is authorized to approve all travel requests. Considerations shall be given to the professional area of the potential attendee, the Commission workload, and the availability of funds. A team member shall present themselves in the utmost professional manner as they represent the commission and SWLA.

## **LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

### **Administrative Leave**

An administrative leave with pay may be granted by the Executive Director when weather conditions, acts of God, or other special conditions that exist could cause injuries, jeopardizing or otherwise resulting in a threat to the safety and well-being of a team member and/or family member.

### **Bereavement Leave**

In the event an immediate family member dies, a team member may be granted up to five (5) days of PTO to arrange for and attend the funeral. For purposes of bereavement leave, a current spouse, mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandfather, grandmother, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law and stepparents, stepchildren and step-siblings are considered immediate family.

### **Maternity, Paternity & Adoption Leave**

Maternity, Paternity, and Adoption leave may be granted to a full-time team member not to exceed six (6) weeks. Upon the team member's return to work, a certificate of related birth or adoption will be required.

### **Jury Duty & Civil Leave**

If a team member is called to fulfill a civic duty to serve on a jury or to appear in court on behalf of SWLA-RPC, he or she may receive paid leave during the service. If required to serve more than three working days, the team member may use available PTO for the duration of the absence. A team member receiving a jury summons shall notify his or her supervisor immediately. To qualify for jury duty pay, a copy of the jury summons must be submitted to the supervisor as soon as it is received and a copy of the proof of service when the jury duty is completed. If required to appear in court or otherwise as a witness on behalf of SWLA-RPC, team members will be paid their regular rate of pay for the time spent as a witness. If required to appear as a witness, but not on SWLA-RPC's behalf, a team member may request to use PTO time or an unpaid leave of absence. All jury duty leave must be reported to immediate supervisor. All jury duty payments are to be signed back to SWLA-RPC if paid leave is utilized.

### **Special Leave**

Special unpaid leave (i.e., educational, military, etc.) may be granted on the recommendation of the Executive Director with the approval of the Executive Committee. All applicable state and federal laws will be followed with respect to a team member who is a member of any of the Armed Forces of the United States. Team members are eligible for military leave for any military duty, drills, or training.

### **Leave as an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accommodation**

A team member who may be a qualified individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as amended, may be granted a leave of absence as a form of reasonable accommodation. Team members who believe they have a disability and may need leave from work should meet with his or her supervisor to discuss the issue and determine what further steps, if any, may be needed. SWLA-RPC may ask for documentation from the team member's healthcare provider to assess any leave request made.

### **Extended Medical Leave**

Unpaid extended medical leave may be available if certain eligibility requirements are met, provided that all Family Medical Leave (FML) time has been exhausted and the extended medical leave is requested due to a team member's own serious illness or work-related injury or illness. Any earned and unused PTO benefits will be paid when extended medical leave begins. Benefits end when extended medical leave begins. COBRA will be offered to eligible team members.

### **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

All team members will be allowed to take a leave of absence of up to 6 weeks of unpaid leave in any rolling twelve-month period for the following reasons:

- The birth of a child and/or to care for a newborn of a team member.
- The placement of a child with a team member for adoption or foster care.
- To care for a team member's spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition.
- A serious health condition which renders that team member unable to perform the functions of his or her job.
- Call to active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces.

A serious health condition has a complicated legal definition, but generally refers to an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care, incapacity for more than three (3) consecutive calendar days, or treatment two or more times by a health care provider.

If the need for a leave of absence is foreseeable, a team member must give 30 days prior written notice. If this is not possible, you must give notice as soon as it is practical.

## **CONDUCT AND APPEARANCE**

### **Housekeeping Duties**

Team members must maintain clean and comfortable working quarters. Neat and orderly appearance of the Commission offices reflects quality of personnel, pride in the organization, and overall efficiency. Public perception and attitude of the Commission may be greatly affected by the appearance of the office.

### **Personal Conduct**

As public team members, team members must provide full value in return for their salaries and must avoid any conduct which might cause embarrassment or criticism of the Commission. Team members should always bear in mind the unavoidable fact that their off-duty conduct will reflect on SWLA-RPC either favorably or unfavorably.

SWLA-RPC's standards of conduct and supporting general rules were developed to support values that lay the foundation for the culture of the Commission. The standards of conduct, inherent in all team members, provide a pro-active means to support positive behaviors and actions, positive work environments, and team spirit. The Commission expects all team members to embody SWLA-RPC by interacting honestly and treating team members with dignity and respect.

### **Dress and Appearance**

The way team members present themselves makes a statement about attitude and professionalism. Team members are expected to be neat, clean, and well-groomed always and to dress appropriately for the position. Common sense elements such as good personal hygiene are expected from all team members. Team members are expected to dress in a manner that is normally acceptable in a professional business.

Examples of inappropriate attire include miniskirts (shorter than four inches above the knee), shorts, tight pants, halter-tops, tank tops, midriff tops, sheer fabrics, and hats. Undergarments are an essential part of a business wardrobe. Extreme hairstyles, hair color, makeup, jewelry, footwear, and accessories are not appropriate for a business setting. Sandals or open toe shoes are not permitted.

- Special attention should be paid to the hands and fingernails to be certain they are clean, cut and filed to a reasonable length.
- Team members are permitted to have mustaches, goatees, and beards. Mustaches must be clean and neat and will not be allowed to hang below the upper lip. Neatly groomed goatees and beards are permitted but shall not be longer than one-half inch in length.
- Team members may have tattoos if they are not vulgar, explicitly gang-related, controversial, or distracting. Tattoos deemed offensive must be concealed. Tattoos may be required to be covered for certain events and meetings.
- Team members are prohibited from having visible body piercings, including nose, lips, eyebrows, tongue, etc. Gauged ear lobes must be covered with solid flesh tone plugs. Unobtrusive earrings are permitted for both women and men.
- Perfumes, colognes, or aftershave lotions are not permitted due to reasonable accommodations granted under the provisions of the American with Disabilities Act. Cosmetics should be used in a conservative manner.
- The standards of appearance established herein are not intended to be overly restrictive. The limits set forth are intended to be clear and reasonable and to ensure that team members' personal appearance contributes to a favorable image. Supervisors will inform any team member if there is a concern about the appropriateness of his or her appearance or attire. The primary consideration is that each team member always maintains a neat and well-groomed appearance.

### **Dress Down Days**

Fridays are considered dress down days unless team members are scheduled for a meeting or conference, at which time business attire is required. Blue jeans, golf shirts, and business casual attire are acceptable on dress down days. Team members might want to keep a jacket in the office for the days when a client unexpectedly appears on a dress down day, especially if the client is wearing a suit.

Field operations requiring a team member to work outside the business office in outdoor environments impacted by heat, humidity and rough locations have the option to dress in uniform or field attire.

## **COMPUTER USAGE & CYBERSECURITY**

### **Computer Equipment/Services**

Computers, software, removable storage media and peripherals are the property of SWLA-RPC and are to be used for legitimate business-related purposes. Internet, email and other online services are likewise to be used for legitimate business-related purposes. Team members are therefore prohibited from using computer equipment and services for personal reasons except to the limited extent permitted by the express terms of this policy. Team members are to use Commission computers, laptops and tablets on the secured, wired wide area network (WAN).

### **Proper Use of Services**

Team members shall use the Internet and SWLA-RPC's computer system in a professional, ethical and lawful manner. Business-related email messages must comply with the standards of decency and professionalism observed in other forms of written communication, including proper spelling and grammar, and must use acronyms judiciously. All such communications must properly and fully identify the sender. The creation of, access to and transmission of any material on or through the Internet or SWLA-RPC's computer system in violation of this policy or any federal, state or local law or regulation are strictly prohibited.

### **Consent**

By logging on and using SWLA-RPC's computers and related equipment, systems and services, including the Internet, team members expressly consent to SWLA-RPC's logging, tracking, auditing, inspecting and monitoring of such usage. Such consent authorizes SWLA-RPC to undertake any inquiry and institute any process deemed necessary to further the intent of this policy. Such inquiries and processes include the right to log team member web use and email and review computer usage, without team member knowledge or participation, and the right to enter offices and work locations to secure/retrieve/inspect computers and related equipment, data and files therein.

### **Expectation of Privacy**

SWLA-RPC team members are hereby advised that information services personnel employ automated systems to record and collect detailed information on computer, internet, email and WAN usage to perform special and routine support services and maintenance upon our computers and related equipment, which service/maintenance may require such personnel to view and review Internet searches performed and sites visited. As such, SWLA-RPC team members are hereby advised that their Internet, email and other online communications, and the files stored on any SWLA-RPC computer, including computer hard drives and removable storage media are not privileged or private. This lack of privacy extends to anything an SWLA-RPC team member views, creates, sends, receives, uploads, downloads, stores, prints or sends via paper or electronically, all of which are subject to review and inspection, upon authorization of the appointing authority, based upon reasonable suspicion of computer usage that is unrelated to legitimate business purposes or in violation of this policy or any federal, state or local law or regulation.

SWLA-RPC team members should also be aware that their data, email communications and transmissions (paper and electronic) via the use of SWLA-RPC's computers and related equipment, systems and services are generally publicly accessible and subject to the provisions of Title 44 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes (Louisiana's Public Records Act).

NOTE: Information services personnel track usage and periodically review computer equipment and services for patterns of abuse. Abuses or usage in violation of this policy will be brought to the attention of the appointing authority.

### **Personal Use**

Given today's technological advancements and customary, acceptable modes of communication, SWLA-RPC recognizes that occasional personal use of the Internet and its computer system will occur. In most circumstances, such usage will be of no concern and indeed, not detected. While not encouraged, such occasional personal use will be tolerated provided such:

- Is incidental, brief, occasional and intermittent.

- Does not result in additional cost to SWLA-RPC.
- Does not interfere with team members' job duties.
- Does not impact system-wide performance.
- Does not circumvent security systems.
- Is not intended to produce personal monetary gain.
- Is not offensive, profane or otherwise inappropriate; and/or
- Does not violate the prohibitions of this policy or any federal, state or local law or regulation.
- Occurs during lunch breaks when team member is not in work status.

Team members should understand that the occasional, limited personal use of SWLA-RPC's computers and related equipment, systems and services tolerated by this policy does not diminish SWLA-RPC's ownership of the data, files and transmissions thereon, nor diminish the authority SWLA-RPC has to track, audit, access, review and monitor team member usage of computers, equipment, systems and services.

Team members should also understand that the limited personal use of SWLA-RPC's computers, as authorized by this policy, does not convey ownership of the personal data received, transmitted or stored, and does not permit the team member to demand retrieval of such data upon separation. Team members must be mindful that such incidental use privilege may be revoked and lead to disciplinary action, including termination, if such use interferes with SWLA-RPC's operations or is in violation of this policy.

### **Sensitive Communications**

SWLA-RPC team members frequently transact business that is sensitive, privileged or confidential, and certain business communications should be disseminated on a need-to-know basis only. Examples include communications regarding litigation and personnel matters, as well as personally identifiable data, including Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) compliant information, personal health and FMLA information, drug test results, et al. Similarly, certain business proposals and plans of action in the preliminary stage, such as organizational or programmatic changes, should be maintained in strict confidence or may not yet be appropriate for disclosure. Since computer communications are sometimes transmitted in error, can be reproduced even after deletion, are monitored by information services personnel, and are subject to disclosure under Louisiana's Public Records Doctrine, team members should be mindful that SWLA-RPC's computer system may not be the appropriate medium for certain business communications.

### **Reporting Requirements**

Recipients of improper computer communications are required to notify the sender of the inappropriateness of the transmittal and instruct them to immediately cease sending such communications. After doing so, if the improper communications persist, the team member is to report such receipt to the appointing authority. Failure to do so will be deemed a violation of this policy and could constitute cause for disciplinary action in accordance with the Civil Service Rules. Improper communications are those which are abusive, intimidating, discriminatory, harassing, obscene, defamatory, derogatory or otherwise in violation of this policy or any federal, state or local law or regulation.

### **Copyrighted/Patented Materials**

SWLA-RPC team members should be aware that certain online information is copyrighted or patented, including text, pictures, video and sound. SWLA-RPC team members are not to duplicate, upload or download any software or materials that are copyrighted, patented or otherwise identified as intellectual property without the written, authorized consent of the owner, and then only with approval of information services personnel. Team members should assume all information on any website is copyrighted unless it is expressly placed in the public domain. Any such material which is currently stored, without authorization, is to be immediately deleted from SWLA-RPC equipment.

Commercial software is copyrighted and may not be reproduced except as stipulated in the licensing agreement. It is the policy of SWLA-RPC to comply with all copyright laws and license agreements related to software installed on its computers. Reproduction, duplication, distribution or illegal installation of such licensed software without appropriate licensing agreements is prohibited. Software may only be installed by Information Services (IS) personnel familiar with state standard software that IS can support and track.

### **Approved Software and Hardware**

SWLA-RPC may only purchase computers, laptops, printers and software included on a frequently updated, approved list of models and versions proscribed for purchase and use. The hardware and software are in compliance with published Louisiana state specifications and price standards. Purchase of any hardware or software product not on the list must be justified and requested in advance and in writing by an appointing authority. Team members are prohibited from installing, storing or using software not specifically licensed through SWLA-RPC. This prohibition includes software and hardware purchased by SWLA-RPC team members for home use.

### **Storage and Backup of Data Files.**

Files used by or created by SWLA-RPC team members must be stored on designated network drives, not on local PC hard drives or personal hard drives. Only network drives are regularly backed-up and secured and can be restored in the event of data loss. Any team member who stores files on local PC hard drives or removable devices will be considered in violation of the computer use policy with the understanding that such files are always subject to loss. At certain remote sites, SWLA-RPC team members are instructed not to back-up their data, including files and email, to shared folders or removable storage devices such as DVD or USB memory sticks, and as such may be required to temporarily save their files to their hard drive, with the understanding that they will be moved to a shared folder at the first opportunity. Team members that create large video, photo, graphic, GIS, 3D, VR or scanned files should consult with information services technicians who may suggest alternative storage options.

While every effort is made to back-up SWLA-RPC's email server on a regular basis, retention of email stored on the server is not guaranteed. If the information contained in an email message is deemed important enough to keep, it should be saved to a local disk or printed. Email stored in this fashion is the responsibility of the user.

### **Network Security**

Team members may only access the Internet through SWLA-RPC's secure network. Only approved SWLA-RPC owned computers, laptops, and other devices with current operating systems and desktop productivity software, with regularly updated service packs, security patches, antivirus programs, and licensed cloud-based security services may be plugged into SWLA-RPC's secure network. Use of non-approved hardware, software, or services to access, bypass or circumvent SWLA-RPC's network is strictly

prohibited. All files downloaded from the Internet or from computers or networks that do not belong to SWLA-RPC must be scanned for viruses and other destructive programs before being placed into SWLA-RPC's computer system.

### **Prohibitions:**

**Email General Prohibitions:** The email system is not to be used to engage in any illegal activity as defined by federal, state or local laws or regulation.

- The email system is not to be used to send messages that express personal views, beliefs or opinions on non-agency issues.
- The email system is not to be used to create and forward chain emails, cartoons, jokes, or other non-business-related spam.
- The email system is not to be used to send messages or information that are critical of, disparage or provide unsolicited opinions concerning the operation or policies of SWLA-RPC or its team members.
- Team members may not send electronic messages under the name of another team member unless specifically authorized by a supervisor.
- Non-declared alteration, without authorization, of electronic messages, including attachments, is prohibited.
- SWLA-RPC email addresses cannot be used to register non-work-related Internet sites or to subscribe to Internet services without proper authorization.
- Team members may not share login information or passwords via telephone or email.
- Team members may not share personally identifiable data on themselves or colleagues.
- Team members must learn to distinguish phishing emails and delete them.

**Express Email Prohibitions:** Team members are expressly prohibited from using (sending or receiving) the email messaging system for the following:

- Threatening, harassing or profane email communications.
- Malicious activities.
- Public or private messages containing objectionable language, material or content.
- Misrepresentations of oneself or SWLA-RPC.
- Creating or exchanging mass solicitations or chain letters.
- Business or commercial activities, including personal or political fundraisers.
- Promotion of discrimination (on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, political affiliation, religion or disability).
- Sexual harassing communications.
- Obscene, pornographic, sexually suggestive or sexually explicit communications.
- Promotion of personal, political or religious beliefs.
- Communications that knowingly cause congestion and/or disruption of SWLA-RPC's network

system.

- Creating or exchanging mass solicitations or chain letters.

**Internet Prohibitions:** Team members are expressly prohibited from using the Internet system for the following:

- Engaging in any illegal activity as defined by federal, state, or local law or regulation.
- Willfully viewing, receiving, transmitting, downloading and/or distributing materials or records that are copyrighted, patented or otherwise privileged as intellectual property without appropriate authorization as required by law.
- Downloading executable files (programs) on an SWLA-RPC computer unless specifically authorized by information services personnel.
- Viewing, receiving, transmitting, downloading, and/or distributing obscene, pornographic, nude, profane, violently graphic, sexually explicit, racist or threatening materials.
- Personal business or commercial activities.
- Political activities prohibited by state law.
- Knowingly or willfully creating, introducing or propagating a virus, worm or other destructive program code.
- Knowingly engaging in activity that disables, impairs or overloads the performance of any computer system or network, or circumvents any security system.

### **Password and Logon Requirements**

Team members are responsible for all computer activity under their password secured user ID whether generated from their workstations, remote locations, or on any SWLA-RPC laptop computer. Any and all computer activity occurring under an employee's user ID and password will be considered an act of the team member unless compelling evidence demonstrates otherwise. Team members are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of their computer passwords and properly signing-off of their computer whenever departing the workstation and at the end of every workday. Password control and adherence to proper log-off protocols assure team members that access to authorized SWLA-RPC computers is not compromised. Information services personnel will never ask a team member for his or her password. Network passwords shall not be shared nor disclosed except on a need-to-know basis. Passwords shall be changed in a timely manner prior to expiration. No team member may use another employee's password without express supervisory authorization. Furthermore, no team member is to log on to or use another employee's computer without express supervisory authorization.

### **Compliance/Violations**

All SWLA-RPC team members are required to sign a formal Acknowledgment evidencing their receipt, understanding and intent to comply with the terms and provisions of this policy. Failure to follow the provisions within this policy or violations of the prohibitions thereof shall be cause for appropriate corrective action, including termination. Any violation of this policy which also is criminal in nature will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement authority for prosecution. Additionally, violations of this policy may result in restrictions or limitations upon the employee's access to SWLA-RPC's computers and related equipment, systems and services.

## **ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY & COMPLAINT PROCESS**

SWLA-RPC strives to create and maintain a work environment in which people are treated with dignity, decency and respect. The environment of the Commission should be characterized by mutual trust and the absence of intimidation, oppression and exploitation. SWLA-RPC will not tolerate unlawful discrimination or harassment of any kind. Through enforcement of this policy and by education of team members, SWLA-RPC will seek to prevent, correct and discipline behavior that violates this policy.

All team members, regardless of their positions, are covered by and are expected to comply with this policy and to take appropriate measures to ensure that prohibited conduct does not occur. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any team member who violates this policy. Based on the seriousness of the offense, disciplinary action may include verbal or written reprimand, suspension, or termination of employment.

Managers and supervisors who knowingly allow or tolerate discrimination, harassment or retaliation, including the failure to immediately report such misconduct to a supervisor are in violation of this policy and subject to discipline.

### **Prohibited Conduct**

SWLA-RPC, in compliance with all applicable federal, state and local anti-discrimination and harassment laws and regulations, enforces this policy in accordance with the following definitions and guidelines:

#### **Discrimination**

It is a violation of SWLA-RPC's policy to discriminate in the provision of employment opportunities, benefits or privileges; to create discriminatory work conditions; or to use discriminatory evaluative standards in employment if the basis of that discriminatory treatment is, in whole or in part, the person's race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information or marital status.

Discrimination of this kind may also be strictly prohibited by a variety of federal, state and local laws, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination Act of 1967 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. This policy is intended to comply with the prohibitions stated in these anti-discrimination laws.

Discrimination in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including termination.

#### **Harassment**

SWLA-RPC prohibits harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, and will take appropriate and immediate action in response to complaints or knowledge of violations of this policy. For purposes of this policy, harassment is any verbal or physical conduct designed to threaten, intimidate or coerce an employee, co-worker, or any person working for or on behalf of SWLA-RPC.

The following examples of harassment are intended to be guidelines and are not exclusive when determining whether there has been a violation of this policy:

- Verbal harassment includes comments that are offensive or unwelcome regarding a person's national origin, race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, appearance, disability, gender identity or expression, marital status or other protected status, including epithets, slurs and negative stereotyping.
- Nonverbal harassment includes distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material that ridicules, denigrates, insults, belittles or shows hostility, aversion or disrespect toward an individual or group because of national origin, race, color, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, appearance, disability, sexual identity, marital status or other protected status.

### **Sexual harassment**

Sexual harassment is a form of unlawful employment discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and is prohibited under SWLA-RPC's anti-harassment policy. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), sexual harassment is defined as "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature ... when ... submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions ... or such conduct has the purpose or effect of ... creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment."

Sexual harassment occurs when unsolicited and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature:

- Is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.
- Is used as a basis for an employment decision.
- Unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or otherwise offensive environment.

Sexual harassment may take different forms. The following examples of sexual harassment are intended to be guidelines and are not exclusive when determining whether there has been a violation of this policy:

- Verbal sexual harassment includes innuendoes, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, lewd remarks and threats; requests for any type of sexual favor (this includes repeated, unwelcome requests for dates); and verbal abuse or "kidding" that is oriented toward a prohibitive form of harassment, including that which is sexual in nature and unwelcome.
- Nonverbal sexual harassment includes the distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material, including calendars, posters and cartoons that are sexually suggestive or show hostility toward an individual or group because of sex; suggestive or insulting sounds; leering; staring; whistling; obscene gestures; content in letters, notes, facsimiles, e-mails, photos, text messages, tweets and Internet postings; or other forms of communication that are sexual in nature and offensive.
- Physical sexual harassment includes unwelcome, unwanted physical contact, including touching, tickling, pinching, patting, brushing up against, hugging, cornering, kissing, fondling, and forced sexual intercourse or assault.

Courteous, mutually respectful, pleasant, noncoercive interactions between team members that are appropriate in the workplace and acceptable to and welcomed by both parties are not considered to be harassment, including sexual harassment.

### **Consensual Romantic or Sexual Relationships**

SWLA-RPC strongly discourages romantic or sexual relationships between a manager or other supervisory team member and a team member who reports directly or indirectly to that person, because such relationships tend to create compromising conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts. In addition, such a relationship may give rise to the perception by others that there is favoritism or bias in employment decisions affecting the team member. Moreover, given the uneven balance of power within such relationships, consent by the team member is suspect and may be viewed by others, or at a later date by the team member, as having been given as the result of coercion or intimidation. The atmosphere created by such appearances of bias, favoritism, intimidation, coercion or exploitation undermines the spirit of trust and mutual respect that is essential to a healthy work environment. If there is such a relationship, the parties need to be aware that one or both may be moved to a different department or other actions may be taken.

If any team member of SWLA-RPC enters into a consensual relationship that is romantic or sexual in nature with a team member who reports directly or indirectly to that employee, or if one of the parties is in a supervisory capacity in the same department in which the other party works, the parties must notify the executive director or other appropriate Commission officer. Because of potential issues regarding quid pro quo harassment, SWLA-RPC has made reporting mandatory. This requirement does not apply to team members who do not work in the same department or to parties where neither one supervises or otherwise manages responsibilities over the other.

Once the relationship is made known to SWLA-RPC, the company will review the situation in light of all the facts (reporting relationship between the parties, effect on co-workers, job titles of the parties, etc.) and will determine whether one or both parties need to be moved to another job or department. If it is determined that one party must be moved, and there are jobs in other departments available for both, the parties may decide who will be the one to apply for a new position. If the parties cannot amicably come to a decision, or the party is not chosen for the position to which he or she applied, the executive director and senior management will decide which party will be moved. That decision will be based on which move will be least disruptive to the organization as a whole. If no other jobs are available for either party, the parties will be given the option of terminating their relationship or resigning.

### **Retaliation**

No hardship, loss, benefit or penalty may be imposed on a team member in response to:

- Filing or responding to a bona fide complaint of discrimination or harassment.
- Appearing as a witness in the investigation of a complaint.
- Serving as an investigator of a complaint.

Lodging a bona fide complaint will in no way be used against the team member or have an adverse impact on the individual's employment status. However, filing groundless or malicious complaints is an abuse of this policy and will be treated as a violation.

Any person who is found to have violated this aspect of the policy will be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

### **Confidentiality**

All complaints and investigations are treated confidentially to the extent possible, and information is disclosed strictly on a need-to-know basis. The identity of the complainant is usually revealed to the parties involved during the investigation, and the HR director will take adequate steps to ensure that the complainant is protected from retaliation during and after the investigation. All information pertaining to a complaint or investigation under this policy will be maintained in secure files within the administrative department.

### **Complaint procedure**

SWLA-RPC has established the following procedure for lodging a complaint of harassment, discrimination or retaliation. The Commission will treat all aspects of the procedure confidentially to the extent reasonably possible.

- Complaints should be submitted as soon as possible after an incident has occurred, preferably in writing. Another supervisor may assist the complainant in completing a written statement or, in the event a team member refuses to provide information in writing, a supervisor will dictate the verbal complaint.
- Upon receiving a complaint or being advised by a supervisor or manager that violation of this policy may be occurring, the supervisor will notify senior management and review the complaint with the company's legal counsel.
- The executive director will initiate an investigation to determine whether there is a reasonable basis for believing that the alleged violation of this policy occurred.
- If necessary, the complainant and the respondent will be separated during the course of the investigation, either through internal transfer or administrative leave.
- During the investigation, the executive director, together with legal counsel or other management team members, will interview the complainant, the respondent and any witnesses to determine whether the alleged conduct occurred.
- Upon conclusion of an investigation, the executive director or other person conducting the investigation will submit a written report of his or her findings to the company. If it is determined that a violation of this policy has occurred, the executive director will recommend appropriate disciplinary action. The appropriate action will depend on the following factors:
  - the severity, frequency and pervasiveness of the conduct;
  - prior complaints made by the complainant;
  - prior complaints made against the respondent; and
  - the quality of the evidence (e.g., firsthand knowledge, credible corroboration).
- If the investigation is inconclusive or if it is determined that there has been no violation of policy, but potentially problematic conduct may have occurred, the executive director may recommend appropriate preventive action.

- Senior management will review the investigative report and any statements submitted by the complainant or respondent, discuss results of the investigation with the executive director and other management staff as appropriate, and decide what action, if any, will be taken.
- Once a final decision is made by senior management, the executive director will meet with the complainant and the respondent separately and notify them of the findings of the investigation. If disciplinary action is to be taken, the respondent will be informed of the nature of the discipline and how it will be executed.

### **Alternative Legal Remedies**

Nothing in this policy may prevent the complainant or the respondent from pursuing formal legal remedies or resolution through local, state or federal agencies or the courts

## **DRUG & ALCOHOL POLICY**

In compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, SWLA-RPC has a longstanding commitment to provide a safe, quality-oriented and productive work environment. Alcohol and drug abuse poses a threat to the health and safety of SWLA-RPC team members and to the security of the company's equipment and facilities. For these reasons, SWLA-RPC is committed to the elimination of drug and alcohol use and abuse in the workplace. This policy applies to all team members and all applicants for employment of SWLA-RPC. The executive director is responsible for policy administration.

### **Team Member Assistance**

SWLA-RPC will assist and support team members who voluntarily seek help for drug or alcohol problems before becoming subject to discipline or termination under this or other SWLA-RPC policies. Such team members will be allowed to use accrued paid time off, placed on leaves of absence, referred to treatment providers and otherwise accommodated as required by law. Team members may be required to document that they are successfully following prescribed treatment and to take and pass follow-up tests if they hold jobs that are safety-sensitive or require driving, or if they have violated this policy previously. Once a drug test has been initiated under this policy, unless otherwise required by the Family and Medical Leave Act or the Americans with Disabilities Act, the team member will have forfeited the opportunity to be granted a leave of absence for treatment, and will face possible discipline, up to and including discharge.

Team members should report to work fit for duty and free of any adverse effects of illegal drugs or alcohol. This policy does not prohibit team members from the lawful use and possession of prescribed medications. Team members must, however, consult with their doctors about the medications' effect on their fitness for duty and ability to work safely, and they must promptly disclose any work restrictions to their supervisor.

### **Work Rules**

- Whenever team members are working, are operating any SWLA-RPC vehicle, are present on SWLA-RPC premises or are conducting company-related work offsite, they are prohibited from:
  - Using, possessing, buying, selling, manufacturing or dispensing an illegal drug (to include possession of drug paraphernalia).

- Being under the influence of alcohol or an illegal drug as defined in this policy.
- Possessing or consuming alcohol.
- The presence of any detectable amount of any illegal drug, illegal controlled substance or alcohol in an employee's body system, while performing company business or while in a company facility, is prohibited.
- SWLA-RPC will also not allow team members to perform their duties while taking prescribed drugs that are adversely affecting their ability to safely and effectively perform their job duties. Team members taking a prescribed medication must carry it in a container labeled by a licensed pharmacist or be prepared to produce the container if asked.
- Any illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia will be turned over to an appropriate law enforcement agency and may result in criminal prosecution.

### **Required Testing**

**Pre-Employment:** Applicants being considered for hire must pass a drug test before beginning work or receiving an offer of employment. Refusal to submit to testing will result in disqualification of further employment consideration.

**Reasonable Suspicion:** Team members are subject to testing based on (but not limited to) observations by at least two members of management of apparent workplace use, possession or impairment. The executive director should be consulted before sending a team member for testing. Management must use the Reasonable Suspicion Observation Checklist to document specific observations and behaviors that create a reasonable suspicion that a team member is under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol. Examples include:

- Odors (smell of alcohol, body odor or urine).
- Movements (unsteady, fidgety, dizzy).
- Eyes (dilated, constricted or watery eyes, or involuntary eye movements).
- Face (flushed, sweating, confused or blank look).
- Speech (slurred, slow, distracted mid-thought, inability to verbalize thoughts).
- Emotions (argumentative, agitated, irritable, drowsy).
- Actions (yawning, twitching).
- Inactions (sleeping, unconscious, no reaction to questions).

When reasonable suspicion testing is warranted, both management and the executive director will meet with the team member to explain the observations and the requirement to undergo a drug and/or alcohol test within two hours. Refusal by a team member will be treated as a positive drug test result and will result in immediate termination of employment.

*Under no circumstances will the team member be allowed to drive himself or herself to the testing facility. A member of management must transport the team member or arrange for a cab and arrange for the team member to be transported home.*

**Post-Accident:** Team members are subject to testing when they cause or contribute to accidents that seriously damage an SWLA-RPC vehicle, machinery, equipment or property or that result in an injury to themselves or another team member requiring offsite medical attention. A circumstance that constitutes probable belief will be presumed to arise in any instance involving a work-related accident or injury in which a team member who was operating a motorized vehicle (including a forklift, pickup truck, overhead crane or aerial/man-lift) is found to be responsible for causing the accident. In any of these instances, the investigation and subsequent testing must take place within two hours following the accident, if not sooner. Refusal by an team member will be treated as a positive drug test result and will result in immediate termination of employment.

*Under no circumstances will the team member be allowed to drive himself or herself to the testing facility. A member of management must transport the team member or arrange for a cab and arrange for the team member to be transported home.*

### **Collection and Testing Procedures**

Team members subject to alcohol testing will be transported to an SWLA-RPC-designated facility and directed to provide breath specimens. Breath specimens will be tested by trained technicians using federally approved breath alcohol testing devices capable of producing printed results that identify the employee. If an employee's breath alcohol concentration is .04 or more, a second breath specimen will be tested approximately 20 minutes later. The results of the second test will be determinative. Alcohol tests may, however, be a breath, blood or saliva test, at the company's discretion. For purposes of this policy, test results generated by law enforcement or medical providers may be considered by the company as work rule violations.

Applicants and team members subject to drug testing will be transported to a SWLA-RPC-designated testing facility and directed to provide urine specimens. Applicants and team members may provide specimens in private unless they appear to be submitting altered, adulterated or substitute specimens. Collected specimens will be sent to a federally certified laboratory and tested for evidence of marijuana, cocaine, opiates, amphetamines, PCP, benzodiazepines, methadone, methaqualone and propoxyphene use. (Where indicated, specimens may be tested for other illegal drugs.) The laboratory will screen all specimens and confirm all positive screens. There must be a chain of custody from the time specimens are collected through testing and storage.

The laboratory will transmit all positive drug test results to a medical review officer (MRO) retained by SWLA-RPC, who will offer individuals with positive results a reasonable opportunity to rebut or explain the results. Individuals with positive test results may also ask the MRO to have their split specimen sent to another federally certified laboratory to be tested at the applicant's or employee's own expense. Such requests must be made within 72 hours of notice of test results. If the second facility fails to find any evidence of drug use in the split specimen, the team member or applicant will be treated as passing the test. In no event should a positive test result be communicated to SWLA-RPC until such time that the MRO has confirmed the test to be positive.

### **Consequences**

Applicants who refuse to cooperate in a drug test or who test positive will not be hired and will not be allowed to reapply/retest in the future.

Team members who refuse to cooperate in required tests or who use, possess, buy, sell, manufacture or dispense an illegal drug in violation of this policy will be terminated. If the team member refuses to be

tested, yet the company believes he or she is impaired, under no circumstances will the team member be allowed to drive himself or herself home.

Team members who test positive, or otherwise violate this policy, will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Depending on the circumstances, the employee's work history/record and any state law requirements, SWLA-RPC may offer an team member who violates this policy or tests positive the opportunity to return to work on a last-chance basis pursuant to mutually agreeable terms, which could include follow-up drug testing at times and frequencies determined by SWLA-RPC for a minimum of one year but not more than two years as well as a waiver of the right to contest any termination resulting from a subsequent positive test. If the team member either does not complete the rehabilitation program or tests positive after completing the rehabilitation program, the team member will be immediately discharged from employment.

Team members will be paid for time spent in alcohol or drug testing and then suspended pending the results of the drug or alcohol test. After the results of the test are received, a date and time will be scheduled to discuss the results of the test; this meeting will include a member of management, a union representative (if requested), and HR. Should the results prove to be negative, the team member will receive back pay for the times/days of suspension.

### **Confidentiality**

Information and records relating to positive test results, drug and alcohol dependencies, and legitimate medical explanations provided to the MRO will be kept confidential to the extent required by law and maintained in secure files separate from normal personnel files. Such records and information may be disclosed among managers and supervisors on a need-to-know basis and may also be disclosed when relevant to a grievance, charge, claim or other legal proceeding initiated by or on behalf of an team member or applicant.

### **Inspections**

SWLA-RPC reserves the right to inspect all portions of its premises for drugs, alcohol or other contraband; affected team members may have union representation involved in this process. All team members, contract team members and visitors may be asked to cooperate in inspections of their persons, work areas and property that might conceal a drug, alcohol or other contraband. Team members who possess such contraband or refuse to cooperate in such inspections are subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including discharge.

### **Crimes Involving Drugs**

SWLA-RPC prohibits all team members, including team members performing work under government contracts, from manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing or using an illegal drug in or on Commission premises or while conducting company business. SWLA-RPC team members are also prohibited from misusing legally prescribed or over-the-counter (OTC) drugs. Law enforcement personnel may be notified, as appropriate, when criminal activity is suspected.

SWLA-RPC does not desire to intrude into the private lives of its team members but recognizes that team members' off-the-job involvement with drugs and alcohol may have an impact on the workplace. Therefore, SWLA-RPC reserves the right to take appropriate disciplinary action for drug use, sale or distribution while off Commission premises. All team members who are convicted of, plead guilty to or are sentenced for a crime involving an illegal drug are required to report the conviction, plea or

sentence to HR within five days. Failure to comply will result in automatic discharge. Cooperation in complying may result in suspension without pay to allow management to review the nature of the charges and the employee's past record with SWLA-RPC.

### **Definitions**

"Commission premises" includes all buildings, offices, facilities, grounds, parking lots, lockers, places and vehicles owned, leased or managed by SWLA-RPC or any site on which the company is conducting business.

"Illegal drug" means a substance whose use or possession is controlled by federal law but that is not being used or possessed under the supervision of a licensed health care professional. (Controlled substances are listed in Schedules I-V of 21 C.F.R. Part 1308.)

"Refuse to cooperate" means to obstruct the collection or testing process; to submit an altered, adulterated or substitute sample; to fail to show up for a scheduled test; to refuse to complete the requested drug testing forms; or to fail to promptly provide specimen(s) for testing when directed to do so, without a valid medical basis for the failure. Team members who leave the scene of an accident without justifiable explanation prior to submission to drug and alcohol testing will also be considered to have refused to cooperate and will automatically be subject to discharge.

"Under the influence of alcohol" means an alcohol concentration equal to or greater than .04, or actions, appearance, speech or bodily odors that reasonably cause a supervisor to conclude that a team member is impaired because of alcohol use.

"Under the influence of drugs" means a confirmed positive test result for illegal drug use per this policy. In addition, it means the misuse of legal drugs (prescription and possibly OTC) when there is not a valid prescription from a physician for the lawful use of a drug in the course of medical treatment (containers must include the patient's name, the name of the substance, quantity/amount to be taken and the period of authorization).

### **Enforcement**

The executive director is responsible for policy interpretation, administration and enforcement.

## **HEALTH, SAFETY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

### **Covid-19 Pandemic Restrictions and Procedures**

The Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission offices are physically located in a building owned and operated by McNeese State University. University pandemic procedures are applicable to SWLA-RPC staff, board members and visitors as modified from time to time.

### **Workplace Injuries**

Team members who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses must inform their supervisor immediately, no matter how minor the on-the-job injury may appear. The injured team member and his or her supervisor will complete the team member accident reports.

### **Workplace Violence**

SWLA-RPC is committed to providing a safe workplace for all team members and customers. Acts and threats of violence in the workplace are strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated in any form. Even a threat of violence that a team member does not intend to carry out, may be grounds for immediate discharge. If you witness or become aware of a threat or act of workplace violence, you must immediately contact McNeese Police and report it to your supervisor and/or Human Resources. All suspicious activity and occurrences must be immediately reported to Security.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

SWLA-RPC is committed to protecting team members, visitors, and property in the event of an emergency, which can create a variety of hazards. Preparation plays a vital role in ensuring that team members have the necessary equipment, know where to go, and know how to keep themselves and visitors safe when an emergency occurs. Please refer to SWLA-RPC's Emergency Preparedness and Response policies for information on how to prepare and train for emergencies.

## **EXTRA ACTIVITIES**

### **Political**

Team members are prohibited from actively campaigning for political candidates, passing out political literature, or having stickers supporting any candidate on vehicles parked at SWLA-RPC or member entities' offices. Team members may participate on one side or the other on issues, so long as they do it as individual citizens and their views do not implicate the Commission. Everyone is entitled to his or her personal political opinion and is encouraged to exercise his or her rights.

### **Community**

Team members are encouraged to participate in church, school, civic and community activities. Any activities that impact a team members' office schedule must have prior approval from his or her supervisor.

### **Employment**

No team member shall engage in any other employment or conduct any private business venture during hours he or she is employed to work for SWLA-RPC. Nor shall he/she engage in employment or conduct outside such hours in a manner to the extent that adversely affects his or her service to SWLA-RPC. Any outside employment requires prior approval from the Executive Director. If the Executive Director requests outside employment, the Executive Committee must approve that request. No team member shall utilize SWLA-RPC office space, supplies, or equipment in conjunction with outside activities.

## **PERSONNEL EVALUATIONS**

### **Personnel Assessments**

Periodic performance evaluations are completed by the Executive Director to evaluate team members' job performance and career development goals. The performance evaluation process is an opportunity for team members to receive constructive feedback regarding his or her individual job performance and to discuss career and professional development goals, as well as SWLA-RPC's goals. A copy of the evaluation will be maintained in the team members' personnel file and may be considered for other

employment decisions. Performance evaluations are not administered to part-time, temporary or contract team members.

All newly hired team members are subject to a six (6) month introductory evaluation period and annually thereafter. This period has been designated as a time for management to evaluate team member capabilities, aptitude, conduct, work habits, attendance, etc., and for the team member to learn.

### **Disciplinary Action and/or Termination**

A team member is subject to disciplinary action by the Executive Director for any of, but not limited to the following:

- Insubordination
- Unlawful or immoral conduct
- Discourtesy to the public
- Habitual tardiness
- Excessive absenteeism
- Use of official position for personal profit
- Lack of cooperation or other attitude or behavior resulting in impairment of the efficiency of organization
- Unauthorized use of SWLA-RPC materials, supplies, and equipment
- Absence from work without notifying his or her supervisor with a reason

Upon the first infraction, a verbal warning will be issued and noted in the employee's file. Upon the second infraction, a written warning will be issued and filed in the employee's file. This will initiate a probationary period of one (1) to three (3) months to improve. Upon the third infraction, the Executive Director will either enforce a demotion or a termination.

At the discretion of the Executive Committee and upon written request of the team member within five calendar days of the disciplinary action, the Executive Committee may review the disciplinary action and uphold, modify, or revoke it. The required 30-day professional staff and 15-day administrative staff dismissal notice will not apply if the team member is dismissed because of an infraction of any of the previously stated disciplinary categories.

### **Grievance Procedure**

A grievance is a complaint or conflict of any kind and for any reason, particularly if a team member feels that he or she has been discriminated against because of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, or disability. A team member may present a grievance as follows for any reason.

#### **Supervisor**

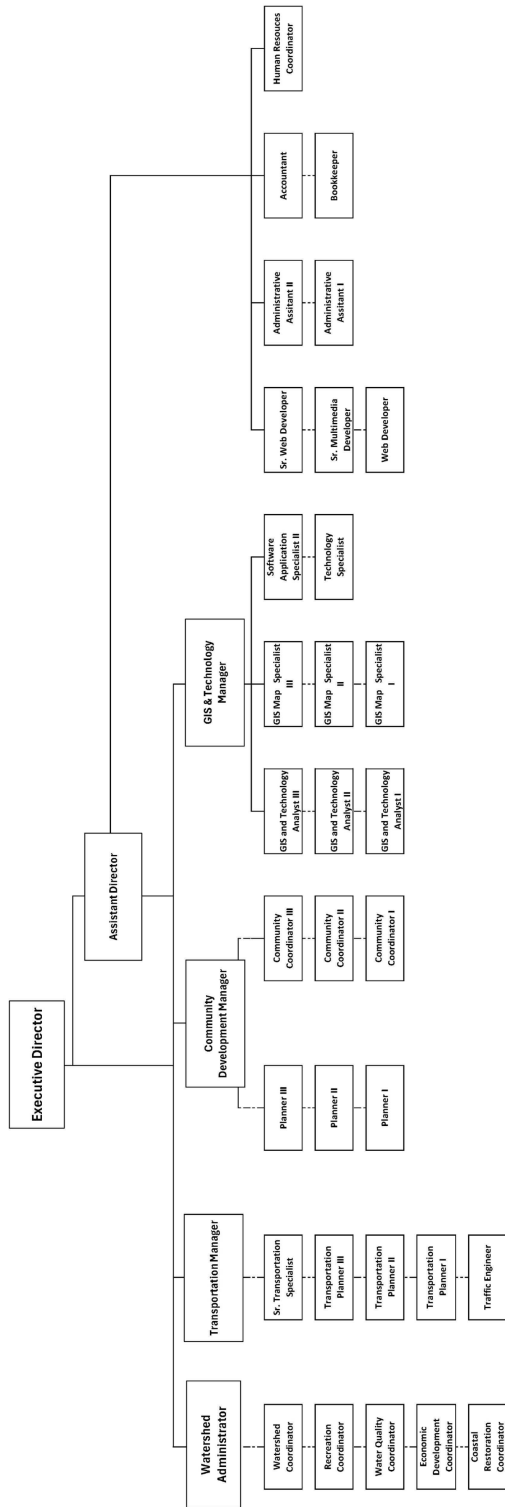
The goal is for a team member's grievance to be amicably resolved by his or her immediate supervisor or another supervisor. A sincere effort to resolve issues at this level is desired. If the parties fail to reach a mutually agreeable solution, the grievance may be presented to the Executive Director.

**Executive Director**

Matters not resolved after exhausting other options may be brought to the Executive Director. When this step is necessary, a conference will be held for both parties.

**Executive Committee**

If the team member is not satisfied with the response of the Executive Director, the team member has the right to appeal to the Executive Committee.



| <u>First Name</u> | <u>Last Name</u> | <u>Title</u>                  | <u>Job Description</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <u>Pay Range</u>         | <u>Current</u> |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Mike              | Hollier          | Executive/MPO Director        | Responsible for the overall management of the agency including its team, work programs, activities, contracts and finances. Serves as the primary public "face and voice" of the organization in the discharge of the commission's wide array of work tasks and responsibilities, and charged with successfully implementing the organization's adopted Mission Statement and working collaboratively with public officials, civic leaders, business executives, and others to identify and advocate for Southwest Louisiana's priority needs, wants and shovel-ready projects and funding opportunities while simultaneously providing leadership, management and oversight of a diverse and skilled team. | \$150,000 - \$250,000/yr | \$74/hr        |
| Jamie             | Gaines           | Assistant Director            | Organizes, manages, and plans complex, multifaceted projects for the organization, including research, development, and product implementation. Oversees a team of managers and analysts to ensure projects are completed on time and to specifications. Delegates work and assignments to team members based on expertise, work experience, and time constraints.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | \$90,000 - \$150,000/yr  | \$ 103,074.00  |
| Michael           | Bernard          | GIS & Technology Manager      | Leads the team of geographic information system (GIS) and technology specialists responsible for the internal and external connectivity of the organizations information systems and the creation, management, analysis and maps of all types of data.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | \$80,000 - \$100,000/yr  | \$ 95,040.00   |
| Justin            | Habetz           | GIS Technician III            | Responsible for making maps, customized Geographic Information Systems (GIS) applications and manipulating and analyzing data to serve a variety of purposes. They will read and interpret maps, manipulate and understand digital land data and manage data entered into a GIS database.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | \$70,000 - \$80,000/yr   | \$ 70,980.00   |
|                   |                  | GIS Technician II             | Responsible for making maps, customized Geographic Information Systems (GIS) applications and manipulating data to serve a variety of purposes. They will read and interpret maps, manipulate and understand digital land data and manage data entered into a GIS database.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | \$60,000 - \$70,000/yr   |                |
| Devin             | Hoffpauir        | GIS Technician I              | Responsible for making maps, customized Geographic Information Systems (GIS) applications and manipulating and analyzing data to serve a variety of purposes. Will read and interpret maps, manipulate and understand digital land data and manage data entered into a GIS database.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | \$50,000 - \$60,000/yr   | \$ 55,000.00   |
| Darryl            | Mack             | GIS Liasion                   | Responsible for making maps, customized Geographic Information Systems (GIS) applications and manipulating and analyzing data to serve a variety of purposes. They will read and interpret maps, manipulate and understand digital land data and manage data entered into a GIS database.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | \$35.00 - \$40.00/hr     | \$35/hr        |
| Yasic             | Naumenko         | Technology Specialist         | Responsible for performing technical related activities in the design, fabrication, and/or support of specialized information technology. Also plan, administer, test, and implement computer databases, applying knowledge of database management systems.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | \$60,000 - \$75,000/yr   | \$70,867.00    |
|                   |                  | Community Development Manager | Organizes, manages, and plans community and economic development projects for the organization, including research, development, and product implementation. Oversees a team of managers and analysts to ensure projects are completed on time and to specifications. Delegates work and assignments to team members based on expertise, work experience, and time constraints.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | \$85,000 - \$100,000/yr  |                |
|                   |                  | Planner III                   | Facilitates the review, adoption and implementation of a range of community or economic projects and programs. Prepares, directs and supervises planners I and II on assigned responsibilities involving local and regional plans and projects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | \$65,000 - \$75,000/yr   |                |

|          |          |                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                         |              |
|----------|----------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Harris   | Quadir   | Planner II                       | Facilitates the review, adoption and implementation of a range of community or economic projects and programs. Prepares, directs and supervises planners I on assigned responsibilities involving local and regional plans and projects .                                                                                                                                                                           | \$60,000 - \$70,000/yr  | \$ 65,000.00 |
|          |          | Planner I                        | Facilitates the review, adoption and implementation of a range of community or economic projects and programs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | \$50,000 - \$60,000/yr  |              |
| Michelle | Mestayer | Watershed Specialist             | Facilitates the review, adoption and implementation of a range of community or economic projects and programs pertaining to Region 4 of the Louisiana Watershed Initiative such as flood mitigation, invasive species, and clean water, to name a few.                                                                                                                                                              | \$30.00 - \$35.00/hr    | \$31.50/hr   |
| Jerry    | Mack     | Grant Writer                     | Researches, writes, and submits grant proposals to help organization receive funding. Responsible for most stages of the grant application process, from identifying opportunities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | \$35.00 - \$40.00/hr    | \$30/hr      |
| Steve    | Jiles    | Transportation Manager           | Administers preparation, maintenance, update and implementation of both rural and urban transportation plans and infrastructure throughout region, including streets, roads, highways, and other multimodal networks, as well as pedestrian, bikeways, trails and rail components. Coordinates federal, state and local bridges and accessibility related infrastructure, safety, enforcement, and financing tools. | \$85,000 - \$100,000/yr | \$ 90,041.00 |
|          |          | Transportation Planner III       | Facilitates the review, adoption and implementation of a range of transportation projects and programs including public transit. Prepares, directs and supervises planners I and II on assigned responsibilities involving local and regional transportation plans and projects .                                                                                                                                   | \$65,000 - \$75,000/yr  |              |
|          |          | Transportation Planner II        | Facilitates the review, adoption and implementation of a range of indepth or intricate transportation projects and programs including public transit. Prepares, directs and supervises planners I on assigned responsibilities involving local and regional transportation plans and projects .                                                                                                                     | \$60,000 - \$70,000/yr  |              |
|          |          | Transportation Planner I         | Facilitates the review, adoption and implementation of a range of transportation projects and programs including public transit.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | \$50,000 - \$60,000/yr  |              |
| Tim      | Conner   | Sr. Transportation Specialist    | Tasks include working on a specific transportation program or project component. Usually, a retired individual with many years of experience in transportation who has expertise and time to focus on selected transportation objectives assigned by the Transportation Manager.                                                                                                                                    | \$35.00 - \$40.00/hr    | \$40/hr      |
| Chris    | Fonseca  | Transportation Specialist        | Tasks include working on a specific transportation program or project component. Usually, a retired individual with many years of experience in transportation who has expertise and time to focus on selected transportation objectives assigned by the Transportation Manager.                                                                                                                                    | \$30.00 - \$35.00/hr    | \$33/hr      |
| Bill     | Fontenot | Overlay Specialist               | Facilitates the review, adoption and implementation of a range of transportation projects and programs including road overlays.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | \$35.00 - \$40.00/hr    | \$40/hr      |
|          |          | Special Projects Coordinator     | Oversees research, analysis, viability and funding of complex, multifaceted programs as designated by the district needs, wants and shovel-ready projects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | \$65,000 - \$75,000/yr  |              |
|          |          | Economic Development Coordinator | Oversees various research, analysis and funding of economically viable programs as designated by the district needs, wants and shovel-ready projects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | \$65,000 - \$75,000/yr  |              |
|          |          | Community Outreach Coordinator   | Oversees the engagement with member entities and team members on programs and projects as designated by the district needs, wants and shovel-ready projects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | \$65,000 - \$75,000/yr  |              |
| Erin     | Whidden  | Sr. Software Developer           | Researches, designs, implements, tests, evaluates and manages software and website development programs and projects, identifying and/or developing modifications. Writes and implements efficient code.                                                                                                                                                                                                            | \$60,000 - \$70,000/yr  | \$30/hr      |

|          |         |                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                        |              |
|----------|---------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| Taylor   | Lowe    | Sr. Multimedia Designer  | Creates visual text, 2D and 3D imagery concepts to communicate ideas that inspire, inform, or captivate for commission website, internal and external plans, programs and projects.                                            | \$60,000 - \$70,000/yr | \$68,140     |
|          |         | Bookkeeper II            | Maintains key accounting records, including day-to-day income/expense transactions, reconciliations, requisitions and audit compliance. Prepares, directs and supervises Bookkeeper I on assigned responsibilities.            | \$65,000 - \$75,000/yr |              |
| Brittany | Shirley | Bookkeeper I             | Maintains key accounting records, including day-to-day income/expense transactions, reconciliations, requisitions and audit compliance.                                                                                        | \$55,000 - \$65,000/yr | \$ 64,900.00 |
| Amanda   | LeDoux  | Administrative Assistant | Provides administrative support to ensure efficient operations. Answers phone calls, schedules meetings and supports visitors. Carries out administrative duties such as filing, typing, copying, binding, and scanning.       | \$50,000 - \$60,000/yr | \$ 55,000.00 |
| Lukas    | Jakubek | Intern                   | Completes tasks as assigned and asks questions to improve knowledge of the industry. Works under a supervisor who oversees activity for the duration of the placement and provides feedback on their performance and progress. | \$20.00 - \$25.00/hr   | \$20/hr      |

## TEAM MEMBER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that I have read and understood these procedures outlined in this copy of SWLA-RPC's Personnel Procedures Manual. I understand that these procedures provide only a general reference and are not a full statement of SWLA-RPC's procedures nor are they a contract. I will update these policies as I am provided with new materials, and I will return my copy of the Personnel Procedures Manual to SWLA-RPC upon termination of my employment.

Team Member Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*This is a copy of the SWLA-RPC Personnel Procedures Manual. This copy is for you to refer to as needed. Please review, sign, and return a copy of the Team Member Acknowledgement page to your supervisor for annual filing purposes.*