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PREAMBLE

Optional Rehabilitation Services (**OPTIONS**) Inc. works hard to ensure that anyone connected to us, our clients, staff, families, volunteers and our community friends and neighbors are treated fairly and with respect; that privacy of individuals is protected; and that the Company operates with the utmost integrity.

OPTIONS services are based on our valuing of each other and on the unique talents and gifts that we each can bring to our relationships and our community. These values are the cornerstone of our organization and we endorse and practice respect for each other in our connections with current and prospective staff, the individuals we serve and their families.

We believe our approach to Human Services, evident in our mission statement “SEEK TO UNDERSTAND”, reflects the meaningful and important commitment we bring to our work. It also demonstrates that we are in a partnership of support that we can truly celebrate.

OPTIONS supports the principles of, and complies with, applicable human rights legislation, including anti-discrimination provisions relating to employment. **OPTIONS** and its staff do not tolerate behavior in the workplace that is contrary to applicable provincial human rights.

INTRODUCTION TO OPTIONS

OPTIONS is a private company incorporated on August 7th, 1986. The owner of the company, Elaine Yost, is the Chief Executive Officer / Director of the company and, as such, has ultimate control and responsibility for the company in its operations. An advisory committee comprised of parents, consumers, professionals and lay people assists in the development of policies and procedures that affect the company in its work.

OPTIONS was formed for the purpose of creating a new service choice for people who wish to initiate innovative routes for the provision of services to people with complex service needs.

OPTIONS operates with the belief that people who are disabled have the right to be treated with dignity; have the right to make choices; have the right to dignity of risk and have the right to live in the community. We also believe that those individuals who know the person best should have access and input to all decisions made about and with the individual. It is our hope that the relationship between parents/guardians, consumers, and **OPTIONS** and its staff can be built on a joint commitment of supporting the individual in the most positive way possible; on openness in communication; on mutual respect; on constructiveness and creativity in problem solving; on integrity in all aspects of support.

OPTIONS' desire is to strengthen the voices of people with disabilities and their families and friends. We take a “Person Centered” approach in the planning that is done with individuals and their families.

Our belief is that individuals are supported most effectively when supports are flexible, and when there is a commitment to on going learning. We offer an organizational culture that is based on respecting and supporting people’s choices about how they want to live and participate in the life of their community.

Over the years **OPTIONS** has grown and changed significantly from a small organization that mainly provided residential support to an organization today which provides unique and individualized services to children, adults and seniors. We assist in facilitating services to a number of individuals who live in homes with a Supportive Room-mate; we interview, screen and match potential room-mates, provide supports to a number of individuals who are more significantly challenged, provide supports to individuals who require a more individualized day alternative program and to individuals who are retiring from work, support individuals living in their own homes, and provide respite and family support.

ORGANIZATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

OPTIONS’ Beliefs

OPTIONS believes that all people share the same basic needs:

- **Relationships - Respect - Belonging**
- **Autonomy/ Independence**
- **Individuality**
- **Love and Acceptance**
- **Stability - Continuity**
- **Growth and Learning Contributing to the community**
- **Security**
- **Human and Legal rights**
- **A Spiritual Life of own choice**

OPTIONS views people with disabilities as people first. The vision of needs will focus on ordinary human needs. The description of the disability is relevant only to the extent that it complicates meeting needs.

Support can be provided in a variety of ways by many people. **OPTIONS’** goal is to help establish or deepen relationships and to help individuals live with dignity and participate fully in community life. We all share in the responsibility of ensuring that our clients receive services of superior quality; where they are treated with dignity and have their rights and well-being protected.

MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY

OPTIONS recognizes the right of every individual to equality of opportunity with respect to employment, based upon bona fide qualifications. We are committed to providing a workplace in which all people are treated with dignity and respect. We acknowledge and value our employees and recognize that they play a major role in **OPTIONS** and the clients’ success. Our policy is “open door” with respect to our employees, clients and families. We encourage open and honest communication and feedback and recognize that we are all part of a team trying to achieve and provide quality services.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

OPTIONS is an organization which has grown through a shared vision about supports to individuals with disabilities. We operate in a culture based on:

- Values and Philosophy
- Relationships
- Partnerships
- Affirming Relationship
- Long term support
- Confidence
- Compassion
- Companionship
- Community
- Cooperation
- Communion
- Consensus
- Competence to enhance oneself and others

We are committed to the concept of Reciprocal Empowerment with the attributes of:

- Self-Determination
- Independence
- Knowledge
- Choice
- Action embodied in personal authority

STATEMENT OF EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

OPTIONS believes that employees have the right to:

- Access their own personnel records
- Confidentiality
- Information
- Be free from harassment and discrimination of any kind
- A safe forum for the expression of concerns about clients
- Be placed in positions appropriate to their skill
- Support with professional challenges
- A physically and emotionally safe working environment
- Be treated with dignity and respect
- To expect fair treatment
- Access a fair and equitable grievance procedure
- To be acknowledged and respected for the work they do
- To prompt and timely pay
- To participate in in-services and professional training

OPTIONS believes that the relationships that develop between the individuals and families and support staff are the corner-stone of our organization.

PRINCIPLES OF WORKING WITH PEOPLE

1. Keep people involved
2. Keep people informed
3. Treat people and their ideas with respect
4. Treat people consistently
5. Tell people what you expect
6. Allow for individual difference in people
7. Don't expect people to be like you
8. Help people to grow and develop
9. Recognize good performance

NOTE:

*The following information provides you with some of the more important information that you will need in order to function effectively within **OPTIONS**. This package is not a duplicate of the Policies and Procedures Manual, therefore if there are discrepancies within this document, the Policies and Procedures Manual takes precedence.*

1. HUMAN RIGHTS

OPTIONS holds the worth, dignity and creative individuality of every human being as its primary value. **OPTIONS** and its staff will demonstrate in all their interactions a commitment to, and an understanding of the principles of basic human rights.

OPTIONS and its staff shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, language, religion, age, sex, marital status, physical and mental handicap, economic condition or national ancestry. We shall work towards preventing and eliminating discrimination.

Policy:

OPTIONS will uphold the rights of staff and comply with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act, Human Resources Development Canada: Employment Insurance, the Canadian Tax Act, the Alberta Bill of Rights, the Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act, the Employment Code, The Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations, The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the Personal Information Protection Act and/or any other relevant legislation.

Procedure:

Management and Supervisory staff will monitor, on a quarterly basis, changes or amendments to the Acts, Legislation and/or regulations that affect **OPTIONS** in its operations.

- 1) Management and Supervisory staff will suggest amendments to the policies and procedures that are affected by changes in Legislation and/or regulations.
- 2) Policies and procedures will be amended in order to be in compliance with Legislation and regulations.
- 3) Employees will be notified of the change and its impact.

2. LEGISLATION

OPTIONS and its staff will at all times comply with all applicable legislation with regard to our employees including but not limited to the Canadian Charter of Rights, Employment Standards Act, the Occupational Health and Safety act.

3. OPTIONS' CODE OF ETHICS

OPTIONS and its staff will:

- Provide support to individuals in a manner which enhances self esteem, respects the dignity and autonomy of the person, respects individual choice, preference, and abilities
- Regard the well-being of the individuals we serve as our primary responsibility
- Fulfill our obligations and responsibilities with integrity
- Be competent in the performance of our duties
- Protect the privacy of the individuals we support by holding in confidence all professionally acquired information concerning them. Information will only be disclosed when authorized in writing by an individual or when legally or professionally obligated to do so
- **OPTIONS** and its staff will provide factual, objective written reports, free of blaming, judgmental and interpretative language
- **OPTIONS** and its staff will not allow outside interests to jeopardize professional judgment, independence or competence

4. HUMAN RESOURCE PLAN

OPTIONS seeks to attract those individuals who have a sincere belief in the value of all human beings, an understanding of the principles of basic human rights, and are dedicated to playing a supportive role in assisting another being reach his/her goals.

OPTIONS recognizes the unique skills and strengths that each staff member, family member and client brings to the support process. **OPTIONS** works to capitalize on these strengths by using the team approach and consensus style decision making. The team approach requires that all team member's work together towards a common goal. The goal and the means of reaching that goal are chosen through consensus style decision making. This procedure ensures that all stakeholders have input into and a commitment towards the resulting decision.

OPTIONS will avoid the hiring and employment of relatives within the same facility. In the case of staff and clients being related, the same avoidance of staff and clients working and living in the same facility will be practiced. When opportunities for promotion occur, **OPTIONS** will endeavor to promote from existing staff whenever possible. Staff employed in one **OPTIONS** program are eligible for promotion and/or transfer to another **OPTIONS** program.

OPTIONS is committed to staff development and training and will support those who are interested in furthering their education and broadening their knowledge. Numerous in-services are available to staff. **OPTIONS** expects that staff will participate in at least two (2) per year. Staff are also encouraged to participate in various committees that are available.

Compare **OPTIONS** turnover rates with other agencies.

Analyze patterns of turnover including:

- Departure from community rehabilitation
- Departure from agency but not from community rehabilitation
- Departure from individual receiving support
- Evaluate rates of staff satisfaction
- Identify factors contributing to stability
- Ensure training programs, staff development and personal wellness
- Opportunities are available for **OPTIONS'** staff
- Ensure there is a process to recognize improvements and participation by **OPTIONS'** staff
- Provide flexible opportunities for staff to continue their education
- Provide Basic Skills Tutor Training
- Continue to advocate for fair compensation
- In partnership with other organizations, maintain and improve quality services
- Develop a staff recruitment and retention program
- Develop Leadership seminars for staff
- Enhance the image of our staff through recognition programs

5. HIRING OF RELATIVES

OPTIONS will avoid the hiring and employment of relatives within the same facility. In the case of staff and clients being related, the same avoidance of staff and clients working and living in the same facility will be practiced.

6. PROMOTIONS

When opportunities for promotion occur, **OPTIONS** will endeavor to promote from existing staff whenever possible. Staff employed in an **OPTIONS** program are eligible for promotion and/or transfer to another **OPTIONS** program.

Staff should submit their resume and a cover letter for consideration to the appropriate supervisor for any position advertised that fits their qualifications.

7. STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

OPTIONS is committed to providing on-going staff development and training. In-service sessions are held on a regular basis to enhance and increase staff competency and skill development. **OPTIONS** expects that all staff will attend at least two (2) sessions per year.

OPTIONS supports staff who are interested in furthering their education and broadening their knowledge. All staff are encouraged to attend workshops and seminars to keep abreast of current trends in the field.

OPTIONS keeps a record of all education, training and in-services attended and the record is placed in the employee's file. Staff are encouraged to participate on **OPTIONS'** committees, as well as community committees as deemed appropriate to their position and with the approval of their supervisor.

Generally, training and skill development courses should be scheduled outside of the employee's regular work hours. Compulsory courses occurring on a day other than an employee's regular work day, entitle the employees to be paid minimum wage for each hour attending the course.

Any staff interested in training or development courses outside the courses offered by **OPTIONS**, should submit a written request to their supervisor, outlining the course details, costs and benefits. This written request will be subject to approval from the **OPTIONS'** Directors, and staff will subsequently be advised on whether the course and/or training has been approved. Also, any staff attending courses and/or training may be required to chair an in-service to inform other staff on course outline and/or transferable information.

8. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PERSONNEL

Competitions for job openings will be organized when necessary, but need not be held when suitable candidates are known and available. Competitions will be advertised in a non-discriminatory manner.

Current employees of **OPTIONS** will be given first consideration in all job openings. Employees at **OPTIONS** will be selected using the common practices of application and interview. Supervisors, clients and their families may be involved in the selection decision. Selection will be based upon suitability for the particular position.

Procedure:

- 1.) Job postings will be posted as soon as received:
 - a.) on the Web Page (www.optionsplus.org)
 - b.) on the Human Resources Bulletin Board in the Day Program and will be distributed in the Residential mail slots.
 - c.) on other approved sites
- 2.) All positions must be posted for a minimum of seven (7) calendar days.
- 3.) A current job description for the vacant position must be on file or prepared before recruitment begins.
- 4.) Applicants from within **OPTIONS** may apply during the seven (7) day posting period.
- 5.) All candidates employed by **OPTIONS** must fill out an application form, or present a letter of intent and have it initialed by their immediate supervisor.

9. QUALIFYING PERIOD

All staff employed at **OPTIONS** will begin with a three month qualifying period. During the qualifying period the employee may be terminated without notice when the employee is unable to meet the standards of the job requirements.

After the three month period, if job performance is satisfactory, the employee will be evaluated and employment status granted. All employees will have a Feedback and Development review prior to the end of their qualifying period.

If performance is not satisfactory:

- a.) The qualifying period may be extended up to three more months, or
- b.) Employment will be terminated following an evaluation, which will occur prior to the end of the three-month period.

Staff will receive a Feedback and Development Review near the end of the Qualifying Period. This will evaluate the employee and outline the action plans for the upcoming year.

10. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

1. All staff are covered through **OPTIONS** liability insurance regarding professional conduct.
2. All staff are covered by Worker's Compensation.
3. All permanent staff who work a minimum of thirty (30) hours per week are eligible to be covered through **OPTIONS'** Group Benefit Plan. There is a six (6) month waiting period.

Employees may opt in fully or opt out fully of the **OPTIONS'** Group Benefit Package. There is no partial enrollment.

- a) The following are covered on the benefit plan:
 - Basic Life Insurance
 - Dependent Life Insurance
 - Optional Life Insurance
 - Accidental Death and Dismemberment
 - Long Term Disability
 - Extended Health Care
 - Dental Care
 - Emergency Travel Assistance
 - Employee Assistance Program

Procedure:

1. Upon offer of full-time employment, employees complete the Group Benefit Package forms.

11. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

OPTIONS' Director and Supervisory staff are committed to supporting employees in creating and maintaining a safe, professional, working environment. **OPTIONS'** staff is responsible for maintaining this environment by conducting themselves professionally at all times and by proficiently and respectfully performing their duties.

OPTIONS has the responsibility to enable employees to learn and train, to provide support in career counseling, and to outline requirements for further career advancement.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 1) **OPTIONS** encourages the fair distribution of the work load among employees.
- 2) Employees have the responsibility to know their duties and to perform them to the best of their abilities.
- 3) Employees have the right to receive impartial and objective feedback with regard to their individual job performance and the responsibility to co-operate in the process.
- 4) Employees can be assured that they will have the opportunity for a fair hearing on all matters related to their employment and the responsibility to discuss matters of concern in a reasonable manner.
- 5) Supervisors will provide good leadership, supervision and coaching in order to create a positive environment.
- 6) Employees have the responsibility to grasp opportunities for learning and training.

11.1 Support and Resources Provided to Employees

OPTIONS' Director and Supervisory staff are open and vigilant to the emotional, physical, professional, and educational support needs of staff. A Staff Development Committee occasionally polls employees to get input regarding staff needs, preferences, and opinions. Various resources are also available within and outside of **OPTIONS** and requests can be made to access them.

OPTIONS may request that a staff member attend a certain course that is outside of the compulsory courses that all **OPTIONS'** staff must participate in. In that case, **OPTIONS** would be responsible for the financial costs of the course.

OPTIONS endeavors to support staff who are interested in continuing their education. Adjustments can often be made in shift scheduling or other accommodations made so that staff can attend courses.

OPTIONS allocates a certain budget for Staff Development and staff can request financial assistance to attend courses. A decision is made by the **OPTIONS'** Director upon the recommendation of the Supervisor.

- 1.) A request to attend a course, conference etc. must be submitted to your Supervisor along with a budgetary request (if applicable.)
- 2.) The Supervisor provides comments as to the suitability of the course, the benefits that may be expected and submits the request to the **OPTIONS'** Director.
- 3.) The Director approves or declines the request.

11.2 Infringement of Rights

Any employee who feels that their rights have not been respected shall report the situation to their supervisor who will mediate a solution in a manner that respects the rights and safety of all parties. This process will follow the grievance process as outlined in this section of the manual.

11.3 Corrective Action, Disciplinary Procedures and Termination

Certain actions will be automatically considered as providing just cause for disciplinary act and/or terminations. The authority to discipline and/or recommend termination rests with the Director and/or the Supervisors. The authority to terminate an employee rests solely with the Director.

Procedure:

Disciplinary action will begin with an informal disciplinary interview, and may include, but is not restricted to the following steps:

- 1) Informal disciplinary interview (documented)
- 2) Suspension from employment (with or without pay)
- 3) Formal interview with Director
- 4) Disciplinary Probation
- 5) Termination

11.4 Breaches of Code of Ethics, Law or Morality

Disciplinary action or immediate termination may result from, but is not limited to, any of the following actions:

- Insubordination
- Failure to comply with official policies and directives
- Unprofessional conduct
- Unsatisfactory performance
- Gross neglect of duties/clients
- Harassment of clients or abuse of any kind as defined by the Abuse Reporting and Investigation Protocol for Adults with Disabilities
- Any physical assault
- The use of a restrictive/physical program which has not been approved by the Guardian, Client, and/or by **OPTIONS**
- Any indication of indecent behavior, or behaviors detrimental to **OPTIONS**, its staff and clients
- Theft of **OPTIONS** or clients property
- Drinking, intoxication, or consumption of any illegal substance while on duty
- Conviction of a criminal offence
- Breach of the **OPTIONS'** Code of Ethics
- Blatant and substantial dishonesty
- Embezzlement

12. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of interest is defined as a situation in which an employee's private interest compromises the:

- Reputation of **OPTIONS**
- The financial status of **OPTIONS**
- The interests of persons served by **OPTIONS**
- The performance of **OPTIONS'** employees

Employees are expected to act honestly, in good faith, and in the best interest of **OPTIONS**. Therefore, for the fairness and protection of all, a real or perceived conflict of interest must be declared to the employee's supervisor. A review team consisting of the Director and/or Supervisor and another member of management will assess individual circumstances.

Upon completing the review, a written response will be provided to the employee indicating that:

- a. There is no conflict, or
- b. There is a conflict, but appropriate safeguards are in place and the situation is acceptable, or
- c. There is a conflict and there is a requirement for the employee to cease his/her involvement in the situation, or change the situation so there is no longer a conflict.

If the decision is to accept the safeguards or alternate arrangements outlined by the employee, a process for monitoring the situation must be developed to ensure that any changes to the situation are reviewed. All documentation will be kept on the employee's personnel file.

There are many situations that can be classified as conflict of interest, but the following illustrate some common circumstances, but is not limited to these circumstances:

a) Private business benefit:

Employees must not have a personal financial interest in businesses supplying property, goods or services to **OPTIONS**. In awarding any contract the Director will comply with the normal procedure with respect to quotes and expenditures.

b) Involvement with employment or business situations:

Other employment or business involvement must be declared to determine if a conflict exists. These interests should not adversely affect an employee's job by taking time away from his/her duties or competing with work priorities e.g., being hired by **OPTIONS** and another agency to work with the same client; recruiting staff to work in a private business; accepting hours of work in one position that overlaps with another position, even if it is within **OPTIONS**.

c) Employee relationships:

Employees should avoid any arrangements that may compromise the judgment and the ability of the employee to act in the best interest of **OPTIONS**. Specifically, an employee shall not directly supervise an employee with whom he/she has a personal relationship (e.g., is living with, dating, or is a sibling, etc.)

d) Gifts and entertainment:

Employees must not receive payment for services, special privileges, or gifts from an individual or business that has a business relationship with **OPTIONS** (e.g. accepting gifts and money from clients). Gifts of appreciation from Guardians and clients may be acceptable on certain occasions or at certain times of the year. Gifts or entertainment of nominal value such as advertising, mementos, etc. may be acceptable.

- e) Involving clients for personal benefit:
Employees must not engage in any activity with a client which results in a personal financial gain outside of **OPTIONS'** work-related duties (e.g., accepting money for work completed by a client; taking client while working at another job; selling personal articles to clients, etc.)

Private professional relationships with clients

Being the legal guardian or legal trustee or small "t" trustee of an **OPTIONS'** clients on his/her caseload.

Procedure:

- The Employee informs their Supervisor in writing of any situation(s) where a real or perceived conflict exists.
- The immediate Supervisor or Coordinator forwards information to the Director for review, including any additional details that may need to be considered.
- The Director solicits the involvement of a review team to review the case.
- The Review Team evaluates all information in accordance with **OPTIONS** policies and practices, identifies possible implications to **OPTIONS** as a result of the circumstance, and meets with the employee to gain additional facts or seek clarification.

The Director informs the employee of the outcome in writing, indicating that:

- There is no conflict
- There is a conflict, but appropriate safeguards are in place and recommending a process for monitoring the situation.
- There is a conflict and there is a requirement to cease his/her involvement in the situation, or make specified alternate arrangements.
- All documentation is placed on the employee's personnel file.

13. POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Within **OPTIONS** the following salaried positions and titles are used:

- Chief Executive Officer / Director
- Chief Operating Officer
- Human Resources Facilitator
- Accounting Assistant
- Payroll Administrator
- Day Program Director
- Day Program Supervisor
- Day Program Team Leader
- Day Program Assistant Team Leader
- Day Program Assistant
- Positive Outcomes Coordinator
- Residential Support Facilitator
- Residential Director
- Receptionist

Within **OPTIONS** the following hourly positions and titles are used:

- House Coordinator
- Community Connector Practitioner (CRW2)

14. JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Job duties and responsibilities are outlined on the job descriptions written for each position and can be reviewed and amended for special requirements on an individualized client basis.

Job descriptions are reviewed on an annual basis. All staff will receive a copy of their job description on the commencement with **OPTIONS**. Additional copies may also be requested from Human Resources.

15. EMPLOYEE FILE

An employee file is established upon hiring. This file is confidential and will be stored in the Payroll and Accounting Assistants Office in a file cabinet that is locked.

15.1 Access to File

- Employee files are considered to be records in control of a public body. Access to these files is therefore controlled by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP). Under the Act employees are granted full and timely access to the file upon request. Only with the written consent by the Director of **OPTIONS** may sensitive information be removed from the file before access is provided.
- Requests for information will be forwarded in writing to the Director of **OPTIONS** or her designate.
- Information shall be provided by or before 30 days of a request. Should efforts to provide information by that date fail, documentation shall be provided to the applicant explaining the delay.
- The Employee must provide written consent before any information regarding that employee is disclosed to a third party by **OPTIONS**. This consent must include a clear record of the type of information to be disclosed, the individual(s)/organization(s) this information is to be disclosed to, and the expiry date for that consent.

15.2 Confidentiality of Employee Information

The team members with whom we work have a right to expect and demand confidentiality. Only that information which falls within the context of providing good service to those in our care shall be disclosed within the teams. Third parties will receive no information about employees except with the expressed written consent by that employee. Employees of **OPTIONS** will hold all professionally acquired information about their team members as confidential.

15.3 Content and Format of Employee Files

The employee file will consist of the following:

- Resume
- **OPTIONS'** application form
- References
- Interview Notes
- Correspondence to / from employees
- Letter of Hire confirmation
- Job Description
- Completion of **OPTIONS** Orientation
- Completion of Abuse Protocol & Positive Behavior Support Courses
- Release of Confidential Information
- Confidentiality Statement
- Police Security Check
- Intervention Record Check
- Copy of Driver's License
- Copy of Social Insurance (SIN) Card
- Alberta Health Care (AHC)
- Alberta Health Care Group Commencement
- Waiver of Group AHC
- Enrollment to Group Benefit Package (this is kept separate)
- Medication Course certificate
- First Aid / CPR certificate
- Other Certifications / Education Documents
- Acknowledgement of Policies & Procedures Manual
- Driver Declaration Form
- Orientation Check List to Work Locations
- Vehicle Proof of Insurance
- Payroll Deductions – Letter of Authorization
- Payroll Adjustments
- Payroll Advances
- **OPTIONS** EE Add/Change Form
- Direct Deposit Form
- TD1 & TD1 AB
- Old R.O.E'S
- WCB Medical Correspondence
- Absentee & Vacation Requests
- Archived Employee Attendance Detail
- Feedback & Development Review
- Feedback & Development Review Summary Archived
- Miscellaneous Documents

The Employee File includes paper and electronic information collected by **OPTIONS** and stored in the **OPTIONS'** office.

16. ORIENTATION

All employees of **OPTIONS** are required to complete the general **OPTIONS** orientation within the three month qualifying period. General orientation sessions are held on a regular basis at the **OPTIONS'** main office.

In a home situation, new staff is required to work a minimum of two (2) shifts, sixteen (16) hours for orientation with the House Coordinator.

In a day situation, new staff is required to work a minimum of two (2) shifts, twelve (12) hours for orientation with the Day Staff.

If the new employee has not completed the General **OPTIONS'** orientation, Supervisory staff must feel comfortable that the new employee can handle the situation, is aware of the Emergency Procedure and who they can go to for assistance. Supervisors must also ensure that all new employees are aware of **OPTIONS'** Mission Statement, Philosophy, Values, Goals and Objectives. New staff must become familiar with the policies and procedures as soon as possible.

16.1 Content of House Orientation

Residential Directors are responsible for arranging meetings with the House Coordinators and new staff to discuss the following:

- The Philosophy, goals and objectives of the home and its occupants
- The agreement between the client(s), parents/guardians and **OPTIONS**
- The organization, structure, physical facilities and equipment of the home
- All emergency Procedures as outlined in the manuals including the on-call procedure
- Overview of clients and their support needs and goals
- Staff job descriptions and job duties
- Schedules and hours of work
- A tour of the home
- A meeting with the family(ies)
- Information about the neighbors, neighborhood, resources within, connections etc.

16.2 Documentation

- The House Coordinator will ensure that all new staff complete the Orientation Checklists for the House orientation before they work on their own. The Checklist will be signed, initialed and dated by the new staff and the coordinator and returned to the **OPTIONS'** office as soon as possible. The checklist is to be placed in the Employee's file.
- After the General **OPTIONS'** orientation, a form will be signed which indicates the new employee has attended the General Orientation. This will be placed in the Employee's file.

17. TRAINING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

OPTIONS is committed to providing on-going staff development and training. In-service sessions are held on a regular basis to enhance and increase staff competency and skill development. **OPTIONS** expects that all staff will attend at least two sessions per year.

OPTIONS supports staff who are interested in furthering their education and broadening their knowledge. All staff are encouraged to attend workshops and seminars to keep abreast of current trends in the field.

OPTIONS keeps a record of all education, training and in-services attended and the record is placed in the employee's file. Staff is encouraged to participate on **OPTIONS'** committees, as well as community committees as deemed appropriate to their position and with the approval of their supervisor.

Generally, training and skill development courses should be scheduled outside of the employee's regular work hours. Compulsory courses occurring on a day other than an employee's regular work day entitle the employees to be paid minimum wage for each hour attending the course.

18. SUPPORTING OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE

OPTIONS believes feedback and development reviews facilitate a positive experience for everyone involved. Qualifying reviews are performed after three months of employment. Feedback and development reviews are completed annually thereafter as defined by the Human Resource Department. The rationale for this approach is to provide an objective, as well as a subjective measure for both the supervisor and the employee.

OPTIONS believes that on completion of this tool, the employee's strengths and needs are identified and will then serve as a catalyst towards goal setting, and strategic planning to reaching these goals.

The areas for discussion and the basis on which an employee and their supervisor should measure performance is based on the values and philosophy of **OPTIONS**, on-going performance, and information and feedback provided by other members of the team.

18.1 Participants in the Process

The individual being served, their parents/guardian, the employee, other members of the team and their immediate supervisor may provide information, observations and feedback for the review. Only the employee and their immediate supervisor meet to discuss the feedback.

18.2 Copies of the Review

The completed form may be copied and given to the employee.

18.3 The Feedback and Development Review Format

The Feedback and Development Review is designed to measure skills and abilities of employees working for **OPTIONS**. It is comprised of three sections:

SECTION I — Employee Self Review

This work sheet is to be completed by the employee prior to the review meeting. The purpose of the exercise is to identify how the employee views their skills, abilities, and performance.

SECTION II— Feedback and Developmental Review Meeting

The employee's skills, abilities and performance for the past year are discussed and noted.

SECTION III — Action Plan

The Action plan is derived from the questions from the Feedback & Development Review and should list areas that required attention. An Action plan must be completed for every question that the employee is ranked as "Needs Improvement".

18.4 Review by Management

The Feedback and Development Review is placed in the employee's file after it is reviewed by the Director. Human Resources will make copies of the review for the employee and the Supervisor. The original will be filed in the Employee's file.

19. EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

OPTIONS is committed to dispute prevention so that disagreements can be resolved as early and in as informal a stage as possible to avoid and minimize the stress related to a formal grievance procedure.

All employees have recourse to **OPTIONS'** grievance procedure. The purpose of the procedure is to promote harmony and to ensure there is mutual understanding and agreement.

Employees of **OPTIONS** are, as such, the responsibility of **OPTIONS** in terms of all job related grievances. Therefore, employment grievances will be dealt with through internal channels. The focus of grievance procedures should be the mutually successful conclusion of differences whereby the employee can return to the workplace having had an opportunity to voice a point of view and the employer can continue to administer a project confident that duties are being performed competently and up to standards.

The grievance procedure is as follows:

- An employee who feels she/he has a valid grievance will request a meeting with his/her supervisor at the earliest opportunity.
- If after a discussion of the grievance a mutually satisfactory solution cannot be reached, the employee must, within five (5) working days re-submit the grievance in writing to his/her supervisor. The complaint should include a description of the alleged discriminatory action; the date of its occurrence; the name(s) of other involved (if any), and a proposed remedy.
- The supervisor will immediately forward the grievance along with written comments to the Director.
- The Director, after consultation with all interested parties, will render a written decision within fifteen (15) working days from the date of receipt of the grievance.
- Under certain circumstances employees may initially request a meeting with the Director.
- When conflict occurs between staff and a parent/Guardian, internal or external mediation will be attempted between the conflicting parties to promote reconciliation, settlement, or compromise.

20. EXIT INTERVIEW

The purpose of the exit interview is to gather information about the employee's reasons for leaving **OPTIONS**, their overall impression of the organization, and to hear suggestions that could be made to improve our organization. The Human Resources Facilitator conducts the exit interview. Participation is optional and is the employee's choice. The exit interview is kept in the human resources files.

21. MANDATORY COURSES

OPTIONS and its employees must comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

A) First Aid and CPR Certification

All employees must have a valid Emergency First Aid and Level C, C.P.R. certificate.

B) Positive Behavior Support and Abuse Protocol

All employees must have current **OPTIONS'** Positive Behavior Support and Abuse Protocol certificates.

21.1 New Employees

New employees will be required to obtain their certificates within the three month qualifying period at **OPTIONS** if they do not have current valid certificates.

21.2 Maintaining Certification

It is the responsibility of the employee to maintain their courses and keep them current. Contact Human Resources if you are not sure of your course due dates.

21.3 Documentation

Copies of the certificate must be forwarded to Human Resources, at which point the courses are recorded and kept in the employee's personnel file.

21.4 Suspension

If an employee does not have their mandatory courses current, the employee may be suspended without pay until a valid certificate is acquired.

22. POLICE SECURITY CLEARANCE

All individuals who are offered employment by **OPTIONS** or volunteer in any capacity will be required to complete a Police Security Clearance.

22.1 Conditional Employment

Employment will be considered conditional until clearance is received.

OPTIONS reserves the right to dismiss anyone who cannot satisfactorily meet the clearance requirements. Individuals may be terminated without notice or compensation. This is to protect clients receiving service and support from **OPTIONS**.

22.2 Conditions for not Hiring

OPTIONS may not employ an individual who has been found guilty of theft, assault, sexual assault, aggressive crimes, or any related crimes. Employment will be determined by **OPTIONS** and is not negotiable. Clients, parents and/or Guardians may be involved in the hiring decision and therefore may, with the prospective employee's consent, be given information from the security clearance.

22.3 Security Clearance Updates

Criminal conduct is defined as behavior that attracts liability under any Criminal law statutes. Allegations of criminal activity and actual criminal activity can have a substantial negative impact on **OPTIONS**, its reputation, daily operation, employees and employee morale. If a criminal charge has, or may be laid against an employee, the employee must inform their immediate supervisor or the **OPTIONS'** Director in writing within twenty four (24) hours of the charge being laid or if they have knowledge that a charge may be laid. The employee must provide complete details of the circumstances surrounding the charge, a copy of the charges and details of the charges. The employee must inform the organization of the progress of any charges, court proceedings and any convictions. Employees must inform **OPTIONS** immediately if there are any changes in their security clearance. In accordance with the Policy on Rights and Responsibilities, termination may follow the conviction of a criminal offense.

22.4 Wrongful Dismissal

Sections 2 and 3 may cause an individual to claim wrongful dismissal or unfair labor practices. **OPTIONS** will maintain its position of protecting and respecting the client's best interests.

22.5 Cost

The employee will cover the cost of the Police Security Clearance. The cost will not be refunded if employment is terminated.

22.6 False Reports

If an employee knowingly falsely reports criminal activity by a fellow employee, the reporting employee may be subject to disciplinary action:

- Circumstances and consequences will be dealt with on an individual basis

Consequences may be determined by a number of factors:

- Employee's job performance and position
- Whether the criminal matter is directly related to the employee's work
- The nature and seriousness of the criminal matter
- The ability of the employee to continue to perform employment duties in a satisfactory manner
- Whether the criminal activity is incompatible with the employee's terms of employment
- The effect of the criminal matter on **OPTIONS**, its reputation, daily operations, employees and employee morale of **OPTIONS**
- The range of possible consequences may include no action, verbal warning, written warning, suspension (with or without pay) pending resolution of the charges, dismissal.

Paper work to start the process for the Police Security Clearance will be given to new employees upon commencement with **OPTIONS**. The fee for the clearance will be deducted from the employee's first pay-check.

23. INTERVENTION RECORD CHECK

All individuals who are offered employment by **OPTIONS** or volunteer in any capacity will be required to complete an Intervention Record Check.

23.1 Conditional Employment

Employment will be considered conditional until clearance is received. **OPTIONS** reserves the right to dismiss anyone who cannot satisfactorily meet the clearance requirements. Individuals may be terminated without notice or compensation. This is to protect clients receiving service and support from **OPTIONS**.

23.2 Conditions for not Hiring

OPTIONS may not employ an individual who has been found to cause a child to need protection. Employment will be determined by **OPTIONS** and is not negotiable. Clients, parents and/or Guardians may be involved in the hiring decision and therefore may, with the prospective employee's consent, be given information from the record check.

23.3 Record Check Updates

Employees must inform **OPTIONS** immediately of any changes in their record. In accordance with the Policy of Rights and Responsibilities, termination may follow the conviction of an offense.

23.4 Wrongful Dismissal

Sections 1 and 2 (ABOVE) may cause an individual to claim wrongful dismissal or unfair labor practices. **OPTIONS** will maintain its position of protecting and respecting the client's best interests.

23.5 Cost

The employee will cover any costs related to the Intervention Record Check. The cost will not be refunded if employment is terminated. Paper work to start the process for the Intervention Record Check will be given to new employees upon commencement with **OPTIONS**.

24. WORK RECORDS

The Coordinator and/or Supervisory staff is responsible for monitoring and ensuring accurate and up-to-date records of time worked by each employee. It is the employee's responsibility to provide their House Coordinator or Supervisor with accurately completed time sheets, before the scheduled due date, for initial approval.

- Employees are responsible for informing themselves of the due dates.
- Time sheets are considered legal documents.
- Time sheets must be signed, completed, initialed and approved.
- Time sheets must be handed in to the House Coordinator, your supervisor or the office by 9:30 am on the scheduled due date.

Pay periods are from the 1st to the 15th and the 16th to the last day of the month. Changes in work hours that occur within the pay period, but after initial approval of the timesheet will be reported on the next pay period. Late timesheets will not be processed until the next pay period.

25. HOURS OF WORK

A) Staffed Residential

- The Coordinator and / or Supervisory staff is responsible for scheduling individual hours of work, overtime, and time off.
- Coordinators will post the work schedule for a given month by or before the 15th of the month before (e.g., September's schedule will be posted by or before Aug.15)
- It is the responsibility of the front-line staff members to inform themselves of their scheduled shifts. Staff requiring days off in a month will inform the Coordinator before the posting date in order for the Coordinator to consider such requests. After the posting date, it is the responsibility of the front-line staff member to find relief staff to fill any shift they are unable to work. It is also the responsibility of the front-line staff to inform the Coordinator of any schedule changes at least twenty four (24) hours before the shift occurs.

- Relief staff are responsible for coordinating the shifts that they are offered and ensuring that they are not double booked or working over the allotted time in a work period.
- When a client is absent from their scheduled program, the employee will either be assigned another client to work with, or other work related duties for the duration of the shift. Should there not be any available work, the employee will be entitled to three (3) hours of pay and sent home.

B) Staffed Day Services

- The Coordinator and / or Supervisory staff is responsible for scheduling individual hours of work, overtime, and time off.
- Coordinators will post the work schedule for a given month by or before the 15th of the month before (e.g., September's schedule will be posted by or before Aug. 15)
- It is the responsibility of the front-line staff members to inform themselves of their scheduled shifts. Staff requiring days off in a month will inform the Coordinator before the posting date in order for the Coordinator to consider such requests. After the posting date, it is the responsibility of the front-line staff member to find relief staff to fill any shift they are unable to work. It is also the responsibility of the front-line staff to inform the Coordinator of any schedule changes at least twenty four (24) hours before the shift occurs.
- Relief staff are responsible for coordinating the shifts that they are offered and ensuring that they are not double booked or working over the allotted time in a work period.
- When a client is absent from their scheduled program, the employee will either be assigned another client to work with, or other work related duties for the duration of the shift. Should there not be any available work, the employee will be entitled to three (3) hours of pay and sent home.

26. STAFF APPEARANCE AND DRESS CODE

- Staff are required to be dressed and groomed in a manner appropriate to their position and work duties. As representatives of **OPTIONS**, staff are expected to set a good example and may be role models for individuals in terms of appropriate dress.
- Wear comfortable clothing that is neat and clean, in good repair and allows for freedom of movement. Clothing should be discreet and non-revealing. Clothing should give an image of professionalism to individuals, families, and the community.
- Jewelry may be worn with discretion. In order to prevent accidents with individuals i.e. chains, dangling earrings, etc. that may get entangled resulting in damage or causing bodily injury should be avoided.
- Shoes are to be worn at all times. They should be in good repair, give support and be practical for the type of work required i.e. pushing wheelchairs, lifting and transferring individuals.
- When providing support to individuals in the workplace, staff are expected to comply with the dress code policy guideline for that particular work-place. Staff are encouraged to have clean shampooed, well brushed hair at all times. When support is given to an individual working in the food environment, staff must comply with the dress code policy guideline for that particular workplace.

27. SCHEDULED WORK

- **OPTIONS'** employees are responsible to report for work as scheduled, unless time off or leave has been granted by supervisory staff.
- When, in the opinion of the Coordinator or Supervisor, an employee's absenteeism is unnecessarily reducing productivity, disciplinary action may occur as per the policy of Corrective Action, Disciplinary Procedures and Termination. Employee's hours of work may be outlined on job descriptions at the time of employment. Because of the nature of residential rehabilitative work, shift-work of some nature is inevitable.
- Part-time staff and relief on-call staff will be hired for specified time periods.
- Any changes to the schedule or time off must be approved by the Coordinator or Supervisor.
- An Alberta Employment Standards Regulation states that Residential Care staff are eligible to work a maximum of one hundred thirty two (132) hours per pay period, not exceeding twelve (12) hours per day without overtime compensation. Compensation for hours worked extra to one hundred thirty two (132) hours per pay period will be compensated on a time-for-time (lieu time) basis with prior approval from the Supervisor or Director. Accumulation of large amounts of overtime will not be accepted.

28. IMMUNIZATIONS

OPTIONS' staff must keep their immunizations updated to health department standards. New employees will be required to have their immunizations updated to health department standards prior to the starting date of employment. **OPTIONS** encourages all employees to also receive a flu shot on an annual basis.

Employees should visit the local City of Calgary Health Services office. All records are linked by computer for health records.

Record of Immunization:

If requested, an employee will provide a record of immunization(s) or flu shots which will be placed in their personnel file at the main office.

29. WORKER'S COMPENSATION

All **OPTIONS'** employees are covered through Worker's Compensation benefits. All accidents that affect an employee's ability to do their job must be reported. Those occurring during working hours must be promptly reported to the employee's supervisor. All injuries, whether considered minor or serious, must be promptly reported to the supervisor. Supervisory staff and employee must fill out an Incident Report and Workers' Compensation Board forms. The Form is sent to the Workers' Compensation Board within seventy two (72) hours of the accident.

Employees are advised to see a doctor immediately about the injury and the doctor must complete the Workers' Compensation Form within 48 hours of the employee's visit.

In the event a claim is not accepted, Workers' Compensation Board will inform the employee. The employee has the option to appeal the decision within one year.

When the claim is accepted the employee benefits will include:

- Wage loss replacement
- Medical costs
- Case Management Services
- Return to work planning
- Permanent Disability payments

OPTIONS requires a letter of fitness from the doctor when an employee returns to work after a Workers' Compensation Board claim. An attempt will be made to find modified work for the employee, however due to the nature of the rehabilitation field this is not always possible.

Worker's Compensation forms – Employee's Report & Employer's Report can be obtained from Human Resources. The employee needs to complete the Employee's report and the supervisor needs to complete the Employer's Report within seventy two (72) hours of the incident/accident. Both forms are to be returned to Human Resources, along with a copy of the Physician's Report (Pink). Human Resources will fax them to the appropriate department at WCB. All forms will be filed in the employee's file.

30. LEAVES OF ABSENCE WITH PAY

Requests for leave must be made in writing to the **OPTIONS'** Director including the reason for the leave and the expected length of the leave. Service is considered to be continuous for the purposes of vacation entitlement and benefit plans.

30.1 Bereavement Leave

In the event of the death of an employee's immediate family member, the employee may receive at least three (3) days paid time off in order to arrange or attend a funeral. With consideration to traveling time and the complexity of the situation, further paid or unpaid leave may be granted upon the Director's approval.

For the purpose of this policy, immediate family is defined as, and limited to, the employee's spouse, adult interdependent partner, children, grandchildren, foster children, step children, legal wards, parents, grandparents, foster parents, step parents, brothers, foster brothers, step brothers, sons-in-law, brother's-in-law, sisters, foster sisters, step sisters, sisters-in-law, daughters-in-law, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, first cousins, corresponding relatives of the employee's spouse and other persons who are members of the employee's household.

30.2 Compassionate Leave

Compassionate leave up to five (5) days may be granted to an employee in the event of severe illness, accident, or death in the employee's family, with the approval of the Director of **OPTIONS**. **Compassionate** leave not to exceed one (1) day may be granted for service as a pallbearer at the funeral of a person not a member of the employee's immediate family. Consideration of one paid day may be allowed if a serious illness or accident requiring hospitalization involving someone close to the employee who is not immediate family to a total of two (2) days per year. While on compassionate leave an employee will suffer no loss of earnings.

30.3 Maternity/Parental Leave

Maternity and parental leave are employee entitlements set out in the *Employment Standards Code*. The legislation entitles employees, who qualify, to a period of leave without pay at the end of which they must be reinstated in their old or equivalent job.

- Birth mothers can take up to fifty two (52) consecutive weeks of unpaid job-protected parental leave. This is made up of fifteen (15) weeks maternity leave and thirty seven (37) weeks parental leave.
- Fathers and/or adoptive parents are eligible for up to thirty seven (37) consecutive weeks of unpaid, job-protected parental leave. Adoptive parents can take parental leave regardless of the age of the adopted child.
- Parental leave may be taken by one parent or shared between two parents but the total combined leave cannot exceed thirty seven (37) weeks.

Eligibility:

Employees must have fifty two (52) consecutive weeks of employment with their employer to be eligible for maternity and/or parental leave. This requirement applies to both full-time and part-time employees. Maternity leave can begin at any time within twelve (12) weeks of the estimated date of delivery. Parental leave can begin at any time after the birth or adoption of the child but it must be completed within fifty two (52) weeks of the date a baby is born, or an adopted child is placed with the parent.

The following conditions apply:

- If the pregnancy interferes with the employee's job performance during the twelve (12) weeks before the estimated date of delivery, the employer can require the employee to start maternity leave. The employee must be notified in writing.
- An employee, who takes both maternity leave and parental leave, must take the leaves consecutively.
- An employee must take at least six (6) weeks of maternity leave after the birth of her child, unless the employer agrees to early resumption of employment and the employee provides a medical certificate indicating that resumption of work will not endanger her health.
- If the employer employs both parents of a child, the employer is not required to grant leave to both employees at the same time.

Notice to Start Leave:

An employee must give the employer at least six (6) weeks written notice about when she intends to start maternity leave.

- The employer may demand a medical certificate certifying pregnancy and giving the estimated date of delivery.

- If the employee fails to give the necessary notice she is still entitled to maternity leave if she notifies the employer within two (2) weeks of her last day at work and provides a medical certificate.

An employee who takes maternity leave is not required to give her employer notice before going on parental leave, unless she originally agreed only to take fifteen (15) weeks of maternity leave. An employee must give the employer at least six (6) weeks written notice to start parental leave.

- Parents will still be eligible for the leave if medical reasons, or circumstances related to the adoption, prevent the employee from giving this notice. When this happens, written notice must be given to the employer as soon as possible.

Employees who intend to share parental leave must advise their respective employers of their intention to do so.

Notice to End Leave

Employees must give at least four (4) weeks written notice that they intend to return to work, or to change their return date. This notice must be provided at least four (4) weeks before the end of the leave. An employer does not have to reinstate an employee until four (4) weeks after receipt of this notice.

Where an employee fails to provide this notice, or fails to report to work the day after their leave ends, the employer is under no obligation to reinstate the employee unless the failure is the result of unforeseen or unpreventable circumstances. Employees are required to provide four (4) weeks written notice if they do not intend to return to work after leave ends.

Employer Obligations:

The *Employment Standards Code* provides for 15 weeks maternity leave and thirty seven (37) weeks parental leave with no provisions for extensions. While there is no obligation to do so, it is up to the employer to decide whether to extend leave should unforeseen circumstances arise.

An employer is not required to make any payments to the employee, or pay for any benefits, during maternity or parental leave. An employer cannot terminate an employee on maternity or parental leave, unless the employer suspends or discontinues the business.

Employees returning from maternity or parental leave must be reinstated in the same or a comparable position with earnings and other benefits at least equal to those received when the leave began.

30.4 Sick Days

The purpose of sick days is to reduce the financial effect that genuine illness, accident, or injury (for which Workers' Compensation is not payable) can have on the employee's ability to perform work and the related loss of regular wages. In order to qualify for sick days, employees must have completed the three (3) month qualifying period, and work thirty (30) hours or more per week. All employees who are classified, as full-time, i.e. working thirty (30) hours per week, are able to access up to six (6) paid sick days per year. **OPTIONS** provides

sick days for any illness, quarantine by a medical officer of health, family illness/responsibility, medical/dental appointments and/or because of an accident for which compensation is not payable under Worker's Compensation Act. Unused sick days are not paid out during employment, nor are they carried forward to the next calendar year. Individual circumstances may be considered on a case by case basis by the Director.

In the event of illness, the employee must:

- 1) Call supervisory staff or the On-call phone as much in advance as possible so there is sufficient time to allow for rescheduling;
- 2) Complete an Absentee & Vacation request form which is filed in the employee's file;
- 3) When absent from work, the employee is required to notify their supervisor each day in the morning when they will be absent;
- 4) If the absence has been for three (3) or more consecutive days, the employee is required to return to work with the written note from a Doctor verifying their illness/absence;
- 5) For on-going illnesses, the employee may be asked to attend a medical examination by a doctor designated by **OPTIONS**;
- 6) For sick days longer than one (1) week, it is mandatory that the employee phone Human Resources on a weekly basis with an update on their situation / illness / treatments and return to work. If the employee is too sick, then an alternative contact can be responsible. Alternate reporting terms may also be worked out with Human Resources as necessary;
- 7) After any sick days longer than one (1) week, the employee may be asked to provide a written clearance from a medical doctor advising they can return to their position as outlined by their job description.

Accrued Sick Days

Sick Days will be granted with pay up to a maximum of six (6) days per annum. Upon extenuating circumstances, the Director may grant additional sick days. Sick Days are accrued over the year from January 1st to December 31st. If an employee uses all Sick Days prior to a full year and their employment ends, the un-accrued days (or the value thereof) will be deducted from their final pay.

Sick Days Without Pay

Sick days in the form of 'Short Term Disability' will be granted, as legislated by Service Canada. The employee's benefits will remain in place as long as the employee commits to financial responsibility of the costs of benefits.

30.5 Jury Duty/ Court Leave

An employee who is subpoenaed as a witness or for jury duty will be allowed to take leave with pay for as long as the court requires their presence. Employees must remit all fees they receive as a juror or as a subpoenaed witness (minus any amount received for travel and meal expenses). Employees are expected to report for work when not actually required for jury duty or as a witness.

30.6 Medical and Dental Appointments

Employees are expected to arrange appointments during unscheduled work hours. If this is not possible, full-time employees may in advance request a leave for medical and dental appointments up to 6 hours paid time per year on approval of the Supervisor.

31. PERSONAL REFERENCES

References may be provided for employees and former employees of **OPTIONS** upon request.

A Release of Confidential Information Form must be completed and submitted to the most recent Supervisor or the **OPTIONS'** Director for the release of any necessary confidential information regarding employment with **OPTIONS** and for character reference purposes.

Upon receipt of the authorization form, any information contained in the employee's Feedback and Development Reviews may be disclosed to designated representatives.

OPTIONS does not provide a written letter of reference to an employee who is leaving its employ, except at the discretion of the Director.

OPTIONS will respond to a written request from a potential employer if consent has been given.

OPTIONS' Management and Supervisory staff are the only people authorized to give work-related references on **OPTIONS'** behalf.

32. ANNUAL VACATIONS AND GENERAL HOLIDAYS

32.1 Vacations

OPTIONS recognizes employee's hard work and the need for rest and recreation from work. **OPTIONS** expects that employees will schedule vacation time.

All vacation runs on a calendar year, January to December respectively.

- a) Full-time and part-time employees may schedule vacation time subject to **OPTIONS** approval.
- b) Annual vacations may be taken after one (1) year eligibility period unless otherwise approved by the **OPTIONS'** Director.
- c) Full-time hourly employees (those who work thirty (30) hours or more per week) will be entitled to accrue vacation pay at the rate of 4% of all regular gross earnings. This is approximately the equivalence of ten (10) days off with pay, however this will vary based on actual vacation accrual dollars. Part-time and relief employees will be paid out their vacation earned on each pay period at the rate of 4% on all regular gross earnings.

- d) After five (5) years of continuous employment, full-time employees (those who work thirty (30) hours or more per week) will be entitled to accrue vacation pay at the rate of 6% of all regular gross earnings. This is approximately the equivalence of fifteen (15) days off with pay, however this will vary based on actual vacation accrual dollars. Part-time and relief employees will be paid out their vacation earned on each pay period at the rate of 6% on all regular gross earnings.
- e) After ten (10) years of continuous employment, full-time employees (those who work thirty (30) hours or more per week) will be entitled to accrue vacation pay at the rate of 8% of all regular gross earnings. This is approximately the equivalence of twenty (20) days off with pay, however this will vary based on actual vacation accrual dollars. Part-time and relief employees will be paid out their vacation earned on each pay period at the rate of 8% on all regular gross earnings.
- f) After fifteen (15) years of continuous employment, full-time employees (those who work thirty (30) hours or more per week) will be entitled to accrue vacation pay at the rate of 10% of all regular gross earnings. This is approximately the equivalence of twenty five (25) days off with pay, however this will vary based on actual vacation accrual dollars. Part-time and relief employees will be paid out their vacation earned on each pay period at the rate of 10% on all regular gross earnings.
- g) When a salaried employee receives approval to utilize paid vacation in advance of having accrued a full year's vacation entitlement, this is considered a vacation advance. General practice is that salaried employees are granted full entitlement of vacation days prior to the calendar year end i.e. December 31st. In return, employees are expected to work the full calendar year. Should the employment relationship be terminated by either party prior to full accrual of vacation days, any pre-paid vacation not yet accrued is owed to **OPTIONS** and will be deducted from the employee's final pay.
- h) The maximum number of vacation days an employee may accrue is twenty five (25) days, regardless of the number of years worked.

32.2 Vacation Requests

Vacation requests must be approved by your Supervisor. If you are working in a location where several people have requested the same time off:

- Vacation time will be decided on a first come, first serve basis
- Discussion can occur as to people's willingness to compromise or change their request
- The Coordinator/Supervisor will make a decision to have only one staff away at a time. Vacation requests must be submitted at least one month prior to the vacation time away

Due to the nature of employment in the field of community rehabilitation, employees may be required to work during the Christmas holidays (including New Year's Eve and Day.)

To ensure a fair, equitable process, employees are required to submit their request for Christmas vacation by the date designated by their Supervisor (prior to the 15th of November.) The Supervisor will inform the staff of a decision within two (2) weeks of that date. If a request is not received, it will be expected that the employee will be available for work during the holidays.

Subject to the approval of the **OPTIONS'** Director, **OPTIONS** may pay out vacation accounts to employees. Employees need to submit a written request to Human Resources to have vacation paid out. This should include an explanation of why this has been requested. Human Resources will have the request approved and inform the employee if approval has been granted. A manual cheque for the vacation pay will then be processed by payroll.

32.3 Vacation Accrual Deadline

- Accrued vacation must be taken by June 30th of the following year i.e. vacation time for 2012 must be taken by June 30, 2013.
- If unable to adhere to this rule, a written request must be submitted to the **OPTIONS'** Director for pre-approval.
- Notice will be given to all employees regarding their accrued vacation status in January of each year, leaving six (6) months in which to utilize the previous year's outstanding accrued vacation. In July of each year, any unused or unapproved accrued vacation will be forfeited and considered null and void.
- All vacation requests **must** be pre-approved by the staff member's supervisor and any vacation over a two (2) week period **must** be approved by the **OPTIONS'** Director. All vacation requests for payout, extension, or additional vacation beyond two weeks **must be applied for in writing** to the **OPTIONS'** Director.

32.4 General Holidays

Employees are entitled to one (1) day's paid leave for each of the following holidays when that holiday falls on an employee's regular working day, and the employee has worked more than thirty (30) days in the previous twelve (12) months:

New Year's Day	Alberta Family Day
Good Friday	Victoria Day
Canada Day	Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day	Remembrance Day
Christmas Day	

Easter Monday, Heritage Day and Boxing Day may be approved as a General Holiday subject to the fiscal budget.

Because of the nature of most rehabilitation employment, these holidays may not be able to be taken on the exact date of the holiday. They will however, be given to the Employees, unless otherwise designated. However, the employee must attend their regular shift the day before, and after the General Holiday to receive the benefit.

Employees working the General Holiday that is their regularly scheduled shift, will be paid for their regular hours, plus time and a half for all hours worked on the General Holiday. Employees working the General Holiday, and it is not their regularly scheduled shift, will be paid time and a half for all hours worked on the General Holiday.

33. STAFF MEETINGS

Staff meetings are held once every two (2) months or on an as needed basis. The meetings are important and staff is expected to attend as outlined in the job description. If they are not on duty, staff will be paid for up to a two (2) hour period or at the discretion of their supervisor.

The purpose of the meetings is to discuss common concerns and issues, to review and revise individual goals and to update all staff on **OPTIONS** activities. Staff also meet with their supervisors/coordinators on a one to one basis whenever necessary.

33.1 Coordinators Meetings

Coordinators meetings are generally held every two (2) months. The purpose is to bring people up-to-date, discuss common concerns and issues, to act as a resource to one another, and to evaluate, review and revise standards as necessary.

33.2 Management Meetings

Management meetings are generally held every two weeks. The purpose is to receive updates on concerns and issues regarding individuals in the program, to discuss operational plans, evaluate, review and revise existing policies/procedures as needed.

33.3 Annual Planning Meetings

Evaluation and planning meetings are held annually where future strategic planning is completed.

34. PARTICIPATION IN COMMITTEES

OPTIONS encourages staff members to participate in committees within and without the agency as it relates to their position e.g., Supportive Rights Committee, Ethics Committee, Staff Development Committee, etc. Staff members may also be required to attend meetings and case conferences with other agencies or services related to specific individuals.

35. LIAISON WITH OTHER AGENCIES

OPTIONS and its staff are encouraged to develop and maintain positive relationships with other agencies and Provincial Departments. This is to ensure adequate communication is maintained and to assist us in accessing information, programs, etc. that may be useful in our support of individuals.

- Staff will conduct their liaison duties in a professional manner, showing an awareness and respect for the other agency's chain of command and the principles of confidentiality.

36. PETS

Employees should not have their personal pets at work unless approval has been given by the client's Parent/Guardian.

37. PERSONAL PHONE CALLS

As most of the situations **OPTIONS** supports are in the individual's private Homes, employees will keep personal phone calls to a minimum and of a short duration. Employees should avoid making personal long distance calls, unless it is a necessity. The charges should be made to their home telephone number or reported to the Coordinator.

38. HOUSE KEYS

OPTIONS' staff is generally working in homes which are not owned by **OPTIONS**. In a number of situations the individuals themselves are the renters. The individuals, their families/Guardians (except in the case of the Public Guardians office) should have keys to the home and should be aware of the location of an emergency key. **OPTIONS** office should also have a key to the home which will be kept under secure conditions.

Procedure:

- The Coordinator of each home is responsible to ensure that the individual and their parent/Guardian have a key to the home and are aware of the location of an emergency key.
- The Coordinator of each home is responsible to disburse key(s) to the approved employees and to retrieve them if a staff resigns or is terminated.
- Employees are responsible for the key(s) assigned. Keys must not be loaned or transferred to another employee without the Coordinators knowledge and approval.
- Keys will not be reproduced by an outside firm without permission of the Supervisor or the **OPTIONS'** Director.
- Employees will report lost keys to the Coordinator as soon as possible.
- If the locks are changed the Coordinator is responsible to ensure that a key to the home is in the **OPTIONS'** Office.

39. MILEAGE CLAIMS

Where travel funding has been approved, **OPTIONS** will reimburse employees for using their personal automobiles while carrying out job related duties. Mileage rates, paid in kilometers, are revised periodically as circumstances warrant. Employees will direct enquiries regarding the specifics of each individual's or house situation regarding mileage reimbursement. In some instances, arrangements are made with an individual's Funds Administrator or Trustee. **OPTIONS** is not responsible for parking and/or speeding fines. **OPTIONS** will reimburse reasonable parking costs.

Conditions:

- Employees must be in possession of a valid driver's license
- The vehicle must be covered by a minimum of \$1,000,000 liability insurance.
- Employees must be performing duties assigned by **OPTIONS**.
- Employees must submit a properly completed travel claim expense form.
- Pre-arranged medical appointments, out-of-town trips require Parent/Guardian and Supervisor approval.
- **OPTIONS** does not pay mileage from an employee's residence to their work site, or from the work site to home. Mileage for out-of-town travel will be determined on an individual basis and has to be approved by Trustee/Funds Administrator and/or the Director, prior to travel.
- Employees must sign an annual Driver Declaration.

40. TRANSPORTATION OF CLIENTS IN PRIVATE VEHICLES

OPTIONS requirements concerning the transportation of clients in private vehicles are intended to protect the clients, families and **OPTIONS'** employees. Prior to using a private vehicle for transportation of clients and/or their families employees must adhere to the following:

- It has been ascertained that public transportation or Handi-bus is either not available or is inappropriate.
- It is an emergency situation and/or
- Prior authorization has been obtained from Supervisor staff.

In the event of a motor vehicle accident occurring while transporting clients and/or their families in a private vehicle, employees must:

- Immediately contact their own automobile insurance agency
- Inform the **OPTIONS'** Financial Controller

40.1 Emergency Transportation of Clients

Employees who use their personal vehicles for transportation of clients and/or their families in the case of a minor emergency, to a hospital or other facility, must meet the following requirements:

- Transportation must be on **OPTIONS** business
- Driver and car must be covered under standard insurance.

40.2 Occasional Transportation of Clients

Employees who use their personal vehicles for the occasional transportation of clients and/or their families must meet the following requirements:

- Transportation must be on **OPTIONS** business
- Driver and car must be covered under business insurance

40.3 Regular Transportation of Clients

Employees who use their personal vehicles to provide regular transportation for clients and/or their families, as part of their job duties, must meet the following requirements:

- Transportation must be on **OPTIONS** business
- Driver and car must be covered under business insurance
- **OPTIONS** requires a certificate of insurance, covering transportation of passengers, from the employee's insurance company. Copies of the certificate will be submitted by the employee to his/her Supervisor or the Human Resources Assistant.

41. USE OF OPTIONS PROPERTY

- **OPTIONS** discourages the use of its equipment, facilities and vehicles by employees for their personal needs.
- Employees must obtain Supervisory and/or Director's approval prior to using any of the above for personal needs.

42. CHANGES IN STATUS

Staff will immediately notify the Human Resources Department of any change in their address, phone number, name or marital status. This is to ensure employee records are kept accurate and current. Changes in status may also affect employee benefits.

43. RE-EMPLOYMENT OF STAFF (Benefits and Holidays)

A re-employed employee may be eligible, with the Director's approval, for:

Salary at the grid level they had attained when their employment ceased, the **OPTIONS'** Benefit package, according to the policies of the insuring company. Holidays will be set as per a new employee.

44. STAFF TRANSFERS

Transfers are based primarily on individual ability, or on the compatibility, wishes or best interests of the individual.

Employees may be temporarily re-assigned to a location other than their normal place of work. Employees may be permanently re-assigned, on two (2) weeks' notice, to a location other than their normal place of work.

45. RESIGNATIONS

All employees resigning from a position are expected to give a minimum of two (2) weeks' notice in writing prior to the effective date. A longer period of time should be given whenever possible. This is to ensure minimal disruption of service to **OPTIONS** and the individuals we serve.

Supervisory staff should endeavor to give a minimum of one (1) months' notice in writing prior to the effective date of resignation. Department Directors are encouraged to discuss with the resigning employee the reasons for their resignation and conduct an exit interview.

46. ABANDONMENT OF POSITION

Employees who are absent for three (3) days without communication with their Supervisor will be considered to have abandoned with position with **OPTIONS**. Such employees will be deemed to have resigned without notice.

Procedure:

After the three (3) day period has ended, the Supervisor will send a registered letter to the employee stating that the employee has abandoned the position and is therefore no longer employed by **OPTIONS**. Exceptions will be made in mitigating circumstances.

47. PAYROLL

OPTIONS operates a semi-monthly pay system with pay deposited on the 15th and the last day of the month. **OPTIONS** also has direct deposit for the convenience of employees.

Time sheets are legal documents and are the responsibility of each individual employee and must be turned into the supervisory staff on the 2nd and the 17th of the month. Late time sheets will be paid on the next pay period.

Coordinators and Supervisory staff will check time sheets to ensure hours of work are correct. Supervisors will turn in staff time sheets to the Payroll Administrator no later than 9:30 am on or before the 4th & 19th of each month. Employees will report any pay-cheque errors to the Human Resources Manager and corrections will be made as soon as possible.

47.1 Advances

If time sheets are not in on time, an advance will not be available unless approved by the **OPTIONS'** Director. A maximum of two (2) advances will be considered during the year. An advance must be prepaid in the next pay period. Should employment terminate prior to the repayment of the advance in full, the employee will agree to have the remaining balance deducted from their final pay.

A written request for the advance must be submitted to Human Resources. Human Resources will obtain approval from the **OPTIONS'** Director. Human Resources will advise the employee if approval has been granted and process the manual cheque. Human Resources will advise the employee when the manual cheque is available.

47.2 Loans

In the event of an employee experiencing financial hardship, a written request for a loan must be submitted to Human Resources. Human Resources will obtain approval from the **OPTIONS'** Director. Human Resources will advise the employee if approval has been granted and will process a manual cheque. Human Resources will advise the employee when the cheque is ready. Repayment terms will be determined and agreed upon. Should employment terminate prior to the repayment of the loan, in full, the employee will agree to have the remaining balance deducted from their final pay.

48. SALARIES

Salaries paid to employees of **OPTIONS** are set according to specific job categories and an employee's experience. **OPTIONS** has a salary grid for all Administrative, Supervisory and front line positions.

49. STAFF STATUS

In order to standardize terminology and ensure common understanding in reference to employees, definitions of employees positions are as follows:

Full-time Staff – Refers to an employee who works a minimum of thirty (30) hours per week on a yearly basis.

Part-time Staff – Refers to an employee who works regularly scheduled hours, but does not have thirty (30) hours per week scheduled for work.

Permanent Employee – Refers to a full-time or part-time employee who has successfully completed the qualifying period and is assigned permanent status by the Director.

Relief Employee – Refers to an employee who works on a non-regular, temporary, hourly basis.

50. ON-CALL DUTY SYSTEM

- **OPTIONS** has a twenty-four (24) hour on-call system available to support the individuals and staff regarding any emergency or incident that may arise.
- Staff should not feel they have to handle emergencies without support and it is also helpful to have some advice regarding difficult decision making. Staff will not be viewed negatively if they use the on-call system.
- If a situation arises which requires support, employees will contact the Supervisor on-call.
- Supervisory staff assigned to be on call will carry a cell-phone and will respond to situations during off hours as needed.
- Remuneration will be as scheduled by the **OPTIONS'** Director.

51. SUBPOENAS

An employee served with a subpoena must immediately inform their Coordinator, Supervisor, or the **OPTIONS'** Director.

52. VOTING

OPTIONS acts in accordance with all legislation pertaining to the execution of municipal, provincial and federal elections.

53. VISITORS

Staff should not have visitors (including relatives or friends) at a home unless it has been approved by the Coordinator, Supervisor, and the client / parent / guardian. Staff should not have visitors sleep over at any time.

54. MEALS

Employees will pay a fee of \$2.00 for each meal they eat during a work shift. A minimum of \$2.00 will be deducted each pay period. The purpose of this deduction is to payback the individuals we are supporting for eating and drinking their food while working in their respective homes. All monies deducted are returned to the individuals and placed back into their respective grocery budgets.

55. SMOKING

OPTIONS requests that you do not smoke in the individual's home unless you have received permission from the parent / Guardians. We also request that you do not smoke in front of them unless they are smokers themselves.

56. CELL PHONE / WIRELESS USE POLICY

OPTIONS provides cellular telephones to employees as a business tool. The phones are provided to assist employees in communicating effectively with other employees and outside clients / vendors as deemed necessary. We would encourage all cell phone users to use their cell phones only if absolutely necessary.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines regarding the use of and responsibilities required as an **OPTIONS** cell phone user.

Cell phones that are purchased through **OPTIONS** are the property of **OPTIONS**. The primary use of the telephone is for **OPTIONS'** business. Personal use of an assigned cellular phone should be occasional, for example, business related trips or emergencies. In case of abuse, phone bills may be monitored for any excessive usage.

Note: Under no circumstances should the **OPTIONS** assigned cellular phone be used as a replacement for a personal cell phone or residential landline phone.

OPTIONS understands and appreciates that employees utilize their cellular / wireless phones for business purposes. At the same time, cell phones are a distraction in the workplace. To ensure the effectiveness of meetings, staff are asked to leave cell phones at their desk. Or, on the occasion of an emergency that requires immediate attention, the cell phone may be carried in while on vibrate mode.

Personal cell phones should not be used while at work, except in the case of an emergency. It is important not to be chatting on your cell phone while working with our clients or completing any other work for **OPTIONS**.

OPTIONS understands that staff may use their cell phones for business purposes while driving. **OPTIONS** recognizes that other distractions occur while driving, however, eliminating the use of cell phones while driving is one way to minimize the risk for our employees of accidents. Therefore, you are requested to either stop your vehicle so that you can safely use your cell phone, or you should ask the caller for permission to contact them at a better and safer time.

Staff who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including employment termination.

Individuals to whom cellular phones have been provided are responsible for the security and maintenance of the phones and must promptly report any damage, theft, or vandalism to **OPTIONS**. Safe use of the cell phone is of the utmost importance. Cellular telephones may not be used to defame, harass, intimidate, or threaten any other person. Employees are prohibited from using their cell phones in any illegal, illicit or offensive manner.

57. LEGISLATION

OPTIONS and its staff will uphold the rights of individuals as defined under The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act, Human Resources Development Canada: Employment Insurance, the Canadian Criminal Code, Canadian Common Law, the Age of Majority Act, the Alberta Bill Of Rights, the Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act, the Persons with Developmental Disabilities Community Governance Act, the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Act, the Mental Health Act, the Personal Directives Act, the Protection of Persons in Care Act, the Public Health Act, the Employment Pension Plans Act, Employment Standards Code and Regulation, the Labor Relations Code, the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations, the Residential Tenancies Act, the Blind and Deaf Persons' Rights Act, The Social Care Facilities Licensing Act, the Social Care Facilities Review Committee Act, the Dependent Adults Act, the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, The Personal Information Protection Act, and/or any other relevant legislation pertaining to Human and Legal Rights.

POLICY:

OPTIONS' staff will be familiar with and respectful of individual's rights.

OPTIONS' staff will support individuals to understand their rights and provide information to them in a manner which they can understand, including situational opportunities that arise.

OPTIONS will provide a personal advocate to assist an individual if requested.

Reference: Information Package for Clients; the Law & Your Rights (Plain Language Booklet & Tape in Resource Room), Charter of Rights (V.R.R.I.)