



# Employee Handbook

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## Welcome to the Texas Litter Control Team!

Dear Employee,

You and Texas Litter Control (TLC) have made an important decision: TLC has decided you can contribute to our success, and you've decided that Texas Litter Control is the organization where you can pursue your career productively and enjoyably.

We believe we've made the right decision. The minute you start working here, you become an integral part of Texas Litter Control and its future. Every job in our company is important, and you will play a key role in the continued growth and success of our organization.

As you will quickly discover, our success is based upon delivering high quality services and products and providing unsurpassed customer service. How do we do it?

- ...by working very hard,
- ...thinking about our customers' needs,
- ...doing whatever it takes,
- ...treating each other and customers with respect,
- ...and by acting as a team.

Should you have any questions concerning this handbook, your employment or benefits, please feel free to discuss them with the Site Supervisor or Executive Director.

Welcome to the team!

Sincerely,

The Board of Directors of Texas Litter Control

# Introduction, Notices and Disclaimers

## Introduction

An interesting and challenging experience awaits you as an employee of Texas Litter Control. We have written this handbook in order to answer some of the questions you may have concerning the policies of the Company and, in certain instances where noted, policies specific to Texas Litter Control. Please read it thoroughly and retain it for future reference. Should you have any questions regarding any policies, please ask either the Site Supervisor or the Executive Director for assistance.

## Definitions

The term “employee” as used throughout this handbook means persons employed by Texas Litter Control. The term “employment” as used throughout this handbook means your employment with Texas Litter Control. The term “Company” as used throughout this handbook means Texas Litter Control.

## Disclaimer of Express or Implied Contract of Employment

This employee handbook is provided as a guide and does not create either an express or implied contract of employment of any specific duration.

I understand that employment at-will means that either the Company or I have the right to terminate my employment at any time and for any reason not otherwise prohibited by law.

No supervisor, manager or representative of TLC, other than the Board of Directors, has the authority to change your at-will status, enter into any agreement for employment for any specified period, or make any promises or commitments contrary to the foregoing.

## Notice to Employees

This Employee Handbook supersedes all previous Company handbooks and policies, other than the policy of at-will employment which may only be changed by a written document signed by the President and Vice President of the Company. In addition, this handbook supersedes all prior management memoranda to the extent that such memoranda contradict a subject or policy covered herein.

## Change in Policy

The policies in this handbook are subject to change at the sole discretion of the Company. We will notify you of these changes by appropriate means. Changes will be effective on dates determined by the Company, and you may not rely on policies that have been superseded. No supervisor or manager has any authority to alter the foregoing.

If you are uncertain about any policy or procedure, please check with the Site Supervisor or Executive Director.

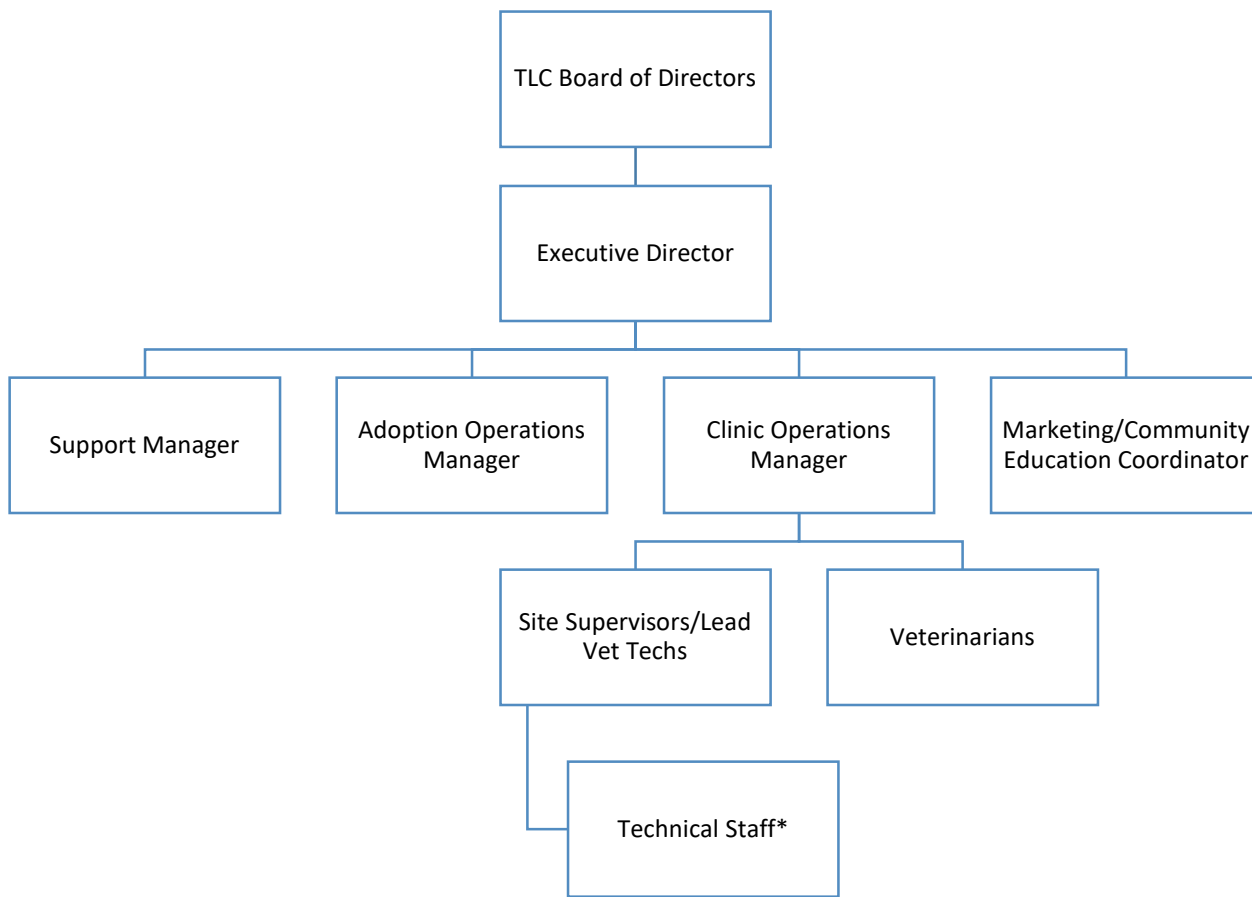
Texas Litter Control is a Texas Nonprofit Corporation. Texas Litter Control is a 501(c)3 Tax-exempt organization.

## TLC Mission Statement

Texas Litter Control is a high quality, low cost veterinary clinic, adoption center, pet food bank, and shelter support program for companion animals. Our mission is to eliminate the suffering of companion pets in Texas by:

- educating the public on the importance of spaying/neutering and proper pet healthcare;
- providing a low cost solution available to the general public for spay and neuter and basic wellness services;
- providing extended pet healthcare to income and program qualified individuals;
- providing adoption options for fully vetted pets to the public;
- providing alternative solutions such as healthcare, food and other basic needs to pet owners considering surrendering a pet to a local shelter;
- providing a networking and educational forum for animal welfare organizations to work together;
- providing high quality, high volume spay/neuter surgery training for Veterinarians; and
- mentoring other animal welfare groups to open clinics in other under serviced areas.

## TLC Organization Chart



*\*The Lead Technician is also the Site Supervisor. He/she manages and oversees the operations of the clinic he/she is assigned to. His/her responsibilities include but not limited to hiring, termination, corrective action, scheduling, enforcement that all regulatory rules are followed, ensure proper handling of inventory and money, etc., however, the Veterinarian on staff is responsible for the well-being of all animals within his/her care. Technicians must follow the instructions of the Veterinarians at all times.*

## Chain of Command

We refer employees to their Site Supervisor, Clinic Operations Manager or Executive Director throughout this Employee Handbook. This is because many positions report directly to the Executive Director. Respecting the chain of command helps keep a more harmonious work environment. Employees should always try and resolve issues through their immediate supervisor before involving the Executive Director or Clinic Operations Manager. Veterinarians should discuss issues involving personnel or clinic operations with the Site Supervisor first. If a matter cannot be resolved, it should then be escalated to the Executive Director.

## Confidentiality Agreement

Information that pertains to TLC's business, including all nonpublic information concerning TLC, its vendors and suppliers, is strictly confidential and must not be given to people who are not employed by TLC. Please help protect confidential information by taking the following precautionary measures:

- Discuss work matters only with other TLC employees who have a specific business reason to know or have access to such information.
- Do not discuss work matters in public places.
- Monitor and supervise visitors to TLC to insure that they do not have access to company information.
- Destroy hard copies of documents containing confidential information that is not filed or archived.
- Secure confidential information in desk drawers and cabinets at the end of every business day.
- Do not take photos of the customers, pets, or the clinic without prior approval from the Clinic Director.
- Do not post information about customers, pets, or the clinic without prior approval from the Clinic Director.

Your cooperation is particularly important because of our obligation to protect the security of our clients' and our own confidential information. Use your own sound judgment and good common sense, but if at any time you are uncertain as to whether you can properly divulge information or answer questions, please consult the Executive Director.

## Conflict of Interest

Employees must avoid any interest, influence or relationship which might conflict or appear to conflict with the best interests of TLC. You must avoid any situation in which your loyalty may be divided and promptly disclose any situation where an actual or potential conflict may exist to your Site Supervisor or Executive Director.

Examples of potential conflict situations include:

- Having a financial interest in any business transaction with TLC
- Owning or having a significant financial interest in, or other relationship with, a TLC competitor, customer or supplier, and
- Accepting gifts, entertainment or other benefit of more than a nominal value from a TLC competitor, customer or supplier.

Anyone with a conflict of interest must disclose it to management and remove themselves from negotiations, deliberations or votes involving the conflict. You may, however, state your position and answer questions when your knowledge may be of assistance to TLC.

## Employment Policies

This handbook is designed to answer many of your questions about the practices and policies of the Company. These policies apply to all areas of employment, including recruitment, hiring, training and development, promotion, transfer, termination, layoff, compensation benefits, social and recreational programs, and all other conditions and privileges of employment in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws.

Feel free to consult with your Site Supervisor or Executive Director for help concerning anything you do not understand.



## Equal Employment Opportunity

The Company provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants without regard to race, color, religious creed, sex, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, pregnancy, childbirth, physical disability, mental disability, age, military status or status as a Vietnam-era or special disabled veteran, marital status, registered domestic partner or civil union status, gender (including sex stereotyping and gender identity or expression), medical condition (including, but not limited to, cancer related or HIV/AIDS related), genetic information, or sexual orientation in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws. In addition, the Company complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location in which the Company has facilities. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training.

## Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires an employer to provide reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities, unless it would cause undue hardship to the Company. A reasonable accommodation may include changes in the work environment or in the way a job is performed that enables a person with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities.

If you require an accommodation, you must inform your Site Supervisor or Executive Director that there is a need for an adjustment or change at work for a reason related to a disability. We will respond promptly and to the best of our ability to accommodate the needs of all employees.

## Personnel Files

TLC maintains a personnel file on each employee. You may review your personnel file upon request and in the presence of authorized personnel. If you are interested in reviewing your file, contact your Site Supervisor or Executive Director to make arrangements.

To ensure that your personnel file is up-to-date at all times, notify your Site Supervisor or Executive Director of any changes in your name, telephone number, home address, withholding instructions, number of dependents, beneficiary designations, scholastic achievements, the individuals to notify in case of an emergency and so forth. An Employee Change in Status Notice will need to be filled out and given to your manager.

## Classifications of Employment

For purposes of salary administration and eligibility for overtime payments and employment benefits, the Company classifies its employees as follows:

**Full-time Regular Employees** -- Employees hired to work a normal, full-time workweek of thirty (30) hours or more or Veterinarians on shift scheduling working five (5) or more shifts per week on a regular basis. Such employees may be "exempt" or "nonexempt" as defined below.

**Part-time Regular Employees** -- Employees hired to work fewer than thirty (30) hours per week on a regular basis. Such employees may be "exempt" or "nonexempt" as defined below.

**Temporary or Relief Employees** -- Employees engaged to work full time or part time with the understanding that their employment will be terminated no later than upon completion of a specific project or assignment. A temporary employee may be offered, and may accept, a new temporary assignment and thus still retain temporary status. Such employees may be "exempt" or "nonexempt" as defined below. Individuals contracted from temporary employment agencies for specific assignments are considered employees of the respective

agency and are not considered employees of the Company. Temporary agency employees are paid by the respective agency and should not be on the Company payroll.

**Nonexempt Employees** – Employees who are required to be paid at least minimum wage and overtime at the federal, state or local prescribed wage rate, whichever is higher. Nonexempt employees are required to complete and provide accurate records of their hours worked.

**Exempt Employees** -- Employees who are not eligible for overtime and in some cases also not subject to minimum wage regulations, in accordance with applicable federal, state and local wage and hour laws. Executives, professional employees (Veterinarians), outside sales representatives, certain computer professionals and some administrative employees are typically exempt.

## Outside Employment

Employees may hold outside jobs so long as they meet the performance standards of their job with the Company. All employees will be judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work requirements. Due to safety concerns for the patients, employees may not work an overnight job and then come in to work at TLC.

If it is determined that an employee's outside work conflicts or interferes with performance, safety or the ability to meet the requirements of the Company as they are modified from time to time, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if he desires to remain with the Company.

Outside employment that constitutes a conflict of interest is prohibited. Employees also may not receive any income or material gain from individuals outside the Company for materials produced or services rendered while performing their jobs with the Company.

## Job Performance Evaluations

You will be evaluated with respect to the specific job that you are performing. As you demonstrate the ability to take on additional responsibilities, your talents will be utilized in the manner deemed most suitable to your demonstrated ability and the needs of the Company.

A written performance evaluation of each employee may be performed periodically. The evaluation will be conducted by your supervisor and will be reviewed with you. Any areas of specific achievement or in need of improvement will be noted and discussed with you.

A positive performance review does not guarantee either an increase in compensation or continuing employment. Raises, if given, may be based on a number of factors, such as Texas Litter Control performance and profitability, department or group performance and individual performance.

## Employment References

All employment verification or reference requests on current or former employees are to be referred to the Executive Director at 281-528-1238. TLC will normally only release last title and dates of employment. All other requests for information on current or former employees also are to be referred to the Executive Director, who will consider and respond to the request.

Requests for employment verification for credit or mortgage purposes should also be referred to the Executive Director. Certain information will be provided only if the employee has signed a release.

## Separation from Employment

An employee may be separated from employment either voluntarily or involuntarily by retirement, resignation, lack of work or termination.

### Exit Interviews

Management may conduct an exit interview to discuss your reasons for leaving and any other impressions that you may have about Texas Litter Control. During the exit interview, you can provide insights into areas for improvement for Texas Litter Control and your specific position.

### Return of Company Property

Any property issued to you by Texas Litter Control, such as software, computer equipment, databases, files, cell phone, pager, keys, parking passes or credit card(s) must be returned at the time of your termination. You will be responsible for any lost or damaged items. Replacement costs of lost or damaged items including missing keys requiring changing of locks, may be withheld from your last paycheck.

## Operations Policies

### Appearance

Appropriate attire is required. Clinic staff should wear scrub tops with scrub bottoms, jeans or capri pants and appropriate footwear. Office staff, can wear jeans, however tops should be presentable. TLC recommends golf/polo type shirts or solid T Shirts, jeans, and tennis shoes. Employees are allowed to wear short pants at outdoor events.

Employees should refrain from wearing:

- Skirts or shorts more than 3 inches above the knee,
- T Shirts with logos, controversial designs, or political designs,
- Clothes with holes,
- Open toe shoes if working at a clinic or at the sanctuary, or
- Loop earrings and facial piercings.

Employees must cover all tattoos that depict:

- Violence toward animals or people,
- Racism or discrimination,
- Nudity,
- Illegal substances or substance abuse, or
- Offensive language.

Suppliers and customers visit our office and we wish to put forth an image that will make us all proud to be TLC employees. These rules apply even if you get dirty. Employees should anticipate that they may get dirty. Keeping an extra scrub top and pants on hand is highly recommended.

Please contribute to a positive work environment by maintaining high standards of neatness, grooming and personal hygiene. Also, please keep in mind that some individuals may be allergic to such things as perfumes, colognes and lotions. If you use such items, please use them in moderation and with consideration for those around you.

## Personal Phone Calls and Personal Business

During business hours, you are requested to keep personal calls, including personal cell phone calls, to an absolute minimum. No long distance or toll calls, such as directory assistance, other than Company business calls, are to be made from Company telephones. If it is absolutely necessary that you make a toll call from work, you must charge it to your personal calling card, home number or use your personal cell phone. Telephone records are subject to periodic review by management. Veterinarians are not to accept personal phone calls while they are performing surgery. Technicians are not to accept personal phone calls or text messages while they are monitoring patients.

If you need to leave the worksite to conduct personal business, you must first obtain permission from your Site Supervisor. This will allow us to make modifications to the work schedule if necessary and will keep us aware of your activities during the day. Personal visits of friends and family members to the worksite are discouraged.

## Use of Communications Systems

It is the intent of the Company to provide the communication systems necessary for the conduct of its business. Employees are expected to adhere to proper use of all communication systems. These include, but are not limited to, the telephone, electronic mail (e-mail), cell phone, BlackBerry, facsimile, Internet, corporate intranet, voice mail, computer terminals, modems, systems and other software. Employees are permitted use of Company property and must comply with Company policies and procedures regarding its use.

The communication systems are owned and operated by the Company and are to be used for the business of the Company. Employees should have no expectation of privacy of any correspondence, messages or information in the systems, regardless of the content or purpose of the same. No personal devices are allowed on the TLC network.

The Company reviews, monitors and accesses all electronic content, keystrokes and messages sent or received for any purpose, regardless of whether messages are transmitted/received via the Company's e-mail system or the employee's personal e-mail account(s). All such messages, regardless of content or the intent of the sender, are a form of corporate correspondence, and are subject to the same internal and external regulation, security and scrutiny as any other corporate correspondence. E-mail communications must be written following customary business communication practices as is used in Company correspondence. E-mail communications are official internal Company communications, which may be subject to summons in legal proceedings. Work-related messages should be directed to the affected employee(s) rather than sending a global message to all employees. It is the employee's obligation to notify any third parties affected by this policy of the Company's policies regarding monitoring employee communications.

The Company's communication systems shall not be used as a forum to promote religious or political causes, or an illegal activity. Offensive or improper messages or opinions, transmission or postings of sexually explicit images or other images or materials inappropriate for the workplace, messages, cartoons, or other such items, or messages that may be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based on race, color, religious creed, sex, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, pregnancy, childbirth, physical disability, mental disability, age, military status or status as a Vietnam-era or special disabled veteran, marital status, registered domestic partner or civil union status, gender (including sex stereotyping and gender identity or expression), medical condition (including, but not limited to, cancer related or HIV/AIDS related), genetic information or sexual orientation are also prohibited on the Company's communication systems.

Employees shall not, unless authorized by personnel with the authority to grant such authorization, attempt to gain access to another employee's personal communications system and messages. The Company, however,

reserves the right to access, and will access an employee's messages and other electronic data at any time, without notice to the employee.

Any violation of these guidelines may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## Internet Code of Conduct

Access to the Internet has been provided to staff members for the benefit of the organization and its clients. It allows employees to connect to information resources around the world. Every staff member has a responsibility to maintain and enhance the Company's public image and to use the Internet in a productive manner. To ensure that all employees are responsible, productive Internet users and are protecting the Company's public image, the following guidelines have been established for using the Internet.

### Acceptable Use of the Internet

Employees accessing the Internet are representing the Company. All communications should be for professional reasons. Employees are responsible for seeing that the Internet is used in an effective, ethical and lawful manner. Instant Messaging Systems and Internet Forums may be used to conduct official Company business or to gain technical or analytical advice. Databases may be accessed for information as needed. E-mail may be used for business contacts.

### Unacceptable Use of the Internet

The Internet should not be used for personal gain or advancement of individual views. Solicitation of non-Company business or any use of the Internet for personal gain is strictly prohibited. Use of the Internet must not disrupt the operation of the Company network or the network of other users. It must not interfere with your productivity.

### Communications

Each employee is responsible for the content of all text, audio or images that he/she places or sends over the Internet including, but not limited to, any Web-based sites or programs utilized through the Company. Fraudulent, harassing or obscene messages are prohibited. All messages communicated on the Internet should have your name attached. No messages will be transmitted under an assumed name. Users may not attempt to obscure the origin of any message. Information published on the Internet should not violate or infringe upon the rights of others. No abusive, profane or offensive language may be transmitted through the system. Employees who wish to express personal opinions on the Internet are to use non-Company Internet systems and should refrain from making any representations that would somehow attribute their personal opinions to the Company.

### Software

To prevent computer viruses from being transmitted through the system, there will be no unauthorized downloading of any software. All software downloads require prior approval by the IT staff or the Executive Director.

### Copyright Issues

Staff members while using the Internet may not transmit copyrighted materials belonging to entities other than the Company. One copy of copyrighted material may be downloaded for use in research. Users are not permitted to copy, transfer, rename, add or delete information or programs belonging to other users unless given express permission to do so by the owner. Failure to observe copyright or license agreements may result in disciplinary action from the Company, up to and including immediate termination or legal action by the copyright owner.

## Passwords

While our systems may accommodate the use of passwords for security, the reliability of such for maintaining confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Individual passwords do not prevent the Company from accessing your files.

You are required, however, to disclose your password(s) to your Site Manager or Executive Director because your system may need to be readily accessed by the Company when you are absent. Never disclose personal or system passwords to anyone other than authorized Company representatives.

Employees will not attempt to gain access to another employee's e-mail or voice mail messages. However, the Company reserves the right to access an employee's messages at any time, without notice, to the employee.

## Security

All messages created, sent or retrieved over the Internet are the property of the Company and should be considered public information. The Company accesses and monitors all messages and files on the computer system as deemed necessary and appropriate. Internet messages are public communication and are not private. All communications including text and images can be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver. You cannot change the clinic's computer password without permission from your Site Supervisor or Executive Director.

## Harassment

Harassment of any kind is prohibited. Messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual or group's race, color, religious creed, sex, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, pregnancy, childbirth, physical disability, mental disability, age, military status or status as a Vietnam-era or special disabled veteran, marital status, registered domestic partner or civil union status, gender (including sex stereotyping and gender identity or expression), medical condition (including, but not limited to, cancer related or HIV/AIDS related), genetic information or sexual orientation will not be permitted.

## Violations

Violations of any guidelines listed herein may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination. If necessary, the Company will advise appropriate legal officials of any illegal violations.

## Blogging

### Definitions

A "blog" is a written diary posted on the Internet and as such is accessible to anyone who has access to the Internet. A blog can include, but is not limited to, photos, drawings, videos, essays and other writings, and other graphic or audio information. A blog may be an actual "Web log," a posting on an Internet bulletin board system, a posting in an Internet chat room, an Internet Web page or any similar form of social networking site or communication over the Internet.

### Compliance with other Policies

Bloggers must comply with the Company's policies concerning confidential information and protecting trade secrets. Under no circumstances may a Company employee post, by blogging, any comments which are discriminatory or harassing in violation of the Anti-Harassment Policy.

## Prohibition of Blogging Using Texas Litter Control Property

Employees may not blog using Texas Litter Control property without the express written consent of the Texas Litter Control Board of Directors and for purposes consistent and not in conflict with Texas Litter Control business.

## Limitations of Blogging Using Non-Company Resources

Employees are encouraged to discuss complaints about the Company with any member of the management team. The Company cannot resolve an issue if it is not aware of the issue.

The Company expects all employees to act professionally and refrain from behavior, both on and off the job, which could adversely impact the Company's reputation or mission. Unless specifically authorized in writing by Texas Litter Control management, under no circumstances may employees blog to post information that attributes the author's personal opinions to the Company. Under no circumstances may employees blog to post information that puts the Company, its management, products or services in a negative light even if the blogging is done using non-Company resources, outside of normal working hours and from a non-Company location.

This policy is not intended to restrict employees' lawful expressions of opinion other than those that put the Company, its management, products or services in a negative light.

## Violations

To the extent permitted by law, employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. If you have questions about this policy, you should consult with your Site Supervisor or Executive Director. The Company will pursue liable damages if applicable.

## Wireless Communication Device Use Guidelines

It is the policy of Texas Litter Control to provide wireless communication devices, including hands-free devices, to those employees who have a job-related need for them. Such devices are the property of Texas Litter Control and their use must be properly documented. Accordingly, these guidelines must be followed:

- Employees provided with wireless communication and hands-free devices for business use will be expected to carry such equipment on their person as directed by their supervisor.
- Employees are not permitted to use any wireless communication or hands-free devices issued by Texas Litter Control for personal use without prior, written approval of the Site Supervisor or Executive Director. Texas Litter Control accesses and monitors electronic communications made using Texas Litter Control issued devices.
- Texas Litter Control will not pay for or reimburse an employee for expenses related to personal calls. Such expenses are the employee's personal responsibility. In the event Texas Litter Control grants an exception to initially cover such personal expenses, such an exception is specifically conditioned on initial receipt of a related payroll deduction authorization form signed by the employee.
- Employees are responsible for lost or stolen wireless communication and hands-free devices and must report such losses immediately.

Upon termination of employment for any reason, the employee must return the company wireless communication and/or hands-free devices to Texas Litter Control.

## Safety Issues

The Company values its employees and the safety of other third parties, and accordingly expects employees to put safety first while driving. Drivers are prohibited from using wireless communication while driving unless the

driver is using a hands-free device. Texting, which is meant to include composing, sending, or reading, while driving is strictly prohibited. Employees whose job responsibilities include regular or occasional driving and who are issued a wireless communication device for business use are expected to refrain from using this device while driving. Safety must come before all other concerns. Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, employees are strongly encouraged to pull off to the side of the road and park the vehicle in a safe location before placing or accepting a call.

If acceptance of a call is unavoidable and pulling over is not an option, employees are expected to keep the call short, use hands-free equipment, refrain from discussion of complicated or emotional discussions, and keep their eyes on the road. Special care should be taken in situations where there is heavy or erratic traffic, inclement weather or the employee is driving in an unfamiliar area. Additionally, employees are expected to know and follow all local and state laws relating to using communication devices, including but not limited to school and construction zones.

Employees whose job responsibilities do not specifically include driving as an essential function, but who are issued wireless communication and hands-free devices for business use, are also expected to abide by the provisions above. Under no circumstances are employees allowed to place themselves or others at risk to fulfill business needs.

Employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of their wireless communication device while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions.

These are standard operating procedures, and any violation of the above guidelines by an employee will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## Gifts and Favors

No employee shall solicit or accept for personal use, or for the use of others, any gift, favor, loan, gratuity, reward, promise of future employment, or any other thing of monetary value that might influence, or appear to influence, the judgment or conduct of the employee in the performance of their job.

Employees can accept occasional unsolicited courtesy gifts or favors (such as business lunches, tickets to sporting events or cultural events, holiday baskets, flowers, etc.) so long as the gifts or favors have a market value under \$25, are customary in the industry, and do not influence or appear to influence the judgment or conduct of the employee. Please discuss any exceptions to this amount with your Supervisor or the Executive Director.

Employees are not to give, offer or promise directly or indirectly anything of value to any representative of a customer, a potential customer, a vendor or potential vendor, financial institution or potential financial institution with whom the Company has or may have a business relationship.

## Rescuing Animals

Some employees are associated with third party rescue organizations. Employees are never authorized to take possession of an animal from a client on behalf of a third party rescue. The client must be referred to the third party off premise. Employees are not allowed to take possession of an animal from a client on behalf of Texas Litter Control without permission from the Executive Director, Clinic Operations Manager or Adoption Operations Manager. If permission is granted, employees are required to have the owner sign an Owner Surrender Form before leaving the animal.



## Solicitations and Distribution of Literature

It is the intent of the Company to maintain a proper business environment and prevent interference with work and inconvenience to others from solicitations and/or distribution of literature.

Group meetings for solicitation purposes, distributing literature, circulating petitions in work or sales areas is prohibited unless it is approved by the onsite supervisor as a Company-sponsored event. The following guidelines will apply throughout the Company:

- Employees will not engage in any solicitation of other employees for any purpose whatsoever during working hours or in work areas.
- The Company's facilities may not be used as a meeting place that involves solicitation and/or distribution of literature.
- In order to maintain good customer relations and preserve the professional work environment, employees may not wear any insignia, badge or button on their person, nor display any insignia, badge or button on their desk or in their work area, excluding professional designation awards, except as allowed by law.
- Management will approve and post all information that is displayed on the Company's bulletin board or make available for review or distribution to employees.
- Trespassing, soliciting or distributing literature by non-employees is prohibited on Company premises.

## Romantic Relationships

The Company desires to avoid misunderstandings, actual or potential conflicts of interest, complaints of favoritism, possible claims of sexual harassment, and the employee morale and dissension problems that can potentially result from romantic relationships involving managerial and supervisory employees in the Company or certain other employees in the Company.

Accordingly, managers and supervisors are discouraged from becoming romantically involved with one another or with any other employee of the Company. Additionally, all employees, both managerial and non-managerial, are discouraged from becoming romantically involved with other employees, when, in the opinion of the Company, their personal relationships may create a conflict of interest, cause disruption, create a negative or unprofessional work environment, or present concerns regarding supervision, safety, security or morale.

An employee who is romantically involved with a supervisor or fellow employee should immediately and fully disclose the relevant circumstances to the Site Supervisor or Executive Director so that a determination can be made as to whether the relationship presents an actual or potential conflict of interest. If an actual or potential conflict exists, the Company may take whatever action appears appropriate according to the circumstances, up to and including transfer or discharge. Failure to disclose facts may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employees are expected to behave in a professional manner in the workplace and keep their personal relationships out of the work environment. Employees should also remember that the Company maintains a strict policy against unlawful harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment. The Company will vigorously enforce this policy consistent with all applicable federal, state and local laws.

## Ethics

Employees are expected to act ethically, honestly, and with the highest standard of personal integrity at all times in the performance of their job responsibilities. Employees must comply fully with federal, state and local

laws and regulations governing our operations, and must conduct their business affairs according to the highest legal and ethical standards. Violation of this policy may subject an employee to discipline, up to and including immediate termination.

You are to report any actual or potential violations of applicable laws or regulations and any unethical, dishonest or improper conduct to your Site Supervisor or Executive Director. If you are uncertain as to the applicability of a law or this policy to your work, you are responsible for seeking guidance from your Site Supervisor or Executive Director. No reprisal or detrimental action of any kind shall be taken against an employee who reports a violation of law or of this policy.

## Company Property

In an effort to ensure the safety and welfare of employees and invitees, the Company reserves the right, on reasonable suspicion that Company policy is being violated, to conduct searches or inspections which includes, but is not limited to, employee's work area, desks, automobiles and any other property located on Company premises or worksites. Entry on Company premises or worksites constitutes consent to searches or inspections.

## Weapons

It is the intent of the Company to provide a safe and secure workplace for employees, clients, customers of clients, visitors and others with whom we do business. The Company has "zero tolerance" for, and expressly forbids the possession of, while on Company property, any type of weapon, firearm, explosive and/or ammunition unless approved by the Executive Director. For purposes of this policy, Company property includes, but is not limited to, all Company facilities, Company-provided parking areas and vehicles and equipment that are either leased or owned by the Company or a Company client.

The possession of firearms or other weapons on Company property may be cause for discipline, including, but not limited to, immediate termination of employment. In enforcing this policy, the Company reserves the right to request inspections of any employee and their personal effects while on Company property, to the extent allowable under applicable law. Any employee who refuses to allow such an inspection will be subject to the same disciplinary action as having been found in possession of firearms or other weapons.

Employees within the Company share the responsibility of identifying violators of this policy. An employee who either witnesses or suspects another individual of violating this policy should immediately report this information to their Site Supervisor or Executive Director.

## Smoking

In order to maintain a safe and comfortable working environment and to ensure compliance with applicable laws, smoking in Company offices and facilities is strictly regulated. You should familiarize yourself with those areas throughout the premises where smoking is either permitted or prohibited. Ask your Site Supervisor to show you where the designated smoking area is. Because the Company may be subject to criminal and civil penalties for violations of applicable smoking laws, we must insist on strict adherence to this policy. Smokers must stay 15 feet away from the customer entrance and must dispose of litter appropriately. Employees smoking in any non-smoking area may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Please contact your Site Supervisor if you have any questions regarding the smoking policy. Complaints regarding violations of this policy may be filed under the Company's complaint resolution procedure, which is described elsewhere in this section of the handbook.

## Employee Conduct

### Anti-Harassment

It is the policy of the Company to maintain a working environment that encourages mutual respect and promotes respectful and congenial relationships between employees and that is free from all forms of harassment by anyone, including supervisors, co-workers, vendors, contractors or customers. Harassment, even when not unlawful or directed at a protected category, is expressly prohibited and will not be tolerated by the Company. Accordingly, Company management is committed to vigorously addressing complaints of harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination at all levels within the Company.

Reported or suspected occurrences of harassment or discrimination will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. Following an investigation, the Company will promptly take any necessary and appropriate disciplinary action.

The Company will not permit or condone any acts of retaliation against anyone who files harassment or discrimination complaints or cooperates in the investigation of same.

1. The term “harassment” includes harassment based on any category protected by federal, state or local law, which may include depending on the jurisdiction, but is not limited to, unwelcome slurs, jokes, or verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religious creed, sex, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, pregnancy, childbirth, physical disability, mental disability, age, military status or status as a Vietnam-era or special disabled veteran, marital status, registered domestic partner or civil union status, gender (including sex stereotyping and gender identity or expression), medical condition (including, but not limited to, cancer related or HIV/AIDS related), genetic information or sexual orientation.
2. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:
  - a. Submission to such conduct is an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment;
  - b. Employment decisions are based on an employee's submission to or rejection of such conduct; or,
  - c. Such conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

### Complaint Procedure

The Company provides its employees with a convenient and reliable method for reporting incidents of alleged harassment, including sexual harassment and discrimination. Any employee who feels harassed or discriminated against is encouraged to immediately inform the alleged harasser that the behavior is unwelcome. In many instances, the person is unaware that his or her conduct is offensive and when so advised can easily and willingly correct the conduct so that it does not reoccur. If the informal discussion with the alleged harasser is unsuccessful in remedying the problem or if you do not feel comfortable with such an approach, you should immediately report the conduct to your Site Supervisor or the Executive Director of Texas Litter Control. We cannot resolve a harassment or discrimination problem unless we know about it. Therefore, it is your responsibility to bring those kinds of problems to our attention so that we can take the necessary steps to correct the problem. The report should include all facts available to the employee regarding the alleged harassment or sexual harassment or discrimination.

### Confidentiality

All reports of alleged harassment, sexual harassment or discrimination will be treated seriously. It will be kept confidential, and it will be shared only with those who have a need to know about it. Depending on the

circumstances, that could include the alleged harasser. However, absolute confidentiality is not promised nor can it be assured.

### Investigative Procedure

Once a complaint of alleged harassment or sexual harassment or discrimination is received, the Company will begin a prompt and thorough investigation. The investigation may include interviews with all involved employees, including the alleged harasser, and any employees who are aware of facts or incidents alleged to have occurred.

Following an investigation, the Company will promptly take any necessary and appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary action will be taken if the investigation reveals that an employee has acted in a manner that is not in alignment with the goal of this policy, even when the actions may be lawful. In fact, the Company may address any workplace issue discovered during an investigation. This may include some or all of the following steps:

- a. Restore any lost terms, conditions or benefits of employment to the complaining employee.
- b. Discipline the alleged harasser. This discipline can include written disciplinary warnings, transfer, demotion, suspension and termination of employment.

If the alleged harassment or sexual harassment is from a vendor, contractor, customer or other third party, the Company will take appropriate action to stop the conduct.

If you have made a complaint but feel that the action taken in response has not remedied the situation, you should make a complaint following the complaint procedure outlined in this policy.

### Duties of Employees and Supervisors

All employees of the Company, both management and non-management, are responsible for assuring that a workplace free of harassment or sexual harassment and discrimination is maintained. Any employee may file a complaint regarding incidents experienced personally or incidents observed in the workplace. The Company strives to maintain a lawful, pleasant work environment where all employees are able to effectively perform their work without interference of any type and requests the assistance of all employees in this effort.

All Company supervisors and managers are expected to adhere to the Company's Anti-Harassment Policy. Supervisors' evaluations may include an assessment of a supervisor's efforts in following and enforcing this policy.

All managers and supervisors are responsible for doing all they can to prevent and discourage harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination from occurring. If a complaint of harassment or sexual harassment or discrimination is raised, the individual to whom the complaint is made (i.e., Site Supervisor or Executive Director) should act promptly to notify the Board of Directors so that the Company may proceed with an investigation. If such individual fails to follow this policy, he or she will be disciplined. Such discipline may include termination.

### Guidelines for Appropriate Conduct

As a Company team member, employees are expected to accept certain responsibilities, follow acceptable business principles in matters of conduct, and exhibit a high degree of integrity at all times. This not only involves sincere respect for the rights and feelings of others, but also demands that employees refrain from any behavior that might be harmful to themselves, co-workers, the Company, or that might be viewed unfavorably by current or potential customers or by the public at large. Employee conduct reflects on the Company. Employees are, consequently, encouraged to observe the highest standards of professionalism at all times.

Types of behavior and conduct that the Company considers inappropriate include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Falsifying employment or other Company records;
- Violating the Company's Anti-Harassment Policy;
- Violating state, federal or local laws and regulations;
- Violating security or safety rules or failing to observe safety rules or the Company safety practices; failing to wear required safety equipment; tampering with the Company's equipment or safety equipment;
- Soliciting gratuities from customers or clients;
- Exhibiting excessive or unexcused absenteeism or tardiness;
- Possessing firearms, weapons or explosives on Company property without authorization, in violation of Company policy or while on duty;
- Using Company property and supplies, particularly for personal purposes in an excessive, unnecessary or unauthorized way;
- Engaging in criminal conduct or acts of violence, or making threats of violence toward anyone on Company premises or when representing the Company; fighting or provoking a fight on Company property, or negligent damage of property;
- Reporting to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and/or illegally manufacturing, possessing, using, selling, distributing or transporting drugs;
- Committing theft or unauthorized possession of Company property or the property of fellow employees; possessing or removing any Company property, including documents, from the premises without prior permission from management; using Company equipment or property for personal reasons without proper authorization; using Company equipment for profit;
- Giving confidential or proprietary Company information to competitors or other organizations, or to unauthorized Company employees; working for a competing business while an employee of the Company; breaching confidentiality of personnel information;
- Using obscene, abusive or threatening language or gestures;
- Acting in an insubordinate manner;
- Spreading malicious gossip and/or rumors; engaging in behavior which creates discord and lack of harmony; interfering with another employee on the job; restricting work output or encouraging others to do the same;
- Sleeping or loitering during working hours;
- Soliciting during working hours and/or in work areas; selling merchandise or collecting funds of any kind for charities or others without authorization during business hours, or at a time or place that interferes with the work of another employee on Company premises;
- Posting, removing or altering notices on any bulletin board on Company property without the permission of an officer of the Company or in violation of procedures related to same;
- Smoking in restricted areas or at non-designated times, in accordance with Company policy.
- Mishandling of animals.
- Being disrespectful to customers.
- Not following appropriate cleaning standards and not cleaning up after yourself.

Should an employee's performance, work habits, overall attitude, conduct or demeanor become unsatisfactory based on violations either of the above or of any other Company policies, rules or regulations, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Before or during imposition of any discipline, employees may be given an opportunity to relate their version of the incident or problem at issue and provide any explanation or justification they consider relevant.

Where appropriate and as circumstances may dictate, supervisors will follow a process of progressive employee discipline. Examples of employee discipline include:

**VERBAL COUNSELING** - A "verbal counseling" is a verbal communication to an employee that his/her conduct is unacceptable, and that repeated or continued failure to conform conduct or performance to the Company standards will result in more severe disciplinary action. A record of the notice of the verbal counseling may be made and retained in the employee's personnel file. The employee may be required to sign it.

**WRITTEN COUNSELING** - A "written counseling" describes the unacceptable conduct or performance of the employee and specifies needed changes or improvements. A copy of the written counseling generally will be retained in the employee's personnel file.

**SUSPENSION** - Suspension of the employee's employment may, at the sole discretion of the Company, be used prior to termination. The length of the suspension will vary based upon such factors as the severity of the offense, the employee's performance and the employee's disciplinary record. An employee may be suspended for repeated instances of minor misconduct, failure to conform his/her conduct or performance to the standards of his/her position, or for a single serious offense. A record of the suspension generally will be retained in the employee's personnel file.

**TERMINATION** - If an employee fails to conform his/her conduct or performance to the standards required by the Company, the Company may, in its sole discretion, terminate the employee's employment.

Notwithstanding the potential for less severe discipline before termination, the Company reserves the right to administer discipline in such a manner as it deems appropriate to the circumstances, and may, in its sole discretion, terminate an employee without prior discipline or without following a particular order of discipline.

**CONSIDERATION FOR IMMEDIATE TERMINATION WITHOUT PRIOR WARNING** – Texas Litter Control considers the following offenses grounds for immediate termination without prior warning or any kind:

- Reckless endangerment to an animal.
- Mishandling of an animal which results in bodily harm to an animal or a person.
- Not following the Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners current standards which could result in the suspension or fining of the Veterinarian's license.
- Mishandling the controlled substances or the controlled drug log.
- Theft of property.
- Misrepresentation of hours worked.
- No call/no show to a scheduled work day. The staff at each location is small and when an employee does not show without calling, we are placing our patients in danger. The scheduled staff is what it takes to properly monitor the animals while under anesthesia. The Company considers an employee as a no call/no show if the employee does not notify the Site Supervisor or Executive Director at least 1 full hour prior to the shift starting. The employee must actually speak to the Site Supervisor or Executive Director. Text messaging is not an acceptable means of communication.

If an employee is in violation of any policy which is considered grounds for immediate termination, the employee will be suspended without pay. All Company property will be surrendered immediately to the Site Supervisor or Executive Director. The Board, Executive Director and Veterinarian (if applicable) will review the suspension and make a final determination as to whether the employee will be terminated immediately or be placed on final written warning.

## Violence in the Workplace

It is the intent of the Company to provide a safe workplace for employees and to provide a comfortable and secure atmosphere for customers and others with whom we do business. The Company has zero tolerance for violent acts or threats of violence.

The Company expects all employees to conduct themselves in a non-threatening, non-abusive manner at all times. No direct, conditional or veiled threat of harm to any employee or Company property will be considered acceptable behavior. Acts of violence or intimidation of others will not be tolerated. Any employee who commits or threatens to commit a violent act against any person while on Company premises will be subject to immediate discharge. If an employee, while engaged in Company business off the premises, commits or threatens to commit a violent act, that employee will be subject to immediate discharge.

Employees within the Company share the responsibility in identifying and alleviating threatening or violent behaviors. Any employee who is subjected to or threatened with violence, or who is aware of another individual who has been subjected to or threatened with violence, should immediately report this information to his/her Site Supervisor or Executive Director. Employees must assume that any threat is serious. If you as an individual feel threatened and need protection, do not hesitate to report the situation to the Site Supervisor or Executive Director. The Company will carefully investigate all reports, and employee confidentiality will be maintained to the fullest extent possible.

The Company's prohibition against threats and acts of violence applies to all persons involved in the Company's operation, including, but not limited to, personnel, contract and temporary workers, and anyone else on Company property. Violations of this policy by any individual on Company property will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination and/or legal action as appropriate.

## Employee Safety and Health

It is the policy of the Company to provide its employees a safe and healthy workplace and to follow procedures intended to safeguard all employees. Accident prevention and efficiency in production go together; neither should be given priority over the other.

Safety is everyone's responsibility. Every supervisor is expected to devote the time and effort necessary to ensure the safety of employees at all times.

### Employee Responsibilities Include:

- Obeying the safety rules.
- Following safe job procedures and not taking shortcuts.
- Keeping work areas clean and free from slipping or tripping hazards.
- Using prescribed personal protective equipment.
- Immediately reporting all malfunctions to a supervisor.
- Using care when lifting and carrying objects.
- Observing restricted areas and all warning signs.
- Knowing emergency procedures.

- Reporting unsafe conditions to supervisors.
- Promptly reporting every accident and injury to one's supervisor.
- Following the care prescribed by the attending physician when treated for an injury or illness.
- Attending all employee safety meetings.
- Participating in accident investigations, serving on safety committee or other loss control activities as needed.

Failure to observe these guidelines may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of your employment.

## Workplace Accidents

All accidents, injuries, potential safety hazards, safety suggestions and health and safety-related issues must be reported immediately to your Site Supervisor or Executive Director. If you or another employee is injured, you should contact outside emergency response agencies, if needed.

## Drug-Free Workplace

The policy of the Company is to maintain a drug-free workplace. As a condition of continued employment, all Company employees must comply with this policy. The term "workplace" is defined as Company property, any Company sponsored activity or any other site where the employee is performing work for the Company or representing the Company. The term "drug" as used in this policy includes alcoholic beverages and prescription drugs, as well as illegal inhalants and illegal drugs and/or controlled substances as defined in schedules I through V of the Controlled Substances Act, 21 U.S.C. Sec. 812, 21 C.F.R. Sec 1308, and the state and local law of the jurisdiction where the workplace is located, including, but not limited to, marijuana, opiates (e.g., heroin, morphine), cocaine, phencyclidine (PCP), and amphetamines. An employee who engages in an activity prohibited by this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Prohibited activities under this policy include the possession, use, sale, attempted sale, distribution, manufacture, purchase, attempted purchase, transfer or cultivation of drugs, as defined above, in the workplace, as defined above. Employees are also prohibited from being at the workplace with a detectable amount of drugs in their system. However, the use and/or possession of prescription drugs, when taken as directed and obtained with a valid prescription under federal law, shall not be a violation of this policy.

*This policy is not intended to replace or otherwise alter applicable U.S. Department of Transportation obligations or any other federal, state or local agency drug testing regulations related to a particular industry.*

## Complaint Resolution Procedure

Misunderstandings or conflicts can arise in any organization. To ensure effective working relations, it is important that such matters be resolved before serious problems develop. Most incidents resolve themselves naturally; however, should a situation persist that you believe is detrimental to your employment with the Company, you should follow the procedure described below for bringing your complaint to management's attention.

**Step One.** Discussion of the problem with your Site Supervisor is encouraged as a first step. If, however, you do not believe a discussion with your Site Supervisor is appropriate, you may proceed directly to Step Two.



**Step Two.** If your problem is not resolved after discussion with your Site Supervisor or if you feel discussion with your Site Supervisor is inappropriate, you are encouraged to request a meeting with the Executive Director. In an effort to resolve the problem, the Executive Director will consider the facts and may conduct an investigation.

The Company does not tolerate any form of retaliation against employees availing themselves of this procedure. The procedure should not be construed, however, as preventing, limiting or delaying the Company from taking disciplinary action against any individual, up to and including termination, in circumstances (such as those involving problems of overall performance, conduct, attitude or demeanor) where the Company deems disciplinary action appropriate.

### Complaint Procedure

The Company provides its employees with a convenient and reliable method for reporting incidents of alleged harassment, including sexual harassment. Any employee, who believes that they have been or are being harassed or discriminated against, is encouraged to immediately inform the alleged harasser that the behavior is unwelcome. In most instances, the person is unaware that their conduct is offensive and when so advised can easily and willingly correct the conduct so that it does not reoccur. If the informal discussion with the alleged harasser is unsuccessful in remedying the problem, or if such an approach is either not possible or comfortable for the employee, the employee should immediately report the complained-of conduct to their Site Supervisor or Executive Director. The report should include all facts available to the employee regarding the harassment.

## Hours and Compensation Policies

### Hours of Operation

By being ready, willing and able to serve customers efficiently at any time and competing fairly in the marketplace and producing a quality product, we increase the opportunity for maintaining a steady flow of work. Therefore, normal operating hours for employees are from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., Monday through Sunday.

Clinic staffs are very small and the employees must work as a team. Since clinic staff is scheduled in on staggered shifts, those coming in late may not be ready for a break while those on the early shift need a break. The Board of Directors expects the staff to talk to one another and if an individual needs a break, the team needs to work together to make sure we have a pleasant working environment. It is up to the staff members to communicate with the Veterinarians.

### Breaks

Employees working between 4 and 5.99 hours are entitled to one 15 minute break for rest.

Employees working between 6 and 7.99 hours:

- Are entitled to two 15 minute breaks for rest each day.

Employees working 8 hours or more:

- Are entitled to 3 15 minute breaks for rest each day.

Breaks may be scheduled at staggered times to allow proper coverage. You must communicate with your team prior to taking for a break.

Should you need to leave the premises, you must punch out. You cannot be on the clock if you leave the premises.

## Payday

All employees will be paid on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the first day of the month. For paydays falling on a Saturday, you will be paid the prior business day. For paydays falling on a Sunday, you will be paid the following business day.

Hours worked from the 24<sup>th</sup> of one month to the 8<sup>th</sup> of the next month are paid on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Hours worked from the 9<sup>th</sup> of one month to the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the next month are paid on the last day of the month.

If you are absent on payday and someone else is to pick up your check, it will not be released without a signed, handwritten note from you authorizing the named person to pick it up. The person designated to pick up your check will be asked to produce identification satisfactory to management; otherwise, your check will not be released. Any deviations from this procedure must have prior approval from the Site Supervisor or Executive Director.

Vacation pay will be paid on the regular pay cycle during which vacation is taken. If you resign, final settlement of services or wages will be made in accordance with state law.

If you are terminated, you will be issued a check or paid via ACH in accordance with applicable state law.

## Payroll Advances

Employees can request a payroll advance 1 time per 12 month period. Requests will be reviewed and granted on a case by case basis. Advances will not be granted for more than the hours already worked.

## Absenteeism and Tardiness

Texas Litter Control is able to secure work based upon our estimates of performance and our history of reliability. Therefore, the Company expects all employees to assume diligent responsibility for their regular and reliable attendance and promptness. Continued dependability, quality and pride of service are factors over which each individual employee has a great deal of influence. If you are absent unexpectedly without reason and cannot perform your duties on time, or if you produce substandard work, we all pay the price by losing the confidence of the customer.

The work schedule is constructed around company-provided vacation time, sick time and paid time off, taking into account the maximum working hours and capabilities of the staff. It is extremely important that you be punctual in your arrival for work at the beginning of the workday or shift to which you are assigned. If you know that you will be absent, notify your Site Supervisor as soon as possible but at least 1 hour prior to your work shift each day of your absence, unless you are granted leave of absence. Notify your supervisor as soon as you know you will be tardy. In the event of a sickness or accident while performing your duties, notify your Site Supervisor immediately.

If you are absent for three (3) or more consecutive workdays due to personal illness, a statement from your healthcare provider may be required before you will be permitted to return to work.

**EMPLOYEES MUST ACTUALLY SPEAK TO THE SITE SUPERVISOR OR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. TEXT MESSAGING WILL NOT BE ACCEPTABLE AS A FORM OF NOTIFICATION.** You can follow the conversation with a confirmation text message if you wish, but you must call and actually speak with your Site Supervisor. No exceptions will be made to this policy. If you do not speak to a supervisor at least 1 hour prior to your scheduled shift, it will be considered a no call/no show and can be grounds for immediate termination.

Excessive unexcused absenteeism or tardiness is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination. In evaluating absences, the Company may consider, among other factors, reasons related to an employee's absences, the nature of the employee's job, and whether the employee gave proper notice in connection with such absences. If you are absent for two (2) or more consecutive business days and fail to properly report your absences, this will be considered a voluntary resignation of your position, and the Company will process the separation of your employment.

## Timesheets

The timesheet is used for payroll records that must be maintained accurately at all times. Texas Litter Control uses an online tool called Timeforge. Employees must clock in and out on their own. If you should miss a punch, you will need to notify your Site Supervisor in writing to correct it. Any discrepancies regarding overtime should be resolved by the Site Supervisor before transmittal to the payroll contact for payment. Employees misrepresenting their hours worked will be suspended and considered for immediate termination.

## Overtime for Nonexempt Employees

Overtime and additional work other than that which is regularly scheduled may be required.

Overtime will be paid to eligible, nonexempt employees in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws. The pay for regular overtime will be at the federal or state prescribed wage rate, whichever is higher.

All overtime must be authorized prior to its occurrence by your Site Supervisor or Executive Director.

## Prohibited "Off the Clock" Work

At no time should employees perform work while "off the clock." All time spent working should be properly recorded. If given a directive to perform work "off the clock," please promptly notify your onsite supervisor, or if your Site Supervisor has given a directive to work "off the clock" and/or has told you not to properly record all hours worked, notify the Executive Director. No employee will be penalized in any way for making such a complaint.

## Exempt Employee Reduction of Salary

Exempt employees are paid on a salary basis and, in general, must be paid their full salary for any week in which they perform work. Their salary may be reduced only in the following circumstances:

1. Employees who are absent from work for at least a full day for personal reasons other than sickness or disability will not be paid for that day unless they have accrued paid time off under the Texas Litter Control paid time off, vacation or sick policy, if any.
2. Exempt employees who are absent for at least a full day because of sickness or disability will not be paid for that day unless they have accrued paid time off under the Texas Litter Control paid time off, vacation, sickness or disability policy and the absence qualifies for pay under such policy. Their salary will not be reduced for less than a full day because of sickness or disability.
3. Employees who are absent from work for jury duty, attendance as a witness or military leave may have their salary reduced by the amount of payment they receive in the form of jury fees, witness fees or military pay. Their salary will not be reduced by the number of hours or days they are absent unless they perform no work during a given week.
4. If an employee violates a safety rule of major significance, his/her salary may be reduced in an amount to be determined by the Company as a penalty for that violation.

5. Employees may be suspended without pay for other types of workplace misconduct, but only in full day increments. This refers to suspensions imposed according to a written policy applicable to all employees regarding serious misconduct, including, but not limited to, workplace harassment, violence, drug and alcohol violations, legal violations, etc. The possibility of such unpaid suspensions is hereby incorporated into all such policies.
6. Employees who work less than forty (40) hours during their first and/or last week of employment will be paid a proportionate part of their full salary for the time actually worked.

This policy is subject to applicable law. The Company will follow the state law regarding reduction of exempt employees' salaries if the state law is more favorable to employees.

### Prohibited Reductions / Complaint Procedure

Any salaried exempt employee whose salary is reduced in violation of this policy will be reimbursed. If you feel your salary has been improperly reduced, please notify the Executive Director. No employee will be penalized in any way for making such a complaint.

This policy is intended solely to implement Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) regulatory requirements, and applicable state law will be applied and modified as necessary in accordance with such requirements, and is not to be considered any type of contract.

### Errors in Pay

Every effort is made to avoid errors in your paycheck. If you believe an error has been made, contact the Executive Director immediately. The Company will take the necessary steps to research the problem and to assure that any necessary correction is made promptly. If an error in pay was caused by the employee (ie. not clocking in or out), the correction will be made on the following payroll cycle. If the employee wishes to be paid sooner, they will have to pay the fees associated with running a payroll off the regular cycle. These fees will be deducted out of the check. It is up to the employee to make absolutely sure they have recorded all punches accurately. Employees can review their timesheets at any time through Timeforge. If management miscalculated payroll, it will be corrected immediately.

### Leave of Absence

Texas Litter Control is currently too small to ensure an employee will be allowed a leave of absence. If a position is available when an employee is ready to return to work, the Company will consider the person on leave first provided the person is qualified for the position. If an employee is on leave of absence due to a medical issue, a full release from the doctor will be required before allowing the employee to return to work.

## Employee Benefits

### Holidays

Regular full-time employees are eligible for the holiday pay schedule after completing 90 days of continuous service.

To receive holiday pay, a nonexempt employee must work the regularly scheduled workday before and after the holiday, unless the Site Supervisor approves an exception in writing. A paid holiday does not count as a day worked in calculating overtime for the week.

The Company observes four (4) holidays per year where the clinics are closed.

New Years Day	January 1
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Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Day after Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Friday in November
Christmas Day	December 25

The Company observes three (3) holidays per year where the clinics are open.

Memorial Day	Last Monday of May
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	First Monday in September

Employees eligible for holiday pay will be paid as follows:

### Hourly Employees

If the clinic is open for business:

If you are scheduled to work on this day, you will be paid double time.

If the clinic is closed for business:

You will receive 8 hours of pay.

### Shift Employees (Veterinarians)

If the clinic is open for business:

If you are scheduled to work on this day, you will be paid your regular shift pay plus \$200.

If the clinic is closed for business:

You will receive shift pay for 1 shift.

All Full Time Employees will receive one (1) personal day for every 6 months of service. These personal days must be taken 180 days from the date of accrual and you must ask for these days off in writing at least 2 weeks in advance.

All Full Time Employees will receive their birthday off with pay. If an employee wishes to use their birthday holiday on a different day, they can do so within the same calendar month.

### Vacation

To the extent permitted by state law, Texas Litter Control provides vacation to eligible employees as outlined in this policy.

Each regular full-time hourly employee consistently working 37 hours a week or more will earn ten (10) days (80 hours) of vacation upon the completion of one (1) year of employment with the Company. Employees consistently working between 30 and 36.9 hours per week will earn five (5) days (40 hours) of vacation upon completion of one (1) year of employment with the Company.

Each full-time shift employee consistently working 5 shifts per week will earn ten (10) days (10 shifts) of vacation upon the completion of one (1) year of full time employment with the Company. Accrued days will be based upon the average number of days you are scheduled to work.

The established vacation period for purposes of this policy is from the employee's hire date.

You may not carry over vacation time from year to year without prior written permission from the Executive Director. Vacations must be taken annually to assure that you receive the full benefit of this plan. If you leave

the Company, you will be paid for accrued but unused vacation computed at the rate of pay earned upon separation, provided you give two (2) weeks' written notice and are not being terminated for misconduct.

So that we may schedule work and plan for business requirements, employees should give at least 30 days but no more than 90 days notice in scheduling vacation time. Employees must take full vacation days. You will not be allowed to take vacation days in increments. In the event of conflicting vacation requests within a department, priority will be determined on the basis of seniority. A more junior employee who already has an approved vacation date will not, however, be bumped by a more senior employee.

TLC will not allow the same individual take off the same "in demand" week consecutive years unless no one else wants it. These weeks are:

- The week of Thanksgiving
- The week of Christmas
- The week between Christmas and New Years

Unless otherwise prohibited by law, employees are required to use available vacation (both accrued and unaccrued) when taking time off from work that is not covered under a leave of absence.

The Company requires employees to take at least five (5) days of accumulated vacation in a block of time. Employees who have earned more than two (2) weeks' vacation are requested to split their time, so that no more than one (1) week are used at any one time.

If a planned vacation has to be canceled due to the needs of Texas Litter Control and an employee is unable to reschedule the vacation within the year, Texas Litter Control reserves the option of paying the employee in lieu of taking the canceled vacation or to allow rescheduling of that vacation. Employees who are away from work on a leave of absence do not accrue vacation time while on leave.

Vacation days are not used in calculating overtime hours.

## Sick Days

The Company recognizes that inability to work because of illness or injury may cause economic hardship. For this reason, Texas Litter Control provides paid sick days to full-time regular employees consistently working 37 hours or more per week upon the completion of 90 days of continuous service. Eligible employees accrue sick days at the rate of 8 hours every quarter up to a maximum of 4 days per year. Employees will be allowed to accrue and carry over sick time. To be paid for sick time, employees must have a doctor's note or equivalent to claim 2 or more sick days. No note is required for 1 paid sick day. No call/no shows will not be eligible for paid sick time.

No payments will be made for accrued but unused sick days in the event of termination. Sick days will not be used in the calculation of overtime. Please familiarize yourself with the absenteeism and tardiness policy, as it is the proper procedures to follow when an absence has or will occur.

## Voting

It is the policy of the Company to permit employees to be absent from work to vote in local, state or national elections. Employees who cannot reach their polling place outside of work hours will be permitted unpaid time off to vote. The time off to vote may not exceed two (2) hours. Evidence of voting will be required.

## Bereavement Leave

If a death occurs in the family of a full-time regular employee, the employee will be compensated for time lost from his/her regular work schedule in accordance with the following guidelines. The employee will be granted up to three (3) days off from work with pay in the event of the death of a spouse, child, parent, grandparent, sibling or comparable step relation; and one (1) day in the event of the death of a, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, or daughter-in-law. Request for bereavement leave should be made to your Site Supervisor. Bereavement leave will not be paid if it occurs when the employee is on vacation or leave of absence, absent due to illness or injury, or not working due to a paid Holiday.

## Jury Duty and Witness Leave

If a full time employee is summoned to jury duty, Texas Litter Control will continue his/her pay for one (1) working day of jury service per calendar year. If a full-time regular employee is required to serve more than one (1) working day of jury service in a calendar year, he/she will be allowed additional time off without pay to complete the jury service. Texas Litter Control will continue to pay an employee for this extended period of service only if and to the extent provided for under applicable law. Employees must notify their Site Supervisor or Executive Director as soon as it is known jury duty will be extended. An employee is also permitted to retain the allowance he/she receives from the court for such service.

All employees are allowed unpaid time off if summoned to appear in court as a witness. To qualify for either jury or witness duty leave, an employee must submit to his/her Site Supervisor or Executive Director a copy of the summons as soon as it is received. In addition, the employee must also submit to the employee's Site Supervisor a related proof of service when the period of jury or witness duty is completed. No adverse employment action will be taken against employees due to their service as either a juror or witness in state or federal courts.

## Health, Dental and Vision Insurance

Texas Litter Control pays for the health, dental and vision insurance for full time employees consistently working 37 hours a week or more. Employees working between 30 and 36.9 hours per week are eligible for health, dental and vision insurance however the employee is responsible for paying the premiums. Full time employees are eligible for these benefits the first day of the calendar month following 90 days after the employee's hire date.

## Workers' Compensation Insurance

To provide for payment of employee medical expenses and for partial salary continuation in the event of work-related accident or illness, employees are covered by workers' compensation insurance provided by TLC.

The amount of benefits payable and the duration of payment depend upon the nature of the employee's injury or illness. All medical expenses incurred in connection with an on-the-job injury or illness and partial salary payments are paid in accordance with applicable state law.

If an employee is injured or becomes ill on the job, the employee must immediately report such injury or illness to the Site Supervisor or Executive Director. This ensures that the Company can help obtain appropriate medical treatment. An employee's failure to follow this procedure may result in the appropriate workers' compensation report not being filed timely in accordance with the law, which may delay benefits in connection with the injury or illness. Questions regarding workers' compensation insurance should be directed to the Executive Director.

## HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I acknowledge that I have received the Company's Employee Handbook ("the Handbook"), dated **December 30, 2019**, and understand that violations of the policies contained in the Handbook including, but not limited to, the Absenteeism and Tardiness Policy, Guidelines for Appropriate Conduct, and Anti-Harassment Policy, could result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

I understand that I can view a full copy of the Texas Litter Control Employee Handbook at any time on any Texas Litter Control Computer via Dropbox.

I understand I must repay the Company any vacation/PTO used but not accrued at the time my employment ends, and I hereby authorize the Company to deduct such amounts from my final paycheck to the extent permitted by law. I also agree that if requested, I will complete a new deduction authorization form to facilitate such deductions.

I understand that expenses incurred by the Company due to lost, damaged or missing items issued to me will be deducted from my final paycheck. I also agree that if requested, I will complete a new deduction authorization form to facilitate such deductions.

I fully understand the Company's no call/no show policies. When calling out from work, I must call my immediate supervisor at least 1 hour prior to the start of my shift. I understand that I must physically speak to my immediate supervisor and text messages are not appropriate forms of communication. **I understand if I do not call and speak with my supervisor prior to my shift starting, it is considered a no call/no show and is grounds for immediate termination.**

I further agree and consent to all policies contained herein and understand that the information contained in the Handbook represents guidelines for the Company and that the Company reserves the right to modify the Handbook or amend or terminate any policy, procedure or employee benefit program at any time.

I further understand that the contents of the Handbook do not form a written employment contract for employment for a specific term or duration. Either Texas Litter Control or I have the right to terminate my employment at any time with or without cause unless I have entered into a duly authorized employment agreement with Texas Litter Control that provides otherwise. Either Texas Litter Control or I have the right to terminate my employment at any time with or without cause.

I further understand that no manager, supervisor or other representative of the Company, other than the president or vice president, has any authority to change my at-will status or enter into any agreement guaranteeing employment for any specific period of time. I also understand that any such agreement, if made, will not be duly authorized and enforceable unless it is in writing and signed by both parties.

My signature below certifies that I understand the at-will employment relationship between the Company and myself.

I further understand that if I have any questions about the interpretation or application of any policies contained in the Handbook, I should direct these questions to the Executive Director.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Employee Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Print Name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Last Four Digits of Social Security Number*