



IHA

Public Health Emergency Operation Plan

Last updated 1/21/2021

On September 7, 2020, Governor Cuomo signed legislation requiring all public employers to create and publish operation plans in the event the Governor declares a public health emergency involving a communicable disease. Section 27-c of the New York State Labor Law focuses specifically on essential public employees and protocols for protecting the Ithaca Housing Authority team.

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The following is a list and description of positions and titles of IHA team members considered essential in the event of a state-ordered reduction of in-person workforce, and a justification of such consideration for each. Each of these justifications are created premised on the IHA Administrative Office being closed to the public except for specific appointments to ensure the IHA is still providing vital affordable housing. Where possible the IHA will provide all necessary technology to enable tele-commuting for both essential and non-essential team members to further limit the potential transmission of a communicable disease (Appendix A).

A. Executive Director

Planning, development, management, and oversight of the authority operations. This includes all housing programs in relation to various federal, state, and local programs as well as fiscal and personnel responsibilities.

Overseeing all day-to-day aspects of the IHA requires the Executive Director to be on-site and deemed essential. There may be times that allow for tele-commuting, but not completely. Communication and coordination with federal, State, and local public health officials along with ensuring the operations move forward with updated and temporary policies, procedures and practices require the Executive Director to be on-site.

B. Confidential Secretary

A varied clerical position that includes but is not limited to providing direct support to the Executive Director, assisting in preparing, reviewing and disseminate policy changes and public statements, assisting in the preparation and oversight of capital improvements, contract, and grants management. Receives and disseminates time sensitive mail and e-mail, prepares notices to residents for dissemination, records and maintains all personnel records and provides direct HR support. Prepares Board of Commissioners meeting materials, serves as interagency systems administrator and prepares various HUD reports.

The varied duties of the Confidential Secretary requires that the individual be on-site and deemed essential. Ensuring policies, procedures, press releases and resident notices are updated and disseminated, while retaining HUD reporting compliance is vital to the IHA especially during challenging times.

C. Fee Accountant

Independently maintains a system of accounts in proper balance according to GAAP, NYS Audit and Control and HUD requirements as well as providing analysis and revision of accounting forms, practices, and procedures.

To ensure that the fiscal position of the IHA remains unchanged during challenging times and to adapt to any necessary flexibilities during a crisis, the IHA Fee Accountant is required to be on-site at various times and is deemed essential. The Fee Accountant works under contract and is only onsite 1-5 days per month. There may be opportunities for the Fee Accountant to tele-commute depending on the timing of various reporting requirements within the month.

D. Principal Account Clerk

Responsible for account keeping and planning, overseeing account keeping activities, and independently performing various phases of such work. Oversees and assists in the classification of a complex variety of receipts and expenditures and the distribution of costs according to prescribed codes. Receives and processes payments weekly including accounts receivables and payables for all departments of the IHA. Directly responsible for preparing and mailing bi-monthly housing assistance payments to over 300 landlords. Has charge of the compilation, preparation, and analysis of a variety of complex financial and statistical records and reports. Compiles and prepares financial information for review by the Fee Accountant and maintains financial records in a database. Reconciles ledgers of revenue received and expenses paid using monthly bank statements. Provides direct support to the Fee Accountant. Manages all insurance policies for the IHA and files workman's comp claims and accident reports.

The varied complex financial duties of the Principal Account Clerk requires that the individual be on-site (at least several days per week) and is deemed essential. There may be times that allow for the Principal Account Clerk to tele-commute depending on days and or timing within the month but not telecommuting completely. When possible the on-site hours of the Principal Account Clerk will be staggered to allow for proper social distancing.

E. Assistant Property Manager (Public Housing)

Responsible for assisting applicants and tenants obtain and maintain safe and affordable housing along with performing all regulatory re-certifications (interim and annual) and receiving all rent/eligibility documentation provided by applicants and residents. Reviews and verifies eligibility for initial and continued tenancy, prepares all required documents, performs finger printing of new applicants, leases apartments, addresses lease violations and provides various reports to the Executive Director to meet regulatory compliance.

As long as federal housing programs continue and regulations are in place, the Assistant Property Manager is required to be on-site and deemed essential. The IHA is required to continue housing programs, assisting families obtain housing and providing rent adjustments based on annual and/or interim re-exams.

F. Tenant Relations Assistants (Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher)

Responsible for assisting applicants and participants obtain and maintain safe and affordable housing along with performing housing quality standards inspections for new participants and annual/bi-annual housing inspections for current participants. Collects, records, and verifies all required documentation used to determine eligibility for applicants and participants. Performs applicant finger printing. Performs all regulatory re-certifications (interim and annual) to determine rent responsibility in accordance with HUD regulations. Prepares letters and provides follow up through constant communication with landlords and participants. Assists the Section 8 Tenant Relations Coordinator with various projects and provides information related to HUD reporting requirements which includes approving and denying of applicants and completing necessary documentation for VMS reporting and the issuance of Housing Assistance Payments.

As long as federal housing programs continue and regulations are in place, the Tenant Relations Assistants are required to be on-site and deemed essential. The IHA is required to continue housing programs, assisting families obtain housing, perform inspections and providing rent adjustments based on annual and/or interim re-exams.

When possible, the Tenant Relations Assistants may experience staggered shifts to reduce the number of staff onsite at one time and when possible, limited tele-work maybe offered depending on program demand.

G. Tenant Relations Coordinator

Responsible for the direct supervision of Tenant Relation Assistants engaged in the delivery of subsidized housing. Trains and provides technical assistance to subordinate staff. Reviews applications, recertifications, adjustments and relocations against eligibility criteria. Approves or disapproves applications and recertifications. Gathers statistics for monthly reporting and to ensure regulatory compliance. Processes bi-monthly housing assistance payments to landlords. Gathers program information and provides various reports to the Executive Director. Ensures the submittal of HUD regulatory reports.

As long as federal housing programs continue and regulations are in place, the Tenant Relations Coordinator is required to be on-site at least several days per week and is deemed essential. The IHA is required to continue housing programs, assisting families obtain housing, perform inspections and providing rent adjustments based on annual and/or interim re-exams.

When possible, the Tenant Relations Coordinator will work a hybrid schedule and stagger shift times or telework part of the week to avoid contact with other team members.

H. Housing Program Assistant

Responsible for providing direct clerical support to the Tenant Relations Assistants, Tenant Relations Coordinator and Assistant Property Manager. Duties include file maintenance, data entry, generating reports, assisting applicants, tenants and the public with online applications or general questions. Assists with the preparation of lease agreements, income/asset verifications, scheduling appointments and housing inspections. Prepares tenant files for all internal transactions and tracks outstanding documents for compliance purposes.

As long as federal housing programs continue and regulations are in place, the Housing Program Assistant is required to be on-site and deemed essential. The IHA is required to continue housing programs, assisting families obtain housing, perform inspections and providing rent adjustments based on annual and/or interim re-exams.

I. Facilities and Maintenance Manager

Responsible for the planning, directing, organizing, and supervising a variety of skilled building maintenance repair, renovation and construction tasks and overseeing the operation and cleaning of several buildings and equipment.

Ensuring all building and site maintenance and emergency maintenance is completed, supervising all IHA maintenance team members. Develops and updates daily planning to maximize challenges during crisis time and modifies typical duties to ensure the health and safety of our team and resident population. Assists and provides reports to the Executive Director. This requires the Facilities and Maintenance Manager to be on-site and deemed essential.

J. Building Maintenance Mechanic/ Maintenance Worker/Laborer

Responsible for all skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled manual work at all IHA owned and managed properties including work orders, building and property site cleaning, emergency maintenance, snow removal, plumbing, electrical, heating, windows, refuse and vacant apartment rehabilitation.

As long as the IHA is operational, the Building Maintenance Mechanic, Maintenance Worker and Laborer are required to be on-site and deemed essential. When necessary shifts maybe staggered in order to accommodate for social distancing or to meet the needs of the public health crisis. When not performing necessary skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled manual work, the Building Maintenance Mechanic, Maintenance Worker and Laborer positions may be used to assist resident population obtain necessary food, medicine, mail, and personal protective equipment (PPE).

K. Storekeeper

Responsible for the operation of various storerooms including ordering, receipt, storage, and distribution of an extensive and varied stock of supplies, equipment and materials as well as receiving, transmitting, and logging detailed, accurate, and extensive telephone and e-mail messages, and dispatching personnel. The Storekeeper assists in scheduling and assisting various vendors and companies that perform vital services and provides direct assistance to the entire maintenance department.

As long as the IHA is operational, the Storekeeper is required to be on-site and is deemed essential. It is necessary to ensure the IHA has the required materials and supplies during the public health crisis as well as ensuring emergency maintenance work is properly sorted and logged for record keeping.

L. Receptionist

Serves as the first point of contact involving extensive face to face and telephone contact with the public, tenants, participants, and landlords. The work involves routine clerical work including answering the phones, transferring calls, taking messages, sending, and receiving faxes, disseminating mail, and providing general support to other staff. Receiving and processing rental payments, applications, resident and applicant communication and keeps tenant database updated.

As long as the IHA is operational, the Receptionist is required to be on-site and deemed essential. Receiving and processing applications, rental payments and communicating with applicants, tenants and the public is essential to IHA operations.

M. ROSS Elderly/Disabled Caseworker

Responsible for assisting elderly/disabled tenants in the senior designated high-rises with completion of necessary IHA required documentation, formulates, and carry out plans to meet the needs of individuals, provides dissemination and clarification of updated policies, procedures and regulations and coordinates with community-based organizations to ensure resident population is accessing available programs and supports. Facilitated tenants’ use of available social services by assisting in the completion of Medicare, Medicaid, Food Stamps, and third-party insurance application and claim forms. Provides general case management and referral services. Organizes and executes food distribution to elderly/disabled tenants.

The Elderly/Disabled Caseworker is required to be on-site and deemed essential during periods of a public health crisis. The Elderly/Disabled Caseworker is the liaison between IHA policy and procedure updates and the tenants. Vital support programming is essential to our elderly/disabled population, especially during a public health crisis.

II. Non-Essential

The following is a list and description of positions and titles of IHA team members considered non-essential in the event of a state-ordered reduction of in-person workforce, and a justification of such consideration for each. Each of these justifications are created premised on the IHA Administrative Office being closed to the public except for specific appointments to ensure the IHA is still providing vital affordable housing. Where possible the IHA will provide all necessary technology to enable tele-commuting for both essential and non-essential team members to further limit the potential transmission of a communicable disease (Appendix A).

A. Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program Case Manager

Provides case management services to participants in the FSS Program, helping them move toward self-sufficiency and achieve program goals. Assists participants in writing their service plans and setting program and family goals. Assists participants in accessing appropriate public or private community agencies to obtain specialized assistance. Provides counseling in various life skills and identifies the need for services through in-depth discussions with participants.

The Family Self-Sufficiency Program Case Managers are not required to be on-site during normal operational hours during a public health crisis. The FSS Case Managers may work remotely to access databases, phone messages, etc. or may work during evening hours to avoid contact with other IHA team members to perform normal duties.

B. Senior Account Clerk/Typist

Responsible for account keeping and planning/overseeing of account keeping activities related to tenant accounts and independently performing various phases of such work. Compiles payroll data, prepares and checks payroll. Manages and updates employee benefits logs. Records utility usage to spreadsheets and ledger accounts. Performs post occupancy move-out procedures and generates letters and requests for security deposit refunds. Manages tenant security deposit ledger. Manages employee’s health insurance requests and retirement benefits. Performs the

daily drawer closing and records rental payments. Compiles and preparing financial information for review by the Fee Accountant and maintaining financial records in database.

The Senior Account Clerk/Typist is not required to be on-site during normal operational hours during a public health crisis. There are monthly processes that require on-site visits; however, many tasks can be completed using a tele-work model. There may be times during the month that the Senior Account Clerk/Typist must be in the office to perform duties. When this occurs, shifts will be staggered, or evening hours will be scheduled to reduce person to person contact.

C. Operations Manager

Responsible for overseeing all housing programs as they relate to compliance and operations. Supervises, trains, and evaluates subordinate staff and oversees the distribution of work assignments. Updates internal policies as they relate to legal, regulatory and policy compliance. Interprets existing and proposed policies and revises or creates procedures in accordance with regulations. Oversees various aspects of vacancy, transfer and leasing of all housing programs. Assists the Executive Director with reporting, compliance, supervision, marketing, development, and outreach.

The Operations Manager is not required to be on-site during normal operational hours during a public health crisis and may work remotely. The Operations Manager may work a hybrid schedule and be on site to support the needs of the operation and the Executive Director and in the absence or tele-workdays of the Executive Director.

III. Work-shift Changes

During any public health crisis where the IHA remains in operational, the IHA will institute a workforce reduction schedule to limit transmission of any communicable disease and prevent the full IHA team from exposure.

This will be accomplished by staggering the shifts of staff positions that require on site attendance or requiring staff to work alternate hours to maintain the duties of the operation and provide services to the tenants.

If staff reduction limits the ability to accomplish the IHA's requirements, the IHA may contract services to meet regulatory requirements and the needs of the public health crisis.

IV. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

During periods of a public health crisis, the IHA will adopt all necessary precautions including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). PPE includes, hand sanitizers, hand washing soap, face masks, face shields, gloves and other items recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and state and local public health officials required for work to be completed by the IHA team. This section of the IHA Operational Plan is not intended to provide guidance on

normal day-to-day PPE like safety glasses when working with certain tools or ear protection when using certain machinery, for example.

The IHA will provide all necessary PPE for its team members and will make every effort, in coordination with state and local public health officials, to provide PPE for the tenant population as possible.

IHA team members are reminded that just because PPE is being used, the team member is not completely protected. It is important to maintain awareness, diligence and enforce combined safety measures during a public health crisis. Proper hand washing and maintaining at least a six-foot distance from others is best practice.

PPE appropriate for the IHA team will be procured in advance of a declared emergency following the IHA Procurement Policy guidelines and stored in a manner to prevent early degradation and provide easy access in the event an emergency is declared. Procured PPE will be in a quantity sufficient to provide at least two pieces of each type of personal protective equipment to each essential employee and contractor during any given work shift over at least six months. See the following table:

Item	Amount	Storage	Replacement
Masks (N95/Surgical)	3,500	IHA Titus warehouse	Following Manufactures guidelines
Gloves	3,500 pairs	IHA Titus warehouse	Following Manufactures guidelines
Hand Soap	30 Pump Bottles	IHA Titus warehouse	Following Manufactures guidelines
Hand Sanitizer	30 containers	IHA Titus warehouse	Following Manufactures guidelines

V. Hours / Location for Essential

Precise hours and work locations, including off-site visits, for essential team members and contractors will be documented using a variety of means dependent on the situation and specific team member.

Administrative Office:

All team members, contractors, and visitors (applicants, vendors, contractors, etc.) will be required to sign in and verify they have not been exposed to any communicable disease which is the subject of the declared public health emergency and they do not currently have any related

symptoms. The IHA team will also ensure the use of their calendar to record the date, time and names of any individuals scheduled to be permitted to access the Administrative Office.

Northside Community Center (NSCC):

If the NSCC is open, the center will have every participant sign into any programming taking place (or be signed in if necessary) and verify they have not been exposed to any communicable disease which is the subject of the declared public health emergency and they do not currently have any related symptoms. Sign-in will include any parents, visitors, volunteers, or contractors.

Maintenance Office:

All team members, contractors and visitor will be required to sign in and verify they have not been exposed to any communicable disease which is the subject of the declared public health emergency and they do not currently have any related symptoms. The Facilities and Maintenance Manager will keep a record of the daily assignments for each team member. The work order system will track all work orders (including emergency work orders) that are addressed documenting which team member responded to the request for work, the location of the work being performed and the date and time. The IHA team will also ensure the use of their calendar to record the details of any scheduled event. The Facilities and Maintenance Manager will record daily attendance and record any team member leaving before the end of the workday.

Overtime:

All overtime will be tracked according to current IHA protocol to include the date, time and location of the overtime work being completed.

High-rises:

All high-rise buildings will have a sign-in form to include date and time. Those signing in will verify they have not been exposed to any communicable disease which is the subject of the declared public health emergency and they do not currently have any related symptoms.

VI. Protocol for Exposure of Team Member
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To mitigate potential spread of a communicable disease, the IHA will institute procedures for situations where someone is believed to be exposed or tests positive for a communicable disease.

Any IHA team member that is exposed or potentially exposed to a public health crisis will be provided paid leave for the period designated by public health officials, to the extent required by law or an applicable collective bargaining agreement. That time may be used for the team member to receive testing, treatment, quarantine or be in isolation. If the team member tests positive, that team member will be required to follow the guidance and guidelines of local public health officials and will be provided paid leave to do so in accordance with set guidelines. A team member with a positive test may not return to work without the consent of a medical provider or public health official. Any essential or non-essential IHA team member choosing to disregard any imposed travel advisory may be subject to unpaid leave during any mandated quarantine period upon their return, and the determination of unpaid leave shall be solely in the discretion of the IHA.

If a IHA team member or visitor begins exhibiting symptoms while at work, they will immediately be removed from their duties and if possible, leave the premises. If unable to leave, they will be placed in a pre-designated isolated setting. If a team member occupies a private office, their isolated setting will be their designated office area. In situations where the team member does not have a private office area or the individual exhibiting symptoms is a visitor, vendor, contractor or other, the following locations will be designated for isolation throughout the IHA:

Building	Designated Isolation Space
Administrative Office	TT2 Conference Room
Northside Community Center	Community Center Office Area
Maintenance Office Area	TT2 Boiler Room
Titus Towers I	TTI Community Room
Titus Towers II	TT2 TV Room

The IHA will begin to disinfect the work or common area visited (including common area surfaces and shared equipment) by the potentially infected individual. Those spaces and equipment will not be occupied or re-used until the disinfection has taken place.

Any IHA team member choosing to disregard any imposed travel advisory may be subject to unpaid leave during any mandated quarantine period upon their return, and the determination of unpaid leave shall be solely in the discretion of the IHA. If the trip is required by the IHA, the team member will receive paid leave during any mandated quarantine period.

VII. Emergency Housing

If necessary, the IHA will work directly with the Tompkins County Health Dept. and local public health officials to identify sites for emergency housing for essential team members to further contain the spread of the communicable disease that is the subject of the declared emergency.

Ithaca Housing Authority Continuity of Operations

Telecommuting Agreement

Purpose – The purpose of this agreement is to establish parameters for employees to work from home in order to maintain a Continuity of Operations pursuant to Executive Order 202.4 of the Governor of New York State, in furtherance of combating the spread of the COVID-19 Epidemic, other pandemics or when situations arise that cannot be avoided.

This agreement is between the employee named and signing below, and the Ithaca Housing Authority (IHA, or the Authority). The pronoun "they" will be used throughout to refer to the employee. This agreement begins on _____, 2021, and continues until _____, 2021. This agreement may be extended beyond _____ at the direction of the Authority.

In order to help the IHA maintain normal business operations during this period, to the extent possible, the employee agrees to the following:

1. The employee will telecommute from their home. The “home office” work schedule will be the same as the employee's normal and designated work schedule, including days of the week and hours of work. The current meal and rest breaks remain in effect.
2. The employee agrees to be available during their regular work hours, except during normal lunch breaks, for communication through such methods as a land-line phone, cell phone, e-mail, text messages or zoom meetings. The employee agrees to respond in a timely manner to work emails and/or voicemails. Any flexibility to the employee's daily work schedule must be approved by their Supervisor. (e.g. – working from 9:00 – 5:00 or taking benefit time for appointments)
3. The job duties and other duties, obligations, responsibilities, and conditions of the employee's employment with the Authority will remain unchanged.
4. The employee's salary, retirement, paid leave, health, dental and vision insurance coverage, and all other employee benefits including accruals shall remain in effect.
5. Work hours, overtime compensation, use of sick and personal leave, and approval for use of vacation will conform to the Authority's policies and procedures, departmental guidelines and to the terms otherwise agreed upon by the employee and the Authority.
6. The employee agrees to designate a workspace within their remote work location for placement and installation of equipment to be used while telecommuting. The employee agrees to maintain a safe work environment free from hazards and other dangers to the employee and the equipment. The employee agrees to report work-related injuries to the supervisor at the earliest opportunity, and to hold the Authority harmless for injury to others at the telecommuting location.
7. The employee agrees to provide a secure location for Authority-owned equipment and materials, and will not use, or allow others to use, such equipment for purposes other than Authority business. All equipment, records, and materials provided by the Authority shall remain Authority property.

8. The employee agrees to continue to abide by the HUD EIV Rules of Behavior and all applicable HUD Rules while accessing the HUD Secure Systems.
9. The employee agrees to keep all IHA materials, including but not limited to applications, tenant files etc. in a locked container and in a locked room when not being utilized. These must not be allowed to be seen by other non-authorized individuals.
10. The employee agrees to return any Authority equipment, records, and materials within one workday day of termination of this agreement. Any Authority equipment will be returned by the employee for inspection, repair, replacement, or repossession upon two days' written notice.
11. The employee agrees to maintain in a secure manner the confidentiality of Authority records, tenant information, and other confidential or privileged information.
12. The employee will follow the security measures contained in the Authority's computer usage policy, including maintaining the integrity of work-related computer passwords. The employee will contact their supervisor with questions regarding computer system security. The supervisor will contact the Authority's Confidential Secretary for technical guidance and support.
13. The Authority will not pay for the maintenance or repairs of privately owned equipment, utility costs associated with the use of the computer or occupation of the home, additional office supplies, or travel expenses (including mileage) associated with commuting to the Authority's main office or to the employee's regular work site.
14. The employee is not prohibited from the Authority's main office, or site offices, if the offices are otherwise open. The employee may access office or work site locations to gather necessary work or for performing other administrative tasks that require office resources. It is expected employees will limit their time in the office as much as possible and follow the guidelines of social distancing by maintaining a distance of 6 feet from other people while present.
15. The employee also agrees to the following conditions:
 - Reachable by telephone (home and cell numbers) provided to the department head/supervisor,
 - Continue to abide by the terms of the IHA's Computer Use Policy,
 - Physically be ready, willing, and able to come into the office or site as agreed upon with department head/supervisor; including regular check-ins as determined by the department head/supervisor,
 - Login to email during the employee's normal working hours; respond and/or forward to department head/supervisor, as needed; complete departmental work as given and/or modified by department head/supervisor,
 - Understand that any items used at home (internet, cell phone service, office equipment, furniture, etc.) will not be reimbursed by the IHA,
 - Office supplies can be provided by the IHA upon approval of the department head/supervisor,
 - Ability to voluntarily use personal home and/or cell to be able to assist that the office runs smoothly; Note that the employee must retrieve voice mail

from the IHA's phone network on a timely basis. In addition, employees should restrict cell phone information as "Blocked Number",

- Use of any accrued time will continue to be pre-approved by department head/supervisor; if unable to do work at home and/or come into work, then any accrued time per the employee's timesheet will be deducted,
- The employee is not allowed to work away from home and/or be in or out of the community during regularly scheduled work hours. The intent is for IHA employees to remain home to reduce the impact/spread of COVID-19.

16. The Authority retains the right to modify this agreement on a temporary basis as a result of business necessity (for example, the employee may be required to come to the office on a particular day), or as a result of an employee request approved by the supervisor, or as a result of governmental mandate.
17. The employee understands that they are responsible for insurance consequences, if any, of this arrangement.
18. Telecommuting is not a substitution for dependent care. Telecommuters must not be available during company hours to provide dependent care.
19. IHA will be responsible for any work-related injuries under our state's Workers Compensation laws, but this liability is limited to injuries resulting directly from work and only if the injury occurs in the designated work area. Any claims will be handled according to the normal procedure for Worker's Compensation claims.
20. The employee understands that s/he remains liable for injuries to third persons and/or family members on their premises. The employee agrees to defend, indemnify and hold harmless IHA, its affiliates, employees, contractors and agents, from and against any and all claims, demands or liability (included any related losses, costs, expenses, and attorney fees) resulting from, or arising in connection with, any injury to persons (including death) or damage to property caused, directly or indirectly, by the services provided herein by the employee or by the employee's willful misconduct, negligent acts or omissions in the performance of the employee's duties and obligations under this Agreement, except where such claims, demands, or liabilities arise solely from the gross negligence or willful misconduct of the IHA.

The employee agrees to the items noted above and all other terms and conditions of the Employee Handbook remain the same. It is hereby agreed and understood between the parties that this agreement is effective _____, 2021.

I have read this Telecommuting Agreement and agree to its terms.

Employee Name: _____

Employee's Signature: _____

Date of Signature: _____

Job Title: _____

Executive Director Signature: _____

Date of Signature: _____