



# Employee Handbook

## 2024



## **WELCOME**

Welcome to Metro West Housing Solutions, we are delighted that you have chosen to join our organization and hope you will enjoy a long and successful career with us. As you become familiar with our culture and our mission, we hope you take advantage of opportunities to enhance your career and further the agency goals.

You are part of an organization that provides high-quality, attainable, affordable housing that is more than just a roof for the residents. We believe that each employee contributes directly to the success of Metro West Housing Solutions, and we hope you will take pride in being a member of our team.

## **ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK**

Please take time to review the policies contained in this handbook. No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question. If you have questions at any time, please feel free to ask your supervisor or to contact the Human Resources Department. This Handbook is designed to acquaint employees with Metro West Housing Solutions (MWHS) and provide some information about working here. The Handbook **is not all inclusive** but is intended to provide employees with a summary of some MWHS' guidelines. This edition replaces all previously issued editions.



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## EMPLOYMENT AT WILL

### **Employment with Metro West Housing Solutions is on an at-will basis.**

This means, that either **the employee or Metro West Housing Solutions (MWHS) may terminate the employment relationship at any point in time, for any reason, with or without notice.**

Nothing in this employee handbook creates or is intended to create an employment agreement, express or implied. The language used in this handbook, or any other written documents, and any verbal statements made by management are not intended to constitute a contract of employment, either express or implied, nor are they a guarantee of employment for a specific duration. No representative of MWHS, other than the Chief Executive Officer, has the authority to enter into an agreement of employment for any specified period and such agreement must be in writing, signed by the Chief Executive Officer and the employee.

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

## Equal Opportunity

Metro West Housing Solutions is proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer. We provide equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, creed, ancestry, national origin, citizenship, sex or gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, and pregnancy-related conditions), gender identity or expression (including transgender status), sexual orientation, marital status, religion, age, disability, genetic information, service in the military, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state, or local laws and ordinances. Equal employment opportunity applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leave of absence, compensation, and training.

Metro West Housing Solutions prohibits any form of unlawful employee harassment or discrimination based on any of the characteristics mentioned above. Improper interference with the ability of other employees to perform their expected job duties is absolutely not tolerated.

Metro West Housing Solutions will endeavor to make a reasonable accommodation of an otherwise qualified applicant or employee related to an individual's physical or mental disability, sincerely held religious beliefs and practices, and/or any other reason required by applicable law, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship upon MWHS's business operations.

Any employees with questions or concerns about equal employment opportunities in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of Human Resources. The company will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who raise issues of equal employment opportunity. Employees who feel they have been subjected to any such retaliation should bring it to the attention of the Chief Human Resources Officer.

Retaliation means adverse conduct taken because an individual reported an actual or a perceived violation of this policy, opposed practices prohibited by this policy, or participated in the reporting and investigation process described below. "Adverse conduct" includes but is not limited to:

- (1) Shunning and avoiding an individual who reports harassment, discrimination, or retaliation;
- (2) Express or implied threats or intimidation intended to prevent an individual from reporting harassment, discrimination, or retaliation; or
- (3) Denying employment benefits because an applicant or employee reported harassment, discrimination, or retaliation or participated in the reporting and investigation process.

Other examples of retaliation include firing, demotion, denial of promotion, unjustified negative evaluations, increased surveillance, harassment, and assault.

Complaints of discrimination should be filed according to the procedures described in the Harassment and Complaint Procedure.



## **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Reasonable Accommodation**

Metro West Housing Solutions is committed to the fair and equal employment of individuals with disabilities under the ADA. It is MWHS's policy to provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the company. MWHS prohibits any harassment of, or discriminatory treatment of, employees or applicants based on a disability or because an employee has requested a reasonable accommodation.

In accordance with the ADA, reasonable accommodations will be provided to qualified individuals with disabilities to enable them to perform the essential functions of their jobs or to enjoy the equal benefits and privileges of employment. An employee or applicant with a disability may request an accommodation from the HR department and should specify what accommodation is needed to perform the job and submit supporting documentation explaining the basis for the requested accommodation, to the extent permitted and in accordance with applicable law. MWHS will then review and analyze the request, including engaging in an interactive process with the employee or applicant, to identify if such an accommodation can be made, or if any other possible accommodations are appropriate. If requested, the employee is responsible for providing medical documentation regarding the disability and possible accommodations. All information obtained concerning the medical condition or history of an applicant or employee will be treated as confidential information, maintained in separate medical files, and disclosed only as permitted by law.

It is the policy of MWHS to prohibit harassment or discrimination based on disability or because an employee has requested a reasonable accommodation. MWHS prohibits retaliation against employees for exercising their rights under the ADA or other applicable civil rights laws. Employees should use the procedures described in the Harassment and Complaint Procedure to report any harassment, discrimination, or retaliation they have experienced or witnessed.

### **Commitment to Diversity**

Metro West Housing Solutions is committed to creating and maintaining a workplace in which all employees have an opportunity to participate and contribute to the success of the business and are valued for their skills, experience, and unique perspectives. This commitment is embodied in company policy and the way we do business at MWHS and is an important principle of sound business management.

### **Harassment and Complaint Procedure**

It is Metro West Housing Solution's policy to prohibit intentional and unintentional harassment of or against job applicants, contractors, volunteers, or employees by another employee, supervisor, vendor, customer, or third party based on actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, age, sex or gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, and pregnancy-related conditions), gender identity or expression (including transgender status), sexual orientation, marital status, military service and veteran status, physical or mental disability, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state, or local laws. Such conduct will not be tolerated by MWHS.

Furthermore, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual or other harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated. MWHS will take all reasonable steps necessary to prevent and eliminate unlawful harassment.

**Definition of “unlawful harassment.”** “Unlawful harassment” is conduct that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, a hostile, or an offensive work environment; has the purpose or effect of substantially and unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance; or otherwise adversely affects an individual’s employment opportunities because of the individual’s membership in a protected class.

Unlawful harassment includes, but is not limited to, epithets; slurs; jokes; pranks; innuendo; comments; written or graphic material; stereotyping; or other threatening, hostile, or intimidating acts based on race, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, age, disability, veteran status, or another characteristic protected by state or federal law.

**Definition of “sexual harassment.”** While all forms of harassment are prohibited, special attention should be paid to sexual harassment. “Sexual harassment” can include all of the above actions, as well as other unwelcome conduct, and is generally defined under both state and federal law as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature whereby:

- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of any individual’s employment or as a basis for employment decisions.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, a hostile, or an offensive work environment.

Other sexually oriented conduct, whether intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a work environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to workers may also constitute sexual harassment.

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct that, if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending on the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwanted sexual advances, whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets; jokes; written or oral references to sexual conduct; gossip regarding one’s sex life; comments about an individual’s body; and comments about an individual’s sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing up against the body, sexual gestures, or suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one’s sexual experiences; and
- Discussion of one’s sexual activities.

All employees should take special note that, as stated above, retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual or other harassment and retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of sexual or other harassment complaints violate MWHS's policy.

**Complaint Procedure.** If an employee believes they have been subject to or have witnessed unlawful discrimination, including sexual or other forms of unlawful harassment, or other inappropriate conduct, they are requested and encouraged to make a complaint. They may complain directly to their immediate supervisor, the Chief Human Resources Officer, or any other member of management with whom they feel comfortable bringing such a complaint. Similarly, if employees observe acts of discrimination toward or harassment of another employee, they are requested and encouraged to report this to one of the individuals listed above.

All complaints will be investigated promptly, and confidentiality will be protected to the extent possible. A timely resolution of each complaint should be reached and communicated to the parties involved.

If the investigation confirms conduct that violates this policy has occurred, MWHS will take immediate, appropriate, corrective action, including discipline, up to and including immediate termination.

No reprisal, retaliation, or other adverse action will be taken against an employee for making a complaint or report of discrimination or harassment or for assisting in the investigation of any such complaint or report. Any suspected retaliation or intimidation should be reported immediately to one of the persons identified above.

# Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

## Conflicts of Interest

Metro West Housing Solutions expects all employees to conduct themselves and company business in a manner that reflects the highest standards of ethical conduct and in accordance with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations. This includes avoiding real and potential conflicts of interests. Exactly what constitutes a conflict of interest, or an unethical business practice is both a moral and a legal question. MWHS recognizes and respects the individual employee's right to engage in activities outside of employment that are private in nature and do not in any way conflict with or reflect poorly on MWHS.

It is not possible to define all the circumstances and relationships that might create a conflict of interest. If a situation arises in which there is a potential conflict of interest, the employee should discuss this with a supervisor for advice and guidance on how to proceed. The list below suggests some of the types of activities that indicate improper behavior, unacceptable personal integrity, or unacceptable ethics:

1. Carrying on company business with a firm in which the employee, or a close relative of the employee, has a substantial ownership or interest;
3. Holding a substantial interest in, or participating in the management of, a firm to which the company makes sales or from which it makes purchases;
4. Borrowing money from customers or firms, other than recognized loan institutions, from which our company buys services, materials, equipment, or supplies;
5. Accepting substantial gifts, rewards, gratuity, or excessive entertainment from an outside organization or agency;
6. Speculating or dealing in materials, equipment, supplies, services, or property purchased by the company;
8. Misusing privileged information or revealing confidential data to outsiders;
9. Using one's position in the company or knowledge of its affairs for personal gains; and
10. Engaging in practices or procedures that violate current laws and regulations, such as: commercial bribery laws, copyright laws, discrimination laws, campaign contribution laws, or other laws regulating the conduct of company business.

## Confidential Information

The protection of confidential business information and client information is vital to the interests and success of MWHS. Confidential information is any and all information disclosed to or known by employees because of employment with the company that is not generally known to people outside the company about its business.

An employee who improperly uses or discloses confidential client, co-worker, or business information will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and legal action, even if the employee does not actually benefit from the disclosed information.

# Employment Relationship

## Employee Privacy

It is MWHS's goal to respect the individual privacy of its employees and at the same time maintain a safe and secure workplace. When issues of safety and security arise, employees may be requested to cooperate with an investigation. The investigation may include the following procedures to safeguard MWHS and its employees: searches of personal belongings, searches of work areas, searches of private vehicles on company premises, medical examinations, and the like. Failure to cooperate with an investigation is grounds for termination. Providing false information during any investigation may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Employees are expected to make use of company facilities only for the business purposes of the company. Accordingly, materials that appear on company hardware or networks are presumed to be for business purposes, and all such materials are subject to review by the company at any time without notice to the employees. Employees do not have to have any expectation of privacy with respect to any material on company property. MWHS regularly monitors its communications systems and networks as allowed by law. Monitored activity may include voice, e-mail, and text communications, as well as Internet search and browsing history. Employees who make excessive use of the communications system for personal matters are subject to discipline. Employees are expected to keep personal communication to a minimum and to emergency situations.

**Video surveillance.** As part of its security measures and to help ensure a safe workplace, MWHS has positioned video cameras to monitor various areas of its facilities. Video footage may be reviewed by management at any time. Video cameras will not be used in private areas, such as break rooms, restrooms, etc.

## Privacy—Social Security Numbers and Personally Identifiable Information

It is MWHS's policy that Social Security numbers and Personally Identifiable Information (PII) obtained from employees, vendors, contractors, customers, or others are confidential information. Social Security numbers and PII will be obtained, retained, used, and disposed of only for legitimate business reasons and in accordance with the law and this policy. Documents or other records containing employee Social Security numbers or PII generally will be requested, obtained, or created only for legitimate business reasons consistent with this policy. For example, Social Security numbers may be requested from employees for tax reporting purposes (i.e., Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form W-4), for new hire reporting, or for purposes of enrollment in the company's employee benefit plans.

Each employee should take the necessary steps to ensure the security and confidentiality of all personally identifiable information (PII) of customers, clients, employees and vendors as well as sensitive company data which includes through emails, faxes, files both electronic and physical on the company's premise or network. Employees are to protect PII against any reasonably anticipated threats or hazards to the security or integrity of such information; and against unauthorized access to or use of such information in a manner that creates a substantial risk of identity theft, fraud or harm to the company or individual. Should any breach or incident be suspected employees should notify their supervisor immediately.

**Retention and access to Social Security numbers and PII.** All records containing Social Security numbers (whether partial or complete) and PII will be maintained in secure, confidential files with limited access. Employees are required to follow MWHS' Records Retention schedule and properly dispose of records once past their retention period.

**Unauthorized use/disclosure of Social Security numbers and PII.** Any employee who obtains, uses, or discloses Social Security numbers and/or PII for unauthorized purposes or contrary to the requirements of this policy and procedure may be disciplined, up to and including discharge. The company will cooperate with government investigations of any person alleged to have obtained, used, or disclosed Social Security numbers and/or PII for unlawful purposes.

## **Employment Classification**

In order to determine eligibility for benefits and overtime status and to ensure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations, MWHS classifies its employees as shown below.

**Exempt.** Exempt employees are typically paid on a salary basis and are not eligible to receive overtime pay.

**Nonexempt.** Nonexempt employees are paid on an hourly basis and are eligible to receive overtime pay for overtime hours worked.

**Regular, full-time.** Employees who are normally schedule to work a minimum of 40 hours weekly and maintain continuous employment status. Generally, these employees are eligible for the full-time benefits package and are subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefits program.

**Regular, part-time.** Employees who are normally scheduled to work 30 to 39 hours per week and who maintain continuous employment status. Regular, part-time employees are eligible for the benefits offered by the company and are subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefits program. Some benefits may be prorated for part-time employees.

**Limited Part time Employee** an employee scheduled to work less than 30 hours per week on average. These employees are not eligible for enrollment in the group health, dental, vision and life insurance but those working an average of 20 hours per workweek. They may be offered some leave benefits.

**Temporary Employee** - an employee who is hired in a job established for a temporary period or for a specific assignment. Temporary employees are currently ineligible for MWHS benefits.

## **Workweek and Hours of Work**

The expected hours of work for most full-time employees are Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. or as scheduled with the supervisor based on the length of meal breaks. All employees will take either a 30 minute or 1 hour unpaid meal break during the work day. Schedule adjustments outside the expected hours must be approved in advance by the supervisor.

The workweek for MWHS is defined as the time from Sunday 12:00 a.m. until Saturday 11:59 p.m. and generally consists of 40 work hours.

## **Meal and 15-Minute Breaks**

Employees are entitled to a minimum 30-minute unpaid meal break each day. Any nonexempt employee who is required to work through a meal break will be paid for the 30-minute period. Employees may take up to two paid 15 minute breaks during the course of the day. These breaks

cannot be combined with the unpaid meal break or to shorten the work day. Meal and 15-minute breaks will be scheduled by the supervisor.

## **Time Records**

All nonexempt employees are required to complete accurate weekly time reports showing all time actually worked. These records are required by governmental regulations and are used to calculate regular and overtime pay. At the end of each two-week time period, employees and their supervisors must verify the time sheet attesting to its correctness before submitting it to the HR department. Failure to accurately record time worked may result in disciplinary action.

## **Overtime**

When required due to the needs of the business, employees may need to work overtime. Overtime is actual hours worked in excess of 40 in a single workweek. Nonexempt employees will be paid overtime compensation at the rate of one and one-half their regular rate of pay for all hours over 40 actually worked in a single workweek. Paid leave, such as holiday, paid time off (PTO), bereavement time, and jury duty, does not apply toward work time. All overtime work must be approved in advance by a supervisor or manager.

## **Deductions from Pay/Safe Harbor Exempt Employees**

Metro West Housing Solutions does not make improper deductions from the salaries of exempt employees and complies with the salary basis requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Employees classified as exempt from the overtime pay requirements of the FLSA will be notified of this classification at the time of hire or change in position.

**Permitted deductions.** The FLSA limits the types of deductions that may be made from the pay of an exempt employee. Deductions that are permitted include:

- Deductions that are required by law, e.g., income taxes;
- Deductions for employee benefits when authorized by the employee;
- Absence from work for one or more full days for personal reasons, sickness or disability if the deduction is made in accordance with a current policy or program providing for compensation of salary lost due to person time off or illness.
- Unpaid disciplinary suspensions of 1 or more full days imposed in good faith for workplace conduct rule infractions; and
- Any full workweek in which the employee does not perform any work.

During the week an exempt employee begins work for the company or during the last week of employment, the employee will only be paid for actual hours worked. In addition, an employee may be paid only for hours worked during a period when the employee is using unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

**Improper deductions.** If an employee classified as exempt believes that an improper deduction has been taken from the employee's pay, the employee should immediately report the deduction to the HR department. The report will be promptly investigated, and if it is found that an improper deduction has been made, the company will reimburse the employee for the improper deduction.

## **Paychecks**

MWHS's pay period for all employees is biweekly on Friday. If payday falls on a federal holiday, employees will receive their paycheck on the preceding workday. Paychecks are directly deposited into employees' checking and/or savings accounts.

## **Access to Personnel Files**

Employee files are maintained by the HR department and are considered confidential. Managers and supervisors may only have access to personnel file information on a need-to-know basis. Employees may inspect their own personnel files and may copy them but may not remove documents from their file. Inspections by employees must be requested in writing to the HR department and will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time or as required under state law. Personnel files are to be reviewed in the HR department. Representatives of government or law enforcement agencies, in the course of their duties, may be allowed access to file information.

## **Employment of Relatives and Domestic Partners**

Relatives and domestic partners may be hired by the company if (1) the persons concerned will not work in a direct supervisory relationship, and (2) the employment will not pose difficulties for supervision, security, safety, or morale. For the purposes of this policy, "relatives" are defined as spouses, children, siblings, parents, or grandparents. A "domestic partnership" is generally defined as a committed relationship between two individuals who are sharing a home or living arrangements. Current employees who marry each other or become involved in a domestic partnership will be permitted to continue employment with the company provided they don't work in a direct supervisory relationship with each other or otherwise pose difficulties as mentioned above. If employees who marry or live together do work in a direct supervisory relationship with each other, the company will attempt to reassign one of the employees to another position for which the employee is qualified if such a position is available. If no such position is available, the employees will be permitted to determine which one of them will resign from the company.

## **Separation from Employment**

In all cases of voluntary resignation (one initiated by the employee), employees are asked to provide a written notice to their supervisors at least 10 working days in advance of the last day of work. The 10 days must be actual working days. Holidays and use of paid time off will not be counted toward the 10-day notice. Employees who provide the requested amount of notice will be considered to have resigned in good standing and generally will be eligible for rehire.

In most cases, HR will conduct an exit meeting on or before the last day of employment to collect all company property and to discuss final pay. If applicable, information regarding benefits continuation through the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) will be sent to the employee's home address.

Should it become necessary because of business conditions to reduce the number of employees or work hours, this will be done at the discretion of the company.



# Workplace Safety

## Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace

It is the policy of Metro West Housing Solutions to maintain a drug- and alcohol-free work environment that is safe and productive for employees and others having business with the company. The unlawful use, possession, purchase, sale, or distribution of or being under the influence of any illegal drug or controlled substance (including medical marijuana) or item that substantially changes an individual's ability to perform job duties while on company or client premises or while performing services for the company is strictly prohibited. MWHS also prohibits reporting to work or performing services under the influence of alcohol or consuming alcohol while on duty or during work hours. In addition, MWHS prohibits off-premises abuse of alcohol and controlled substances (including medical marijuana), as well as the possession, use, or sale of illegal drugs, when these activities adversely affect job performance, job safety, or the company's reputation in the community.

To ensure compliance with this policy, substance abuse screening may be conducted in the following situations:

**For cause:** upon reasonable suspicion that the employee is under the influence of alcohol or drugs that could affect or have adversely affected the employee's job performance.

Compliance with this policy is a condition of employment. Employees who test positive or who refuse to submit to substance abuse screening will be subject to termination. Notwithstanding any provision herein, this policy will be enforced at all times in accordance with applicable state and local law.

Any employee violating this policy is subject to discipline, up to and including termination, for the first offense.

## Smoke-Free Workplace

Smoking is not allowed in company buildings, work areas, maintenance shops, or agency owned vehicles at any time. "Smoking" includes the use of any tobacco products (including chewing tobacco), electronic smoking devices, and e-cigarettes.

Smoking is only permitted during break times in designated outdoor areas. All designated areas must be a minimum of 25 feet from a building entrance. Employees using these areas are expected to dispose of any smoking debris safely and properly.

## Workplace Violence Prevention

Metro West Housing Solutions is committed to providing a safe, violence-free workplace for our employees. Due to this commitment, the company discourages employees from engaging in any physical confrontation with a violent or potentially violent individual or from behaving in a threatening or violent manner. Threats, threatening language, or any other acts of aggression or violence made toward or by any employee will not be tolerated. A threat may include any verbal or physical harassment or abuse; attempts to intimidate others; menacing gestures; stalking; or any other hostile, aggressive, and/or destructive actions taken for the purposes of intimidation. This policy covers any violent or potentially violent behavior that occurs in the workplace or at company-sponsored functions.

All MWHS employees bear the responsibility of keeping our work environment free from violence or potential violence. Any employee who witnesses or is the recipient of violent behavior should promptly inform their supervisor, manager, or HR department. All threats will be promptly investigated. No employee will be subject to retaliation, intimidation, or discipline as a result of reporting a threat in good faith under this guideline.

Any individual engaging in violence against the company, its employees, or its property will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. All acts will be investigated, and the appropriate action will be taken. Any such act or threatening behavior may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Metro West Housing Solutions prohibits the possession of weapons by employees on its property at all times, including our parking lots or company vehicles. Additionally, while on duty, employees may not carry a weapon of any type. Weapons include, but are not limited to, handguns, rifles, automatic weapons, knives that can be used as weapons (excluding pocketknives, utility knives, and other instruments that are used to open packages or cut string and for other miscellaneous tasks), martial arts paraphernalia, stun guns, and tear gas. Any employee violating this policy is subject to discipline up to and including dismissal for the first offense.

MWHS reserves the right to inspect all belongings of employees on its premises, including packages, briefcases, purses and handbags, gym bags, and personal vehicles on company property. In addition, MWHS may inspect the contents of storage areas, file cabinets, desks, and workstations at any time and may remove all company property and other items that are in violation of company rules and policies.

## **Commitment to Safety**

Protecting the safety of our employees and visitors is the most important aspect of running our business. All employees have the opportunity and responsibility to contribute to a safe work environment by using commonsense rules and safe practices and by notifying management when any health or safety issues are present. All employees are encouraged to partner with management to ensure maximum safety for all. In the event of an emergency, notify the appropriate emergency personnel by dialing 911 to activate the medical emergency services. Any workplace injury, accident, or illness must be reported to the employee's supervisor as soon as possible, regardless of the severity of the injury or accident.

## **Emergency Closings**

MWHS will always make every attempt to be open for business. In situations in which some employees are concerned about their safety, management may advise supervisors to notify their departments that the office is not officially closed, but employees may choose to leave the office if they feel uncomfortable.

If the office is officially closed during the course of the day to permit employees to leave early, nonexempt employees who are working on-site as of the time of the closing will be paid for a full day. If employees leave earlier than the official closing time, they will be paid only for actual hours worked, or they can take vacation time. Exempt employees will be paid for a normal full day but are expected to complete their work at another time.

# Workplace Guidelines

## Attendance

All employees are expected to arrive on time, ready to work, every day they are scheduled to work. If unable to arrive at work on time, or if an employee will be absent for an entire day, the employee must contact the supervisor by phone as soon as possible. Voicemail, text, and e-mail messages are not acceptable except in certain emergency circumstances. An individual supervisor may approve an alternate method of notification for direct team members.

Excessive absenteeism or tardiness will result in discipline up to and including termination. Failure to show up or call in for a scheduled shift without prior approval also may result in discipline up to and including termination. If an employee fails to report to work or call in to inform the supervisor of the absence for three consecutive days or more, the employee will be considered to have voluntarily resigned employment.

## Job Performance

Communication between employees and supervisors or managers is very important. Discussions regarding job performance are ongoing and often informal. Employees should initiate conversations with their supervisors if they feel additional ongoing feedback is needed. Regular quarterly check-ins may be conducted based on length of employment.

Generally, formal performance reviews are conducted annually. These reviews include a written performance appraisal, an evaluation on meeting agency key attributes, a discussion between the employee and the supervisor about job performance, and expectations or goals for the coming year.

## Outside Employment

Employees generally are permitted to work a second job as long as it does not interfere with their job performance, current schedule, or create a conflict of interest with MWHS. All employees, including part-time employees, must obtain prior approval from the HR department before undertaking any outside employment or other work activity.

Employees with a second job are expected to work their assigned schedules. A second job will not be considered an excuse for poor job performance, absenteeism, tardiness, leaving early, refusal to travel, or refusal to work overtime or different hours. In addition, employees who have accepted outside employment may not use paid sick time to work on the outside job. However, an employee on a leave of absence may continue to work in the outside job if this employment has been approved by the company under this policy and the employee's reason for leave does not preclude the outside employment. If outside work activity causes or contributes to job-related problems, it must be discontinued, or the employee may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## Dress and Grooming

MWHS provides employment to a wide variety of staff members with diverse backgrounds, varied duties, and unique responsibilities. It is expected that you know your position, use common sense, take pride in your work, and represent the agency in a professional manner according to your duties and assignments.

When in the office a neat, tasteful appearance contributes to the positive impression you make on our customers, co-workers, and visitors. You are expected to be suitably attired and groomed during working hours and when representing MWHS. Some examples of professional office attire may include clean pants such as dress slacks and capris, trousers, khakis, jeans, skirts, blouses, polo type shirts, oxford type shirts, sweaters, agency logo shirts, closed and open-toed shoes, boots, sneakers, etc. Longer style shorts may be acceptable in some positions. Agency issued logo shirts may be required for some positions.

When working offsite, presenting to a public audience, or representing MWHS at meetings or conferences be mindful of the environment that you are visiting and dress accordingly. This may include more formal attire and closed toe shoes only.

Clothing that is not appropriate includes, but may not be limited to, ripped or torn clothing, casual t-shirts, sweats, loungewear, clothing that reveals undergarments, yoga pants, workout leggings, beach style sandals, and flip-flops. If you are in doubt don't wear it or bring an extra set of clothes and check with your supervisor.

## **Cell Phone Safety and Driving**

Safe driving is the first priority when operating a vehicle while driving on MWHS business. Employees' first responsibility is to pay attention to your driving. They should never allow a cell phone or other mobile device to distract them from concentrating on driving. Under no circumstances should employees feel that they need to place themselves or others at risk while driving to fulfill business needs. Employees should follow these procedures to avoid distracted driving:

- Follow all applicable state and local laws that address the use of cell phones and other mobile devices while driving.
- Avoid using cell phones while driving and avoid using it as a hand-held device. Find a safe place to pull over to make or receive phone calls, send or receive text messages, or manipulate navigation apps.
- Program their destination into navigation apps or GPS devices before they start driving.
- Do not read or respond to text messages or e-mail or browse social media or the Internet while driving.
- Be aware of distractions from in-car "infotainment" systems. Just because they are built into the vehicle does not mean they do not create a hazardous distraction.

Employees who fail to follow safety guidelines are subject to disciplinary action.

## **Social Media Acceptable Use**

Metro West Housing Solutions limits posts on agency social media sites to items that are approved and reviewed by the communications team in advance. Employees that want to share information on a MWHS social media site should first consult with a supervisor and members of the communications team directly. All use of social media during working hours must be directly related to a work assignment and approved in advance.

**Note:** As used in this policy, “social media” refers to blogs, forums, and social networking sites, such as X, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat, among others.

**Respect.** A social media site is a public place, and employees should avoid inappropriate comments, demonstrate respect for others and MWHS. For example, employees should not divulge MWHS confidential information such as, tenant names, client lists, or information restricted from disclosure by law on social media sites. Similarly, employees should not engage in harassing or discriminatory behavior that targets other employees or individuals because of their protected class status or make defamatory comments or engage in other behavior that violates the company’s policies.

**Confidentiality.** Employees should not identify or reference company clients, customers, or vendors without express permission.

**Legal.** Employees are expected to comply with all applicable laws, including, but not limited to, Federal Trade Commission (FTC) guidelines and copyright, trademark, and harassment laws.

**Discipline.** Violations of this policy may result in discipline up to and including immediate termination of employment.

## **Solicitation**

Employees should be able to work in an environment that is free from unnecessary annoyances and interference with their work. In order to protect our employees and visitors, solicitation by employees is strictly prohibited while either the employee being solicited or the employee doing the soliciting is on “working time.” “Working time” is defined as time during which an employee is not at a meal, on break, or on the premises immediately before or after a shift.

Employees are also prohibited from distributing written materials, handbills, or any other type of literature on working time and, at all times, in “working areas,” which include all office areas. “Working areas” do not include break rooms, parking lots, or common areas shared by employees during nonworking time. Nonemployees may not trespass or solicit or distribute materials anywhere on company property at any time.

## **Computers, Internet, E-Mail, and Other Resources**

Metro West Housing Solutions provides a wide variety of communication tools and resources to employees for use in running day-to-day business activities. Whether it is the telephone, voicemail, scanner, Internet, intranet, e-mail, text messaging, portable electronic devices, or any other company-provided technology, use should be reserved for business-related matters during working hours. All communication using these tools should be handled in a professional and respectful manner.

Employees should not have any expectation of privacy in their use of company computer, phone, portable electronic devices, or other communication tools. All communications made using company-provided equipment or services, including e-mail and Internet activity, are subject to inspection by the company. Employees should keep in mind that even if they delete an e-mail, a voicemail, or another communication, a copy may be archived on the company’s systems.

Employee use of company-provided communication systems, including personal e-mail and Internet use, that is not job-related has the potential to drain, rather than enhance, productivity and system performance. You should also be aware that information transmitted through e-mail and the Internet is not completely secure or may contain viruses or malware, and information you transmit and receive

could damage the company's systems. To protect against possible problems, delete any e-mail messages before opening that are received from unknown senders and advertisers. It also is against company policy to turn off antivirus protection software or make unauthorized changes to system configurations installed on company computers. Violations of this policy may result in termination for a first offense.

Metro West Housing Solutions encourages employees to use e-mail only to communicate with fellow employees, suppliers, customers, or potential customers regarding company business. Internal and external e-mails are considered business records and may be subject to federal and state recordkeeping requirements, as well as to discovery in the event of litigation. Be aware of this possibility when sending e-mails within and outside the company.

All use of company-provided communications systems, including e-mail and Internet use, should conform to our company guidelines/policies, including but not limited to the Equal Opportunity, Harassment, Confidential Information, and Conflicts of Interest. So, for example, employees should not engage in harassing or discriminatory behavior that targets other employees or individuals because of their protected class status or make defamatory comments. Similarly, employees should not divulge confidential information such as, client lists, or information restricted from disclosure by law on social media sites.

Because e-mail, telephone and voicemail, and Internet communication equipment are provided for company business purposes and are critical to the MWHS's success, your communications may be accessed without further notice by IT and company management to ensure compliance with this guideline. The electronic communication systems are not secure and may allow inadvertent disclosure, accidental transmission to third parties, etc. Sensitive information should not be sent via unsecured electronic means.

Employees should pay particular care to the use and security of portable electronic devices when used for business-related purposes, such as laptops, tablets, smartphones, and other data storage media, whether provided by the employer or the employee. Lost or stolen portable electronic devices containing company information may cause breaches of security that result in the loss of company confidential commercial data, the loss of vital research data, the unauthorized disclosure of sensitive employee data, lawsuits against the individual, and lawsuits against the company. Employees should use appropriate password protections for such devices and physically secure them as recommended by IT administrators.

Office telephones are for business purposes. While the company recognizes that some personal calls are necessary, these should be kept as brief as possible and to a minimum. Personal use of the company's cell phones, long-distance account, or toll-free numbers is strictly prohibited. Abuse of these privileges is subject to corrective action up to and including termination.

The company reserves the right to monitor customer calls to ensure employees abide by company quality guidelines and provide appropriate levels of customer service. Should the subject matter of any telephone conversation become personal while monitoring is taking place, monitoring of the call will immediately be discontinued.

Nothing in this policy is meant to, nor should it be interpreted to, in any way limit employees' rights under any applicable federal, state, or local laws, including rights under the NLRA to engage in protected concerted activities with other employees to improve or discuss terms and conditions of employment, such as wages, working conditions, and benefits. Employees have the right to engage in or refrain from such activities.

## **Disciplinary Procedure**

Metro West Housing Solutions expects employees to comply with the company's standards of behavior and performance and to correct any noncompliance with these standards.

Under normal circumstances, MWHS endorses a policy of progressive discipline in which it attempts to provide employees with notice of deficiencies and provides an opportunity to improve. It does, however, retain the right to administer discipline in any manner it sees fit. This policy does not modify the status of employees as employees at will or in any way restrict the company's right to bypass the disciplinary procedures suggested.

The following steps are suggested in the discipline procedure. Documentation of steps 2-4 should be sent to HR for documentation in the employee's personnel file.

**Step 1:** Informal Discussion. When a performance problem is first identified, the nature of the problem and the action necessary to correct it should be thoroughly discussed with the employee.

**Step 2:** Counseling. If a private informal discussion with the employee has not resulted in corrective action, following a thorough investigation, the supervisor should meet with the employee and (a) review the problem, (b) permit the employee to present information regarding the problem, (c) advise the employee that the problem must be corrected, (d) inform the employee that failure to correct the problem will result in further disciplinary action that may include discharge, and (e) issue a summary statement of the interaction to the employee and HR.

**Step 3:** Written Reprimand. If satisfactory performance and corrective action are not achieved under Steps 1 and 2, the supervisor should meet with the employee in private and proceed via (a) through (d) above and issue a reprimand notice to the employee with a copy to HR.

**Step 4:** Administrative Leave or Suspension. Designated supervisors after consultation with Human Resources or other members of the executive team may have the authority to temporarily remove employees from the workplace, with or without pay. These removals must be approved in advance by the department director and the Chief Human Resources Officer. An exempt employee generally may not be suspended without pay for less than a full day, and the suspension must be related to written workplace conduct rules applicable to all employees, such as a written policy prohibiting sexual harassment or workplace violence.

**Step 5:** Failure to improve. Failure to improve performance or behavior after the written warning or suspension can result in termination.

The progressive disciplinary procedures described above also may be applied to an employee who is experiencing a series of unrelated problems involving job performance or behavior.

In cases involving serious misconduct, workplace violence, or any time the supervisor determines it is necessary, such as a major breach of policy or violation of law, the procedures contained above may be disregarded. Typically, the supervisor after consulting with an superior or human resources should suspend the employee immediately (with or without pay), and an investigation of the incidents leading up to the suspension should be conducted to determine if any further action, such as termination, should be taken.



# Time Off and Leaves of Absence

## Holidays

Metro West Housing Solutions observes and allows time off with pay for the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Presidents' Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth National Independence Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas

Any additional holidays will be designated by the company at the start of each calendar year.

If one of these holidays falls on a Sunday, it will be observed on the following Monday. If the holiday falls on a Saturday, the company will observe the holiday on the preceding Friday.

**Holiday pay.** Full-time and part-time (30 hour) regular employees are eligible for holiday pay. Holiday pay shall be at the employee's regular straight-time rate at 8 hours per day for full-time and 6 hours per day for eligible part-time employees.

To receive holiday pay, an eligible nonexempt employee must be at work or taking an approved absence on the workdays immediately preceding and immediately following the day on which the holiday is observed. An approved absence is a day of paid vacation or paid sick leave. If an employee is absent on one or both of these days because of an illness or injury, the company may require verification of the reason for the absence before approving holiday pay.

**Floating Holiday.** In addition to the above listed holidays, employees may receive up to two floating holidays. Floating Holidays are available for use on days selected by the employee with approval from the supervisor. Accrual for floating holidays occurs on the last pay date of January and July. An employee must be working at the start and end of the prior pay period to accrue a floating holiday.

**Religious observances.** Employees who need time off to observe religious practices or holidays not already scheduled by the company should speak with their supervisor. Depending upon business needs, the employee should schedule time off as far in advance as reasonably possible utilizing either a floating holiday or vacation pay. The company will seek to reasonably accommodate individuals' religious observances.

**On Call Holidays.** Non-exempt employees who are called in to work on a holiday will receive on-call pay or overtime pay, depending on position, for hours worked in addition to their normal holiday pay. Time must be recorded correctly in the payroll system.

All holiday pay and hours must be taken during the calendar year and the hours do not carry over.

## Vacation

Metro West Housing Solutions recognizes the importance of time off from work to relax, spend time with family, and enjoy leisure activities. The company provides paid vacation time to regular employees for this purpose, and employees are encouraged to take vacation during the year that it is earned. Vacation time is earned monthly, according to schedule below. Vacation time is accrued on the last paycheck in a given month.

Years of Service	Non-exempt		Exempt	
	# Hours Accrued	Maximum Accrual Hours	# Hours Accrued	Maximum Accrual Hours
Less than 5	8 (6)	160 (90)	10	240
5-9	10 (6.3)	180 (105)	11.3	250
10-14	11.3 (7.5)	200 (110)	12	252
15-19	12 (8.8)	220 (115)	13.3	255
20 or more	13.3 (10)	230 (120)	15	260

Numbers in ( ) are for regular part-time, 30-39 hours per week, employees.

### Use of Vacation Time

Vacation accruals are not available for use until after the actual accrual date.

Vacations should be scheduled in advance and with supervisor approval. Supervisors may reject certain vacation requests if other employees in the work group have already requested and been approved for leave time or if the length of absence extends beyond two work weeks.

Upon separation, employees are paid the balance of accrued hours of vacation time not to exceed the maximum balance listed above.

Employees may not accrue vacation during certain leave or suspension situations.

Accrued vacation may be used in any increments.

Employees with vacation balances cannot take unpaid time off.

### Vacation Sell Back Option

After your 5-year anniversary, if you generally don't need all the vacation time you earn, you may voluntarily sell some vacation days for cash, however you must have at least two weeks of vacation time remaining after the sell back. Election of this benefit is available during November or at other times if designated by the CEO.

## Sick Leave

Metro West Housing Solutions provides regular employees with paid sick days. Sick leave time is accrued monthly according to the schedule listed below. Depending on an individual date of hire, the first accrual day may be the end of the month following your first full month of employment.

	# Hours Accrued	Maximum Accrual Hours
Full-time Employee	8	840
Part-time Employee (30-39 hours/week)	6	480
Full-time Employee 20+ Years of Service	10	960

## **Use of Sick Leave**

Sick leave is not intended to be used as a substitute for vacation days, but may be used as outlined below.

For your own illness or to provide care for an immediate family member who is ill.

For your own medical appointments and for appointments of dependent household members.

If the need for sick leave is foreseeable, employees are asked to give at least 30 days' advance notice (e.g., a planned medical treatment) whenever possible. If the need for sick leave is not foreseeable, employees are asked to notify their supervisor as soon as is practical.

If an employee misses three or more consecutive days because of illness, MWHS may require the employee to provide a physician's written permission to return to work.

## **Family and Medical Leave**

Metro West Housing Solutions complies with the federal FMLA, which requires employers to grant unpaid leaves of absence to qualified workers for certain medical and family-related reasons. The company also abides by any state and local leave laws. The more generous of the laws will apply to the employee if the employee is eligible under both federal and state laws.

Employees should note there are many requirements, qualifications, and exceptions under these laws, and each employee's situation is different. Employees should contact the HR department to discuss options for leave.

The FMLA requires private employers with 50 or more employees and all public agencies, including state, local, and federal employers, and local education agencies (schools) to provide eligible employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in any 12-month period for certain family and medical reasons. The 12-month period is a rolling period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave, except for leaves to care for a covered service member with a serious illness or injury. For those leaves, the leave entitlement is 26 weeks in a single 12-month period measured forward from the date an employee first takes that type of leave.

**Basic leave entitlement.** The FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons: (1) for incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care, or childbirth; (2) to care for the employee's child after birth or placement for adoption or foster care; (3) to care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition; or (4) for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to work.

**Military family leave entitlements.** Eligible employees with a spouse, child, or parent on active duty or called to active-duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include addressing issues that arise from (1) short notice of deployment (limited to up to seven days of leave); (2) attending certain military events and related activity; (3) arranging child care and school activities; (4) addressing certain financial and legal arrangements; (5) attending certain counseling sessions; (6) spending time with covered military family members on short-term temporary rest and recuperation leave (limited to up to five days of leave); (7) attending post-deployment reintegration briefings; (8) arranging care for or providing care to a parent who is incapable of self-care; and (9) any additional activities agreed upon by the employer and employee that arise out of the military member's active duty or call to active duty.

The FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered servicemember during a single 12-month period. A covered

servicemember is a current member of the armed forces, including a member of the National Guard or reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the servicemember medically unfit to perform the duties of the servicemember's office, grade, rank, or rating and for which the servicemember is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list.

**Benefits and protections during FMLA leave.** During FMLA leave, the company will maintain the employee's health coverage under any "group health plan" on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees will be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms. However, an employee on FMLA leave does not have any greater right to reinstatement or to other benefits and conditions of employment than if the employee had been continuously employed during the FMLA leave period.

Certain highly compensated key employees also may be denied reinstatement when necessary to prevent "substantial and grievous economic injury" to the company's operations. A "key" employee is an eligible salaried employee who is among the highest-paid 10 percent of the company's employees within 75 miles of the worksite. Employees will be notified of their status as key employees, when applicable, after they request FMLA leave.

Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued before the start of an employee's leave.

**Employee eligibility.** The FMLA defines eligible employees as employees who (1) have worked for the company for at least 12 months; (2) have worked for the company for at least 1,250 hours in the previous 12 months; and (3) work at or report to a worksite that has 50 or more employees or is within 75 miles of company worksites that, taken together, have a total of 50 or more employees.

**Definition of "serious health condition."** A serious health condition is an illness, an injury, an impairment, or a physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility or continuing treatment by a healthcare provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school, work, or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a healthcare provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of "continuing treatment."

**Use of leave.** An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced work schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies also may be taken on an intermittent or a reduced work schedule basis.

**Substitution of paid leave for unpaid leave.** Employees may choose or employers may require the use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. Accordingly, the company requires employees to use any accrued paid vacation, personal, and sick days during an unpaid FMLA leave taken because of the

employees' own serious health condition or the serious health condition of a family member or to care for a seriously ill or injured family member in the military. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, employees must comply with the company's normal paid leave procedures found in its Vacation and Sick Leave policies.

**Employee responsibilities.** Employees must provide 30 days' advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days' notice is not possible, employees must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with the company's normal call-in procedures. The company may delay leave to employees who do not provide proper advance notice of the foreseeable need for leave, absent unusual circumstances preventing the notice.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the company to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a healthcare provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform the company if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees also are required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave. The company also may require a second and, if necessary, a third opinion (at the company's expense) and, when the leave is a result of the employee's own serious health condition, a fitness-for-duty report to return to work. The company also may delay or deny approval of leave for lack of proper medical certification.

**Company responsibilities.** The company will inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under the FMLA. If they are, the notice will specify any additional information required, as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If employees are not eligible, the company will provide a reason for the ineligibility.

The company will inform employees if leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employees' FMLA leave entitlement. If the company determines that the leave is not FMLA-protected, the company will notify the employees.

**Other provisions.** Under an exception to the FLSA in the FMLA regulations, hourly amounts may be deducted for unpaid leave from the salary of executive, administrative, and professional employees; outside sales representatives; certain highly skilled computer professionals; and certain highly compensated employees who are exempt from the minimum wage and overtime requirements of the FLSA, without affecting the employees' exempt status. This special exception to the "salary basis" requirements for the FLSA's exemptions extends only to eligible employees' use of FMLA leave.

Employees may not perform work for self-employment or for any other employer during an approved leave of absence, except when the leave is for military or public service or when the company has approved the employment under its Outside Employment policy and the employees' reason for FMLA leave does not preclude the outside employment.

**Unlawful acts by employers.** The FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer (1) to interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under the FMLA or (2) to discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to the FMLA.

**Enforcement.** An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

### **FAMLI – Colorado Medical Leave Insurance Program**

FAMLI benefits provide partial income protection for eligible employees who are temporarily unable to work due to their own or a family member’s qualifying medical or legal reason, specifically for the care of a newborn, adopted child, or fostered child; to care for a family member with a serious health condition; for qualifying military exigency leave; or to address safety needs or the impact of domestic violence and/or sexual assault. FAMLI provides up to 12 weeks of partially paid leave or up to 16 weeks under certain circumstances related to pregnancy and childbirth.

Contributions to the FAMLI fund are a shared responsibility between the employer and the employee. The contribution to the fund is 0.9% of wages, with the employee contributing 0.45% and MWHS contributing 0.45% to the fund. MWHS submits the full amount to the state based on the established remittance schedule.

For more information about the state-facilitated program, including eligibility, required documentation, and process, please see [famli.colorado.gov](http://famli.colorado.gov). Benefits are available after January 1, 2024.

If the employee intends to use FMLA and leave accrual balances concurrently with FAMLI, please contact Human Resources for additional information.

### **Military Leave**

Metro West Housing Solutions supports the military obligations of all employees and grants leaves for uniformed service in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. Any employee who needs time off for uniformed service should immediately notify the HR department and the employee’s supervisor, who will provide details regarding the leave. If an employee is unable to provide notice before leaving for uniformed service, a family member should notify the supervisor as soon as possible.

Upon return from military leave, employees will retain certain rights with respect to reinstatement, seniority, layoffs, compensation, length of service promotions, and length of service pay increases, as required by applicable federal or state law. Failure to report for work within the prescribed time after completion of military service will be considered a voluntary termination.

All employees who enter military service may accumulate a total absence of five years and still retain employment rights.

### **Bereavement Leave**

Employees may utilize up to 5 days of paid leave from individual sick and/or vacation time balances upon the death of a member of their immediate family. “Immediate family members” are defined as an employee’s spouse, domestic partner, parents, stepparents, siblings, children, stepchildren, grandparent, parent-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, or grandchild.

All regular, full-time employees may take up to one day off with pay from available sick and vacation leave balances to attend the funeral of an extended family member (aunts, uncles, and cousins). The company may require verification of the need for the leave. The employee's supervisor and HR will consider this time off on a case-by-case basis.

Payment for bereavement leave is computed at the regular hourly rate to a maximum of eight hours for one day. Time off granted in accordance with this policy shall not be credited as time worked for the purpose of computing overtime.

### **Jury Duty/Court Appearance**

The company supports employees in their civic duty to serve on a jury. Employees must present any summons to jury duty to their supervisor as soon as possible after receiving the notice to allow advance planning for an employee's absence.

Employees will be provided time off for jury duty in accordance with applicable laws. In general, up to a maximum of three days will be paid as regular time. If an employee is released from jury duty after four hours or less of service, the employee must report to work for the remainder of that workday.

Time for appearance in court for personal business will be the individual employee's responsibility. Normally, personal days or vacation days will be used for this purpose.

### **Time Off for Voting**

MWHS recognizes that voting is a right and privilege of being a citizen of the United States and encourages employees to exercise their right to vote. In almost all cases, employees will have sufficient time outside working hours to vote or can opt to vote by mail in ballot. If for any reason an employee thinks this will not be the case, they should contact their supervisor to discuss scheduling accommodations, employees may receive up to 2 hours of paid time to vote during business hours.

### **Domestic Violence Leave**

Under section 24-34-402.7 of the Colorado Revised Statutes, MWHS permits employees who are victims of domestic abuse to take up to three working days of leave in any 12-month period to seek a civil restraining order, obtain medical care or counseling for themselves or their children, make their home secure, or to seek legal assistance. An employee's job is protected during this time if the employee has requested the leave. The law applies only to employees who have worked for MWHS for twelve months or more. Employees will be required to use personal accrued leave time (sick, vacation, etc.) if it is available; otherwise, the time will be unpaid.

# Employee Benefits

Metro West Housing Solutions recognizes the value of benefits to employees and their families. We support employees by offering a comprehensive and competitive benefits program. For more information regarding benefit programs, please refer to the company Summary Plan Descriptions (SPDs), which are found on the company intranet, or contact the HR department. To the extent the information provided here conflicts with the SPD or full plan document, the full plan document will control.

For detailed benefit information please refer to the benefit guide or visit the employee section of the website at [mwhs.org](http://mwhs.org)

## Medical, Dental, and Vision Insurance

Regular employees working 30 hours or more per week are eligible for insurance on the first of the month following their date of hire or if they experience a qualifying event. To keep coverage in force, every insured employee must work a minimum of 30 hours per week.

Health insurance is currently offered through Cigna; Dental and Vision coverage are offered through Delta Dental. Full plan details can be found in the benefit guide and on the website.

## Group Life Insurance

New York Life provides life insurance for full-time employees who work a minimum of 30 hours per week. Employees are eligible for this benefit on the first of the month following their date of hire. The life insurance benefit is equal to one and one half (1.5) an employee's annualized base rate. The cost of this coverage is paid for in full by the company.

## Voluntary Life Insurance

Through New York Life Insurance Company, employees may individually purchase additional term life and accident insurance for themselves, their spouse, civil union partners and dependent children at a competitive rate. Upon leaving employment with MWHS, voluntary life and accident insurance will terminate at the end of the month following the month of separation from employment; there is an option to convert to an individual policy by contacting New York Life directly.

## Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA)

Flexible spending accounts allow an employee to set aside a regular amount from each paycheck on a pre-tax basis to be used towards the cost of dependent care and/or health expenses not fully covered by the medical or dental programs (including copayments). Employees may enroll in Flex Spending account for Health Expenses and Child Care Expenses annually during open enrollment or at time of hire.

## Short-Term Disability

In conjunction with Colorado FAMLI and other leave programs, in certain situations short-term disability may be available to regular employees. Employees must have at least one full year of continuous employment to be considered for this program. It is a self-funded program that provides



for 50% of a disabled employee's base salary, for a non-job-related injury or illness that results in time off from work. Short-term disability may begin at the 241st hour (pro-rated for part-time employees) of leave and continue through either, a maximum use of 960 hours, the employee is released to return to work, long-term disability benefits would be effective, the employee separates employment. Employees should contact Human Resources for full details.

## **Long-Term Disability**

For a long-term illness or injury MWHS provides a long-term disability plan. Long-term disability insurance, offered through New York Life Insurance, provides you with income protection equal to 60% of your salary at the time of injury or illness up to a maximum of \$12,000 per month. This includes any job-related injury, accidental bodily injury, covered sickness, or pregnancy. Regular employees are automatically enrolled in the long-term disability plan effective the first of the month following hire date or date of eligibility. Please see the benefit book for details.

## **Money Purchase Pension Plan and Deferred Compensation**

### **TIAA 401(a) Plan – Money Purchase Pension Plan**

Regular full-time and part-time employees participate in the Lakewood Housing Authority Employees Money Purchase Pension Plan, which is administered through TIAA. This plan is a qualified Social Security replacement money purchase plan set up under provisions of IRS 401(a). Upon separation, fully vested employees and those employees aged 55 or older will receive the entire balance of their account, including MWHS's contributions and any interest or earnings received. Employees not fully vested upon separation will receive the current value of their entire contribution and a percentage of MWHS's, based on length of service.

#### **Vesting Schedule**

Less than 3 continuous years in plan: Employee receives current value of his/her contribution only

At least 3 continuous years, but less than 4 continuous years in plan:

Employee receives current value of his/her contribution and 60% of MWHS's

At least 4 continuous years, but less than 5 continuous years in plan:

Employee receives current value of his/her contribution and 80% of MWHS's

At least 5 continuous years of service, or age 55 or older with any length of service:

Employee receives current value of his/her contribution and 100% of MWHS's

Additionally, an employee is 100% vested if disabled or deceased at any length of service.

MWHS contribution to the pension fund is 10% of salary. The mandatory employee contribution is 8% of salary. These percentages are based on the employee's gross base wage. The mandatory contribution is both federal and state tax deferred. Pension funds are invested according to the option(s) selected by the employee.

### **TIAA 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan**

Deferred compensation is an additional non-qualified retirement savings plan. Deferred compensation plans are currently available through TIAA. With an IRS Section 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan, employees may defer up to a maximum of \$23,000 of their base salary in 2024. This results in pre-tax dollar savings. Employees are eligible to participate in the deferred compensation plan at time of hire or upon request at any time during the calendar year. An employee

may be eligible to contribute more to this plan through the “catch-up provision” once they are within three (3) years of the retirement age (55), but not during the year the employee separates employment with Metro West Housing Solutions. Employees aged 50 or older may contribute up to an additional \$7,500 for a total contribution of \$30,500 in 2024, if they are utilizing the “catch-up” provision.

Deferred income is deposited into the employee's account and invested according to the option(s) chosen by the employee. These funds are generally not available while employed by Metro West Housing Solutions. An employee can enroll, make changes to, or terminate participation in this plan at any time during the year. Rollovers from other qualified 457 plans and other employer-sponsored pension plans may be made to this plan. This plan does have a loan provision.

## **Workers' Compensation**

Workers' compensation is a “no-fault” system that provides compensation for medical expenses and wage losses to employees who are injured or who become ill because of employment. Metro West Housing Solutions pays the entire cost of workers' compensation insurance. The insurance provides coverage for related medical and rehabilitation expenses and a portion of lost wages to employees who sustain an injury on the job.

The company abides by all applicable state workers' compensation laws and regulations. If an employee sustains a job-related injury or illness, it is important to notify the supervisor and HR immediately. The supervisor will complete an injury report with input from the employee and return the form to the HR department. HR will file the claim with the insurance company. In cases of true medical emergencies, report to the nearest emergency room. Employees must report to one of the designated providers to receive care and/or treatment for all Worker's Compensation related injuries

Workers' compensation benefits (paid or unpaid) will run concurrently with FMLA leave, if applicable, where permitted by state and federal law. In addition, employees will not be paid vacation or sick leave for approved absences covered by the company's workers' compensation program, except to supplement the workers' compensation benefits such as when the plan only covers a portion of the employees' salary as allowed by state law.

## **Other Benefits**

### **Employee Assistance Program**

The employee assistance program (EAP) is a resource designed to provide highly confidential and experienced help for employees in dealing with issues that affect their lives and the quality of their job performance. Metro West Housing Solutions wants employees to be able to maintain a healthy balance of work and family that allows them to enjoy life. The EAP is a confidential counseling and referral service that can help employees successfully deal with life's challenges.

Through New York Life, we have a 24/7 free and confidential service available to you and your immediate household members to help with addressing life's challenges. You have three face-to-face sessions with a behavioral counselor available to you. You may contact New York Life EAP at 800-344-9752 or go online to [www.guidanceresources.com](http://www.guidanceresources.com) for more information. Web ID: NYLGBS

## **M.A.P.S. (Momentum, Activities, People, Success)**

The M.A.P.S. committee will meet year-round to provide varied opportunities for staff engagement. The available experiences may vary and include all staff events, team-building activities, morale boosts, employee recognition, wellness events, and fun activities. Please contact a supervisor and HR if you are interested in participating in this committee.

## **MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT**

Employees who use their personal vehicle for Metro West Housing Solutions business will be reimbursed for mileage at the IRS rate. Mileage can be claimed from the location that the employee originally reports to and then any subsequent work related trips. Travel from home to work or to lunch etc. is not reimbursable. To receive reimbursement for mileage, a Monthly Mileage Reimbursement Request form should be submitted with the supervisor's approval. A check or automatic deposit for the mileage reimbursement will then be issued by accounting. Damage, which may occur to personal vehicles being used on Metro West Housing Solutions business, will be covered under the individual owner's insurance policy, not Metro West Housing Solutions policies. A limited number of employees may be eligible for an Auto Allowance at the request of the CEO. These payments will be included on the individual's last paycheck of each month.

## **NOON CLOSURES**

The CEO may designate certain days as noon closure days (including many Friday afternoons). These days are not guaranteed and may change at any time due to the needs of MWHS. The time from noon on will be recorded as regular work hours according to your individual schedule and expected hours of work. If staff are taking the entire day off on a noon closure day (scheduled or unscheduled) they will use their individual leave accruals to cover the entire day. Staff that are not scheduled to work on the noon closure days will not receive any additional hourly adjustments or compensation. Any staff that are working at the time of a noon closure and are assigned to continue working with their work group, need to complete a project, meet a deadline, or respond to an emergency should remain onsite until the issue is resolved and they are approved to leave by a supervisor.

## **RECREATION CENTERS**

Regular employees can access the City of Lakewood recreation facilities and outdoor pools for free general admission. This admission is obtained by presenting your MWHS' ID at the center and stating that it is part of a corporate membership. The employee may take up to one immediate family member with them at no additional cost per visit. Employees and family members must pay for fee any programs or activities that have an associated cost.

Current City-owned recreation centers and pools include:

- Carmody Pool/Recreation Center, 2200 S Old Kipling St 720-963-5360
- Charles E. Whitlock Recreation Center, 8715 W 16<sup>th</sup> Ave. 303-987-4800
- Green Mountain Pool/Recreation Center, 13198 W Green Mt Dr 303-987-7830
- Lakewood Link Recreation Center, 1295 S Reed St 303-987-5400
- Lloyd G. Clements Community Center (age 50+), 1580 Yarrow St 303-987-4820
- Glennon Heights Pool, 10600 West Virginia Ave 303-989-7946
- Morse Park Pool, 8200 W 20<sup>th</sup> Ave 303-235-6881

## TUITION ASSISTANCE

Tuition Assistance is a benefit available to regular full-time and part-time employees who have been continuously employed with MWHS for a minimum of six months. It is intended to assist employees in furthering their education and is not meant to fund an employee's entire education. The current annual maximum tuition assistance is \$1,500 for full-time and \$1,125 for 30 hour/week employees. Please contact HR for additional information and details.

## VOLUNTEERS IN PLACE

VIP is the Volunteers in Place Program at Metro West Housing Solutions. The program provides employees with up to 16 hours per year of administrative leave to volunteer in the organization of their choice. The program is open to all regular employees of Metro West Housing Solutions who have been with the agency at least 6 months. Volunteer days must be approved in advance by a supervisor and human resources. Get a brochure with guidelines from Human Resources or on the employee page of the website.

## WELLNESS REIMBURSEMENT

Metro West Housing Solutions encourages all employees to stay healthy and active. M.A.P.S. offers a wellness reimbursement to assist with a portion of external fees for programs and activities. Employees may submit receipts of purchases to human resources for reimbursement of up to \$50 each calendar year. Purchases must be made in the current year and may include things like gym memberships, step trackers, running event registration, etc.

### Metro West Housing Solutions Plan Numbers and Contact Information

Item	Provider	Plan Number	Phone/Website
Health Insurance	Cigna	634921	864.494.2111 <a href="http://www.mycigna.com">www.mycigna.com</a>
Dental Insurance	Delta Dental PPO	12286 (0001)	303.741.9300 <a href="http://www.deltadentalco.com">www.deltadentalco.com</a>
Vision Insurance	Delta Vision 150	12286 (0003)	
Retirement	TIAA	401(a) 406398 457 406399	1.800.842.2252 <a href="http://www.tiaa.org">www.tiaa.org</a>
Life Insurance	New York Life	Life SGM607407 Dis. SGD607775	1.800.557.7975 <a href="http://www.myNYLBGS.com">www.myNYLBGS.com</a>
Flex Spending	iSolved Benefit Services		1.866.370.3040 <a href="http://www.isolvedbenefitservices.com">www.isolvedbenefitservices.com</a>
EAP	New York Life		1.800.344.9752 <a href="http://www.guideanceresources.com">www.guideanceresources.com</a>
Human Resources	MWHS		<a href="mailto:HR@mwhs.org">HR@mwhs.org</a>

# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND RECEIPT

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the employee handbook of **Metro West Housing Solutions**. I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies in the handbook. I understand that the handbook and all other written and oral materials provided to me are intended for informational purposes only. The handbook, company practices, and other communications do not create an employment contract or term. I understand that the policies and benefits, both in the handbook and those communicated to me in any other fashion, are subject to interpretation, review, removal, and change by management at any time without notice.

I further understand **that I am an at-will employee and that neither this document nor any other communication shall bind MWHs to employ me now or hereafter and that my employment may be terminated by me or the company without reason at any time.** I understand that no representative of the company has any authority to enter into any agreement for employment for any specified period of time or to assure any other personnel action or to assure any benefits or terms or conditions of employment or make any agreement contrary to the foregoing.

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Employee's Name in Print

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Signature of Employee

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Date Signed by Employee

**TO BE PLACED IN EMPLOYEE'S PERSONNEL FILE**

# **EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND RECEIPT OF HARASSMENT POLICY**

I have read and understand the company's Harassment Policy. My signature below confirms my knowledge, acceptance, and agreement to comply with the policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Name in Print

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed by Employee

**TO BE PLACED IN EMPLOYEE'S PERSONNEL FILE**