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TALMAR Employee Handbook: Specified for Baltimore County Recreation and Parks (BCRP) and Contractors

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TO TALMAR EMPLOYEES:

This is our new Employee Handbook (i.e., “Handbook”). Please review it and sign the attached acknowledgment.

You may keep a copy of the Handbook if you wish, but a copy will always be available to you in the main office. If you do not wish to keep a copy, please return the Handbook to the office.

This Employee Handbook (the “Handbook”) was developed to describe some of the expectations of our employees and to outline the policies, programs, and benefits available to eligible employees. Employees should familiarize themselves with the contents of the Handbook as soon as possible, for it will answer many questions about employment with TALMAR.

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This Handbook is designed to acquaint you with TALMAR and provide you with information about working conditions, employee benefits, and some of the policies affecting your employment. This Handbook is not a contract and is not intended to create any contractual or legal obligations. You should read, understand, and comply with all provisions of the Handbook. It describes many of your responsibilities as an employee and outlines the programs developed by TALMAR to benefit employees. One of our objectives is to provide a work environment that is conducive to both personal and professional growth.

No Handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policy. As TALMAR continues to grow, the need may arise and TALMAR reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portion of the Handbook from time to time as it deems appropriate, in its sole and absolute discretion. The only exception is our employment-at-will policy permitting you or TALMAR to end our relationship for any reason at any time. The employment-at-will policy cannot be changed except in a written agreement signed by both you and the Executive Director of the organization. Employees will, of course, be notified of such changes to the Handbook as they occur.

Consumers and volunteers are among our organization’s most valuable assets. Every employee represents TALMAR to our consumers, volunteers, and the public. The way we do our jobs presents an image of our entire organization. Consumers, volunteers, and the public judge all of us by how they are treated with each employee contact. Therefore, one of our first business priorities is to assist any consumer, potential consumer, or volunteer. Nothing is more important

than being courteous, friendly, helpful, and prompt in the attention you give to consumers and volunteers.

TALMAR will provide consumer relations and services training to all employees with extensive consumer and volunteer contact. Our personal contact with our consumers, volunteers, and the public; our manners on the telephone, social media; and the communications we send are a reflection not only of ourselves, but also of the professionalism of TALMAR. Positive consumer relations not only enhance the public's perception or image of TALMAR, but the positive interactions also pay off in greater consumer and volunteer loyalty and increased sales and profit.

1-01 Nature of Employment

Employment with TALMAR is voluntarily entered into and is "at-will," which means that the employee is free to resign at will at any time, with or without notice or cause. Similarly, TALMAR may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice or cause, so long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law. No one has the authority to make verbal statements that change the at-will nature of employment, and the at-will relationship cannot be changed or modified for any employee except in a written agreement signed by that employee and the Executive Director of TALMAR.

Policies set forth in this Handbook are not intended to create a contract, nor are they to be construed to constitute contractual obligations of any kind or a contract of employment between TALMAR and any of its employees. The provisions of the Handbook have been developed at the discretion of management and, except for its policy of employment-at-will, may be amended or cancelled at any time, at TALMAR's sole discretion.

These provisions supersede all existing policies and practices and may not be amended or added to without the express written approval of the Executive Director or person designated by the Executive Director of TALMAR.

1-02 Employee Relations

TALMAR believes that the work conditions, wages, and benefits it offers to its employees are competitive with those offered by other employers in this area and in this industry. If employees have concerns about work conditions or compensation, they are strongly encouraged to voice these concerns openly and directly to their supervisors.

Our experience has shown that when employees deal openly and directly with supervisors, the work environment can be excellent, communications can be clear, and attitudes can be positive. We believe that TALMAR amply demonstrates its commitment to employees by responding effectively to employee concerns.

1-03 Equal Employment Opportunity

In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at TALMAR will be based on merit, qualifications, and the needs of the organization. TALMAR does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the

basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, ancestry, medical conditions, family care status, sexual orientation, or any other basis prohibited by law.

TALMAR will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship to the extent required by law.

This policy governs all aspects of employment, including selection, job assignment, compensation, discipline, termination, and access to benefits and training.

Any employees with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of their direct supervisor first and if there is no satisfaction then go to the Executive Director. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal.

Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

1-04 Business Ethics and Conduct (See also §7-01 Employee Conduct and Work Rules)

The successful business operation and reputation of TALMAR are built upon the principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct of our employees. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and the letter of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as a scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity.

The continued success of TALMAR is dependent upon our consumers' trust, and we are dedicated to preserving that trust. Employees owe a duty to TALMAR, its consumers, and its shareholders to act in a way that will merit the continued trust and confidence of the public.

TALMAR will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects its directors, officers, and employees to conduct business in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct.

In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide you with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. If a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of action, the matter should be discussed openly with your direct supervisor for advice and consultation. If necessary, further discussion should occur with the Executive Director.

Compliance with this policy of business ethics and conduct is the responsibility of every TALMAR employee. Disregarding or failing to comply with this standard of business ethics and conduct could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment.

1-05 Personal Relationships in the Workplace

The employment of relatives or individuals involved in a dating relationship in the same area of an organization may cause serious conflicts and problems with favoritism and employee morale. In addition to claims of partiality in treatment at work, personal conflicts from outside the work environment can be carried over into day-to-day working relationships.

For purposes of this policy, relatives are any persons who are related to each other by blood or marriage or whose relationship is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage. A dating relationship is defined as a relationship that may be reasonably expected to lead to the formation of a consensual “romantic” or sexual relationship. This policy applies to all employees without regard to the gender or sexual orientation of the individuals involved.

Relatives of current employees may occupy a position that will involve them working directly for or supervising their relative. Individuals involved in a dating relationship with a current employee may also occupy a position that will involve them working directly for or supervising the employee with whom they are involved in a dating relationship. The personal relationships could be positions at any level (higher or lower) in the same line of authority that may affect the review of employment decisions. However, if an actual or potential conflict of interest arises involving relatives or if individuals involved in a dating relationship, TALMAR reserves the right to take prompt action or disciplinary action, up to and including, possible termination of employment.

In other cases where a conflict or the potential for conflict arises because of the relationship between employees, even if there is no line of authority or reporting involved, the employees may be separated by reassignment or terminated from employment. Employees in a close personal relationship should refrain from public workplace displays of affection or excessive personal conversation.

1-06 Immigration Law Compliance

TALMAR is committed to employing only United States citizens and aliens who are authorized to work in the United States and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin.

In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. Former employees who are rehired must also complete the form if they have not completed an I-9 with TALMAR within the past three years or if their previous I-9 is no longer retained or valid.

Employees with questions or seeking more information on immigration law issues are encouraged to contact the Executive Director. Employees may raise questions or complaints about immigration law compliance without fear of reprisal.

1-07 Conflicts of Interest

Employees have an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. This policy establishes only the framework within which TALMAR wishes the business to operate. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide general direction so that employees can seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation. Contact the Executive Director for more information or questions about conflicts of interest.

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when an employee is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for that employee or for a relative as a result of

TALMAR's business dealings. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

No "presumption of guilt" is created by the mere existence of a relationship with outside firms. However, if employees have any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts, or leases, it is imperative that they disclose to both the Executive Director of TALMAR as soon as possible. Disclosure of the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest provides safeguards to be established to protect all parties.

Personal gain may result not only in cases where an employee or relative has a significant ownership in a firm with which TALMAR does business, but also when an employee or relative receives any kickback, bribe, substantial gift, or special consideration as a result of any transaction or business dealings involving TALMAR. Employees may not place their personal interests above TALMAR's interest when conducting business with TALMAR's vendors. Employees may not represent themselves as a TALMAR employee unless specifically conducting business for TALMAR.

1-08 Non-Disclosure

The protection of confidential business information and trade secrets is vital to the interests and the success of TALMAR. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- acquisitions
- compensation data
- computer processes
- computer programs and codes
- consumer lists
- consumer preferences
- farming practices
- financial information
- investments
- labor relations strategies
- marketing strategies
- new materials research
- partnerships
- pending projects and proposals
- proprietary production processes
- research and development strategies
- scientific data
- scientific formulae
- scientific prototypes
- technological data
- technological prototypes
- volunteer lists or data

Employees who improperly use or disclose trade secrets or confidential business information will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and legal action, even if they do not actually benefit from the disclosed information.

Additionally, all employees may be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement as a condition of employment.

1-09 Disability Accommodations

TALMAR is committed to complying fully with disability laws and ensuring equal opportunity in employment for qualified persons with disabilities.

TALMAR has reviewed hiring procedures and provides persons with disabilities meaningful employment opportunities. Pre-employment inquiries are made regarding only an applicant's ability to perform the duties of the position.

Where a disability affects the performance of job functions, reasonable accommodations are available to all disabled employees to the extent required by law. All employment decisions are based on the merits of the situation and the needs of the organization, not the disability of the individual.

TALMAR is also committed to not discriminating against any qualified employees or applicants because they are related to or associated with a person with a disability.

This policy is neither exhaustive nor exclusive. TALMAR is committed to taking all other actions necessary to ensure equal employment opportunity for persons with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and all other applicable federal, state, and local laws.

2-01 Employment Categories

It is the intent of TALMAR to clarify the definitions of employment classifications so that employees understand their employment status and benefit eligibility. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time. Accordingly, the right to terminate the employment relationship is at will and at any time. The right to terminate is retained by both the employee and TALMAR.

Each employee is designated as either NONEXEMPT or EXEMPT from federal and state wage and hour laws. NONEXEMPT employees are entitled to overtime pay under the specific provisions of federal and state laws. EXEMPT employees are excluded from specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws. An employee's EXEMPT or NONEXEMPT classification may be changed only upon written notification by TALMAR management.

In addition to the above categories, each employee will belong to one other employment category:

- **REGULAR FULL-TIME** employees are those who are not in a temporary or introductory status and who are regularly scheduled to work TALMAR's full-time schedule. Generally, they are eligible for TALMAR's benefit package, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

- **REGULAR PART-TIME** employees are those who are not in a temporary or introductory status and who are regularly scheduled to work TALMAR's part-time schedule. Generally, receive all legally mandated benefits (such as workers' compensation insurance and Social Security) and are ineligible for all of TALMAR's other benefit programs.
- **INTRODUCTORY** employees are those whose performance is being evaluated to determine whether further employment in a specific position or with TALMAR is appropriate. Employees who satisfactorily complete the introductory period will be notified of their new employment classification.
- **TEMPORARY** employees are those who are hired as interim replacements, to temporarily supplement the work force, or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Often, these employees are hired through another agency or government entity that directly pay their wages. Employment assignments in this category are of a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status. Temporary employees retain that status unless and until notified of a change. While temporary employees receive all legally mandated benefits (such as workers' compensation insurance and Social Security), they are ineligible for all of TALMAR's other benefit programs.

2-02 Access to Personnel Files

TALMAR maintains a personnel file on each employee. The personnel file includes such information as the employee's job application, résumé, records of training, documentation of performance appraisals and salary increases, and other employment records.

Personnel files are the property of TALMAR and access to the information they contain is restricted. Generally, only supervisors and management personnel of TALMAR who have a legitimate reason to review information in a file are allowed to do so.

Employees who wish to review their own file should contact the Executive Director. With reasonable advance notice, employees may review their own personnel files in TALMAR's administrative offices and in the presence of an individual appointed by TALMAR to maintain the files.

2-03 Personal Data Changes

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify TALMAR of any changes in personal data. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, number and names of dependents, individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency, educational accomplishments, and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times. If any personal data has changed, notify the Office Manager.

2-04 Introductory Period

The introductory period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether the new position

meets their expectations. TALMAR uses this period to evaluate employee capabilities, work habits, and overall performance.

The introductory period is 90 days or, as applicable, set by contract. Any significant absence will automatically extend an introductory period by the length of the absence.

Either the employee or TALMAR may end the employment relationship at will at any time during or after the introductory period. Termination may be with or without cause. Termination may occur without advance notice.

An evaluation will be conducted at the end of the introductory period. If TALMAR determines that the designated introductory period does not allow sufficient time to thoroughly evaluate the employee's performance, the introductory period may be extended for a specified period.

TALMAR benefits do not begin until after the successful completion of the introductory period or extended introductory period, as applicable. Unless otherwise stated, benefits will begin the first day after successful completion of the introductory period or extended introductory period, as applicable.

2-05 Employment Applications, Including Proof of Contractors' Workman's Compensation and Liability Insurance Coverage

TALMAR relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in the exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

In processing employment applications, TALMAR requires a background and reference check for all employees for employment. If TALMAR takes an adverse employment action based in whole or in part on any report caused by the Fair Credit Reporting Act, a copy of the report and a summary of your rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act will be provided as well as any other documents required by law.

Additionally, Contractors are required to provide proof of their own workman's compensation and liability insurance coverage.

2-06 Performance Evaluation

Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis. A formal written performance evaluation will be conducted following an employee's 90-day introductory period and again six months following. After which, each staff person will receive a formal performance evaluation yearly from their direct supervisor.

These formal performance evaluations are conducted to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals.

2-07 Job Descriptions

TALMAR maintains job descriptions to aid in orienting new employees to their jobs, identifying the requirements of each position, establishing hiring criteria, setting standards for employee performance evaluations, and establishing a basis for making reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

The Executive Director prepares job descriptions when new positions are created. Periodically, existing job descriptions are reviewed and revised in order to ensure that they are up to date and to reflect any changes in position duties and responsibilities. All employees will be expected to help ensure that their job descriptions are accurate, current, and reflecting the work being done.

Employees should remember that job descriptions do not necessarily cover every task or duty that might be assigned and that additional responsibilities may be assigned as necessary. Contact your direct supervisor followed by the Executive Director if you have any questions or concerns about your job description.

2-08 Employee References and Release of Information

References

While TALMAR understands your need to receive substantive references for new jobs and graduate school applications, TALMAR must also protect itself from lawsuits stemming from the provision of such references. Accordingly, TALMAR will provide verbal references and provide only the following information:

- ❑ Confirmation that the individual was or is an employee of the TALMAR;
- ❑ The dates of employment; and
- ❑ Confirmation of the employee's job title.

No other information will be divulged.

No references will be given if the request is initiated by a phone call. Only the Executive Director can respond to a reference request. Other than the Executive Director, no other TALMAR employees may provide reference information.

Requests for Information

At times it may be necessary for you to ask us to confirm certain personnel information for a bank loan, to a medical professional, or for some other personal business. The employee needs to provide written direction to release information. Only the Executive Director may respond to such inquiries and will determine the appropriate response based upon the inquiry. If the employee is under criminal investigation, the employee will not be contacted regarding the request.

3-01 Consecutive Unauthorized Days of Absence

If you are absent for any reason and cannot come to work, you must notify the Executive Director or your immediate supervisor prior to your scheduled time of arrival. If you are absent without authorization for three consecutive workdays, TALMAR will consider you to have voluntarily resigned. A message left on the Executive Director's voice mail or an employee's or supervisor's voice mail generally does not constitute authorization for an unexcused absence.

Whenever an employee is absent without authorization for three consecutive workdays, the employee's supervisor must notify the Executive Director. Within a reasonable administrative period, the Executive Director will send the employee a final paycheck and a termination letter. The final paycheck will reflect applicable pay deductions and setoffs.

4-01 Paydays

Payday is bi-monthly, and employees will be paid in 26 pays over the course of 12 months. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period. In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a day off, such as a holiday, employees will receive pay on the last day of work before the regularly scheduled payday.

4-02 Administrative Pay Corrections

TALMAR takes all reasonable steps to ensure that employees receive the correct amount of pay in each paycheck and that employees are paid promptly on the scheduled payday.

In the unlikely event that there is an error in the amount of pay, the employee should promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of their direct supervisor so that corrections can be made as quickly as possible. Errors noted by TALMAR will be corrected as reasonably as possible.

4-03 Salary Advances

While it is discouraged, you may request a salary advance in emergency situations. You may not receive more than two salary advances in a calendar year.

To request a salary advance, complete a Request for Salary Advance form and submit it to the Executor Director for approval. If approved, the salary advance request is forwarded to payroll, who will notify you when the check is issued.

An advance shall not exceed the lesser of your two-week net pay or the value of your accrued leave. Repayment of a salary advance will be made through deductions from your paycheck; advances must be repaid within three consecutive pay periods. By signing the Request for Salary Advance form, you authorize TALMAR to deduct the advance from future paychecks or from a final paycheck. To defray banking and administrative costs, TALMAR will deduct a \$15 fee from each advance. An advance will not be approved if you still have an outstanding balance from a prior advance. Any remaining unpaid balance will be deducted from an employee's final pay.

4-04 Employment Termination

Termination of employment is an inevitable part of personnel activity within any organization and many of the reasons for termination are routine. Below are examples of some of the most common circumstances under which employment is terminated:

- Resignation—voluntary employment termination initiated by an employee.
- Discharge— involuntary employment termination initiated by the organization.
- Layoff— involuntary employment termination initiated by the organization because of an organizational change.
- Retirement—voluntary employment termination initiated by the employee meeting age, length of service, and any other criteria for retirement from the organization.

Although advance notice is not required, TALMAR requests at least two weeks' written notice of resignation from employees.

TALMAR generally will schedule exit interviews at the time of employment termination. The exit interview will afford an opportunity to discuss such issues as reasons for resignation, employee benefits, conversion privileges, repayment of outstanding debts to TALMAR, or return of TALMAR-owned property. Suggestions, complaints, and questions can also be voiced.

Nothing in this policy is intended to change the organization's at-will employment policy. Since employment with TALMAR is based on mutual consent, both the employee and TALMAR have the right to terminate employment at will, with or without cause, at any time. Employees will receive their final pay in accordance with applicable state law.

Employee benefits will be affected by employment termination in the following manner:

- All accrued, vested benefits that are due and payable at termination will be paid.
- Some benefits may be continued at the employee's expense if the employee so chooses. The employee will be notified in writing of the benefits that may be continued and of the terms, conditions, and limitations of such continuance. See the "Benefits Continuation (COBRA)" policy section.

5-01 Safety

To assist in providing a safe and healthful work environment for employees, consumers, and visitors, TALMAR has established a workplace safety program. This program is a top priority for TALMAR. The Executive Director has responsibility for implementing, administering, monitoring, and evaluating the safety program. Its success depends on the alertness and personal commitment of all.

TALMAR provides information to employees about workplace safety and health issues through regular internal communication channels such as supervisor-employee meetings, bulletin board postings, e-mail, memos, or other written communications.

Some of the best safety improvement ideas come from employees. Those with ideas, concerns, or suggestions for improved safety in the workplace are encouraged to raise them with their direct supervisor or with the Executive Director. Reports and concerns about workplace safety issues may be made anonymously if the employee wishes. All reports can be made without fear of reprisal.

Each employee is expected to obey safety rules and to exercise caution in all work activities. Employees must immediately report any unsafe condition to the appropriate supervisor. Employees who violate safety standards, who cause hazardous or dangerous situations, or who fail to report or, where appropriate, remedy such situations may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

In the case of accidents that result in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, employees should immediately notify the Executive Director or the appropriate supervisor. Such reports are necessary to comply with laws and initiate insurance and workers' compensation benefits procedures.

5-02 Work Schedules

Work schedules for employees vary throughout our organization. Supervisors will advise employees of their individual work schedules. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate variations in starting and ending times as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week.

5-03 Use of Phone and Mail Systems

Personal use of the telephone for long-distance and toll calls is not permitted. Employees should practice discretion when making local personal calls and may be required to reimburse TALMAR for any charges resulting from their personal use of the telephone.

To ensure effective telephone communications, employees should always use the approved greeting [“Good Morning, TALMAR, This is: (your first name). May I help you?” or “Good Afternoon, TALMAR, This is: (your first name). May I help you?"]. As applicable, speak in a courteous, upbeat and professional manner. Please confirm information received from the caller and hang up only after the caller has done so.

The mail system is reserved for business purposes only. Employees should refrain from sending or receiving personal mail at the workplace. See the **Computer and E-mail Usage** section for e-mail use.

5-04 Smoking

Smoking, e-cigarettes, and vaping are prohibited throughout the workplace. This applies to all areas in and outside of the farm area. We advocate for organic and sustainable lifestyle practices, and smoking is viewed in an adverse way. This policy applies equally to all employees, consumers, and visitors.

5-05 Rest and Meal Periods

All regular full-time employees are provided with one half-hour meal period each workday. We encourage you to stay on site. However, should you decide to go off site, you will be awarded time from the minute you leave for lunch not to exceed 30 minutes. If you leave the premises, please sign out and back in. Supervisors will schedule meal periods to accommodate operating requirements. Those working under the guidelines of another agency, government, etc. will be given rest and meal periods according to their regulations. Some of those agencies and government structures do not necessarily compensate for this time.

Brief rest periods will be allowed, as required by Maryland law.

5-06 Emergency Closings

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, power failures, or earthquakes can disrupt organization operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require closing. If your responsibility is to work directly with our consumers, then we ask that you follow the Baltimore

County school policy (i.e. 2 hour late or closing). We are primarily concerned about each person's safety in adverse weather and ask that you follow what is best for you.

In cases where an emergency closing is not authorized, employees who fail to report for work will not be paid for the time off. Employees may request available paid leave time such as unused personal or vacation benefits.

5-07 Business Travel Expenses

TALMAR will reimburse employees for reasonable business travel expenses incurred while on assignments away from the normal work location. All business travel must be approved in advance by the Executive Director. Employees whose travel plans have been approved should make all travel arrangements prior to said leave.

When approved, the actual costs of the workshop, event, conference, etc. will be reimbursed by TALMAR.

Should there be supplemental budgeted allowances available, expenses that generally would be reimbursed include the following:

- airfare or train fare for travel in coach or economy class or the lowest available fare
- car rental fees, only for compact or mid-sized cars
- fares for shuttle or airport bus service, where available; costs of public transportation for other ground travel
- taxi fares, only when there is no less expensive alternative
- mileage costs for use of personal cars, only when less expensive transportation is not available
- cost of standard accommodations in low- to mid-priced hotels, motels, or similar lodgings
- cost of meals, no more than \$30.00 a day
- tips not exceeding 15% of the total cost of a meal or 10% of a taxi fare
- charges for telephone calls, fax, and similar services required for business purposes

Employees who are involved in an accident while traveling on business must promptly report the incident to their direct supervisor. Vehicles owned, leased, or rented by TALMAR may not be used for personal use without prior approval. When travel is completed, employees should submit completed travel expense reports within 30 days. Reports should be accompanied by receipts for all individual expenses. Employees should contact their direct supervisor for guidance and assistance on procedures related to travel arrangements, expense reports, reimbursement for specific expenses, or any other business travel issues.

Abuse of this business travel expenses policy, including falsifying expense reports to reflect costs not incurred by the employee, can be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

5-08 Consulting and Honoraria

If you are asked to consult with others or to speak at a conference as a representative of TALMAR, you must obtain prior approval from the Executive Director. All monetary compensation you earn as a representative of TALMAR shall be paid to TALMAR. Consulting and honoraria include, but are not limited to, compensation paid for speaking engagements, written work, and attendance at events.

5-09 Visitors in the Workplace

To provide for the safety and security of employees and the facilities at TALMAR, only authorized visitors are allowed in the workplace. Restricting unauthorized visitors helps maintain safety standards, protects against theft, ensures security of equipment, protects confidential information, safeguards employee welfare, and avoids potential distractions and disturbances. All visitors should enter TALMAR at the main entrance. Authorized visitors must sign in and will receive directions or be escorted to their destination. Employees are responsible for the conduct and safety of their visitors. If an unauthorized individual is observed on TALMAR's premises, employees should immediately notify their supervisor or, if necessary, direct the individual to the administrative office.

5-10 Computer and E-mail Usage

Computers, computer files, the e-mail system, and software furnished to employees are TALMAR property intended for business use. Employees should not use a password, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication without authorization.

TALMAR strives to maintain a workplace free of harassment and is sensitive to the diversity of its employees. Therefore, TALMAR prohibits the use of computers and the e-mail system in ways that are disruptive, offensive to others, or harmful to morale.

For example, the display or transmission of sexually explicit images, messages, and cartoons is not allowed. Other such misuse includes, but is not limited to, ethnic slurs, racial comments, off-color jokes, or anything that may be construed as harassment or showing disrespect for others. Employees should notify the Executive Director upon learning of violations of this policy. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

The e-mail system is the property of TALMAR. Occasional use of the e-mail system for personal messages is permitted, within reasonable limits. TALMAR will not guarantee the privacy of the e-mail system except to the extent required by law.

5-11 Internet Usage

Internet access to global electronic information resources on the World Wide Web (www) is provided by TALMAR to assist employees in obtaining work-related data and technology. The following guidelines have been established to help ensure responsible and productive Internet usage. While Internet usage is intended for job-related activities, incidental and occasional brief personal use of e-mail and the Internet is permitted within reasonable limits.

All Internet data that is composed, transmitted, or received via our computer communications systems is considered to be part of the official records of TALMAR and, as such, is subject to disclosure to law enforcement or other third parties. Employees should expect only the level of privacy that is warranted by existing law and no more. Consequently, employees should always ensure that the business information contained in Internet e-mail messages and other transmissions is accurate, appropriate, ethical, and lawful. Any questions regarding the legal effect of a message or transmission should be brought to our Executive Director.

Data that is composed, transmitted, accessed, or received via the Internet must not contain content that could be considered discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or disruptive to any employee or other person. Examples of unacceptable content may include, but are not limited to, sexual comments or images, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any other comments or images that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, age, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.

The unauthorized use, installation, copying, or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked, or patented material on the Internet is expressly prohibited. As a general rule, if an employee did not create material, does not own the rights to it, or has not gotten authorization for its use, it should not be put on the Internet or copied from the Internet. Employees are also responsible for ensuring that the person sending any material over the Internet has the appropriate distribution rights. Any questions regarding the use of such information should be brought to the Managing Director.

Internet users should take the necessary anti-virus precautions before downloading or copying any file from the Internet. All downloaded files are to be checked for viruses; all compressed files are to be checked before and after decompression.

Abuse of the Internet access provided by TALMAR in violation of the law or TALMAR policies will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees may also be held personally liable for any violations of this policy. The following behaviors are examples of previously stated or additional actions and activities that are prohibited and can result in disciplinary action:

- Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing, or threatening messages or images
- Using the organization's time and resources for personal gain
- Stealing, using, or disclosing someone else's code or password without authorization
- Copying, pirating, or downloading software and electronic files without permission
- Sending or posting confidential material, trade secrets, or proprietary information outside of the organization
- Violating copyright law
- Failing to observe licensing agreements
- Engaging in unauthorized transactions that may incur a cost to the organization or initiate unwanted Internet services and transmissions
- Sending or posting messages or material that could damage the organization's image or reputation
- Participating in the viewing or exchange of pornography or obscene materials
- Sending or posting messages that defame or slander other individuals
- Attempting to break into the computer system of another organization or person
- Refusing to cooperate with a security investigation
- Sending or posting chain letters, solicitations, or advertisements not related to business purposes or activities
- Using the Internet for political causes or activities, religious activities, or any sort of gambling
- Jeopardizing the security of the organization's electronic communications systems
- Sending or posting messages that disparage another organization's products or services
- Passing off personal views as representing those of the organization

- Sending anonymous e-mail messages
- Engaging in any other illegal activities

5-12 Workplace Violence Prevention

TALMAR is committed to preventing workplace violence and to maintaining a safe work environment. Given the increasing violence in society in general, TALMAR has adopted the following guidelines to deal with intimidation, harassment, or other threats of (or actual) violence that may occur during business hours or on its premises.

All employees, including supervisors and temporary employees, should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Additionally, consumers, volunteers, and members of the public should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, “horseplay,” or other conduct that may be dangerous to others. Firearms, weapons, and other dangerous or hazardous devices or substances are prohibited on the premises of TALMAR without proper authorization.

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, consumer, volunteer, or member of the public at any time, including off-duty periods, will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes all acts of harassment, including harassment that is based on an individual’s sex, race, age, or any characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.

All threats of (or actual) violence, both direct and indirect, should be reported as soon as possible to your direct supervisor or the Executive Director. This includes threats by employees, as well as threats by consumers, volunteers, vendors, solicitors, or other members of the public. When reporting a threat of violence, you should be as specific and detailed as possible.

All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor. Do not place yourself in peril. If you see or hear a commotion or disturbance near your workstation or on the premises, do not try to intercede or see what is happening. TALMAR will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of (or actual) violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as is practical.

Anyone determined to be responsible for threats of (or actual) violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

TALMAR encourages employees to bring their disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of their supervisor or the Executive Director before the situation escalates into potential violence. TALMAR is eager to assist in the resolution of employee disputes and will not discipline employees for raising such concerns.

6-00 Intentionally Blank

7-01 Employee Conduct and Work Rules (See also §1-04 Business Ethics and Conduct)

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, TALMAR expects employees to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all employees and the organization.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following are examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment:

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property
- Falsification of timekeeping records
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer-owned or consumer-owned property
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct
- Violation of safety or health rules
- Smoking in the workplace
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace
- Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice
- Unauthorized disclosure of business “secrets” or confidential information
- Violation of personnel policies
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct

Nothing in this policy is intended to change the organization’s at-will employment policy. Employment with TALMAR is at the mutual consent of TALMAR and the employee, and either party may terminate that relationship at any time, with or without cause, and with or without advance notice.

7-02 Drug and Alcohol Use

It is TALMAR’s desire to provide a drug-free, healthful, and safe workplace. To promote this goal, employees are required to report to work in appropriate mental and physical condition to perform their jobs in a satisfactory manner.

While on TALMAR premises and while conducting business-related activities off TALMAR premises, no employee may use, possess, distribute, sell, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. The legal use of prescribed drugs is permitted on the job only if it does not impair an employee’s ability to perform the essential functions of the job effectively and in a safe manner that does not endanger other individuals in the workplace.

Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment, and/or required participation in a substance abuse rehabilitation or treatment program. Such violations may also have legal consequences.

Employees with questions or concerns about substance dependency or abuse are encouraged to discuss these matters with the Executive Director to receive assistance or referrals to appropriate resources in the community.

Employees with problems with alcohol and certain drugs that have not resulted in, and are not the immediate subject of, disciplinary action may request approval to take unpaid time off to participate in a rehabilitation or treatment program through TALMAR's health insurance benefit coverage. Leave may be granted if the employee agrees to abstain from use of the problem substance and abides by all TALMAR policies, rules, and prohibitions relating to conduct in the workplace; and if granting the leave will not cause TALMAR any undue hardship.

Employees with questions on this policy or issues related to drug or alcohol use in the workplace should raise their concerns with the Executive Director without fear of reprisal.

7-03 Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment

TALMAR is committed to providing a work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and conduct that can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive, including sexual harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual advances, or visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior and includes gender-based harassment of a person of the same sex as the harasser. The following is a partial list of sexual harassment examples:

- Unwanted sexual advances
- Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances
- Visual conduct that includes leering, making sexual gestures, or displaying of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters
- Verbal conduct that includes making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, or jokes
- Verbal sexual advances or propositions
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, or suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations
- Physical conduct that includes touching, assaulting, or impeding or blocking movements

Unwelcome sexual advances (either verbal or physical), requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; (2) submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for making employment decisions; or (3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

If you experience or witness sexual or other unlawful harassment in the workplace, report it immediately to your direct supervisor. If the supervisor is unavailable or you believe it would be inappropriate to contact that person, you should immediately contact the Executive Director or

any other member of the Board of Directors. You can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal or retaliation.

All allegations of sexual harassment will be quickly and discreetly investigated. To the extent possible, your confidentiality and that of any witnesses and the alleged harasser will be protected against unnecessary disclosure. When the investigation is completed, you will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.

Any supervisor or manager who becomes aware of possible sexual or other unlawful harassment must immediately advise the Executive Director or the Board of Directors of the organization so it can be investigated in a timely and confidential manner. You can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal or retaliation.

Anyone engaging in sexual or other unlawful behavior will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

7-04 Attendance and Punctuality

To maintain a safe and productive work environment, TALMAR expects employees to be reliable and to be punctual in reporting for scheduled work. Absenteeism and tardiness place a burden on other employees and on TALMAR. In the rare instances when employees cannot avoid being late to work or are unable to work as scheduled, they should notify their supervisor or Executive Director as soon as possible in advance of the anticipated tardiness or absence.

Poor attendance and excessive tardiness are disruptive. Either may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

7-05 Personal Appearance

Dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the business image that TALMAR presents to the community.

During business hours or when representing TALMAR, you are expected to present a clean, neat, and tasteful appearance. You should dress and groom yourself according to the requirements of your position and accepted social standards.

Your supervisor or Executive Director is responsible for establishing a reasonable dress code appropriate to the job you perform. If your supervisor feels that your personal appearance is inappropriate, you may be asked to leave the workplace until you are properly dressed or groomed. Under such circumstances, you will not be compensated for the time away from work. Consult your supervisor if you have questions as to what constitutes appropriate appearance. Where necessary, reasonable accommodation may be made to a person with a disability.

7-06 Return of Property

Employees are responsible for all TALMAR property, keys, materials, or written information issued to them or in their possession or control (collectively, 'property'). Employees must return all TALMAR property immediately upon request or upon termination of employment. Where permitted by applicable laws, TALMAR may withhold from the employee's check or final

paycheck the cost of any items that are not returned when required. TALMAR may also take all action deemed appropriate to recover or protect its property.

7-07 Security Inspections

TALMAR wishes to maintain a work environment that is free of illegal drugs, alcohol, firearms, explosives, or other improper materials. To this end, TALMAR prohibits the possession, transfer, sale, or use of such materials on its premises. TALMAR requires the cooperation of all employees in administering this policy.

Desks, lockers, computers, e-mail, and other storage devices may be provided for the convenience of employees but remain the sole property of TALMAR. Accordingly, they, as well as any articles found within them, can be inspected by any agent or representative of TALMAR at any time, either with or without prior notice.

7-08 Solicitation

In an effort to ensure a productive and harmonious work environment, persons not employed by TALMAR may not solicit or distribute literature in the workplace at any time for any purpose.

TALMAR recognizes that employees may have interests in events and organizations outside the workplace. However, employees may not solicit or distribute literature concerning these activities during working time. (Working time does not include lunch periods, work breaks, or any other periods in which employees are not on duty.)

Examples of impermissible forms of solicitation include:

- The collection of money, goods, or gifts for community groups
- The collection of money, goods, or gifts for religious groups
- The collection of money, goods, or gifts for political groups
- The collection of money, goods, or gifts for charitable groups
- The sale of goods, services, or subscriptions outside the scope of official organization business
- The circulation of petitions
- The distribution of literature in working areas at any time
- The solicitation of memberships, fees, or dues

In addition, the posting of written solicitations on TALMAR's bulletin boards and solicitations by e-mail are restricted. TALMAR's bulletin boards display important information.

7-09 Employee Bulletin Boards

Employees should consult TALMAR's bulletin boards frequently for:

- Affirmative Action statement
- Employee announcements
- Workers' compensation insurance information
- State disability insurance/unemployment insurance information

If employees have a message of interest to the workplace, they may submit it to the Executive Director for approval. All approved messages will be posted by Executive Director.

7-10 Progressive Discipline

The purpose of this policy is to state TALMAR's position on administering equitable and consistent discipline for unsatisfactory conduct in the workplace. The best disciplinary measure is the one that does not have to be enforced and comes from good leadership and fair supervision at all employment levels.

TALMAR's own best interest lies in ensuring fair treatment of all employees and in making certain that disciplinary actions are prompt, uniform, and impartial. The major purpose of any disciplinary action is to correct the problem, prevent recurrence, and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future.

Although employment with TALMAR is based on mutual consent and both the employee and TALMAR have the right to terminate employment at will, with or without cause or advance notice, TALMAR may use progressive discipline at its discretion.

Disciplinary action may call for any of four steps—verbal warning, written warning, suspension with or without pay, or termination of employment—depending on the severity of the problem and the number of occurrences.

Progressive discipline means that, with respect to many disciplinary problems, these four steps will normally be followed. However, there may be circumstances when one or more steps are bypassed.

TALMAR recognizes that there are certain types of employee problems that are serious enough to justify either a suspension or, in extreme situations, termination of employment, without going through the usual progressive discipline steps.

While it is impossible to list every type of behavior that may be deemed a serious offense, the Employee Conduct and Work Rules section includes examples of problems that may result in immediate suspension or termination of employment. However, the problems listed are not all necessarily serious offenses, but may be examples of unsatisfactory conduct that will trigger progressive discipline.

By using progressive discipline, we hope that most employee problems can be corrected at an early stage, benefiting both the employee and TALMAR.

7-11 Problem Resolution

TALMAR is committed to providing the best possible working conditions for its employees. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any problem, complaint, suggestion, or question receives a timely response from TALMAR supervisors and management.

TALMAR strives to ensure fair and honest treatment of all employees. Supervisors, managers, and employees are expected to treat each other with respect. Employees are encouraged to offer positive and constructive criticism.

If employees disagree with established rules of conduct, policies, or practices, they can express their concern through the problem resolution procedure. No employee will be penalized, formally or informally, for voicing a complaint with TALMAR in a reasonable, business-like manner, or for using the problem resolution procedure.

If a situation occurs when employees believe that a condition of employment or a decision affecting them is unjust or inequitable, they are encouraged to make use of the following steps:

1. The employee presents the problem to his or her direct supervisor after the incident occurs. If the supervisor is unavailable or the employee believes it would be inappropriate to contact that person, the employee may present the problem to the Executive Director.
2. The supervisor responds to the problem during discussion or after consulting with appropriate management, when necessary. The supervisor documents this discussion; the Executive Director will document if she discussed with the employee.
3. The employee presents the problem to the Executive Director, if the problem is unresolved.
4. The Executive Director counsels and advises the employee, assists in putting the problem in writing, and meets with the employee's manager(s).

The employee may discontinue the procedure at any step.

Not every problem can be resolved to everyone's total satisfaction, but only through understanding and discussing mutual problems can employees and management develop confidence in each other. This confidence is important to the operation of an efficient and harmonious work environment.

8-01 Life-Threatening Illnesses in the Workplace

Employees with life-threatening illnesses, such as cancer, heart disease, and AIDS, often wish to continue their normal pursuits, including work, to the extent allowed by their condition.

TALMAR supports these endeavors as long as the employees are able to meet acceptable performance standards. As in the case of other disabilities, TALMAR will make reasonable accommodations in accordance with all legal requirements, to allow qualified employees with life-threatening illnesses to perform the essential functions of their jobs.

Medical information on individual employees is treated confidentially. TALMAR will take reasonable precautions to protect such information from inappropriate disclosure. Managers and other employees have a responsibility to respect and maintain the confidentiality of employee medical information. Anyone inappropriately disclosing such information is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Employees with questions or concerns about life-threatening illnesses are encouraged to contact the Executive Director for information and referral to appropriate services and resources.

8-02 Suggestions

As employees of TALMAR, you have the opportunity to contribute to our future success and growth by submitting suggestions for practical work-improvement or cost-savings ideas.

All employees are eligible to participate in the suggestion program.

A suggestion is an idea that will benefit TALMAR by solving a problem, reducing costs, improving operations or procedures, enhancing consumer service, eliminating waste or spoilage, or making TALMAR a better or safer place to work. All suggestions should contain a description of the problem or condition to be improved, a detailed explanation of the solution or improvement, and the reasons why it should be implemented. Statements of problems without accompanying solutions or recommendations concerning co-workers and management are not appropriate suggestions. If you have questions or need advice about your idea, contact your supervisor for help.

Submit suggestions to the Executive Director; after review, they will be forwarded to the Board of Directors. As soon as possible, you will be notified of the adoption or rejection of your suggestion. Special recognition and, optionally, a cash award will be given to employees who submit a suggestion that is implemented.