

# TCESC EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

## Contents

<b>WELCOME</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Governing Board.....	4
Departments .....	4
Compliance Officers .....	4
<b>EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Employee Criminal Background Checks.....	5
Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators.....	5
Licensure.....	5
Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect .....	6
<b>TCESC POLICIES &amp; LEGAL POSTINGS</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Equal Employment Opportunity Employer .....	6
Americans with Disabilities Act .....	6
GINA Statement.....	7
Ohio Auditor of State Fraud Reporting System.....	7
Anti-Harassment Policy .....	7
Drug/Alcohol Free Workplace .....	8
Copyrighted Works.....	8
Conflict of Interest .....	8
Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).....	8
The Ohio Smoke Free Workplace Law .....	9
Use of Tobacco on School Premises.....	9
<b>ABSENCES &amp; LEAVES</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Attendance & Punctuality .....	10
Frontline.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Reporting Off Work.....	10
Reporting Leave Time .....	10
Sick Leave.....	10
Personal Leave .....	11
Bereavement Leave.....	11
Jury Duty/Court Appearance .....	11
Battery/Assault Leave.....	12
Family Medical Leave .....	12
Extended Sick Leave.....	12
Parental Leave.....	13
Extended Unpaid Leave.....	14
Professional Meeting/Staff Development .....	14
<b>TCESC PROCEDURES</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Confidential Information .....	15
Signing In/Checking Out .....	15
Purchasing Procedures .....	15
Mileage Reporting .....	15

Calendar .....	16
Employee Safety .....	16
Accident/Incident Reporting Procedure.....	16
Professional Attire Recommendations.....	17
Change of Name, Address and/or Phone Number .....	18
Communications with Public .....	18
Hepatitis Vaccine and Lice Infestation .....	18
Courier .....	18
Flower Fund .....	18
Calamity Day .....	18
Job Postings .....	18
Resignations .....	18
Supplemental Contracts .....	19
<b>TECHNOLOGY PROCEDURES &amp; REQUIREMENTS.....</b>	<b>19</b>
Computer/On-Line Services .....	19
Email/Text.....	21
Social Media .....	21
<b>INSURANCE.....</b>	<b>21</b>
Health Care Insurance.....	21
COBRA.....	22
<b>APPRAISAL PROCEDURES .....</b>	<b>22</b>

# WELCOME

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Welcome to the Trumbull County Educational Service Center. It is our privilege to serve the Trumbull County educational community. We are pleased that you are joining TCESC as an employee and we look forward to working with you. The intent of this employee handbook is to communicate important information about TCESC's operations to all our employees.

TCESC provides educational leadership and instruction in the areas of curriculum development, special education and technology. TCESC serves 20 Trumbull County school districts and maintains Ohio's high-performing ESC designation. Through direct instruction and quality professional development, TCESC partners with districts to improve education for all students. We operate special education classrooms for students in the following areas: multiple disabilities, emotional disturbance, hearing impaired and preschool. We serve visually impaired students through itinerant teachers. TCESC provides related services support including speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and school psychology services. We provide academic enrichment to students through programs such as STEAM/Excel, Prep Bowl, Spelling Bee, etc. as well as gifted and talented services and support. Our professional learning programs support both teachers and administrators through instructional coaching, data analysis, technology training and ongoing educator professional learning sessions.

On behalf of the organization, we welcome you. We hope that your experience here will be both enjoyable and rewarding. We wish you success in your new job, and we hope that you quickly feel at home.

# INTRODUCTION

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This handbook has been designed to provide you with important information and to serve as a guideline regarding our policies and procedures. This handbook is not your only source of information about TCESC. The TCESC policies and guidelines are on the TCESC website. The Trumbull County Classified Staff Association Agreement and the Trumbull County Professional Staff Association Agreement both outline specific operating procedures. Also, your supervisor and the human resources department are available to assist with questions.

It is your responsibility to be aware of the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook, as well as on the TCESC website, and to abide by them. The policies summarized in this document are not representative of the entire policy manual; employees should refer to the official policy manual to review complete policies. The complete policy manual is available as a link on the TCESC website on the TCESC Employees page.

The contents of the handbook are a living document and the contents are subject to revision or elimination without notice. They are also not intended to be a contract between you and TCESC. This handbook is not a substitute for ever-changing school law or the policy manual previously mentioned. Material in this handbook may be superseded by board policy, administrative regulation, or changes in federal or state laws. Naturally, a handbook cannot cover every

October 2019

situation. TCESC's administration has the authority and right to make the final decisions within the framework of TCESC's policies and procedures.

## **TRUMBULL COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER**

6000 Youngstown Warren Road

Niles, Ohio 44446

Phone: 330-505-2800

Fax: 330-505-2814

Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday

Web: [www.trumbullesc.org](http://www.trumbullesc.org)

## **ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW**

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### **GOVERNING BOARD**

The Governing Board consists of five elected representatives of the public who have oversight responsibility for TCESC operations. The Governing Board is the final and legal authority that makes decisions affecting the organization and its employees. It sets policy for our organization. The Governing Board employs the superintendent to serve as its chief administrator and the treasurer to maintain responsibility for fiscal operation. Each January, the Governing Board elects a president and a vice president.

### **DEPARTMENTS**

- Superintendent's Office
- Treasurer's Office
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Pupil Services
- Technology
- Human Resources

### **COMPLIANCE OFFICERS**

- Robert Marino, Assistant Superintendent. Phone: 330-505-2800 ext. 275.  
[Robert.marino@trumbullesc.org](mailto:Robert.marino@trumbullesc.org)
- Kathleen Vilsack, Director of Pupil Services. Phone: 330-505-2800 ext. 133.  
[Kathleen.vilsack@trumbullesc.org](mailto:Kathleen.vilsack@trumbullesc.org)
- Carlotta Sheets, Supervisor of Human Resources. Phone: 330-505-2800 ext. 124.  
[Carlotta.sheets@trumbullesc.org](mailto:Carlotta.sheets@trumbullesc.org)

# **EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS**

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## **EMPLOYEE CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS**

All employees are required to complete both the BCII (Ohio) and FBI (Federal) background checks upon employment. All employees are required to undergo FBI checks every five (5) years after they are hired. It is the employee's responsibility to have these completed. Both the BCII and FBI checks may be done at TCESC. The cost for the BCII and FBI checks is the responsibility of the applicant or employee.

## **PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR OHIO EDUCATORS**

All TCESC employees are expected to behave in a manner that reflects the status and substance of a public school professional. Employees are expected to discharge their duties in a professional, responsible, honest, and legally compliant manner at all times. Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 3319.31 states that engaging in an immoral act, incompetence, negligence, or conduct that is unbecoming to the person or person's position can result in license suspension, revocation, or limited license renewal. TCESC complies with Ohio Revised Code and the Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators and applies these professional conduct expectations to all employees. Employees who fail to comply with law, regulations, directives, policies, administrative guidelines, rules of professional conduct and/or this handbook or otherwise fail to appropriately discharge the duties of their position may be subject to discipline, including but not limited to suspension and/or termination from employment.

The Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators is available in its entirety on the TCESC website in the Employees/Employee Handbook section.

## **LICENSURE**

TCESC employees must meet the requirements of the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) for obtaining and holding an ODE certificate or license as an expectation for employment in the position for which he/she is employed. Employees applying for a new or renewed license/ permit issued by the Ohio Department of Education may be required to complete an Ohio criminal background check conducted by the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCII) and a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) background check according to ODE and/or Ohio Revised Code requirements.

The human resources office will assist employees with the licensure process, but it is ultimately the employee's responsibility to obtain a current, valid license and file it in the TCESC human resources office. Ohio Revised Code requires employees to hold a valid license for the position for which they are employed prior to receiving compensation.

The TCESC Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC) reviews and approves course work and other professional development activities proposed and completed by educators employed by the TCESC. The LPDC also determines if the licensure renewal requirements under Ohio's Teacher Education and Licensure Standards have been met. Licensed employees can locate all LPDC information, including the handbook and forms, on the TCESC website on the Employees page.

## **SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

TCESC recognizes that it is the legal obligation of school employees to report situations of suspected child abuse and neglect. This obligation includes personnel who are in daily contact with school-age children as they are often able to identify abused children and refer them to school authorities. Section 2151.421, Ohio Revised Code, dealing with the reporting of child abuse and neglect requires:

1. All school employees having reason to believe that a child under eighteen years of age has suffered any wound or injury or neglect shall immediately report such information.
2. A written report should follow as soon as possible to the appropriate reporting agency for the county. Any school employee making such a report shall be immune from civil or criminal liability.

## **TCESC POLICIES & LEGAL POSTINGS**

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TCESC's Governing Board adopts policies that are necessary for the safe and efficient operation of the ESC, its employees and pupils. This section of the handbook contains abbreviated versions of specific policies and legal postings. Please be aware that this handbook does not contain the policy or posting in its entirety.

All TCESC bylaws, policies and administrative guidelines are available in their entirety on the TCESC website in the Employees section. This website is updated regularly and should be the resource that is used when referencing bylaws, policies and administrative guidelines. TCESC employees are expected to familiarize themselves with all board policies.

All required legal postings are also available on TCESC Handbook webpage and also on the bulletin board in the hallway of the human resources office.

## **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER**

TCESC provides equal employment opportunities to all qualified individuals. TCESC's Governing Board policy states that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age, religion, military status, ancestry, genetic information or any other legally protected category, in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities. TCESC's compliance officers are the supervisor of human resources and the director of public services. The names and contact information for these individuals are listed on the website. Additional information and the required forms, including the Staff Request for Reasonable Accommodation form, can be found in the policies and guidelines section of the TCESC webpage.

## **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is designed to allow individuals with disabilities to enjoy the same employment opportunities available to persons without disabilities. TCESC fully endorses the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will not tolerate unlawful discrimination and/or harassment of disabled employees. In accordance with federal law, we encourage disabled employees to identify themselves. Information regarding your disability remains confidential in your medical file and may only be used in order to reasonably

October 2019

accommodate any special needs you may have.

## **GINA STATEMENT**

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits employers and other entities covered by GINA Title II, including the Governing Board, from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by law. To comply with this law, please do not provide any genetic information when responding to any request for medical information (unless the request pertains to a request for FMLA leave for purposes of caring for an immediate family member with a serious health condition). *Genetic information* as defined by GINA, includes an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic test, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services or participated in clinical research that includes genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

## **OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE FRAUD REPORTING SYSTEM**

The Ohio Auditor of State's office maintains a system for the reporting of fraud, including misuse of public money by any official or office. The system allows all Ohio citizens, including public employees, the opportunity to make anonymous complaints through a toll free number, the Auditor of State's website, or through the United States mail.

Telephone: 1-866-FRAUD OH (1-866-372-8364)

Website: [www.ohioauditor.gov](http://www.ohioauditor.gov)

US Mail: Ohio Auditor of State's office, Special Investigations Unit, 88 East Broad Street  
P.O. Box 1140, Columbus, OH 43215

## **ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY**

It is the policy of the Governing Board to maintain an education and work environment that is free from all forms of unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment. This commitment applies to all school educational service operations, programs, and activities. All students, administrators, teachers, staff, and all other school personnel share responsibility for avoiding, discouraging, and reporting any form of unlawful harassment. This policy applies to unlawful conduct occurring on school property, or at another location if such conduct occurs during an activity sponsored by the Board.

The Board will vigorously enforce its prohibition against discriminatory harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, called *protected classes*) that are protected by federal civil rights laws (hereinafter referred to as unlawful harassment), and encourages those within the school center community as well as third parties, who feel aggrieved to seek assistance to rectify such problems. The Board will investigate all allegations of unlawful harassment and in those cases where unlawful harassment is substantiated, the Board will take immediate steps to end the harassment, prevent its reoccurrence, and remedy its effects. Individuals who are found to have engaged in unlawful harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

## **DRUG/ALCOHOL FREE WORKSPACE**

The Governing Board believes that quality education is not possible in an environment affected by drugs and alcohol. It will seek, therefore, to establish and maintain an educational setting that is not tainted by the use or evidence of use of any controlled substance. The Board shall not permit the manufacture, possession, use, distribution, or dispensing of any controlled substance, alcohol, and any drug paraphernalia as the terms is defined by law, by any member of the Center's staff at any time while on Center property or while on duty at any Center-related activity. Any staff member who violates this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Center guidelines and the terms of collective bargaining agreements.

## **COPYRIGHTED WORKS**

The Governing Board directs its staff and students to use copyrighted works only to the extent that the law permits. The Board recognizes that federal law applies to public school centers and the staff and students must, therefore, avoid acts of copyright infringement under penalty of law. In order to help the staff and students abide by the laws set forth in Title 17 of the United States Code, the Board provides administrative guidelines regarding the copying and distribution of copyrighted materials for instructional purposes and for the appropriate use of copyrighted material on the Center's web site. The administrative guidelines are available on the TCESC website in the Employee section under Policies and Guidelines.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The proper performance of school business is dependent upon the maintenance of unquestionably high standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality, and professional conduct by Governing Board's members, and the Educational Service Center's employees, officers and agents. Further, such characteristics are essential to the Board's commitment to earn and keep the public's confidence in the Center. For these reasons, the Board has outlined guidelines in its Conflict of Interest policy to assure that conflicts of interest do not occur. These guidelines apply to all Center employees, officers and agents, including members of the Board. No employee, officer or agent shall engage in or have a financial or other interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his/her duties and responsibilities at TCESC. Employees, officers and agents shall not engage in business, private practice of their profession, the rendering of services, or the sale of goods of any type where advantage is taken of any professional relationship they may have with any student, client, or parents of such students or clients in the course of their employment or professional relationship with the Center.

## **FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT (FLSA)**

It is the Governing Board's policy to comply with the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and its implementing regulations. The Board shall pay at least the minimum wage required by the FLSA and Ohio law and local municipal law/ordinance/regulation to all covered, non-exempt employees, unless an employee's individual contract or the terms of an applicable collective bargaining agreement provide for greater benefits than mandated by federal, state or local law. Non-exempt employees are hourly employees, or salaried employees who do not qualify for a professional, administrative, executive, computer or any other exemption under the FLSA. Exempt employees are individuals who are exempt from the FLSA minimum wage and overtime provisions. These employees include, but are not limited to, persons employed in bona fide executive, administrative and professional positions, and certain computer employees.

To qualify for the exemption, employees generally must meet certain tests regarding their specific job duties and be paid a minimum per week salary as established by the Department of Labor.

## **THE OHIO SMOKE FREE WORKPLACE LAW**

Ohio voters approved a smoking ban in November of 2006, which prohibits smoking in public places and places of employment. The ban provides a statewide minimum standard of protection from the health hazards associated with exposure to secondhand smoke. Enforcement of the ban by the Ohio Department of Health became effective May 3, 2007. Many of Ohio's local health departments have partnered with the Ohio Department of Health to help provide enforcement of the law and rules, and have been designated to enforce the smoking ban in certain areas of Ohio. All employees are required to comply with any and all regulations regarding the smoke free workplace act at their assignment of school district, program or institution.

## **USE OF TOBACCO ON SCHOOL PREMISES**

The Governing Board is committed to providing students, staff, and visitors with a tobacco and smoke-free environment. The negative health effects of tobacco use for both users and nonusers, particularly in connection with second hand smoke, are well established. Further, providing a non-smoking and tobacco-free environment is consistent with the responsibilities of teachers and staff to be positive role models for our students.

For purposes of this policy, "use of tobacco" means to chew or maintain any substance containing tobacco, including smokeless tobacco, in the mouth to derive the effects of tobacco, as well as all uses of tobacco, including cigars, cigarettes, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, any other matter or substances that contain tobacco, in addition to papers used to roll cigarettes and/or the smoking of electronic, "vapor," or other substitute forms of cigarettes, clove cigarettes and any other lighted smoking devices for burning tobacco or any other substance.

In order to protect students and staff who choose not to use tobacco from an environment noxious to them, and because the Board does not condone smoking and/or the use of tobacco, the Board prohibits the use of tobacco or tobacco substitute products within any enclosed facility owned or leased or contracted for by the Board, and in the areas directly or indirectly under the control of the Board immediately adjacent to locations of ingress or egress to such facilities. This prohibition extends to any Board-owned and/or operated vehicles used to transport students and to all other Board-owned and/or operated vehicles. Such prohibition also applies to school grounds and any school-related event, except at designated times.

## **ABSENCES & LEAVES**

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TCESC maintains collective bargaining agreements with both the Trumbull County Professional Staff Association and the Trumbull County Classified Staff Association. These agreements outline the requirements for sick leave, bereavement leave, assault/battery leave, association leave, personal leave, jury duty/court appearance, FMLA, leave of absence without pay, parental leave, work related physical injury leave, and leave of absence for professional improvement. The procedures for the most commonly used leaves are outlined below. For additional information, employees should consult their agreements.

## **ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY**

Attendance is an essential aspect of every position at TCESC. Employees are expected to be punctual and at work on a regular basis. Additional details regarding specific forms of leave are provided in this section of the handbook

### **FRONTLINE**

Frontline is an online system that TCESC employees use to apply for absences from work and secure substitutes. Employees must use Frontline to report all absences including long-term leaves, jury duty, bereavement leave, personal leave, etc. Supervisors approve absences in the Frontline.

Frontline also houses other valuable employee information, including accrued leave balances, etc. To access Frontline:

- Go to the TCESC website at [www.trumbullesc.org](http://www.trumbullesc.org).
- In the column on the left of the page, click on the Frontline link.

### **REPORTING OFF WORK**

Employees who need a substitute can request the substitute using the Frontline system.

Please submit your absence as soon as possible to allow ample time to secure a substitute. The substitute shortage is critical, so we appreciate your consideration and cooperation with timely call-offs. If you are unclear about how to secure a substitute, please contact your program supervisor.

Employees who do not need a substitute are to call their secretary to report off. If you have questions about reporting absences from work, contact your program supervisor.

### **REPORTING LEAVE TIME**

All employees will report leave time in hours used, not days. Leave time will be reported in quarter hour segments. For example, an absence from 1:15 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. equates to 2.25 hours. An eight (8) hours-per-day employee who misses 2.5 days should report 20 hours.

An employee is responsible for reporting the absence through Frontline, available on the TCESC website, within seven (7) days upon returning to work following an illness, bereavement or jury duty. Personal leave and vacation should be requested in advance. In the case of scheduled appointments, absences must be submitted in advance and approved by the supervisor. Absences must be reported through Frontline during any long term leave including an extended sick leave/parental leave, FMLA or any unpaid leave. **The Treasurer has been directed by the State Auditor and by negotiated agreement to deduct pay for failure to submit the absences within seven (7) days of return to work.**

### **SICK LEAVE**

Sick leave accrues at a rate of 1.25 days per month.

Employees may use sick leave for the following reasons:

- Personal illness or injury.

- Illness, injury or death in the immediate family. Immediate family is defined as: father, mother, brother, sister, spouse, child, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, foster child, and/or any relative or member of the household clearly standing in the same relationship to the employee as any of those named.
- Exposure to contagious disease.
- Illness or disability by reason of pregnancy.

An employee who has been on sick leave may be required to furnish the name and address of the employee's physician. The employee shall authorize the physician to release a confirmation.

**SICK LEAVE BANK:** Use of a Sick Leave Bank is for Professional or Classified Association members only as per the collective bargaining agreement. Forms are available from the Professional Staff Association or Classified Staff Association.

## **PERSONAL LEAVE**

Employees receive three (3) personal leave days each school year to be used in accordance with terms detailed in both the Professional Staff Association and Classified Staff Association agreements. Employees who begin work after July 1 and do not work a full-year contract shall be granted personal days on a pro-rated basis.

Personal leave is any absence from duty for the purpose of discharging an *essential personal obligation* that cannot be discharged at any time other than school time and that is not otherwise permissible as sick leave or other leave according to the appropriate collective bargaining agreement. A request for personal leave should be submitted to the supervisor via Frontline at least five (5) days prior to the date of leave and in accordance with collective bargaining agreements. The five (5) days will be waived in cases of emergency; however, the employee must still notify the supervisor immediately.

## **BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

Employees receive three (3) days of bereavement leave in accordance with the provisions outlined in the Trumbull County Professional Staff Association and Trumbull County Classified Staff Association collective bargaining agreements. Immediate family is defined in the bargaining unit agreements.

## **JURY DUTY/COURT APPEARANCE**

If an employee is served with a lawfully issued subpoena for a court appearance of jury duty, the employee will be granted court or jury duty leave during normal working hours. The employee will be paid his/her regular salary for the leave. These days will not be deducted from any other leave days. However, the employee must remit to TCESC the amount of money earned for serving on jury duty minus the necessary and documented expenses that were incurred. Fees earned for jury duty or court service on an employee's day off or during the summer months do not have to be remitted to the treasurer's office.

Employees must report absences via Frontline in advance if possible or *immediately* upon return to work. All other documentation must be submitted to the treasurer within twenty (20) workdays of the completion of the duty.

## **BATTERY/ASSAULT LEAVE**

Provisions for Battery Leave are outlined in the Trumbull County Professional Staff Association Agreement. Provisions for Assault Leave are outlined in the Trumbull County Classified Staff Association Agreement.

## **FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE**

Provisions for Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) are outlined in the Professional and Classified Staff collective bargaining agreements. Administrative staff should contact the human resources department for further details. TCESC will comply with all federal regulations in regard to FMLA leave.

FMLA entitles employees to up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave with benefits. During this leave there is no accrual of sick leave, personal leave and or vacation time. To be eligible for FMLA, an employee must have been employed by TCESC for at least twelve (12) months before the leave request and have worked at least 1,250 hours during those last twelve (12) months.

FMLA may be taken for one or more of the following circumstances:

- The birth and care of an employee's child or placement for adoption or foster care of a child with an employee.
- Care of an immediate family member (spouse, child or parent) who has a serious health condition.
- Care of an employee's own serious health condition.
- Any qualifying exigency involving an employee's military spouse, child or parent. FMLA also allows up to twenty-six (26) weeks of leave to care for a spouse, child, parent or next of kin who is a service member recovering from a serious illness or injury sustained in the line of duty and who is still in the military.

FMLA leave runs concurrently with all other paid and unpaid leaves. For example, if you are taking sick leave and then plan to apply for FMLA, your sick leave will be counted as part of the twelve (12) weeks FMLA leave.

## **EXTENDED SICK LEAVE**

Extended sick leaves are granted in accordance with the timelines and requirements detailed in the Trumbull County Classified Staff Association agreement or the Trumbull County Professional Staff Association agreement.

TCESC employees anticipating surgery or other medical procedure should notify the immediate supervisor and the human resources department as early as possible. If there is an emergency situation, the employee should contact the supervisor and human resources department immediately to initiate the necessary paperwork. The human resources department will assist in planning the leave and initiating the required paperwork.

The steps involved in taking an extended sick leave are outlined below:

1. Employees must complete a Request for Parental Leave & Extended Sick Leave at least forty-five (45) days prior to the requested beginning date of the leave. This form details what type of leave(s) (sick, FMLA or unpaid) will be taken and how many days

will be charged to each type of leave.

2. Employees must provide a written recommendation from the attending physician that states the date of surgery/procedure/treatment, recommended time of recovery and any other specific health concerns that impact the leave. If leave is being taken because of the illness of a family member, the employee must provide a physician's statement regarding the fact that the family member's health requires the employee's care. This written statement can be a letter from the physician.
3. The TCESC Governing Board must approve any unpaid leave.
4. The employee must notify the human resources department of any changes in the original Request for Parental Leave & Extended Sick Leave form. These changes include: last work date, actual first date of leave, expected date of return to work and the actual date of return to work.
5. An employee must record absence requests via Frontline during the leave.
6. The employee must provide a written declaration of intent to return to work to the human resources office 60 days prior to the end of the leave.
7. The employee must notify the supervisor and the human resources department again one week prior to returning to work.
8. If leave was due to an employee's health concern, the employee must submit a physician's statement of release upon return to work. This release must indicate that the employee is able to perform the essential functions of her/her job and outline any necessary restrictions.

## **PARENTAL LEAVE**

Parental leaves are granted in accordance with the timelines and requirements detailed in the Trumbull County Classified Staff Association Agreement or the Trumbull County Professional Staff Association Agreement.

TCESC employees anticipating the birth or adoption of a child should notify the immediate supervisor and the human resources department as early as possible. The human resources department will assist in planning the leave and initiating the required paperwork.

The steps involved in taking a Parental Leave are outlined below:

1. Employees must complete a Request for Parental Leave & Extended Sick Leave at least forty-five (45) days prior to the requested beginning date of the leave. Parental leave *may* involve up to three types of leave: sick, FMLA and unpaid leave. The form details what type of leave(s) will be taken and how many days will be charged to each type of leave.
2. Employees must provide a written statement, which can be in the form of a letter, from the attending physician that details the expected date of delivery, recommended time of recovery and any other specific health concerns that impact the leave.

3. The TCESC Governing Board must approve any unpaid leave.
4. The leave shall begin on the date of birth/adoption unless sick leave is used prior to delivery because of medical complications. Leaves beginning earlier than delivery require a physician's excuse.
5. The employee must notify the human resources department of any changes in the original Request for Parental Leave & Extended Sick Leave form. These changes include: last work date, actual first date of leave, actual date of delivery, expected date of return to work and the actual date of return to work.
6. An employee must record absence requests via Frontline during the leave.
7. The employee must provide a written declaration of intent to return to work to the human resources office sixty (60) days prior to the end of the leave.
8. The employee must notify the supervisor and the human resources department again one week prior to returning to work.
9. Upon return to work, an employee must submit to the human resources department a physician's statement of approval to return to work.

### **EXTENDED UNPAID LEAVE**

Extended unpaid leaves may be granted according to the terms detailed in both the Professional Staff Association and Classified Staff Association Agreements. Requests for unpaid leave shall be submitted according to the association's collective bargaining agreement. Leave without pay should not be expected or planned until granted by the Superintendent and approved by the Governing Board. In all cases, the superintendent will make all judgments regarding situations while considering the welfare of both the employee and TCESC.

### **PROFESSIONAL MEETING/STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

TCESC expects its staff to participate in professional learning opportunities. Professional learning opportunities include educational conventions, conferences, workshops and/or trainings that are related to the work activities and/or duties/responsibilities of the staff as determined by the superintendent. In general, professional meetings are meetings conducted outside of Trumbull County that employees do not attend regularly. Professional meetings must be directly related to job duties and benefit TCESC and/or the school districts.

Individuals must request the professional leave using the Frontline prior to attending professional development activities. Individuals must also submit an electronic copy of the meeting registration form and meeting agenda by attaching it to the leave request in Frontline. Proper purchase order procedures must be followed both before and after the event. Reimbursement for the costs incurred will be made when the form is returned, accompanied by a purchase order and original receipts.

# **TCECSC PROCEDURES**

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## **CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

Throughout the course of employment, TCECSC employees may receive or have access to confidential and proprietary information of TCECSC, or one or more of our students. All student information is confidential, as required by federal and state law, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g, 34 C.F.R. Part 99, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400, 34 C.F.R. Part 300, and Ohio Revised Code Section 3319.321. Confidential information includes many other things including, but not limited to, information about parents, school staff, security systems, personnel, contracts, business, school and personnel files and records. Employees are to treat any information obtained while working for TCECSC, in association with TCECSC or in any school assignment as confidential and may not be disclosed to any other party, even another TCECSC employee. If you are unclear as to whether certain information is confidential, treat it as if it is confidential.

## **SIGNING IN/CHECKING OUT**

All employees are to immediately notify their department secretary of their presence when arriving and departing from the TCECSC office. This information is critical in case of any type of emergency or disaster drill in the building.

## **PURCHASING PROCEDURES**

All TCECSC purchases are made by purchase orders. No employee shall make purchases for TCECSC or enter into contracts with consultants/presenters or vendors without following the established procedures. A purchase order must be completed, submitted and approved by both the superintendent and the treasurer before a purchase is made. Only after receipt of such approval can the purchase be made. Employees may be held personally responsible for anything purchased without a properly signed purchase order or the necessary authorization.

## **MILEAGE REPORTING**

Routine mileage is that which occurs as a part of daily service to school districts. As per the Trumbull County Classified Staff Association Agreement and in the Trumbull County Professional Staff Association Agreement, the mileage rate is the IRS rate at the time the mileage occurred. An employee who travels during the work day from one assigned work station to another to perform work duties will be reimbursed mileage. Work stations are the employee's assigned school buildings or other related educational locations approved by the employee's supervisor. Mileage will be recorded from the first work station of the day to the last work station of the day. Mileage will not be reimbursed for travel to and from the employee's residence nor to locations other than work stations.

Employees must submit purchase orders for mileage reimbursement on a quarterly basis. Purchase orders must be submitted to and approved by the Treasurer's office prior to the first day of the quarter for which the mileage is requested.

Mileage must be recorded each month on the Monthly Mileage Report form. A copy of the Monthly Mileage Report form should be submitted to the program secretary.

October 2019

Mileage to locations that are not a regular part of the employee's assignment must be approved by the immediate supervisor. For these trips, the employee must complete a Professional Meeting Request and have it approved prior to the meeting date.

## **CALENDAR**

TCESC employees, with the exception of central office support staff, are required to complete a yearly calendar that aligns with the calendar of the district in which the employee's work station is located. This calendar must be completed, approved by the individual's supervisor and submitted to both the treasurer's office and the human resources office prior to any school year. You must also give your department secretary a copy of your work calendar. All calendar adjustments require the approval of the supervisor.

All ESC recognized holidays are outlined in the Trumbull County Classified Staff Association Agreement and the Trumbull County Certified Staff Association Agreement.

## **EMPLOYEE SAFETY**

TCESC is committed to the safety and health of its employees. We make every effort to comply with relevant federal and state occupational health and safety laws. TCESC maintains a safety committee that meets regularly to address safety issues.

Emergencies and disasters can never be predicted; however, plans have been prepared in the event of a disaster to minimize their impact. TCESC and the districts that house our classrooms have emergency safety plans in place for hazards and threats including: lockdown; building evacuation; fire safety; active shooter; bomb threat; medical emergency; severe weather; terrorism; etc. Periodic drills will provide personnel with practice in responding to emergency situations should they occur.

Medical emergencies may occur that justify the use of AEDs. Again, districts have AEDs in their buildings as does the TCESC. AEDs in the TCESC office are maintained and tested in accordance with operational guidelines of the manufacturer. Staff members received training to use the AED.

## **ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURE**

We ask all employees to:

- Exercise maximum care and good judgment at all times to prevent accidents and injuries.
- Contact your supervisor and seek first aid for all injuries, regardless of how minor.
- Report unsafe conditions, equipment or practices to your supervisor.
- Use safety equipment provided for your use.
- Conscientiously observe all safety rules and regulations at all times.

If you are involved in an accident or are injured while working, you should:

- Seek prompt medical attention or first aid, even if the injury appears minor.
- Report the accident/injury to your supervisor then complete the Employee

Accident/Battery Report and return the report to the human resources department as soon as possible.

- If the injury requires emergency medical treatment, seek the treatment first. Then contact your supervisor and complete the Employee Accident/Battery Report as soon as possible.

## **PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE RECOMMENDATIONS**

TCESC is a service organization. As such, we believe that we must dress appropriately to present the professional image that meets the expectations of the public and customers that we serve.

TCESC expects employees to dress in a manner that communicates to students a pride in personal appearance. Employees should present a well-groomed appearance and good personal hygiene is expected at all times.

### **SOME EXAMPLES OF PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE INCLUDE:**

- A dress shirt, tie and dress slacks for men.
- Conservative dresses, blouses, sweaters and dress slacks for women.
- Polo shirts, sweaters, casual dress slacks.
- Sport coats and suits are always appropriate.

### **EXAMPLES OF ITEMS THAT ARE NOT TO BE WORN INCLUDE:**

- Jeans (unless required for job duties for the day).
- Sweat suits or sweat pants (unless required to carry out job duties).
- Sneakers (unless required for job duties for the day).
- Purposely exposed undergarments.
- Sagging pants.
- Excessively short or tight garments.
- Low cut blouses.
- Bare midriff shirts.
- Strapless shirts, tank tops, halter tops or muscle shirts.
- Attire with inappropriate messages.
- Provocative, revealing, profane, vulgar, offensive or obscene clothing.
- Torn clothing.
- Flip flops or hiking boots.
- Hats.

A variation from these norms may be appropriate for health reasons, job duty, temperature, etc.

Business casual dress is permitted for the central office staff for the summer months and for Fridays throughout the year. However, business casual is not a license to wear any of the prohibited items or to dress in an inappropriate manner. The final judgment in all cases is left to the superintendent or designee regarding determination of what is considered professional attire for TCESC employees.

## **CHANGE OF NAME, ADDRESS AND/OR PHONE NUMBER**

Employees should notify the human resources department of any name, address and phone number changes so that any necessary paperwork can be completed.

## **COMMUNICATIONS WITH PUBLIC**

Communication with the public is important and helps to mold our image. Marketing and public relations responsibilities belong to everyone. Please be sure to proofread your writing to ensure that it is grammatically correct and clearly written. TCESC employees who are contacted by the media should direct all calls to their supervisor or the superintendent's office.

## **HEPATITIS VACCINE AND LICE INFESTATION**

TCESC employees may elect to receive the Hepatitis B vaccine on a voluntary basis, in accordance with the Trumbull County Classified Staff Association Agreement and the Trumbull County Professional Staff Agreement. TCESC also will provide lice control products to employees in the event of an infestation.

## **COURIER**

The TCESC courier delivers mail between TCESC and all Trumbull County school districts. Mail delivered via courier must be properly addressed including name of recipient, local district and building. Most individual sheets of paper should be placed in an envelope. The courier schedule is posted on the TCESC website.

## **FLOWER FUND**

Current employees have the option of participating in the TCESC flower fund. As part of the flower fund, flowers or donations are sent in the event of an immediate family member death. This encompasses the following family members: immediate family ~ husband, wife, child, father, mother, parent in-law, grandparent or grandchild. Flowers or a donation will be sent if the active employee has an extended hospital stay or illness, outpatient surgery or birth of a child. Fliers are distributed in new hire paperwork and at convocation.

## **CALAMITY DAY**

In case of a calamity day (snow, flooding, no electricity, no heat, etc.) in the employee's assigned district, the employee reports to any of his/her work station(s) that are open. If the TCESC central office is open, all employees who have a work station at the TCESC central office must report to work. If all of the employee's assignment locations are closed, the employee does not report to work.

## **JOB POSTINGS**

Job vacancies are filled in accordance with the Trumbull County Classified Staff Association Agreement and the Trumbull County Certified Staff Association Agreement. Job postings are distributed via email and posted on the TCESC website in the Job Opportunities section.

## **RESIGNATIONS**

Staff members who wish to resign from TCESC must submit a signed, written letter of resignation to the superintendent and a copy to their direct supervisor and the human resources office. The letter should state the employee's intent to resign and the effective date of his/her resignation.

In most cases, when an individual is resigning at the end of a school year, certified and administrative staff members should set the effective date of their resignation at the end of their contract term. Certified/administrative staff members may resign their contract prior to or on July 10. After July 10, employees wishing to resign must contact the superintendent for approval.

Classified staff members under contract may resign by filing a written resignation with the superintendent at least two (2) weeks prior to the effective date of resignation.

Upon resignation, TCESC staff members must return all materials, supplies, equipment and keys before the resigning employee will receive his/her last check.

## **SUPPLEMENTAL CONTRACTS**

Staff members may be issued supplemental contracts to perform work beyond contract expectations and/or beyond the normal contract day/year.

# **TECHNOLOGY PROCEDURES & REQUIREMENTS**

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## **COMPUTER/ON-LINE SERVICES**

Technology enhances all of TCESC's communications and instructional programs. All computers are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical and legal manner. Staff members accessing the internet through TCESC's computers and networks assume personal responsibility and liability, both civil and criminal, for unauthorized or inappropriate use of the internet. Failure to abide by TCESC's policies and guidelines in relationship to technology usage will result in the revocation of the user's access privileges.

All TCESC employees are required to sign the Staff Network and Internet Acceptable Use & Safety Agreement form in order to access email and/or the internet at work. Upon receipt of the signed form, TCESC employees are assigned an email address that will be used to communicate important information about mandatory trainings, licensure, background checks, healthcare benefits, leaves, etc. Please be aware information communicated through your TCESC email frequently addresses employment requirements. Failure to regularly monitor your TCESC email could impact your employment status.

If you are having difficulty accessing email, you should contact the TCESC technology office by using the help desk on the website or by calling 330-505-2800.

1. Users shall not violate the conditions of the Ohio Revised Code 3319.32.1.
2. The system shall be used only for purposes related to education or administration. Commercial, political and/or personal use of the system is strictly prohibited. The administration reserves the right to monitor any computer activity and on-line communications for improper use.
3. Keep messages brief and use appropriate language. Do not use profanity, obscenity or other language that may be offensive to other users.

4. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden. Users shall not view, download or transmit material that is threatening, obscene, disruptive or sexually explicit or that could be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based on their race, national origin, citizenship status, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion or political beliefs. Users shall not use the system to encourage the use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco nor shall they promote unethical practices or any activity prohibited by law or Board policy.
5. Vandalism results in the cancellation of user privileges. Vandalism includes uploading/downloading any inappropriate material, creating computer viruses and/or any malicious attempt to harm or destroy equipment or materials or the data of any other user.
6. The employee in whose name an on-line service account is issued is responsible for its proper use at all times. Employees shall use this system only under their own account login.
7. Use of the computer and/or network is not for financial gain or for any commercial purpose.
8. Users shall not read other users' mail or files; they shall not attempt to interfere with other users' ability to send or receive electronic mail, nor shall they attempt to read, delete, copy, modify or forge other users' mail.
9. The network should not be used in such a way that it disrupts the use of the network by others. Users shall report any security problem or misuse of the network to the teacher, principal or immediate supervisor.
10. Copyrighted material may not be placed on the system without the author's permission.
11. Copying commercial software in violation of copyright law is not permitted. Downloading of freeware or shareware programs is not permitted. Please contact the technology department regarding any software installation.
12. No personally identifiable information about a student (name, home address, date of birth, health records, etc.) should be placed on any district or TCESC website or entered into any online system/application without permission.
13. TCESC staff members will instruct students regarding the appropriate use of technology and online safety/security. Staff members are responsible for monitoring students' online activities while at school. TCESC staff who witness acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying shall notify the program supervisor and/or building principal and file written report.
14. Rules and regulations of on-line etiquette are subject to change by the administration.

## **EMAIL/TEXT**

All employees should be advised that all email and text communication associated with your public employment is a matter of public record. Any member of the public may at any time request to view public records. As a result, keep the following guidelines in mind when using school email for any purpose and/or communicating with parents/the public.

1. Electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. Individuals operating the system have access to all messages. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
2. Do not reveal your personal home address or phone number or those of students or colleagues using any type of electronic communication.
3. Avoid judgmental statements in text and email communications associated with your job. This includes all messages sent with your TCESC email account, education apps, and messages related to your employment.
4. Refrain from using student names in all email or text communications related to your employment.
5. Avoid use of personal text applications and personal email accounts to communicate with parents, other staff, or members of the public if that communication is related to your employment.
6. Operate under the assumption that anything you write in electronic communication in your capacity as an employee of TCESC could be broadcast on the television news or printed in the newspaper.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

An employee's personal or private use of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Snap Chat, Instagram, etc., may have unintended consequences. While the Governing Board respects its employees' First Amendment rights, those rights do not include permission to post inflammatory comments that could compromise TCESC's mission, undermine staff relationships, or cause a substantial disruption to the school environment. This caution also applies to staff members' online conduct that occurs off school property including from the employee's private computer. Postings to social media should be done in a manner sensitive to the staff member's professional responsibilities. In addition, federal and state confidentiality laws forbid schools and their employees from using or disclosing student education records without parental consent. Education records include a wide variety of information and posting personally identifiable information about students is not permitted.

## **INSURANCE**

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### **HEALTH CARE INSURANCE**

TCESC provides insurance to employees based upon the terms outlined in the negotiated

October 2019

agreements. Summary plan descriptions are available to all participants.

Open enrollment for insurance coverage is the month of September. We are unable to change coverage at any other time of year unless you have a life-altering event. If a change in benefits is desired because of a life-altering situation (birth, death, divorce, marriage, spouse job loss), you must contact TCESC's human resources office within 30 days of the change.

## **COBRA**

COBRA permits employees, upon termination, resignation, retirement, leave of absences, etc., to continue their insurance coverage at their own cost. For additional information about COBRA, contact the treasurer's office.

## **APPRAISAL PROCEDURES**

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Evaluation of staff is the responsibility of the superintendent and/or the appointment designee, and shall be conducted in accordance with Governing Board Policy and within provisions of the Ohio Revised Code. The purpose of the evaluation is intended to be a process to provide for the continuous improvement and professional development of staff and of TCESC programs. TCESC conducts performance appraisals in accordance with all ORC requirements.