

# **BITTERROOT VALLEY EDUCATION COOPERATIVE**

## **CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEE PROCEDURES MANUAL**

**Revised: February 18, 2010**

## KNOWING YOUR ORGANIZATION

*Discovering what works in the particular universe of any organization is the task of everyone in that organization. Most people want to dedicate their intelligence to discovering solutions that help their system work better. People are attracted to figuring out how to make something happen. We want to be engaged in the creation of unique, daring, colorful, and surprising adaptations. We want to create for the good of our enterprises.*

*-- Margaret Wheatley and Myron Kellner-Rogers*

### Belief Statement and Goals

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The Belief Statement was developed by and for the Cooperative staff to describe our common underlying belief system. The basis for our Belief Statement is mutual respect, empathy, and understanding of all our team members' roles and responsibilities. We seek time to reflect, collaborate and plan with Co-op and district staff to enhance our effectiveness. We believe that we are self-improving and look for opportunities to improve regardless of our mastery level. **Refer to the Belief Statement in the Employee Handbook.**

#### Management Board

The Management Board is the governing body of the Cooperative. It is comprised of the superintendents, or their representatives, of each member school district. The Director is the Agent of the Board. Board meetings are generally held the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Cooperative Office. One staff representative attends the meeting.

## **Position Information**

### **Job Description**

Each employee is required to review his/her job description and related performance goals. Signature on the Orientation Checklist is acknowledgement that you have read and understand the requirements in your job description and performance expectations. **Refer to the Job Description in the Employee Handbook.**

### **Performance Appraisal**

The Performance Appraisal process is based on the premise that we are intrinsically motivated to achieve professional self-improvement and that we are capable of self-evaluation. Employee performance goals are based upon the standard job description. Specific goals may be added by employee or supervisor. Feedback on performance is taken from school personnel, employee and supervisor. Mentors are assigned as needed. Each employee has an annual Performance Appraisal. After three consecutive years of positive appraisals, employees are eligible for review cycles up to every three years. **Refer to the Performance Appraisal document and related forms in the Employee Handbook.**

### **Hours of Work Day**

Work hours are established upon employment and may be increased or reduced as the need arises. Under no circumstances are hourly rate employees to exceed forty hours per week without advance approval from an immediate supervisor.

## Calendars/Directories

### Cooperative Calendar

If you are assigned to more than one district, you follow the scheduled workdays on the Cooperative Calendar. If you are assigned to only one school district, you will follow that district's calendar. This includes working the districts' Parent-Teacher Conferences *and PIR days*. All employees shall attend Cooperative staff meetings during the contract period as indicated on the Cooperative calendar, or as otherwise notified. Where calendar or schedule conflicts arise, employees shall contact a Cooperative supervisor in advance and gain approval to miss a Cooperative meeting. **Refer to the Cooperative Calendar - Download from BVEC web page.**

### Staff Directory

There are several Staff Directories that we provide for you. The first one is the Staff Directory with the work site information, which is on the BVEC web site. **This can be printed out from time to time from the web site to update your Employee Handbook.** The second one is a Staff Directory with home information **for staff use only is and not to be given out to non-employees. Please call BVEC Office to have this information emailed to you.**

### School Directories

Directory of Special Education Teachers and Administrators - **Download from BVEC web page.**

## **Contracts, Policies and Manuals**

### **Bitterroot Valley Education Cooperative Board Policies**

BVEC Board Policy is set by the Management Board and governs all employees of the Cooperative. You are responsible to read and be familiar with the Board Policies. **Refer to the copy of the BVEC Policy Manual - Download from BVEC web page.**

### **Bitterroot Valley Education Cooperative Employee Handbook**

That would be this manual. It includes important things you need to know and procedures. **Download from BVEC web page.**

### **HIPPA Policies and Procedures**

The Cooperative has developed a HIPPA Policy and Procedures Manual. All Cooperative employees responsible for billing for services will receive training on HIPPA requirements within 30 days of the start date.

### **Exposure Control Plan**

The Cooperative has an Exposure Control Plan, which outlines procedures and universal precautions to protect employees from blood borne pathogens. This includes Hepatitis B and HIV viruses. All employees will receive training in these procedures and precautions at the time of hire and review the procedures and universal precautions annually. These are available for you to checkout and review. If your position is designated at-risk for exposure, you may elect to receive a series of vaccinations or decline the vaccinations and sign off on the appropriate form. The Exposure Control Plan for the Bitterroot Valley Education Cooperative is maintained on file in the Cooperative Office and is available for review upon request. **Refer to the Exposure Control Plan on file in the Cooperative Office.**

## **Treatment of Confidential Information**

Information regarding students' identification, evaluation, disability, or special education program is confidential and is to be share with only those individuals who have a right to know that information. If such information, or other information of confidential nature, is shared with individuals, then that shared information becomes part of the special education record. The act of sharing information constitutes the legal making of a special education record and removes it from the realm of proprietary information. All information contained in a student's special education record is confidential.

“Confidential” does not mean that sensitive information cannot be shared, rather it means that it can only be shared with those who have an “educational right to know” without parental consent. Individuals who have a right to access special education records without parental consent are generally listed as part of the Access Log in each student's file.

## **Internet Use**

All employees are assigned email and will have access to internet use. You will use the Internet for communication between and among office staff. You can access the Co-op web page at <http://bvec-mt.org> .

All staff must be familiar with the Co-op Internet Use and Safety Procedure. **Refer to Internet Use and Safety Policy in the BVEC Board Policy Manual - Download from BVEC web page**

## Administrative Procedures

### Reporting Schedule Changes and Absences

You must notify the Cooperative and the respective schools of absences or schedule **changes by 8:00 am or as soon as the employee is aware of the need** for a schedule change or absence. Requests for **Vacation Leave** must be submitted, on standard form, as far in advance as possible but **no later than two working days** in advance of the request.

**Sick and vacation leave** are deducted hourly to the nearest ¼ hour.

**You must give proper notice** if you are going to be absent, late for work or must leave early, or for any reason would like to change your schedule from your normal assignment (this includes workshops and out of district meetings).

### **Proper Notice**

**a) Notify the Cooperative Office, in advance, by calling Extension 135 and leave a detailed message which includes the reason and specific times leaving and returning to work and;**

**b) Notify the individual school office building(s) where you are assigned on that particular day or days with the same detailed information.**

For purposes of reporting time away **before or after lunch** – only report time in excess of a standard one-half hour lunch period.

### **Email Addresses/BVEC Website/Protected Messages**

Staff members must regularly check their email accounts. Most employee forms and contact information is found on the Co-op website along with the calendar of local training, important links, other related special education and mental health documents regularly used by staff. Use this website to access forms and information. All staff members have ***Protected Messages***, which is used only when transmitting confidential information.

## **Resolving Conflict**

Conflicts, concerns or misunderstandings routinely arise in Cooperative work settings. Our first responsibility in problem resolution is to discuss concerns directly with the initial source of the problem or question. If the concern is not resolved to the employee's satisfaction, he or she addresses it with a direct supervisor, then to the Director and finally to the Cooperative Management Board if necessary. Other hearing procedures available to employees include: Investigation and Action Procedure (Appendix C of the Policy Manual) for perceived violations of Cooperative policies, or state or federal laws.

## **Supplies and Equipment Purchases / Purchase Orders**

**All purchases, orders, and reimbursements must be recorded in the Team Budget Folder.** You should always keep a copy of the Vendor Order form, Purchase Order, or Expense Reimbursement Form. If you order from a catalog, you must complete the catalog order form and send it to the Business Manager. If you wish to charge on the account of a local merchant, a Purchase Order (PO) must be used. To do this, complete a PO Request Form and email or fax to the Business Manager. The Business Manager will then email or fax the authorized PO Form to you. Take the PO with you to the merchant. Team members are not to exceed their allocated budget amount without approval from the Director. **Refer to the Purchase Order Request -Download from BVEC web page.**

## **Expense Reimbursements**

If you incur personal expenses for work related items, you must submit your requests for reimbursement on a Standard Office Reimbursement Form. **Refer to the Expense Reimbursement Form – Download from BVEC web page.**

## **Professional Development Request**

The steps for Professional Development Training are as follows:

1. At the beginning of the school year teams set training priorities and goals.
2. Individual requests for training are submitted to the business manager on the standard *Professional Development Training Request* form. Supervisor will email approval or denial.
3. It is the employee's responsibility to confirm approval before attending the training.
4. After attending the training the individual will confirm attendance and trigger reimbursement of allowable expenses by submitting the professional development form a second time to the business manager. **Refer to the Professional Development Request Form - Download from BVEC web page.**

## **Mileage Reimbursement**

Mileage is reimbursed at the current IRS rate for official Cooperative business: After arriving at your assigned work site for the day, travel between sites for work is reimbursable. Outside of the Cooperative boundaries you are also reimbursed when on approved travel for meetings, conferences, and in-service training. **See the [Mileage Reimbursement Form - Download from BVEC web page](#)**.

You are responsible for the commute to your initial site and back home with the following exceptions:

**Stipends:** Staff who travel more than 45 miles round trip per day to and from work will receive a stipend for daily round trip miles in excess of 45. The stipend rate is tiered and based upon number of sites served (because the number of sites serves impacts opportunities to carpool). If you serve 1 site you would receive 15 cent per mile stipend for all daily round trip miles exceeding 45, 2 sites = 20 cents and 3 sites = 25 cents. The logic here is that the more itinerant the position the fewer opportunities to get in on carpool incentives. If you believe you are eligible for a stipend because you drive over 45 miles round trip at least one day per week you must request a **Commuting Mileage Verification form** and submit to the Business Manager upon employment or no later than the end of your first week of work. If you are eligible, stipend agreements will be sent to you for your signature.

**Carpool Incentives:** Employees who carpool to work receive three cents per mile based upon documentation submitted monthly. All Co-op employees in the carpool can submit even if a district employee drives. Submit monthly or whenever you fill up the form. **See Carpool Log - Download from BVEC web page**.

**Refer to the Mileage Reimbursement Form, Commuting Mileage Verification Form, and Carpool Log - Download from BVEC web page**.

## **Staff Meetings**

Co-op staff meetings are considered **mandatory** unless indicated as optional or the employee has received prior supervisor approval to be absent. If there is a conflict between a Co-op staff meeting and a mandatory school district meeting or other schedule conflicts, the employee must have prior supervisor approval to be absent.

## **Lunch Break**

You have a standard one-half hour nonpaid lunch period. Changes from the standard lunch period must be discussed agreed upon by a supervisor.

## **Dress and Appearance**

You are to dress in an **appropriate, clean and professional manner at all times when on duty. This means no torso skin (midriff or excessive cleavage) exposed. No short shorts, skirts or dresses.** Please take careful note of dress expectations in individual schools, some schools have more formal standards than others do.

## **Smoking**

There is no smoking in the Cooperative Office or any school district campuses.

## **Perfume/Cologne**

Some individuals are sensitive to strong odors from perfumes and colognes. No perfumes or colognes at work.

## Assigned Work Sites

### Tour of Assigned Work Site

You will be given a tour of your work site and introduced to staff. Areas to be include but not limited to:

<b>Office/Room/Space</b>	<b>Restrooms</b>
<b>Emergency Exits and Supplies</b>	<b>Kitchen</b>
<b>Copy and Fax Machines</b>	<b>Parking</b>
<b>Mailbox and Messages</b>	
<b>Office Supplies</b>	

### Work Site Key

You will be issued a work site key. If you lose your key you are to notify the Director of Cooperative and the Principal of the building. Be aware that losing your key could result in the re-keying entire building(s). **Key(s) can not be duplicated.**

### Mailbox and Message Designation

You are assigned a designated place for mail, phone messages, and e-mail. You must check for mail and messages daily. If you have difficulty in any particular school with message or mail or e-mail delivery, you must notify your Co-op Supervisor immediately.

## **CO-OP OFFICE – STEVENSVILLE**

### **Tour of Office**

### **Office Key**

Only employees who require an office key will be issued one. If you lose a key you must notify the Director immediately. You may not duplicate office keys.

### **Security Alarm and Lock-up Procedures.**

The last person to leave the Co-op Office is responsible to turn off all lights, lock all doors, windows, turn down heat to 65 degrees and set the security alarm. Individuals who have individual office space are responsible to turn off their lights, lock windows and blinds are closed when leaving daily.

### **Use of Equipment at Co-op Office**

Some equipment is designated for checkout and must be signed out. Other equipment is permanent and is not to be removed. Laptop computers and other sensitive electronic equipment must not be left in automobiles or subject to hot or cold temperatures. If you borrow equipment, you are responsible for any damage and related repair costs while such equipment is in your possession.

## **PAYROLL AND BENEFITS**

### **Employment Agreement**

Classified employees receive an Employment Agreement that lists the hourly rate of pay and terms of employment.

### **Timesheets**

**Classified Employees** record hours worked each day on a time sheet. Time sheets are due in to the Business Manager on the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month.

### **Payday**

Payroll checks are distributed on the 18<sup>th</sup> of each month.

### **Pay Check Deposit**

You may have your payroll check mailed directly to your home or electronically transferred into your bank account.

### **Tax Sheltered Annuity**

If you choose to contribute to a Tax Sheltered Annuity, the deduction will be payroll deducted and sent by the Business Manager for deposit into your TSA account. All other forms of retirement investment must be made directly by the employee. Please see the Business Manager for more information.

### **Retirement**

You are required to participate in either the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) or the Teachers Retirement System (TRS), depending on your position. You are vested and eligible for retirement benefits after five years of employment. See the Business Manager for more information regarding the State Retirement System.

## **Workers Compensation**

All employees of the Cooperative are covered by workers' compensation benefits. An employee who is injured in a work related accident may be eligible for workers' compensation benefits. By law, employee use of sick leave must be coordinated with receipt of workers' compensation benefits, on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the Workers' Compensation Division, Department of Labor and Industry.

In the event of a work related accident:

Report the injury or possible injury to the Co-op, and if a student is involved also report the accident to the building principal, immediately if possible but no later than twenty-four (24) hours after the incident. Contact a Co-op supervisor, and the business manager who is responsible to file workers' compensation claims. **The Co-op, NOT the district, completes the workers' comp claim for its employees.**

If the injury is significant or results in extended absence from work, the Co-op may require the employee to furnish a physician's order to take leave or to return to work.

## **W4, I9 Forms, and New Hire Reporting Forms**

The Business Manager will give you W4, I9, TRS/PERS enrollment form and New Hire Reporting forms to complete. These forms must be turned in to the Business Manager within five days after receiving them.

## **Health Insurance Enrollment**

If you work at least twenty hours per week, you are eligible for health insurance. Contact Business Manager for more information.

## **Flex Program**

You may enroll in a flex plan which allows you to withhold funds from your paycheck to pay for medical/dental insurance premiums and allowable medical and day care related costs tax free. Enrollment forms must be completed and returned to the Business Manager within five days of receiving them.

## TAKING TIME OFF

### **Vacation**

For more information see policy **4.28 Annual Vacation Leave** and **4.29 Rate Earned**.

Employees may take annual leave upon advance request and approval of the Cooperative so long as their absence does not cause an undue burden on the Co-op or member districts. The Co-op reserves the right to restrict the use of vacation leave due to the workload and needs of the Co-op and member districts. (See Leave Request form).

Employees are not entitled to vacation leave with pay until they have been continuously employed for a period of six calendar months. Vacation is dependent upon number of years experience in the system. It is calculated by multiplying a factor based upon experience times the number of total hours worked in a school year.

Years Worked	Factor
1-10	0.058 x total annual hours worked
10-15	0.069
15-20	0.081
20+	0.092

(Example: With five years experience as a classified employee in the schools or Co-op at 187 days x 8hrs/day = 1,496 hrs x .058 = 86.76 annual vacation hrs)

### **Sick Leave**

For more information see Policy **4.31 Sick Leave**.

Employees are not entitled to paid sick leave until they have been continuously employed for 90 days. Sick leave for classified personnel is calculated by multiplying a factor of .046 times the total hours worked in a school year.

(Example: At 187 days x 8 hrs/day = 1,496 x .046 = 68.81 annual sick leave hours)

### **Holidays**

School holidays are listed in the Cooperative Calendar. Paid holidays for classified staff are listed on the Employment Agreement.

### **Professional Training**

You are encouraged to participate in continuing professional development and will be generally approved unless your absence creates an undue hardship on the Co-op or its member district.