

BITTERROOT VALLEY EDUCATION COOPERATIVE

SALARIED 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

You are contracted to work a minimum of 7.5 hours per day plus any additional time required at meetings, staff meetings, school related events or work related paperwork. Generally you are required to be at the school site a minimum of fifteen minutes before students arrive and fifteen minutes after students are dismissed. However, each employee will determine with supervisor support the most appropriate work schedule for the assigned schools. **Refer to the School Start and End Times** and **Individual Employee Work Schedule** form in the Employee Handbook.

As “Exempt” professionals (exempt from overtime pay) employees you will frequently work beyond the minimum 7.5 hours per day.

If you arrive late or leave early you are required to report the time. See **Reporting Schedule Changes and Absences.**

With prior approval, **Extra-ordinary Time** may be documented for future personal leave. Extra-ordinary time is reserved for special situations where administrator and employee agree, in advance, that extra-ordinary work time should be documented for future personal leave use.

Position Information

Workload Guidelines

The Co-op endeavors to maintain desirable workloads that create effective work conditions. Workloads are considered undesirable when two or more of the following factors are present:

1. SLP

- a. Number of students with IEPs receiving services exceeds 45 for 1.0 FTE
- b. Number of schools served exceeds three,
- c. Schedules for direct service students, indirect service students, collaboration, evaluation/assessment time, planning time, travel time, required IEP/CST meetings and other job duties exceed time available in the workweek.

2. OT and PT

- a. Number of students with IEPs receiving direct services and/or consultations exceeds 45 for 1.0 FTE.
- b. Number of schools served exceeds four,
- c. Schedules for direct service students, indirect service students, collaboration, evaluation/assessment time, planning time, travel time, required IEP/CST meetings and other job duties exceed time available in the workweek.

3. School Psychologist

- a. Number of student enrollment in schools served exceeds 1,200 for 1.0 FTE.
- b. Number of schools served exceeds four,
- c. Schedules for direct service students, indirect service students, collaboration, evaluation/assessment time, planning time, travel time, required IEP/CST meetings and other job duties exceed time available in the workweek.

When two or more of these factors exist, the individual staff member is responsible to request assistance. In this case the supervisor will assemble the individual staff member and an additional designated staff member if needed or requested and will meet to seek an acceptable solution.

An acceptable solution may include any of the following, but not limited to: equalization of caseloads among staff, assignment of additional staff, paid extra hours, contracting with other agencies for the provision of services, scheduling additional time, allowing employee to complete work during time for direct student therapy (within reason), allow employee to flex time from another school or district with lower caseload (if feasible).

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.**

Calendar for Part-Time Personnel or Personnel Who Work Four Day School Week

Part time personnel maintain an accounting of days worked on a personal calendar. **Calendars documenting workdays are turned into the Business Manager at the end of each school year.**

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

Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) for Personnel who are Certified, Licensed, or who's Position Requires a Bachelors Degree

The CBA is a legal binding instrument negotiated between the Employee's Bargaining Unit and the Management Board. This may be a one-year or multiple-year contract. It defines the working conditions, pay, and benefits for certified and licensed personnel. Working conditions not defined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement are generally defined in BVEC Board Policies. **Refer to the Collective Bargaining Agreement - Download from BVEC web page.**

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 such as common procedures and important policies you should know. **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

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 **Personal 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.

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 Co-op Office 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.

Sick leave is deducted in ¼ hours increments. Proper notice is required to take sick leave. If sick, no advance approval is required. Sick leave may also be used for medical appointments. However, staff must make medical appointments after school hours (or on days off working less than full time) – and only schedule medical appointments during the work hours when it is the last option.

Sick Leave Examples:

1) You are not feeling well when you awake at 6:00 call X135 saying that you are sick and will not be in to work today. One full day will be deducted from your sick leave.

2) You have medical appointment at 11:30 a.m. and expect to be away from your worksite from 11:00-12:30. As soon as you schedule the appointment, call X135 stating the time you will be leaving and the nature of the appointment and the time you expect to return. In this case; medical appointment with departure time at 11:00, expect to return by 12:30. Sick leave will be deducted in ¼ hour increments for a total of 1.5 hours. In the event you return earlier or later than expected call X135 and amend your original message.

Personal leave is deducted either in full-day or half-day increments or as little as ¼ increments if needed. Advance written request and approval is required for personal leave with the following exception:

a) Conditions where you can take less than full-day or half-day leave for personal leave without advance request and approval:

If you give proper notice, you are allowed to take, without approval, **up to a maximum two hours per day** when leaving early or arriving late for personal reasons during the standard workday. After you take personal leave without approval for a total of 7.5 hours, you will be notified by email. From that point forward all personal leave must be requested in writing and approved in advance.

Personal Leave Examples:

- 1) You have a court appearance and need to be away from school for three hours. Because it is over two hours, you submit written request for personal leave and three hours is deducted from your total annual personal leave.

- 2) You forgot to set the alarm, overslept and will be one hour late to work. Call x135 and leave a detailed message that you are going to be late to work by approximately one hour and will call when you arrive. Since it is under two hours no prior approval or documentation is needed. One hour will be deducted from personal leave.

- 3) You are planning a trip to Grandmother's house in three weeks on Friday. Put a written request for one day personal leave as soon as you know the date you plan to leave.

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: 1) Investigation and Action Procedure (Appendix C of the Policy Manual) for perceived violations of Cooperative policies, or state or federal laws and 2) Grievance Procedure (in the Bargaining Agreement) for perceived violations of work conditions under the Bargaining Agreement.

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 with original receipts.

Refer to the Expense Reimbursement Form - Download from BVEC web page.

Professional Development Training 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 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 Training 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.**

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 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 attached 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

Thirty minutes is generally considered a standard lunch break on a 7.5 minimum hour day. You should determine what the standards are in the schools you serve and try to stay within those standards. Unless specified in the school(s) you serve, one-half hour is the general standard.

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 on 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:

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

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 Coop 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

Timesheets

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

Salaried Employees do not keep a time sheet. Personnel (usually part-time) who have prior approval of a supervisor may from time to time utilize a time sheet for additional hours worked on special projects.

Payday

Payroll checks are distributed on the 18th 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 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.

Health Insurance Enrollment

If you work at least twenty hours per week, you are eligible for health insurance. Enrollment forms must be completed and returned to the Business Manager within five days of receiving them. **Refer to the Collective Bargaining Agreement -Download from BVEC web page.**

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.

Professional Dues Reimbursement

Employees covered under the bargaining agreement are entitled to an annual reimbursement for non-union professional dues or licensing fees. You must provide the Business Manager with a cancelled check for your dues or fees. **Refer to the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the maximum reimbursement amount.**

TAKING TIME OFF

Leaves

Leaves for salaried personnel are described in the Bargaining Agreement. **Refer to the Collective Bargaining Agreement for description of leaves. Download from BVEC web page.**

Employees who need bereavement leave will contact an immediate supervisor to discuss bereavement needs and complete the Bereavement Leave Request Form. **Download from BVEC web page.**

Holidays

School holidays are listed in the Cooperative Calendar.

Jury Duty

You are encouraged to fulfill jury duty if summoned. **Refer to the Collective Bargaining Agreement for a description of Jury Duty.**

Professional Training

You are encouraged to participate in continuing professional development. As a rule, your participation in conferences and workshops is generally approved if it meets your team goals or identified training needs. The Cooperative pays for expenses to the extent the budget allows. You may apply up to two (2) days of summer professional training toward the October Professional Conference Days if a written request is submitted and approved prior to the summer training.

LABOR RELATIONS

Unions

Optional union membership is available to join if your position is listed in the negotiated agreement under "Appropriate Unit." If your position is listed, you are covered under provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement regardless of your membership. If you choose to join the union, union dues will be automatically deducted from your monthly paycheck. For more information regarding union membership, please see your local union representative.