

# GENERAL DENTIST

## General Policy Manual

**Note:** The following policies and procedures comprise general information and guidelines only. The purpose of these policies is to assist you in performing your job. The policies and procedures may or may not conform with Federal, State and Local laws, rules and regulations and are not offered here as a substitute for proper legal, accounting or other professional advice for specific situations.

Prior to implementing any of these suggestions, policies or procedures, you should seek professional counsel with your attorney, accountant and/or the appropriate governing or licensing board or any other applicable government body for a full understanding of all appropriate laws, rules, procedures or practices pertaining to your healthcare discipline or business activities.

# TRAINING MANUAL INFORMATION

## READ FIRST

### STATE-SPECIFIC COMPLIANCE NOTE – FLORIDA (2026)

This General Policy Manual is currently written to align with Florida employment and dental practice standards where applicable.

Upon request, this manual may be updated at no additional charge to reflect the specific employment laws and regulatory requirements of any U.S. state, without altering the intent or operational philosophy of the policies contained herein.

The purpose for this General Policy Manual is to help you understand and use the basic policies needed to be an effective part of our dental team.

Our reasons for giving you this training manual are threefold:

1. **To provide written policies** and procedures relating to your job functions.
2. **To ensure you have a resource** for correcting or adding to the written exam questions (since we only accept 100%)
3. **To provide you with a future reference.** We do not expect you to memorize all of the policies relating to your job. But, we do expect you to refer back to the appropriate written material and review it on your own as well as with your supervisor.

When you have finished reading the policies in this manual see the office manager or doctor to arrange to take the written exam at the end of the manual. When taking the exam you may refer back to the appropriate policy in an open book style to change or add to your answers.

## HOW TO EDIT YOUR MANUALS

As you might imagine, creating these manuals was quite an undertaking. We knew that no single manual would apply to every practice, since each doctor has a unique personality and management style. Over the years, we updated the manuals with both ideas from our clients and emerging techniques.

The resulting contents provide detailed policies and procedures that will significantly reduce your administrative efforts. You may choose to leave the contents in the original form or to adapt the contents to meet your specific style.

Once you have reviewed the manuals and personalized the contents, you will have a solution for competently dealing with the majority of employee-related concerns in your dental office. You'll also have written documentation to consistently support each situation, which will alleviate you from continually rendering opinions.

We recommend you (or your designee) print the manuals and place them in a notebook binder. Then, review each policy and make edits as needed. For example, you may want the phone answered differently than the wording in our script or you may not want to include "Paid Holidays." In these instances, simply draw a line through the corresponding contents (use red or blue ink so it's easy to see) and then draw an arrow to the new text that you want included. If there is a policy that does not apply to your practice, simply draw an X through the whole policy and write "delete" in bold letters across the appropriate section.

When the editing is complete, input the changes into the original Microsoft Word file and save. You can then print as many copies as you need and make changes in the future as necessary.

In addition to the detailed information in our manuals, we suggest you retain other relevant handbooks and references that are essential to managing your practice (e.g., equipment manuals, software guides, etc). All manuals and guides should be stored together in an easily accessible area of your office for quick reference.

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# MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to be known as the best dental practice in this community. We strive to provide excellent results and to be the most friendly, efficient staff and doctor in the state.

We are dedicated to helping each patient attain his or her maximum potential for good oral health. Through this commitment, we will sustain a prosperous and viable practice with a well-compensated staff and doctor.

Our purpose is to operate at full capacity with unparalleled quality and patient service.

# WELCOME TO OUR TEAM

Welcome to our dental office. We look forward to a long and prosperous relationship with you and hope that you feel the same way about our team. We are dedicated to providing quality care in every aspect of service to our patients from our first greeting to the delivery of our excellent dental care.

At our dental office we understand the value of dedicated and loyal employees who enjoy their jobs and work with confidence. We expect our employees to always perform at their highest level. To support this endeavor we are committed to providing clear, detailed policies and procedures for job functions, general rules and office guidelines. This includes explicit policies and procedures for each individual position.

We believe in open communication. If you need clarification about anything please see your office manager or doctor right away. This approach will allow you to continue performing your duties with accuracy and confidence.

You are an important part of our team now. We are happy to welcome you and hope you enjoy working with us in providing great service to our great patients!

# WHY DO WE NEED POLICY?

Can you imagine baseball without any rules or driving in rush hour traffic with no laws or guidelines governing what to do when the lights turn green, yellow or red? The obvious result would be confusion and chaos. This same logic applies to every organization. If there are no guidelines and rules for employees to follow they will not know what is expected of them and frustration, confusion and unnecessary disagreements can ensue.

For these reasons and many more it is vital we have a Dental Office General Policy Manual.

In addition to achieving our goal of improving our patient's dental health, we want to maintain a comfortable and fun environment. This can only happen if everyone knows the specific expectations required of him or her as employees.

The following policies will cover staff bonuses, time off, uniforms, benefits, etc. The doctor may decide to change these policies as necessary in the future. If a change occurs you will be notified in writing of the policy amendment or cancellation. If you discover no policy exists to cover a specific situation relating to your job (or to the office in general), you are **expected to propose a policy** to cover that particular situation. Any proposed policies should be provided in writing to your office manager or doctor who will review and then forward (when appropriate) the proposal to the doctor for consideration.

If you have any concerns with a policy see your office manager or doctor for immediate clarification. If you don't understand something please get it clarified.

This General Policy Manual and all other training materials are the property of the practice and may not leave the office without permission from the doctor.

## PROPOSING NEW POLICIES & CHANGING POLICIES

To ensure that our office runs smoothly, efficiently and in a team-oriented manner, all policy changes and additions require written approval from the doctor.

If you have a great idea on how to do something better or more efficiently, write a memo with your suggested policy change and forward it to the office manager or doctor. The office manager or doctor will review the memo. The doctor will then review your

proposed policy. If the doctor approves the policy it will be created in policy format and distributed to all staff for discussion at the next staff meeting.

We definitely appreciate your ideas, enthusiasm and input, so feel free to suggest anything you think will help.

When a policy is changed without everyone's knowledge things become confusing and unorganized. So please follow the above procedure and refer other staff to it as needed.

## WORK SCHEDULE

Our office hours are \_\_\_\_\_. All staff and dentists are expected to arrive 15 minutes prior to opening each morning to help prepare for our patients. The only exception would be part time staff or a doctor's rotating schedule. (This exception will be noted in writing and issued to the appropriate staff members to avoid any confusion with this policy.)

You are expected to handle all your personal errands during your lunch break or on the afternoon we are closed.

There may be times when we run late due to servicing patients. Please keep in mind that patients are our priority and you may be required to stay later to properly care for our patients. Employees that accept this responsibility willingly and without complaints will be recognized in their evaluations.

If your responsibilities require you to work more than 40 hours per week, you must get written approval from the office manager or doctor before any overtime will be paid. If a backlog exists in your area of responsibility you must inform the office manager or doctor in writing of the situation. Please include complete details in your written summary so a plan can be formulated and the backlogged work completed. All positions in this practice should be able to operate efficiently without any backlogs and without any need for more than 40 hours per week.

If personal emergencies require your absence during regular work hours, record when you leave and when you return to work. You will not be paid for time away from the office.

Ideally, you will never be unexpectedly late or absent from work. However, if an urgent and unexpected situation arises, call the office manager or doctor at home one hour before we open or at least one hour before your work schedule is to begin. You must also contact any other staff member that your absence may affect.

If there is excessive illness, a doctor's statement may be required. Any excessive tardiness or absence is grounds for possible termination. Unexpected absence from any position creates a burden on the rest of the staff, so please do your best to ensure it doesn't occur.

## **PROTOCOL FOR CALLING OFF WORK**

If you cannot attend work for any reason (sickness, personal issues, etc.), please call the office and advise us of your situation before the day starts. If you are supposed to be on the job at 9:00 AM and you aren't here at 9:00AM, we consider your behavior to be disrespectful, irresponsible and a clear indication that you don't want to work here.

If you can't arrive by your scheduled start time, call the office and advise the office manager or doctor of your situation. Do not assume another employee is going to pass along your information. Take full responsibility for yourself – please.

If you are absent and you know for sure you will not be able to come in the following day, please call the office no later than 4:00 P.M. on the first day you are absent, so we can prepare accordingly.

Following is a list of employee phone numbers. Please keep a copy of this list at home for your reference.

Name	Phone	Cell Phone

# OFFICE MEETINGS

Office meetings are held every Friday at 12:30 PM unless we are still servicing patients or you have been notified otherwise from the office manager or doctor. These meetings will be approximately one hour long and are necessary to keep you updated on any future plans, policy additions/changes and most importantly to review all statistics from

the previous week and/or month. Our staff meetings are **not gripe sessions**. If you have a complaint about something take it up with your office manager or doctor. You will never be reprimanded for communicating but we will not tolerate abusive and profane language, harassment, or conduct that is injurious, offensive, or coercive of coworkers or clients.

We encourage you to give your ideas for improving the quality or speed of our services. In addition, we welcome suggestions to correct situations that may be hindering our efficiency.

## CHANGE IN PERSONNEL INFORMATION

Personnel files are kept for each staff member for personal tax status, phone numbers, commendations, reprimands, etc. You are required to keep the office manager or doctor informed (in writing) of changes regarding:

1. Name
2. Phone number
3. Address
4. Marital status
5. Number of dependents
6. Personal health

## TERMINATION OF EMPLOYEES

If it ever becomes necessary to dismiss an employee due to his/her inability to do the job, he/she will turn in their keys and leave on the day of dismissal. We do not want to make a situation more uncomfortable than it already is for either party.

Unused vacation pay will be paid if an employee is terminated. Employees who are terminated are to be treated fairly and according to state and federal guidelines. They will be paid for wages accrued through the day of termination. They will not be paid bonuses for the month they were terminated.

If possible, an exit interview will be conducted. This interview will cover the following:

1. Suggestions on how the employee may improve his/her performance for future employment, no matter where it may be.
2. A review of any incomplete matters.
3. The reclaiming of any keys or other property belonging to the practice. If any items are missing or damaged, the cost (including the cost of changing the locks and replacing keys) will be deducted from the employee's final paycheck provided this is allowed under state and federal guidelines.
4. The delivery of the final paycheck or the date it will be available for mailing to the individual.

## **RESIGNATION**

Any employee wishing to resign is expected to provide at least two week's advance notice in writing to the office manager or doctor. If you are at a management level, you are expected to give at least four week's notice and to help ensure a replacement is procured and properly trained to take your place. Any resignation given less than the above stated times is considered insufficient notice and is grounds for immediate termination.

This policy is based on the assumption that the employee has been performing well and the reason for their leaving is based on external circumstances not related to our practice.

## **LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

On occasion, it may be necessary for an employee to take a leave of absence due to personal, health or related matters. Leaves of absence will be granted for limited periods of time depending on the reasons and circumstances that prompt such a request. A leave of absence must be supported by a valid reason and approved by the doctor. This absence will be without pay.

If you desire a leave of absence, you must present a complete written request form. The request must include the expected length of absence, dates of the leave, and the circumstances involved. An approved leave will not be extended past the date of the initial written request without further written approval.

# PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS

Occasionally, a staff member finds it necessary to leave our organization either temporarily or permanently.

The proper channel for resigning is to give written notice to the office manager or doctor, who will promptly arrange for an exit interview as soon as possible.

## BAD WEATHER

If we are forced to close early due to bad weather, all employees who reported to work will be paid for their hours worked. Those who did not come in that day will not be paid.

If the office is closed prior to the start of the workday, no pay will be given. The employee who lives closest to the office will go in for the purpose of rescheduling patients. The office manager or doctor will coordinate this action.

Unless otherwise notified, all employees are urged to make every effort to report to work.

## PAY PERIODS AND PAYCHECKS

Paychecks are issued every two weeks. Checks will not be cut early, so please don't ask.

If a payday is on a weekend or holiday, your check will be distributed on the last workday before the weekend or holiday. The check will remain dated the normal date of the paycheck.

Each employee is responsible for completing his/her pay sheet and routing it to the office manager or doctor on the last day of the pay period.

If desired, we can arrange to have your paycheck automatically deposited in your checking account. See the office manager or doctor for the forms you will need to complete.

Ordinarily, checks will be given only to the person whose name appears on the check. If the office is notified, checks will be mailed as instructed. If any employee is absent on payday, the office will hold that check until he/she returns.

If an employee loses a check, the office manager or doctor should be notified immediately. If the bank has not paid the check, the office will issue a stop payment notice. The employee must pay for stop payment charges and a new check will be issued. If the lost check is found, let us know immediately.

No check can be distributed to an employee until he/she has signed a W-4 form, which declares number of dependents. Deductions will be made accordingly and will include Federal Withholding, Social Security, State Withholding, and City and/or County Withholding (if applicable), and State Disability (if applicable). These deductions will be itemized with each paycheck.

Following the first of each year, staff will receive a W-2 tax form from the office. This form states how much money the person was paid and how much was withheld the previous year. A copy of the W-2 should be included in the employee's tax return when it is sent to the IRS or state.

**ANY CHANGE IN NAME, ADDRESS, MARITAL STATUS OR NUMBER OF  
DEPENDENTS MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO ENSURE PROPER  
CREDIT FOR TAX PURPOSES.**

## TIME CLOCK POLICY

Time \_\_\_\_\_ is our computerized software that tracks the time we spend at the dental office. Each employee will choose a two or three letter or digit password to be used when logging in and out of Time \_\_\_\_\_.

You must log in when starting your shift and log out at the end of the workday. Each employee receives a one-half (1/2) hour unpaid lunch break for each scheduled workday. You must also log in and log out for each lunch break. Employees will not be paid for time not documented in Time \_\_\_\_\_.

All Time \_\_\_\_\_ codes are to be kept confidential. Employees may not punch in or out for each other. Doing so is grounds for termination.

Time clock password (confidential): \_\_\_\_\_

Employee signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Upon completion, forward a copy of this page to the office manager or doctor in a sealed envelope.

TIME \_\_\_\_\_ INSTRUCTIONS

(Insert your Employee Time Clock software instructions here)

**DELETE THIS PAGE IF YOU DO NOT USE TIME CLOCK SOFTWARE  
OR INSERT YOUR OWN TYPE OF SOFTWARE INSTRUCTIONS).**

## **ALARM SECURITY CODE**

Each new full time employee will be given a personalized, confidential security code in order to disarm security and gain access to the office and to properly close (arm) the security system as needed after the first 30 days.

You may choose a code with four digits to arm and disarm the security system. This code cannot contain any zeros or begin with "77." If you are ever forced to disarm the alarm, you can enter the ambush code "77" before your personalized code; the system will disarm, and then call silently for help. Under no circumstances is your personalized code to be given to or shared with another individual.

Alarm code (confidential): \_\_\_\_\_

Employee signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Upon completion, forward a copy of this page to the office manager or doctor in a sealed envelope.

## **REVIEWS**

All staff members working at our dental office will be reviewed on their efficiency and productivity. The office manager and/or doctor will conduct a personal conference.

The frequency of reviews will be determined by position.

## **STAFF DENTAL CARE**

Staff members are eligible for no-charge dental care after three months of employment. We provide full time staff with free preventive and basic restorative care and home instructions as long as service is delivered during normal business hours when there is availability on the schedule.

The spouse and children of full time staff also receive dental care at no charge. All staff and family members' appointments for dental care must also only be delivered during normal business hours when there is availability on the schedule.

"Complex cases" must be approved ahead of time. Costs will vary based on the case. The definition of complex is at the sole discretion of the practice owner(s).

Staff members receiving dental care must ensure they are not "on the clock" when receiving any kind of dental or hygiene care at our practice.

## **POSTING STAFF DENTAL PRODUCTION**

A staff member's dental work must never be posted as production as this would give a false production figure. Any staff production will be posted at a zero charge with the

actual value of the service listed in the note field. This will enable us to keep a total of the staff member's dollar benefit.

## STAFF PAY AND BONUSES

Each staff member's pay will be based on individual performance and initiative to advance the growth of this practice.

Rather than annual raises, we will establish a competitive pay range for each staff member based on ability and experience. Increases in pay may be in the form of a monthly bonus. This bonus, if implemented, will be based on the productivity of the individual and the practice as a whole. This eliminates a "ceiling" on everyone's pay and actually results in a higher annual salary in comparison to most practices (assuming the monthly collections place in the bonus range).

In order to be eligible for a monthly bonus, each individual's production must be in an acceptable range for the month. This is how we ensure that **all** staff members contribute to our goals.

At the beginning of each month, a production and collection goal will be set. Each individual staff member will be notified of his or her "bonus estimate" if the goal is met for the month.

## HIGHEST PRODUCTION QUOTA BONUS PROGRAM

### THE PRIZE:

A \$50.00 bonus. The winner can choose how they would like the prize (airline certificate, mall certificate, restaurant, performing arts, money, etc.).

### THE GAME:

Any employee (or associate doctor) who attains an individual production quota that is higher than ever attained before by an

individual will receive the above bonus.

#### **THE STRATEGY:**

At the beginning of the month, evaluate what your quota would have to be in order to qualify and then calculate how much this would need to be on a weekly basis. The doctor establishes the “bottom line quota” in writing.

#### **THE RULES:**

You must be a full time employee and have the “bottom line quota” in writing from the doctor. Bottom line quota means what has already been established as attainable, which is not too high or too low for the position. Any variation to this bonus program must be in writing and signed by the doctor. The bonus is paid as a separate check on the first payday of each month (if money is the requested bonus). This program is in addition to any other established bonus program for which the individual employee is eligible. Eligibility for this bonus program must be in writing from the doctor and filed in the employee’s personnel file. All applicable laws relating to paying bonuses and taxes are followed.

#### **THE GAME BEGINS:**

On the first working day of each month and ends the last working day of each month.

## **VACATIONS**

Annual paid vacation is a benefit provided by this practice for eligible employees. An employee becomes eligible after working at the practice for 12 consecutive months as a full time employee. At this point employees are entitled to the following:

One week of vacation with pay after 1 year.

Two weeks of vacation with pay after 3 years.

The amount of paid vacation time will depend on the employee's average weekly hours worked. In other words, if the employee works 40 hours per week, he/she will be paid 40 hours for a 1-week vacation. If the employee works an average of 33 hours per week, he/she will be paid 33 hours for a one-week vacation. "One week" being established as 5 working days. If an employee works a varied number of hours each week, the vacation time will be based on an average of the hours worked during the past three months.

A two-month notice is required when an employee requests vacation time. The actual vacation dates must be approved, so that they are coordinated with other staff requesting time off. Preference of vacation date will be based on seniority and production.

If a paid holiday falls during an employee's vacation, the employee may arrange an additional vacation day that is convenient for the office. Illness or disability occurring during vacation is considered vacation time.

Vacations must be taken as paid days off during the year. Employees may not skip or miss a few days of their vacation, then include it in the next year's vacation. They may take vacation pay as a substitute for their vacation.

Vacation time is not earned if an employee has been on a leave of absence for a continuous period exceeding 15 calendar days.

An employee may request his/her vacation paycheck prior to leaving for vacation. Fourteen day minimum notice is needed to issue the check in advance.

The office manager or doctor will enter the employee's vacation period on the employee's time sheet and annual attendance record.

It is preferable that you do not take your vacation one day at a time. If you must do so, the required notice (two months) is still required.

Staff who leave the employment of the practice will have vacation pay pro-rated based on how many weeks of the eligible year they worked.

## PAID HOLIDAYS

Our office provides paid time off on certain holidays to eligible employees. After 90 days of full time employment staff members who are designated as full time employees become eligible for this benefit. Paid holidays are as follows:

- 

New Year's Day

- 

Memorial Day

- 

July 4<sup>th</sup>

- 

Labor Day

- 

Thanksgiving Day

- 

Christmas Day

You must also work the days you normally work that come before and after a holiday. For example, if you normally work Monday-Thursday and the holiday falls on a Monday you must work the Thursday before as well as the Tuesday after the holiday. Also the holiday must fall on a day you normally would work.

Additional free days may be scheduled at the discretion of the doctor.

## PAID TIME OFF

Full time employees are eligible for personal time off (PTO) which covers sick and personal days off.

PTO accumulates at a rate of one half day per month after 90 days of employment.

At the end of the year any unused PTO will be paid out to the employee.

During a period of illness an employee is expected to maintain daily contact with the office. This way we will know the estimated date of return to work.

## SEMINARS

It is a unique opportunity to be given the benefit of paid training. As an employee of this practice, you will be given this opportunity as often as possible.

You will be asked to make arrangements to attend seminars and classes, as they are made available. The office will cover hotel expenses, airfare, parking expenses and daily meals. Dress code for attendance is professional, but comfortable attire. No jeans, cut-offs or tank tops please.

You will be paid in accordance with State and Federal regulations.

We feel our staff is worth the investment for continuing education and increased skills; we hope you feel the same.

## MATERNITY LEAVE

When an employee becomes pregnant, she should notify our office manager or doctor immediately since this is a change in your health status.

Pregnant employees may continue to work until they are certified as unable to work by their physician.

This office provides a 12-week leave of absence for any employee who becomes pregnant and wishes to take this time away from work during the initial weeks following birth.

This excused leave of absence will be without pay, unless the employee has accrued vacation pay by having been with us on a full time basis for more than 12 months. Since this leave of absence is without pay, no benefits such as future vacation time or any other company benefits are accrued during this leave of absence.

An exact return date will be agreed upon between the doctor and employee. If the employee does not show up for work on the agreed upon date, it will be assumed the employee is not going to return and their employment shall end on that day.

When the employee returns to work, she is entitled to return to the same or equivalent job with no loss of service or other rights or privileges. Should the employee not return to work when released by her physician, she will be considered to have voluntarily terminated her employment.

## LACTATION

For up to one year after the child's birth, any employee who is breastfeeding her child will be provided reasonable break times to express breast milk for her baby. Our office has designated the room located [insert location] for this purpose. A small refrigerator reserved for the specific storage of breast milk is available. Any breast milk stored in the refrigerator must be labeled with the name of the employee and the date of expressing the breast milk. Any nonconforming products stored in the refrigerator may be disposed of. Employees storing milk in the refrigerator assume all responsibility for the safety of the milk and the risk of harm for any reason, including improper storage, refrigeration and tampering. Breaks of more than 20 minutes in length will be unpaid, and the employee should indicate this break period on her time record.

# BEREAVEMENT PAY

All employees are eligible for bereavement leave after 90 days of service. In the event of the death of an immediate family member, eligible employees will receive up to 3 days of paid leave to attend the funeral or religious services or to handle the affairs of the deceased. **Immediate family members** are considered to be spouses, parents, children, brothers and sisters.

## UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT

Groups of people who work together for any purpose require guidelines. The purpose for these guidelines is to improve staff relationships and to enhance production. They are to be enforced in a constructive manner.

It is important to clearly define and make these guidelines available in writing to all staff, so it is possible for staff to become familiar with what is expected. Disciplinary action then becomes predictable and not based on “opinions” or bias.

Violation of acceptable conduct may result in one or more of the following forms of disciplinary action: verbal warning, written policy review, interview and discharge.

In arriving at a decision for proper action, and only after a thorough investigation, the following facts will be considered: the seriousness of the violation, the past record of the employee, and the circumstance surrounding the matter.

Although it is impossible to identify every violation possible in a code of conduct, the following is a partial list of violations that may result in warnings and/or discharge:

- Interrupting or distracting staff from their work with things that could be put in writing and/or things that do not further production.
- Conducting personal business during working hours.
- Failure to establish good rapport with office staff, doctor, managers and patients.
- Abusive and profane language, harassment, or conduct that is injurious, offensive, or coercive of coworkers or clients.
- Failure to report a situation that should be reported.
- Intentionally creating problems for other staff, office manager or doctors.
- Acting in discourteous or insubordinate manner.
- Divulging confidential information.

- Negligence or deliberate inattention to patient care on your job.
- Frequent absence or tardiness.
- Unprofessional conduct such as loud arguing, threatening or intimidating people, or abusive language.
- Negligence of safety and health rules.
- Knowingly violating written policy.
- Failure to perform duties adequately, properly and willingly.
- Lying.
- Use of alcohol or illegal drugs during the workday.
- Theft.
- Displaying a negative attitude that affects the patients and/or staff.

## ACCEPTABLE CONDUCT

While it is important to understand what is unacceptable conduct, it is equally important to understand what is “acceptable conduct” so one can concentrate on the *positive* not the negative. We encourage everyone to practice the following code as much as possible, so we can all enjoy a positive working environment.

- Ensure patients have your full interest, receive top quality care, and feel valued.
- Exceed patients’ expectations for treatment, communications and office experience.
- Be courteous and considerate toward patients and fellow staff.
- Conduct yourself in an honest, reliable and trustworthy manner.
- Be punctual.
- Take initiative.
- Work hard and get the job done.
- Set and achieve production goals.
- Fulfill job duties completely, professionally and willingly.
- Explores new approaches, technology and administrative offerings related to his/her job and the practice on a regular basis.
- Follows our office policies and understands the purpose for policy.
- Takes responsibility for the whole practice by taking action regarding non-optimum situations (if only by reporting it).
- Focuses on business, yet enjoys the job and working with the staff and patients.
- Maintains a clean, professional appearance and communicates in a positive, cordial manner.
- Sets a good example for other staff.

- Seeks help in the form of a policy review as needed.
- Displays a positive attitude and exemplifies the true meaning of a “team member.”

## TARDINESS

The employee is responsible for being on time for work. In order to be prepared to begin work on time, you must arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the day. If you are tardy, the following steps may occur:

1. Verbal warning
2. Policy review
3. Termination (may result from excessive tardiness)

## EMPLOYEE ABSENTEEISM

You are expected to report for work on time on a regular basis. Absenteeism and tardiness are expensive and disruptive. It will also have an adverse effect on any promotion or raise opportunity. Unsatisfactory attendance will result in disciplinary action, including possible termination.

If you are going to be late or absent for any reason, telephone the office manager or doctor per our policy. Asking another employee, friend or family member to give the notification is not considered proper, except under emergency circumstances. Do **not** leave a message on the answering machine. Follow the protocol in the “Calling Off Work” policy.

Any employee who fails to give such notification will be given an unexcused absence. If an employee is absent for two consecutive days without contacting the office, he/she will be discharged. If notice is given and management does not approve the absence as justified, it will be considered unexcused and may result in termination.

## INSURANCE FRAUD

Insurance fraud is a deliberate and knowing misrepresentation of the truth in order to get money from the insurance company. There will be no insurance fraud in this office.

This doesn't mean we don't insist on being paid what's due to us and being paid in a timely manner. Insurance procedures constantly change, which makes it a challenge to

stay abreast of the current guidelines. However, we always strive to accurately follow these procedures.

## **HANDBILLS AND SOLICITATION**

Handbills are notices or advertisements. No handbills will be distributed on practice property without prior approval of the doctor and office manager.

Solicitation is urging the employees/patients to do or buy something. Unauthorized solicitation is strictly prohibited.

## **TIPPING/GIFTS**

We discourage any form of tipping or gratuities from patients. However, if you receive a gift, it must be noted in the patient's file. A thank-you note will then be written on the office stationery.

## **OFFICE FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT**

### **PARKING**

All staff members are responsible for parking their cars as far away as possible from our office to allow for patient parking close to our front entrance.

### **OFFICE**

Personal use of office materials or postage is absolutely not permitted for any reason at any time.

If needed, staff may make limited use of office telephones for local calls regarding personal matters during lunch. Personal long distance calls on office telephones are not allowed.

Incoming personal calls, other than emergencies, cannot be taken during working hours. In such instances, messages will be taken in writing and routed to your mailbox.

# OFFICE APPEARANCE

Office cleanliness is essential to maintaining a professional image. This is especially important in the health care profession.

Nothing can potentially offend a patient more than a messy, dirty office or operatory. You are required to help keep the practice clean and orderly. The visual image we make will have an impact on the patient's health and their continuation at our practice.

The restrooms must be kept clean and neat, so please take responsibility for checking on the cleanliness of our facilities. From time to time, other cleaning duties may be required. If so, each employee will be notified by the office manager or doctor.

# UNIFORMS AND DRESS CODE

The practice will purchase your uniforms for you. You will be responsible for maintaining your uniform. When you leave employment of the practice, all uniforms must be returned. If uniforms are not returned, you will be responsible for the current cost to replace them.

Since our floors are light in color, we require that you wear sneakers or appropriate shoes with white soles to keep black scuff marks to a minimum. You are responsible for the purchase and upkeep of your sneakers/shoes. Please keep them white.

Excessive jewelry, nail length, heavy makeup and perfume are neither appropriate, nor are they in keeping with the professional, natural health care image we maintain. Hair must be kept neat at all times.

Staff should keep their bodies clean and breath fresh. Anything less than clean, wrinkle free clothing is unacceptable.

## **TATTOOS & BODY PIERCINGS**

Tattoos should be covered and facial piercings removed while at work.

# COMMUNICATING AND RELATING TO PATIENTS

1. Patients' needs are our **top priority**. You must leave your personal issues and opinions outside of the office. Patients visit our office to improve their health and eliminate pain. An atmosphere of warmth, cheerfulness and caring must be conveyed. Indifference to patients' problems will not contribute to this atmosphere.

**Remember patients' names** and use them often when talking with the patients. Refer to the patient as "Mr.," "Mrs.," "Miss," or "Ms.," unless the patient **invites you** to use their first name. Do not give patients nicknames or refer to them as "Hon," "Darlin," or other pet names.

2. Your statements to patients must be in line with the practice policy and the dentist's image. When talking to patients regarding their progress, be reassuring and tell them they have the very best dentist and are in good hands. Tell them to follow the dentist's instructions and that the dentist will do everything possible to make the patient comfortable, answer his questions, etc. Non-treating personnel should never make personal recommendations or a diagnosis concerning patients' problems, causes or treatments. Rather, tell the patient to be sure to discuss the situation with the dentist. If necessary, walk the patient to the front desk and help them make an appointment for a consultation with the dentist.

3. Relay both positive and negative comments to the dentist. This enables him to communicate better with patients, answer questions and avoid misunderstandings. Feel free to relay positive comments expressed by our patients at staff meetings.

4. It is vital that you have an understanding of the dental profession. We encourage you to learn all you can about dental care and its scientific approach to the restoration and maintenance of the human body.

## **PATIENT PERSONAL NOTES**

These are hand written notes all staff members can add, when it is appropriate. Any staff member can add to this information at any visit or after any phone call. This activity will help us know more about each patient and let the patients know that they are more than just a number to us.

The atmosphere we'd like to create in this office is one where our patients know that we care. We want to make a difference in the patient's day. It is so important to take an interest in the patient and find something in common, strike up a conversation, admire a pretty dress, tie, hairdo, necklace, etc. Just be sure your comment is sincere.

Whenever you find out some personal patient information, enter the details on the Personal Comments form inside the patient's chart.

PLACE A SAMPLE OF YOUR  
PERSONAL COMMENTS FORM  
HERE

**CELL PHONE, OFFICE PHONES AND  
COMPUTER USE**

CELL PHONES

Cell phone use (including texting, checking Facebook, etc.) should only occur during breaks or meal periods and never in front of patients as it can give patients the impression they are not important. It can also cause you to be distracted causing inaccurate documentation, incorrect data entry, etc.

#### TEXTING PRACTICE OWNER OR OFFICE MANAGER

Staff are prohibited from texting the dentist or office manager for any reason including "texting in sick". This also removes any potential violation of a patient's privacy.

#### OFFICE PHONES

The office phones are our main means of scheduling patients and conducting business. Therefore, we ask that you not use the office phones for personal use except to receive an emergency call from a family member, etc.

#### OFFICE COMPUTER USE

Office computers are never to be used for personal use. Period. The reasons for this are obvious including the possibility of infecting the office computer system with a virus. Doing so can result in immediate termination

Note: Our office computers are set up with software to monitor all Internet activity. E-mail messages and other use of office computers is not confidential, and even though you may be issued a private password or other private access code to log in to the computer, you should have no expectation of privacy with regard to your use of the system.

## PHONE PROCEDURES

Our phone procedure must be studied and memorized before answering the office telephone. Correct telephone procedure is needed to answer the prospective new patients' questions and get them appointed. Improper procedure may result in losing the new patient. If you find yourself in a position where you must answer the phone without the required training, please say:

"Dr. [name]'S DENTISTRY. THIS IS \_\_\_\_\_. HOW MAY I HELP YOU?" Unless you can easily handle the call ask them to "please hold while I transfer you to someone who can answer your question" -or- "set that appointment for you."

Wait for a response then put the patient on hold and find a qualified person to take the call.

## FRONT DESK AREA - 10 SECOND ZONE

No one is allowed in the front desk area except office personnel and repairmen. This is a "10 second zone" for anyone not actually working in the front desk area.

**It is the receptionist's responsibility to see that this policy is followed.**

## FOOD

Food is never to be consumed in front of patients; nor, is it to be left in their view. If you eat at the practice, do so in the lounge area, out of the patients' view.

As with the rest of the office, everyone is responsible for keeping the lounge area neat and clean. Dirty cups, plates and utensils, old food, etc., must be cleaned or thrown away in order to keep the lounge a pleasant place for all who use it.

Beverages may be consumed at your desk provided they are in an appropriate container and cannot be easily spilled. There are to be absolutely no soda cans or bottles outside of the staff lounge during office hours. Beverage containers of any type should never be placed on the same surface as a computer or other electronic equipment.

## SMOKING AND CHEWING GUM

Smoking is not allowed inside the practice at any time, under any circumstances. This includes any time the office is closed. If you must smoke, ensure your breath is fresh when you return to the office.

Employees are not allowed to chew gum while on duty. The policy ensures that staff members' gum chewing doesn't interfere with patient communications or project a non-professional image.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Patient information, both written in the chart and verbal, is absolutely confidential. The practice and dentist's business affairs are also to be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

The above subjects should not be discussed outside of the office. Office matters must be kept in the office.

Some government regulations also restrict release of any information about a patient to members of the public or press, other professionals, pharmacies, family, friends, etc. without the patient's specific authorization. These regulations generally cover information such as the patient's name, age, address, sex, nature of illness or injury, general condition, etc.

When discussing confidential matters at the office, keep voices at a low level. Be particularly aware of what is said at the front desk and outside of the treatment rooms, as patients may easily overhear it.

Patients should not be exposed to discussion of internal office matters. For example, if a patient's ledger or chart cannot be located or there is a scheduling conflict, the patient does not need to be told this information.

## STAYING ON TIME

It is our responsibility to make sure that patients are seen on time. This requires both the cooperation of the administrative/clinical staff and good organizational skills. As soon as a patient arrives, an arrival slip is to be given to the dentist by the receptionist (depending on whose patient it is). This process lets the dentist know the patient has arrived, the scheduled appointment time and if the patient is early or late.

If for any reason we run late, the receptionist will explain to the waiting patient why we are running behind and give an approximation of the wait time. The receptionist and office manager or doctor will determine what help is needed to get the clinical staff back

on schedule. The office manager or doctor will then inform the team so the available and appropriate staff members can provide assistance.

## TIME MANAGEMENT

There are many things that need to be done to run an efficient office, but even more things are needed to make it grow. Therefore, any free time is to be used to advance practice growth. You will be expected to take the initiative to use idle time wisely. See the office manager or doctor if you are unsure of what to do.

## LEAVE REQUEST FORM

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Requested Leave:

How will your work be covered?

LEAVE REQUESTED:	EXACT DATE(S) TAKEN:	TOTAL HOURS PAID	TOTAL HOURS UNPAID
<input type="checkbox"/> VACATION			
<input type="checkbox"/> PERSONAL (including sick time)			
<input type="checkbox"/> FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE (Complete an FMLA Form)			
<input type="checkbox"/> BEREAVEMENT (Specify relationship below)			
<input type="checkbox"/> JURY DUTY (Attach Jury Duty Notice)			
<input type="checkbox"/> MISCELLANEOUS <input type="checkbox"/> Work-related <input type="checkbox"/> Non Work-related  (Specify reason below)			

Address & telephone number where you can be reached:

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Employee \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_

Office Manager or doctor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*If Disapproved or Unscheduled, please give reason:* \_\_\_\_\_

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Senior Administrator \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

*If Disapproved or Unscheduled, please give reason: \_\_\_\_\_*

## MAILBOX SYSTEM

Each employee will have a mailbox to receive and distribute any and all written memos, mail, magazines, etc.

All mailboxes should be kept empty, as much as possible. If you realize you can't complete what is asked for at that moment, store it in an "incomplete file." All staff should be given one of these files upon hiring. The incomplete file should not become a "never to be seen again file."

All staff should also have a "miscellaneous file" for articles or magazines they wish to review at some point because it is pertinent to their job. None of these files should ever become a "storage bin" that never gets emptied. Periodicals and magazines should be kept in a separate space for all staff and dentists to review as needed.

## LIBRARY CHECKOUT

All staff members are encouraged to keep up with continuing education. This can be done through many sources, such as video, magazines and seminars. In order to keep our practice full of patients, we seldom have time to view these materials during office hours.

The continuing education materials we have available in the office are available for staff to take home. This is not required, but is recommended to keep everyone up to **date** on current topics.

Anytime a staff member wants to check out materials, they must follow these steps:

1. The staff member must fill out a "checkout sheet" and turn it in to the office manager or doctor.
2. The office manager or doctor will issue the continuing education material and file the check out sheet in the library check out folder.
3. Each item will be released for two days.

4. If an extension is needed, the staff member must again check out the materials following the above process.
5. When materials are returned, they are to be given to the office manager or doctor.
6. The office manager or doctor will check the materials back into the library folder.

If materials are checked out and not returned and an extension has not been approved, the staff member will be asked to provide a solution.

## **GENERAL POLICY MANUAL CONCLUSION**

The policies contained in this manual have been created for all employees and associates, whether temporary or full time. The purpose is to provide a clear understanding of what is expected from you, as well as our viewpoint on the ideal practice.

Without policy we have “gray areas.” An employee can truly struggle when he/she doesn’t know what’s needed and wanted.

Everyone forgets with time. In order to avoid any misunderstandings, it is recommended that all employees review this policy manual periodically. As with any policy, “I forgot” is not an acceptable excuse.

These policies will remain in effect from this point forward unless the doctor decides to make an amendment or cancellation. You will be notified in writing if this occurs. Staff is always welcome to propose policy for their areas if it is found to be lacking. Please ensure you attach a request memo outlining the proposed policy and route it to the office manager or doctor.

## **AT WILL EMPLOYMENT**

I understand that if I have any questions regarding any of the policies in the General Policy Manual I should consult the office manager or doctor to have my questions answered.

I also understand that I have entered into this employment relationship with this practice voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no specified length of employment.

Accordingly, I understand my employment is at will and either I, or the practice, can eliminate the relationship, with or without cause, at any time.

I acknowledge that this General Policy Manual is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document, with the exception of the “at will” employment relationship noted above. I have received the General Policy Manual and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained herein and any revisions made to it.

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Employee Signature

DATE

Upon completion, forward a copy of this page to the office manager or doctor in a sealed envelope.

## GENERAL POLICY EXAM INSTRUCTIONS

These are your master copies and are not to be **used** by anyone.

When an employee is ready to take the exam, make a **copy** of the exam and procedure drill forms and have them sign the copy when complete.

Ensure the exam answers are complete and correct. Any answer by the employee that is incorrect or incomplete should be indicated as such. Instruct the employee to review the appropriate policy(s) as many times as necessary until they give a correct and complete answer. The same is done for the procedure applications. We are not concerned with how many or how few times the employee needs to review the appropriate policy, only that they gain certainty on the policy and procedures.

Always file the completed forms in the employee-training folder. Keep this master copy in a secure place. No one is permitted to have the master copy, except for the doctor and office manager.

We recommend you make it a firm policy, that each new employee completes all of their exams, procedure applications and apprenticeship checklists before becoming eligible for any bonuses. This places the responsibility on the shoulders of the employee to complete their individual training.

## GENERAL POLICY MANUAL EXAM

The purpose of this exam is to ensure excellent understanding of the basic policies in this manual. Please ensure your answers are complete. For any questions not completely answered, the office manager or doctor will have you review the applicable policy(s) and then have you re-take that part of the exam relating to the reviewed policy(s). If you need more space to complete your answer, use the back of the page and indicate which question you are answering.

The first part of this exam is in written format and the remainder will be done as a practical application of procedures (drills). Ask your office manager or doctor to initial on the line next to

the drill once they have observed your correct application of the drill. When this is done you will be ready to be trained on your individual job.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_

POLICY:

*Mission Statement*

1.

In your own words, describe how you can contribute to the mission of this office.

POLICY:

*Proposing New Policies*

2. What is the procedure for changing an existing policy at our practice? Be specific in how it is done.

POLICY:

*Office Meetings*

3.

A. What is supposed to occur at office meetings?

B. What is the one thing that is **not** supposed to occur at staff meetings?

POLICY:

*Termination of Employees*

4. Describe two of the reasons for termination and why they may be just cause for termination.

POLICY:

*Termination of Employees*

5. What would it be like to work with someone who continually got away with some of the reasons for termination?

POLICY:

*Personnel Leaving*

6. What is the procedure to follow when an employee has decided to leave our practice?





POLICY:

*Staff Pay and Bonuses*

7.

How can you influence the staff bonus amount each month?

POLICY:

*Paid Holidays*

8. What are the paid holidays at this practice and who is eligible to take them?

9.

POLICY:

*Seminars*

9. In your own words, please give your opinion about attending or not attending seminars paid for by the practice.

POLICY:

*Code of Conduct*

10.

Give an example of four instances of unacceptable conduct and explain why these may be considered unacceptable.

POLICY:

*Acceptable Conduct*

11.

Describe how you could practice four instances of acceptable conduct.

POLICY:

*Employee Absenteeism*

12. What affect does it have on the Dentist and staff if you don't show up for work when you really could have?
- 13.

POLICY:

*Office Facilities and Equipment*

13. Why are staff members not allowed to receive **non-emergency** phone calls during work hours?

POLICY:

*Uniforms and Dress Codes*

14.

Why do you think proper personal appearance of all staff might be important?

POLICY:

*Communicating and Relating with Patients*

15. In your own words, describe why each of the four points in the above policy is important.

16.

***FINAL ESSAY***

Write a final essay on how **your** application of the policies contained in this manual can benefit **you**. Include the following points in your essay. Will you refer yourself and others to it as needed? Will you use the memo form, and if so, for what purpose? Describe how following policy, as well as referring others to it as needed can contribute to a better workplace for all.

I attest that I have read, understand and will apply the policies in this manual.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Manager or Doctor Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

Upon completion, forward a copy of this page to the office manager or doctor in a sealed envelope.

## **GENERAL POLICY PROCEDURE APPLICATIONS**

POLICY:

Pay Periods and Paychecks \_\_\_\_\_

1.

Complete a pay sheet and deliver it to the office manager or doctor to review for completeness and accuracy. Repeat as necessary. (If you have been employed for more than a month, you do not have to complete this exercise.)

POLICY:

Office Appearance \_\_\_\_\_

2.

Take a look around the office and name at least two things that should be cleaned or replaced, in your opinion. Write up your suggestions and forward them to your office manager or doctor per the policy on using the Mail Box System.

POLICY:

Internal Memo Form \_\_\_\_\_

3.

Write five memos to other staff on real or imaginary situations. Turn these into your office manager or doctor for review.

**POLICY:**

Library Check Out \_\_\_\_\_

See your office manager or doctor for a Library “checkout sheet” and complete one for a technical magazine or video. Now role-play each of the remaining five steps as though you were the office manager or doctor was the employee wanting to check out a technical magazine.

**ATTEST**

I attest that I have observed

successfully complete all of the above procedures.

(Employee name)

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Employee Signature:

Office Manager or Doctor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Upon completion, forward a copy of this page to the office manager or doctor in a sealed envelope.