



# **Employee Handbook**

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## SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

### WELCOME TO VISION VETCARE, LLC!

To both our new employees and those who have already become a seasoned part of the team, we are glad that you are a part of Vision VetCare, LLC and wish you every success here. We hope that you will take pride in your employment and enjoy being a part of our team.

Vision VetCare, LLC's goal is to provide the finest quality products and services to our clients and to do so more effectively and economically than our competitors. By satisfying our clients' needs they will continue to do business with us and recommend us to others.

We are committed to a high standard of excellence and look forward to you helping us maintain that standard. You are our most valuable resource and we believe that each of you contributes directly to our growth and success.

We hope that your experience here will be challenging, enjoyable and rewarding. We are glad you are a part of our team!

### ORGANIZATIONAL DESCRIPTION

Vision VetCare, LLC is a group of full-service veterinary practices located throughout the Midwest and Southeast United States. Our team is dedicated to providing pet owners with exceptional client service and the highest quality care in a prompt, professional manner, while maintaining a compassionate atmosphere.

### INTENT OF HANDBOOK

Vision VetCare, LLC, also referred to as the Organization, encompasses any practice in the Vision VetCare, LLC family. This handbook was developed to describe some of the expectations of our employees and to outline the policies, programs and benefits available to eligible employees. Each employee should read, understand and comply with all provisions of the handbook. It describes many of the responsibilities as an employee and outlines the programs developed by Vision VetCare, LLC to benefit employees.

No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policy. As Vision VetCare, LLC continues to evolve, the need may arise to alter, supplement or rescind any policies or portion of the handbook as it deems appropriate. When possible, employees will be notified as changes to the handbook occur.

Each practice will provide additional specific direction regarding practice specific procedures. Please contact your HR Consultant for further interpretation.

In this handbook the term "practice" is used to refer to a clinic or hospital location and "practice manager" is used to refer to the individual in charge of managing the location (usually a Doctor or Office Manager).

### CHOOSING TO WORK FOR US

Vision VetCare, LLC hopes that every employee sees their employment experience as one in which they endeavor to have a long and successful career. The information within this handbook should provide guidance on how to adequately meet the expectations of the Organization.

However, employment with Vision VetCare, LLC is a choice the employee and the Organization make voluntarily. Each employee is free to resign at will at any time, for any reason. Similarly, Vision VetCare, LLC may terminate the employment relationship at will at any time, for any reason, and with or without notice, so long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law. This handbook and the policies contained within are not intended to create a contract, nor are these policies to be construed to constitute contractual obligations of any kind or a contract of employment between Vision VetCare, LLC and any of its employees.

The provisions of the handbook have been developed at the discretion of management, except for its policy of employment-at-will, and may be amended or cancelled at any time, at Vision VetCare, LLC's discretion. These policies supersede all existing policies and practices and may not be amended or added to without the express written approval of the Organization Management Team of Vision VetCare, LLC.

## SECTION II: THE WAY WE WORK

### CODE OF ETHICS

Vision VetCare, LLC is committed to conducting all aspects of business in strict compliance with professional, ethical and legal standards. Vision VetCare, LLC will not tolerate or condone any practice or activity that impugns its integrity and reputation. To that end, each employee is expected to observe the highest professional, ethical and legal standards in performing his or her job duties and representing the Organization to its clients, vendors and the public. Employees should act honestly, strive for excellence in performing their job duties and observe all laws and regulations governing the Organization's business. Any employee who becomes aware of an ethical breach or observes any activity or practice that violates or could violate this policy must notify management immediately.

### CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE

The protection of confidential business information and trade secrets is vital to the interests and the success of Vision VetCare, LLC. Employees and former employees are prohibited from disclosing "confidential information" or utilizing such information for their own benefit or for the benefit of any other person. Confidential information means any and all written, oral and electronic information and materials concerning the business, clients, operations, products, procedures, assets, financial affairs, marketing concepts and other confidential and proprietary matters of Vision VetCare, LLC; of all other companies which are now, which in the past have been, or which in the future may become, affiliates of organization; and of the owners of organization and of all such affiliated companies. Confidential information includes, without limitation, information which employees originate while employed by Vision VetCare, LLC.

Exceptions to these confidentiality requirements may be made only with the permission of the Organization Management Team. These requirements apply both during an employee's employment and thereafter, regardless of the reason for the employee's separation. All requests for confidential information, including reference requests, should be referred to the Practice Manager or designated member of management.

Employees may be required to sign a separate non-disclosure agreement as a condition of employment.

Inappropriate release of confidential information, either internally or externally, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Also, unauthorized disclosure or removal of confidential information by employees or former employees may subject such individuals to legal action for the recovery of monetary damages and injunctive relief.

### CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Employees have an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest. The purpose of this policy is to provide general direction so that employees can seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation.

A conflict of interest occurs when an employee is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for that employee or for a relative as a result of the business dealings of Vision VetCare, LLC or its affiliates. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

If employees have any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts or leases, it is imperative that a disclosure be made to Vision VetCare, LLC management as soon as possible of the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties. Other examples of Conflicts of Interest may include, but are not limited to:

- Accepting gifts, cash, discounts and entertainment from business contacts that could be interpreted as given to influence an employee's actions.
- Working for an organization or having outside business interests which compete with Vision VetCare, LLC, or engaging in work that interferes with the employee's job performance; or
- Developing a relationship with a client or other business contact which may jeopardize an employee's independent judgment.

Employees should contact management for more information or questions about conflicts of interest.

## OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

For those staff members who are full-time employees of Vision VetCare, LLC, outside employment may constitute a conflict of interest and is therefore prohibited unless approval has been given by the Practice Manager. Employees should discuss any potential outside employment with the Practice Manager prior to engaging in the opportunity.

If outside employment is approved and Vision VetCare, LLC management determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance or the ability to meet the requirements of the job, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment.

If employees are involved in any approved outside employment or client services other than those performed at work, they may not use any Vision VetCare, LLC facilities. Any outside client services should not involve or interfere with the employee's performance at Vision VetCare, LLC. In addition, any outside employment or services should not be on behalf of any Vision VetCare, LLC Practice. Employees are responsible to make it clear to clients that the work performed is not affiliated with Vision VetCare.

Employees may not receive any income or material gain from individuals outside Vision VetCare, LLC for materials produced or services rendered while performing job assignments. In addition, employees may not solicit any business away from the Organization.

## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at Vision VetCare, LLC will be based on merit, qualifications and abilities. Vision VetCare, LLC does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, genetic disposition or any other characteristic protected by law.

Employees with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of the Human Resources Consultant or the Practice Manager. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

Vision VetCare, LLC is committed to complying fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ensuring equal opportunity in employment for qualified persons with disabilities. All employment practices and activities are conducted on a non-discriminatory basis.

Reasonable accommodation is available to all disabled employees, where the disability affects the performance of essential job functions. All employment decisions are based on the merits of the situation in accordance with defined criteria, not the disability of the individual.

Vision VetCare, LLC is committed to taking all other actions necessary to ensure equal employment opportunity for persons with disabilities in accordance with the ADA and all other applicable federal, state and local laws.

## SEXUAL AND OTHER UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT

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

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

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

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

Unlawful harassment also includes bullying. Vision VetCare defines bullying as repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment. Vision VetCare considers the following types of behavior examples of bullying:

- Verbal bullying: Slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or his or her family; persistent name calling that is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.



- Physical bullying: Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault or threat of physical assault, damage to a person's work area or property.
- Gesture bullying: Nonverbal threatening gestures; glances that can convey threatening messages.
- Exclusion: Socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities.

Employees should immediately report to the Human Resources Consultant or the Practice Manager if they experience or witness sexual or unlawful harassment in the workplace. If the manager is unavailable or if it would be inappropriate to contact that person, the employee should immediately contact any other member of management. Employees can always raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal or retaliation.

Any manager who becomes aware of possible sexual or other unlawful harassment should immediately advise the Human Resources Consultant or the Practice Manager so it can be investigated in a timely and confidential manner.

All allegations of sexual harassment will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. To the extent possible, confidentiality of any and all witnesses, the complainant and the alleged harasser are protected against unnecessary disclosure. When the investigation is completed, the complainant will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.

If Vision VetCare, LLC determines that this policy was violated, it will take timely and effective remedial action. Any employee who is found, after appropriate investigation, to have violated this policy (and regardless whether such conduct rises to the level of legally actionable harassment), will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action commensurate with the nature of the conduct, which may include immediate termination of employment. Steps will also be taken, as necessary, to prevent any further harassing conduct.

Employees will not be subjected to retaliation for reporting suspected harassment or for participating in any investigation of suspected harassment. Employees should immediately report any incidents of retaliation to management or Human Resources.

Any employee who knowingly brings forth false and unsubstantiated claims of harassment, who fails to honestly participate in an investigation or initiates any retaliation as a result of being party to an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action.

## IMMIGRATION LAW COMPLIANCE

Vision VetCare, LLC complies with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. Vision VetCare, LLC hires only those individuals who are legally authorized to work in the United States and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin.

In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 on their first date of employment and must present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility within the first three (3) business days of employment. If an employee cannot verify the right to work in the United States, Vision VetCare, LLC may be obliged to terminate employment in compliance with immigration law. Vision VetCare, LLC agrees to comply with all applicable federally mandated immigration programs.

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

## ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Vision VetCare, LLC's Electronic Communication Tools (including computers, computer files, the email system, voicemail, copiers and the internet) are the Organization's property and are provided for business use to the Vision VetCare, LLC employees. To safeguard Vision VetCare, LLC and ensure compliance, management may access, review, audit, copy, intercept, delete or disclose information prepared, transmitted, received, stored on or maintained on computer equipment, computer software or computer discs. Accordingly, employees have no right or expectation of privacy in any such information. Employee consent to Electronic Communications monitoring is a condition of continued employment with Vision VetCare, LLC. Employees who violate any part of the Electronic Communications policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Employees should refrain from personal use of Vision VetCare, LLC electronic communications systems in order to ensure that achievement of business goals remain the priority and to minimize undue strain on business systems.

Vision VetCare, LLC strives to maintain a workplace free of harassment and sensitive to the diversity of its employees. Therefore, Vision VetCare, LLC prohibits the use of Electronic Communications in ways that are disruptive, offensive to others or in any way breach the *Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment Prevention Policy*. (For example, the display or transmission of sexually explicit images, messages and cartoons is not allowed. Other such misuse includes, but is not limited to, ethnic slurs, racial comments, off-color jokes or anything that may be construed as harassment or showing disrespect for others.)

### Software

Vision VetCare, LLC purchases and licenses the use of various computer software programs for business purposes and does not own the copyright to this software or its related documentation. Unless authorized by the software developer, Vision VetCare, LLC may not have the right to reproduce such software. Vision VetCare, LLC prohibits the illegal duplication of software and its related documentation.

### Email

Care should be used when sending confidential, proprietary or potentially sensitive information. Any information that is transmitted via email becomes a document that can be subpoenaed for review and remains Company property. The email accounts are for business purposes only. For this reason, your passwords will be known by you, the Practice Manager and your HR Consultant.

### Internet

Vision VetCare, LLC provides internet access to global electronic information resources on the World Wide Web to assist employees in obtaining work-related data and technology. Personal use of the Internet should not interfere with an employee's work, provide a negative image or provide undue strain on the network.

All internet data that is composed, transmitted or received via Vision VetCare, LLC's computer communications systems is considered to be part of the official records of Vision VetCare, LLC and, as such, is subject to disclosure to law enforcement or other third parties. Consequently, employees should always ensure that the business information contained in internet messages (including email) and other transmissions is accurate, appropriate, ethical and lawful.

## *Mobile Devices*

It is the responsibility of any Vision VetCare, LLC employee who uses a mobile device to access practice resources to ensure that all security protocols are maintained. It is imperative that any mobile device that is used to conduct business be used appropriately, safely, responsibly and ethically.

This mobile device policy applies, but is not limited to, all devices and accompanying media that fit the following classifications:

- Smart phones
- Other mobile/cellular phones
- Tablets and E-readers
- PDAs
- Laptop/notebook/Ultrabook computers

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Vision VetCare, LLC respects employees' right to use social media, provided such use does not conflict with the Organization's legitimate interest in protecting its goodwill and business reputation. "Social media" includes, but is not necessarily limited to, personal web pages, message boards, networks, communities and social networking websites, such as Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, Instagram, Topix, LinkedIn and other forms of weblogs ("blogs"). Vision VetCare, LLC expects employees to exercise good judgment when using social media, and prohibits employees from:

- Posting or displaying content that violates any of Vision VetCare, LLC's policies or procedures;
- Accessing or using any social media during working time, unless it is being done for Vision VetCare, LLC business;
- Posting or displaying any of Vision VetCare, LLC's proprietary or confidential business information;
- Posting or displaying content about Vision VetCare, LLC, its products, services, suppliers, clients or clients' pets that is knowingly and maliciously false, slanderous, libelous, flagrantly disloyal, physically threatening or intimidating, harassing or discriminatory;
- Posting or displaying content that constitutes a disparaging, public attack on the quality of Vision VetCare, LLC's products and/or services in a manner an objective person reasonably would perceive as calculated to harm the Organization's reputation and reduce its income; and

Employees are requested to make clear in any online activity that the views and opinions they express about work-related matters are their own, have not been reviewed or approved by Vision VetCare, LLC and do not necessarily represent the view and opinions of the Organization, its management or other employees. Employees should be respectful of Vision VetCare, LLC's products and services, clients, partners, affiliates, vendors, suppliers and competitors and the products and services of each. If an employee sees any publicly accessible online postings or comments regarding Vision VetCare, LLC, especially any that appear to violate any policy, the employee is requested to promptly bring them to the attention of the Human Resources Consultant or the Practice Manager.

Employees should understand that any information created, transmitted, downloaded, exchanged or discussed in publicly accessible social media may be viewed by Vision VetCare, LLC at any time without further notice. Employees are personally responsible for the commentary they express and the material they post or display in social media.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action or termination of employment. Nothing in this policy is intended, or will be interpreted, to interfere with, restrain or coerce any employee's lawful exercise of his or her rights under any applicable federal, state or local law, including but not limited to lawfully discussing terms and conditions of their employment, engaging in protected concerted activity, acting together for mutual aid or protection or otherwise lawfully exercising their Section 7 rights.

## RETALIATION

Employees are obligated to report breaches of policy. Any perceived or actual retaliation for reporting any suspected breach of a Vision VetCare, LLC policy or for participating in any investigation of a suspected breach of policy will not be tolerated. Employees should immediately report any incidents of retaliation to the Practice Manager or the Human Resources Consultant.

## TALK TO US

Vision VetCare, LLC is committed to creating an environment where open and frank discussions are encouraged. As a part of this commitment, the Organization Management Team will strive to create an atmosphere in which any problem, complaint, suggestion or question is heard, acknowledged and responded to in a timely manner.

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

If an employee disagrees with established rules of conduct, policies or practices, the employee should express his or her concerns openly and professionally with the Practice Manager or the Human Resources Consultant. No employee will be penalized, formally or informally, for voicing a complaint with Vision VetCare, LLC in a reasonable, business-like manner.

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

## SECTION III: ON THE JOB

### EMPLOYEE CONDUCT AND WORK RULES

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

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

- Violation of any rule, process, policy or procedure that is detrimental to Vision VetCare, LLC's efforts to operate profitably or reputably.
- Violation of any policy or procedure published in this handbook or other practice documentation.
- Any interaction with clients or pets that could be deemed inappropriate or hurtful to the reputation of Vision VetCare, LLC.
- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property.
- Falsification of timekeeping or expense records.
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment.
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace.
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer-owned or client-owned property.
- Insubordination.
- Violation of safety or health rules.
- Smoking in prohibited areas.
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment.
- Bullying including verbal, physical, gesture and exclusion bullying.
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace.
- Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice.
- Unauthorized absence from work station during the workday.
- Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, or other employer-owned equipment.
- Unauthorized disclosure of business "secrets" or confidential information.
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct.

Employment with Vision VetCare, LLC is at the mutual consent of Vision VetCare, LLC and the employee, and either party may terminate that relationship at any time, for any reason, and with or without advance notice.

### ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Each Vision VetCare practice depends heavily upon all of its employees to provide service to, and uphold our reputation with, our customers. Dependability, attendance, punctuality and a commitment to do the job right are essential at all times. As such, employees are expected at work on all scheduled work days and to report to work

on time each day. On time is defined as being at work and ready to start at the beginning of your shift and after any approved breaks or meal periods.

In the rare instance when an employee cannot avoid being late to work or is unable to work as scheduled, the employee should notify his or her manager personally. It is the responsibility of each employee to seek out and understand the appropriate notification procedures for his or her Vision VetCare, LLC Practice. At minimum, employees are asked to phone a manager approximately an hour prior to the start of the shift. Unless otherwise approved and noted by the Practice Manager, text and/or email notifications are not acceptable. **It is a violation of Company policy not to notify the manager directly via the means and deadline provided at each location when you will be absent or late to work.**

### *Occurrences Points*

Attendance records will be monitored regularly and points assessed for all unexcused or unplanned absences and/or tardies.

1. Unexcused Absence: An unexcused absence from work is generally defined as any time an employee is scheduled to report for work and fails to do so without prior approval.
  - a. Three (3) points.
  - b. Absences of two or more consecutive days for a single reason that are substantiated by a doctor's note or other pertinent documentation may be counted as a single occurrence and assessed only Three (3) points. (Documentation must be presented on the day the Team Member returns to work.)
  - c. Points are assessed regardless of available Paid Time Off Balances. Documentation does not excuse the absence or tardy. Points are assessed for all absences and tardies, regardless of notification or documentation, except for the circumstances listed below under "Excused Absences."
2. Excused Absence: Absences for scheduled holidays, approved paid time off, jury duty, military duty, bereavement leave, short or long term disability, approved FMLA leave or any other pre-approved unpaid time off will not count as an occurrence under the attendance policy and will be considered excused absences.
3. Tardy: Arriving to work late or returning from a scheduled break or lunch late will be recorded as a tardy and will always be considered as a tardy occurrence unless approved in advance. Returning from lunch or a break any time after the scheduled return time is considered Tardy.
  - a. Arrival and departure times will be recorded according to the clocks used in each practice. Therefore, employees are encouraged to ensure that personal timekeeping devices are in sync with the practice.
  - b. One (1) point will be assessed for each tardy of ten (10) minutes or less at the start of a shift or return from break.

- c. Two (2) points will be assessed for each tardy greater than ten (10) minutes at the start of a shift or return from break.
- d. Arriving more than three (3) hours late after the start of shift will be considered a full day absence.

Cumulative Occurrence Points	Corrective Action Step
6+	A verbal warning will be issued to the employee.
9+	A written warning will be issued to the employee.
12+	A final written warning will be issued to the employee.
15+	A termination decision will be made and issued.

#### *Absence Occurrence Expiration & Forgiveness*

We recognize that employees may experience rough patches in their lives that cause absences that would not otherwise occur. Ultimately, we believe that every employee wants to meet the expectations of the job. Therefore, points will expire one year from the date they are incurred. In addition, employees have the ability to have one point deducted from their total point balance on a monthly basis, by meeting the following requirements. For each month that an employee has a clear record, with zero points accrued, one point will be deducted from their point balance. Employees are not able to obtain a negative balance.

#### *Chronic Attendance Problems*

A chronic attendance problem is defined as unexcused absenteeism in the form of tardiness or days absent which occurs over an extended period of time. Employees who continually carry a balance of twelve (12) + occurrence points over an extended amount of time may be subject to termination.

#### *Failure to Call In (No Call/No Show)*

Not reporting to work and not calling to report the absence is a no call/no show and is a serious matter. The first instance of a no call/no show will result in a written warning. The second separate offense may result in termination of employment with no additional disciplinary steps. Any no call/no show lasting two consecutive days is considered voluntary termination of employment.

If the employee already has incidents of attendance/punctuality when a no call/no show occurs, the disciplinary process may be accelerated.

The Practice Manager may consider extenuating circumstances when determining discipline for a no call/no show (for instance, if the employee is in a serious accident and is hospitalized) and has the right to exercise discretion in such cases.

## PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress, grooming and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the business image Vision VetCare, LLC presents to clients. The properly attired individual helps to create a favorable image for the Organization, to the public and fellow employees.

During in office business hours or when representing Vision VetCare, LLC, employees are expected to present a clean, neat and tasteful appearance.

If a manager feels an employee's personal appearance is inappropriate, the employee may be asked to leave the workplace until properly dressed or groomed. Under such circumstance, the employee is not compensated for the time away from work.

Without unduly restricting individual tastes, the following personal appearance guidelines should be followed:

- Scrubs are required attire for all employees unless the individual position indicates an alternative dress code approved by the manager.
- Scrubs should be appropriately fitted and in good condition free from holes, tears or fraying.
- Jeans, low-rise pants, shorts, short skirts and hats may not be worn.
- Care should be taken to ensure that the entire torso of an employee is covered.
- Undergarments should not be visible and women should ensure that low necklines are avoided.
- Clean, close toed shoes are required. Some locations may prohibit Crocs or similar slip-on shoes.
- Hair should be clean, dry and neatly groomed and it must be secured away from the face - hair rollers are not permitted.
- Mustaches and beards should be neatly trimmed.
- Offensive body odor and poor personal hygiene are not professionally acceptable.
- Perfume, cologne and aftershave lotion should be used moderately or avoided altogether, as some individuals may be sensitive to strong fragrances.
- Makeup should be professional in appearance. The use of extreme colors or designs is not permitted.
- Dangling jewelry can be hazardous to employees and patients. Employees may be asked to remove jewelry during business hours. Such decisions are at the discretion of the Practice Manager.

Additional practice-specific uniform and appearance guidelines will be communicated by the Practice Manager if applicable.

## WORKPLACE ETIQUETTE

Vision VetCare, LLC strives to maintain a positive work environment where employees treat each other with respect and courtesy. Sometimes issues arise when employees are unaware that their behavior in the workplace may be disruptive. Many of these day-to-day issues can be addressed by politely talking with a co-worker to bring the perceived problem to his or her attention. In most cases, common sense will dictate an appropriate resolution. Vision VetCare, LLC encourages all employees to keep an open mind and graciously accept constructive feedback or a request to change behavior that may be affecting another employee's ability to concentrate and be productive.

The following workplace etiquette guidelines are not necessarily intended to be hard and fast work rules with disciplinary consequences. They are simply suggestions for appropriate workplace behavior to help everyone be



more conscientious and considerate of co-workers and the work environment. Employees should contact their managers with any comments, concerns or suggestions regarding these workplace etiquette guidelines.

- Avoid public accusations or criticisms of other employees. Address such issues privately with those involved or the manager.
- Be conscious of how voice travels, and try to lower voice volume when talking on the phone or to others in open areas.
- Keep socializing to a minimum, and try to conduct conversations in areas where the noise will not be distracting to others.
- Refrain from using inappropriate language (swearing) that others may overhear.
- Avoid discussions of personal life/issues in public conversations that can be easily overheard.
- Monitor the volume when listening to music, voice mail, or a speakerphone that others can hear.
- Clean up and do not leave behind waste or discarded papers.

## CARE OF CLIENT RECORDS

To provide the best care of Vision VetCare, LLC clients, it is critical that the Organization maintains accurate and current client records. All records are confidential and legal property of Vision VetCare, LLC and may not be removed from the premises for any reason.

Client records should be handled with care and not disfigured in any way. Falsification of client records is strictly prohibited. Employees are prohibited from discussing client records with anyone outside of the Organization.

Occasionally, clients or other physicians will request copies of records. Under no circumstances will requests for clients' records be fulfilled unless prior legally permissible authorization is provided. The authorization documentation should be placed in the client's file. All employees must have the permission of the Practice Manager or the delegated staff member before releasing any client records.

## CLIENT AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Vision VetCare, LLC's reputation is built upon excellent service and quality work. To maintain this reputation requires the active participation of every employee.

The opinions and attitudes that clients have toward Vision VetCare, LLC may be significantly impacted by the actions of one employee. It is sometimes easy to take a client for granted, but this risks losing not only that client, but his or her associates, friends or family who may also be clients or prospective clients.

As such, each employee must provide courteous treatment in all working relationships and client interactions.

## CONTACT WITH THE MEDIA

All media inquiries regarding Vision VetCare, LLC and its operations must be referred to the Organization Management Team. Only the Organization Management Team is authorized to make or approve public statements on behalf of Vision VetCare, LLC. No employees, unless specifically designated by the Organization Management Team, are authorized to make statements on behalf of Vision VetCare, LLC.

## USE OF PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Equipment essential in accomplishing job duties is expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using Vision VetCare, LLC property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance and follow all operating instructions, safety standards and guidelines. No property may be removed from the premises without management authorization.

Employees must notify their manager if any equipment appears to be damaged, defective or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of damages, defects and the need for repairs could prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees or others. A manager can answer any questions about an employee's responsibility for maintenance and care of equipment used on the job.

The improper, careless, negligent, destructive or unsafe use of equipment can result in corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

## PERSONAL PROPERTY

Vision VetCare, LLC is not responsible for loss or damage to personal property. Valuable personal items, such as purses and all other valuables should not be left in areas where theft might occur.

## PERSONAL TELEPHONE CALLS

It is important to keep Vision VetCare, LLC telephone lines free for client calls. Employees are asked not to make personal phone calls while on duty. Although the occasional use of the Vision VetCare, LLC's telephones for a personal emergency may be necessary, routine personal calls should be kept to a minimum.

Personal cellular telephones must be turned off or set to a silent alert during working hours. Due to the disruption it causes, employees are prohibited from using cellular telephones to take personal calls or text messages during working hours. If calls are expected, employees can check phones periodically with prior approval from the Practice Manager or during approved work or meal breaks. If an employee has to make a call on a cell phone, he or she should do so in an approved non-work area.

## PRACTICE VEHICLES

Operators of practice vehicles are responsible for the safe operation and cleanliness of the vehicle. Accidents involving practice vehicles should be immediately reported to the Practice Manager. Employees are responsible for any violations or fines that may result while operating a practice vehicle. Only employees that have a valid driver's license and are properly insured are permitted to operate any practice vehicle.

Practice vehicles should be driven by the employee only and may only be used for work related driving. Smoking in practice vehicles is prohibited and the use of seatbelts is mandatory for drivers and passengers. Cell phone and mobile device use is prohibited while driving a practice vehicle.

## NON-SOLICITATION/DISTRIBUTION

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

In addition, the posting of written solicitations on Vision VetCare, LLC bulletin boards are prohibited. Bulletin boards are reserved for official Organization communications on such items as:

- State and federally required postings.
- Employee announcements.
- Job openings.
- Workers' compensation insurance information.
- State disability insurance/unemployment insurance information.

## RESIGNATION

Vision VetCare, LLC hopes that each employee endeavors to have a long career with the Organization. Regardless, occasional circumstances dictate that an employee leaves the Organization for pressing reasons. If these reasons are related to the work, working conditions, benefits, compensation or relationships with managers or colleagues, the employee is strongly encouraged to discuss his or her concerns with a manager or the Human Resources Consultant or the Practice Manager before looking for alternate employment.

If the employee determines that separation from Vision VetCare, LLC is necessary, the Organization asks for the courtesy of at minimum, a two week notice. This courtesy notice is essential to the Practice's ability to continue to provide excellent service to our patients. Any employee not providing a minimum of two weeks' notice may not be eligible to receive the cash equivalent of accrued, unused PTO time. In addition, employees are responsible for the prompt return of all Vision VetCare, LLC property, uniforms, materials or written information issued to the employee and under the employee's control. Employees must return all Vision VetCare, LLC property immediately upon request or upon termination of employment. The employee will be responsible for the full replacement cost of any unreturned or damaged property.

## SECTION IV: PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

### INTRODUCTORY PERIOD

The first 60 days of employment with Vision VetCare, LLC are designated as the introductory period. During this time, both the employee and the Organization will have the opportunity to determine if the employment relationship is a good fit for both parties. The employee's performance, aptitude and compatibility with co-workers will be evaluated during this period. Either the employee or Vision VetCare, LLC may end the employment relationship at will at any time during or after the introductory period, for any reason and with or without advance notice.

Upon satisfactory completion of the introductory period, employees enter the "regular" employment classification.

### PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Managers and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis. Additional formal performance evaluations are generally conducted to provide both managers and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals.

Performance evaluations will typically be conducted at the end of the introductory period and again on or around the employee's anniversary date. Some practices may choose to evaluate more frequently. Please see your Practice Manager for the performance evaluation schedule at your location.

### CORRECTIVE ACTION

Vision VetCare, LLC strives to administer equitable and consistent communication regarding unsatisfactory conduct or performance in the workplace. The best disciplinary measure is the one that aims to correct behavior or performance when an employee is not meeting expectations.

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

Although employment with Vision VetCare, LLC is based on mutual consent and both the employee and Vision VetCare, LLC have the right to terminate employment at will, for any reason, and with or without advance notice, Vision VetCare, LLC may use disciplinary action at its discretion.

Vision VetCare, LLC may utilize a variety of corrective action steps including: verbal warnings, written warnings or performance improvement plans. If an employee is unable to meet the expectations outlined by Vision VetCare, LLC through the corrective action process the employment relationship may be terminated.

Vision VetCare, LLC is not obligated to administer corrective action using predetermined steps in any particular sequence. The Organization does not have a policy of "progressive" discipline. Vision VetCare, LLC recognizes that there are certain types of employee problems that are serious enough to justify termination of employment, without going through a warning procedure.

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

By using the corrective action system, Vision VetCare, LLC hopes that most employee problems can be corrected at an early stage, benefiting both the employee and the Organization.

## TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Vision VetCare, LLC is committed to supporting the individual growth of its employees. From time to time, Vision VetCare, LLC may arrange to have both formal and informal training programs to enable employees to progress. When non-exempt employees are required to attend classes, workshops or Company-arranged training programs, employees will be paid for time away from work to attend the Company approved courses. All or a portion of the expenses for training will be paid for by the Organization depending on the nature of the course. For questions or approval to attend such Company sponsored programs, please see the Practice Manager.

## SECTION V: TIMEKEEPING AND PAYROLL

### TIMEKEEPING

Non-exempt (Hourly) employees must accurately record all time worked. Federal and state laws require Vision VetCare, LLC to keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits. Time worked is all the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties.

Non-exempt employees should accurately record the time the workday began and the workday ended, as well as the beginning and ending time of each meal period. Employees should also record the beginning and ending time of any departure from work for personal reasons. Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, recording time on another employee's time record, neglecting to following timekeeping procedures (punches) or working before or after the assigned schedule without permission may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

It is the employees' responsibility to verify time records to certify the accuracy of all time recorded. If corrections or modifications are made to the time record, both the employee and the supervisor should verify the accuracy of the changes.

Some practices may require exempt employees to accurately record all time worked in order to support business functions.

### PAY DAYS

All employees are paid bi-weekly on Friday through direct deposit or pay card and receive an itemized statement of wages earned. Each paycheck includes earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period.

Employees are responsible for providing accurate bank deposit information for direct deposit processing. Inaccurate information will result in a delay of pay being deposited to an employee's account.

### ADMINISTRATIVE PAY CORRECTIONS

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

In the unlikely event that there is an error in the amount of pay, the employee should promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of the Human Resources Consultant so that corrections can be made as quickly as possible.

### PAY DEDUCTIONS

Vision VetCare, LLC is required to make certain deductions from every employee's compensation. Among these requirements are applicable federal, state and local income taxes. Vision VetCare, LLC also deducts Social Security taxes on each employee's earnings up to a specified limit that is called the Social Security "wage base." Vision VetCare, LLC matches the amount of Social Security taxes paid by each employee.

Vision VetCare, LLC also offers programs and benefits beyond those required by law. Eligible employees may voluntarily authorize deductions from paychecks to cover the costs of participation in these programs.

Pay setoffs are pay deductions taken by Vision VetCare, LLC, usually to help pay off a debt or obligation to Vision VetCare, LLC or others as required by law.

Vision VetCare, LLC prohibits the making of improper deductions from the salaries of exempt employees. If an “exempt” employee, as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act, believes that Vision VetCare, LLC has improperly deducted amounts from salary that should not have been deducted, the employee should immediately contact his or her manager. Any improper deductions will be reimbursed, and there will be no retaliation against any employee who raises any good faith concern regarding deductions from salary. If it is determined that the deduction was improper, the employee will be reimbursed for the deduction on the next regular paycheck. Unless the employee alerts the Organization that deductions are believed to be improper, Vision VetCare, LLC will assume all deductions are correct.

## REST AND MEAL PERIODS

Vision VetCare, LLC will provide non-exempt (hourly) employees with rest breaks as required by state laws unless voluntarily waived by the employee. Rest breaks are generally 10 minutes or less and should occur no more than twice during an eight hour shift. Employees should not leave the location during these periods.

Full-time regular employees may be entitled to one meal period each workday according to state requirements. Meal periods should be scheduled to accommodate operating requirements and approved with the manager in advance. During a meal period, employees are relieved of all active responsibilities and restrictions and are not compensated for that time. Non-exempt employees are expected to accurately record the time the meal period began and the time the meal period ended.

## OVERTIME FOR NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES

When operating requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours, non-exempt (hourly) employees may be scheduled to work overtime hours. When possible, advance notification of these mandatory assignments will be provided.

Overtime compensation is paid to all non-exempt employees in accordance with federal and state wage and hour requirements. Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Paid time off (PTO) or paid holiday is not considered hours worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations. Questions about overtime and eligibility should be directed to the employee’s manager or the Human Resources Consultant.

All overtime work must receive the Practice Manager's prior authorization. Working unapproved overtime may result in corrective action.

## EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, power failures or earthquakes, can disrupt clinic operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of a work facility. When operations are officially closed due to emergency conditions, time off for scheduled work is unpaid. Employees may request to use earned PTO.

## SECTION VI: EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND RECORDS

### EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES

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

Each employee is designated as either Non-exempt or Exempt from federal and state wage and hour laws. Non-exempt employees are entitled to overtime pay under the specific provisions of federal and state laws. Exempt employees are excluded from specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws. An employee's Exempt or Non-exempt classification may be changed only upon written notification by Vision VetCare, LLC management.

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

Regular full-time employees are those who are not in an introductory or temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work Vision VetCare, LLC's full-time schedule. Generally, regular full-time employees are eligible for Vision VetCare, LLC's paid time off and benefit package, subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefit program.

Regular part-time employees are those who are not assigned to an introductory or project status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than twenty-nine (29) hours per week. While part-time employees do receive all legally mandated benefits (such as Social Security and workers' compensation insurance), part-time employees are ineligible for all of Vision VetCare, LLC's voluntary benefit programs.

Temporary employees are employees who are hired on a full or part-time basis for a specified period of time, usually not to exceed six (6) months.

### EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS

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

### EMPLOYMENT REFERENCE CHECKS

To ensure that individuals who join Vision VetCare, LLC are well qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, the Organization may check the employment references of applicants.

Vision VetCare, LLC typically responds in writing only to reference check inquiries that are submitted in writing. Responses to such inquiries generally confirm only dates of employment and position(s) held.

### PERSONNEL DATA CHANGES

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify Vision VetCare, LLC of any changes in personnel data. Any changes should be directed to the Human Resources Consultant. Personal mailing addresses, telephone



numbers, emergency contact information, educational accomplishments, change of dependents and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times.

## JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Vision VetCare, LLC makes every effort to create and maintain accurate job descriptions for all positions within the Organization. Vision VetCare, LLC maintains job descriptions to aid in orienting new employees, identifying the requirements of each position, establishing hiring criteria, setting standards for employee performance evaluations and establishing a basis for making reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

Employees should remember that job descriptions do not necessarily cover every task or duty that might be assigned, and that additional responsibilities may be assigned as necessary. Job descriptions may be rewritten periodically to reflect any changes in the position's duties and responsibilities.

## ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILES

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

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

An employee who wishes to review the employee's own file should contact the Practice Manager. With reasonable advance notice, employees may review the personnel file in the presence of an individual appointed by Vision VetCare, LLC to maintain the files.

## SECTION VII: TIME AWAY FROM WORK AND OTHER BENEFITS

### PAID TIME OFF (PTO)

*Any employee hired before July 1, 2013 may choose to be grandfathered in with their existing allotment of PTO hours.*

Paid Time Off (PTO) is an all-purpose time-off policy for eligible employees to use for vacation, illness or injury and personal business. It combines traditional vacation and sick leave plans into one flexible, paid time-off policy.

Regular full-time employees are eligible for PTO upon successful completion of the introductory period. PTO must be used in increments of a minimum of one-half day.

PTO is earned based on years of service as follows:

New PTO (updated October 2013)		
Years of Service	Maximum Annual PTO	Bi-Weekly Earning Schedule (Based on a 40 Hour Work Week)
60 days - 2 years	8 days	2.46 hours
2-5 years	11 days	3.38 hours
5-15 years	16 days	4.92 hours
16+ years	21 days	6.46 hours

PTO is accrued based on the calendar year from January to December. In an employee's first year of employment, the employee will receive PTO benefits based on the biweekly earning schedule and must earn a minimum of one full day prior to using PTO.

PTO is paid at the employee's base pay rate at the time of absence. It does not include overtime or any special forms of compensation such as incentives, commissions, bonuses or shift differentials.

Employees with one or more years of service may use PTO in advance of accrual with prior management approval. If the employee leaves employment for any reason, the employee is responsible for re-paying Vision VetCare, LLC for any hours that were paid out but not yet earned.

In the event that available PTO is not used by the end of the benefit year, employees forfeit the unused PTO. Upon termination of employment, employees are paid for unused PTO that has been earned through the last day of work. However, if Vision VetCare, LLC, in its sole discretion, terminates employment for cause, forfeiture of unused PTO may result.

### Planned PTO

Employees are encouraged to take time away from work for vacations, attending to personal matters, etc. Employees are asked to request approval of PTO as soon as the need is known. Each practice will dictate the internal practice for approving time off requests and how far in advance the request must be received. At minimum, to schedule planned PTO, an employee should request advance approval from the manager at least

one week in advance. Planned PTO requests exceeding one (1) day in length may require a thirty (30) day advance request. Requests are generally reviewed based on a number of factors, including business needs and staffing requirements.

### **Unplanned PTO**

Employees who have an unexpected need to be absent from work should notify the Practice Manager at a minimum of sixty (60) minutes prior to the scheduled start of the workday. Failure to provide appropriate notification will result in PTO time not being paid, as well as being subject to disciplinary action.

### **HOLIDAYS**

Vision VetCare, LLC locations close for certain holidays and will provide holiday pay for the following to regular full time employees:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

While Vision VetCare, LLC locations are closed, employees may be required to work for part or all of a designated holiday to care for animals staying at the practice. Each location will determine how holiday shifts will be assigned. Time worked on the holiday will be paid in addition to holiday pay for the day.

Vision VetCare, LLC reserves the right to add additional holidays to this schedule if appropriate based on the current year's calendar. Holiday pay is calculated based on the employee's straight-time pay rate (as of the date of the holiday) times the number of hours the employee would otherwise have worked on that day with a maximum of eight (8) hours. For the holiday to be paid, it must fall on a day in which the location would have otherwise been open. Paid time off for holidays is not counted as hours worked for the purposes of determining overtime.

### **CIVIC DUTIES**

#### ***TIME OFF TO VOTE***

Vision VetCare, LLC encourages employees to fulfill civic responsibilities by participating in elections. Generally, employees are able to find time to vote either before or after the regular work schedule. However, if employees are unable to vote in an election during nonworking hours, Vision VetCare, LLC may allow unpaid time off to vote according to state law.

Employees should request time off to vote from the manager at least two working days prior to the Election Day. Advance notice is required so that the necessary time off can be scheduled at the beginning or end of the work shift; whichever provides the least disruption to the normal work schedule. Vision VetCare, LLC may specify which hours must be used for this benefit.

## *JURY DUTY*

Vision VetCare, LLC encourages employees to fulfill civic responsibilities by serving jury duty when required. Employees summoned for jury duty are granted an unpaid leave in order to serve. Exempt employees may be provided time off with pay when necessary to comply with state and federal wage and hour laws.

Employees should show the jury duty summons to the manager as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made to accommodate the absence. Of course, employees are expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits.

Vision VetCare, LLC or the employee may request an excuse from jury duty if, in Vision VetCare, LLC's judgment, the employee's absence would create serious operational difficulties.

PTO continues to accrue during unpaid jury duty leave.

## *WITNESS DUTY*

Vision VetCare, LLC encourages employees to appear in court for witness duty when subpoenaed to do so.

If an employee has been subpoenaed or otherwise requested to testify as witnesses by Vision VetCare, LLC, the employee will receive paid time off for the entire period of witness duty.

Employees are granted unpaid time off to appear in court as a witness when requested by a party other than Vision VetCare, LLC. Employees may use PTO to receive compensation for the period of this absence.

The subpoena should be shown to the employee's manager after it is received so that operating requirements can be adjusted, where necessary, to accommodate the employee's absence. The employee is expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits.

## *BEREAVEMENT LEAVE*

Regular full-time employees who wish to take time off due to the death of an immediate family member should notify their manager. Up to 3 days of paid bereavement leave is provided to eligible employees.

Bereavement pay is calculated based on the base pay rate at the time of absence and does not include any special forms of compensation, such as incentives, commissions, bonuses or differentials. Bereavement leave is normally granted unless there are unusual business needs or staffing requirements. Employees may, with the supervisors' approval, use any available paid leave for additional time off as necessary.

Vision VetCare, LLC defines "immediate family" as the employee's spouse, parent, child, sibling; the employee's spouse's parent, child, or sibling; the employee's child's spouse; grandparents or grandchildren. Special consideration is also given to any other person whose association with the employee was similar to any of the above relationships.

## *FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE*

It is the policy of Vision VetCare, LLC to grant up to 12 weeks of family and medical leave during any 12-month period to eligible employees at eligible practices, in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) and up to 26 weeks of leave in a single 12-month period in compliance with the expansion of the FMLA under the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008. The leave may be paid, unpaid or a combination of paid

and unpaid leave, depending on the circumstances of the leave and as specified in the policy. Please refer to the full FMLA policy in Appendix A of this handbook.

## MILITARY LEAVE

A military leave of absence may be granted to employees who are absent from work because of service in the U.S. uniformed services in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Advance notice of military service is required, unless military necessity prevents such notice or it is otherwise impossible or unreasonable. The leave will be unpaid. However, employees may use any available paid time off for the absence.

Continuation of health insurance benefits is available as required by USERRA based on the length of the leave and subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of the applicable plans for which the employee is otherwise eligible. Vacation, sick leave and holiday benefits will continue to accrue during a military leave of absence.

Employees should apply for reinstatement in accordance with USERRA and all applicable state laws. Employees returning from military leave will be placed in the position the employee would have attained had the employee remained continuously employed or a comparable one depending on the length of military service in accordance with USERRA. The employee will be treated as though continuously employed for purposes of determining benefits based on length of service.

Employees should contact the Human Resources Consultant for more information or questions about military leave.

## BENEFITS

Vision VetCare, LLC provides a comprehensive set of employee benefit programs to supplement employees' regular wages. Employees should refer to management, plan documents and summary plan descriptions for specific information regarding benefit offerings and eligibility for their location. Vision VetCare, LLC reserves the right to modify its benefits at any time.

## BENEFITS CONTINUATION (COBRA)

The federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under Vision VetCare, LLC's health plan when a "qualifying event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Some common qualifying events are resignation, termination of employment or death of an employee; a reduction in an employee's hours or a leave of absence; an employee's divorce or legal separation; and a dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirements.

Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage at Vision VetCare, LLC's group rates plus an administration fee. Vision VetCare, LLC provides each eligible employee with a written notice describing rights granted under COBRA when the employee becomes eligible for coverage under Vision VetCare, LLC's health insurance plan. The notice contains important information about the employee's rights and obligations.

## PET DISCOUNT

All employees receive a discount on pet services and products after completing the Introductory Period. This discount applies only to pets of the employee. The number of employee pets eligible for the discount is determined by your Practice Manager. All employee pets, with the exception of urgent or emergency care, will be

scheduled on an “as time allows” basis. **See your Practice Manager for discount amounts and number of eligible pets.**

Employees are expected to pay in full or enter into a payroll deduction agreement at the time services are rendered unless prior arrangements with the Practice Manager have been made. When such arrangements are made, the employee may not carry a balance over \$100. When the balance reaches over \$100, the employee will no longer receive discounted services or products until this balance is reduced or receives prior approval from the Practice Manager.

This benefit is designed for your personal use and should be understood that employee discounts are to be used for your personal pets only, not for friends or family members or pets that do not live in your household.

## SECTION VIII: HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY

### SAFETY

To assist in providing a safe and healthful work environment for employees, clients and visitors, Vision VetCare, LLC considers workplace safety to be a top priority for Vision VetCare, LLC.

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

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

### ACCIDENT REPORTING

Employees who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses should inform the Practice Manager or the Human Resources Consultant immediately. No matter how minor an on-the-job injury may appear, it is important that it be reported immediately. This enables an eligible employee to qualify for workers' compensation coverage as quickly as possible.

Vision VetCare, LLC provides a comprehensive workers' compensation insurance program at no cost to employees. This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical, surgical or hospital treatment. Neither Vision VetCare, LLC nor the insurance carrier is liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for injuries that occur during an employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social or athletic activity sponsored by Vision VetCare, LLC.

Practice Managers should contact their Human Resources Consultant to assist with reporting and return to work matters within 24 hours of incident.

### SMOKE AND TOBACCO FREE WORKPLACE

In keeping with Vision VetCare, LLC's intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment, use of any smoking or tobacco products including but not limited to cigarettes, e-cigarettes and other forms of smokeless tobacco is prohibited throughout the workplace except in those locations that have been specifically designated as smoking areas. This policy applies equally to all employees, clients and visitors.

### DRIVING ON BUSINESS

The safety and wellbeing of Vision VetCare, LLC employees is of critical importance to the Organization. Employees that are required to drive on Company business at any time will be expected to follow all driving laws and safety rules. Use of handheld cell phones, while driving on Company business, is prohibited. Any employee driving for business purposes must have a valid driver's license and be properly insured.

## VISITORS IN THE WORKPLACE

To provide for the safety and security of employees and the facilities at Vision VetCare, LLC, only clients or authorized visitors are allowed in the workplace. Authorized visitors must be accompanied by authorized employees at all times and are not permitted in confidential, unauthorized or potentially hazardous areas.

Restricting unauthorized visitors helps maintain safety standards, protects against theft, ensures security of equipment, protects confidential information, safeguards employee welfare and avoids potential distractions and disturbances. If an unauthorized individual is observed on Vision VetCare, LLC's premises, employees should immediately notify a manager or, if necessary, direct the individual to the reception area.

## WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Vision VetCare, LLC is committed to preventing workplace violence and to maintaining a safe work environment. Accordingly, Vision VetCare, LLC has adopted the following guidelines to deal with intimidation, harassment or other threats of (or actual) violence that may occur during business hours or on its premises.

All employees, including managers and contract employees, should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, "horseplay" or other conduct that may be dangerous to others. Firearms, weapons and other dangerous or hazardous devices or substances are prohibited from the premises of Vision VetCare, LLC without proper authorization.

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

All threats of (or actual) violence, both direct and indirect, should be reported as soon as possible to the immediate manager or any other member of management. This includes threats by employees, as well as threats by clients, vendors, solicitors, or other members of the public. When reporting a threat of violence, employees should be as specific and detailed as possible.

All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported as soon as possible to the Practice Manager or Human Resources Consultant. Employees should not intercede or place themselves in harm's way should they see or hear a commotion or disturbance in the workplace.

Vision VetCare, LLC will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of (or actual) violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as is practical. In order to maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, Vision VetCare, LLC may suspend employees, either with or without pay, pending investigation.

Anyone determined to be responsible for threats of (or actual) violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines may be subject to prompt corrective action up to and including termination of employment. Additionally, Vision VetCare, LLC will take appropriate action when dealing with clients, former employees or visitors to facilities who engage in such behavior. Such action may include notifying the police or other law enforcement personnel and prosecuting violators of this policy to the maximum extent of the law.

Vision VetCare, LLC encourages employees to bring disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of a manager or the Human Resources Consultant before the situation escalates into potential violence.



## IN AN EMERGENCY

Employees should contact management immediately when an emergency occurs. Emergencies include all accidents, medical situations, bomb threats, other threats of violence and the smell of smoke.

Should an emergency result in the need to communicate information to employees outside of business hours, all employees will be contacted by Vision VetCare, LLC. Therefore, it is important that employees keep their personal emergency contact information up to date. Notify the Practice Manager and the Human Resources Consultant when this information changes.

When events warrant an evacuation of the building, employees should follow the instructions of management. Employees should leave the building in a quick and orderly manner. Employees should assemble in the parking lot and wait for further instructions or information.

Any questions regarding emergency procedures should be directed to management.

## DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE

It is Vision VetCare, LLC's desire to provide a drug-free, healthful and safe workplace. To promote this goal, employees are required to report to work in appropriate mental and physical condition to perform job duties in a satisfactory manner.

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

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

Employees with questions on this policy or issues related to drug or alcohol use in the workplace should raise concerns with the Practice Manager or the Human Resources Consultant without fear of reprisal.

## DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING

Vision VetCare, LLC is committed to providing a safe, efficient and productive environment for all employees, clients and pets. Using or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on the job may pose serious safety and health risks.

To help ensure a safe and healthful working environment, post-offer job applicants may be asked to provide body substance samples (such as urine and/or blood) to determine the illicit or illegal use of drugs and alcohol. All employees are also subject to testing after an accident or based upon (but not limited to) reasonable suspicion of apparent workplace use, possession or impairment. Refusal to submit to drug or alcohol testing may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## SECURITY INSPECTIONS

Vision VetCare, LLC wishes to maintain a work environment that is free of illegal drugs, alcohol, firearms, explosives or other improper materials. To this end, Vision VetCare, LLC prohibits the possession, transfer, sale or

use of such materials on its premises. Vision VetCare, LLC requires the cooperation of all employees in administering this policy.

Desks, lockers and/or other storage devices provided for the convenience of employees remain the sole property of Vision VetCare, LLC. Accordingly, these items, as well as any articles found within, can be inspected by any agent or representative of Vision VetCare, LLC at any time, either with or without prior notice.

## WEAPONS POLICY

All employees of Vision VetCare, LLC and any other person coming onto the Organization's premises are prohibited from carrying any concealed dangerous weapons. A license to carry a concealed weapon does not supersede Vision VetCare, LLC policy. An employee who has obtained a license to carry a concealed dangerous weapon may stow his/her weapon in his/her personal vehicle in accordance with state law, but may not do so in a vehicle owned, leased or temporarily rented by the Organization.

Any employee with personal safety concerns (i.e. parking in remote areas, working after hours, etc.) should discuss this with the Practice Manager or the Human Resources Consultant. Vision VetCare, LLC reserves the right to grant complete or partial exceptions to this policy if circumstances warrant an exception.

Any employee violating this policy shall be subject to immediate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.



## HR CONTACT INFORMATION

For all human resources related questions including benefits, payroll and policy contact your HR team:

Robin Adkins or Amy Mears

(502) 753-0970

robin@integrityhr.com

amears@integrityhr.com

### Integrity HR Hotline Hours:

9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. EST

Monday – Friday

*All hotline inquiries will be returned on or before the next business day.*

**Enter Practice Specific Expectation Notes Here:**

## HANDBOOK RECEIPT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – EMPLOYEE COPY

Please read the following statements and sign below to indicate your receipt and acknowledgment of this Employee Handbook.

I understand this Employee Handbook has been prepared to communicate Vision VetCare, LLC's policies, benefits and general information. I understand that I should consult my manager or the human resources consultants regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. Vision VetCare, LLC reserves the right to make changes in content or application of its policies, as it deems appropriate and these changes may be implemented even if they have not been communicated, reprinted or substituted in this Employee Handbook. I acknowledge receipt of the Employee Handbook and understand that my continued employment constitutes acceptance of Vision VetCare, LLC's policies and practices and any changes that may be made in content or application of the Employee Handbook.

I understand that nothing in this Employee Handbook or any other policy or communication creates an employment contract or changes the fact that employment is at-will for an indefinite period unless terminated at any time by Vision VetCare, LLC or me. I understand that no employee or representative of Vision VetCare, LLC, has any authority to enter into an employment contract or to change the at-will employment relationship, or to make any agreement contrary to the foregoing.

I understand I am required to immediately report cases of actual or suspected abuse/neglect, any known violations of the law or state regulation, occurrences of actual or suspected harassment or discrimination or any incident of a reportable nature to my manager or other member of management.

If I owe Vision VetCare, LLC any sums of money at the time of my termination including the value of damaged or unreturned property, Vision VetCare, LLC is hereby authorized and directed to deduct from my paycheck.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I have received the handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

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Employee's Printed Name

Position

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Employee's Signature

Date

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---

Employee's Printed Name

Position

---

Employee's Signature

Date

## APPENDIX A

### FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

It is the policy of Vision VetCare, LLC to grant up to 12 weeks of family and medical leave during any 12-month period to eligible employees at eligible practices, in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) and up to 26 weeks of leave in a single 12-month period in compliance with the expansion of the FMLA under the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008. The leave may be paid, unpaid or a combination of paid and unpaid leave, depending on the circumstances of the leave and as specified in the policy.

### ELIGIBILITY

To qualify to take family and medical leave under this policy, the employee must meet all of the following conditions:

1. Have worked for the Company for at least 12 months in the last 7 years;
2. Have worked at least 1,250 hours for the Company during the last 12 calendar months preceding the request for leave; and
3. Are employed at a worksite that has 50 or more employees within a 75 mile radius.

### TYPE OF LEAVE COVERED

#### *Basic FMLA Leave*

Employees who meet the eligibility requirements described above are eligible to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period for one of the following reasons:

1. To care for the employee's son or daughter during the first 12 months following birth;
2. To care for a child during the first 12 months following placement with the employee for adoption or foster care;
3. To care for a spouse, son, daughter or parent ("covered relation") with a serious health condition;
4. For incapacity due to the employee's pregnancy, prenatal medical or child birth; or
5. Because of the employee's own serious health condition that renders the employee unable to perform an essential function of his or her position.

#### *Military Family Leave*

There are two types of Military Family Leave available:

1. Qualifying exigency leave. Employees meeting the eligibility requirements described above may be entitled to use up to twelve (12) weeks of their Basic FMLA Leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Leave may be used if the employee's spouse, son or daughter, is on active duty or called to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation or deployment overseas with the armed forces. Qualifying exigencies may include:

Short-notice deployment (up to seven (7) days of leave)

- Attending certain military events
- Arranging for alternative childcare

- Addressing certain financial and legal arrangements
  - Periods of rest and recuperation for the service member (up to fifteen (15) days of leave)
  - Parental Care
  - Attending certain counseling sessions
  - Attending post-deployment activities (available for up to ninety (90) days after the termination of the covered service member's active duty status)
  - Other activities arising out of the service member's active duty or call to active duty and agreed upon by the Company and the employee
2. Leave to care for a covered service member. There is also a special leave entitlement that permits employees who meet the eligibility requirements for FMLA leave to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period. At the time of the request for military caregiver leave, FMLA leave already taken for other FMLA circumstances in the previous 12-month period will be deducted from the total of 26 weeks available. A covered service member is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has been rendered medically unfit to perform his or her duties due to a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty or while on active duty, and/or pre-existing injuries or illnesses that were aggravated in the line of duty, that may render the service member medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the service member is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list. In addition, leave will be provided to eligible family members of certain veterans receiving medical treatment, recuperation or therapy if the veteran was a member of the Armed Forces at any time during the five (5) year period preceding the date of the medical treatment, recuperation or therapy.

## TIMING AND DURATION OF LEAVE

The Company will measure the 12-month period as a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any leave under this policy. Each time an employee takes qualified leave, the Company will compute the amount of leave the employee has taken under this policy in the last 12 months and subtract it from the 12 weeks of available leave, and the balance remaining is the amount of time the employee is entitled to take at that time.

For an employee taking up to 26 weeks of leave to care for seriously ill or injured covered service member in a single 12-month period, the single 12-month period begins on the first day the employee takes FMLA leave and ends 12 months after that date.

## EMPLOYEE STATUS AND BENEFITS DURING LEAVE

If applicable, health care, life insurance or disability plan benefits will be maintained during the leave. The employee is responsible for their portion of the insurance premium cost, if any. Failure to pay the employee portion of the health insurance premiums by the agreed upon date of each month between the employee and the Practice Manager may result in the termination of coverage. If eligible, the employee will receive notification of continuation of benefits. The Company reserves the right to seek reimbursement from the employee for all insurance premiums paid by the Company, on behalf of the employee, while the employee was on FMLA leave whether or not the employee returns to work.

Paid time off accruals will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon return to active employment.



## USE OF PAID AND UNPAID LEAVE

Employees will be required to use any accrued paid vacation or sick leave before taking unpaid leave under this policy.

FMLA will run concurrently with any applicable paid time off such as personal sick time, and vacation, while on family and medical leave. Disability leave for the birth of a child and for an employee's serious health condition, including workers' compensation leave (to the extent that it qualifies), will be designated as FMLA leave and will run concurrently with FMLA.

## CERTIFICATION

The Company may require certification for the employee's serious health condition, for the family member's serious health condition, for the serious injury or illness of the covered service member or for qualifying exigency for military family leave. The employee must respond to such a request within 15 days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of leave. The Company has the right to ask for a second opinion if it has reason to doubt the certification. If the second opinion is required, the Company will select the doctor and pay for the certification. If there is discrepancy between the original and second opinion, it will pay for the opinion of a third doctor. The third opinion will be considered final.

## RECERTIFICATION

The Company may request recertification for the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's family member no more frequently than every 30 days and only when circumstances have changed significantly, or if the Company receives information casting doubt on the reason for the absence, or if the employee seeks an extension of his or her leave. Otherwise, the Company may request recertification for the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's family member every six months in connection with an FMLA absence. The employer may provide the healthcare provider with the employee's attendance record and ask whether need for leave is consistent with the employee's serious health condition.

## PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING LEAVE

### *Amount of Notice Employee Must Provide*

Any employee applying for leave for any FMLA-qualifying reason must request and complete Vision VetCare, LLC's application for FMLA leave. The employee must return the completed application to the Practice Manager at least 30 days in advance of the start of leave if the need for leave is foreseeable. If a full 30 days' notice is not possible, the form must be submitted as soon as practical (either the same day the employee learns of the need for leave or the next business day.)

Where the need for leave is not foreseeable, and the employee is unable to complete a written application for FMLA leave before the start of the leave, the employee must follow Vision VetCare, LLC's usual absence reporting policy.

Regardless of how far in advance the employee becomes aware of the need to take qualifying exigency leave, notice of the need for such leave must also be given as soon as practicable either the same day the employee learns of the need for the leave or the next business day.)

Employees who fail to provide sufficient notice may have their FMLA leave delayed or denied.

*Status and Intent to Return*

While on leave, employees are requested to report periodically to Vision VetCare, LLC regarding the status of the medical condition and their intent to return to work.