

North Carolina Statewide Independent Living Council

(NCSILC)

**Policy Manual
FINAL**

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

The NCSILC shall maintain written standards of conduct governing the performance of its employees, officers Council Members or agents engaged in the award and administration of contracts. No NCSILC employee, officer, council member, or agent shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by federal funds if a real or apparent conflict of interest would be involved.

A conflict would arise when the NCSILC employee, officer, council member or agent, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in the firm selected for an award. The officers, employees, council members and agents of NCSILC or the contract recipient shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors, or parties to sub-agreements. However, the NCSILC may set standards for situations in which the financial interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value.

The standards of conduct shall provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations of these standards by the recipient officers, employees, council members or agents of NCSILC.

COMMITTEES

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee Shall:

1. Actively recruit potential members to expand the diversity and enhance the expertise represented by the members of the NCSILC.
2. Receive and review applications of potential members, and recommend individuals meeting those requirements to the full NCSILC for endorsement.
3. Ensure that there is always a youth representative on the NCSILC.
4. Ensure that the NCSILC membership meets the requirements of membership as stated in the Rehabilitation Act.
5. Ensure that the NCSILC Executive Director submits NCSILC endorsed applications to the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions upon NCSILC endorsement.
6. Ensure that the NCSILC Executive Director works closely with The Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions regarding applications for Council membership and appointments to the SILC and reports progress of such applications to the NCSILC quarterly.
7. Plan and ensure that orientation training for newly appointed members of NCSILC is carried out on a timely basis.
8. Create and update NCSILC Member Manual.
9. Support new NCSILC members.

Policy and Long-term Planning Committee

The Policy and Long-term Planning Committee shall:

1. Create and present for NCSILC approval policies and procedures pertaining to Council business, including but not limited to: member and staff reimbursement, conference participation, committee activities, etc.

2. Plan an NCSILC member training activity that focuses on strategic planning for the Council to better serve people with disabilities in NC to live independently.
3. Propose and plan annual member trainings providing information about Independent Living, Statewide Independent Living Councils and topics pertaining to the mission of NCSILC.
4. Work with the Evaluation Committee to expand the framework of operational and financial performance measures evaluating the activities of NCSILC.
5. Maintain an organizational structure which optimizes the assets and programs of NCSILC.
6. Ensure that NCSILC By-Laws meet Federal and State requirements pertaining to non-profit organizations.
7. Propose policy updates and revisions to the full NCSILC membership as needed.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall be responsible for ensuring successful completion, and appropriate oversight, of the following functions:

1. Development and adherence to the annual operating budget.
2. NCSILC member travel and training requests on behalf of NCSILC
3. The Council's insurance program.
4. Annual review or independent audit of financial records and operations.
5. The accurate and timely submission of all financial and tax reporting.
6. Ongoing development of long term financial strategies to ensure that the Council is adequately funded to meet its long range goals.
7. Additional fund raising activities utilizing non-part B funds.
8. Recommendations to the Council on allocation of part B funding, annually.

9. In order to promote full transparency, the finance committee of the SILC will meet monthly either in person or by teleconference. Prior to the meetings, financial documents will be disseminated to the committee members only. All documents are considered confidential in nature and are considered property of the NC SILC office and are not to be shared. The documents include the bank statement for the month preceding, the profit and loss statement, and other documents applicable to the meeting. No general ledgers or documents identifying individuals will be disseminated. Any committee member wanting to view additional documents, may come to the office during normal business hours in order for the staff to be present to answer questions or give clarification. A detailed report will be presented to the full council at each quarterly meeting. Committee members violating any of the rules of the Finance committee will be sanctioned at the request of the Executive Committee to the full Council.

10. The Finance Committee shall delegate its responsibility to the Executive Director, when appropriate.

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING PLAN (SPIL) GOAL COMMITTEES 2014-2016

Goal 1 Committee

SPIL Goal – Provision of Quality Independent Living Services

The Goal 1 Committee will monitor, review and evaluate implementation of SPIL Goal 1, including the following objectives and activities, and will report its findings to the full SILC council.

Objective 1.1: The IL Network staff members are well trained.

Activities:

- IL Network/CIL staff members receive training conducted in compliance with Rehab Act roles and responsibilities.

- IL Network/CIL staff members attend conferences and disability related events.

- IL Network/CIL staff members provide cross training opportunities with VR, VRIL, DSB, and other key partners of the NC SILC.

Objective 1.2: Members of the IL Network implement uniform practices.

Activities:

- The IL Network Directors or CIL staff leaders participate in at least two (2) face-to-face or teleconference meetings to facilitate network building and the sharing of promising practices each year.
- The IL Network/CIL staff members develop a uniform service delivery manual.
- The IL Network/CIL staff members disseminate uniform practices and service delivery procedures throughout the Network.

Goal 2 Committee

SPIL Goal – Leadership and Empowerment of Individuals with Disabilities

The Goal 2 Committee will monitor, review and evaluate implementation of SPIL Goal 2, including the following objectives and activities, and will report its findings to the full SILC council.

Objective 2.1: Youth with disabilities are prepared for leadership roles.

Activities:

- Youth with disabilities participate in a Youth Leadership Forum each year.
- Youth with disabilities receive training about Independent Living.
- Teachers and parents of youth with disabilities have access to resources concerning independent living and transition experiences.

Objective 2.2: people with disabilities and the community at large are educated on disability policies and regulations on federal, state and local levels.

Activities:

- People with disabilities participate in training events and conferences.
- People with disabilities educate the community at large as well as people with disabilities on policies and regulations.

- People with disabilities provide presentations on Disability History and Awareness, especially in the month of October.

Goal 3 Committee

SPIL Goal – Growth and Improvement of Independent Living Services

The Goal 3 Committee will monitor, review and evaluate implementation of SPIL Goal 3, including the following objectives and activities, and will report its findings to the full SILC council.

Objective 3.1: Current service areas do not become unserved or underserved to a greater degree, and previously unserved consumers in NC are served.

Activities:

- At a minimum, the current level of funding for CILs is maintained, and funding increases are the optimum outcome.
- Part B and Part C CILs maintain financial support from Title VII Part B funding.
- Information on "How to Start a Center for Independent Living" is provided for the unserved areas of the state.
- The IL Network will include materials on their webpages and social media outlets that can assist consumers both within and outside their service area limits.
- The IL Network members will promote IL concepts and distribute useful materials through colleagues and partners that have a statewide focus.

Goal 4 Committee

SPIL Goal – Support the operations of the NCSILC non-profit office

The Goal 4 Committee will monitor, review and evaluate implementation of SPIL Goal 4, including the following objectives and activities, and will report its findings to the full SILC council.

Objective 4.1: Maintain an autonomous and independent NC SILC nonprofit office.

Activities:

- Part B funds are provided for general operations of the NCSILC non-profit office and the NCSILC related activities.
- A sub-committee from the SILC identifies and reports annually on best practices from other states by reviewing other SPILs, contacting other SILCs, attending the SILC Congress, and reviewing other publicly-available information.
- The sub-committee from the SILC contacts other SILC organizations or visits other SILC organizations in the region.
- The flow of Title VII, Part B funds (from RSA to the eventual Title VII, Part B contract recipients), shall be transparent, and an accounting of such funds shall be made available by the DSU to NCSILC on a monthly basis.

Objective 4.2: The NC SILC nonprofit office coordinates SPIL-related activities.

Activities:

- The NC SILC holds quarterly meetings.
- The NC SILC disseminates information.
- When sufficient funds remain in a fiscal year, the NC SILC implements an annual IL summit to garner input and monitor implementation of the SPIL.
- The NC SILC maintains representation from youth with disabilities.
- The NC SILC implements recruitment and membership procedures.
- For NC SILC succession planning, the membership committee identifies and recommends, on a continuous basis, at least three potential SILC nominees who meet the qualifications mandated in the Rehabilitation Act.
- The NCSILC provides orientation and training to new members, to include assignment of a mentor and training sessions in conjunction with NCSILC quarterly meetings.

Goal 5 Committee

SPIL Goal – Promote Community Based Living

The Goal 5 Committee will monitor, review and evaluate implementation of SPIL Goal 5, including the following objectives and activities, and will report its findings to the full SILC council.

Objective 5.1: Residents in institutions transition to community-based living.

Activities:

- Part B and C Centers assist consumers with transitions to community-based living.
- The NC SILC maintains a community resource database for transition needs.
- SILRPs (State Independent Living and Rehabilitation Programs), Part B and Part C Centers provide NC SILC with performance data and success stories on deinstitutionalization and transitioning.

Goal 6 Committee

SPIL Goal – DSUs provide Independent Living Services

The Goal 6 Committee will monitor, review and evaluate implementation of SPIL Goal 6, including the following objectives and activities, and will report its findings to the full SILC council.

Objective 6.1: people with disabilities have greater access to transportation in their communities.

Activities:

- People with disabilities participate in the local transportation decision-making process.
- People with disabilities are identified to serve on boards.
- The DSUs will increase rural transportation options for persons with disabilities in NC.
- The designated state units research funding opportunities.
- The designated state units share information gained from research with community groups of and/or for individuals with disabilities (e.g. CILs, local mayor's committees for individuals with disabilities, agency consumers).

Objective 6.2: people with disabilities have the supports necessary to live independently and safely in the communities of their choice.

Activities:

- The designated state units develop new partnerships to educate hospital discharge planners to incorporate person centered principles.

- The designated state units collaborate with Division of Medical Assistance to enable utilization of the Money Follows the Person funding and resources to deinstitutionalize persons from skilled-level nursing facilities.
- The designated state units provide IL skills training by qualified practitioners.
- The designated state units provide supports that enhance the quality of life such as housing and vehicle modifications, assistive technology, and durable medical equipment.
- The designated state units support the development and expansion of local aging and disability resource connections (CRC).

Objective 6.3: Veterans with disabilities receive seamless supports and services that allow them to live independently.

Activities:

- The designated state units increase communication and collaboration with the Veterans Administration and other programs serving veterans.

CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE POLICY

The term “conference” is defined as any seminar, meeting, retreat, workshop, training activity, or similar event that is funded by NCSILC, or by any external organization/partner, excluding SILC quarterly meetings or the IL Summit.

1. An NCSILC member is eligible for NCSILC to pay for attendance at professional conferences/meetings if the applicant:
2. Is an NCSILC member who is actively involved in the NCSILC.
3. Has completed a Conference Attendance Application, and submitted it to the SILC Chair and Finance Committee Chair for approval at least four weeks prior to the conference.
4. The Application form has been approved by the SILC Chair and Finance Committee Chair, and the SILC office has received notice of such approval at least four weeks in advance of conference date. If an NCSILC member is unable to stay in a hotel for the authorized State rate for lodging, the NCSILC provides the DSU with a written justification for DSU approval.

5. Has signed the Conference Attendance Policy and submitted to the NCSILC office for filing (only required once per term – retained in Member File).

By agreeing to attend a conference at the expense of NCSILC, the member agrees to attend the conference sessions, and to be an active participant in the proceedings. The member understands that they are representing NCSILC.

Within two weeks of returning from the conference, the attendee should submit a NCSILC Conference Activity Report to the NCSILC Executive Director. A brief summary of the conference activity (5 min. or less) will be required at the next scheduled NCSILC meeting.

SILC funding decisions regarding meeting and conference travel and training expenses reside with the Finance Committee Chair. Final decisions are made by the NCSILC Chair.

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT TO COUNCIL MEMBERS

NCSILC members shall be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses that are incurred when attending conferences and or performing council duties as follows:

Food / Per Diem / Lodging

Food Expense: Members may receive the amount allowed by State Travel Policies for each meal per day. As of January 2017 NC permits: \$8.30/breakfast; \$10.90/lunch; and \$18.70/dinner if in-state or \$21.30/dinner if out of state.

Breakfast—Breakfast will be reimbursed at the current rate included on all NC SILC reimbursement forms; Breakfast is eligible for reimbursement when departure from home is prior to 7 a.m.

Lunch—Lunch will be reimbursed at the current rate included on all NC SILC reimbursement forms.

Dinner—Dinner will be reimbursed at the current rate included on all NC SILC reimbursement forms; Dinner is eligible for reimbursement when return to home is after 7 p.m.

Meals which are included in a registration fee paid by the NC SILC, as well as meals provided by the NC SILC at SILC-related events, are not eligible for reimbursement. Meals are reimbursed at current rates as reported on the NC SILC reimbursement forms; therefore, receipts are not necessary to claim this expense.”

Per Diem: Members may receive a per diem of \$15/day. If a member is unemployed, or if the member forfeits wages from other employment to attend conferences or to perform related duties, then the member may receive a maximum per diem of \$50/day. State employees shall receive no per diem compensation.

Lodging: State daily lodging allowance is \$67.30 + tax (in state) or \$79.50 (out of state). A zero balance hotel receipt must be attached and submitted with the request for reimbursement.

- Reimbursement may include the cost of lodging for one night per conference day. For example, if the conference lasts two full days, then the member may be reimbursed for the cost of two nights of lodging.
- Note: reimbursement will not include the cost of one night's lodging for a partial conference day except as described below.
- In limited circumstances, a member may be reimbursed for more than one night of lodging per meeting day. Members must direct requests for reimbursement of extended lodging to the SILC office. Such requests must be received by the SILC office at least eight days prior to the start of the meeting and must receive approval from the SILC Chair and the Finance Committee Chair. In the event that the SILC Chair and Finance Chair cannot agree, the SILC Vice Chair will decide whether or not to approve the request.

Transportation / Mileage / Driver and/or Personal Assistant

Public Transportation Expense: Members may be reimbursed for transportation expenses. In order to receive reimbursement, a zero balance or paid in full receipt for all train, airline, bus fare, taxi or transportation service must be attached and submitted with the request for reimbursement.

Mileage: Members may be reimbursed for mileage at the current federal rate. As of October 2013, the federal mileage reimbursement rate is \$0.535/mile. The NCSILC non-profit office staff will determine mileage reimbursement for each NCSIL member based on the shortest distance from residence to NCSIL event. Any unforeseen event such as a detour or accident should be noted on the member's reimbursement form. This is being done to create a consistent and uniform policy.

Driver / Personal Assistant: Members may be reimbursed for the cost of their driver and/or personal assistant when such expense is reasonable and necessary. The rate of reimbursement for drivers is \$8.00/hour; the rate for personal assistants is \$15.52/hour.

- Note: Members may also be reimbursed for food expenses for drivers and/or personal assistants at the state rates provided above.

Additional Expenses

Member expenses that are not described above must be authorized before they are incurred in order to be eligible for reimbursement. Requests to authorize such additional expenses should be directed to the SILC office and must be approved by the Executive Committee.

Financial Policies and Procedures

The Financial Policies and Procedures of the NC Statewide Independent Living Council (NCSILC) are the official documentation of the agency for the conduct of business and the accounting for and administration of all funds received by the agency.

The purpose of the Financial Policies and Procedures is to provide detailed information on the accounting for and administration of funding. This includes the following:

- A record of the Fiscal Policy of the Organization
- A procedure to ensure the proper handling of Agency assets
- A tool to facilitate planning
- A framework for assigning duties, particularly with respect to maximum possible segregation of duties, consistent with the size of the agency.
- A tool for educating staff and members of the Council, on the responsibilities of planning, oversight, operations management, internal and external control, and reporting requirements.

These policies should guide employees and members of the Council in the application of various State and Federal laws and regulations to the use of agency funds.

These policies constitute all current fiscal policies and standards that have been developed by NCSILC through the date of issuance. The Financial Policies and Procedures will be reviewed at least annually by the Executive Director, the Treasurer and the Council Chair to ensure that the policies and procedures are current, remain relevant and meet current standards and reporting requirements.

The procedures and policies contained herein apply to all employees and members of the Council. All new employees and members of the Council will be given a copy of these policies. It is the responsibility of all employees and members of the Council to familiarize themselves with all applicable portions.

I. NC Statewide Independent Living Council

The role of the NC Statewide Independent Living Council is to set policy for the organization. The fiduciary responsibilities of the Council include internal financial oversight and external financial compliance to insure that the fiscal policy and fiscal management decisions of the organization support the agency's mission.

Internal financial oversight includes approval of fiscal policy and overseeing the established budgeting, accounting and financial analysis processes. External financial compliance includes meeting reporting requirements from grant sources and meeting state, local and federal agency guidelines.

A. Policy Issues

Policy issues coming before the Council shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Adoption of the annual operating budget
- Approving grant applications and related budgets
- Approving fee for service rates
- Approving staff salary ranges and bonuses
- Setting the rate of compensation and terms of employment for the Executive Director
- Approving fund raising events
- Handling the purchase, sale or lease of real property
- Approving contractual agreements
- Contracting for and overseeing an annual audit
- Negotiating and approving bank agreements
- Changes in program offerings
- New fund raising efforts and providing programs with nonprofit Part B funds

The Council may delegate all or some tasks related to financial management to the Executive Director.

B. Financial Management

The joint and individual duties and responsibilities of the Board of Directors include internal and external oversight of the budgeting, accounting and financial analysis processes for the SILC budget and all Part B funds. These tasks may include:

- Approve and understand fiscal policies
- Approve financial management procedures
- Advise the Executive Director in budget development
- Review, understand and approve the Annual Budget
- Review, understand and approve the monthly financial statements
- Review, understand and approve grant applications
- Monitor expenditure of funds against annual budget
- Approve non-routine expenditures over \$2500.
- Ascertain and ensure external reporting requirements are being met
- Review and approve financial aspects of annual reports
- Review and approve annual audit

The Council may delegate any or all of these functions to a finance committee for review and recommendation before the Council acts.

II. Annual Budget

The annual Operating Budget is a financial plan representing a consolidation of income from all sources and expenditures from all cost centers since grant sources and other revenues may not be consistent with NCSILC's fiscal year reports. The operating budget is annualized using the best available information and projects anticipated but not yet available revenues. Recognizing this, the operating budget will include a narrative which identifies fixed and variable revenues and costs. The narrative will also include contingencies for unanticipated shortfalls or significant changes in financial position or circumstances.

The Executive Director will prepare the annual operating budget with input from appropriate staff or other advisory personnel. The Budget will reflect the following:

- A reasonable projection based on a combination of program needs, experience and prior figures if available.
- Adequate funding to programs that are central to the mission of the agency to ensure successful operation
- A plan for flexibility allowing for the acquisition of new programs or loss of current programs, recognizing that grant periods will not necessarily coincide with NCSILC's fiscal year.

Budget Revisions

Realities of daily operations may raise the need for changes in budgeted figures. The Executive Director has the authority to make changes (that do not have major programmatic impact) between and within cost categories as allowed by grant requirements.

III. Compliance with State and Federal Requirements

NCSILC will comply with all relevant state and federal laws, regulations, policies and procedures related to the expenditure of funds and financial record keeping. This includes, but is not limited to compliance with OMB Circulars A- 122, A-133, the Education Department General Administrative Regulations, the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and North Carolina General Statutes .

Current updates to these documents are available online and employees are required to check for updates regularly, but not less than monthly.

IV. Insurance

NCSILC will maintain insurance coverage consistent with the needs of business, to meet legal requirements, insure protection of NCSILC's assets, provide for liability against injury of persons on the premises or conducting business offsite, and to provide other necessary safeguards. Mandated insurance coverage will include General Liability, a Fidelity Bond to cover personnel with responsibilities related to account managing, cash and assets of the organization, Workers Compensation and Directors and Officials Liability Coverage.

V. Financial Analysis Process

The Bookkeeper will reconcile the Bank Statement with NCSILC records, as maintained in Quickbooks, during the first week of the month. The Executive Director shall use a bank statement generated through on-line banking capabilities to review the reconciliation.

The Bank Statement mailed to NCSILC will be opened by the finance committee designee who will examine it for any unusual activities. All financial records relating to items that have not been reconciled will be kept in a separate location, easily accessible to the NCSILC member opening the statement.

Monthly Financial Reports and the Bank Reconciliation will be made available to the Executive Director within a week of the receipt of the monthly bank statement. The Report will include expenses, revenues, bank reconciliation and a balance sheet. The reports will then be presented to the Finance Committee by the 15th of the following month.

VI. Purchasing Authority

NCSILC authorizes purchases based on an operating budget. Prior approval by the Executive Director is required for all purchases.

The Executive Director may approve expenditures and purchases up to \$2500, and payments over \$2500 for regularly scheduled payments such as rent and payroll. Non-routine payments above \$2500 require the approval of the Finance Committee.

The Executive Director may delegate expenditure approval authority only in emergency situations.

VII. Authority to Expend Funds

The following documents, when accompanied by appropriate documentation will serve as an authority for the Bookkeeper to expend funds when signed by the Executive Director:

Time Sheets, signed by the Executive Director or the President of the Board of Directors will serve as the authority to process payroll payments.

The Board Chair's Authorization to Travel will serve as a Payment Request for expenses related to travel.

An invoice, approved by the Executive Director, will serve as a request for all other payments.

VIII. Authorization to sign checks.

The Executive Director and two members of the Board of Directors are authorized to sign checks. NCSILC checks require only one signature to be

valid for payments up to \$2500. Checks exceeding \$2500 require an additional signature on the check, before it is disbursed.

No check will be signed without backup documentation, including a signed Time Sheet, being attached.

IX. Check Process

Invoices are approved by the ED and entered as a bill in QuickBooks by the Bookkeeper. The Invoice will contain the amount, purpose and account number and grant allocation amounts as required. Invoices will be accompanied by appropriate documentation.

The Bookkeeper will prepare checks and enter information in Quickbooks.

All checks are pre numbered. Unused checks are maintained in a locked cabinet.

Voided checks are defaced to prevent subsequent use and retained by NCSILC.

No checks will be made payable to "Cash" or "bearer."

Checks are reviewed and signed by Executive Director or Council member.

After it is signed the Bookkeeper will copy checks. Bank balance will be checked before mailing. Back up materials will be held with check copy until reconciled with bank statements. After material is reconciled, material will be filed by vendor.

XI. Debit Card Use

The Executive Director maintains a debit card for use in situations where it is impractical to use a check or personal credit card. All financial management policies relating to checks, including prior approval or travel authorization, apply to debit card transactions. Additionally, staff will use the debit card only with the written authorization of the Executive Director.

The Bookkeeper shall review debit card purchases at least weekly.

XII. Cash Management

At this time the organization does not make any cash disbursements to vendors or receive any payment from consumers for services provided. Most payments to the agency are made through Electronic Fund Transfers. The NCSILC does not maintain any Petty Cash.

XIII. Cash Receipts and Bank Deposits

At this date all revenues are received as direct deposits to the Agency's Bank account. In the event that a check or cash is received it will be deposited within three business days. The deposit slip will be filed with a copy of the check and any supporting documentation.

XIV. General Bookkeeping Procedures

The financial records of NCSILC will be kept and modified on an accrual basis according to Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures. The chart of accounts will be established to meet the bookkeeping and reporting needs of the agency and its grantors.

NCSILC will use Quickbooks to record all financial transactions.

Expenses will be recognized and recorded as they are incurred.

Revenue will be recognized as funds are made available for the current fiscal year. When billing and reporting procedures become routine and predictable funds will be recorded as receivables as billed or in accordance with grant requirements.

Authorized bills will be paid weekly to insure timely payment and avoid late fees.

XV. Internal Controls

The Audit Committee of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, in its Audit Committee Toolkit recognizes that the system of internal controls should be tied to the scale of the organization. A lack of segregation of duties is not automatically a material weakness or even a reportable condition, depending on the compensating controls that are in place.

The financial staff of NCSILC at this time is one part time person who handles all entry level accounting and reporting functions, supervised by the Executive Director. To minimize the risk to the agency the organization has put in place the following compensating controls, some of which are included in other parts of this document:

Individuals with authority to print checks will not have authority to sign checks or initiate Electronic Fund Transfers of funds to the agency.

The Bookkeeper (working two days per week), generates all checks, However, the Executive Director, with the authority to access the internal accounting software, does have the authority to sign checks and initiate Electronic Fund Transfers of funds to the agency. Full Financial Statements (including General Ledger) are forwarded to the Finance Committee Chair monthly.

The Bookkeeper will keep all financial records that have not been reconciled in a separate location easily accessible to Executive Director and members of the Council.

No Petty Cash is maintained.

XVI. Payments to staff

Purchases of materials or supplies by individual staff and volunteers will be discouraged. Given the size and staff levels of the agency it may be unavoidable at times. If, in the opinion of the Executive Director, it is necessary for staff or volunteers to make a purchase on a personal credit card, the following procedures will be used for reimbursements.

The Payment Request will note that the purchases were made at the direction of the Executive Director.

Staff will complete an Expense Reimbursement Request Form. The Executive Director will match the attached receipts with materials purchased and check off each item and sign the form.

XVII. Posting of Receipts

Upon notice of Electronic Transfer of Funds or receipt of deposit slips, receipts will be posted using QuickBooks software.

XVIII. Payment of Invoices

Payment of invoices will be processed upon receipt of invoice according to vendor terms, proof of delivery and appropriate authorization. Payment checks will be processed weekly and distributed on the first working day following appropriate signatures.

Payment will generally be made only from invoices.

XIX. Travel Expenses

Business expenses, directly related to employment at NCSILC are reimbursable, upon completion of appropriate forms and submission of appropriate documentation.

Travel expenses will be reimbursed consistent with State Policy.

Travel in the immediate vicinity is to be recorded on agency travel logs and submitted at least quarterly. Out of area travel and any travel that requires registration fees, meal reimbursement or lodging expenses must be approved in advance, in writing by the Board Chair.

XX. Assets

NCSILC will maintain records of all equipment acquired including a description, serial numbers (when applicable), location, cost and acquisition date, funds used for purchase (including grant number), disposal method and date.

Small electronic equipment shall be kept in locked cabinets when not in use.

All essential documents related to NCSILC shall be kept in a locked cabinet with electronic back up stored in a secure location.

NCSILC will maintain appropriate and adequate insurance for all assets, taking into account the age of the asset and the cost effectiveness of maintaining such insurance over and above the cost of replacing such assets.

XXI. Non Expendable Property

At least three estimates will be obtained for major purchase over \$1500. Estimates may be obtained in person or on line and will be maintained with purchase documents.

XXII. Vendor Files

The Bookkeeper will maintain vendor files which will include all the information required by NCSILC to conduct business. All vendor files will be maintained on the QuickBooks system. Hard copies of checks, payment records, and original invoices up will be stored in vendor files maintained by the Bookkeeper.

XXIII. Access to Files

Corporate business and financial records, payroll, vendor files and other such records will be locked to safeguard confidential and other corporate records. Access will be limited to persons with legitimate business need for financial information. No information will be released or copied from confidential files without prior authorization.

Regular Backups of Financial Records will be made and stored offsite as a safeguard against the loss of records.

Personnel Policies

These policies have been developed to help acquaint you with NCSILC policies and answer initial questions that employees might have. It explains the NCSILC's most important personnel policies and benefits, as well as the specific opportunities and responsibilities that exist for NCSILC employees.

This policy is designed to familiarize employees and Council Members with NCSILC's policies and procedures, and is distributed for informational purposes only. Nothing contained in this policy is intended to create a contract governing the terms and conditions of an employee's employment. With the exception of the "employment at will" policy and policies required by law, NCSILC may revise, supplement, delete or deviate from these policies and procedures at any time at its sole discretion. These policies supersede all previous personnel policies or memoranda that have been issued on the subjects covered by this handbook.

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I. EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

All employees are expected to:

1. Work conscientiously toward achieving the objectives of NCSILC in compliance with its philosophy, policies and procedures.
2. Conduct oneself in a professional manner and perform assigned duties at a high level of quality, accuracy, effectiveness and integrity.
3. Work cooperatively with other staff members and volunteers and respect their findings, views and actions.
4. Be punctual and plan assigned duties to achieve effective and productive use of time.
5. Maintain and hold confidential all information in accordance with NCSILC policy.
6. Respond to the guidance, directions and instructions of the Executive Director and specified staff and volunteers.
7. Be constantly mindful of the obligations NCSILC, its staff, volunteers and members have for the welfare and well being of the consumers and groups served by the Council
8. Report to work groomed and dressed appropriate to job requirements and in accordance with prevailing community standards and safety regulations.
9. Avoid disrupting the workplace by fraternizing with other employees.

10. Conduct oneself in accordance with the code of ethics outlined below:

CODE OF ETHICS

The nature of the NCSILC business requires careful observation of applicable legal regulations, general accounting principles and procedures, and regard for maintaining the high standards of conduct and personal integrity that are essential if we are to merit the confidence of members, consumers, employees, and the general public.

A written policy cannot answer all questions raised in the context of business relationships, therefore, as an employee of NCSILC, you are expected to accept responsibility for recognizing and responding to specific situations as they arise. In questionable situations, you are encouraged to discuss the matter with your supervisor or Executive Director.

You should be aware of and adhere to the following components regarding business ethics:

- ◆ Confidential information regarding members, employees, consumers, and the corporation's business should be safeguarded and communicated on a "need to know" basis only.
- ◆ The discussion of confidential or proprietary information in public places, or where it may be overheard by other employees or consumers, should be avoided.
- ◆ Materials, including all forms, documents, programs, etc. are proprietary and for the exclusive use of NCSILC only.
- ◆ Employees are not to, directly or indirectly, solicit or accept any gifts of value as a "quid pro quo" (something received or given as a personal reward for preferential action or service by a consumer) or as a gratuity, in connection with corporation business.
- ◆ Gifts of money in any amount shall not be accepted.
- ◆ Gifts may be accepted from outside sources (including but not limited to members and vendors) only if it is not intended to influence or give the

appearance of influencing a business decision, is unsolicited, is infrequent, is of a nominal value, and is reasonable and customary.

- ◆ Employees must not engage in partisan activities while acting as an NCSILC employee.
- ◆ Employees are expected to conduct their relationships with those doing business with NCSILC in a professional manner.

If you have any knowledge of a violation of business ethics, you have a responsibility to report such information immediately to your supervisor or Executive Director, or Council member. All reports of business ethics violations will be investigated in a manner that is as confidential as possible and where necessary, will include consultation with a lawyer.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY

The Executive Director of NCSILC has responsibility for administering written personnel policies, which have been approved by the Council. To handle situations not covered by written policies and exceptions to written policy, the Executive Director may take immediate problem solving action without Council approval, keeping the Council informed of significant outcomes.

Every employee is expected to be familiar with these personnel policies. The Executive Director shall be consulted on questions of interpretation before decisions are made or actions taken. All employees will receive a copy of these policies and are advised that this is not an employment contract.

III. STAFF SELECTION PROCEDURES

Recruitment and hiring of all staff will be conducted by the Executive Director or his/her designee. All staff positions will be filled via a recruitment and hiring process and will be in accordance with Affirmative Action Policies and Procedures.

A. RECRUITMENT/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

NCSILC will not discriminate against any employee or applicant on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin,

disability, veteran status, sexual preference, or any other protected status. NCSILC will take affirmative actions to ensure that its personnel policies and practices further this principal of equal employment opportunity. The organization will administer all of its personnel policies and practices, including recruitment, hiring, training, promotion, demotion, transfer, discipline, termination, layoff, compensation, benefits, social and recreational activities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin or political affiliation, Disability, veteran status, sexual preference, or any other protected status. NCSILC will continually review its personnel policies and practices to ensure that all employees are adhering to this policy of equal employment opportunity.

NCSILC shall comply with all non-discrimination laws in assuring that all persons shall have equal access to employment opportunities. NCSILC shall comply with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, the Age Discrimination and Employment Act, which mandates that all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or political affiliation shall have equal access to employment opportunities. NCSILC shall comply with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act which prohibits discrimination in the employment or advancement of qualified persons because of physical or mental disabilities. NCSILC shall comply with the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 as amended.

B. JOB DESCRIPTION

All Council positions will have written job descriptions, which will be reviewed periodically and modified as necessary.

C. PROMOTION

As part of the NCSILC promotion-from-within policy, present employees will be made aware of openings and requisites concurrently or prior to the beginning of external recruitment.

D. SELECTION

All applications and/or resumes must be screened by the Executive Director or designee. Character and employment

reference checks must be completed before hiring. No applicant shall be hired without completing an interview.

E. ORIENTATION

Each new employee shall receive a comprehensive orientation and copies of all relevant personnel materials. Each new employee shall receive an orientation to agency policies and procedures when hired.

IV. EMPLOYEE STATUS AND BENEFIT ELIGIBILITY:

A. EMPLOYEE STATUS:

The following terms are used to describe the classification of employees and their employment status.

Exempt: Employees whose positions meet specific tests established by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and who are exempt from minimum wage and/or overtime pay requirements. (i.e. management)

Non-exempt: Employees whose positions do not meet Fair Labor Standards Act exemption tests and who are paid one and a half times their regular rate of pay for hours worked in excess of 40 per week.

Regular Full-Time: Persons who are employed “at will” and scheduled to work at least 32 hours per week for an indefinite period of time. Regular full-time employees are eligible for employer-paid benefits.

Regular Part-Time: Persons who are employed “at will” and scheduled to work less than 32 hours per week for an indefinite period of time.

Temporary: Persons whose service with NCSILC is for a limited duration. Temporary employees are not eligible for company benefits except those mandated by state and federal law. Temporary staff are not guaranteed regular placement regardless of the length of the assignment.

V. COMPENSATION

A. WORK HOURS

The normal workweek is forty (40) hours at the Council. Daily hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Individuals may alter this schedule by prior agreement with their immediate supervisor.

The SILC office will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. It is fully recognized that much of the Council's work is performed outside the office; however, it is the responsibility of each staff member to keep the Executive Director, or designee, informed of his/her whereabouts at all times during working hours and to account for same.

B. ABSENCES

If a staff member is unable to come to work or will be late on a particular day, the Supervisor should be notified as soon as possible.

Employees will receive supervisory counseling after the first unexcused absence, a written reprimand after the second unexcused absence, and termination from employment after the third unexcused absence.

C. PAYDAYS

Salaries will be paid every two weeks on a posted schedule. Timesheets for a two-week period are due by noon the following Monday. Electronic payments are posted, and hard copy paychecks are available on Friday, a week following close of the pay period the previous Friday.

D. OVERTIME:

From time to time it may be necessary to accomplish NCSILC's mission in hours other than the normal work time. When these circumstances occur, the following guidelines shall apply:

Overtime pay (1 1/2 times the employee's hourly wage -non-exempt employees only) is to be approved in advance by the Executive Director, and only for special projects. Overtime projects will be decided by the Executive Director, who will assess available resources and will assign personnel to work overtime on an equal basis according to an individual's desire to do so. Non-exempt

employees will be paid overtime at a rate equal to one and one-half times his or her normal hourly rate of pay.

VI. OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES AND COMPENSATION:

To avoid actual, or the appearance of, conflict of interest, any employee who engages in any remunerative activities in any field directly related to Council work must have prior approval from the Executive Director, and in the case of the Executive Director, the Chair of the Council. Any fee when representing the Council for such an activity will be paid to the Council. This includes consultation, speeches, conference participation, travel, and related work by Council staff members. Any non-related work performed outside the Council is expected to be done on the employee's own time. No employee may represent himself or herself as a spokesperson for the Council without prior written approval of the Executive Director.

All patents and copyrights resulting from Council work by employees will be in the name of the Council and shall remain the property of the Council.

VII. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

A. HEALTH INSURANCE

The Council does not provide health insurance at this time. Should the Council provide membership in a health plan, it will be made available for employees working thirty (30) hours or more per week.

B. WORKER'S COMPENSATION

All employees are covered by worker's compensation insurance, which is meant to cover the cost of reasonably required medical care and/or lost wages which results from an injury arising from, and in the course of the employee's employment. NCSILC complies with all state laws regarding worker's compensation. Any questions about coverage should be directed to the Executive Director.

Each employee has a primary responsibility for his/her own safety and an obligation to report any accident or injury to his/her own supervisor. Any accident or injury, which happens to an employee while on the job, must be reported immediately to the supervisor even if the injury does not appear to be serious. The employee must file a written incident report with his/her supervisor within 24 hours of the accident or injury. The NCSILC bookkeeper shall be notified. Bookkeeper will inform the Executive Director of the incident and contact the insurance carrier who provides Workers Compensation Insurance for the NCSILC, provide all information required, and track the filing process until the process is completed.

Employees seeking medical care for a work-related injury are encouraged to go to a medical facility recommended by our worker's compensation insurance carrier. See the Bookkeeper for this information.

C. VACATION

Following the initial 3-month probation period each full-time employee accumulates one vacation day and one sick leave day per month, retroactive to their start date. After one year of employment, each part-time employee accumulates one partial vacation day and one partial sick leave day equivalent to the proportion of hours per week of employment (ex: 5 hours a day out of 8, quarter time hours, etc).

Vacation time may be taken in one day increments or longer, based on the following accrual rate:

Years 1 through 4	10 hours per month (120 hours: 3 weeks)
Years 5 through 20	12 hours per month (144 hours: 18.5 days)

An employee accrues vacation from the first day of employment, but is not eligible to take accrued vacation until six (6) months of service is completed. Each employee may take vacation with full salary at such time as is mutually agreed upon with the

Executive Director or designee. The employee shall not carry-over from the preceding calendar year any more than ten days of vacation. Employees are required to take a minimum of 10 vacation days each year. Additional carry-over must be approved by the Executive Director, but cannot exceed twenty (20) days.

An employee will be reimbursed for unused vacation at the salary rate he/she is earning at the time of termination of employment. If a medically documented illness occurs during a vacation period, sick leave may be substituted for those days during the vacation when the employee was ill. If an authorized Center holiday occurs within an employee's vacation period, the day will not be counted as vacation. Scheduling of vacations shall be based upon agency priorities, seniority, and/or staffing requirements.

D. HOLIDAYS

NCSILC shall honor some federal and/or state holidays. An annual schedule will be posted on the NCSILC website (ncsilc.org).

Employees will be paid for holidays only when they work the day before and day after the holiday and is their regularly scheduled work day or receive approved vacation, unless they provide a Doctor's note verifying illness.

Each employee will be allowed one floating holiday per calendar year. Employees should submit a leave request indicating their intent to use the floating holiday and it must be preapproved by their immediate supervisor. The floating holiday may not be used in any other calendar year than that in which it is earned, and is not convertible to paid compensation.

E. SICK LEAVE:

Paid sick leave is accrued at the rate of one (1) working day per month for full time employees, and prorated for part time employees after the 90-day probation period (retroactive to start date). To be classified as paid sick leave, an illness extending over more than three (3) days may need to be verified by a physician's written statement. The Executive Director or designee may request a

physician's statement at any time. Under certain circumstance the Executive Director may request a release from the physician before the employee can return to work. Paid sick leave may be accumulated up to forty-four (44) working days.

Sick leave is to be granted when the employee is ill, for regular doctor or dentist appointments.

F. EMERGENCY LEAVE

The Executive Director may grant emergency leave with or without pay. Paid time will be drawn from accrued vacation or sick time.

G. TEMPORARY MEDICAL LEAVE

In accordance with the Family & Medical Leave Act of 1993, unpaid leave will be granted to employees who have worked for NCSILC for at least one year, and for 1,250 hours over the previous twelve (12) months. Unpaid leave will be granted for up to twelve (12) weeks for any of the following reasons:

1. to care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care,
2. to care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition;
3. or for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

Within the period of leave, NCSILC will require the employee to first exhaust any accrued paid vacation and sick time prior to unpaid leave. If the employee is taking leave due to their own illness, NCSILC will require the employee to first exhaust accrued paid vacation or accrued sick leave. During the time of leave, NCSILC will maintain any employer-paid benefits that are in effect at the time leave begins. During the time of leave the employee will not earn or accrue other benefits.

The employee must provide thirty (30) days advance notice when the leave is "foreseeable." NCSILC will require medical

certification to support a request for leave because of a serious health condition, and will require a physician's release to return to work.

Upon return to work, the employee will resume the same or equivalent position, with equivalent pay and benefits.

H. TIME-OFF RECORDS

Employees will receive a quarterly benefits update on their usage and accrual of sick leave, vacation and floating holiday time.

I. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A leave of absence is time off in a non-pay status. Upon receipt of a formal written request for leave of absence from regular full-time employees, management will determine whether a leave of absence will be granted. Vacation time or sick time off is expected to be used to cover such circumstances. The types of leaves granted are personal, and military.

The leave classifications are defined as follows:

1. Personal. Personal leaves are granted to employees having special personal need for an extended period of absence. Each case must be evaluated on its own merits considering the following:
 - a. The reason for the request;
 - b. The amount of time required; and
 - c. The employee's length of service and past record.

Normally, personal leaves are granted for periods of up to ninety (90) days.

2. Military. To protect the employment rights of employees entering the armed forces of the United States and to ensure conformance with the applicable federal laws, a leave of absence

must be granted to all employees (except temporary) who enter military service for active duty as a result of the following:

- a. Initial enlistment in the armed services of the United States;
- b. Initial training period in the National Guard;
- c. Being ordered to active military service as a member of the Reserves or National Guard for an indefinite period or for a periodic training period up to 10 working days; or
- d. Any service requirements under the Selective Service Act.

RETURN TO WORK

The employee assumes responsibility for keeping the company periodically advised of the need for continuing leave of absence status. He or she should contact the supervisor/manager at least two weeks prior to the expiration of the leave to discuss return to work. Following leave of absence, the company will make every reasonable effort, consistent with company needs, to reinstate an employee to the same position he or she previously occupied, or to a similar position. However, the company cannot guarantee that the employee will be reinstated to the same position or a similar position. If the same or a similar position is not available, the company reserves the right to offer the employee a lower-level position at the appropriate salary for such a position.

If this is not acceptable to the employee, the employee will be terminated. Exceptions to this rule are employees who are granted military leave of absence. They are entitled to full reemployment rights subject to the governing federal and state laws. Employees who do not return to work after leave of absence will be terminated effective on the last day of work or paid leave whichever is later.

BENEFITS

Holiday pay is not available to employees during leave of absence. Vacation and personal or sick leave is not accrued during the leave of absence.

J. BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

NCSILC will pay for time off in the event of death of the following immediate family members:

Spouse	Parent
Child/Step Child	Parent-In-Law
Brother	Grandparent
Sister	Grandchild

The maximum paid leave is three (3) days for each incident. Leave for attendance at the funeral of non-immediate family members or persons with some especially close relationship may be granted with or without pay. Vacation or sick leave will be used if available. Determination will be made by the Executive Director.

K. JURY DUTY

NCSILC will grant employees time off for mandatory jury duty or court appearances as a witness when the employee must serve or is required to appear as a result of a court order or subpoena. A copy of the court order or subpoena must be supplied to the employee's supervisor/manager when requesting time off. The employee is entitled to full pay for each day of jury duty or service as a witness up to a maximum of ten (10) days per year in addition to any other paid leave. If the employee is also compensated for their time by the court, that money shall be given to NCSILC. This does not include compensation received for mileage. However, time off for court appearances as a party to any civil or criminal litigation shall not be compensated by NCSILC, and the employee must arrange for time off without pay or use accrued vacation or personal leave for such appearances.

VIII. PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

All new employees will serve a six-month (6) probationary period beginning on the first working day to determine whether or not they fully satisfy the requirements of the job. The Executive Director, or supervisor, will carefully monitor performance during this time and will provide regular performance feedback to the new person.

The Executive Director, Supervisor, or designee will conduct at least one written performance review annually of each supervised staff member using forms designed for this purpose, and agreed upon by both parties at the beginning of the evaluation period. The objective of these reviews is to assist employees in their career development and to improve overall effectiveness of Center operations. Reviews will be shown to employees in draft form and discussed with them. Subsequent changes may be agreed upon before a final record is made. If agreement cannot be reached, the employee may prepare a statement for record as appropriate. All performance reviews will be signed by both parties, indicating that they have communicated on the subject matter even though they may not have agreed. The Executive Director will approve each written review before it is placed in the employee's permanent personnel file. Employees will also be given a copy of the final document. Performance reviews will be required of any employee promoted from within upon completion of six (6) months in that new position.

The Executive Director may grant a merit increase (with Finance Committee approval) for employees whose performance exceeds expectations if funds are available.

The NCSILC Chair or Executive Committee will have the responsibility for holding an annual review of the performance of the Executive Director. This performance review will be used as the basis for any adjustment in salary and/or benefits. The Executive Committee, with Finance Committee approval, may grant discretionary salary and/or benefit increases based on this review, commensurate with increased responsibility and performance, and the availability of funds.

Performance appraisals will be completed by September 30 of each year for all employees. Compensation increase, #14 The Executive Director may recommend a merit increase for employees whose performance exceeds expectations based on a regularly scheduled performance review. Final increase approval will be made by the Finance Committee based on availability of funds.

IX. GRIEVANCES

An employee is expected to consult informally first with his/her direct supervisor regarding any action, occurrence or attitude, either expressed or

implied, which is perceived as unfair or inequitable on the job. If a satisfactory agreement for resolution cannot be made by agreement with his/her supervisor, or if the employee has no direct supervisor other than the Executive Director, the employee may appeal to the Executive Director in writing. This grievance must be sent to the Executive Director within thirty (30) working days of the incident, and the Executive Director must respond in writing within ten (10) working days.

If an employee files a written grievance with the Executive Director, and no resolution is reached to the satisfaction of the employee, the employee may then request within ten (10) working days after the Executive Director's decision is received that the Council Chairperson instruct the appropriate NCSILC committee to resolve the grievance. The decision of that Committee must be sent in writing to the employee within ten (10) working days of receiving the letter of appeal. The Committee's decision will be final.

X. POLICY PROHIBITING HARASSMENT

NCSILC will take all necessary steps to ensure that each employee's work environment is free of unlawful harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, Disability, veteran status, sexual preference, or any other protected status. The NCSILC will not tolerate verbal or physical conduct that harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another's work performance or that creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile work environment.

Although all forms of harassment are prohibited, it is the organization's policy to emphasize that sexual harassment is specifically prohibited. Each employee has a responsibility to maintain the workplace free of any form of sexual harassment.

Sexually harassing or offensive conduct includes:

1. Insinuations that an employee's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect the employee's employment status in any way.
2. Unwelcome sexual flirtation, touching, advances, or propositions.
3. Verbal abuse of a sexual nature.
4. Graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's dress or body.
5. Sexually degrading words to describe an individual.

6. The display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.

Anyone who believes that workplace harassment has occurred has a responsibility to report the conduct immediately to his or her supervisor/manager, the Executive Director of the Board Chair. There will be no retaliation against a reporting employee. The reporting employee should bypass as many levels of management as necessary to make NCSILC aware of the conduct. NCSILC will investigate all complaints of harassment promptly and in as confidential a manner as possible, consistent with the need to complete a reasonable investigation. The supervisor or manager who conducts an investigation will be required to report the findings to the Executive Director. Other avenues of reporting sexual harassment include contacting NCSILC Chair and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or the N.C. Attorney General's Office.

An employee accused of harassment may be suspended with pay while the accusations are being investigated. Any employee found to have engaged in unlawful discrimination or harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions, up to and including termination. NCSILC will not tolerate harassment.

XI. ELECTRONICS COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

NCSILC continues to adopt and make use of new means of communication and information exchange to give employees the tools to do their job. This means employees may have access to one or more forms of electronic media and services, including computer, e-mail, telephones, voice mail, fax machines, on-line services, and the Internet.

NCSILC encourages the use of these media and associated services because they are valuable sources of information and can assist employees in doing their job more effectively. However, the electronic media and services provided by NCSILC are company property and their purpose is to facilitate and support company business.

Personal use: electronic media is intended to serve as tools that will assist staff to conduct business in a timely and efficient manner, and is provided for business purposes only. Personal use of computer equipment during lunch and breaks will be allowed, however, professional discretion is required. Any use of the internet to view or download offensive or pornographic materials, or for purposes of gambling, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Communications Rules of Conduct – Electronic messaging systems cannot be used to knowingly transmit, retrieve, or store any communication that is discriminatory or harassing; derogatory to any individual or group; obscene; defamatory or threatening; or to engage in illegal activity or activity that is contrary to NCSILC policy or business interest.

Electronic information created and/or communicated by an employee using e-mail, word processing, utility programs, spreadsheets, voice mail, telephones, Internet and similar electronic media generally is not monitored by NCSILC. However, NCSILC reserves the right, at its discretion, to review any employee's electronic files and messages to the extent necessary to ensure electronic media and services are being used in compliance with the law, this policy and other NCSILC policies. Employees should not assume electronic communications are private.

No outside software shall be loaded or downloaded from the Internet without prior approval from your immediate supervisor. If approved, it will be loaded by the appropriate personnel and will be arranged by your supervisor. All documents/files opened using NCSILC equipment should first be scanned for viruses.

XII. REIMBURSEMENTS RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT – ALL SUBJECT TO AVAILABLE FUNDS

A. PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION DUES:

Where membership is for the purpose of officially representing the Council, payment of dues and fees will be made by NCSILC, if funds are

available. Other professional memberships may be paid by the Council if they are job essential and approved in advance by the Executive Director.

B. TRAVEL PER DIEM:

NCSILC may reimburse employees for transportation, conference fees, and lodging, intercity transit, gratuities, etc., following the NC State reimbursement policy based upon the location of travel. Employees must provide receipts for transportation, conference fees and lodging. All such arrangements must be approved in writing by the Executive Director prior to travel. Requests in excess of the above limits must be approved by the NCSILC Finance Committee.

C. TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION:

Before an employee may incur out-of-city travel expenses, written authorization must be obtained from the Executive Director. If travel is undertaken without authorization, reimbursement for the expenses incurred may be denied and/or disciplinary action may be taken against the employee.

D. USE OF AUTOMOBILES:

When it is necessary for staff members to use their own automobiles for Center business, they will be reimbursed at a rate set by the federal rate for travel. On extended trips, automobile mileage reimbursement may not total more than round-trip economy airfare and required ground transportation service.

The Council will maintain a non-ownership liability insurance policy to protect its interests when privately owned automobiles are used for Center business. Employees who use privately owned vehicles for Council business are responsible for complying with state laws and for obtaining personal liability protection related to operation of the vehicle. Any accident occurring on Council business must be reported promptly to the Executive Director. Use of private, non-scheduled aircraft for Center business is not authorized, and employees doing so act at their own risk.

All employees who use private automobiles on Center business must receive authorization from the Executive Director. This authorization will be granted on forms provided for this purpose, following the certification by the employee of the existence, amount and type of insurance carried privately.

Typically, you should begin tracking mileage from the office or the originating point, whichever is less. If you are beginning the workday from home, and you pass by the office within a three (3) mile radius, you should begin tracking mileage from the office. If you do not come within a three (3) mile radius of the office, you should begin tracking mileage from home.

F. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION:

Any employee, whether full or part-time, who requests a workplace modification or an alteration in policies, practices or procedures for purposes of providing an accommodation based on Disability will be accommodated to the best of NCSILC's financial ability to do so. A request for a reasonable accommodation should be submitted to the Executive Director. A reasonable accommodation request only applies in the case of Disability as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 or the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. An accommodation requested primarily for convenience or perceived increased efficiency is not considered a required reasonable accommodation under this section.

Where a reasonable accommodation request is determined to be a financial hardship by the Executive Director, the Council will be consulted. Every effort will be made to try and find other funding within the community to meet the request. The preference of the requesting employee as to the nature, type and extent of the accommodation shall be given priority.

XIII. TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Employment with NCSILC is not guaranteed for any length of time, and is subject to termination for cause or no cause without liability. The end of an employment relationship with the NCSILC will fall within one of the following categories, with indicated policies applicable to each:

A. RESIGNATION:

Resignation is voluntary termination freely made by the employee for any reason he/she chooses. An employee shall give a minimum of two (2) weeks notice or will lose any benefits to which he/she may be entitled. Less than two weeks notice with good cause

may be accepted with benefits upon the approval of the Executive Director. Managerial employees are requested to provide notice at least four weeks prior to their last day worked.

B. REDUCTION IN FORCE:

Reduction in force is the elimination of a job position due to reorganization or financial considerations determined by Council management. Any employee so affected will be given as much notice as possible where circumstances permit.

C. TERMINATION:

Termination occurs when the Executive Director establishes that it would be beneficial to the Council to end the employment relationship as a result of-

1. Substandard job performance as substantiated by the employee's written evaluation report.
2. Misconduct involving gross employee misbehavior on the job, insubordination, wrongful use or taking of Center property, or conviction of a felony.

Termination requires no notice. NCSILC reserves the right to terminate employment at any time for any lawful reason.

D. RETIREMENT:

There is no mandatory retirement age.