

NEW STARTS FOR WOMEN INC.  
PERSONNEL POLICY

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New Starts for Women Inc. – March 1992 revised July 2006

Throughout this Policy, the female gender where specified shall be taken to include the male gender.

## 1.0 PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

### 1.1 Personnel Functions of the Board.

1.1.1 The Board of Directors has final responsibility for the adoption of personnel policies.

1.1.2 The Board has the legal responsibility as an employer and, if need be, shall make provision for professional legal consultation.

1.1.3 The Board will receive recommendations for terminations of employment of all staff. *amended January 2018*

1.1.4 The Personnel Committee of the Board of Directors completes the annual work performance evaluation of the Director.

1.1.5 The Board delegates to the Director, daily responsibility for the implementation and administration of approved personnel policy.

1.1.6 The Personnel Committee, in conjunction with the Director and staff, formulates and recommends written policy to the Board of Directors.

1.1.7 The Personnel Committee, in conjunction with the Director, annually reviews salary scales.

1.1.8 The Board receives reports from the Personnel Committee on appointments, resignations, etc. of staff.

1.1.9 The Board and the Director deal with grievances and terminations as outlined in the Personnel Manual.

1.1.10 The Director and staff will review, as needed, the Personnel Policies and the job classifications. They will then be presented to the Personnel committee and the Board for approval.

### 1.2 Personnel Functions of the Director

1.2.1 The Director is responsible for the appointment, development, direction and termination of staff within Personnel Policy limits and subject to approval of the Board of Directors.

1.2.2 The Director is responsible for aspects of personnel administration that are not specifically reserved to the Board of Directors.

1.2.3 The Director works to ensure effective communication between staff and the Board of Directors.

- 1.2.4 The Director or designate, encourages staff development by means of:
- Orientation for newly appointed staff
  - Staff meetings and consultation
  - Annual goals and objectives
  - Staff training sessions
- 1.2.5 The Director shall keep herself informed of municipal, provincial and federal legislation affecting the general welfare of clients and employees' working conditions.

2.0 HIRING PROCEDURES

- 2.1 No person shall be employed by NSWI without the position being properly approved either by inclusion in the budget or by separate approval of the Board of Directors.
- 2.2 No person shall be employed by NSWI unless a job description has been approved and a salary range established.
- 2.3 A vacancy for a permanent position shall be advertised and posted within the shelter.  
*Amended January 2020*
- 2.4 An interviewee required to travel over 100 km for an interview may be offered the following reimbursement for out of pocket expenses: *amended 2011*
- |    |   |
|----|---|
| a) | one night accommodation if needed to a maximum of \$90.00.    |
| b) | meal allowance of \$40.00.                                    |
| c) | transportation allowance, determined by distance, as follows: |
|    | less than 100 KM \$ 0   |
|    | 100 - 500 KM \$ 50  |
|    | 501 - 1000 KM \$100   |
|    | 1001 - 2000 KM \$200  |
|    | 2001 - KM \$250   |
- 2.5 No person may vote on the selection or recommendation of any person for employment by NSWI if she is an immediate relative of any candidate being considered for a position or in a relationship with any candidate being considered for a position that would present a conflict of interest. ("Immediate means mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, wife, husband, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law).
- 2.5 The following procedures are to be followed in the selection process:
- |    |   |
|----|---|
| a) | The Director with consultation of the Board of Directors shall, based on the qualifications required, decide what minimum qualifications (if any) are required for a person to be considered. <i>amended 2011</i> |
| b) | All applications received shall be reviewed against the above and only those who meet the minimum requirements shall be considered further.   |

- c) The Personnel Committee will advertise and interview candidates for the position of Director. The Board will appoint the Director upon the recommendation of the Personnel Committee.
  - d) The Director will advertise, interview and hire for all other positions. *amended January 2020*
- 2.6 Employees shall either be hired on a permanent or a temporary basis for a specified period.
- 2.7 No member of the Board of Directors shall be considered for employment by NSWI, unless she requests and receives termination from the Board prior to submitting an application for employment.
- 2.8 All new permanent employees shall serve a probationary period of:
- a) three months for full-time employees; and
  - b) 360 hours for part-time or casual employees.
- During the probationary period, the new employee's performance will be assessed to determine fitness for continued employment beyond the probationary period.
- 2.9 The Director shall decide whether an employee who is promoted or transferred to another position in NSWI should serve another probationary period in her new duties.
- 2.10 The Board of Directors may authorize an employee to assume duties of a higher paying position during a temporary absence of the position's incumbent or the filling of a vacancy on a permanent basis.

### 3.0 TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

#### 3.1. Salary Administration

- 3.1.1 Employees shall be paid every second Tuesday except when a holiday falls on that day. Should this occur, pay will be the preceding work day.
- 3.1.2 No employee shall be given her cheque earlier than the official pay day except:
- a) employees traveling on shelter business on the official pay day; or
  - b) employees beginning their vacation.
- 3.1.3 Employees will have their pay deposited directly into their account at a local bank.
- 3.1.4 Standard pay deductions will be specified by the employee in accordance with statutory or NSWI requirements.
- 3.1.5 Should an employee be requested to assume the duties of a higher paying position during a temporary absence or a vacancy pending an appointment by competition, that employee shall be paid at the higher rate of pay for the period of time that she performs the higher level duties. *amended January 2018*

3.1.6 Employees who use their personal vehicle for work purpose will be paid mileage at the rate set out annually, by resolution of the Board. Mileage claims must be made out on the proper form, submitted on a monthly basis and be accompanied by a clear record of mileage showing date, actual kms and reason for trip.

## 3.2 Hours of Work

3.2.1 NSWI will operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with staff on duty at all times.

3.2.2 The administrative office hours will be 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday - Friday.  
*amended 2011*

- 3.2.3 a) A shift schedule for hourly employees will be posted by the Program Manager one month in advance. Special requests will be given, in writing, to the Director for approval. When possible the request should be made at least two weeks prior to the change. The Director's decision will be final. (Amended February 2000)  
*amended January 2018*
- b) Full-time Shelter Support Workers will work four consecutive 12 hour shifts, followed by four consecutive days off. *amended 2011*
- c) Full-time Salaried employees will work 40 hours per week, being Monday - Friday, 8 hours per day between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. A schedule of each employee's hours will be submitted for the approval of the Director. (Amended Dec. 1994), (Amended June 1999)
- d) Children's Programs/In-House Coordinator shall work 30 hours per week hours are to be flexible to meet the needs of the house. *amended 2011*
- e) In-House Maintenance/Cook shall work 30 hours per week and will be determined by ensuring the needs of the house are met. Amended 2011
- f) Hours of work for Casual employees will vary with need to a maximum of one 12 hour shift in any 24 hour period and a total of no more than 48 hours in a week. In the event that a Casual employee does not choose to work any hours at all over a four month period, they may be removed from the payroll at the discretion of the Director. (Amended Dec. 1994) *amended 2011*
- g) All front line staff are required to arrive prior to the beginning of their shift to acquaint themselves with the situation of the residents. *amended 2011*
- h) If lateness is unavoidable, the employee is responsible for notifying the employee that is on shift.

- i) Time sheets shall be completed by each employee and submitted to the Administrative Assistant by 9:00 a.m. the Friday before the official payday (Amended February 2000) *amended 2011*

### 3.3 Staff Meetings

- 3.3.1 Staff meetings will be held the first Wednesday of the month or on a date decided by the Director to meet attendance and participation of staff. *amended 2011*
- 3.3.2 The Administrative Assistant will be responsible for recording and distributing minutes.
- 3.3.3 Minutes of the meetings will be made available to staff unable to attend.
- 3.3.4 Attendance at staff meetings is expected and will be paid at regular hourly wage for the time actually in the meeting to next full ½ hour. (Interpretation: if the meeting ends more than 15 mins into the next ½ hour the employee will be paid for the full ½ hour). If the employee is unable to attend a staff meeting, she is responsible for updating herself.

### 3.4. Vacation

- 3.4.1 Scheduling of vacations will be discussed between full-time employees and the Program Manager. The Program Manager will schedule staff vacations and shall use seniority as a basis for determining the schedule. In the event of a conflict the Director will determine and provide the final decision. *Amended January 2018*
- 3.4.2 Vacation entitlement for full-time hourly employees will be:
  - After 1 year of service – 120 paid hours
  - After 3 years of service – 160 paid hours
  - After 5 years of service – 200 paid hours(Amended Dec. 1994)
- 3.4.3 Full-time salaried employees will be entitled to:
  - After 1 year of service – 120 hours
  - After 3 years of service – 160 hours
  - After 5 years of service – 200 hours *amended 2011*
- 3.4.4 Vacation time will be paid as pay accumulated in an employee's vacation bank. (Interpretation – where an employee has taken a leave as in 3.6.4 or 3.6.5, upon return to work, the employee will only be entitled to paid vacation according to the amount of pay which has been accumulated or remains in the employee's vacation account.) (Amended August 1996)
- 3.4.5 Casual employees will be paid 4% vacation pay on each pay with an increase to 6% after 5 years of service. *Amended January 2018*

- 3.4.6 Vacation time must be taken within the year following the one in which it has been earned unless authorized by the Director.
- 3.4.7 When a statutory holiday falls within a vacation period, extra hours will be credited to the vacation period for full-time salaried employees and full-time hourly employees in accordance with the number of hours worked in a normal shift. (Amended Dec. 1994) *amended 2011*
- 3.4.8 In consultation with the Program Manager and the Director, an employee may take portions of her vacation at different times of the year. *amended January 2018*

### 3.5. Statutory Holidays

- 3.5.1 All permanent full-time employees shall enjoy the following holidays with pay: New Year's Day; Family Day, Good Friday; Easter Monday; Victoria Day; Canada Day; Civic Holiday; Labour Day; Thanksgiving Day; Christmas Day and Boxing Day and one other day, (International Women's Day/Remembrance Day/Aboriginal Day). *amended 2011*
- 3.5.2
  - a) When a public holiday falls on a regular work day, salaried (and hourly) staff will have the day off with full pay. Front line staff that choose to work the holiday will receive one and one-half times the regular rate of pay, in addition to the employee's regular day's pay for that public holiday. *amended 2011*
  - b) When a public holiday falls on a day that is not a regular work day, salaried staff will receive the next regular work day off with pay and hourly staff will receive earned time off hours in lieu.
  - c) Part time hourly staff will be paid in accordance with the current legislation. The total amount of wages earned, in the pay period immediately preceding the pay period divided by the number of days worked in that same pay period. *amended January 2018*

#### WITH THE FOLLOWING EXCEPTIONS:

- a) they have not worked the regularly scheduled work day before and after the holiday (A regularly scheduled work day includes an appropriately booked vacation day.)
  - b) they have agreed to work on a public holiday and do not report for work, without reasonable cause. (*Amended May 1994*) (*Amended Dec. 1994*)
- 3.5.3 Casual/relief employees will be paid holiday pay in accordance with current legislation. *Amended January 2020*
  - 3.5.4 An employee who is not entitled to public holiday pay but who works on the holiday is entitled to payment for one and one-half times the hours worked.
  - 3.5.5 Where arrangements cannot be made for casual/relief employees to work on a paid holiday, a full-time support worker will be required to work but will be compensated

one and one-half times the regular rate of pay, in addition to the employee's regular day's pay for that public holiday. (Amended May 1994)

### 3.6 Leaves

#### 3.6.1 Sick Leave:

- (1) Sick leave for employees is as follows:
  - a) full-time employees – up to 120 hours per year. Newly hired employees will have the sick hours prorated from the time they have been employed. *amended 2011*
  - b) permanent part-time or contract employees will be prorated based on hours worked.
- (2) Sick leave is provided at the discretion of the Director for illness of employees and for family emergencies. The Program Manager should be contacted when reporting sick leave. Compensation for accrued sick leave credits upon leaving NSWI will not be given. *amended January 2018*
- (3) Medical and dental appointments should be arranged, when possible, outside normal working hours.
- (4) Unused sick hours will be converted based on a rate of fifty percent of remaining hours to an RRSP contribution in the employee's name. *amended 2011*

#### 3.6.2 Compassionate Leave

Serious illness or other misfortune of family members, etc., may require an employee to request time off. Up to three (3) paid days per year can be granted for this compassionate leave. Absences longer than three (3) days should be requested in writing and addressed to the Director. In the case of the Director requesting additional leave, the request should be made to the Board of Directors.

#### 3.6.3 Bereavement Leave

- (1) Employees requiring a bereavement leave must notify the Director as soon as possible.
- (2) A bereavement leave of up to five (5) consecutive working days will be granted to an employee to attend the funeral of an immediate family member without loss of regular pay. "Immediate family" means spouse, parent, brother, sister, daughter, son, grandparents, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law and brother-in-law.



### 3.6.4 Parenting Leave

- (1) New Starts for Women Inc. will grant parenting leave on the birth or adoption of a child as follows:
  - a) maternity leave shall be granted in accordance with legislation and regulations set forth in the Provincial Employee Standards Act and the Federal Unemployment Insurance Act.
  - b) Unpaid leave of up to twelve (12) months shall be negotiated with the Director and approved by the Board. (Amended Jan. 2002)
  - c) Benefits and vacation accrual will be suspended until the employee returns to work.

### 3.6.5 Leave of Absence without Pay

- (1) Upon written application, special or extended leave may be granted to an employee by the Director, in consultation with the Board. Seniority is not accrued during a leave of absence.
- (2) Benefits will be paid at the discretion of the Board.
- (3) A casual relief worker will be hired under contract to replace the full-time employee who takes a leave of absence.

### 3.6.6 Personal Time Off

Personal Time off, without pay, may be granted to full-time employees, at the discretion of the Director, as follows:

- (1) personal time off may be granted to a maximum of three (3) regular work days per year
- (2) requests for personal time off must be made, in writing, to the Director three (3) days in advance
- (3) no reason need be given for requesting personal time off
- (4) in the case of full-time hourly employees, personal time must be booked in time frames of four (4) or more hours in order to accommodate scheduling of casual relief

### 3.7 Time off for Voting and Jury Duty

Employees will be granted appropriate time off work for voting and for jury duty as stated in applicable legislation.

### 3.8 Probationary Status, Permanent Employment

- 3.8.1 All new employees will be on probation as set out in Section 2.10 of this policy. During that period, should the employee feel that the position is not suitable, she may terminate on two weeks notice, or on a time negotiated by the employee and the Director. *amended 2011*
- 3.8.2 If performance of the probationary employee is unsatisfactory, employment can be terminated according to the Employment Standards Act, or on a time negotiated by the employee and the Director. *amended 2011*
- 3.8.3 Following the probationary period, an evaluation will be performed involving the employee, the Program Manager and the Director. *amended January 2018*
- 3.8.4 A successful evaluation will result in a recommendation to permanent status.
- 3.8.5 If the employee's evaluation is not satisfactory, the probationary period may be extended. Specific goals will be set and evaluated at the end of the extension.
- 3.9 Goals and Objectives *amended 2011*
- 3.9.1 Purpose: Goals and Objectives are determined between the employee and the Program Manager in consultation with the Director, in which the employee's performance is summarized, and goals for the future are set. Objectives are also set forth on how the goals will be met and the time frame in which they will be accomplished. Progress meetings will be held Bi-annual to determine if the goals have been met. Progress reports will be documented and should be viewed as a learning and teaching tool for the employee and their Supervisors It is a permanent record. *amended 2011*
- 3.9.2 Goals and Objectives are determined annually in cooperation with the employee and supervisory staff. Supervisory meeting may be conducted at any time, at the Director's discretion. Documentation is permanent and will be included in the employees personnel file.
- 3.9.3 Both the employee and the Program Manager / Director will contribute to the goals and objectives and decide on mutual direction for the future. The final draft encompassing both person's perspectives will be completed.
- 3.9.4 The employee and the Director will acknowledge goals and objectives and supervisory meetings by dual signatures. One copy is given to the employee, the original remains on the employee's personnel file.
- 3.9.5 The Director's evaluation shall be conducted by the Board of Directors in the same format as above. *amended 2011*
- 3.10 Lay-offs, Resignations and Termination of Employment

3.10.1 Staff should give two weeks notice of resignation, with the exception of the Program Manager, and the Administrative Assistant who should give one month, and Director who should give two months notice of resignation.

3.10.2 An employee hired on a temporary basis ceases to be an employee at the end of the specified term of her employment unless she has been appointed to another temporary or permanent position.

3.10.4 Termination Process:

- (1) When a recommendation to terminate an employee has been made by The Director, the Board of Directors shall hear the reasons for the recommendation.
- (2)
  - a) If the duties of a permanent employee's job are no longer required by reason of lack of funding, changes in programs, etc., that employee may be laid off by the Director.
  - b) Such permanent employees shall be given one (1) months notice of being laid off.
  - c) Employees who have been laid off shall be given priority for re-employment for all positions at an equal or lower salary level for one year after being laid off.
- (3) Any departing employee may request an outgoing interview with the Board and/or Director.

### 3.11 Staff Development

3.11.1 Employees are encouraged to upgrade their skills by attending staff development Sessions, and outside training conferences, workshops or job related courses. Requests should be made to the Director. The Director will make requests for training to the Board. All relevant workshops will be posted in the Front Line Office.

3.11.2 All employees who attend such courses will share their knowledge by presenting a written report to the Director.

- 3.11.3 (1) Where the Director deems it necessary to send an employee to an educational or training course in the interest of NSWI, attendance at such a course will involve no expenses to the employee concerned.
- (2) Tuition fees will be reimbursed as funds are available if the Director and Board feel that attendance at such a course will benefit both the Board and the employee and if the employee provides satisfactory proof that she has successfully passed the course or in cases where no examinations are held, that she attended at least 75% of the total lectures.
- (3) The Board will only support courses by employees when they do not Interfere with the efficient operation of NSWI and staff must approach the Director for approval of these courses.
- (4) Time-off without pay will be given for employees who require education hours during a regularly scheduled shift.

- (5) Travel to course, workshops, etc. shall be scheduled during working hours, if possible. Travel time will be reimbursed in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Director/Board of Directors.

### 3.12 Overtime

#### 3.12.1 Front Line Staff/Salaried Employees:

- (1) Who work overtime must record the time worked, purpose and date. This will be attached to the time sheet for that pay period. Where possible, approval for overtime must be obtained from the appropriate Supervisor, prior to the overtime being worked within that pay period. (Amended March 1998)
- (2) Overtime will be taken at a ratio of 1 hour off for every 1 hour worked.
- (3) Authorized overtime may be accumulated up to a maximum of 24 hours. An attempt should be made to take the equivalent amount of time off within a three-month period or extended with the consultation of the Director. Compensating time off must be planned at least one week in advance and authorized by the Director.

#### 3.12.2 Hourly Paid Staff:

- (1) Work done in excess of the regularly scheduled hours is overtime and must be approved by the Director.
- (2) Overtime will be taken at a ratio of 1 hour off for every 1 hour worked
- (3) If staff choose to attend court or other appointments with residents while they are not scheduled on shift, they must seek approval before the possible overtime is worked. Staff may volunteer to help residents but are not entitled to overtime.

### 3.13 Travel and Expenses

3.13.1 All travel and related expenditures must be authorized by the Director.

3.13.2 A representative of NSWI must attend the full session of any meeting, workshop, or duty in order to be eligible for travel re-imburement. With the consent of the Board, exceptions can be made to this rule for reasons of illness, travel delays, weather, etc. Anyone who misses any session or is unreasonably late will have a proportional amount of her expenses disallowed.

3.13.3 All travel and expense claims must be submitted with all supporting receipts within 10 days of the meeting function. Claims not received within 10 days will not be paid.

3.13.4 Claims for hotel, parking, bus, taxi or airfares must be supported with the original receipts. (Amended November 2017)

3.13.5 Incidental expenses such as personal phone calls will not be paid.

3.13.6 Meals and mileage will be reimbursed at the rate described in Appendix 1.

3.13.7 An advance will be given to the employee who is attending a workshop so that she does not have to use her money to finance the trip. This estimation of the costs shall be submitted to the Director by the employee.

### 3.14 Fringe Benefit Package

The Benefit Package for all full-time employees of New Starts for Women Inc. will include the following (*amended January 2020*):

- a) CanadaLife:  
The benefit package will commence 3 months after the 1<sup>st</sup> day of permanent employment. This plan includes:
  - Life Insurance
  - Accidental Death/Dismemberment and Loss of Use Benefit
  - Dependent Life Insurance
  - Dental Care Expenses Benefits for Employees and Dependents
  - Eye Care Plan
  - Long Term Disability Pension
  - Critical Illness for Employees and Dependents
  - Employee Assistance Program
  
- b) Registered Retirement Savings Plan: After one year of service New Starts for Women Inc. will contribute \$50 per month to the RRSP registered with Manulife. Contributions will only be made by New Starts for Women Inc. if the employee has also made a \$50 per month contribution. Dependent upon funding, all permanent employees will have a Registered Retirement Savings Plan started in their name. The contribution (amount to be determined annually by the Board), will be placed in an account in the employee's name.

The sole discretion to establish, amend or discontinue this program will remain with the Board of Directors of New Starts for Women Inc.

Amended Apr/15

## 4.0 CONDUCT OF STAFF REPRESENTING NEW STARTS FOR WOMEN INC.

The following points on the conduct of individuals representing New Starts for Women are intended to protect the interests and reputation of the shelter and to ensure its continued acceptance by a broad range of community groups.

### 4.1 Use of the Name of the Organization

Individuals may speak for NSWI only when they have received permission to do so either by the Director or by the Board or the Director (i.e. "I represent New Starts for Women and this is our opinion on..."). In all other cases, individuals must clarify that they are speaking as an

individual or in whatever capacity may apply, and are not representing the Shelter. This is particularly important in matters concerning statements of policy on behalf of NSWI. No press releases shall be made without the prior approval of the Chair of the Board.

#### 4.2 Acceptance of gifts

It is the firm policy of NSWI that no employee, volunteer or Board Member accept gifts or cash for services rendered in their capacity as representatives of NSWI. Exceptions are made only for small gifts such as food or flowers. The Board, as a body, or the Director as their designate may accept donations to NSWI if people wish to express their gratitude in such a way.

#### 4.3 Confidentiality

All staff shall uphold the Confidentiality Policy as set out in the House Policy and Procedures as follows:

- 1) NSWI will maintain the confidentiality of its residents. No information pertaining to any resident will be given to any individual unless written permission is received from the resident, or by court order or subpoena.
- 2) The following may be reason for breaking confidentiality and staff will inform the supervisor or her designate before breaking confidentiality.
  - suicide threats/threats on life of another
  - serious illness or death of a resident
  - subpoena/court order/search warrant
  - child abuse or child neglect
  - communicable disease
- 3) The proven violation of resident confidentiality is grounds for immediate dismissal and may result in legal action by the resident.
- 4) All employees, Board Members, volunteers and contract staff are required to sign Oaths of Confidentiality before they begin work. Residents and visitors are required to sign confidentiality forms upon entering the building.

#### 4.4 Standards of Conduct

- 4.4.1 Employees support the Board of Directors in serving the residents and are expected to carry out the duties assigned by the Board and to ensure that policy decisions of the Board are carried out.
- 4.4.2 Employees are expected to report for work regularly and on time every scheduled working day.
- 4.4.3 An employee who is unable to report to work or who is going to be late for any reason shall make every effort to call her supervisor to explain the reasons for not reporting and

advise when she expects to report. If the employee cannot reach her supervisor, she must arrange with other employees for the coverage of the shelter while absent.

- 4.4.4 It shall be the duty of all NSWI employees to conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect credit upon themselves and their employers.
- 4.4.5 All information acquired regarding NSWI business shall be confidential and shall not be released to any person or news media unless previously cleared through the Board.
- 4.4.6 All employees and volunteers shall protect and care for all property entrusted to them.
- 4.4.7 Employees are expected to dress in a manner appropriate to their job, with sensitivity to the professional nature of the job and the often limited means of the clients with whom they must build a trust relationship.
- 4.4.8 The following will be grounds for dismissal:
- a) breach of Oath of Confidentiality
  - b) betrayal of resident trust or confidence
  - c) disrespect of resident (physical and/or verbal abuse)
  - d) lack of conscientious, efficient service to resident
  - e) disobedience of program or personnel policies
  - f) unauthorized absence from duties including sleeping on shift
  - g) falsification of records and statistics
  - h) pilferage
  - i) attending work while under the influence of alcohol/drugs
  - j) unsatisfactory performance of duty
- 4.4.9 The following will be grounds for disciplinary measures:
- a) frequent lateness or leaving early without permission
  - b) failure to perform duties as per job description
  - c) insubordination
  - d) failure to make resident recordings on time

Directive for Staff Code of Conduct:

Policy: All staff are to be familiar with the New Starts for Women Vision Statement and Philosophical Statement of Purpose. All staff are charged with ensuring that they treat all clients, students, and other staff with dignity and respect.

Procedure:

- Minor personality clashes are to be dealt with directly between the individuals involved. Every effort is to be made to work cooperatively and as a team. Should an issue arise, discuss it directly with your colleague. If this fails to resolve the

problem, both workers will agree to attend a conflict resolution meeting with management.

- It is the intention of New Starts for Women to deal with interpersonal and personnel management issues in an expeditious, sensitive and confidential manner.
- Staff will not speak to clients about any challenges that they may be having at work or with their personal lives. Women and children who have experienced violence come to New Starts for Women for support during a traumatic time in their lives. We are here to support them. They are not here to support us.
- Where the worker becomes aware of professional misconduct by a colleague, such as stealing, reporting for work under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and engaging in any activity that would reasonably be seen as illegal, unethical or immoral, they shall take steps to bring that misconduct to the attention of management, doing so without malice, and preferably with notification to the colleague that this action has been commenced.
- Depending on the issue New Starts for Women Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy may be utilized.

Amended Jan/15

#### 4.5 Discipline Procedures

The purpose of this policy is to establish a procedure to deal with the unsatisfactory job performance of an employee.

- 4.5.1 The Director shall verbally present her concerns to the employee. This verbal notice will be documented in the employee's personnel file.
- 4.5.2 Should dissatisfaction with any employee's performance persist, written notice will be served upon the employee and a copy retained in the employee's file.
- 4.5.3 Record of verbal and written notices to an employee shall be retained in the employee's personnel file for one year.
- 4.5.4 Should the employee fail to respond to written notice from the Director, and the unsatisfactory performance persists the Director will give notice of discipline to the employee. The Director shall discuss the matter with the Board.
  - a) If necessary the Personnel Committee will conduct a hearing into the matter of discipline brought to its attention by the Director.
  - b) After considering all aspects of the complaint and finding that the complaint against the employee is substantiated, the Personnel Committee will inform the Board and ask for recommendations for disciplinary action.
  - c) Disciplinary action, which may be taken, can include: a reprimand, a



suspension of work without pay to a maximum of three days or a termination notice. Record of disciplinary action to an employee shall be retained in employee's personnel file for a maximum of two years.

#### 4.6 Grievance Procedures

- 4.6.1 Any employee who feels she has a legitimate complaint related to her employment, including any disciplinary action she feels is unjustified, shall first discuss her concern with the Director. If the grievance cannot be resolved through discussion, the employee shall present in writing to the Director, the date and nature of the grievance. The Director will make a decision within five working days. If no acceptable decision is reached at this stage the grievor may proceed as per 4.6.2
- 4.6.2 The grievance shall be presented in writing to the Personnel Committee or its designate. The written grievance shall consist of a statement of the facts and relief sought. Such grievance must be received within two weeks of the event or discussion that prompted the grievance.
- 4.6.3 The Personnel Committee shall give its decision on the grievance within ten working days of its receipt.
- 4.6.4 An employee who is not satisfied with the Personnel Committee's decision on her grievance may, within five working days of receipt of the decision re-submit her grievance to the Board. The Board of Directors or its designate, upon the receipt of the grievance, shall arrange a meeting with the employee or her agent within five working days or at a time mutually agreed upon.
- 4.6.5 The Board shall consider the facts and give its decision within fifteen working Days.
- 4.6.6 An employee abandons a grievance either by notifying the Personnel Committee in writing or by not re-submitting within the time limit.
- 4.6.7 The Director's grievance shall begin at step 4.6.2.

#### 4.7 Conflict of Interest

All employees and volunteers of New Starts for Women Inc. are expected to avoid all situations where there is or is likely to be a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. A conflicting interest is one which would likely affect adversely our judgment when acting on behalf of New Starts for Women and which may prejudice our ability to act objectively in fulfilling our duties and responsibilities.

- 4.7.1 The goal of this policy is to ensure that an appropriate level of objectivity and professionalism is maintained in all employee-client and volunteer relationships, both during working hours and when employees and volunteers are off duty.

- 4.7.2 Employees and volunteers will not enter into any financial transactions with clients, including the borrowing or lending of money, the purchase or sale of goods, or the exchange of money for services required. The only exception to this is for the sale of used household articles to clients and must have the approval of the Director or her designate.
- 4.7.3 Employees and volunteers will ensure that interactions with all clients are conducted in a fair, consistent and professional manner, both on duty and off, and that any interactions which could be seen as preferential treatment or favoritism are to be avoided.
- 4.7.4 Employees and volunteers will exercise discretion and caution in any personal or social interactions with clients outside work hours to ensure that counselor-client objectivity and professionalism are maintained, and the value of the employee's/volunteer's capacity to provide positive and appropriate role modeling is preserved.
- 4.7.5 Casual Employees and volunteers who have part time work with other agencies may have similar and/or same clients and may be in conflict at times with the statement of principles of New Starts for Women.

In the event of a conflict, the casual relief worker will not be provided with shifts for the duration of the client's stay at New Starts. Each employee and volunteer is expected to disclose fully, without delay, any actual or possible conflict of interest.

- 4.7.6 An employee and volunteer of New Starts for Women Inc. may not use information acquired in the course of their employment/involvement, with New Starts for Women Inc., in the concurrent involvement with another agency or to further their own personal, professional or business interests.
- 4.8 Staff Complaints

Should any staff person become aware of any other staff person's behavior that is reasonably thought to be illegal, immoral or unethical, that staff person has an obligation to report this immediately to the Executive Director or her designate.

Where the Executive Director is known to be involved in any incident that is reasonably thought to be illegal, immoral or unethical, that staff person has an obligation to report this immediately to the Chair of the Board.

- 4.8.1 Put the Complaint in writing and forward to the Executive Director.
- 4.8.2 Arrange to meet with the Executive Director to verbally discuss the complaint.
- 4.8.3 Staff may also utilize the Workplace violence and harassment policy.

In all circumstances no action will be taken without reference to specific incidents and/or circumstances. No action will be taken on the basis of a third party complaint.

Complaints regarding the behaviour of a staff person are to be directed to the appropriate level of management and are not to be discussed with other staff. Disciplinary action may be taken under Breach of Confidentiality policies.

Amended Jan/15

#### 4.9 Code of Ethics and Conduct

New Starts for Women Inc. acknowledges that the service users in this sector represent a particularly vulnerable population and their engagement in the agency depends significantly on the application of a consistent standard of care. As a result the agency recognizes that the adherence to ethical practice as a substantial priority.

In order to ensure clarity and practical guidelines for the ethical engagement of clients NSWI adheres to the code of ethics contained in this document. All staff must follow these practices and operate within an ethics based framework of practice. To this end all staff shall sign indicating that they understand and agree with this code of ethics.

New Starts for Women Inc. believes that women have a right to make their own decisions and shall have access to a full range of information regarding their options. Consistent with our philosophy, employees, volunteers and Board Members shall **support a woman's right to make her own decisions.**

Clients with disabilities will receive services delivered in a manner which respects their dignity and independence. They will be given equal opportunity to access all programs and services offered by New Starts for Women Inc.

Employees should be aware of their professional status at all times and their impact on the residents and community. This awareness implies a clear understanding of their role and how they should interact, both with each other and with residents. **At no time and under no circumstances shall anyone associated with New Starts for Women Inc. in a paid or volunteer capacity engage in conduct that is known or should ought to reasonably be known to be harassing, threatening, abusive or violent. This standard applies both during working hours and during non working hours. This policy applies to onsite and offsite events where you are representing New Starts for Women Inc.**

The confidential nature of the work of New Starts for Women Inc. makes it imperative that all information about clients be kept secure and confidential. To that end it is prohibited for any staff, volunteer or resident to share information about any service user in the agency without the consent of the client. All client consents will be kept during the period of time they are active and will be retained in the agency in accordance with its record keeping policy. All staff, volunteers and clients accessing the residential facility shall sign an oath of confidentiality upon entering the facility. Breaching confidentiality

shall result in consequences related to the individual who breeches this responsibility and may result in discharge from the shelter or disciplinary action against a staff or volunteer up to and including dismissal.

In order to maintain confidentiality on the crisis line and allow for one-to-one discussions with residents as the need arises, the office should be used as a professional place of business. Although an open-door policy is essential, there must be a clear distinction between socializing and employee duties.

It is not professional, and is expressly prohibited, for employees to have interaction with current residents or clients on off-duty hours for any reason whatsoever. Should a staff person be approached in the community outside of their hours of work or job responsibility they will advise the client who approaches them that they cannot discuss their situation with them outside of their place of work. The client will be requested to either make contact at the agency during regular business hours or via the crisis line to discuss any matter that they have in the appropriate setting to meet the client's need for service and confidentiality. Any such encounter will be recorded in the client management system upon the staff member's return to work during their regular work hours.

Crisis situations of former residents, outreach and transitional services clients should be re-directed to staff on duty at New Starts for Women Inc.

Employees should not receive any monetary or personal gain from any current or former resident.

Employees may not make recommendations or endorsement for specific services in the community or legal counsel.

Employees should neither lend to nor borrow money from any client.

A former client who is functioning as a volunteer should be treated as a professional peer.

Employees are prohibited from providing housing for any current or former resident, should a situation arise where a staff member's family member enters the program this will be discussed with the Executive Director as soon as it is known so that boundaries can be put in place that respect the right of the client and the ethics of the work performed by the agency.

Although the employees of New Starts for Women Inc. assist in finding housing for residents and may suggest housing alternatives, they should make it clear that the choice lies with the resident and that each resident must make her own assessment of the situation.

Personal telephone numbers, either of Board or Staff, shall not be disclosed other than to New Starts for Women Inc. personnel. Employees are expressly prohibited from

receiving phone calls from clients at their personal home or cell phone numbers. Should a service user obtain any staff member's phone number and make contact with the staff member outside of the agency business phones the client will be directed that they cannot call the staff member at their personal number and to contact the crisis line operated by the agency, no further dialogue with the client should occur beyond the relay of this information. This interaction will be reported to the Executive Director in writing on the first regular work day of the staff who received the contact from the client.

Employees shall practise only Agency-approved models of counselling.

Employees are required not to enter into a personal relationship with a past or present client for at least five years from the time the service relationship had been terminated. This may only occur if the staff member has a point of contact with the former client that does not originate from their involvement with New Starts for Women Inc.

Should an employee of New Starts for Women Inc. have a previously established relationship with a client accessing services, the employee must declare a conflict of interest with their Supervisor as soon as possible. The employee must avoid entering into a work relationship with a previous acquaintance or other persons with whom the employee could be considered to have a dual relationship. In these circumstances clients shall be offered assistance from alternate staff and discussion about the confidential nature of the service, the boundaries around contact in the context of the work of the agency and at the request of the client may be referred to another shelter or VAW service agency. Dual relationships impair judgement and increase the risk of exploitation. Examples of dual relationships include, but are not limited to, business or close personal relationships with clients.

Prospective clients shall be made aware of this Policy.

All donations both monetary and material received on behalf of New Starts for Women Inc. are to be expressly allocated at the direction of the Executive Director or her delegate. Donations received are for the benefit of clients served by New Starts for Women Inc. and will be used to further the work and goodwill of the agency.

The application of these ethical practices is of paramount importance to the integrity of the organization and all staff members must be in compliance with this code of ethics. Failure to comply with these ethical standards will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the agency.

All employees, volunteers and Board members are required to sign off on this Code at the start of their engagement with New Starts for Women Inc. and annually thereafter.

#### 4.10 Recreational Marijuana Policy

Intent: The employees of New Starts for Women Inc. are our most valuable resource, and for that reason, their health and safety is of paramount concern. Marijuana will be treated the same as all

other recreational substances. New Starts for Women Inc. has adopted this policy to communicate its expectations and guidelines surrounding marijuana use, misuse, and abuse.

Guidelines: Employees under the influence of drugs or alcohol on the job can pose serious health and safety risks both to themselves, their fellow employees and clients of the organization. To help ensure a safe and healthy workplace, New Starts for Women Inc. reserves the right to prohibit certain items and substances from being brought on to, or present on company premises.

### **Expectations**

The following expectations apply to employees and management alike while conducting work on behalf of the organization, whether on or off company property:

- Employees are expected to arrive to work fit for duty and able to perform their duties safely and to standard; employees must remain fit for duty for the duration of their shift;
- Use, possession, distribution, or sale of drugs or alcohol during work hours, including during paid and unpaid breaks, is strictly prohibited;
- Employees are prohibited from reporting to work while under the influence of recreational marijuana, alcohol and any other non-prescribed substances;
- Employees on medically approved medication must communicate to management any potential risk, limitation, or restriction requiring modification of duties or temporary reassignment; and
- Employees are expected to abide by all governing legislation pertaining to the possession and use of marijuana.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

New Starts for Women Inc. will clearly communicate all expectations surrounding marijuana use, misuse, and abuse. To help enforce this policy, management and employees are expected to adhere to the following:

#### Management will:

- Identify any situations that may cause concern regarding an employee's ability to safely perform their job functions;
- Ensure that any employee who asks for help due to a drug or alcohol dependency is provided with the appropriate support (including accommodation) and is not disciplined for doing so; and
- Maintain confidentiality and employee privacy.

#### Employees must:

- Arrive to work fit for duty, and remain fit for duty throughout their shift;
- Perform work safely in accordance with company-established safe work practices;
- Avoid the consumption, possession, sale, or distribution of marijuana, other drugs, or alcohol on agency property, and during working hours even if off company property;
- When off duty, refuse a request to come into work if unfit for duty;
- Report limitations and required modifications as a result of medically approved marijuana use;
- Report unfit co-workers to management;
- Seek advice or appropriate treatment, where required;
- Communicate dependency or emerging dependency;
- Follow the after-care program, where established; and
- Abide by all governing legislation pertaining to the possession and use of marijuana.

## Medical Marijuana

Where an employee uses medical marijuana, it is expected they provide a copy of their medical licence to use marijuana to New Starts for Women Inc.

## Disciplinary Action

Employees found in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Where applicable, New Starts for Women Inc. may also take legal action in accordance with the law.

### 4.11 Social Media Personal Use

Intent: New Starts for Women Inc. strives to maintain a positive image in the community, and has adopted this policy to ensure that our staff members are aware of their responsibility to maintain a positive image as a representative of our organization. New Starts for Women Inc. employees and volunteers who maintain personal social media pages (for example, Facebook, LinkedIn, personal blog, Twitter, Instagram) are expected to comply with the guidelines set out within this policy.

Staff continue to act as representatives of this organization outside of regular business hours, and should conduct themselves appropriately.

#### Definitions

Social media: “Forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages and other content” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). These include but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Snapchat, and Instagram.

#### General Guidelines

Agency employees who maintain personal social media pages or accounts must comply with the following guidelines as they relate to their association with New Starts for Women Inc. Employees will be held accountable for what they write or post on social media or webpages. Inflammatory comments or unprofessional or disparaging remarks made about the organization, its board members, employees, clients, vendors, or sister organizations may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Employees should follow the guidelines below when making posts or comments on any social media site whether public or private.

Employees shall conduct themselves professionally both on and off duty. Where an employee publicly associates with the company, all materials associated with their page may reflect on the company. Please be advised that inappropriate comments, photographs, links, and so on should be avoided.

Posts involving the following will not be tolerated and will subject the individual to discipline:

- Proprietary and confidential organization information;
- Discriminatory statements or comments of a harassing or bullying nature regarding co-workers, board members, management, clients and sister organizations; and

- Defamatory statements regarding the company, its employees, board members, clients, sister organizations, or vendors.

Where an employee mentions the company, they must include a disclaimer stating that any opinions expressed are the employee's own and do not represent the company's positions, strategies, or opinions.

Employees who use these sites are prohibited from publishing any private organizational information or any negative comments regarding the organization therein.

New Starts for Women Inc. employees are prohibited from speaking on behalf of the organization, releasing confidential information, releasing news, or communicating as a representative of the organization without prior authorization to act as a designated company representative.

Use of personal social media may not conflict with any existing policies of New Starts Womens Shelter whatsoever. This includes our Confidentiality and Code of conduct Personnel Policy.

Employees are prohibited from using social media during regular working hours; employees should limit use to official breaks (for example, eating periods). The use of social media must not harm user productivity or efficiency. As Internet access at New Starts Womens Shelter is monitored, please be advised that excessive use of social media for personal reasons is a misappropriation of company time and resources, and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Company policies governing the use of copyrighted materials, corporate logos, and other forms of branding and identity apply to electronic communications. Employees are prohibited from using New Starts for Women Inc. protected materials (copyright material, branding, or logos) without prior express written permission.

New Starts for Women Inc. strictly prohibits the use of company-owned computer resources for illegal downloading or uploading of copyrighted materials without express written permission and authorization from the copyright holder.

This policy is not intended to interfere with the private lives of our employees, or impinge on their freedom of speech. This policy is designed to ensure that the image and branding of New Starts for Women Inc. are maintained, as well as the health and safety of employees.

Employees should abide by these guidelines whether they mention the company by name or not. Even if the name is not mentioned in a post, it is possible a link can be made back to New Starts for Women Inc. which can negatively affect the company's reputation. Where a link can be made between a negative or inflammatory post and the company, even if not named directly, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

Any employee who fails to follow the guidelines set out in this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

#### Client Use

Employees will inform all clients and vendors on the property that taking pictures and recordings on our property and in the building is not permitted to ensure the confidentiality of all those in the building. Failure to follow this policy can result in their being asked to leave.



Employees who are photographed or recorded acting inappropriately or unprofessionally may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination or employment.

## APPENDIX I

### EXPENSES

- 1) Meals shall be reimbursed to a maximum of \$50.00 per day for travel within the region. The region described as Northern Ontario and Manitoba. New Starts for Women will reimburse at the following meal rates; breakfast \$10, lunch \$15 and supper \$25. Meals covered at any training session will not be reimbursed. (November 2017)
- 2) Hotel accommodation shall be reimbursed on the basis of cost incurred, for moderately priced accommodations.
- 3) Transportation will be reimbursed at the rate set annually by resolution of the Board when employees use their own vehicle. The most efficient mode of travel for the occasion will be used.
- 4) Mileage is paid at a rate of \$0.50 per kilometer

(November 2000)