

VENTURA COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
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PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

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I. Introduction to the VCBA

The Ventura County Bar Association is a non-profit organization established to maintain the honor and integrity of the legal profession. It promotes the due process of the administration of justice and cultivates social integration among its members. Our goals are:

- A. Provide general information about the legal services industry to the public at the highest degree of excellence.
- B. Promote a healthy and safe working environment.
- C. Foster professional and personal development of the organization staff members.
- D. Hire individuals who are dedicated to the VCBA's goals.

The VCBA is a privately operated organization with a professional staff and an elected board of directors. The elected body sets policy and organizes its programs while delegating the day-to-day administration and management to the Executive Director.

II. Purpose of this Handbook

The information contained in this Employee Handbook is intended to provide basic information about the Ventura County Bar Association's procedures, policies, and benefits. The Employees of the VCBA are responsible for reading understanding the information contained in this booklet.

III. Administrative and Personnel Policies

A. Equal Opportunity Statement

The VCBA is committed to an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policy.

This (EEO) policy insures applicants and employees that they are treated without regard to their race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, national origin, veteran status, sexual orientation, physical disability and/or mental disability.

It is the intention of the VCBA to act in accordance with all regulations of the federal, state, and local government when providing equal opportunity employment.

The VCBA prohibits and will act to eliminate discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, national origin, veteran status, sexual orientation, physical disability and/or mental disability. Any applicant or employee who believes that he or she is the victim of unequal treatment should contact their supervisor or the Executive Director as soon as possible.

All allegations of unequal treatment are taken very seriously and will be investigated. Perpetrators of unequal treatment will be disciplined and may be terminated.

B. Sexual Harassment Policy

The VCBA is committed to providing a work environment free of discrimination. The VCBA maintains a strict policy prohibiting sexual harassment. This policy applies to all VCBA employees. Sexual harassment seriously undermines the atmosphere of trust and respect that is essential to a healthy work environment.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) unwanted sexual advances;
- 2) demands for sexual favors in exchange for favorable treatment or continued employment;
- 3) repeated sexual jokes, advances or propositions;
- 4) verbal abuse of a sexual nature;
- 5) obscene comments or gestures;
- 6) the display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.

All employees of the VCBA are encouraged to report promptly any complaints about sexual harassment, sexual

misconduct, and sexual assault to the Executive Director or their supervisor as deemed necessary by the employee.

Persons found to be in violation of the VCBA's sexual harassment policy shall be subject to disciplinary action which may include, but is not limited to, written warning, demotion, transfer, suspension, expulsion, dismissal or termination.

The VCBA takes all allegations of sexual harassment very seriously. Any complaint will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. If the employee is dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they have the right to appeal their case to another management official. Retaliation against any employee who, in good faith, has registered a complaint under this procedure is strictly prohibited.

The VCBA recognizes that, given the nature of this type of discrimination, false allegations or harassment can have serious effects on innocent employees. The VCBA, therefore, trusts that all employees will conduct themselves in a responsible and professional manner.

C. Layoffs

An employee may be laid off due to periods of economic stagnation. Layoffs shall be made on a classification basis as established by the Executive Director. Skill and ability, previous classification status, and seniority shall be considered when determining which employee is to be laid off.

D. Resignations

In the case of a resignation, the employee shall provide the Executive Director written notification of their intent two (2) weeks prior to their intended resignation date. All sick leave and salary benefits cease upon the resignation date. A resignation date cannot be postponed for any reason. If the employee seeks re-employment with the VCBA, their application will be considered on the same basis as all other applicants. Employees who resign receive their final payment on the next regular payday.

E. Termination of Employment

A termination of employment for reasons other than resignation is made at the discretion of the VCBA. No cause is required to terminate the employment of an employee. For the first three months, employment may be terminated without notice by the VCBA. Thereafter, two (2) weeks notice shall be given. The final compensation payment for a terminated employee is due on the last day of work.

In the case of violation of the VCBA requirements covering the use of alcohol and/or drugs, violence or threats of violence, the Executive Director or supervisor has the authority to terminate the employee immediately with the right of review. Any employee who knowingly falsifies attorney or client records, or does not follow referral procedures is subject to immediate suspension or termination with the right of review.

The Executive Director shall inform a terminated employee in writing of all reasons for a termination. If the employee protests the termination, a meeting will be scheduled in accordance with the Grievance Procedure.

F. Drugs and Alcohol

The VCBA realizes that the misuse of illicit drugs and/or alcohol impairs employee health and productivity. Drug and alcohol problems result in unsafe working conditions. The VCBA is committed to maintaining a productive, safe and healthy work environment free of illicit drugs and alcohol.

Any employee involved in the unlawful use, sale, manufacturing, dispensing, or possession of illicit drugs or alcohol on the VCBA premises, or working under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol, will be subject to disciplinary action which may include termination of employment and referral for prosecution.

G. Injuries

It is the policy of the VCBA to take all necessary steps to provide a safe and healthful work environment for its employees. It is the VCBA's policy that all health and safety policies are in compliance with Federal and State

regulations. It is the obligation of each employee to observe these mandated regulations and practice safety at all times.

If you are injured or become ill, you are required to report this fact promptly to your supervisor and complete all required forms that your supervisor will provide to you.

Any employee who is injured and/or loses time from work because of a job related injury will be compensated according to the Workers' Compensation Act. No employee, after an absence-causing injury, will be allowed to return to work until he or she is released by a doctor.

H. Grievances

Differences of opinion sometimes arise between individuals at the VCBA regarding concepts of fair and equal treatment. Therefore, it is desirable to provide a procedure whereby differences may be evaluated in a formalized manner and without prejudice. Such a procedure should help to make the relationship between an employee and his or her supervisor one of mutual trust, understanding, and respect. The VCBA policy provides that the Executive Director is directly responsible for personnel matters concerning staff. Employees should feel free to discuss problems with their immediate supervisor but if such discussion does not resolve a problem, employees may initiate the following procedures:

Step 1: If employees believe they have been unjustly or unfairly treated, they are encouraged to make such beliefs known to their immediate supervisor even if the supervisor is the cause of the problem for formal appraisal and decision.

Step 2: If, after reviewing the problem with their supervisor the employee feels that the decision rendered is not satisfactory, the employee is encouraged to take the problem to the Executive Director and the Board of Directors as appropriate. Thereafter a thorough review of the problem will be made and steps will be taken to resolve the problem.

Steps 1 and 2 shall be in writing and signed by all parties.

I. Disabilities

The VCBA does not discriminate on the basis of disability in employment or in the admission and access to its services, programs or activities. This policy applies equally to employees of the VCBA and members of the general public who access public services through the VCBA. The VCBA strives to create a non-discriminating environment. The primary policies and procedures regarding persons with disabilities are identified below.

1. Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Disability (ADA Policy): The VCBA does not discriminate on the basis of disability in employment or in the admission and access to its services, programs or activities. Pursuant to the ADA, the VCBA's Executive Director has been designated to carry out the VCBA's compliance with the non-discrimination requirements.

2. Non-Discrimination in Programs, Services, Activities or Events (ADA Title II Requirements): When conducting VCBA-sponsored events at VCBA or non-VCBA facilities, the facilities are to be accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities as mandated by Title II of the ADA and the State of California Unruh Civil Rights Act.

IV. Professional Rights and Responsibilities

A. Business Hours

The VCBA's normal operating hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Executive Director may authorize a flexible schedule for employees on an individual basis.

B. Breaks

Employees working during normal operating hours are given one, one-hour long lunch break from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. The lunch hour may not be accumulated in order to shorten the working day. Other breaks are permissible at the discretion of the employee's supervisor. It is important that the employee notify their supervisor before any such break.

C. Change of Status

It is important that an employee notify their supervisor in case of any change of status since reported on their application for employment. Changes that are of utmost importance include changes of address, telephone number, and marital status. The information provided will remain confidential and will not be shared with any third party.

D. Confidentiality

All employees at one time or another will receive personal, privileged and/or confidential information. That information may concern other employees, the VCBA's operations or other organizations with which the VCBA does business. You are obligated to ensure that this information remains confidential and is not disclosed. This is true regardless of whether you are actively employed, on leave or your employment with the VCBA ends (for any reason).

Employees who disclose such sensitive information will be disciplined, up to and including immediate termination. **If inquiries are made from outside the company, particularly from the press, you should not answer, but direct all such questions to your supervisor or the Executive Director.**

If your employment with the company terminates, for any reason, you must promptly return to the Company all confidential documents and other materials that you have. You are not permitted to retain copies of any such documents or materials.

E. Dress Code

Employees are expected to dress in attire that is consistent with their position within the legal community and comparable to others of similar positions at other firms.

F. Quality Evaluations

The first six months of employment are considered the probationary period. During this time, the Executive Director will provide the employee with a written

evaluation after ninety days of employment and after six months of employment. Thereafter, the employee will continue to receive evaluations every six months.

G. Attendance and Punctuality

Your attendance is extremely important to the success of the VCBA. We expect employees to strive for perfect attendance and to arrive for work on time. We recognize that, on occasion, you may not be able to come to work or may need additional time before you arrive. Sickness and other emergencies cannot always be anticipated and may require you to miss all or part of your workday.

If you cannot report to work as scheduled, you must notify your supervisor. If your need for time off is foreseeable, you must provide as much notice as possible. If your need for time off is not foreseeable, you must provide as much notice as practicable, but in no event less than one (1) hour prior to your normally scheduled starting time. Of course, if you cannot contact your supervisor personally, you must have someone do it for you.

When you contact your supervisor you must let them know for how long you will be out and when you expect to return or, as the case may be, arrive for work.

You must submit documentation for absences due to persistent illnesses that require you to miss more than three days of work. Generally, you must provide a document from your doctor or other recognized health care provider that would justify your absence. Likewise, you will need to provide documentation justifying your return to work.

Excessive absences or lateness (including a pattern of absences or lateness) may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

If you are absent from work for three (3) consecutive days without notice, the company will consider that you have voluntarily resigned your position.

V. Benefits

A. Compensation

The Executive Director will receive a salary in an amount fixed by the Board of Directors each December. Other VCBA employees will be paid an hourly rate to be fixed by the Board of Directors each December.

B. Pay Periods

You will be paid on the 15th of each month and the last day of each month. If a regular payday falls on a holiday every effort will be made to have paychecks ready for distribution on the day before.

C. Insurance Package

All full time employees of the VCBA are given a medical insurance package. Details will be discussed with the Executive Director at the time of employment or promotion.

D. Promotions

It is the policy of the VCBA, wherever possible, to fill vacancies with qualified employees from within the VCBA. Promotion to all positions is based on, among other things, individual ability, efficiency, qualifications, performance, good attendance and punctuality, educational background and length of service.

E. Bereavement Policy

In the event of the death of your spouse, child, parent, sibling or a relative with whom you have been living, you will be paid at your regular rate of pay for three (3) consecutive working days' absence. For the death of grandchildren or grandparents, you will be allowed one-day leave with pay. Should you wish to take extra time, it may be taken as vacation time.

F. Overtime Pay

The VCBA discourages overtime. All overtime must first have the approval of the Executive Director and is only granted to non-management full time employees.

G. Sick Days

Sick leave will be based on the anniversary date of employment. In the case of an employee who has been with the VCBA less than one year, sick leave will be prorated in the manner described below:

- a. First Six Months of Employment: An employee is not entitled to any paid sick leave during the first six months of employment.
- b. Second Six Months of Employment: After this period, an employee is entitled to a sick leave credit of 4-1/2 hours per month times the number of months remaining in the first year of employment.
- c. After First Year of Employment: All employees in this category are entitled to 54 hours paid sick leave per year. This is in the nature of a credit; after the credited time has been used in any calendar year, the employee shall not be paid for time off for illness.

Any unused sick leave at the end of the calendar year will be paid to the employee as a bonus.

At times it is necessary for employees to make doctor, dentist and similar appointments during our business hours. It is our policy to accommodate the reasonable needs of our employees in these matters.

Sick leave should be used only if you or a member of your family is actually ill or has a medical or dental appointment. We add that limitation because we know that sick leave is often viewed in the same fashion as vacation and taken as such. It will be the responsibility of the Executive Director to maintain records with respect to both vacations and sick leave and, if necessary, to adjust paychecks in accordance with this policy.

A departing employee shall not be paid for unused sick leave. Employees shall not be allowed to make up time off for sickness.

H. Vacation

Vacation will be based on the anniversary date of employment. In the case of an employee who has been with the VCBA for less than a year, vacation will be prorated:

- a. First Six Months of Employment: An employee is not entitled to any paid vacation for the first six months of employment.
- b. Second Six Months of Employment: An employee is entitled to five paid vacation days during the second six months of employment.

After one year of employment, all employees in this category are entitled to ten days' paid vacation per year for each of the first five years of employment, to fifteen days paid vacation per calendar year after five years of employment, and to twenty days paid vacation per calendar year after ten years of employment.

After vacation time is accrued, vacation may be taken any time - all at once or in increments of not less than one-half day - subject to approval by the Executive Director and subject to there being no conflicts with other vacation schedules. A vacation schedule will be prepared each year, and employees are asked to make known their preferences as early as possible so conflicts may be avoided. In the absence of unusual circumstances, no more than one employee may be on vacation at any time.

Vacation is not cumulative from year to year. Any unused vacation time at the end of the year will be paid to the employee. After six months, vacation rights vest in the employee on the following basis:

Length of Service	Vested Right to Vacation
6 months to 5 years	5/6 days per month
5 years to 10 years	1-1/4 days per month
Over 10 years	1-2/3 days per month

Vested unused vacation shall be paid to a terminated employee.

I. Holidays

The VCBA observes 10 of the holidays in which the Ventura County Courts are closed. These days include:

New Year's Day

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

President's Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Columbus Day

Veteran's Day

Thanksgiving Day

Day after Thanksgiving Day

Christmas Day

If any holiday falls on the weekend, the day following or prior to the weekend shall be given as a holiday. The day that such a holiday is observed is subject to Board approval. The employee must work the day before the holiday and the day after the holiday in order to receive holiday pay, unless previously scheduled with the Executive Director.

J. Jury Duty

As a good citizen you may be called upon at some time to serve on a jury. If you receive a summons for jury duty you should notify your supervisor as soon as possible. The work of the VCBA is a public service, with limited personnel, and absence of even one person can seriously affect its programs. Jury duty is not charged against employees' attendance. While on jury duty you will receive your regular salary and be required to relinquish to the VCBA monies received as salary or

reimbursement while appearing. Travel fees remain with the employee.

K. Maternity/Paternity Leave

Four months maternity or paternity leave before or after the delivery may be granted to permanent, full-time employees after one year of employment. Accumulated sick leave and vacation may be applied; the remainder of the leave is without compensation. If the leave exceeds 120 days, the VCBA must reconsider holding the position for the employee on leave. While on maternity/paternity leave an employee will not lose seniority or continuity of service.

VI. Miscellaneous Items

The VCBA understands that not all policies and procedures can be concisely set forth in this Policies and Procedures Manual.

We acknowledge that with the passage of time, new employees will learn the structure and policies of the VCBA through experience. It is important that if an employee does not understand a certain policy or if they have a question not covered by this handbook, they immediately ask their supervisor.

Memorandum of Understanding

I acknowledge receipt of the VCBA's Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual. I understand that the manual's sole purpose is to summarize the VCBA's personnel policies and procedures and to set forth facts that will be useful to know throughout my career here. I also understand that the manual does not constitute a contract of employment and is subject to revision by the VCBA without prior notice and at its sole discretion. However, I may expect to receive a copy of such revisions. I also understand that this Handbook supersedes all prior versions of an employee handbook or personnel policies and procedures manual that the VCBA has issued. I further understand that my employment status is at-will and that this status can be changed only by a document signed by VCBA's Executive Director.

Print Name

Signature

Date

