

The Couchiching Conservancy

Personnel Policies

1. Application for employment

The Executive Director is interviewed and hired by the board of directors or duly appointed committee.

All other regular full-time and part time employees or contract employees are hired by the Executive Director in consultation with the person to whom they will report.

2. Confirmation and conditions of employment

Once the application is accepted a letter of confirmation shall be sent to the prospective employee. This letter shall specify the starting salary and the date on which the probationary period ends. For other terms and conditions of employment the new employee is referred to the appropriate job description and the personnel policies. The work performance objectives will be set out with the employee during the probationary period.

3. Probationary period

All employees will be subject to and advised of a probationary period of no less than 3 months from the date of employment.

If deemed necessary this period may be extended and any extension will be communicated to the employee in writing.

Employees will be notified in writing that they are not entitled to notice of termination of employment or pay in lieu of notice during the first 3 months of employment.

4. Reporting structure

The Executive Director reports to the board and consults with the board on matters of policy and major expenditures.

Unless otherwise specified, all employees report directly to the Executive Director who will act as supervisor for all activities. Staff will often work directly with volunteers and others within the framework of approved projects and will be expected to report regularly to the Executive Director on progress and any problems.

Any staff initiatives involving expenditures, new programs or relationships with volunteers, other organizations or the public must be cleared by the Executive Director or referred to the board at his/her discretion.

All dealings with the media will be referred to the Executive Director unless otherwise directed.

5. Resignations

The Executive Director is requested to give a minimum of two months notice in writing to the President.

All other staff are requested to give a minimum of two weeks notice in writing to the Executive Director.

6. Termination of employment with cause

Termination without prior warning may take place in circumstances considered by the Executive Director to be a serious breach of conduct, such as an employee using drugs or alcohol on the job, if she /he has misrepresented his/her qualifications for a position or if his/her actions pose a threat to the safety of themselves or other employees.

Before terminating an employee, the Executive Director or designate will advise the President.

7. Performance reviews

Evaluations made of staff performance are completed by the Executive Director in a format developed in consultation with the Personnel Committee. Evaluations made of the Executive Director's performance are completed by the board of directors or a duly appointed committee.

Evaluations should be achievement-oriented and related to previously established, measurable work performance objectives as set out in the employee's work plan.

These evaluations are shown to the individuals concerned, who then sign them and who may write their own comments if they desire. They should be used as a staff development tool and not as a punitive device. Evaluations form an ongoing record and are placed in the employee's personnel file.

An evaluation will be conducted at the end of the probationary period, at least annually thereafter, or more frequently as appropriate.

8. Termination of employment for inadequate performance

In accordance with the Ontario Employment Standards Act, any employee, after successfully completing the probation period, can be terminated with adequate advance written notice, with termination pay instead of notice, or with a combination of both.

When the performance of an employee is deemed to be unacceptable or inadequate as compared to previously agreed work performance objectives, he/she will be informed

as soon as possible and prior to a scheduled performance review, and provided with suggested corrective measures.

Should deficiencies continue, the employee will be notified in writing, required to acknowledge receipt in writing and given three months to bring the performance up to the objective. This notice will be retained and not removed from the employee's personnel file. Failure to meet with the performance objectives within three months may be cause for termination without compensation or further notice.

The responsibility for the termination of the Executive Director rests with the board of directors.

9. Working hours

Full-time staff will be paid a salary for up to 37.5 hours per week.

Other staff will be paid an hourly wage for the number of hours worked, as determined by the Executive Director and as outlined in the contractual agreement.

Employees are expected to arrive at Grant's Woods, or other work-site as arranged, by the agreed starting time and be ready to undertake their duties in a punctual manner.

10. Statutory Holidays

The Couchiching Conservancy recognizes the following statutory holidays: New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and Boxing Day. Employees will be paid for these days if they fall within their terms of employment.

If staff are required to work on a statutory holiday they will be remunerated according to the Ontario Employment Standards Act.

Should a holiday occur during an employee's vacation period an additional day of vacation may be taken or the holiday may be taken at another time.

11. Compensation time

All employees, with the exception of the Executive Director will be paid overtime after 44 hrs of work each week.

Staff will not work overtime without the approval of the Executive Director.

Any payment for overtime will be in accordance with the Ontario Employment Standards Act and will be either paid or given in time off.

12. Vacation time

All employees are entitled to 4% vacation pay or equivalent in paid vacation time.

Vacation weeks commensurate with years of service:

1-4 years service – 2 weeks (10 working days)

5-14 years service – 3 weeks (15 working days)

Vacation dates must be scheduled and approved by the Executive Director.

Vacation time is automatically available after twelve months of continuous employment. Vacation time between the date of employment and the end of the first year of service can only be taken at the discretion of the Executive Director.

The board of directors will negotiate and approve the Executive Director's vacation time.

Pay continues during an employee's vacation time.

Vacation time cannot be accumulated from year to year unless approved in advance by the Executive Director.

13. Absences

13.1 Sick leave

Employees will take no more than six sick days per year without the consent of the Executive Director. Employees will notify the Executive Director each day they are sick. If time off extends for a period beyond two weeks, the employee and Executive Director will discuss whether the employee has a reasonable likelihood of being able to resume his/her duties.

Eligibility for sick leave for regular employees is effective upon the completion of the probationary period.

After three consecutive days of absence, the Couchiching Conservancy reserves the right to request a doctor's certificate.

Sick days cannot be accumulated from year to year but can be extended at the discretion of the board.

Sick days cannot be accumulated as a payout at the end of employment or contract position.

13.2 Compassionate leave:

With the approval of the Executive Director, an employee will be granted up to three days leave of absence with pay in the event of the death of someone in a close family relationship or in the case of a family emergency.

13.3 Jury and witness duty

Up to three days leave with pay (after deducting jury pay) will be allowed to regular employees who are called for jury duty or required by law to appear as a witness.

13.4 Absence without pay

An employee of the Couchiching Conservancy will be granted pregnancy, parental and family medical leave in accordance with the Ontario Employment Standards Act

In extraordinary personal circumstances, an employee may request an extended unpaid leave of absence. The Executive Director and the President will decide whether to grant an extended unpaid leave. In the case of the Executive Director, the President, in consultation with the Personnel Committee, will make this decision.

If the Couchiching Conservancy finds that the leave, beyond the limits of the Ontario Employment Standards Act, affects its ability to operate without a replacement worker, it will not guarantee the employee a position upon his/her return to work.

13.6. Sabbatical

A request for a sabbatical by the Executive Director will be considered by the board. It would then be subject to the feasibility of arranging appropriate financial and logistical arrangements during the sabbatical.

14. Time Sheets

All employees except the Executive Director will maintain a daily time sheet.

15. Expenses

The board of directors will approve a kilometer rate that will be paid to individual employees using a personal car on Couchiching Conservancy business. At the discretion of the Executive Director a car rental plus gas costs can be arranged as an alternative.

If the Executive Director pre-approves a trip involving an overnight stay, accommodation and food costs will be covered once the employee has provided the appropriate receipts.

16. Employee benefits

The Couchiching Conservancy will pay all Mandatory Employment-Related Costs (MERC) as well as Workers' Compensation premiums and the Employer Health Tax. For all full and part time staff.

17. Professional dues and memberships

Employees are expected to pay their own dues and membership fees in professional societies or other organizations except where such memberships are considered essential to the job and approved by the Executive Director, or in the case of the Executive Director, by the President. Essential memberships will be paid in full by the Couchiching Conservancy.

18. Training and professional development

When participation in a course or conference is required by the Couchiching Conservancy, all applicable costs will be born by the Couchiching Conservancy.

Other training and professional development requirements will be discussed during the annual performance review.

Prior to enrolling in a course or conference, an employee must make a written request to the Executive Director and receive approval to attend.

To be considered for full or partial financial support the course or conference must contribute to the employee's ability to carry out his/her present duties, or prepare him/her for potential advancement within the organization.

19. Grievance procedures

In the interest of maintaining good working relationships an employee is expected to discuss with the Executive Director any problems or concerns regarding working conditions, salaries, or other matters involved in the employee/organization relationship.

If a problem or concern is not resolved satisfactorily, the employee has the option of discussing the issue with the chair of the personnel committee. The Executive Director will be notified of the meeting.

If the employee continues to be dissatisfied he or she may put the complaint in writing and send it to the chair of the personnel committee. The chair of the personnel committee will notify the Executive Director and the President of the board that a grievance has been received.

The chair of the personnel committee will meet with the staff person to understand the staff person's view of the complaint. The chair may attempt an informal resolution, or, where appropriate, convene a joint meeting with the Executive Director to attempt to resolve the issue. The chair will notify the President in writing of the outcome of the meeting.

If the issue is still unresolved it will be considered by a Grievance Committee consisting of two board members appointed by the President and a representative of the personnel committee, who will decide on an appropriate process for further action. The Executive Director, the employee involved, and the board will be

notified in writing of this process. No substantive decisions will be made by the Grievance Committee without hearing from both the employee and the Executive Director. Notice of substantive decisions made by the Grievance Committee will be given in writing to the Executive Director, employee and the board.

In situations including but not limited to allegations of incompetence, dishonesty or harassment on the part of the Executive Director, the chair of the personnel committee will not attempt to convene a joint meeting but will inform the personnel committee and the President of the board, and a decision will be made about appropriate next steps.

Copies of the written grievance, notifications and decisions will be kept in the employee's personal file.

20. Conflict of interest

Refer to the Conflict of Interest Policy approved by the Board of Directors Oct. 28, 2013.

21. Code of professional conduct

The Couchiching Conservancy expects and requires honesty and ethical behaviour from every employee in dealings with volunteers, fellow employees, the public, and other organizations.

Employees shall not discuss with or disclose to others information ascertained as an employee of the Couchiching Conservancy without the authorization of the Executive Director. Such confidential information could include reports, salary and/or benefit information, real estate transactions, and electronically stored data or analysis.

All files and documents generated by the employee will remain the property of the Couchiching Conservancy.

The Couchiching Conservancy takes employee privacy very seriously and deals with all personal employee information in a sensitive manner.

Employees are expected to have neat and clean dress, appropriate to the tasks being performed. For some outdoor duties, safety shoes may be required. The employer will provide other safety equipment such as gloves, and ear and eye protection.

May 29, 2006
Approved by Board