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# Employee Policies and Procedures Manual

Tanglewood Foot Specialists

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## Welcome to Tanglewood Foot Specialists!

We are excited to have you as part of our team. This manual outlines the personnel policies, work rules, expectations, and benefits in regards to working in our office. Please keep a copy of this manual for your future reference and contact your supervisor if you have any questions.

**What is a Podiatrist?**

A Podiatrist is a medical specialist who deals with the medical, mechanical and surgical treatment of the human foot and ankle. A Podiatrist’s schooling consists of four years of undergraduate training, four years in a college of Podiatric Medicine and, in many States, a compulsory residency program. A Podiatrist treats all ailments of the human foot and ankle, the only restriction being that he cannot administer a general anesthetic. A Podiatrist may prescribe any medication to aid the treatment of a foot problem. Surgery is performed in the office, outpatient surgical centers and the hospital. These surgical procedures, in most instances, give a patient permanent relief from a chronic foot problem.

The Texas State Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners licenses Podiatrists in Texas. Some of the more common ailments treated by a Podiatrist include:

* Corns, calluses, bunions, hammertoes, ingrown nails, thickened toenails, warts and tumors of the feet
* Skin diseases of the foot
* Foot problems in children and the elderly
* Painful arches, heels, joints, etc.
* Fractures of the foot and anklebones.

Podiatrists in Texas must attend 50 hours of postgraduate training courses every two years to have knowledge of the latest diagnostic and treatment methods. Podiatrists have admitting and staff privileges at most hospitals in Texas.

**Purpose of this Manual**

The manual is provided for the use of employees of Tanglewood Foot Specialists and contains statements of personnel policies and office procedures. It is designed to be a working guide for the administration of consistent and fair personnel policies and serve as a reference for front and back office procedures.

The policies described are not conditions of employment and are not intended to create a contract between Tanglewood Foot Specialists and the employee. Please understand that this handbook only highlights policies, practices, procedures and benefits for your personal education and cannot therefore be considered a legal document.

The written policies are intended to:

* Eliminate misunderstandings, which might arise from unwritten policies, inconsistently applied procedures, or lack of proper communications.
* Eliminate the need for personal decisions in matters of policy.
* Assure uniformity and fairness throughout Tanglewood Foot Specialists.

It is the responsibility of Dr. Schneider to administer these policies in a consistent and impartial manner.

Procedures and practices in the field of staff relations are subject to modification and further development in the light of experience. Each staff member is requested to keep the policy program up-to-date by notifying the doctors whenever problems are encountered or areas for improvement identified in the administration of staff policies.

If you cannot find the information you are looking for here, or you still have a question after reading this material, talk with the doctor. He is your best resource when you need additional information. The answer may not always be immediately available, but the research will be in place to source the information you need.

With your help and the help of all the staff of Tanglewood Foot Specialists, our office will grow with strength, enthusiasm and excitement, and be an enjoyable place of work. We are here to work hard, provide worthwhile treatment and service to the patients and have fun at the same time.

**Supplements to the Policy Manual**

The policies, practices and guidelines in this Personnel Policy and Procedures manual will remain in effect until changes are considered necessary through internal growth, competitive forces, or general economic conditions pertaining to Podiatric Medicine. Changes in the personnel policies will be made after due consideration of the mutual advantages and responsibilities to both management and personnel. Tanglewood Foot Specialists reserves the right to make changes, add supplements, or rescind any of the provisions of this handbook. When changes and additions are warranted and approved, you will be given revisions (additions) to update this manual. Ensure you file all updated material you receive to guarantee you maintain a current guide for your use.

**Distribution of the Manual**

Tanglewood Foot Specialists has prepared this handbook for its employees. The Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual is the property of Tanglewood Foot Specialists. A copy will be kept in a designated place in the office for easy referral. The material it contains is not intended for use or disclosure outside the office and may not be removed from the office premises.

#### *Office Mission Statement…*

***Our Mission is to SERVE:***

* ***S***tress-free environment for our patients.
* ***E***xcellence in podiatric care.
* ***R***eturn to full activity in the shortest time possible.
* ***V***ision: At Tanglewood Foot Specialists, we strive to keep up-to-date on the latest techniques and procedures.
* ***E***ducated physicians, staff and patients.

**Function of the office:**

Ensure that patients are 100% satisfied with our treatment and services, fully-educated about their condition and return to the office, refer others and pay their bill as agreed.

The office operates on a team concept. The success of the entire office is dependent on each member doing his or her job. We are always in search of new ideas on how this office can function better. If you have any suggestions or complaints, please present them at one of our regular meetings or, if it is urgent, after the last-scheduled patient of the day has been discharged.

**Why should people prefer our practice over others?**

We provide gentle caring foot care for people who deserve special attention.

**Tanglewood Foot Specialists pledges:**

* To provide a work environment, conducive to harmonious staff relationships and free from unfair treatment.
* To provide staff members with avenues for addressing job-related concerns.
* To recognize each staff member as an individual and valuable part of the team.
* To conduct Performance Reviews periodically to ensure staff know where they stand in relation to their work performance and are provided with guidance and assistance where needed.
* To pay wages comparable to industry standards in the community and also take into consideration the relative importance of each position, the employee‘s work performance and their contribution to the welfare of Tanglewood Foot Specialists.
* To maintain safe and healthy work conditions.
* To welcome constructive suggestions.

**Tanglewood Foot Specialists expects all staff members:**

* To give a productive day’s work consistent with their individual skills and abilities.
* To be friendly and courteous in their treatment of other employees and patients.
* To adhere to office policies.
* To express complaints or grievances through the established channels to ensure proper communication and mutually-satisfactory resolution of problems.

**Tanglewood Foot Specialists will administer its responsibilities:**

* To dismiss, assign, supervise and discipline as necessary.
* To schedule hours of work and make changes in the work schedule.
* To change work assignments or job classifications.
* To change methods and procedures by which work is carried out.
* To change office policies as a result of internal circumstances, competitive forces or economic conditions.
* To make decisions and act wherever and whenever deemed to be in the best interest of Tanglewood Foot Specialists and its staff.

**Part I Office Personnel Policies, Work Rule and Benefits**

## Employment Practices and Relations: Legal Responsibilities of Office Staff

Because office staff are not licensed health care providers, the doctor is legally responsible for all acts performed by these individuals. Even though the doctor has ultimate responsibility for the acts of his employees, staff can also be named as defendants in a suit brought by a patient against the doctor. It is important, therefore, that staff be acquainted with potential problems that can cause legal concerns for doctors and other colleagues.

***Some legal precautions staff should follow:***

1. Familiarize yourself with the State’s Podiatry Practice Act (available online at http://www.foot.state.tx.us/rules.htm). As an unlicensed person, the assistant is forbidden by law to carry out certain medical acts or tasks. A list of duties is also included, outlining the duties staff can legally perform and those it cannot.
2. Carry out all reasonable and lawful orders of the doctors.
3. Avoid doing anything to a patient that might prove dangerous to you.
4. Never overstep the boundaries that the doctors have established.
5. Never go beyond your level of competence in any situation.
6. Never discuss patients and their medical problems to any unauthorized person, in or out of the office, as this is unlawful as well as unethical.
7. Do not make any remark to patients regarding their former or present doctors, present or former treatment, results of such treatment or the way their foot appears. Non-verbal communication gives the same message to the patient as a verbal message, so be careful of your facial expressions when presented with unpleasant conditions. The ‘cure’ should never be used when discussing treatment with a patient.
8. Do not attempt to diagnose the patient’s ailment or prescribe any treatment.
9. Eliminate all physical hazards from the office such as slippery floors, folded rugs, loose objects on the floor, etc. Provide help to patients requiring assistance walking, dressing, getting in and out of treatment chairs, etc. Make sure that all equipment is clean and in a safe operating condition.
10. Do not dispense samples of any kind without first consulting the doctor.
11. If a patient seems upset, angry, or dissatisfied with the treatment he/she is receiving, be conciliatory and diplomatic and try to soothe them.
12. Do not release any patient information to anyone without the patient’s written consent and the doctor’s knowledge and approval.
13. If you have doubt about anything, do not do it. Ask the doctor.
14. Make sure that all medical records are kept accurate, are complete and are neat.

**Sexual Harassment Policy**

It is the policy ofTanglewood Foot Specialists to recognize the right of all employees to a workplace environment free from sexual harassment. It is our policy that ***all employees*** are responsible for ensuring that the workplace remains free from sexual harassment. Tanglewood Foot Specialists will not tolerate sexual harassment.

**Definition:**

Sexual harassment may be defined as an unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment also occurs where submission to an unwelcome sexual advance is made a condition, either explicitly or implied, of continued employment or promotion. Sexual harassment also includes where submission to an unwelcome sexual advance is used as a basis for an employment-related decision. Furthermore, sexual harassment occurs when sexually-related conduct substantially interferes with an individual’s job performance and would create, in the mind of a reasonable person, an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

**Complaint policy:**

Employees who believe that they are the victims of sexual harassment should immediately report the incident to the senior doctor in charge of the office. If the complaint involves the doctor in charge, the employee should report the incident to the most senior office employee. All complaints of sexual harassment will be taken seriously and promptly investigated. All employees should be aware that, to the fullest extent possible, the privacy of the parties concerned would be kept confidential. However, if necessary, the identity of the person making the complaint will be made known to the accused. Should the investigation confirm the complaint of sexual harassment, disciplinary action will be taken according to the facts and circumstances of the offence, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

**Retaliation:**

Retaliation by a person accused of sexual harassment against a person making a complaint will similarly not be tolerated by Tanglewood Foot Specialists. Employees wishing to report an incident of retaliation for making a prior complaint should also follow the complaint procedure outlined herein. Should the investigation confirm the complaint of retaliation, disciplinary action will be taken according to the facts and circumstances of the offence, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

**Equal Opportunity Employment Policy**

It is the policy of Tanglewood Foot Specialists to grant employment to qualified persons without regard to race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, physical or mental disability, or veteran status provided they are able to perform the requirements of the position in a satisfactory manner. It is our objective that equal opportunities are provided in employment, promotion, wages, benefits, and all other privileges, terms and conditions of employment. The ongoing support of this policy by each employee is a vital part of our commitment to further the principles of equal employment opportunity within the office.

**The Employment Selection Process**

Candidates for a job opening will be selected on merit, competence, experience and satisfactory character and employment references. Applicants will be thoroughly screened before they are considered for employment. Items which will be reviewed during the screening process include:

* The employment application form,
* Education and work experience,
* Prior work history
* References, and
* Test results to ascertain skill and potential job performance (if applicable).

**Reference Requests**

It is our policy that all requests for information concerning current and former employees be handled in a consistent and appropriate manner. Such requests usually involve credit information, personal and business references, descriptions of job duties and responsibilities, etc.

**Procedure:** All written, verbal, or informal requests about employees or former employees should be referred immediately to the doctor. Please remember this policy is for the protection of all concerned. By establishing this policy for all reference requests, we can ensure the information we release is accurate, authorized and representative of the doctor’s position.

**Terms of Employment**

The Employment Agreement will communicate the terms and conditions of employment. It will address compensation, salary and performance review, position and responsibilities, employee rights and expectations.

The Employment Agreement is not to be considered evidence of a contractual relationship between the employee and Tanglewood Foot Specialists and, unless otherwise defined in writing, such relationships shall be defined as 'employment at will’, where either party is free at any time to dissolve the relationship.

**New Employee Performance Review**

New employees will receive three written evaluations of their job performance during the first year of employment. The reviews will be conducted at approximately one (1) month, six (6) months and one (1) year of employment. This gives both parties an opportunity to determine where improvement or assistance and training are needed.

**Performance Appraisals**

Tanglewood Foot Specialists has a procedure for evaluating job performance on a regular basis. These performance appraisals are vital for future planning and provide a timely, fair and objective measurement of performance against requirements. Each staff member will receive a performance appraisal at least once a year, at which time they will receive a copy of the written performance appraisal form as completed by the doctor. A copy of this form will also be included in your personnel file. New employees will receive appraisals during the first year at approximately one month, six months and one year after date of employment. To give the doctors and staff members an opportunity to prepare, the staff member will be advised at least three days in advance of the appraisal so areas of mutual concern can be addressed.

The performance appraisal is designed to:

* Maintain and improve job satisfaction by ensuring staff know the doctors are interested in their job progress and personal development.
* Serve as a systematic guide to recognize needs for further training and progress planning
* Assure a factual, objective analysis for an employee’s performance relative to job responsibilities.
* Help place employees in positions within Tanglewood Foot Specialists that will best utilize their talents and capabilities.
* Provide an opportunity to discuss job problems.
* Serve as an aid in salary administration.
* Provide a basis for coordinating organizational and individual goals and objectives.
* Give recognition for superior performance when applicable. The Performance Appraisal will address job factors and behaviors, which are observable, measurable and specifically related to job performance.

***The factors to be considered are:***

* Quality of work
* Quantity of work
* Job knowledge
* Employee relations
* Patient relations

Salary adjustments will not automatically be made at the time of the performance evaluation.

**Employee Classification**

Tanglewood Foot Specialists classifies employees according to specific terms and definitions. The employee classifications are:

**Employees/Staff Members:** persons who receive a wage or salary from the employer.

**New Employees:** persons employed for less than ninety (90) calendar days (probationary period). During this initial orientation/training period, employees have the opportunity to demonstrate their attitudes and abilities and determine if their individual philosophy and goals are compatible with those of Tanglewood Foot Specialists.

New employees may leave on their own will or be dismissed without notice during this period. Upon satisfactory completion of the orientation/training period, employees will be granted full or part-time status. New employees will not accumulate seniority, nor be eligible for benefits during their initial orientation/training period. Upon satisfactory completion of the orientation/training period, the employee will be:

* Considered qualified.
* Reclassified as a regular or temporary employee.
* Given seniority retroactive to starting date.
* Enrolled in office benefit plan and
* Informed of the above changes.

**Full-Time Employees:** Those staff members who regularly work 30 hours or more within a working week

**Part-Time Employees:** Staff members who work less than the hours defined for the full-time employee classification.

**Hours of Employment**

**Hours of Work –** Usual office hours are:

Monday 7-5

Tuesday 8-5

Wednesday 7-5

Thursday 8-5

Friday 8-3

Employees should arrive in the office no later than 15 minutes before the first scheduled patient is expected and remain in the office until the last patient leaves. The main Patient Care Coordinator for the day should arrive 30 minutes prior to the first scheduled patient, as should the Primary Medical Assistant. Unusual fluctuations in work load, staffing availability and so forth may require variations in an employee’s arrival and departure times and total hours worked each day or week. Because we have an office team, we must reserve the right to assign staff to jobs other than their usual assignment when necessary

**Rest and Meal Periods**

Lunch break is taken during the period between morning and afternoon patients (see hours of employment). The lunch break is normally 60 minutes, but this may not always be possible if a treatment overlaps the lunch break.

**Food Policy**

1. No gum chewing in public areas or around patients. Gum chewing is permitted if you work in a private office like the marketing or financial departments. However, it is unacceptable to chew gum, or have gum in the mouth while you are on the phone.
2. No food by the computers.
3. Drinks are only permitted by the front receptionist computers if prepared in a non-spill mug and not left in the view of visitors or patients.

**Overtime**

A medical office differs from a business office or factory in that employees cannot stop work at a definite time because of the fluctuation of seeing and treating patients. Occasionally patients are seen earlier or later in the day and at these times, it will be necessary to be present in the office. In an unusual case where work is required outside of usual work hours, additional compensation will be provided at the discretion of the doctors. After the last patient leaves, the office is to be prepared for the next day’s practice, if time allows.

**Doctors out of Office**

When the doctors are out of the office, normal office hours are maintained. All employees are responsible for performing their usual duties during these periods.

**Absenteeism**

In order to ensure our patients receive the proper treatment, it is imperative that we have adequate staff to handle the workload. Therefore, frequent absences of short-term duration, disabilities of relatively long duration and excessive tardiness are not acceptable and constitute an unsatisfactory work record. Staff members who are unable to report to work are expected to notify the senior doctor directly by phone at least one hour before starting time. You should not just leave a message on the answering machine, but page the doctor and call the employee that will cover you for that day. If you are not able to call, a member of your family should contact the doctors. You are expected to report in on each day of your absence. You should tell the doctors the reason and likely duration of your absence. Excessive absences will result in disciplinary action and possible discharge.

**Tardiness**

You are expected to start work at the scheduled time, 15 minutes before the first patient appointment or as described above. If you are going to be more that 15 minutes late, you must call the doctor and give your expected time of arrival. Repeated incidences of tardiness or leaving work early may result in disciplinary action, including possible discharge.

**Job Abandonment**

If you are absent from work for two days and have not contacted the doctor, you may be released on the grounds of job abandonment.

**Leaving the Premises**

Leaving the office for personal reasons during regular work hours requires the doctors’ prior approval.

**Wages and Salaries**

**Wages and Salaries Policy**

Tanglewood Foot Specialists will maintain a salary administration program, which will:

* Provide payment of salaries comparable to industry standards in the community
* Allow for variances in individual performance, ability, knowledge and skill, and
* Provide incentives and other means of compensation to encourage each individual to strive for improved performance.

**Payday**

Payday for Tanglewood Foot Specialists will be every on the 15th and 30th of each month. Payroll is managed through Paychex and we encourage all employees to set up direct deposit. Employees are responsible for using the Minutehound system to maintain accurate times. A fingerprint scan-in is required upon arrival, scan-out at lunch, scan-in at the start of afternoon hours, and scan-out upon leaving for the day. If a scan is forgotten, make a note of the proper time and provide it to the payroll coordinator.

**Garnishment of Wages**

Tanglewood Foot Specialists is required by law to recognize certain court orders, liens and wage assignments. When a pending garnishment or wage assignment is received, the doctors will discuss it with the employee in an effort to settle the matter without involving Tanglewood Foot Specialists. Employees are encouraged to avoid financial transactions that may result in wage garnishments.

**Lost Paychecks**

Staff members are responsible for their paychecks once they have been received. Checks lost or otherwise missing should be reported immediately so a stop payment may be initiated. We encourage all employees to take advantage of direct deposit to avoid these situations.

**Payroll Deductions**

**New Employees:** New employees are required to fill out a Withholding Exemption Certificate (form W-4) on or before the day they begin work. If an employee fails to fill out form W-4, Tanglewood Foot Specialists is required to withhold the maximum amount of tax. A Form W-4 remains in effect until a new amended form is submitted.

**Change in Status:** An employee must file an amended form W-4 reducing the number of exemptions with 10 days if:

* The spouse for whom the employee has been claiming an exemption is divorced, legally separated or claims his/her own exemptions on a separate certificate.
* The support of a dependent for which the employee has claimed exemptions is assumed by someone else or no longer furnishes more than half the support each year.
* The employee finds the income of a dependent relative is less than the legally-allowable amount for the year, and the employee had not previously claimed an exemption for the dependent.
* The employee or his/her spouse will reach the age of 65 on or before January 1 of the following year.
* The employee or his/her spouse becomes blind.

**Validity:** The employee is required to submit the W-4 Form to the Internal Revenue Service for review if they:

* Earn more than $200 a week and are claiming 14 exemptions; or
* Claim total exemption from withholding; or
* Have claimed an excessive number of dependents according to the employer

**Wage and Tax Statement**

Each employee will receive two copies of form W-2 showing income and social security taxes withheld for the year by January 31 the following year.

**Employee Benefits**

**Introduction**

Once you satisfy certain eligibility requirements, you may participate in our benefit program. These include:

* Personal Day Benefits
* Vacation and Holiday Time

Eligibility requirements and further information concerning these benefit programs is explained elsewhere in the handbook.

**Vacation Benefits**

Tanglewood Foot Specialists recognizes the value of rest and relaxation and encourages employees to use all vested vacation benefits. Employees working over an average of 30 hours per week based on the last full year are eligible for vacation, with pay, following their completion of a year’s of employment with Tanglewood Foot Specialists. All vacation time will be paid at the standard rate. Vacation time will be earned according to the following schedule:

**Length of Continuous Service Vacation Benefit**

* 1-2 years = 1 week
* 3-4 years = 2 weeks
* 5 years = 2 weeks and 3 days

You cannot take more than one week of vacation at a time. A Completed Staff Work (CSW) form must be filled out and put in the owner’s communication box. You must present a solution that will cover your post taking into consideration the efficacy of the office and include this on the CSW sheet. Please ensure the colleague who is covering you initials the form to indicate their approval of the solution. If the employee’s employment is terminated for any reason, this includes resignation, and the employee has not taken any vacation they had become entitled to, they forfeit that vacation time and will not be paid for the days they did not use. The above also applies to sick days. The employee cannot take more than four nights as vacation time, with six allowed for employees with service of five or more years.

The vacation time is in lieu of regular working hours. If the employee works only half a day and takes that day as vacation, only a half vacation day will be given.

Vacation time shall be taken in full-day increments. Split vacations are permissible if scheduling permits; however, requests for vacations of less than one-week duration are not encouraged. If a paid holiday falls during the scheduled vacation period, the staff member will be given an additional day off with pay or may be paid for the day at the discretion of the doctors. Vacation time must be scheduled at least three weeks in advance by giving a written request (filling out a CSW form) for time off to the doctor. Approval of requests for vacation time will be given according to the needs of the office at that particular time. Only one employee will be allowed to take vacation time on a given day unless an extenuating circumstance is determined by the doctors. Multiple requests for common vacation days will be resolved in favor of the employee with the greatest seniority.

**Employees cannot receive payment in lieu of vacation.**

Staff on various leaves of absences will either discontinue accrual of vacation days, holidays, and illness benefits at the time of the leave or after 30 days from the date the leave began (See Leaves of Absence).

**Holiday Benefits**

Tanglewood Foot Specialists recognizes the importance of leisure time in achieving greater productivity and provides all employees with the following holidays each year. All holiday time will begin immediately after employment.

Paid holidays observed are:

* New Year’s Day
* Memorial Day
* Independence Day, July 4th
* Labor Day
* Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after.
* Christmas

When a scheduled holiday falls on Sunday, it will be observed on the following Monday. When a scheduled holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be observed on the preceding Friday. Holidays that occur during an employee’s vacation will not be counted as a vacation day, but rather as holiday time. Reasonable accommodations will be made to the religious needs of employees upon approval of the doctors. These additional religious holidays may be observed without pay.

**Leaves of Absence**

Leaves of absence are defined as an excused absence without pay. An absence involving paid time off is not considered a leave absence. Leaves of absence are granted for various reasons and are listed in this section. Benefit eligibility dates and the salary and performance review date will be advanced thirty days for each month of absence.

**Sick Leave**

After three months of working, the employee will be granted three sick days per year. After working three years, the employee will be granted five sick days.

Employees are not granted extra pay or time off for illness that fall during a vacation or holiday.

Sick leave exceeding the allotted time is regarded as time off without pay. However, staff members can use earned vacation time after sick leave is up.

Sick leave is to be used for illness only. All personal business should be conducted on the employee’s own time, whenever possible.

Tanglewood Foot Specialists pays employees their regular hourly wage, or a portion of it, for all unused sick days at the end of each year.

**Bereavement**

In the event of death in the immediate family, a full-time employee who has completed the provisional period will be allowed up to three consecutive working days off to arrange and attend the funeral. The time will be paid time, but will be excused. If you require more than three days, you may request a personal leave of absence for additional unpaid time or the opportunity to take unused vacation time. Immediate family includes: spouse, children, sister, brother, mother, father, current mother/father-in-law, or legal guardian.

Employees who have not completed their provisional period and those who are not full-time may request up to three days off without pay for bereavement leave.

**Jury Duty**

If you are called to serve on jury duty, you should notify the doctors immediately. Employees will be provided with unlimited time off for jury duty and will be paid for time spent on jury duty, up to a maximum of two weeks.

All jury duty will be excused up to the amount indicated on the certification of days spent on the jury duty form provided by the Jury Commissioner’s office. If released from jury duty prior to the end of the day, you must return to work for the balance of the day.

**Witness Duty**

An employee who is required by law to appear in court as a witness may take unpaid time off for such purpose provided arrangements are made through the doctors with appropriate advance notice.

**Voting Time**

Because Tanglewood Foot Specialists has a continuing interest in encouraging responsible citizenship, employees are urged to vote for candidates of their choice at local, state and national elections. Employees are to go to the polls before or after regular working hours. However, to make the voting process more available, exceptions will be permitted if pre-approved by the doctors.

**Military Leave**

An employee who enters the armed forces of the United States will be placed on an extended leave without pay in accordance with applicable federal laws. Upon completion of military service, the employee will be reinstated with full seniority to their former position or to a comparable role if application for re-employment is made within 90 calendar days of release from the service.

An employee who is a member of the National Guard or of a reserve component of the armed forces shall, upon furnishing a copy of the official orders or instruction, be granted a military training leave. Training leaves will not, except in an emergency or in the event of extenuating circumstances, exceed two weeks a year, plus reasonable travel times. All military training leaves will be unpaid. Vacation days, holidays and illness benefits do not accrue during any period of this leave of absence.

**Maternity Leave**

When pregnancy causes a medical disability for an employee, that employee will be provided with up to six weeks of excused, unpaid time off. Each case of disability for pregnancy-related reasons must be documented by a physician’s note. This policy also allows for the mother to remain at home with an adopted child during the initial period of adjustment. Employees will be guaranteed a return to work to the same or similar job position as they occupied prior to absence on the maternity leave. Vacation days, holiday and illness benefits do not accrue during any period of the leave of absence.

**Child Care Leave**

This leave of absence is intended for the ease of either parent when time off is needed on an extended basis for care of family members, including newborn children. Duration of this leave will be based upon the employee’s request and the needs of the business. None of this time off will be paid. If the leave of absence is greater than 30 days, there is no guarantee of return to work.

Vacation days, holiday and illness benefits will stop accruing after thirty (30) days from the date the leave began.

**Nursing Mothers**

Tanglewood Foot Specialists recognizes the importance and need of nursing an infant and therefore pumping during the day. The employee will be provided with a private area for such purposes and will coordinate with the office manager to attempt to plan for the least disruption to the schedule. Hourly employees must clock out during this time.

**Personal Leave**

This leave of absence is intended for use of employees when time off is needed on an extended basis to attend school, settle family matters, or attend to other personal needs. Duration of this leave is based upon the employee’s request and needs of the business. Leave of this type will be unpaid. If this leave of absence is greater than thirty days, there will be no guarantee of return to work. Vacation days, holiday and illness benefits do not accrue during any period of this leave of absence.

**Other Medical Leave**

Employees who are temporarily unable to perform their usual and customary work due to a personal illness or injury, including a pregnancy-related condition, will be granted a medical leave of absence. This medical leave will be granted based on a physician’s written statement that an employee is no longer able to work due to such a medical disability.

To be eligible for other medical leave, the employee must provide the doctors with reasonable notice of the date this leave will commence, estimated duration of the leave and the date on which they expect to be able to return to work. When an unplanned medical situation or emergency occurs that does not allow the employee to provide advance notification of the need for this medical leave, the employee must notify the doctors of the situation within three working days of initial absence.

If an employee is absent for more than three working days without notifying the doctors, they will be considered to have voluntarily resigned. The maximum length of leave granted for any medical disability is ninety (90) days.

Employees returning to work after any disability must have a written release form from a physician verifying that they are able to return to work and safely perform their duties. With the exception of pregnancy-related disabilities, no medical disability leave will carry a guarantee of re-employment. If an employee is unable to return to work, for any reason, following the maximum ninety-day leave period, the employee’s role at Tanglewood Foot Specialists will be automatically terminated.

**Policy of Employees Making Doctor’s Appointments**

If you need to see a physician and it is not an emergency, please make the appointment in your lunch hour. If this is not feasible, give the staff enough notice, fill out a CSW form and make sure your post is covered. A doctor’s appointment is not considered a sick day unless it is due to an ongoing illness for which you are already absent from work. Sick days are not planned. If the doctor’s appointment is made three weeks in advance, you can use that day for a vacation day but not a Wellness Day.

In the event of your child’s illness, you must ensure your post is covered and may be required to make up the hours to help the person covering for you.

**Workers’ Compensation Insurance**

Tanglewood Foot Specialists does not carry Worker's compensation insurance. You are responsible for reporting all on-the-job injuries to the doctors immediately for you own protection.

**Unemployment Insurance**

If your employment terminates, you may be eligible to receive unemployment insurance. In most cases, you must file a claim to collect this benefit. Should such a situation arise, you should enquire about unemployment insurance at the time of separation from Tanglewood Foot Specialists. We will be happy to explain your rights under this law.

**Social Security**

As an employee of Tanglewood Foot Specialists, you are covered under the provisions of the federal social security law (F.I.C.A.). Social security benefits are often a significant step to providing you and your family with a retirement income. The sum deducted from your wages for social security taxes is matched by Tanglewood Foot Specialists. The total contribution by you and the company is credited toward your social security benefits, which may be available at the time you are eligible to retire. In addition, disability and survivor’s benefits are financed through social security deductions.

**Health Insurance Benefits**

Tanglewood Foot Specialists provides access to a group health policy after a minimum of three month's employment. Participation with healthcare coverage is optional but encouraged. Tanglewood Foot Specialists will subsidize 50% of the employee's premium with the employee paying the remainder through payroll deduction. Spouses and dependants may be added to the policy, however the full amount of the additional premium will be deducted from payroll.

**Pension Plan**

A 401k retirement plan is offerred to employees of Tanglewood Foot Specialists after one year of continuous employment. The contributions to this policy will be made as a payroll deduction. Tanglewood Foot Specialists will match 3% of employee contributions which will be added to the employees account.

**Personal Appearance**

Tanglewood Foot Specialists provides patients with professional services. In the interest of presenting a professional image to our patients, we ask that all employees observe good standards of grooming and personal hygiene. Personal appearance contributes greatly to how we feel about ourselves and how we act towards others, even on the telephone.

Employees shall dress appropriately. Jeans, shorts, stretch-pants, sweatshirts, sleeveless tops and sneakers are not considered appropriate. Uniform attire is appropriate for all staff members. The front staff are not permitted to wear all white and should preferably assume business attire, however scrubs are allowed. All questions regarding the employee dress code should be taken up with the office administrator. All medical assistants must wear uniform attire.

Please dress conservatively and professionally. All employees should appear neat and clean at all times. Hair is to be well groomed and cosmetics are not to be used excessively. If you have any questions about what constitutes proper attire, please speak with the doctors.

**Dress Code Policy**

1. No visible body piercings. This includes tongue rings, nose rings or any piercings except for the earlobe. Loop earrings are not allowed.
2. No visible tattoos.
3. No belly shirts or short skirts. All skirts must be below the knee.

If the employee comes to work with any of the above items, he/she will be sent home to change. Exceptions to this rule may be granted by the doctor in the case of religious observance.

**Personal Telephone Calls**

The office telephones are for business use and personal calls should be kept to a minimum. If you must make a private outgoing call, please do so during the lunch break using the private lines. You will be expected to pay for any long distance or toll calls you make for personal reasons.

**Cell Phone Usage**

All cell phones must be turned off during office hours. In case of emergency, your family may contact you on the back line: 713-785-7882. The employee is also permitted to use this line for emergency purposes. It is expected that employees do not send or receive text messages during work hours.

**Use of the Internet**

The internet is for business use only. Personal web surfing will not be allowed during office hours except during lunch break.

**Moonlighting**

There is no rule preventing employees from holding another job as long as their performance at Tanglewood Foot Specialists is not adversely affected. You might give some serious consideration to your personal endurance, health and effectiveness at Tanglewood Foot Specialists before deciding to take a supplementary job in addition to your role here. All employees are expected to meet the same standards of performance, scheduling demands and attendance standards whether or not they maintain more than one job.

**Smoking**

For health and safety considerations, smoking is prohibited in all locations at the office.

**Health and Safety**

Every employee is responsible for safety. To help us provide a safe work place, all staff must be safety conscious. Please report any unsafe or hazardous conditions directly to the doctors immediately. Every effort will be made to remedy problems quickly. In case of an accident involving a personal injury, regardless of how serious, notify the doctors immediately. Failure to report accidents can result in a violation of legal requirements and lead to difficulties in processing insurance and benefit claims.

***Some rules for safety are:***

* When lifting, bend your knees, keep your back straight and lift with your legs.
* Store materials and equipment safely and neatly and avoid clutter that may cause accidents
* Report equipment defects to the doctors immediately
* Do not climb on or into any shelving or fixtures.
* Wear safe and appropriate footwear.
* Report conditions and practices you consider unsafe.
* Know where fire extinguishers are located in the building and their proper use.

**Maintenance**

A clean and orderly environment has a positive impact on staff morale and productivity. Patients are favorably impressed and attracted to an office that looks professional and well-maintained.

It is each employee’s responsibility to keep their work areas neat and clean and to report any conditions that detract from the professional image of the office.

**Office Confidentiality**

Office and patient-related records and information are confidential and not to be discussed away from the premises or within hearing distance of any patient.

**Office Security**

Tanglewood Foot Specialists takes no responsibility for staff’s personal belongings. Staff members with keys are to notify the doctors immediately if they are lost. Duplicate keys are not to be made without permission of the doctors. No outside agency inspector, visitor, inquirer, salesperson or ex-employee may enter the office from the reception room without permission.

**Personal Data Changes**

The employer is required by law to maintain certain employee records. To assist us in keeping records updated, employees are required to report any of the following changes immediately:

* Name
* Address
* Telephone number
* Number of dependents
* Education
* Person(s) to notify in case of emergency
* Physical or other limitations
* Change in beneficiaries

Your employee record file will contain information such as:

* Work and salary history
* Performance evaluations
* Insurance coverage
* Personal data
* Other miscellaneous information

You may request to see this file or make copies of its contents (with the exception of references given prior to employment) by submitting a written request to the doctors.

**Continuing Education**

Tanglewood Foot Specialists recognizes that educational development is becoming increasingly important and encourages the continuing education process. For that reason, it is our policy to provide an opportunity for staff to obtain additional education or training in order to increase their competence in their present job assignment and prepare for future development. Tanglewood Foot Specialists will pay expenses for the course if mutually agreed. In some cases, the expenses may be shared upon mutual agreement by both parties.

Expenses to be considered are:

* Travel
* Meals
* Accommodation
* Tuition
* Salary
* Supplies

Staff will receive regular pay for courses attended on normal working days but not those attended outside their regular work schedule. In the event that prepaid fees are lost because the employee does not attend, the individual will reimburse the employer through payroll deduction. A copy of certificates and units earned will be kept on record in the employee’s file.

**Staff Meetings**

Staff meetings are held every other week at a predesignated time. If the meeting encompasses the lunch hour, lunch will be provided. Full attendance is required at these meetings.

**Standards of Performance**

**Introduction**

In this section you will find information regarding standards of performance. Good work performance and personal behavior are prerequisite for continued employment at Tanglewood Foot Specialists.

**Employee Conduct**

Whenever people are required to work together for any purpose, they need certain guidelines to govern their personal conduct and relations. Tanglewood Foot Specialists considers work rules to be an important part of creating that type of environment. These rules play a necessary role in managing our business to ensure every employee can be treated fairly and work safely and effectively. These rules apply to all employees. Violation of the following rules may result in some form of disciplinary action. In some cases, it may result in either verbal or written warnings, followed by suspension or discharge if repeated. In serious cases or those in which an employee has previously violated the same or other rules, or not performing at an acceptable level, the employee may be subject to immediate discharge. It is necessary to point out that the following work rules are just examples and are not a complete list of conduct that can result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

**Work Rules**

All employees are expected to work according to these rules. They are here so you may know early in your employment with Tanglewood Foot Specialists what is expected. If you have any questions, raise your concerns with the doctors.

Violation of the following rules, because of their seriousness, may result in immediate discharge without warning:

1. Obtaining employment based on false or misleading information or falsifying information or making material omissions in any document or record.
2. Malicious or willful destruction or damage to property or supplies of Tanglewood Foot Specialists or the property of another employee, patient or visitor.
3. Theft or inappropriate removal from the premises of Tanglewood Foot Specialists’ property that belongs to or is in the possession of Tanglewood Foot Specialists, another employee, patient or visitor.
4. Bringing or possessing firearms, weapons, or any other hazardous or dangerous devices onto the property of Tanglewood Foot Specialists during on-duty time without prior authorization.
5. Sexual harassment of any other person, whether another employee, patient, visitor or vendor partner of Tanglewood Foot Specialists.
6. Absence of three days or more without authorization.
7. Embezzlement, disclosure of trade secrets, industrial espionage or conviction of a felony including falsification of any records of Tanglewood Foot Specialists.
8. Repeating to anyone comments made by a patient is a violation of their confidence and grounds for immediate termination.
9. Infractions of the following rules will, depending on the seriousness of the offence and all pertinent facts and circumstances, result in disciplinary action, including a verbal or written warning, suspension or discharge:
10. Unsatisfactory job performance.
11. Fighting or provoking a fight on Tanglewood Foot Specialists’ time or property.
12. Insubordination, including refusal to do assigned work or perform work in the manner described by a supervisor without prior justification.
13. Possession of any unlawful drug while on Tanglewood Foot Specialists premises, or reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or any unlawful drug.
14. Non-compliance or disregard of any established safety rule.
15. Frequent or excessive tardiness or absence from work or employee’s assigned work area.
16. Sleeping on the job.
17. Leaving Tanglewood Foot Specialists premises or your job during working hours without notifying the doctors or obtaining cover or permission.
18. Horseplay or any other action that endangers others, Tanglewood Foot Specialists property, or disrupts work.
19. Smoking in Tanglewood Foot Specialists office.
20. Harassing, threatening, intimidating or coercing any other employee.
21. Failure to abide by set standards for lunch and break time periods.
22. Failure to assist in maintaining clean work areas.

**Termination Procedure**

Tanglewood Foot Specialists maintains a progressive discipline procedure to ensure a fair method of disciplining employees. The progressive discipline system is intended to give employees advance notice, whenever possible, of problems with their conduct or performance in order to provide them with an opportunity to rectify the situation.

Normally, progressive discipline involves verbal counseling and one or more written warning before an employee is terminated. However, exceptions or deviations from the normal procedure may occur whenever Tanglewood Foot Specialists determines that the circumstances warrant one or more steps in the process be skipped and such circumstances may sometimes warrant immediate termination. It should be remembered that employment is at the mutual consent of the employee and Tanglewood Foot Specialists. Either the employee or the practice can terminate the employment relationship at will.

**Acknowledgment of Receipt**

**Tanglewood Foot Specialists**

**Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual**

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of Tanglewood Foot Specialists’s Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual and understand that it contains important information on the general personnel policies of Tanglewood Foot Specialists and on my privileges and obligations as an employee. I will familiarize myself with the material in the handbook and understand that I am governed by its contents. I further understand that Tanglewood Foot Specialists may change, rescind or add to any policies, benefits or practices described in the handbook from time to time at its sole discretion with or without prior notice.

Employee Signature Date

Print Employee Name Date

*After completing this form, please give it to the doctor. You should make a copy of this form.*