



Vernon Women's **Transition House** Society

PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION



Vernon Women's **Transition House** Society

PERSONNEL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

This section provides guidelines for the administration of the paid personnel and/or volunteers/practicum students of the Society. While it may seem to be very regulatory in nature, it should be remembered that it is the objective of written guidelines to provide consistency and to avoid dispute. It is expected that the day to day relationship between the Society and its staff will be driven by our values regarding consultation and consensus decision making wherever possible, and that the primary concern of all parties will be providing exemplary service to the clients/participant of our programs and the community.

✚ POLICY IN CONFLICT WITH CONTRACT OR LETTER OF AGREEMENT:

There may be instances where there are inconsistencies between this policy and Letters of Agreement or contracts with individual employees. In those cases, the Letter of Agreement or contract shall take precedence. Where an agreement outside the policy is to be made with an employee, it must be approved by the Board of Directors.

✚ COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT:

Where staff members are party to a collective agreement between a registered trade union and the Society, that agreement shall take precedence over this personnel policy.

✚ WHERE NO POLICY IS STATED:

Where no policy exists, the *Employment Standards Act* will be applied.

✚ EMPLOYMENT AND COMPENSATION DEPENDANT UPON ADEQUATE FUNDS:

Staff is employed and compensated depending upon the receipt of adequate funds. Reduction in revenues from any source may necessitate changes to staffing levels, job descriptions, hours worked and all forms of compensation. The decision to make those changes will be made by the Board of Directors. Their first consideration in making those changes will be the ongoing ability of the Society to service the needs of the clients/participants and fulfill obligations under contracts and grants. Their decisions may render the terms of contracts between the Society and individual staff member and the terms of this policy, in regards to staffing levels, job descriptions, hours worked, all forms of compensation, and severance arrangements, null and void. In this circumstance, the terms of the *Employment Standards Act* will become the standard.

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PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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- ✚ If there is more than one page to a specific Policy then the Policy Number at the top of each page will read **1-1A, 1-1B** etc. and will read 1 of 3, 2 of 3, 3 of 3 etc. and will be reflected in the ‘**Pages Column**’ on the right hand side of this Table of Contents.

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1-1

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE:	HIRING PRACTICE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 3	

POLICY: Vernon Women's Transition House Society will ensure objective and consistent hiring practices are applied, in a manner consistent with the Employment Standards of B.C., while ensuring that the best candidate gets the job.

CONDITIONS:

1. When a vacancy occurs, the *Executive Director* will determine whether there is a need to fill the position.
2. Candidate selection is based upon the assessment of education, training, experience, required certification, personal suitability, eligibility to work in Canada, eligibility for bonding, absence of a job-related criminal record, positive reference checks, and other factors considered relevant by the employer.
3. At no time will the employer discriminate against any applicant on the basis of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, gender, sexual orientation, age, or conviction unrelated to employment, except where such discrimination constitutes a bona fide occupational requirement.
4. Before making a final selection, the employer will conduct a minimum of two (2) reference checks and a criminal record check (must be an Attorney General Criminal Record Review in programs providing services to children). Programs governed by Community Care Licensing will conduct a minimum of three (3) reference checks.
5. The employer shall give the selected applicant a written letter of offer of employment, outlining the requirements of the position, starting date, salary, benefits, and other conditions of employment.
6. All new hires, where appropriate to the requirements of the job, will provide proof of completion of a medical examination. Any doctor's fee will be incurred by Vernon Women's Transition House Society, and medical confidentiality will be preserved.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

1-1A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE:	HIRING PRACTICES	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010		PAGE: 2 of 3

- Each employee hired into a position within the Society, whether it is a new employee or an existing employee moving within the Society, will be subject to a period of probationary review.

PROCEDURES:

- The job posting will contain a brief description of the position, qualifications required, knowledge/education and skills required, wage rate or grid level, contact person, and closing date for application.
- The job will be posted internally and, where necessary, externally simultaneously in order to find the best candidate for the job in the minimum amount of time, so that client needs do not go unmet.
- A change in the duties during the posting process of a position may require reposting of that position.
- It is the responsibility of the Executive Director or Program Manager to arrange advertising and recruiting for the vacant position.
- All *permanent external* positions will be posted internally.
- The *Executive Director* or *Program Manager* will short list from applicants for the position.
- In the case of a *Regular Employee* position, an interview panel consisting of the *Program Manager*, and one additional person (*being the Executive Director, an appropriate professional, or a front line worker*), will interview all short listed applicants and make a decision on the successful applicant.
- In the case of a Casual Employee, the *Program Manager* will interview all appropriate applicants and make a decision on the successful applicant. The Program Manager may include one other person of their choice in the interview.
- In the case of a *Management* position, an interview panel consisting of the *Executive Director*, two additional people (*such as a Program Manager, an appropriate professional, or a staff member from the program*) will interview all short listed applicants and make a decision on the successful applicant. The final decision will rest with the *Executive Director*.

POLICY APPROVED

_____ Date Approved

Executive Director

1-1B

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE:	HIRING PRACTICES	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010		PAGE: 3 of 3

10. When a successful candidate has been chosen, a Letter of Employment Offer will be completed by the *Executive Director* or *Program Manager* and the successful candidate will sign this form confirming that they have been hired into the new position and that they will be on a probationary period.
11. The *Executive Director* or *Program Manager* will ensure that the new employee is documented properly and oriented before commencing work.

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Series

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE:	ANTI-NEPOTISM	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY:

Staff:

The Vernon Women's Transition House Society will not hire into a position, a person who has a relationship to an individual employed with the same program and/or worksite where the client(s) is deemed to be vulnerable and/or unable to verbalize issues of risk.

Hiring will also be impaired when a person applies for a position that is supervised by or will be supervising a relative. This would involve hiring a person with a relationship to the Executive Director or Program Manager for which the person will work.

Board Members:

A relative of a member of the Board of Directors may be hired, provided the director thereafter absents him/herself from any Committee or Board discussion and/or vote pertaining to personnel or labour relations issues, (e.g., salaries, benefits, conditions of work, program closure, recruitment, etc.)

DEFINITIONS:

For the purpose of this policy, relative shall include husband, wife, common-law spouse, son, daughter, mother, father, sister, brother, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandparent, or grandchild. This will involve current and previous relationships (*ex-husband, ex-wife, step children, half siblings, etc.*)

PROCEDURES:

1. During the hiring process, before any decision is made, the *Executive Director* or *Program Manager* doing the hiring will ask the prospective employee if any of the above-described relationships exists.
2. If a relationship does exist, the person will not be hired for the Program or work site where the other party in the relationship is employed. However, the person will be eligible for employment in Programs or work sites *other than* the one at which the second party in the relationship works.
3. If such a relationship becomes evident after hiring, all efforts will be made to adhere to the policy, including transfer of the new employee to another department or worksite, voluntary resignation, etc.

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Series

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director
Date Approved

1-3

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE:	ORIENTATION	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 2

POLICY: Employees of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society will undergo job orientation at the commencement of employment with the Society and the commencement of any new position within the Society.

REASON FOR POLICY:

- To introduce the new staff member within the program;
- To thoroughly acquaint the new staff member with the organization and the requirements of her/his new job;
- To lay the groundwork for productive and satisfying interpersonal relationships between present members of staff and the new staff member.

PROCEDURE:

1. The orientation session will cover but not be limited to:
 - Philosophy of the organization;
 - Organizational structure;
 - Services of the organization;
 - Policies and procedures (*human resources policies, payroll information*);
 - Fire and disaster programs;
 - Evacuation training;
 - Occupational health and safety programs/procedures for reporting injuries;
 - Tour of the organization;
 - Job – related activities
 - Introduction to union representatives (*if working in a unionized setting*).
2. The ***Program Manager*** will ensure that an orientation is done within 5 days of placement and, in any case, before commencement of duties.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

1-3A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE:	ORIENTATION (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 2	

3. At the completion of the orientation, each program staff member will sign an *Orientation Checklist* form, acknowledging that the orientation has been completed and that all instructions and policies and procedures are understood.
4. The *Orientation Checklist* form will be retained in the program staff member's personnel file.

Ongoing Support

5. Staff meetings for all program staff will be held on a regular basis to facilitate a common understanding of purpose and approach, and to provide a forum for the sharing of ideas.
6. Individual supervision sessions will be held on a regular basis to provide an opportunity to discuss the staff member's concerns with respect to their role in the program, support personal growth and development in their work, and review personal performance goals.

Addendum: *Orientation Checklist* form

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Series

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE:	PROBATION	
	POLICY DATE: JULY 13, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: An employee in a new position will always be subject to a probationary period and review.

Vernon Women's Transition House Society may reject a probationary employee for *Just Cause*.

Just Cause includes, but is not limited to, actions on the part of the employee/staff that are contrary to the aims and objectives, policies and procedures of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society.

PROCEDURE:

1. The probationary period for all other employees shall be (3) months worked or the equivalent numbers of hours worked as based on the normal hours of work of a full-time employee, whichever occurs last.
2. During the probationary period, management will carefully review his/her job performance.
3. If an employee's performance is found to be unsatisfactory, and it is deemed that there is *Just Cause* for rejection of the probationary employee, the employee may be terminated without notice.

Note: A rejection during probation shall not be considered a dismissal for the purpose of the Union Contract Article 11.2.

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Series

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP: STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE: EMPLOYEE RECORDS	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010	
		PAGE: 1 of 2

POLICY: The Vernon Women's Transition House Society will maintain a centrally filed personnel record system with and up-to-date, individual, confidential file for each employee.

REASON FOR POLICY:

A record must be kept and maintained of each employee's work history for management purposes.

The sensitive and personal nature of the information requires that it remain confidential and be kept secure from unauthorized access.

PROCEDURE:

1. The file for each employee will be established at the date of employment, continuously maintained throughout the employment period, and retained by the Vernon Women's Transition House Society for seven (7) years after termination, or the time period dictated by the *Income Tax Act*, whichever is greater.
2. During this period, only designated personnel will have access to these records.
3. No records will be removed from the employee's file except under circumstances described in the union contract.
4. Upon the expiration of the designated period, the records of the employee shall be destroyed in a manner which ensures confidentiality, i.e., shredding, incineration.
5. Each employee's individual personnel file will contain all pertinent documentation relating to the employee's status and job performance, including:
 - Identifying information
 - Signed copy of Orientation Checklist
 - Copy of references
 - Medical certification (if applicable)
 - Name(s) of next of kin or person(s) to notify in the case of emergencies
 - Job description(s)
 - Performance evaluations
 - All documents pertaining to complaints, including the results of investigations and disciplinary action taken (if any)
 - Résumés (including previous experience, credentials and acquired training)

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

1-5A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMPLOYEE RECORDS (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 2	

- Verification of a Criminal Records Check
- Signed agreement to the statement of the “*Employee Code of Ethics*” of the Society
- Letter of Employment Offer (*including the signed acknowledgement of an understanding of the Society’s Programs’ policies and procedures*)
- Verification of Driver’s License, where required
- Current TD1 form

6. The Finance Manager will ensure that all personnel files are maintained in a locked cabinet to secure against loss, destruction or unauthorized access.
7. Information of a personal nature is kept in a *sealed envelope* in the personnel file.
8. The confidentiality of a third party who has given information pertaining to a staff member is maintained.

Employee Access to Information

9. Employees wishing to review their own file may do so by making a request in writing to the Executive Director.
10. The review will be conducted in the presence of the Executive Director or Finance Manager.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director
Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE:	TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT - Employee	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	ALL EMPLOYEES	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: Employees are required to give the employer notice of their intent to resign prior to the last day worked.

CONDITIONS:

1. Regular employees shall endeavour to give a notice of termination to the *Program Manager*, of at least fourteen (14) calendar days.
2. The period of notice must include time to be worked and may include vacation time with the agreement of the *Program Manager*.
3. The requirement to give notice may be waived by the *Executive Director*.

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Series

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director
Date Approved

1-7

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE:	TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT - Employer	
	POLICY DATE: JULY 13, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: Where a regular employee's services are terminated other than for **Just Cause*, he/she shall be entitled to notice in writing, or regular pay for the period in lieu of notice.

Where the employee has completed a consecutive period of employment ranging from three (3) months to one (1) year, he/she shall be entitled to one (1) week's notice or one (1) week's pay in lieu of notice.

Where an employee has completed more than one (1) year of consecutive employment, he/she shall be entitled to two (2) weeks' notice plus an additional week's notice for each subsequent completed year of employment, up to a maximum of eight (8) weeks' notice or pay in lieu of notice.

EXCEPTIONS:

This policy does not apply to casual employees, employees who have been dismissed for **Just Cause*, employees on temporary layoff who have been offered and refused a reasonable alternative, and employees hired for a definite term or for specific work to be completed in a period not exceeding twelve (12) months.

PROCEDURE:

1. Notice must be given to the employee in writing. The period of notice must be for time worked and not include vacation time (*unless agreed to by the Executive Director*).
2. When notice of termination has been given to an employee, the wage rate and conditions of employment shall not be altered, except with the employee's consent. Notice shall be deemed to be without effect if the employee continues to work after the expiration of the notice.
3. When an employee is on temporary layoff, he/she must first be recalled to work before being given notice of termination. Otherwise, he/she will be considered terminated and eligible for severance pay if the layoff exceeds thirteen (13) weeks in a twenty (20) week period, or exceeds the time fixed by the Director of Employment Standards. For the purpose of calculating length of notice or severance pay, employees shall be considered terminated at the commencement of temporary layoff.

***Just Cause** - Section 1 Policy 4 - *Probation* for definition of Just Cause

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Series –*Termination Guidelines*, Employment Standards Act, Part 8

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE:	TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT – Staff Reduction	
	POLICY DATE: JULY 13, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 2	

POLICY: An employee may be terminated where, as a result of operational or economic reason the services of the employee are no longer required *or can no longer be supported*.

REASON FOR POLICY:

The Vernon Women's Transition House Society believes that its mandate to provide necessary services to women, children, youth, individuals and families requires that it recognize the primacy of this responsibility.

Should the Society determine that its ability to provide the required services has been affected, or will reasonably be affected in the foreseeable future, then it may deem a reduction in the number of professional staff employees to be warranted.

PROCEDURE:

1. Written policies and procedures regarding the potential and process of staff reduction should be provided to all employees at the point of hiring the employee.
2. Should it become necessary to implement staff reductions, all employees must be treated fairly and reductions must be carried out according to established policies and procedures with which the employee is familiar.
3. In the event of a prospective reduction to the number of employees, the *Executive Director* will advise the Board of Directors, at the earliest opportunity, that the services of some staff may not be required for operational reasons.
4. The *Executive Director* will meet with the Board of Directors, consult with the employees, and develop a plan for reducing the number of positions.
5. *Voluntary Attrition* will be the first step in the plan to reduce staff. This includes **voluntary resignation*, voluntary or statutory retirement, voluntary leave of absence, or voluntary changes in employment status (i.e. full time to part time).

***Voluntary Resignation:** Where the employee, for any reason, leaves the service of the employer on his/her own volition.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

1-8A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE:	TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT – Staff Reduction	
	POLICY DATE: JULY 13, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 2	

6. *Transfer* of staff to other assignments will be the second step in the plan to effect staff reduction, if voluntary attrition does not result in sufficient staff reduction.
7. If neither voluntary attrition nor transfer achieves sufficient staff reduction, the plan will effect reduction through the termination of contracts of employment.
8. The determination of which employees will be released will be based upon the operational needs of the Society, the skills and qualifications of the employees, the level of performance (as determined by the performance evaluation system), the length of service (i.e. seniority), and all other factors being equal.
9. The release of employees, within a Program, will be in reverse order of seniority.
10. *Where an employee has been terminated*, the employee will receive notice in writing, be provided with reasonable opportunities during this period to secure other positions and/or, at the option of the Society, be given a month's pay in lieu of notice.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE:	VOLUNTEERS / PRACTICUM STUDENTS	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 2	

POLICY: Appropriately screened, trained and supervised volunteers may be involved in the provision of direct and support services.

All volunteers and practicum students will undergo the same selection process as staff members, including Criminal Record Checks, reference checks and personal interviews.

REASON FOR POLICY:

Volunteer are a significant and integral part of the Society's team. Consequently, the Society requires high standards for volunteers who provide the same services as regular employees.

The same steps are required to be taken for volunteers and students as for staff, because the same need to ensure their personal suitability exists as for staff. Program Managers need to ensure that the person in question is suitable to the client and staff group and that inappropriate people are screened out.

PROCEDURE:

1. Each potential volunteer/practicum will be screened.
2. The *Program Manager* requiring the volunteer/practicum will conduct a personal interview with the candidate.
3. Volunteers/practicums will be subject to the same Hiring Procedures as new employees.
4. The *Program Manager* will be ultimately responsible for the supervision of each volunteer/practicum.
5. Each volunteer/practicum will receive ongoing formal supervision by the *Program Manager* at least once per month.
6. Documentation of these sessions will be maintained in the volunteer/practicum's file.
7. Each volunteer/practicum will be provided with training to assist them in the provision of services and invited to attend ongoing in-service sessions, when appropriate.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

1-9A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE:	VOLUNTEERS / PRACTICUM STUDENTS (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 2	

8. Each volunteer/practicum will abide by established guidelines regarding acceptable behaviour and remain familiar with applicable policies and procedures.
9. Each volunteer/practicum will log all time spent in that capacity on the *Volunteer Sign-In Sheet*.
10. Volunteers/practicums will be reimbursed for expenses incurred during the course of their duties where the expenses have the prior approval of the ***Program Manager***, are invoiced at cost, and are supported by receipts.
11. A volunteer/practicum may be suspended from his/her assigned duties when the Program Manager or program staff become concerned with actual or alleged inappropriate behaviour and issues arising in his/her life which may negatively affect performance or cause the Society to be viewed in a negative light.
12. Issues which may require suspension will be discussed with the ***Program Manager*** at the earliest opportunity.
13. Reinstatement to assigned duties may occur, subject to consultation with the ***Program Manager***.

Addendum: *Volunteer Sign-In Sheet*

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	STAFFING	
	POLICY TITLE:	DIVERSITY	
	POLICY DATE: JANAUARY 30, 2008		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: The Vernon Women’s Transition House Society considers diversity in the workplace to be essential, and encourages and embraces its diverse workforce. As a Social Service provider, our employees, contingent staff, clients and suppliers are naturally diverse. We value and encourage the broad range of perspectives and capabilities this diversity brings.

The Vernon Women’s Transition House Society defines diversity as differences of race, national origin, religion, cultural background, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity. We expect and promote mutual respect and understanding between people with different personal situations or backgrounds.

The Vernon Women’s Transition House Society believes that a rich diversity of people and the many points of view they bring serve to enhance the quality of service provided.

The Vernon Women’s Transition House Society is committed to promoting equality regarding the opportunity for employment and access to its services.

POLICY APPROVED

_____ Date Approved

Executive Director

2-1

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	ATTENDANCE/PUNCTUALITY	
	REVISION DATE: SEPTEMBER 15, 2010		PAGE 1 of 1

POLICY: All employees will attend work in a consistent and timely manner.

Dependable attendance and punctuality are expected of all employees.

REASON FOR POLICY:

Uncontrolled employee absence diminishes the Society's ability to provide the highest level of quality service to its clients.

To define the employee's responsibility with respect to attendance or arriving late to work.

To facilitate employee management and scheduling.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Administration Department will be responsible for maintaining attendance and employee records and administering leave management.

PROCEDURE:

Employee attendance at work will be monitored and recorded as follows:

1. The Vernon Women's Transition House Society will encourage improvement in attendance by identifying persons whose absence exceeds normal levels and counselling them on the issues that cause the absence.
2. Attendance records will be kept to restrict recurring absences to the minimum and eliminate unnecessary absences.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-2

PESONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	ABSENCES – (Controllable)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010		PAGE 1 of 1

POLICY: All employees will be expected to keep controllable absences to a minimum.

In order to keep controllable absences to a minimum, employees are encouraged to:

- Maintain reasonable healthy standards and take precautions against illness
- Ensure that minor indispositions or inconveniences do not prevent them from coming to work, and
- Attend to personal affairs and obligations outside of their working hours, whenever possible.

REASON FOR POLICY:

To define the employee's responsibility and procedures to follow with respect to absenteeism.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

While absence due to illness or emergencies is often beyond their control, regular attendance is the responsibility of every employee.

PROCEDURE:

1. **Notification:** Employees will notify the *Program Manager* as soon as possible before the start of shift, of their inability to report to work.
2. Failure to adequately inform the *Program Manager* may result in disciplinary action.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-3

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	CODE OF ETHICS – Colleagues, Employers, Public	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010		PAGE 1 of 3

POLICY: All Vernon Women's Transition House Society Employees have a professional obligation to treat their colleagues, employers, and the public with respect and dignity.

RESPONSIBILITY TO COLLEAGUES:

All Employees will:

- ▶ Respect the rights and views of their fellow professionals and treat them with fairness, courtesy and good faith.
- ▶ Be aware of their potential influence on students and co-workers and will not exploit their trust.
- ▶ Make every effort to avoid dual relationships that could impair their professional judgment.
- ▶ Not engage in or condone any form of harassment or discrimination.
- ▶ Not permit students or fellow employees to perform or present themselves as competent to perform services beyond their training and/or level of expertise.
- ▶ Respect the confidences of their co-workers.
- ▶ When replacing a colleague or being replaced, will act with consideration for the interest, character and reputation of the other professional.
- ▶ Extend respect and cooperation to colleagues of all professions.
- ▶ Not knowingly assume professional responsibility for the clients of a colleague without appropriate consultation with that colleague.
- ▶ If a client of a colleague is seen during a temporary absence or emergency, serve the client with the same devotion and consideration as that afforded any client.
- ▶ Given the responsibility for employing and evaluating the performance of other staff, do so in a responsible, fair, considerate and equitable manner.
- ▶ If knowing first-hand that a colleague has violated ethical standards, attempt an informal solution by bringing this to their colleague's attention. If this fails, the unethical activity will be reported to the Supervisor and appropriate professional society.

RESPONSIBILITY TO EMPLOYERS:

All Employees will:

- ▶ Work to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of services provided by the agency.
- ▶ Act to prevent and eliminate discrimination in work assignments or in personal policies or practices.
- ▶ Use the resources of the agency only for the purposes for which they were intended.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-3A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	CODE OF ETHICS – Colleagues, Employers, Public	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010		PAGE 2 of 3

- ▶ Fulfill any and all commitments made by them to the agency.
- ▶ Maintain respect for agency policies, procedures and management decisions, and will take the initiative toward improvement of such policies, procedures and decisions when it will better serve the best interest of their clients.
- ▶ Support the integrity and reputations of the agency.

CONFIDENTIALITY:**All Employees will:**

- ▶ Recognize that confidentiality and privacy requirements apply also to co-workers who participate in the agency's programs.
- ▶ Store or dispose of client records responsibly and in ways that maintain confidentiality.
- ▶ Possess a professional attitude that upholds confidentiality towards clients, colleagues, applicants and any sensitive situations arising within the agency.
- ▶ Upon termination, shall maintain client and co-worker confidentiality and must hold confidential information about sensitive situations within Vernon Women's Transition House Society.

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY:**All Employees Will:**

- ▶ Have a total commitment to provide the highest quality of care to those who seek professional service.
- ▶ Have a continuing commitment to assess their own personal strengths, their limitations, their biases and their effectiveness.
- ▶ Act in accordance with the highest standards of professional integrity.
- ▶ Not attempt to diagnose, treat or advise on problems outside the recognized bounds of competence.
- ▶ Seek appropriate professional assistance for their own personal problems or conflicts that are likely to impair their work performance and their professional judgment.
- ▶ Recognize their personal and professional needs by utilizing ongoing self-evaluation; challenging, supporting and sharing information with peers; using professional development and supervision opportunities.
- ▶ Access appropriate resources to maintain their professional and personal well-being.
- ▶ Engage in self-care activities and will acknowledge their own vulnerabilities and limits. They will model the ability and willingness to self-nurture in appropriate and self-empowering ways.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-3B

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	CODE OF ETHICS – Colleagues, Employers, Public	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010		PAGE 3 of 3

PUBLIC STATEMENT:**All Employees Will:**

- ▶ Because of their ability to influence and alter the lives of others, exercise special care when making professional recommendations or options public through testimony or other public statements.
- ▶ Accurately represent their education, training, experience, and competencies as they relate to their profession.
- ▶ Correct, whenever possible, false, misleading or inaccurate information and representations made by others concerning their qualifications of services.
- ▶ If serving as a Supervisor, make certain that the qualifications of persons under their supervision are represented in a manner that is not false, misleading or deceptive.
- ▶ Abide by agency policies related to public statements.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-4

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	STAFF CONFIDENTIALITY	
	REVISION DATE: MARCH 15, 2005		PAGE 1 of 1

POLICY: All information regarding a staff member will be held confidential by all other staff members, unless otherwise directed by the employee in question.

REASON FOR POLICY:

To prevent unwanted access to and disclosure of information deemed confidential by an employee.

To provide control by staff of information that may be required to be released about them.

PROCEDURE:

1. Under no circumstances will personal information be provided about another employee.
2. **Personnel Records:** The Vernon Women's Transition House Society will maintain a centrally filed Personnel Record File with an individual "**Confidential**" file for each employee.
3. **Home Phone Number:** If a request is made for an employee's home phone number, the person receiving the request will state politely, but firmly, that it is against agency policy to provide home phone numbers. The employee will then offer to take a message and pass it along.
 - If the caller suggests that it is an emergency, or some type of urgent situation, the person receiving the request will offer to try passing the message along immediately, while explaining that there is no guarantee that the party can be reached immediately.
4. **Release of Information:** Information about any employee will not be released without their authorization on the signed *Consent for the Release of Confidential Information* form.

***Addendum:** Consent for the Release of Confidential Information form

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-5

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	CONFLICT OF INTEREST	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010		PAGE 1 of 1

POLICY: Employees who have involvement in an issue other than their involvement through Vernon Women's Transition House Society will inform the Program Manager of that relationship. A conflict of interest may be real or potential in nature.

Where the employee is involved in any decision-making responsibility regarding the issue, that employee will declare a conflict and relegate the responsibility to the Program Manager. This includes having a family member or associate as a client in your work area.

Perceptions of conflict of interest will be dealt with as a conflict of interest. All employees will be aware of the possible perception of a conflict and consider the repercussions when making any decisions within their control.

PROCEDURE:

1. The employee involved in a possible conflict of interest will bring the issue to the attention of the Program Manager.
2. In a situation where a co-employee has identified another employee to have a possible conflict of interest issue, the co-employee will first bring the issue to the attention of the involved employee. If the conflict is not rectified, the issue is to be brought to the attention of the Program Manager.
3. The Program Manager or Executive Director will investigate the possible conflict and the repercussions of the conflict.
4. The Program Manager or Executive Director will determine the extent of the conflict and rectify the situation. The solutions could include any of the following remedies:
 - Removing the employee from that responsibility,
 - Delegating the authority in this instance to another employee,
 - Reviewing the decision and making any necessary changes,
 - Disciplining the employee where misconduct was involved.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-6

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	CONFLICT RESOLUTION	
	REVISION DATE: July 13, 2010		PAGE 1 of 1

POLICY: Employees becoming involved in a conflict with other employees in the same program are obligated to take clear and decisive action to resolve such staff conflict issues in order to ensure the continuity of smooth, professional service delivery to the clients.

REASON FOR POLICY:

From time to time conflicts may arise between program staff, which affects worksite morale and staff performance. In such cases, the staff members involved in these conflicts will need to take mature, responsible steps to achieve a clear and complete resolution of the conflict.

PROCEDURE:

When one staff member has a dispute with other staff members, that staff member should:

1. First discuss the issue of concern with the other staff member who is the source of the concern. Where this fails to resolve the difficulty, the concerned staff member should then ask the Program Manager to mediate the conflict/dispute.
2. Where the concern is of a serious or sensitive nature, such as abuse of a client, fraud or theft, go directly to the person in question's Supervisor.
3. The Program Manager will then schedule a meeting. Participation in this meeting will be mandatory for all those involved in the issue.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-7

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 3	

POLICY: During the course of the selection process, enquiries will be made regarding the criminal record of persons who are being considered for positions within the Society.

Should the results of such enquiries indicate that there is a criminal record, which is relevant to the position applied for; a review must take place with respect to the applicant's suitability for appointment.

REASON FOR POLICY:

The safety and wellbeing of the participants at all of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society programs is paramount.

The purpose of the criminal record check is to ensure the safety of the clients who, due to the possibility of a background of abuse, are more vulnerable than most people to abuse of trust.

PROCEDURE:

1. All prospective employees of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society will be required to sign the "*Consent Form Criminal Record Search*", take the consent to their local RCMP station, and identify themselves.
2. All records will be returned to the Executive Director.
3. The Executive Director will review the records of all persons being checked and respect and ensure the confidentiality of those records.
4. The Executive Director and designated member of the Board of Directors will use the criteria as listed below to determine the employment eligibility of the prospective employee *where a criminal record exists*.
5. The original criminal records check, and other related documents will be returned to the employee.
6. **Assessment Criteria where a record exists:**

Physical/Sexual Assault/Abuse

- Any record of sexual abuse, sexual assault or violence will be grounds for rejection.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-7A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 3	

Other Records

- Other criminal records will be assessed using the following criteria:
 - The number and type of charges, convictions and diversions
 - The length and time between past criminal activity and the present
 - The age and circumstances of the offender at the time of the offence
 - The conduct and circumstances of the individual since the offence, and
 - The likelihood of the individual repeating the offence.

7. Having assessed the criminal record check of prospective employees, and where the applicant has not been rejected based upon the record check, the Executive Director will classify and action each case as follows:

- **No Record:** Where the record check reveals no criminal record, the Finance Manager will place the *Consent for Criminal Records Check* form in the employee's personnel file.
- **Criminal Record Exists – Multiple Charges/Under 5 Years:** Where a criminal record exists, but the Executive Director and Board designate is not sure if the record should preclude the applicant from being hired, the Executive Director will interview the prospective employee to determine whether the individual should be eligible.

If the Executive Director and Board designate decides to hire the individual, they will sign and date the record check form, attach a record of the interview (signed & dated), with the ameliorating circumstances to the records check, and place the record check in the employee's personnel file.

- **Criminal Charges and/or Convictions During Employment:** If an employee is charged with an offense during the period of employment with Vernon Women's Transition House Society, that employee will:
 - Inform the Program Manager within 3 days of the charge
 - Explain the nature and circumstances of the charge
 - Continue to inform the Program Manager of status of charge, including any convictions, stays, discharges, etc.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-7B

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 13, 2010	PAGE: 3 of 3	

8. The Program Manager will inform the Executive Director, who will conduct an interview with the employee to determine whether the outcome will preclude the employee from further employment.
9. Depending on the nature of the charge, the result of the investigation may include disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Addendum: Consent Form Criminal Records Check, Criminal Record Check Completed Form

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-8

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	DISCIPLINE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE 1 of 3

POLICY: The principles of progressive discipline will be adhered to whenever disciplinary action is being taken.

In circumstances where the safety of the clients is at risk, the Society will act to protect the safety of the clients.

REASON FOR POLICY:

Progressive discipline is designed to provide staff members with opportunities and incentive to improve their performance and rectify behaviour through feedback and increasingly serious penalties.

When the safety of the client is at risk, the client's safety becomes the first priority. The issue of progressive discipline can be raised **after** the client's safety is assured.

PROCEDURE:

Union Representation: A union representative may be present at any disciplinary meeting of employee and Program Manager, and it is the responsibility of the *Program Manager* to inform the employee of this right.

Forms of Disciplinary Action:

1. The seriousness of the behaviour will dictate the seriousness of the response.
2. Different situations will require different, corresponding disciplinary action that may range from:
 - Verbal warning by the Program Manager
 - Written warning notice, a copy of which will be placed in the employee's personnel file.
 - A second written warning notice
 - Written warning notice and suspension for one (1) day, with pay,
 - Written warning notice and suspension for a pre-determined period, without pay, and
 - Written warning notice of discharge.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-8A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	DISCIPLINE (Continued)	
	POLICY DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE 2 of 3

Considerations in determining disciplinary action:

1. Each circumstance will be considered on its own merits.
2. Discipline will be tailored to meet the circumstances of the specific situation.
3. In determining the appropriate course of action, the following factors may be considered:
 - **Seriousness:** is the behaviour/situation so serious as to warrant severe disciplinary action up to and including discharge,
 - **Reason for Behaviour:** has the behaviour been triggered by some unusual, mitigating circumstances,
 - **Premeditation:** was the behaviour willful and planned,
 - **Disciplining History:** has the employee a history of disciplinary problems,
 - **Length of Service:** how long has the employee worked for the Society.

Suspension/Discharge:

1. Depending upon the seriousness of the circumstances, the Society may initiate suspension or discharge without prior notification or without progressive corrective action having been taken.
2. In those situations, where suspension or discharge is the action considered or taken, a hearing may be conducted by the Executive Director.
3. Other persons may attend this hearing if they have information pertaining to the situation.

Types of Prohibited Conduct:

1. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not restricted to, the following:
 - Abusive behaviour towards clients or co-workers, including sexual harassment

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-8B

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	DISCIPLINE (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE 3 of 3

- Theft, or other forms of criminal action
- Alcohol/drug use on Society property and/or time
- Violation of safety rules
- Unsatisfactory work performance
- Insubordination and/or refusal to follow the appropriate instructions of a Program Manager to perform the required duties of the job
- Disorderly conduct
- Intentional misuse/abuse of the Society's equipment or material
- Submission of falsified reports
- Absence without permission and
- Leaving work early without permission

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-9

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMPLOYEE RELATIONS (Between Employees)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE 1 of 1

POLICY: The Vernon Women's Transition House Society will discourage the formation of intimate relations among individuals employed at the same worksite.

REASON FOR POLICY:

This policy exists to ensure and maintain professional relationships in a sometimes intense working situation.

It is difficult enough to maintain an objective view without complicating the environment with issues external to those that are work related.

PROCEDURE:

1. **Staff** will inform their Program Manager when they are getting involved with a fellow staff member.
2. **The Program Manager** will monitor the relationship at the worksite and take any such action deemed appropriate, such as:
 - Ensuring that staff in question do not work the same shifts, or
 - Transferring one of the staff members involved to another worksite.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-10

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMPLOYEE RELATIONS (Between Supervisors & Employee)	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005		PAGE 1 of 1

POLICY: Anyone in the position of supervising an employee will not become involved in an intimate relationship with that individual.

If anyone in the position of supervising an employee becomes involved in an intimate relationship with that individual, they may face disciplinary action or transfer. This includes close friendships.

REASON FOR POLICY:

A Supervisory position has a great impact upon the working environment.

Supervisory relations are more liable for misinterpretation.

PROCEDURES:

1. The development of an intimate relationship between a person in a supervisory position and an employee will be reported to the Executive Director **immediately**.
2. The Executive Director will take such action as is appropriate to safeguard the integrity of the program.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-11

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE OF VWTH	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE 1 of 1

POLICY: Employees of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society may undertake employment outside of Vernon Women's Transition House Society, provided that it does not interfere in the employee's performance of their work with the Society.

REASON FOR POLICY:

A balance must be achieved between the desire of the employee for supplementary work elsewhere and the effect this may have upon the well being of the Society's clients.

PROCEDURE:

1. Where the Program Manager believes that an employee's outside employment is adversely affecting their work within the Society, the issue will be raised and the employee will be given the chance to rectify the situation (i.e. change schedule, reduce hours, etc.).
2. If the employee's work continues to be adversely affected, the employee will have to make a choice between work for the Vernon Women's Transition House Society and the outside employment.
3. The employee will be subject to discipline if the situation continues unresolved, to the detriment of their work with the Society.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-12

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	EVALUATIONS	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE 1 of 3

POLICY: All employees of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society will receive a performance evaluation annually, on the anniversary of their hiring date (*inclusive of the probationary period*).

REASON FOR POLICY:

To ensure that a high quality of care and treatment for the clients is maintained through monitoring and providing feedback on employee performance.

The Society recognizes the importance of providing the employee with the opportunity for advancement based upon ability, performance and experience. The purpose of performance appraisal is to ensure that the employee completely understands the job and to provide the opportunity for the Program Manager to evaluate and discuss the performance of assigned duties with the employee.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATIONS:

1. **An employee's performance may be evaluated in connection with the following:**

- Scheduled, annual evaluation
- Scheduled, probationary evaluation
- Re-evaluation subsequent to less than acceptable work performance, or
- A change in job description

2. **The following criteria will be considered during the evaluation:**

- Job performance
- Quality of work
- Conduct
- Ability to get along with co-workers
- Willingness to cooperate
- Ability to lead, and
- Attendance record.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-12A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	EVALUATIONS (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE 2 of 3

PROBATIONARY EVALUATION:

1. The **Program Manager** will schedule an evaluation time with the employee with at least two weeks notice.
2. The schedule will ensure that the evaluation is completed and signed by the due date.
3. The employee and the Program Manager will discuss each area of the job description and rate it.
4. The Program Manager's judgment is final; however, if an employee disagrees with a particular point, their comments may be included by the Program Manager, but should be identified as such.
5. The evaluation should focus on the single, critical question: *"How do your actions impact upon the experience of service recipients?"*
6. The Society's evaluation process provides the following 3 possible answers to this question: **Below Expected, As Expected, or Above Expected.**
7. A summary comment will be included, which will identify recurring issues or problems, strengths and special skills and summarize the previous year's activities.
8. Goals will be reviewed and set, mutually agreed upon by the Program Manager and the employee, and rated as either met or not met.
9. A recommendation will be made by the Program Manager.
10. A place will be provided on the evaluation for the employee to sign and date it.
11. The space for the employee's signature will provide an option to either agree or disagree with the evaluation.
12. The Program Manager will give a copy to the employee and forward the original to the Executive Director for approval. A copy of the evaluation will be sent to Administration for inclusion in the Personnel File.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-12B

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	EVALUATIONS (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE 3 of 3

13. The final probationary evaluation will occur within 5 months of the hiring date, or after 758 hours of work.
14. The recommendation will be to either offer permanent employment at this time, or discharge the probationary employee.

ANNUAL EVALUATIONS:

1. The annual evaluation will occur by the anniversary date of the employee's hiring.
2. It will occur every year, and if the employee's overall performance is at the acceptable level, the Program Manager will recommend that a **seniority increment** be granted the employee.

CASUAL EMPLOYEES:

1. Casual workers who have worked six (6) months for the Society will be entitled to an evaluation.
2. If the evaluation is at the acceptable level or better, the Program Manager will recommend a **seniority increment** be granted.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-13

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	GARNISHMENT	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005		PAGE 1 of 1

POLICY: The Vernon Women's Transition House Society will not become involved in the personal financial affairs of its employees unless legally obliged to.

REASON FOR POLICY:

It is expected that employees will manage their own financial affairs in such a manner that the Society need not become involved.

PROCEDURE:

1. A garnishee issued against an employee is a court order, which creates a legal obligation on the Society, as a third party, to deduct the amount of money as specified in the garnishee summons from the salary of the employee.
2. The Society must honour a garnishee or be liable for contempt, in addition to accepting responsibility for the amount specified in the garnishee summons.
3. Upon the receipt of a letter of release from the creditor, and in the event of an employee successfully getting the creditor to withdraw the garnishee, the Society will not act upon the garnishee.

PUNITIVE ACTION: An employer, by law, may not take any form of action, which would in any way jeopardize an employee's employment solely on the grounds of garnishee.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-14

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	HARASSMENT - Personal	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE 1 of 2

POLICY: Vernon Women's Transition House Society is committed to promoting a work environment in which all employees are treated with dignity and respect and are free of harassment in the workplace. Therefore, behaviour that comes under the definition of harassment will not be tolerated.

REASON FOR POLICY:

Personal harassment is objectionable conduct or comment, directed towards a specific person, which serves no legitimate work purpose and has the effect of creating an intimidating, humiliating, hostile or offensive work environment. For the purposes of this policy, personal harassment includes conduct or comment that constitutes discrimination under the *BC Human Rights Act*.

EXPLANATION OF HARASSMENT: *Personal Harassment includes but is not limited to:*

- Unwanted actions, derogatory or demeaning comments, jokes or slurs;
- Derogatory or demeaning posters, pictures, cartoons, graffiti or drawings;
- Innuendoes, taunting ostracizing a co-worker or employee;
- Threats, bullying, coercion;
- Malicious gestures or actions.

PROCEDURE:

1. An employee who feels that he/she is being harassed is encouraged to advise the alleged harasser that such conduct is unwelcome and is a breach of this policy and must stop.
2. If the behaviour does not stop, or if the employee chooses not to approach the harasser, the employee should report the incident(s) in writing to the Program Manager within six months of the latest occurrence. The Program Manager will then meet with the employee to discuss the specifics of the complaint.
3. The Program Manager will advise the employee accused of engaging in harassment that there has been a complaint, that the matter is being investigated, and that no threats or reprisal against that complainant will be tolerated.
4. The Program Manager will investigate the **complaint within seven (7) days** of receiving it in writing, by interviewing the complainant, the alleged harasser, and any potential witnesses. During the investigation, every effort will be made to treat the matter with the utmost confidentiality. The Program Manager will carefully document the results of the investigation.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-14A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	HARASSMENT – Personal (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE 2 of 2

5. Where the alleged harasser is the Program Manager, the employee will provide the written report to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will undertake the investigation of the matter as set out above. Where the alleged harasser is the Executive Director, the complaint shall be presented to the Chair of the Board, who will conduct the investigation.
6. If the complaint is substantiated, appropriate disciplinary action will follow. This decision will be made within **five (5) days** of the completion of the investigation. Disciplinary action could include:
 - A disciplinary letter on the employee's personnel file;
 - A suspension without pay;
 - Termination of the harasser's employment with Vernon Women's Transition House Society.
7. If the complaint is not substantiated, and it is determined that the complainant deliberately made a false accusation or acted in a vexatious manner, disciplinary action will be taken against the complainant.
8. In determining the outcome of a harassment investigation, the Program Manager shall consult with the Executive Director. If the Executive Director feels it is necessary, he/she may consult with members of Vernon Women's Transition House Society Executive Committee. All parties consulted will treat the matter in confidence.

Nothing in this policy shall restrict an employee's legal or civil rights to file a complaint with the B.C. Council of Human Rights or the police.

Reference: Human Rights Code.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-15

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	INTERNET / FAX MACHINE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE 1 of 1

POLICY: All material sent by facsimile machine, email or the Internet will be sensitive to the philosophy, values and beliefs of the Society and would represent all consumers of services in a positive light.

Jokes, hate literature or other inappropriate written material sent by fax, email or Internet has the possibility of being viewed by individuals other than those intended and, therefore, should not be sent through the systems operated or owned by Vernon Women's Transition House Society.

REASON FOR POLICY:

This policy is established to ensure that any written material sent by Vernon Women's Transition House Society represents the values and beliefs of the Society.

PROCEDURE:

Any incidents will be investigated by the Program Manager and/or Executive Director. The result of the investigation may include disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-16

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	JOB DESCRIPTIONS	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 3

POLICY: Each position within the Vernon Women's Transition House Society will have a written job description developed and provided for it.

The criteria for staff qualifications will conform to the training accreditation and credentials required for any professional discipline that the Society wishes to incorporate.

Changes to job descriptions must be approved by the Executive Director after submission to the Program Manager.

A copy of his/her job description will be given to each employee upon hiring.

REASON FOR POLICY:

In order to ensure that employees have the necessary training and experience to provide the best possible service to the clients and their families, written criteria for each position regarding qualifications must be maintained and followed.

Job descriptions are the basis of supervisory expectations as well as annual evaluations and, as such, are the foundation of the supervisory relationship.

Job descriptions make it clear to the employee what is expected of him/her with respect to the duties required and how those duties are to be carried out.

EXPLANATION OF EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS:

The following employee classifications are applied in the Vernon Women's Transition House Society, and job descriptions will be developed within these classifications.

Permanent Full Time Employee:

- An employee who works a regularly scheduled full time shift of at least thirty-five (35) hours per week.
- Permanent full time employees are entitled to all benefits.

Permanent Part Time Employee:

- An employee who works on an established part time schedule of weekly hours.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-16A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	JOB DESCRIPTIONS (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 2 of 3

- Permanent part time employees, who work 20 hours/week, are entitled to benefits on a pro-rated basis.

Management Employee:

- Employees who have supervisory and/or administrative responsibilities for the management of a program.
- Permanent full time management employees are entitled to all benefits.

Special Project/Contract Employees:

- Employees hired under the auspices of Federal or Provincial Grant.
- Upon completion of the project or program, the employment contract may end.
- Conditions of employment will be outlined in the contract of employment.
- Union concurrence must be in place if the employee is exempt.

Casual Employees:

- Employees hired on an "on call" basis to cover absences due to leave, sickness, vacation, to fill temporary vacancies or augment staff during peak periods.
- Casual employees are eligible for 10.2% pay in lieu of benefit.

PROCEDURE:

1. The written job descriptions will include, but not be limited to:
 - The position title
 - The purpose of the position
 - Reporting relationships and accountability
 - Responsibilities, and
 - Qualifications and skills required.
2. The written criteria for each position regarding the qualifications required of staff to perform the respective duties and responsibilities of the assigned position will include, but not be limited to:
 - The minimum educational requirements
 - The minimum related work or volunteer experience, and
 - Any combination or substitution thereof.
3. Program Managers will give a copy of the employee's job description to the new employee during their orientation shift.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-16B

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	JOB DESCRIPTIONS (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 3 of 3

4. Any employee may suggest improvements to their job description.
5. All suggestions should be discussed or forwarded to the Program Manager.
6. The Program Manager may present these suggestions, together with their recommendations, to the Executive Director, who will ultimately decide whether or not to reclassify the job description.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-17

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	PROPERTY: DAMAGE TO	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: The Vernon Women's Transition House Society will reimburse staff for damage to their property caused by clients, when the property is appropriate for the job.

The employee may be required to reimburse the Society or client for damage or loss of property.

REASON FOR POLICY:

From time to time, clients may damage the property of staff as they pursue their duties.

Property owned by Vernon Women's Transition House Society or our clients may become lost or damaged by employees.

PROCEDURE:

Reimbursement:

1. Staffs who have had property damaged by clients will inform the Program Manager, who will authorize reimbursement through the Program's account.
2. Damaged property will be reimbursed to the value of an item appropriate for the job or the deductible on insurance claims.
3. Employees will be responsible for ensuring that the property they bring to work is appropriate (*i.e. an everyday shirt being ripped by a client would be replaced, where a very expensive silk shirt would not*).

Note: This advisement also extends to items of jewelry.

Loss or Damage to Property of Staff:

4. Staff who lose or damage property owned by Vernon Women's Transition House Society or clients of the Society will inform their Program Manager immediately. The Program Manager must inform the Executive Director, who will then determine suitability of repayment.
5. Damaged or lost property will be reimbursed to the value of the item or the value of the deductible on insurance claim.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-18

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	SUPERVISION	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 3

POLICY: Supervision will be provided to all employees of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society. This supervision will be based upon the principle of **mutual determination*. Supervision is an opportunity and a right, as opposed to an obligation or demand.

CONCEPT OF SUPERVISION:

Supervision is one of the most important activities available in the field of social/human services for assuring, maintaining and enhancing the quality of service to people in the community. It involves the support, education and training of the supervisee. This is achieved directly through the development of knowledge and skill and indirectly through the enhancement of feelings of self-esteem and self-respect evidenced by workers who receive effective supervision.

It is the Society's belief that there is a direct relationship between the quality of supervision and the quality of the programs and services. To fail to provide effective supervision is to avoid the responsibility to encourage the continued growth and development of employees and, with them, the services provided.

Vernon Women's Transition House Society believes that the supervisory interaction is an interaction involving the support, education and training of the individuals involved. The Society believes that supervision is a learning process, which is part of the overall professional staff development of the organization. Supervision is affected by the values and beliefs of the organization and is, therefore, an interactive process conducted with caring and respect for the individuals involved and is differentiated according to the needs of those individuals.

Vernon Women's Transition House Society believes that supervision is a learning process within the overall framework of enhancing the quality of services delivered to women and children.

REASON FOR POLICY:

Regular supervision is necessary in order to maintain professional standards of competence, quality of service and a vital part of professional development.

All employees within the Vernon Women's Transition House Society have the right to expect regular supervision as a support to maintaining and improving the quality of their work.

* **Mutual Determination:** Where both the Supervisor and supervisee are responsible for making decisions regarding supervision criteria.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-18A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	SUPERVISION (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 2 of 3

PROCEDURE:

1. Supervision will be provided to all employees of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society so as to provide staff with support and direction as required, maintain accountability for performance, and monitor the development of skills and competencies.
2. The person supervising and supervisee both decide what should occur in the area of tasks to be undertaken, the standards to be met, the results to be expected, and the goals to be achieved. This includes indicators that will be acceptable as evidence of meeting them.
3. The Program Manager will be directly responsible for the supervision of all program staff under his/her direction and all volunteers under his/her direction.
4. The Program Manager should be able to explain, in detail, and answer questions regarding:
 - The job tasks included in the employee's job description
 - The level of performance expected of the employee regarding each task
 - The supervisory practice and procedures employed in the program
 - The practices and procedures employed in the formal evaluation sessions
 - The policies and procedures of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society, and
 - The values, vision and mission of the Society and the program.
5. The Program Manager should ensure that program staff follows program and administrative guidelines in the following ways:
 - Directly observe and work with program staff
 - Read all appropriate documentation
 - Be available and accessible to the program staff
 - Provide guidance on the program staff's performance and ensure that program staff take corrective action, if necessary
 - Meet individually with program staff members in supervisory meetings
 - Discuss with the employees their understanding of the strengths, weaknesses and problems of the client
 - Explore, with the employee, ways in which the client's strengths can be utilized and reinforced and the client's problems can be addressed

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-18B

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	SUPERVISION (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 3 of 3

- Examine, with the employee, the adequacy of the goals set for the client and the means employed to achieve these goals and progress towards these goals based upon measurable indicators.
 - Review and offer advice on each client's Service Plan, and
 - Discuss job-related behaviour and incidents with the employee, recognizing the boundaries between personal, therapeutic and work-focused interactions.
6. The Program Manager will maintain brief Supervisory minutes of each supervision session, which will be signed as read by the employee.
 7. The documentation will be kept secure and confidential.

Staff Supervision:

8. Staff supervision consists of minimally, a one hour meeting every month between the employee and their Program Manager and ongoing, on-the-job supervision.
9. Staff supervision sessions should be used as opportunities for professional development wherein job-related strengths and weaknesses are openly explored, and appropriate action is taken to improve performance.
10. Both parties are equally responsible for the agenda and the effectiveness of the session.
11. Staff supervision sessions will consist of:
 - Discussions of the program staff member's understanding of their staff's or participant's strengths, weaknesses or problems
 - An exploration of ways in which the program staff member may better cope with the participants or their staff
 - An examination of the adequacy of the goals set for the staff or the participants, the means employed to achieve these goals, and progress towards goals based on measurable indicators
 - A discussion of job-related behaviour and incidents
 - Explanation and instruction regarding interpretation of policies, procedures and programs, and
 - A discussion of the program staff member's progress in developing and improving work competencies and achieving performance goals.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-19

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	VACATION – During Program Closure	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: Employees working in programs where there is a planned closure resulting in a shortage of work, will be required to take vacation during this closure.

REASON FOR POLICY:

Within some programs of the Society, a shortage of work may necessitate employees' vacation being taken at designated times.

PROCEDURE:

1. Employees with no vacation entitlement will be required to take the time off without pay.
2. School programs follow school district instruction days and, therefore, are closed during Christmas break, Spring break, etc.
3. Employees with a vacation bank will take the time off with pay. Employees with no earned bank will take the time off without pay.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-20

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	WORK PERFORMANCE (Problems)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE 1 of 1

POLICY: Employees experiencing ongoing performance problems between evaluation periods will be notified by their Program Manager of the problem(s), and encouraged and supported regarding self-improvement in these areas.

REASON FOR POLICY:

To provide the employee with the opportunity to rectify the problem(s) being encountered.

PROCEDURE:

1. The Program Manager will give a verbal notification of existing problem regarding work performance will be given.
2. If the problem(s) persists, the Program Manager will place a note in the employee's Personnel file, with a copy to the employee, which will outline the nature of the problem(s) and include a description of future steps to be taken.
3. The Program Manager will negotiate performance goals to be reviewed in a specified time period.
4. If, at the end of this period, the employee's performance has improved to an acceptable level, normal supervision and evaluation will re-commence.
5. If, at the end of this period, the employee's performance still needs improvement, the employee will be terminated.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-21

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	RETIREMENT	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: Normal retirement age is 65 years; however, there is no mandatory retirement date for employees.

PROCEDURE:

- An employee **may retire** on the first day of any of the 60 months immediately preceding the employee's 65th birthday, upon giving at least one (1) month's written notice to the Program Manager.

Early Retirement

- An employee **may retire** on the first day of any of the 60 months immediately preceding the employee's 60th birthday, upon giving at least two (2) months written notice to Program Manager.
- The Program Manager will provide the employee with a written acceptance of their retirement and then forward the employee's retirement request to the Executive Director as soon as it is accepted.
- The Program Manager will ensure that those employees reaching *normal retirement* age provide the necessary documentation within the time guidelines.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-22

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	ALCOHOL AND GRATUITIES	
	POLICY DATE: JANUARY 9, 2008		PAGE: 1 OF 1

POLICY: Alcoholic beverages will not be consumed by front line staff members when accompanying clients to any eating establishments.

Gratuities will be reimbursed at no more than 10% of the total bill by Vernon Women's Transition House Society, when staff members are on society business.

REASON FOR POLICY:

Front line staffs are responsible for clients under their supervision and the consumption of alcoholic beverages during working hours will not be tolerated.

It is not the responsibility of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society to reimburse the gratuities in excess of 10% of the total bill for services while at eating establishments.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-23

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	GIFTS - EMPLOYEES	
	REVISION DATE: July 21, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 2

POLICY: Employees will be recognized for milestones in length of service, illness, births, marriages, leaving and retirement.

REASON FOR POLICY:

This policy exists to provide consistent and fair guidelines for the purchasing of gifts for all staff.

PROCEDURE:

1. Hospitalization or serious illness of employee, spouse or child residing in the home will receive a flower arrangement or basket not to exceed **\$35.00**.
2. Employees getting married will receive a gift not to exceed **\$35.00**.
3. Birth of an employee's child, a flower arrangement or basket not to exceed **\$35.00**.
4. Funeral of employee's parent, spouse, common-law spouse, child (*including foster or step, etc.*), brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, or any relative residing in the home will receive a flower arrangement or basket not to exceed **\$35.00**. (
5. Funeral of employee's in-law (*father, mother, brother, sister, daughter or son*) will receive a flower arrangement not to exceed **\$35.00**.
6. **Permanent** employees terminating **before** their one year anniversary will be eligible to receive a luncheon from Vernon Women's Transition House Society (*amount as per VWTHS lunch per diem*). **After one year**, they will receive a luncheon from Vernon Women's Transition House Society and a gift will be bought in the amount of \$1 for every month they have been a permanent employee.
7. Relief employees will receive a Vernon Women's Transition House Society mug filled with candy.
8. **Employee Birthdays** will be recognized by individual programs. Employees celebrating a birthday will be presented with a card and have a choice of a cake or lunch.

Note: All expenditure limits as outlined above do not include applicable taxes and the cost of delivery.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-23A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	GIFTS - EMPLOYEES	
	REVISION DATE: July 21, 2010		PAGE: 2 of 2

Ordering Process for Flowers/Baskets:

1. **Flowers/Basket:** The Supervisor will notify the Executive Administrative Assistant of the name of the employee requiring flowers/basket. They will also be responsible for giving the reason for the flowers/basket and all the pertinent information such as date of the occasion, delivery address, telephone number, etc.
2. **Luncheons:** Will be arranged by the Supervisor who will identify the location, date and time and then draft a memo for the Executive Administrative Assistant to send to all employees via circular. Vernon Women's Transition House Society will pay for the lunch of all **permanent** employees up to the amount of the lunch per diem.
3. **Gifts:** Shall be purchased by a person chosen by the Supervisor.
4. **All** flowers/baskets/gifts given by Vernon Women's Transition House Society will have a card accompanying them saying "*From the Board and Staff of Vernon Women's Transition House Society*".

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-24

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	VEHICLE USE (Personal)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: All Vernon Women's Transition House employees will be responsible for maintaining proper insurance on their vehicles.

CONDITIONS:

When transportation is provided to participants in a *privately-owned* vehicle by an employee, volunteer or student, the employee will ensure and verify that:

- Their vehicle is properly licensed,
- They, *the operator of the vehicle*, holds a valid driver's license.
- The vehicle is properly maintained in a safe and operable condition.
- The vehicle is **adequately insured*, and
- The vehicle is not driven by clients.

Taxis are not considered usual modes of transportation for work related travel by staff members.

If a staff member needs to **temporarily* take a taxi for work related travel, they will only be reimbursed the equivalent of what would be reimbursed if they used their own vehicles.

PROCEDURE:

1. Safety belts must be worn by the driver and all passengers, at all times.
2. When transporting small children, the appropriate approved child car seat will be used to secure them safely in the vehicle.
3. All traffic and motor vehicle laws will be observed.
4. A copy of the staff license and proof of insurance will be kept in their personnel file.
5. **Accidents:** In the event of any vehicle accident occurring in the course of conducting Society business, the Program Manager will be contacted immediately, who will then notify the Executive Director of the accident.

The Program Manager will be responsible for notifying the next-of-kin and Ministry staff, where applicable, regardless of the severity of the accident.

6. **Cell Phone Use:** Refer to Health & Safety Policies – Section 8 – Page 21 – Policy 10.

**Temporarily – Not on an ongoing basis or as a main mode of transportation.*

**Adequately Insured:* Adequate insurance will be defined as motor vehicle insurance required by law under the Motor Vehicle Act, to a level of coverage sufficient to cover the liability of the Society's operations.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

2-25

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMAIL ADDRESS - WORK	
	POLICY DATE: JANUARY 30, 2008		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: All *Work* Email Addresses will be owned by the Vernon Women's Transition House Society.

Use of the *Work* email address for anything non work related will be kept to a minimum.

In order to ensure ongoing access to required vital information, all current passwords for the use of Vernon Women's Transition House Society emails and/or computers and/or changes to said passwords will be submitted to the Executive Director in a timely manner.

Any person leaving the employ of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society will understand that ownership of their work email address will remain with the Society.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-26

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	DISPOSAL OF DONATIONS AND UNWANTED SOCIETY BELONGINGS	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: All donations of items *must first* be offered to the clients of the Society.

REASON FOR POLICY: Funds and items are donated to our Society by community members. Items are purchased by our Society using public funds. Whether items are large or small, our actions must be scrupulously ethical and transparent, to ensure that the consumers of our services receive the most benefit from the donation. At the same time, environmental considerations of reusing and not wasting perishable donations must be considered. A clear and rigid procedure with respect to staff acquiring donations that are not useable to residents is therefore required.

EXCEPTIONS: Exceptions to the above are items that are generally not useful or practical, (large appliances, men's clothing, king-sized beds, office furniture or equipment, etc.)

PROCEDURE:

1. All donations will first be offered to clients of the Society.
2. Occasionally, the financial benefit of selling valuable items, such as jewelry, antiques or collectibles outweighs the benefit of use by clients. In this case, the items are liquidated and cash is used to purchase practical items for women and children. The Executive Director must approve the method of disposing of these items.
3. Another way of disposing of unwanted items, including Society property, is through offering staff the opportunity to purchase the items through a silent bidding process.
4. Bidding on items by staff will be conducted by offering the item via the staff web site and having interested staff submit an '*expression of interest*' by way of a sealed bid to the Transition House Executive Director by a fixed date (*usually one week*).
5. If there is an overabundance of perishable food donated or purchased, and all programs have been offered what they can use, staff may purchase the food item(s) at a reasonable price as determined by the the Executive Director. The price will be similar to the retail price for the item(s).
6. The generated funds will return to the Program that purchased the item or will go to the Program for which the donation was intended.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-27

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	INTERACTIONS WITH CLIENTS REGARDING FAITH PRACTICES	
	POLICY DATE: FEBRUARY 4, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: Other than facilitating the gathering of information for clients if they wish to make a choice regarding faith practices, Vernon Women's Transition House staff members will not promote any specific Faith Practices to clients of the Society.

RATIONAL: Women who come to the Transition House or use our services are vulnerable. For many, they are without the control of a partner for the first time in a very long time. Often women will attach themselves to the first opportunity to "belong" that is offered them. This is why staff must be incredibly aware and scrupulous about the effect that we can have by suggesting an opportunity for clients. We must also acknowledge the inherent power that we have over the women, teens and children who use our Programs.

We know that belonging to a church, temple or other group gives all of us an incredible sense of community and is very beneficial and some people have a spiritual need that cannot be denied. However, it is not our role to promote this. As well as being unethical to be involved in the promotion of a client's religious experience, it is against our (or any Society's) constitution and our contracts forbid it. It is not only the actual act of promoting a religion, but the perception from others that can cause problems for the Society.

PROCEDURE:

1. If women express interest in attending a church or place of worship, a list of **ALL** local services will be provided.
2. If they want a church of a particular faith or perspective, they will be encouraged to phone the leadership of that church and ask those questions.
3. Staff members **will not** give clients their opinion or recommendation.
4. If clients ask which faith a staff member belongs to, or which church the staff member attends, the client will be reminded that the conversation is about them and not the staff member.
5. If the a client does, by coincidence, end up attending the same church as a staff member, observe the same conduct and rules outlined in the ***Confidentiality & Ethical Conduct (Clients)** (*i.e. a staff member cannot develop a special relationship with a client– their relationship is with the Transition House, not with the staff member as an individual*).
6. Staff members **will not** transport residents to church, if the church is the one that the staff member attends. As with other situations, do not provide any transportation when you are working.
7. Materials for religious practices, such as bibles, holy books, sweet grass, etc. will only be provided at their request. We have commonly used religious materials, like the bible and sweet grass at the Transition House. All holy books are available at the library.
8. Staff **will not** participate in religious ceremonies (*i.e. praying, sweet grass burning, etc.*) under any circumstances, other than helping them access materials and resources and finding a quiet space.
 - *Confidentiality & Ethical Conduct – Conditions of Employment – Policy 3 – Pages 3-3D*

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-28

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	SOCIETY VEHICLE USE	
	POLICY DATE: SEPTEMBER 14, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 3	

POLICY: The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity regarding the use and operation of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society vehicle.

Costs to operate the vehicle and the liability associated with the use are borne directly by Vernon Women's Transition House Society, therefore, workers will be expected to use the vehicle appropriately, and in a legal and safe manner.

Drivers must always practice defensive driving and take every possible precaution to avoid accidents.

GENERAL REGULATIONS:

1. A driver is responsible for ensuring that they are in possession of a valid driver's license. A copy of the license must be submitted to the Accounting Dept. and will be kept in the employee's personnel file.
2. A driver must advise their Program Manager if their driver's license ceases to be valid or if medical conditions impair or prevent driving.
3. Operation of the Vernon Women's Transition House vehicle is expressly prohibited where the person in care and control of the vehicle has used any substance that may legally impair the operator or may have an effect on the safe operation of the vehicle.
4. Use of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society vehicle shall be strictly limited to the performance of duties associated with the operations of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society.
5. **Only employees** of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society are permitted to operate the Vernon Women's Transition House Society vehicle unless otherwise authorized by the Executive Director.
6. Any employee driving the Vernon Women's Transition House Society vehicle must operate the vehicle in accordance with the Motor Vehicle Act, Workers' Compensation Regulations and Vernon Women's Transition House Society policies.
7. A driver must immediately report and document accidents, damage, problems or concerns to their Program Manager and the Executive Director.
8. An Accident report shall be promptly submitted to the Executive Director with a copy to the Financial Manager.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

2-28A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	SOCIETY VEHICLE USE	
	POLICY DATE:	SEPTEMBER 14, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 3

- 9. Parking tickets, traffic violations and assessments related thereto will normally be the responsibility of the operator involved.
- 10. Transporting of passengers who are not associated with the Vernon Women's Transition House Society is strictly prohibited, including hitchhikers.
- 11. Smoking while in the vehicle is strictly prohibited.
- 12. Eating while driving the vehicle is strictly prohibited.
- 13. Use of cell phones **while driving the vehicle** is strictly prohibited. (*Ref. Policy regarding Cell Phone use – Section 8-Health & Safety- Policy 9 – Page 20*).
- 14. Vehicle refueling will be done on an 'as needed' basis and will be the responsibility of the driver at the time it is required.
- 15. The Vehicle will be signed out on *Vehicle Sign Out* form at the Transition House and a *Vehicle Travel Log* will be kept in the vehicle, where employees will fill in the date, their name and number of kilometers driven.

PROCEDURE:

- 1. A pre-trip inspection will be performed by the driver prior to starting the vehicle (*circle check*). Any damage and/or concerns will be documented on the *Vehicle Pre-Trip Inspection Report* form and reported to their Program Manager prior to leaving with the vehicle. Where necessary, pictures of any damage will be taken to be included with report.
- 2. The need for refueling will also be determined by way of the pre-trip inspection.
- 3. Refueling of the vehicle will be done with money from Vehicle Fueling Float. A receipt for refueling must be submitted with Petty Cash Reimbursement.
- 4. The vehicle will be shut off during loading and unloading.
- 5. A driver must wear a seat belt while operating the Vernon Women's Transition House Society vehicle. The driver is also responsible for ensuring that seat belts are worn by all workers and/or clients who are passengers in the vehicle.

POLICY APPROVED

_____ Date Approved

Executive Director

2-28B

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	SOCIETY VEHICLE USE	
	POLICY DATE: SEPTEMBER 14, 2010		PAGE: 3 of 3

6. A driver will not exceed the posted speed limit. Speed should be adjusted depending upon adverse road and/or weather conditions to ensure that control of the vehicle is maintained, and that the vehicle can be safely stopped. In the case of inclement weather or unsafe conditions, drivers will check road conditions prior to driving. If conditions are unsafe, the trip should be postponed.
7. The Vernon Women's Transition House Vehicle must be returned to the Transition House parking lot at the end of the work day unless otherwise authorized by the Program Manager or Executive Director.
8. When not in operation, employees are to ensure that the Vernon Women's Transition House Society vehicle left unattended is locked and parked securely at all times.

MAINTENANCE:

1. The Vernon Women's Transition House Society vehicle will be washed when required (car wash).
2. The Society will ensure that all conditions applicable to the warranty are met.
3. It is the Society's responsibility to carry out all checks, as required, on the following: coolant, oil level, tire pressures, battery levels, lights, brakes, and any other annual servicing.
4. Records of mechanical work performed are to be kept and filed in the Finance Department.

**Addendum: Vehicle Sign-Out form and Vehicle Travel Log, Vehicle Pre-Trip Inspection Report.*

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

3-1

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HOURS OF WORK	
	POLICY TITLE:	SHIFT AND WORK SCHEDULES	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 2

POLICY: Vernon Women’s Transition House Society staff will be advised of their hours of work upon commencing a job or at least eleven (11) calendar days when changes to their hours of work are required (shift work only).

REASON FOR POLICY:

Expected hours of work should be clearly explained and schedules made available to all staff, particularly those working shifts in residential programs.

PROCEDURE:

Regular Hours of Work:

1. The work week for *full time permanent employees* will be thirty-five hours, exclusive of meal periods.
2. The work week for other employees will vary, depending upon their job classification when hired.
3. Employees will be notified in writing if changes are made to their hours of work.

Shift Schedules:

4. Shift schedules will vary depending upon the residence and program in which the employee is working. The letter of appointment will clearly indicate the shift schedule to be worked.
5. Schedules will be circulated to all staff one week before the beginning of the month and posted on the worksite where they will be accessible to staff.

Additional Hours:

6. Work performed by an employee in excess of regular hours of work will be considered additional hours.
7. Generally, additional hours must be authorized in advance by the Program Manager and documented on the timesheet.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

3-1A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HOURS OF WORK	
	POLICY TITLE:	SHIFT AND WORK SCHEDULES (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 2 of 2

8. In cases where prior approval is not possible, the employee will use discretion in working additional hours and notify the Program Manager, or designate, as soon as possible following the time worked.
9. The Society reserves the right to determine the legitimacy of the additional hours claimed.
10. Management staff will be responsible for their own time management and to work additional hours only as necessary.
11. The Executive Director will be responsible for monitoring overtime recorded on management staff timesheets.
12. *There shall be a minimum of eight (8) consecutive hours off-duty between the completion of one work shift and the commencement of the next. When it is not possible to schedule eight (8) consecutive hours off-duty between work shifts, all hours by which such change over falls short of eight (8) consecutive hours shall be paid at overtime rates as per the overtime policy.

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Series – *Employment Standards Act

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

3-2

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HOURS OF WORK	
	POLICY TITLE:	FLEX TIME	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: Flex time employees can choose the length of their workday, with the primary consideration given to meeting the needs of the workplace.

Accumulated hours will be taken as soon as possible. The Executive Director will be responsible for monitoring flex hours on Management staff time sheets.

*Unionized staff flex time is governed according to the collective agreement.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HOURS OF WORK	
	POLICY TITLE:	OVERTIME	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: Vernon Women’s Transition House Society employees shall not be permitted or required to work in excess of seven (7) hours in a day or thirty-five (35) hours in a week. If required to do so, the Society shall pay overtime wages as specified below.

EXCEPTIONS:

This policy does not apply to positions that are exempt from the overtime, provisions of the *Employment Standards Act*, or that are included in a variance. ***This policy is not applicable to flex time employees.***

CONDITIONS:

Employees requested to work in excess of the normal daily full shift hours, or who are requested to work on the scheduled day of rest, shall be paid:

- a) Time and one-half for the first two (2) hours of overtime on a regularly scheduled workday; and
- b) Double time for hours worked in excess of the two (2) hours referred to in (a) above;
- c) Double time for all hours worked on a scheduled day of rest.

The compensation of overtime in (a) and (b) is to be on a daily basis and not cumulative.

An employee may choose to receive equivalent compensatory time off in lieu of overtime. Time off shall be scheduled at a ***mutually agreeable*** time.

An employee may be required by the employer to work overtime. However, the employee may refuse if his/her hours of work are excessive or detrimental to his/her health or safety.

A regular part-time employee will be paid overtime when he/she has worked in excess of the hours per day and hours per week set out above, except where a variance has been obtained from *Employment Standards*.

The Employment Standards Act requires all employees to have at least thirty-two (32) consecutive hours free from work each week. An employer who requires or allows an employee to work in the thirty-two (32) hour period shall pay the employee double (2 X) his/her regular wage for all hours worked during that 32 hour period. However, on receipt of a written application, the director of Employment Standards may authorize a variation.

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Series – *Employment Standards Act*, Part 4, s. 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40 and 41
Collective Agreement – Article 16.5 – *Overtime Compensation*

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HOURS OF WORK	
	POLICY TITLE:	MEALS AND REST PERIODS	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: Meal and rest periods will be provided to employees, subject to the conditions outlined below.

CONDITIONS:

Each employee is entitled to a meal period of at least one half hour, at intervals that will result in no employee working longer than five (5) consecutive hours without an eating period. The period allowed for meals shall not be counted as hours worked, unless the employee is required to work during the period.

Optional:

Employees working the number of hours in a day equivalent to a full-time employee will receive a fifteen (15) minute rest period in each half of the shift.

Employees working *less than a full shift* and a minimum of four (4) hours will receive one (1) fifteen (15) minute rest period.

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Series – *Employment Standards Act*

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

4-1

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	SICK LEAVE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		

POLICY: An employee shall be entitled to sick leave during a period of sickness or injury.

REASON FOR POLICY:

To define the employee's responsibility and procedures to follow with respect to absences due to an illness or injury.

PROCEDURE:

Notification: Employees will notify the *Program Assistant* as soon as possible before the start of shift, of their inability to report to work.

1. The employee will inform the *Program Assistant* of the nature of the illness or injury, the expected return to work date, and any subsequent changes in the stated return to work date.
2. The employee will provide **sufficient notice* of intent to return to work in order that relief may be cancelled.
3. When an employee fails to provide **sufficient notice* prior to returning to work, the employee may be ***sent home without pay*.
4. **Doctor's Certificate:** The employee will submit a *Doctor's Certificate* after an absence of 3 or more **consecutive** or **consecutively** scheduled days of work.
5. After an absence of 3 or more **consecutive** days of work, the employee must submit the *Doctor's Certificate* prior to returning to work, in order to certify that the employee is capable of assuming the full duties of the position.

**Sufficient notice* usually means one shift in advance.

***Such would be the case where the notice given was insufficient to allow for cancellation of the relief.*

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

4-1A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE
	POLICY TITLE:	SICK LEAVE (Continued)
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE 2 of 2

6. In the event of a **continuing absence**, a second *Doctor's Certificate* must be provided no later than five weeks from the start of the absence, every month thereafter and at the employer's request, when it appears that a pattern of consistent and frequent absence is occurring.
7. The *Doctor's Certificate* must be completed and signed by a medical practitioner qualified to practice in the Province of British Columbia.
8. The Doctor signing the certificate during the absence must see the employee.
9. An employee who fails to provide a *Doctor's Certificate* when required may have sick leave benefits terminated.
10. If sick leave benefits have been terminated, benefits may be reinstated retroactively if it can be shown that there is a satisfactory reason for the certificate being late, or benefits will recommence on the date the *Doctor's Certificate* is provided (without retroactive payment of benefits).

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

4-2

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	UNPAID LEAVE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: Employees will be considered for **extended unpaid leaves of absence* subject to client needs and availability of replacement staff.

Leave of absence without pay will be granted only after other paid leave entitlements are exhausted.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Employees:

- Will give the required notice with respect to absences, requested leave or shift changes, and cancellation of leaves.
- Will complete the documentation required for each form of absence or leave, or cancellation.

Program Managers and/or Executive Director:

- The final authorization of Requests for Leave.

PROCEDURE:

1. Requests for **extended unpaid leaves of absence* must be made in writing at least eight (8) weeks prior to the anticipated start of such leave.
2. Requests for leaves of absence of less than 5 working days, or one shift rotation, must be made five (5) days in advance.
3. Requests for leaves of absence for the purpose of pursuing other employment will not be considered.
4. An employee shall be deemed to have resigned on the date upon which the leave commenced, if an application for re-employment is not made within one (1) month prior to the expiration of the leave, or if the employee does not return to work after having applied for re-employment.

* **Extended Leave** – is defined as, minimally, 5 consecutive working days or one shift rotation.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	COMPASSIONATE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 2	

POLICY: Compassionate leave of absence of three (3) days with pay shall be granted to a regular employee at the time of notification of death, upon application to the Employer, in the event of a death of a member of the employee's immediate family.

REASON FOR POLICY:

To address the needs of employees with respect to the loss of a family member and to meet the client service and staffing requirements of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society.

CONDITIONS:

1. For the purpose of this policy, immediate family shall include parent (or alternatively step-parent or foster-parent), spouse, common-law spouse, child, step-child, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, legal guardian, ward and relative permanently residing in the employee's household or with whom the employee permanently resides.
2. The Employee shall be paid for shifts on those days which he/she is scheduled to work that are covered by this approved leave.
3. Such bereavement leave shall be granted to employees who are on annual vacations. When bereavement leave of absence with pay is granted, any concurrent paid vacation leave credits used shall be restored.
4. Vernon Women's Transition House Society may grant additional bereavement leave of absence without pay, if requested by the employee.
5. Up to an additional two (2) days without loss of pay may be taken associated with travel.
6. Bereavement leave of absence with pay shall not apply when an employee is on an unpaid leave of absence.
7. When established ethno cultural or religious practices provide for ceremonial occasions other than the compassionate period outlined above, the balance of the compassionate leave as provided above, if any, may be taken at the time of the ceremonial occasion.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

4-3A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	COMPASSIONATE (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 2	

PROCEDURE:

The employee shall, submit a written request for bereavement leave. Approval must be received before such leave may be taken.

When the leave has been taken, the Program Manager shall ensure that the leave is appropriately recorded.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	MATERNITY/PATERNITY	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 2	

POLICY: Staff members are entitled to Maternity/Paternity leave according to the applicable collective agreement or the terms and conditions of employment for non-contract and excluded staff and/or the *Employment Standards Act*.

REASON FOR POLICY:

To address the needs of employees with respect to the leaves of absence and to meet the client service and staffing requirements of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society.

CONDITIONS:

1. A pregnant employee is entitled to up to 52 consecutive weeks of unpaid pregnancy leave. This leave may start no earlier than 11 weeks before the expected birth date, and must end no earlier than six weeks after the birth date unless the employee requests a shorter period. This leave may be extended
2. A request for pregnancy leave made during the pregnancy must be made in writing at least four weeks before the proposed start date.
3. The Program Manager will arrange for the leave and ensure that the leave is appropriately recorded.
4. Notice granting such leave will be returned to the employee by the supervisor.
5. If pregnancy leave is not requested until after the birth of a child or after termination of the pregnancy, the employee is entitled to up to six consecutive weeks of leave beginning on the date of birth or termination date.
6. An initial period of leave may be extended up to six consecutive weeks if an employee is unable to return to work for reasons relating to the birth or termination of a pregnancy.
7. A request to return from leave earlier than six weeks from the birth must be made in writing at least one week before the proposed return date.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

4-4A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	MATERNITY/PATERNITY (Continued)	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	ALL EMPLOYEES	
	POLICY DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 2 of 2

8. If the employee is unable to report for work at the end of the leave of absence, the employee will give fourteen (14) days' advance notice in writing to the supervisor.
9. An employer may require an employee to provide a doctor's certificate in support of a request for leave or a leave extension.
10. Medical complications relating to the pregnancy during employment, excluding the period of maternity leave of absence may be charged to normal sick leave credits, subject to the policy for sick leave notification and documentation.
11. Vernon Women's Transition House Society will continue to maintain any health and welfare benefits which are in place at the commencement of maternity leave provided the employee continues to pay any portion of the costs which would normally be her responsibility had she not taken leave. The employee's portion shall be prepaid monthly.
12. An employee on maternity leave continues to accrue vacation leave entitlement at her regular rate but does not continue to accrue vacation pay. Service will be deemed continuous for the purpose of calculating notice of termination or severance pay.
13. If an employee is on maternity leave, employment is considered continuous for the purposes of calculating annual vacation and termination entitlements, as well as for pension, medical or other plans of benefit to the employee.
14. Vernon Women's Transition House Society must continue to make payments to any such plans unless the employee chooses not to continue with his or her share of the cost of a plan. The employee is also entitled to all increases in wages and benefits that the employee would have received if not on leave.
15. Vernon Women's Transition House Society may require an employee to commence a leave of absence where she is not reasonably able to perform the duties of her position because of the pregnancy. Such leave shall continue until the employee provides a certificate from a medical practitioner stating that she is able to perform her duties

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	PARENTAL/ADOPTIVE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 2	

POLICY: Staff members are entitled to parental leave according to the applicable collective agreement or the terms and conditions of employment for non-contract and excluded staff and/or the *Employment Standards Act*.

CONDITIONS:

Parental leave for birth and adopting parents

1. A birth mother who has taken pregnancy leave is entitled to 52 consecutive weeks of unpaid parental leave. A birth mother must begin her parental leave immediately after her pregnancy leave ends, unless she and the employer agree otherwise.
2. A birth father or an adopting parent is entitled to up to 52 consecutive weeks of unpaid parental leave. A birth father must begin the leave within one year of the birth of the child, and an adopting parent within a year after the child is placed with the parent.
3. If a newborn or adopted child suffers from a physical, psychological or emotional condition and will be at least six (6) months of age before coming into actual care and custody, an additional period of parental leave of up to five (5) weeks is allowed. A doctor or the agency that placed the child must certify that such an additional period of parental leave is required.
4. A request for parental leave by a birth parent must be made in writing at least four weeks before the proposed start date.
5. Vernon Women's Transition House Society may require an employee to provide a doctor's certificate or other evidence that the employee is entitled to the leave or leave extension.
6. If an employee is on parental leave, employment is considered continuous for the purposes of calculating annual vacation and termination entitlements, as well as for pension, medical or other plans of benefit to the employee.
7. Vernon Women's Transition House Society must continue to make payments to any such plans unless the employee chooses not to continue with his or her share of the cost of a plan. The employee is also entitled to all increases in wages and benefits that the employee would have received if not on leave.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

4-5A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	PARENTAL/ADOPTIVE LEAVE (Continued)	
	POLICY DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 2	

8. An employee on parental leave does not qualify for statutory holiday pay unless the employee has worked at least fifteen (15) of the last thirty (30) calendar days immediately preceding the holiday and has been on the payroll at least thirty (30) days prior to the holiday.

PROCEDURE:

1. A written request for parental leave must be submitted to the Program Manager a minimum of four (4) weeks before the day specified in the request as the day on which the employee proposes to commence parental leave. The request must be accompanied by a certificate of a medical practitioner or other evidence stating the probable date of birth of the child in the case of natural mother or father. (*A medical certificate need not be provided if one has previously accompanied an application for maternity leave.*)
2. In the case of adopting a child, a letter from the agency that placed the child will be required when applying for parental leave. Parental leave may be taken by the adopting mother or father, following the adoption of the child and within the fifty-two (52) week period after the date the adopted child comes into the actual care and custody of the mother or father.
3. The Program Manager shall arrange for the leave and shall ensure that the leave is appropriately recorded.
4. Notice granting such leave will be returned to the employee by the Program Manager.
5. If the employee is unable to report for work at the end of the leave of absence, the employee will give fourteen (14) days advance notice in writing to the supervisor.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	JURY / WITNESS DUTY	
	POLICY DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: Employees will be granted leave without loss of pay, *other than employees on leave without pay*, who serve as jurors or witnesses in a court action, provided such court action is not occasioned by the employee's private affairs. Vernon Women's Transition House Society will pay all related travel costs not paid for by the Courts.

PROCEDURE:

1. The employee must advise the Program Manager as soon as he/she is aware the leave will be required. The employee must complete a *Request for Leave* form and indicate the approximate length of absence. Where the leave has been approved and taken, the supervisor must ensure that the leave is appropriately recorded.
2. Time spent at court by employees in their official employment capacity shall not result in any loss of regular pay.

Addendum: Request for Leave form

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	LEAVE MANAGEMENT	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 2	

POLICY: Program Managers will ensure that adequate staffing is in place to meet client service levels.

The Program Manager or Executive Director will have final authorization on Leaves of Absence.

REASON FOR POLICY:

Program Managers must ensure that employee absences are for valid and supportable reasons. In addition, some types of absences can impact the employee's pay; therefore, accurate reporting is essential.

PROCEDURE REGARDING LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

1. Staff leave will be administered through the use of the *Request for Leave* form, which is to be completed on each occasion that an employee is absent from work, with or without pay (*i.e. vacation, earned time off*).
2. When requesting any time off for any purposes, the employee will complete and submit the applicable form(s) to the Program Manager or Executive Director, prior to the date of absence, for approval.
3. The Program Manager or Executive Director will approve and coordinate leave of absence, and will explain, control and document any absence of employees reporting to them.
4. The form(s) will then be authorized and signed by the Program Manager or Executive Director and forwarded to Administration for final processing.
5. In cases where scheduling of replacement employees is necessary, the *Program Assistant* will be given a copy of the Request for Leave form. The Request for Leave form will then be attached to the absent employee's timesheet for that pay period and submitted to the Finance Manager for processing of payroll.
6. The *Request for Leave* form will also be used to request report cancellation of leave and, subsequently, document and record the approved leave or cancellation of leave.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

4-7A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	LEAVE MANAGEMENT (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 2	

7. The Program Manager will give a copy of the authorized form to the employee for his/her own records.
8. The Employee must not assume that leave has been granted until a copy of the signed *Request for Leave* form has been returned to him/her by the Program Manager.
9. *Request for Leave* forms will be retained by *Finance Manager* for reference in reporting an employee's hours of work, as a reference for developing vacation schedules, and as written records of approved leave or cancellation of leave.

Addendum: Request for Leave form

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

4-8

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	CANCELLATION OF LEAVE	
	POLICY DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: Employees will provide **sufficient notice* of any Cancellation of Leave and/or new date leave requests, to allow for rescheduling of staff.

REASON:

To avoid any confusion regarding staffing requirements.

PROCEDURE:

1. When requesting a *Cancellation of Leave*, employees will use the back side of the original "Approved" *Request for Leave* form and include any new requested dates of leave.
2. The form will be submitted to the Program Manager.
3. The Program Manager will forward the form to the Executive Director for final authorization, who will then submit a copy to the *Program Assistant* for final processing.
4. The *Cancellation of Leave* signed original will be submitted to the Finance Manager for purposes of payroll.
5. The Program Manager will file the copy of the authorized Cancellation of Leave and new dates information with the original request in the employee's records.
6. The Program Manager will then give the authorized Cancellation of Leave and new dates of leave to the employee for his/her own records.
7. The employee must not assume that new leave has been granted as requested until the signed *Request for Leave* for has been returned to him/her by the Program Manager.

***Sufficient Notice:** A minimum of 2 days notice.

4-9

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	COURT	
	POLICY DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: Leave of absence shall be granted to an employee who is required to make a court appearance.

CONDITIONS:

Leave of absence *without pay* shall be granted to employees who:

1. Are required to be in attendance as a result of court action arising from their employment.
2. Are subpoenaed by the Crown to serve as jurors or witnesses for the Crown in a court action.
3. Employees whose private affairs have occasioned a court appearance.
4. An accused employee who is jailed pending court appearance.
5. Employees who are subpoenaed by an agent other than the Crown.

PROCEDURE:

1. The employee must advise their Program Manager as soon as he/she is aware the leave will be required. The employee must complete an application for leave of absence and indicate the approximate length of absence. Where the leave has been approved and taken, the supervisor must ensure that the leave is appropriately recorded.
2. Time spent at court by employees in their official employment capacity shall not result in any loss of regular pay.

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Manual

4-10

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	SPECIAL LEAVE	
	POLICY DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: Special leave of absence shall be granted to an employee under specified circumstances.

CONDITIONS:

Regular full-time employees who have completed their probationary period will be granted leave without pay to a maximum of ten (10) days per year for the following:

- a) Marriage of the employee – five (5) days;
- b) Birth of the employee's child – two (2) days;
- c) Attend his/her formal hearing to become a Canadian citizen - one (1) day.
- d) Serious household or domestic emergency – two (2) days;
- e) Attend funeral as pall-bearer or mourner - one (1) day.
- f) Attending wedding of employee's child – one (1) day.
- g) Court appearance for hearing of employee's child – one (1) day.
- h) Care, health or education of a child in the employee's care – up to five (5) days
- i) Care or health of any other member of the employee's immediate family – up to five (5) days.

Permanent part-time employees will be entitled to leave on a pro-rated basis.

Approval shall not be withheld unjustly and the employee may draw upon their vacation credits at their discretion to avoid loss of income for (d), (e).

PROCEDURE:

1. The employee shall notify their Program Manager fourteen (14) days in advance, *where possible*, when a special leave is required.

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Manual

4-11

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	MEDICAL/DENTAL APPOINTMENT	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: Where medical and/or dental appointments cannot be scheduled outside the employee's working hours, sick leave may be used and/or unpaid leave of absence may be granted.

PROCEDURE:

1. Employees who have regularly scheduled days off will be expected to arrange appointments during those days off. Exceptions may be made for care which is required on an immediate or emergency basis, or where routine appointments cannot be accommodated on the employee's days off.
2. Employees who work on a casual on-call basis will be required to attend all medical or dental care appointments on their own time.

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Manual

4-12

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S RANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	LEAVES OF ABSENCE	
	POLICY TITLE:	ELECTIONS	
	POLICY DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: In keeping with the Elections Act, employees will be given four (4) consecutive, clear hours in which to vote during the hours in which polls are open.

PROCEDURE:

1. The Program Manager is responsible for arranging the necessary leave and ensuring that the employee is able to vote in an election.

Reference: Elections Act

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	WAGES AND BENEFITS	
	POLICY TITLE:	WAGES	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: Vernon Women’s Transition House Society will pay each employee all wages earned for the pay period other than wages for annual vacation or accrued statutory holidays.

Employees of the Vernon Women’s Transition House Society will be paid in accordance with the rates of pay described in the wage grid.

PROCEDURE:

1. All employees will sign a direct deposit authorization form before commencing employment. All wages will be paid by direct deposit to the account authorized by the employee.
2. Pay Days will be every second Thursday.
3. Staff will be responsible for recording their hours of work on their individual timesheet and will, four (4) days before payday, provide to the Administration Department, the completed timesheets and the statement of time taken.
4. Executive Director or Program Manager will review and sign the timesheets.
5. The Finance Manager, will transfer all of the information provided onto the payroll program to calculate the payroll entitlements.
6. Finance Manager will transfer all holiday, vacation, special leave and sick time information onto the vacation/statutory holiday/banked and sick time entitlement record. This record will be the master.
7. The distribution of pay information slips will be done in such a manner that the details of the pay will be kept confidential.
8. The Finance Manager will prepare the payroll so that pay is available on the appropriate days.
9. If the pay cheque is not available on the pay day stipulated, the Society will, upon request from the employee, arrange for the employee to be provided with an adequate advance on the salary.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	WAGES AND BENEFITS	
	POLICY TITLE:	FLEX TIME	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: The banking of hours for use as Flexible Time can occur where the type of job requires an individual to adjust the time worked to meet the needs of the program.

PROCEDURE:

1. Individuals in positions where Flexible Time can occur will have it clearly defined in their job description that the hours of work are to be flexible to meet the needs of the program.
2. Actual hours worked must be recorded daily and submitted on time sheet.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

5-3

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	WAGES AND BENEFITS	
	POLICY TITLE:	TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: An employee who has been temporarily assigned by the Executive Director or Program Manager to a position with a rate of pay lower than his/her regular rate of pay shall maintain his/her regular rate of pay.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

5-4

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	WAGES AND BENEFITS	
	POLICY TITLE:	SUBSTITUTION PAY	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: Where the Executive Director assigns an employee to temporarily relieve in a higher-rated position, substitution pay shall be authorized, subject to certain conditions.

CONDITIONS:

Substitution pay **will not** be payable in the following circumstances:

- An employee has not been authorized by the Executive Director to substitute for another employee.
- An employee's current position normally requires periodic substitution in the higher position as set out in the job description or letter of hire.
- Substitution required is for a period of less than one (1) full shift.

PROCEDURE:

1. Written authorization from the Executive Director shall be required for relief periods in excess of five (5) consecutive work days.
2. Employees on a paid leave of absence will be entitled to the basic rate of pay they received prior to substituting in the higher position.
3. Where an employee has been assigned to temporarily perform the duties of a management employee in a higher classification, the employee shall receive the starting salary of the higher paid position, or where this rate is lower than the employee's current rate, the step on the salary scale that is immediately higher than the current rate.
4. Where an employee has been assigned to temporarily perform the duties of another employee in a higher classification, the employee shall receive the higher rate of pay for all hours worked for each full shift relieved.

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Series

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	WAGES AND BENEFITS	
	POLICY TITLE:	STATUTORY HOLIDAYS	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005	PAGE: 1 of 2	

POLICY: Regular employees are entitled to eleven statutory holidays each calendar year and such other holidays as may be in future proclaimed or declared by either the provincial or federal governments.

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Empire (Victoria) Day
- Canada Day
- British Columbia Day
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Remembrance Day
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day

EXCEPTIONS:

If a statutory holiday falls on a weekend, either the preceding Friday or following Monday is declared the holiday for those employees who normally work Monday to Friday. All other employees will have the statutory holiday worked into their shift rotation.

Lieu days for statutory holidays are to be scheduled and taken within six (6) months.

Statutory holidays cannot be accumulated.

CONDITIONS:

1. **On a regularly scheduled working day:** When the statutory holiday falls on what would otherwise be a regular working day, regular/full time staff is paid the same amount for the holiday as though he/she had worked regular hours that day (*Part-time staff is paid 4.2% on each cheque*).
2. **On a regularly scheduled day of rest:** When a statutory holiday occurs on a regular employee's day of rest, the employee shall be entitled to a day off with pay in lieu of the statutory holiday.
3. **During a vacation period:** When a statutory holiday falls during an employee's vacation, the statutory holiday will not count as a day of vacation.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

5-5A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	WAGES AND BENEFITS	
	POLICY TITLE:	STATUTORY HOLIDAYS (Continued)	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005	PAGE: 2 of 2	

4. **During paid leave:** When a statutory holiday occurs during an employee's leave with pay, the employee shall receive regular pay for the statutory holiday, but shall not reschedule the statutory holiday.
5. **Illness on a statutory holiday:** If the employee is or becomes ill on a statutory holiday or scheduled lieu day, the scheduled day off will not be rescheduled.
6. **Statutory holiday is rescheduled:** Where lieu days for statutory holidays have to be rescheduled, Vernon Women's Transition House Society will, subject to the operational requirements of the organization, make every reasonable effort to reschedule such days for a time which is mutually agreeable to the employer and employee. In no case will the lieu day be scheduled later than:
 - Six (6) months,
 - The employee's next annual vacation, or
 - The termination of the employee's employment

PROCEDURE:

Employees not covered by the provisions of a collective agreement who have completed their first thirty (30) calendar days of employment shall be compensated for statutory holidays in accordance with the following:

1. Regular full-time employees receive a paid day off of each statutory holiday.
2. Regular part-time and casual employees shall be paid the average of their daily hourly earnings, exclusive of overtime, for the days worked in four (4) week period immediately proceeding the statutory holiday.
3. Employees who are required to work on the statutory holiday will be paid at one and one-half times (1 1/2x) their regular wage for the first eleven (11) hours worked and double (2x) their regular wage for each hour worked in excess of eleven in the day, plus receive a day off with pay.

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Series – Employment Standards Act, Part 1
Employment Standards Regulations, Parts 1, 5

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP: WAGES AND BENEFITS	
	POLICY TITLE: HEALTH AND WELFARE BENEFITS	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005	
		PAGE: 1 of 2

POLICY: Vernon Women's Transition House Society shall provide all regular employees with health and welfare benefits as outlined below.

CONDITIONS:

Medical Plan:

Employees who are enrolled in the Society's BC Medical Plan shall have deducted from their paycheque an amount equivalent to one point six percent (1.6%) of gross pay as their contribution towards the monthly premium. Vernon Women's Transition House Society shall pay the remaining cost of the monthly premium for eligible regular employees, their spouse, and dependent children.

Extended Health Care Plan:

The Society will pay 100% of the regular monthly premiums for extended health care coverage for eligible regular employees, their spouse and dependent children, provided that they are not covered by another extended health care plan.

Dental Plan:

The Society will pay 100% of the regular monthly premiums for eligible regular employees, their spouse, and dependent children, provided that they are not covered by another dental plan.

Group Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment:

The Society will pay 100% of the premiums for the group life and accidental death and dismemberment insurance plans.

Long-Term Disability Insurance:

The Society shall provide a long-term disability plan.

Coverage under the provisions of these plans will apply to regular full-time and regular part-time employees who are scheduled to work twenty (20) regular hours or more per week.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

5-6A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	WAGES AND BENEFITS	
	POLICY TITLE:	HEALTH AND WELFARE BENEFITS	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005	PAGE: 2 of 2	

1. Participation in the above plans is a condition of employment unless the employee is covered by a comparable plan elsewhere and there is mutual agreement between the employee and the employer to another arrangement.
2. When an employee is on unpaid leave of absence, both the employee and employer portion of benefit payments must be paid by the employee in order to maintain coverage. Basic maternity leave is an exception to the foregoing.
3. Vernon Women's Transition House Society is only responsible for paying benefit premiums for the first twenty (20) work shifts of *Leave Without Pay*. The employee is responsible for all premiums, including employer's portion, after twenty (20) work shifts and **must make arrangements with the Finance Manager to pay ongoing benefit premiums in advance**. Premiums are due prior to the first of each month.
4. If the employee fails to make the *necessary arrangements* for payment of premiums, or if *payment* is not made, **it will result in termination of coverage**.

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Series

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	WAGES AND BENEFITS	
	POLICY TITLE:	ANNUAL VACATION LEAVE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 3	

POLICY: Vacation leave will be granted to regular full-time and regular part-time employees as set out in this policy statement.

Vacation leaves will be granted subject to a review of operational requirements.

Vacation leave for a regular part-time employee shall be proportionate to regular full-time and at no time will a regular part-time employee receive a superior benefit to a full-time employee.

Casual employees receive a percentage payment in lieu of paid vacation.

CONDITIONS:

All employees shall be credited with and granted vacations earned each year, on the following basis:

1. All employees who have not been **continuously employed** at least six (6) months prior to commencement of the vacation year will receive vacation time based on total completed calendar months employed to commencement date.

New employees who have been **continuously employed** at least six (6) months prior to commencement of the vacation year will receive a partial vacation after six (6) months' service based on the total completed calendar months employed to commencement date.

An employee whose employment ceases before he/she has completed five (5) working days of employment is not entitled to annual vacation pay.

2. **Regular full-time employees** with one (1) or more years of **continuous service** shall have earned the following vacation pay:

1-2 years of service	15 workdays
3 years of service	16 workdays
4 years of service	17 workdays
5 years of service	18 workdays
6 years of service	19 workdays
7 years of service	22 workdays

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

5-7A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	WAGES AND BENEFITS	
	POLICY TITLE:	ANNUAL VACATION (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 2 of 3

8 years of service	23 workdays
9 years of service	24 workdays
10 years of service	25 workdays
11 years of service	26 workdays
12 years of service	27 workdays
13 years of service	28 workdays
14 years of service	29 workdays
15 years of service	30 workdays
16 years of service	31 workdays
17 years of service	32 workdays
18 years of service	33 workdays
19 years of service	34 workdays
20 years of service	35 workdays

PROCEDURE:

1. Employees shall submit their vacation requests to the Program Manager on or before:
 - 1) November 1st for the period January 1st through April 30th, and
 - 2) March 1st for the period May 1st through December 31st.
2. Vacation schedules shall be approved within two (2) weeks of the closing dates for vacation requests.
3. An employee who does not exercise his/her seniority rights within two (2) weeks of receiving the vacation schedule, shall not be entitled to exercise those rights in respect to any vacation time previously selected by an employee with less seniority.
4. An employee who relocates to another work location where the vacation schedule has already been completed will not be entitled to exercise his/her seniority rights for that year only. However, every effort shall be made to grant vacation at the time of the employee's choice.
5. A regular employee may carry over up to five (5) days' vacation leave per year; except that such vacation carryover shall exceed ten (10) days at any time. An employee shall not receive pay in lieu of vacation time, except upon retirement or termination. All vacation time not scheduled or designated for carry over by three (3) months prior to the end of the vacation year will be scheduled by Vernon Women's Transition House Society following consultation with the employee.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

5-7B

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	WAGES AND BENEFITS	
	POLICY TITLE:	ANNUAL VACATION (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 3 of 3	

Vacations and Sick Time:

1. Sickness occurring while on vacation is normally not paid. However, if a major illness occurs during vacation, the employee may present his/her supervisor with a Physician's certificate and request consideration that the period of illness be charged against accumulated sick leave credits, thus creating an unused vacation entitlement. Approval of such requests is at the discretion of the Program Manager.
2. A major illness is one requiring hospitalization or complete bed rest under a Physician's care. Employees requesting utilization of *Sick Leave* rather than vacation credits must advise their Program Coordinator as soon as possible, in order that the Program Coordinator may consider whether or not vacation schedules should be rearranged to accommodate such a request.
3. No vacation pay will be paid in conjunction with WCB payments.
4. Upon twenty-one (21) days' written notice, a regular employee shall be entitled to receive, prior to commencement of a vacation, a payroll advance equivalent to the amount of his/her regular paycheque issued during the vacation period.
5. Employees who have commenced their annual vacation shall not be called back to work except in the case of an extreme emergency.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director_____
Date Approved

6-1

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	CONFIDENTIALITY	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 2	

POLICY: Vernon Women's Transition House Society members and staff must not disclose nor discuss any client information acquired during the course of their work.

All counselling sessions, whether in person or by telephone, will occur in such a way that information provided by and to the client will remain confidential from other program clients or staff.

Clients' records will not be disclosed for any purpose outside of the scope of their work, to anyone other than authorized employees, the Program Manager, or the Executive Director or without written authorization of the Executive Director.

Confidentiality of client information will extend beyond the term of employment or membership with the Society.

REASON FOR POLICY:

The Vernon Women's Transition House Society has a responsibility to protect the anonymity of its clients and their families and so supports and ensures client confidentiality.

Failure to maintain client confidentiality could have adverse consequences for the clients and families and may expose the Society to controversy and liability.

The confidentiality of counselling sessions must be ensured in order to maintain client confidentiality, safety, clinical relationships, and program integrity.

PROCEDURE:

1. Discussion regarding the actions or character of a client will not be carried out in the presence of other clients.
2. Written reference to clients in public areas should be by their initials only (*i.e. bulletin boards*).
3. Written reference to clients in easily accessible material will be by their initials only (*i.e. meeting minutes*).

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

6-1A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	CONFIDENTIALITY (Continued)	
	POLICY DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 2	

4. Confidential material should not be left out overnight or for any longer than it is required.
5. Confidential material will not be discarded in the trash baskets, but will be disposed of in a secure manner (*i.e. shredded*).
6. Employee's personal notes should not contain identifiable information (*i.e. complete name and address*). Notes containing this type of information will be kept secure in the client file and disposed of in a secure manner.
7. Program staff will not conduct case consultations in the presence of other program clients, unless stipulated otherwise by the client involved.
8. Counselling sessions will be undertaken in a method and venue that ensures privacy.
9. All request for disclosure of client information and records by unauthorized parties will be directed to the Executive Director for written authorization.
10. Each request for release of information will be accompanied by a "*Consent for Release of Confidential Information*" form.
11. A record will be kept, as part of the case file, of all requests and those who were granted access to the case record.
12. Suspected breaches of confidentiality will be considered serious disciplinary issues. An investigation will be carried out immediately upon notification of a possible breach. The Program Manager and Executive Director will manage the investigation. The worker may be suspended during the investigation and the results of the investigation will determine the consequences of the breach on the involved employee up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Addendum: Consent for Release of Confidential Information Form

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

6-2

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	CLIENT RECORDS	
	REVISION DATE: OCTOBER 25, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: All client records, both current and past will be considered confidential, and will be kept in a secure place.

Client records are designated as owned by either the funding Ministry or Vernon Women's Transition House Society. This designation is stated in each contract for service. Where there is no designation, the possession defaults to the Society.

Vernon Women's Transition House Society will keep personal client information for only as long as necessary for the identified purposes or as required by law.

PROCEDURE:

1. During a client's stay in residential programs, daily notes are recorded in the client's file for staff communication purposes. These are *Transitory Documents* and are shredded once the client has departed, the file is closed and the file has been processed at month-end.

DISPOSAL OF CLIENT RECORDS:

1. *Transitory Documents* will not be shredded if required for legal purposes and these purposes are known before the file is closed. Other *Transitory Documents* that may be in the client file include medication logs and babysitting contracts.
2. Client records will only be disposed of by the Finance Manager under direction of the Program Manager, and will be shredded to ensure total destruction of all confidential documents.
3. Records for clients who are under 19 years of age at time of service will be maintained for 7 additional years after the client turns 19.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

6-3

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	RELATIONS BETWEEN EMPLOYEES AND CLIENTS	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: All relations between Vernon Women's Transition House Society employees and clients, which include children, youth, individual and their families, will be professional relationships and will be maintained as such.

Program Staff will avoid socializing on a personal level outside of program time with program participants and alumni, even if they are legally adults.

REASONS FOR POLICY:

Due to the possibility of being accused falsely of inappropriate behaviour, and to aid in stress management, program staffs are discouraged from becoming involved in non-program activities with program participants.

Socializing with program participants on a personal level outside of program time has significant potential to be interpreted in a negative light and, consequently, affect the professional standing of the program staff and the program itself.

PROCEDURE:

1. All elements of the relationship between Vernon Women's Transition House Society staff, students, volunteers and clients will be reported and reviewed regularly as part of the ongoing supervisory process.
2. Any staff, student or volunteer who meets a client outside of the regularly scheduled working hours, even if inadvertently, will keep the contact brief, document the incident in the daily log or client file, and report it to their Program Manager at the earliest opportunity.
3. All staff, students or volunteers will secure prior approval from their Program Manager to contact clients outside of the regular working hours.
4. Employees should consult with their Program Manager, where they are unsure as to the appropriateness of a specific behaviour or relationship.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	PHYSICAL CONTACT	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: Vernon Women's Transition House Society employees will avoid physical contact with program participants.

REASON FOR POLICY:

Physical contact may be construed as being outside the boundaries of professionalism or having sexual contact, whether the staff or the program participant initiate this contact.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	LENDING/BORROWING	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: Vernon Women's Transition House Society employees will not lend or borrow money or property to/from program participants.

REASON FOR POLICY:

Lending or borrowing money or property to/from program participants may be seen as relinquishing control and/or giving payment for dubious reasons.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	FOSTERING CLIENTS	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: Vernon Women's Transition House Society employees will not act as foster parents or, under any arrangements, have living with them current or former clients of the Society.

REASON FOR POLICY:

Due to the sensitive nature of the relationship between staff, volunteers or students and clients, it is inappropriate for staff to develop special relationships with clients where other clients might expect the same or resent the lack of it.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	GRIEVANCE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: Clients will have the right of access to the Program Manager, Executive Director and the Board of Directors so that they may hear any grievances not effectively dealt with by Program staff.

REASON FOR POLICY:

From time to time, grievances may arise where the Program staffs are not able to effectively respond to grievances by clients. In these cases, clients then need to be able to access the Program Manager and Executive Director. If this is not satisfactory, the Board of Directors may be contacted so as to find a satisfactory resolution to the issue.

PROCEDURE:

1. Clients who have a grievance, which concerns a particular Program, will **first contact the Program Manager** and attempt to resolve the matter.
2. If the situation remains unresolved, the client will have the right to approach the **Executive Director**.
3. If the situation is not satisfactorily resolved with the Executive Director, the client will have the right to approach the **Board of Directors by contacting the Chairperson of the Society**.
4. The **Chairperson** will appoint a committee of three persons to look into the matter and make recommendations. The committee will consist of **one front line worker, one Program Manager and one Board Member**. *Committee members will not be from the Program in question.*
5. The committee will be empowered to recommend that the matter come before the full Board, or the matter be referred back to the Executive Director for resolution at a staff level.
6. Program staff will do everything possible to facilitate this grievance process.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	CLIENT SUPERVISION	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: The Vernon Women's Transition House Society will provide, on a twenty-four (24) hour basis, qualified staff supervision sufficient to maintain the safety and adequate care and maintenance of clients in each program.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	CLIENT ABUSE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 3	

POLICY: Clients of the organization have a right to expect an environment that is safe and free from any abuse or neglect. Any staff member or volunteer who, upon investigation, has inflicted abuse or neglected a client may be terminated.

Any staff member or volunteer who has knowledge of an incident of suspected abuse has the responsibility to report such an incident immediately to their Program Manager. Failure on the part of any witness to report such an incident will result in severe disciplinary action and may result in termination of employment.

This policy does not negate a staff member's right to move away from a client, who is acting in a way that might harm the staff member provided that the client is left in a safe situation.

All reported incidents must be investigated by the supervisor of the program and remedial action taken expeditiously.

DEFINITIONS:

Abuse is defined as an action or behaviour by a staff member or volunteers that may result in physical, emotional or mental harm to a client.

Categories of Abuse:

Physical:

- Assault (e.g. slapping, hitting, kicking, punching, stuffing a cloth into a client/consumer's mouth).
- Rough handling without regard for the client/consumer's comfort, (e.g. unnecessary force applied during lifts, transfers and activities of daily living).
- Gross physical neglect: (e.g. withholding food or personal or medical care).

Psychosocial:

- Verbal or emotional abuse (e.g. yelling, making demeaning or derogatory remarks, teasing, swearing, and/or name-calling).
- Gross psychosocial neglect (e.g. lack of attention, isolation, confinement).

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

6-9A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	CLIENT ABUSE (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 3	

Financial:

- Theft: money or personal property.
- Fraud: deceitful manipulation of finances.
- Solicitation for compensation.

Sexual Abuse/Assault:

- Sexual abuse consists of sexually inappropriate and/or non-consensual actions (*or any sexual relationship with a minor who is known to be receiving services from Vernon Women's Transition House Society or client in which the staff has a perceived position of power or control*), such as exposure to sexual materials (*such as pornography*), the use of inappropriate sexual remarks/language, not respecting the privacy (*physical boundaries*) of a child or individual (*e.g., intentionally walking in on someone while dressing or in the bathroom*), fondling, exhibitionism, oral sex and forced sexual intercourse (*rape*).

Medication Abuse:

- Over sedation, misuse of person's medications and prescriptions, non-compliance with medication refills, or the medication administration policy.

Violation of Rights:

- Denial of basic civil/human rights.

Neglect:

- **Active neglect:** willful withholding of basic necessities and care.
- **Passive neglect:** withholding of basic necessities and care, usually due to a lack of experience or information

PROCEDURE:

1. All concerns raised by clients, clients' families, staff or other persons, of possible abuse must be reported immediately to the responsible Program Manager and reported to the appropriate governing body(s).

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

6-9B

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	CLIENT ABUSE (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 3 of 3	

2. If a situation arises which a staff member feels incapable of handling, or if a staff member is abused by a client, the staff member must withdraw from the situation as soon as practical and seek assistance. On no occasion is it appropriate for a staff member to "punish" or take retaliatory measures against a client.
3. Any staff member who has witnessed abuse of a client or suspects there has been abuse should report the incident immediately to the person in charge who will investigate it immediately. Failure to report such an incident will result in disciplinary action being taken.
4. The responsible Program Manager will commence an investigation immediately.
5. Following the completion of the investigation and a thorough review of all the information obtained as well as resolution of any conflicting information where such occurs, a decision will be made regarding the appropriate response.
6. If the investigation provides proof of such abuse, the staff member will be disciplined with an appropriate penalty up to and including termination.

Any volunteer who has abused a client or whose behaviour puts a client at risk, shall be relieved of their volunteer responsibilities

Reference: CSSEA Self-Help Series

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

6-10

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: Vernon Women's Transition House Society staff will only accept those gifts from clients that are appropriate to the relationship with that client.

REASON FOR POLICY:

Clients at times may, out of gratitude or some other emotion, try to give staff gifts.

Staff acceptance of a gift may, in some instances, impose an obligation upon the employee or give the wrong impression of the client/staff relationship.

PROCEDURE:

1. Whenever clients wish to give a gift to staff, the staff in question will evaluate its appropriateness to decide whether or not to accept it.
2. Staff may use the following guidelines in deciding to accept the gift:

Appropriate: Small gifts, particularly to celebrate an event, are appropriate.

Inappropriate: Cash gifts are inappropriate, as are expensive gifts or gifts beyond the means of the giver.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

6-11

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	HEALTH & SAFETY - <u>HYGIENE</u>	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 2	

POLICY: Where appropriate, programs within Vernon Women's Transition House Society will provide assistance to clients in addressing their personal care needs,

REASON FOR POLICY:

To promote and develop sound health and personal hygiene habits and practices.

PROCEDURE:

1. Program staff will foster each client's recognition of the following:
 - The need for a positive attitude towards safe and healthful living,
 - The participant's responsibilities for both his/her own health and safety and that of others,
 - His/her sexuality, sexual attitudes and behaviour,
 - The need for adequate physical exercise, and
 - The need for regular routine of personal care, cleanliness and change of clothing.
2. Where clients need adult guidance to develop and maintain good standards of health and hygiene, program staff will provide the following:
 - Reminders to those who require them,
 - Support for the client's efforts to establish good grooming habits,
 - Expressions of approval for those who demonstrate satisfactory improvement, and
 - Expressions of disapproval for inappropriate habits and behaviour.
3. Program staff will bring any concerns to the staff meetings.
4. Based upon specific limits and a prior assessment of those participants who have little or no source of personal income, the program will provide the following assistance:
 - Obtain all of the necessary personal hygiene and personal grooming products,
 - Pay for any transportation, when necessary, and
 - Ensure that each client has adequate clothing of good quality, appropriate for size, activities and weather conditions.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

6-11A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	HEALTH & SAFETY – <u>HYGIENE</u> (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 2	

- The Program Manager will ensure that the clients are supplied with all necessary personal hygiene and personal grooming products, adequate resources for transportation and adequate and appropriate clothing.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

6-12

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	HEALTH & SAFETY - <u>NUTRITION</u>	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: Transition House and Support to Young Parent program staff will ensure that clients receive well-balanced meals and snacks that are nutritionally adequate for their physical growth and development and, where possible, special foods as recommended by a physician.

PROCEDURES:

1. Meals and snacks will be prepared in accordance with Canada's Food Guide and Health requirements.
2. Program staff must ensure that conditions for food preparation and handling are sanitary and in accordance with local health regulations.
3. Program staff will ensure that special menus are provided, in accordance with health guidelines, for clients with food allergies, medical or religious requirements.
4. Program staff must ensure that the manner in which food is stored is adequate to retain nutritional value and prevent contamination.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	SUICIDE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 3	

POLICY: Vernon Women's Transition House Society employees must take all practical and reasonable precautions to anticipate the suicidal tendencies and preserve the life of potentially suicidal clients.

Appropriate Vernon Women's Transition House Society employees will be trained in the observation and recognition of suicidal tendencies in their clients.

REASON FOR POLICY:

The Vernon Women's Transition House Society has a commitment and an obligation to ensure and maintain the well-being and security of its clients.

NATURE OF SUICIDE ATTEMPTS:

a) Suicide may occur for the following reasons:

Negative Emotional State: In a state of deep personal frustration resulting from loneliness, despair, profound feelings of rejection or other negative emotional states.

Impaired Mental State: Where an individual's mental functioning is impaired by substance abuse or a psychotic condition.

Note: Either of these conditions can cause feelings of paranoia (*i.e. undue suspicion, delusions, mistaken ideas*), or other clinical symptoms which may result in strange or bizarre behaviour.

By Accident: Accidentally, as a result of miscalculation.

b) A suicide attempt may be:

- Genuine and premeditated in response to a sense of hopelessness,
- A plea for help and understanding,
- Directed by a serious mental illness,
- Motivated by substance abuse,
- Impulsive and retaliatory,
- Manipulative and revengeful (*i.e. intended to induce feelings of guilt in another person*),
- A pretended attempt or gesture for attention purposes,
- Theatrical and staged.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

6-13A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	SUICIDE (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 3	

RECOGNITION/ANTICIPATION/PREVENTION

- c) **No suicide threat or attempt** should be dismissed or punished.
- d) **Every suicide threat or attempt** should be treated as a serious indicator of a potential for self-harm or suicide.

PROCEDURE:

HIGH RISK: Where a client has been assessed and determined to be a high risk for suicide, staff will inform all parties involved of the client's risk potential for suicide.

LOW RISK: Where a client has been assessed and determined to be a low risk for suicide, staff will maintain the client in the Program facility, increase staff monitoring and/or one-to-one supervision, inform all parties involved of the client's low risk potential for suicide, and provide continuing information on the client's mood, behaviour and management.

1. Where the potential for suicide is suspected, Vernon Women's Transition House Society staff will:
 - Monitor on a frequent and regular basis (*i.e. every 15 minutes*) or not leave the person alone,
 - Remove dangerous articles and other items with which the client could cause harm,
 - Search carefully for hidden drugs,
 - Contact a qualified medical specialist to examine and assess the person for suicidal potential, and determine if the potential exists and establish the degree of risk (*i.e. high risk or low risk*), and
 - Complete the '*Critical Incident Report*' and any appropriate reports within the program.
2. Where a suicide has been attempted, and physical harm has resulted, the staff member will **immediately:**
 - Provide the required medical assistance available within the facility,
 - Contact the required external agency(ies) for any additional assistance (*i.e. ambulance, fire department rescue, etc.*),

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

6-13B

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	SUICIDE (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 3 of 3	

- Transport the injured party to the hospital if the injuries require medical attention but do not constitute an emergency,
 - Ensure that all parties involved are aware that the person constitutes a suicide risk and, therefore, must be monitored accordingly,
 - *Notify the appropriate parties, and
 - Complete the '*Critical Incident Report*' and any appropriate reports within the program.
3. Where a suicide has been attempted, and has *resulted in suspected death*, the staff member will **immediately** follow the directions provided in **Policy 6-14 'Death'**.

Note: The person must be treated as if resuscitation is possible until relieved by a physician or qualified medical personnel.

- Contact the required external agency(ies) for any additional assistance (i.e. ambulance, fire department rescue, etc.),
 - Ensure the well-being of other clients and staff,
 - *Notify the appropriate parties,
 - Complete the '*Critical Incident Report*' and any appropriate reports within the program.
4. Where a suicide has been attempted, and *physical harm has not resulted*, the staff member will **immediately**:
- Ensure that all parties involved are aware that the person constitutes a suicide risk and, therefore, must be monitored accordingly,
 - Ensure the well-being of other clients and staff,
 - *Notify the appropriate parties, and
 - Complete the '*Critical Incident Report*' and any appropriate reports within the program.

***Notification:** Where a suicide has been attempted or threatened by a client, staff **must inform the Program Manager and the Executive Director.**

Addendum: Critical Incident Report Form

Reference: Section 8 - Health & Safety – Policy 9 – High Risk/High Profile Cases

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

6-14

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	DEATH	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 2	

POLICY: The suspected death of a client under the jurisdiction of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society will be treated as a medical emergency until the person has been officially pronounced dead by a medical doctor.

Upon confirmation of death, the proper authorities, and the Board of Directors, must be notified as soon as possible.

REASON FOR POLICY:

The assumption must be made that life exists until death is absolutely confirmed so that, should the client be still alive, life-saving treatment will begin immediately.

There is ample time to deal with the technicalities later, but there may be only that one, immediate change to save a life.

PROCEDURE:

1. In the event of an emergency, staff and/or person finding the client will immediately:
 - Announce a medical emergency,
 - Begin artificial respiration/CPR and continue until relieved by the ambulance crew, fire department resuscitation team, medical personnel or until advised to do so by a medical doctor, and
 - Call **911**, or use the emergency alert device to summon an ambulance, fire department or the police.

2. Once the emergency response has been initiated, staff will:
 - Notify the Program Manager, who will notify the Executive Director,
 - Remove the other residents from the scene,
 - If applicable, move roommate(s) to a secure area,
 - Seal the immediate area of the occurrence and leave it undisturbed, and
 - Complete the '*Critical Incident Report*' and any appropriate reports within each program.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

6-14A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	DEATH (Continued)	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 2	

3. The Executive Director and/or Program Manager will notify the following of the death:

Internal:

- Board of Directors

External:

- The appropriate Ministry
- Coroner
- Police
- Family
- Family Doctor
- School

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

6-15

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT
	POLICY TITLE:	ETHICAL CONDUCT (Clients)
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 6

POLICY: The Highest priority of Vernon Women's Transition House Society is the safety and well-being of the women and children using our services. All employees have a professional obligation to avoid any action or behaviour that would undermine or exploit their trust in services or affect the agency's reputation.

PROCEDURE:

1. All contact with clients will be carried out in a professional manner. These contacts will be characterized with sensitivity, courtesy and appropriate concern for the client and agency.
2. Employees will respect the privacy of clients and hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of employment. This extends to the period when employment ceases. Exceptions are: (1) as mandated by law; (2) to prevent a clear and immediate danger to a person; (3) where required by legal proceedings, or (4) if there is a waiver previously obtained in writing.
3. All employees are responsible for storing or disposing of client records in ways that maintain confidentiality.
4. Confidentiality and privacy will be extended towards colleagues, applicants and any sensitive situations arising within the agency.
5. Employees will avoid conflicts of interest and also the appearance or perception of a conflict of interest.
6. Relationships are between the agency and the clients, not the employee and the woman or child.
7. Employees will serve all clients equally; recognizing and respecting individual goals, responsibilities and differences.
8. Employees will act solely as representatives of Vernon Women's Transition House Society while working or attending events on the Society's behalf.
9. Any form of abuse by employees will not be tolerated; including physical, emotional, verbal or sexual, etc.
10. Employees will ensure that outside interests, personal values and feelings do not impair their professional judgement, independence or competence, or interfere with clients' freedom to make choices.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

6-15A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT
	POLICY TITLE:	ETHICAL CONDUCT (Clients) Continued
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 6

11. An employee will generally not have a business arrangement with a client and will not lend or borrow money with or to them. There may be circumstances where this situation is unavoidable, in which case the conflict of interest guidelines will be observed.
12. Unless agreed to by Vernon Women's Transition House Society, employees with private practices or businesses shall not obtain their clients from Vernon Women's Transition House Society.
13. Employees will conduct themselves in a manner that will not encourage physical or emotional dependency by clients.
14. Employees will not provide their personal telephone numbers and addresses to clients.
15. Employees will not accept telephone calls or visits to their homes by clients or partners, or family members or friends of the client.
16. Employees will not make personal calls, or personal visits to the clients. All contact between the employee and client is to be at Vernon Women's Transition House Society or at an authorized venue.
17. There will be no sexual relations between employees and clients.
18. Employees will not socialize outside the society with clients. There may be special social events to which a client invites an employee. In these cases, notification of such an event will be made to the employee's supervisor, and her prior approval will be required. Examples of such situations are graduations, baby showers, wedding, etc.
19. Where there has been an existing relationship, as identified to the supervisor, there will not be a need for notification and approval of attendance at social events.
20. If an employee recognizes a client from the community, this fact will not be raised by the employee, unless the client mentions it first. By the same token, a client will not be acknowledged or approached by an employee unless initiated by the client.
21. It is recognized that employees may find themselves in social situations with clients; in such instances, they will exercise good judgment.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

6-15B

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	ETHICAL CONDUCT (Clients) Continued	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 3 of 6

22. Employees will not socialize with clients outside of the facilities with the following exceptions: field trips organized as part of programming (e.g. Take Back the Night, organized recreational activities such as swimming).
23. There will be no drinking of alcohol or use of illegal drugs with clients.
24. Employees will seek appropriate professional assistance for their personal problems or conflicts that are likely to impair their work performance or professional judgment.
25. A conflict of interest will be handled in the following manner:
- ▶ The employee will notify her immediate supervisor in writing as soon as a conflict of interest has been identified. If the employee becomes aware of the conflict while off duty the employee will leave a voice message with the supervisor regarding the nature of the conflict.
 - ▶ The nature of the relationship will be reviewed with the employee and a plan made regarding the provision of direct service by the employee with the client and the communication to the client regarding the conflict. The safety and comfort of the client is a priority. It will be determined who will discuss the conflict of interest with the client and clarify the role that the employee will have and under what circumstances.
 - ▶ Employees who have relationships with current clients will notify their supervisor in writing of this conflict.

ETHICAL CONDUCT – Backgrounder**PRINCIPLES OF RESPECTFUL BOUNDARIES AND ETHICAL CONDUCT:**

Vernon Women's Transition House Society's highest priority is the safety and well-being of the women and children using our services. All employees have a professional obligation to avoid any action or behaviour that would undermine or exploit the client's trust in our service or affect the agency's reputation in the community. We respect that women are responsible for their lives and the choices made for herself and her children. The role of Vernon Women's Transition House Society employee is to support women and their children in claiming their personal power and provides information and perspectives that they may need in order to make informed choices.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

6-15C

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	ETHICAL CONDUCT (Clients) Continued	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 4 of 6

The following statements serve as a background to the Ethical Conduct Policy for Vernon Women's Transition House Society.

- ▶ There are power differentials between the women and children using the services of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society and those employed to work with them.
- ▶ Employees are to be accountable for the management of these differentials.
- ▶ Employees will remain alert and respond to situations that involve conflict of interests, imbalance of power, personal relationships that may compromise delivery of service, or the well-being of the individual members of the agency as a whole.
- ▶ A high value is placed on objectivity and integrity including assuming responsibility for the consequences of our actions.
- ▶ Women's choices will be accepted with respect, support and dignity, even when those choices are in conflict with the employee's beliefs.
- ▶ An ongoing process of self-evaluation and change is required to improve any aspect of the service delivery for the betterment of the client.
- ▶ Employees will recognize their personal and professional needs by utilizing ongoing self-evaluation; challenging, supporting and sharing information with peers; using professional development and supervision opportunities.
- ▶ Employees will access appropriate resources to maintain their professional and personal well-being.
- ▶ Employees will engage in self-care activities and will acknowledge their own vulnerabilities and limits. They will model the ability and willingness to self-nurture in appropriate and self-empowering ways.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

6-15D

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	ETHICAL CONDUCT (Clients) Continued	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 5 of 6

PURPOSE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT POLICY:

The purpose of the Ethical Conduct Policy is to provide employees with clear boundaries and guidelines regarding their relationships and interactions with all women and children (referred to as “clients”) who use the services of Vernon Women’s Transition House Society. The development of these policies takes into consideration the historical blurry boundaries that come with grassroots organizations. It further recognizes the significant changes in the violence against women’s sector that necessitates changes to ensure professional, community-recognized programs and services are provided.

These policies have been developed for all employees of Vernon Women’s Transition House Society to:

- ▶ Ensure that the best possible service is provided to the women and children
- ▶ Ensure there is no development of emotional and/or physical dependency by the clients on the employees.
- ▶ Recognize that there is a power imbalance (real or perceived) between the employees and the client.
- ▶ Ensure that those who use our services are not exploited.
- ▶ Protect the integrity and limit the liability of the VWTHS.
- ▶ Promote self-care.
- ▶ Fulfill our obligations to our Ministry funders and donors.
- ▶ Maintain the respect of other agencies and our funders.
- ▶ Avoid other serious problems such as a real or perceived conflict of interest.

DEFINITION OF A CLIENT:

A client of Vernon Women’s Transition House Society is defined as a woman or child accessing any form of service including: residential services, outreach programs, group or individual counselling, the transitional support program, crisis calls or visits, casual calls or visits and participation in a program provided by the VWTHS. This policy also extends to partners of women.

A person would no longer be considered a client when there has been no contact with VWTHS, formally or informally, for twelve months.

Recognizing that there may be current relationships with clients already established, this policy will “grandmother” those relationships.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

6-15E

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	ETHICAL CONDUCT (Clients) Continued	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 6 of 6

HANDLING AN EHTICAL CONFLICT:

A conflict of interest exists when someone the employee knows becomes a client. This could be a personal friendship, a relative or in-law, partner, neighbour etc. Employees will avoid both real conflicts of interest and ones that create the appearance of a conflict of interest.

1. The employee will notify her immediate supervisor in writing as soon as a conflict of interest has been identified.
2. If the employee becomes aware of a conflict while off duty, the employee will leave a voice message with the supervisor regarding the nature of the conflict.
3. The nature of the relationship will be reviewed with the employee and a plan made regarding the provision of direct service by the employee with the client and the communication to the client regarding the conflict.
4. The safety and comfort of the client is a priority.
5. It will be determined who will discuss the conflict of interest with the client and clarify the role that the employee will have and under what circumstances.
6. For employees that have relationships with current clients they will notify their supervisor in writing of this conflict.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

6-16

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	FAITH PRACTICES – Interactions with Clients	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: Other than facilitating the gathering of information for clients if they wish to make a choice regarding faith practices, Vernon Women’s Transition House staff members will not promote any specific Faith Practices to clients of the Society.

RATIONAL: Women who come to the Transition House or use our services are vulnerable. For many, they are without the control of a partner for the first time in a very long time. Often women will attach themselves to the first opportunity to “belong” that is offered them. This is why staff must be incredibly aware and scrupulous about the effect that we can have by suggesting an opportunity for clients. We must also acknowledge the inherent power that we have over the women, teens and children who use our Programs.

We know that belonging to a church, temple or other group gives all of us an incredible sense of community and is very beneficial and some people have a spiritual need that cannot be denied. However, it is not our role to promote this. As well as being unethical to be involved in the promotion of a client’s religious experience, it is against our (or any Society’s) constitution and our contracts forbid it. It is not only the actual act of promoting a religion, but the perception from others that can cause problems for the Society.

PROCEDURE:

1. If women express interest in attending a church or place of worship, a list of **ALL** local services will be provided.
2. If they want a church of a particular faith or perspective, they will be encouraged to phone the leadership of that church and ask those questions.
3. Staff members **will not** give clients their opinion or recommendation.
4. If clients ask which faith a staff member belongs to, or which church the staff member attends, the client will be reminded that the conversation is about them and not the staff member.
5. If the a client does, by coincidence, end up attending the same church as a staff member, observe the same conduct and rules outlined in the ***Confidentiality & Ethical Conduct (Clients)** (*i.e. a staff member cannot develop a special relationship with a client– their relationship is with the Transition House, not with the staff member as an individual*).
6. Staff members **will not** transport residents to church, if the church is the one that the staff member attends.
7. Materials for religious practices, such as bibles, holy books, sweet grass, etc. will only be provided at their request. We have commonly used religious materials, like the bible and sweet grass at the Transition House. All holy books are available at the library.
8. Staff **will not** participate in religious practices (*i.e. praying with clients*), other than helping them access materials and resources and finding a quiet space.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

6-17

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	CLIENT MANAGEMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	OUT OF TOWN TRIPS	
	REVISION DATE: AUGUST 4, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: All *out of town trips involving clients and staff must be approved by the Executive Director or Program Manager and conform to the procedures included below.

PROCEDURES:

1. **Approval** must be obtained from the Executive Director or Program Manager before embarking on an out of town trip.
2. Out of town trip preparation will include a checklist which ensures that each of the following requirements are met:
 - Name(s) of client(s),
 - Reason for trip,
 - Departure and return dates and times,
 - Number of hours/days duration,
 - Have a First Aid Kit if overnight/camping,
 - Have a cellular phone,
 - Emergency plans,
 - Equipment, clothing and supplies required,
 - On overnight trips/camping, Executive Director to be notified as to the location and itinerary of the camp.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - External	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	ALL EMPLOYEES	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: The Society is committed to supporting staff to increase their expertise and knowledge in all relevant areas. The professional development of each staff member will be the joint responsibility of the employee and the employer.

REASON FOR POLICY:

Vernon Women’s Transition House Society recognizes that improved service to clients should result if employees acquire additional knowledge and skills related to the services provided by the Society. This policy is intended to encourage employees to enroll in programs and courses that will help them acquire additional knowledge and skills.

PROCEDURE:

1. An employee will be granted *Leave With Pay* to attend seminars, courses, etc., if it is ***at the request of the Vernon Women’s Transition House Society.***
2. When such leave is granted, the employer will bear the full cost of the course, including tuition fees, entrance or registration fees, laboratory fees and course required books.
3. Vernon Women’s Transition House Society will also reimburse the employee for travel costs, meals, accommodation and other legitimate expenses where applicable.
4. Vernon Women’s Transition House Society will **NOT** reimburse the employee for any costs relating to the purchase of alcohol with a meal and any gratuities paid for services rendered.
5. If attendance at the course is at the request of the employer, there will be no loss of wages.
6. If an ***employee initiates a request*** to enroll in a course, he/she may be granted *Leave Without Pay*.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT	
	POLICY TITLE:	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT – In-Service	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	ALL EMPLOYEES	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005		PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: There will be continuous training of staff members within the Society.

PROCEDURE:

1. In-Service training will include:
 - A comprehensive orientation for new staff or for staff moving into new positions,
 - A program of staff in-service training planned and adapted for various members,
 - Workshops within the organization which will be conducted on a regular basis to enhance staff skills, and
 - Maintaining a current professional library.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	SAFETY - GENERAL	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 2	

POLICY: Program staff will be responsible for their own safety and the safety of the program's clients.

Program Procedure Manuals will be kept in an easily accessible area at each worksite outlining all necessary procedures required to maintain a safe workplace for their employees and program clients.

PROCEDURE:

1. Program staff must have read and be aware of the applicable sections within the Program Procedure Manual.
2. Compliance with the directions provided in these manuals is mandatory and constitutes a condition of employment.
3. Program staff will ensure that each client receives instruction and practice in emergency preparedness and procedures for all foreseeable contingencies.
4. Program staff will ensure that each client receives instruction with respect to safety for all foreseeable contingencies.
5. Program staff will provide direct supervision of all program activities.
6. Staff will stop any activity which appears unsafe.
7. Program staff will not use any vehicle or equipment which appears unsafe and will report any hazard immediately to the Program Manager.
8. Program staff will ensure that each program client participates in a fire drill within the first week of their commencement with the program, and each program area contains an operable fire extinguisher at all times.
9. Program staff will report all accidents, illnesses and safety problems promptly to the Program Manager in writing, if so required, and complete an "Incident Report" to be submitted to the Program Manager whenever an incident occurs and/or first aid has been administered.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-1A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	SAFETY - GENERAL	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 2	

10. If an *“Incident Report”* has been filed, the *Health, Wellness & Safety Representative* for that program will be responsible for bringing any pertinent information regarding the incident to the Health, Wellness & Safety Committee for possible discussion regarding the ways a similar incident may be avoided in the future.

Addendum: Incident Report

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-2

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	SMOKING	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: To protect the health of workers and clients and to provide the healthiest model possible to the program participants, all Vernon Women's Transition house Society workplaces will be smoke free.

PROCEDURE:

1. All community-based workplaces will be designated non-smoking, smoke free.
2. Smoking is only permitted, as designated, **outside** of the worksite.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-3

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS BOMB THREAT	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005	PAGE: 1 of 4	

POLICY: the decision to search or evacuate the building upon receipt of a bomb threat is the responsibility of the staff in charge and the Police and Fire Department.

REASON FOR POLICY:

The protection and safety of the residents and staff is of paramount concern.

PROCEDURE (Phone Threat):

1. ***Receiving a Phone threat:*** The person receiving the threatening phone call will attempt to get as much information as possible in order to determine the exact location where the bomb is planted, or is going to be planted.
2. ***Other Information to gather include:*** Description of the caller (i.e. male/female), voice characteristics, affiliation with a political group etc., background voices or noises, and anything that may identify the caller or where the call was coming from.
3. ***Recording Information:*** Record the particulars on the 'Phone Call Record' form, which should be kept in an easily accessible location to the phone.
4. Relay the information to the **Executive Director** or staff person in charge **immediately.**

The Executive Director or staff person in charge will immediately notify the police and fire department by dialing **911.**

PROCEDURE (Mail Threat):

5. ***Receiving a Mail Threat:*** The person receiving the threatening letter or card will relay the information to the Executive Director or staff person in charge immediately and preserve the letter or card for further investigation by the proper authorities.

The Executive Director or staff person in charge will notify the appropriate authorities regarding the threat.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-3A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS BOMB THREAT	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005	PAGE: 2 of 4	

6. **Acting on the threat:** The Executive Director or staff person in charge will evaluate and determine the proper course of action using *Considerations, Threat Evaluation, Occupancy Factors,* and *Time Factor* as stated below to initiate evacuation as per the Evacuation Plan and/or initiate search procedures.

7. **Evacuation:** In the event of evacuation:

- The Executive Director or the staff person in charge will advise all staff and clients of the situation.
- Exits and stairs will be checked prior to evacuation.
- After exiting routes are declared clear, all staff and clients will be evacuated.

CONSIDERATIONS: The decision to evacuate lies somewhere between “evacuating in every case” and “never evacuating” and must be determined based upon the specifics of each case.

- a) While “evacuating in every case” may appear to afford the greatest protection for life, in actuality it may not necessarily ensure better protection. In addition, the practical and economic impact must be carefully weighed.
- b) Conversely, the “never evacuate” policy is even more unsatisfactory, as it leaves no room for dealing with highly credible localized and specific threat.
- c) The decision to evacuate should be based upon the circumstances of each threat within the following considerations.

THREAT EVALUATION: The credibility of the threat is of prime importance. In weighing the threat’s credibility, the following factors should be considered:

- a) The more detailed and credible the warning or threat, the greater the possibility that an actual explosive device is involved.
- b) A non-specific warning from a child, a drunk, a giggler or an incoherent person is much less likely to involve an actual explosive device.
- c) Was the threat specific as to location?
- d) Does the location exist?

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-3B

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS BOMB THREAT	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005	PAGE: 3 of 4	

- e) Could the person reasonably have been expected to gain access to the location described?
- f) Actual explosive devices are more likely to be found in buildings that are completely or partly accessible to the general public.
- g) The more effective the controls on admitting people, the less likely an actual explosive device will be found.
- h) Was the threat specific as to the time of explosion?
- i) Non-specific warnings or threats usually do not reasonably require evacuation.
- j) Disturbed persons may continue threats as long as there is evidence that a response is occurring. The mere fact that the threat is one of several should not cause it to be disregarded.
- k) Each threat must be evaluated without comparison with another.

OCCUPANCY FACTORS: With respect to occupancy of the facility:

- a) The objective of most genuine bomb threats has been property damage and notoriety.
- b) If a bomb threat involves a time when few people are present, evacuation could be the most appropriate course of action, since those factors that would make evacuation a difficult problem would be minimized (*i.e. large number of people converging on exits could increase the amount of injuries or cause mob-related injuries*).
- c) If the bomb threat is specific, involves areas containing large numbers of people and the decision is made to evacuate, alternate route planning should ensure minimum numbers leaving through only one exit.

TIME FACTOR: If a credible threat giving time and location is received, the immediate area should be evacuated. However, thought must be given to the following considerations:

- a) Is there enough time to evacuate the entire facility or even that part in which the bomb is allegedly planted?

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-3C

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS BOMB THREAT	
	POLICY DATE: MARCH 15, 2005	PAGE: 4 of 4	

- b) Could a reasonable search of the area be done prior to the alleged time of detonation?
- c) If sufficient time does not exist to conduct a search, the additional time should then be used to evacuate surrounding area.
8. ***Conducting a Bomb Search:*** If the threat was credible enough to warrant evacuation, re-entry into the threatened area must not be permitted. **A bomb search will be only be conducted by the RCMP.**
9. ***Finding a Bomb:*** Should a real bomb be found, **it must not be touched or disturbed in any way.**

Any strange item that cannot be identified or accounted for must be regarded as suspect and **must not be touched or disturbed in any way.**

Note: *The only reliable criterion in conducting a search is that any object capable of concealing an explosive device should be considered suspect until identified by a person who recognizes it.*

10. Pipe Bombs can be as small as 9" x 12" and readily concealed.
11. The Executive Director and/or staff in charge must be contacted **immediately**.
12. The Executive Director and/or staff in charge must contact the Police and Fire Department **immediately**.
13. The search must be turned over to trained people (i.e. the RCMP) in the event of discovery of a confirmed bomb or an unidentified object.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS CRITICAL INCIDENTS	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 2	

POLICY: All incidents of a critical nature will be dealt with immediately, as per the directions provided in the appropriate chapter of the Policy and Procedures Manual, reported immediately to the Program Manager, Executive Director and any other appropriate agency or Ministry, and documented accordingly at the first opportunity.

REASON FOR POLICY:

In the event of critical incident, the safety and well-being of the affected party is the primary concern followed by the notification of the responsible parties within both the Vernon Women's Transition House Society and other appropriate agencies or Ministries.

The policy reflects these priorities and provides for the immediate treatment of injured parties, followed immediately, if not concurrently, with the notification of management within the society and the appropriate Ministry.

DESCRIPTION OF CRITICAL INCIDENTS:

- a) Critical incidents are defined as those incidents which are serious, have significant impact upon the clients, are not viewed as normal occurrences/behaviour, and involve organizations outside of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society.
- b) Critical incidents include, but are not limited to, the following:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Aggression/Assault | Bomb Threat | Child Abuse |
| Death | Fire | Hostage Taking |
| Illness/Injury | Missing Clients | Medical Assistance |
| Police Assistance | Substance Abuse | Weapons |
| Suicide Threats/Attempts | AWOL's | Illegal Acts |
| Client complaint of staff abuse | Evacuation | Restraints |

PROCEDURE – RESPONSE TO CRITICAL INCIDENTS:

1. Immediate Response: Vernon Women's Transition House Society employees will respond to a critical incident in the manner described in the corresponding chapter of the "Policy and Procedures Manual", if the incident is covered within the manual.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-4A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS CRITICAL INCIDENTS	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 2	

2. When a critical incident occurs which is not covered under existing policies and/or procedures, Vernon Women's Transition House Society staff will:
 - Respond immediately with the type of assistance required by the specific circumstances,
 - Enlist whatever *internal support* and/or expertise is required to resolve the situation,
 - Enlist whatever *external support* and/or expertise is required to resolve the situation, and
 - Ensure the safety of other clients and staff, if the circumstances warrant it.
3. **Notification:** Every critical incident will be deemed serious enough to require the notification of the Program Coordinator, who will notify the Executive Director and other agencies or Ministries, as required.
4. The Executive Director or Program Manager will, if appropriate, inform the Ministry or agency involved of the nature and details of the critical incident.
5. **Recording/Reporting Critical Incidents:** The nature and details of a critical incident will be recorded by the attending staff member, at the earliest opportunity, on the '*Critical Incident Report*' form.

Addendum: Critical Incident Report Form

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DEATH	
	REVISION DATE:	JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 1

POLICY: The suspected death of a client under the jurisdiction of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society will be treated as a medical emergency until the person has been officially pronounced dead by a medical doctor.

Upon confirmation of death, the proper authorities, and the Board of Directors must be notified as soon as possible.

REASON FOR POLICY:

The assumption must be made that life exists until death is absolutely confirmed so that, should the client be still alive, life-saving treatment will begin immediately.

There is ample time to deal with the technicalities later, but there may be only that one immediate chance to save a life.

PROCEDURE:

1. ***Emergency Response:*** Staff, of the person finding the client, will immediately announce a medical emergency, **Call 911**, or use the emergency alert device to summon an ambulance, fire department, or the police. Then begin artificial respiration/CPR and continue until relieved by the ambulance crew, fire department resuscitation team, medical personnel or until advised to do so by a medical doctor.
2. ***Secondary Response:*** Once the emergency response has been initiated, staff will notify the Program Manager, who will notify the Executive Director. Residents will be removed from the scene. If applicable, move roommates(s) to a secure area and seal the immediate area of the occurrence, leaving it undisturbed. Then complete the '*Critical Incident Report*'.
3. ***Notification:*** The Executive Director and/or Program Manager will notify the following of the death:
 - **Internal** – Board of Directors
 - **External** – The appropriate Ministry, Coroner, Police, Family, Family Doctor, and School.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-6

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INJURY/ILLNESS	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 2	

POLICY: The health, safety and well-being of the clients will be of prime importance to all Vernon Women's Transition House Society employees.

All Society employees, in respect to the health of the clients, will act in the same manner as would be reasonable and prudent parent in a given situation.

Parent(s) or guardians will be notified of any significant illness or injury immediately.

Medication will not be given or administered to clients by staff, unless all of the guidelines are met (see Procedures – Medication 7-4A #5 below).

REASON FOR POLICY:

The health, safety and well-being of the clients is the responsibility of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society and its employees, into whose care the clients are entrusted.

PROCEDURE:

1. Vernon Women's Transition House Society employees will make a reasonable effort to be aware of the medical problems of clients and to take this information into consideration in their day to day decisions.
2. Where a client interacts with other employees of the Society, the medical problems of the client will be communicated to those other employees.
3. **Staff Response:** Staff members will immediately report to their Program Manager, or his/her designate, any illness or injury which occurs to a client in their care.

The Program Manager will use his/her good judgment in deciding the course of action to be taken.

If the illness or injury is of a nature significant enough to require emergency measures, the Program Manager will arrange for the necessary emergency assistance immediately, then where the client is a minor, inform the parent(s).

If the illness or injury does not require immediate or emergency treatment, the client will be treated by the Program's staff.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-6A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INJURY/ILLNESS	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 2	

4. **Consent to Medical Treatment:** Employees of the Vernon Women’s Transition House society will take whatever action is necessary, under the law, to preserve the health, safety and well-being of the clients within their care.

The consent of the parent(s) or guardian will be required before medical treatment can be applied to a minor client.

5. **Medication – Providing Medication to Clients:** Medication of any type will not be given to clients by staff unless:

- Where the client is a minor, the parent(s) or guardian have previously authorized the Vernon Women’s Transition House Society in writing to do so.
- The appropriate program authorization form as been completed by a physician.
- Written instructions have been obtained from the prescribing physician as to the means and schedule of administration, and the actions of the staff are in keeping with the actions of a competent parent.
- Medication dispensment is recorded on appropriate program form.

6. **Retention/Storage of Medication:** All medications kept in the Program’s facilities, either for first aid treatment or prescribed by a physician for a client, will be stored in a locked cupboard within a secure room and recorded with respect to physician, date received, quantity, recipient, dosage and schedule of administration.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 5	

POLICY: Vernon Women's Transition House Society staff must fully comply with the requirements of the Family and Child Service Act in the reporting of suspected child abuse.

Notification: Subsequent to notifying the Ministry of Child & Family Development of suspected child abuse, the appropriate personnel of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society must be advised of the situation immediately.

Non-Involvement in Investigation: Society personnel will not assume nor undertake any investigative responsibility in the investigation of child abuse past the point of reporting a suspected offence.

Confidentiality: The confidentiality of the child and family must be respected and procedurally ensured.

Employee Charged and Convicted: The contract of any Society personnel convicted of child abuse will be terminated.

Employee Charge but Not Convicted: Any Society personnel charged but not convicted of child abuse, may not be re-instated prior to consultation with the Executive Director.

REASON FOR POLICY:

Child abuse in Canada, and in British Columbia, is a serious and pressing problem. There are moral, ethical, educational and legal reasons why the abuse of children needs to be addressed by the Vernon Women's Transition House Society. These are as follows:

Moral/Ethical: **Every child** has the right to a safe and secure upbringing that leads the child to a psychological, emotional and moral maturity and security. **Every child** has the right to an upbringing that protects the child from abuse and sexual exploitation. The assumption of the care and custody of the children and youth within the Society's jurisdiction imposes a responsibility upon the Society to afford protection against abuse.

Educational: A child's harmonious development is seriously damaged by abuse and the resulting anxiety, depression and emotional disorder it causes. This injured condition affects the child's ability to learn and concurrently grow within that learning. Child abuse is detrimental to the entire learning process and, subsequently, the development of the child.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-7A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 5	

Legal: The Family and Child Welfare Act has legislated a requirement that *a person who has reasonable grounds to believe that a child is in need of protection, shall forthwith report the circumstances.* The obligation falls upon Society staff especially, due to their continuous contact with children.

PROCEDURE - RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. **Vernon Women's Transition House Society:** The Society recognizes its responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of all children within its jurisdiction.

The Vernon Women's Transition House Society will provide copies of this 'Child Abuse' policy to all Program Managers within its jurisdiction, who will ensure that it is circulated amongst their staff.

The Society will obtain copies of the 'Inter-Ministry Child Abuse Handbook' (Queen's Printers) for distribution within the Society.

2. **Society Personnel:** Pursuant to this responsibility, all Society personnel will be made aware of their obligation to report child abuse as mandated by the Family and Child Service Act and the reporting procedures outlined herein.

Should a parent or other concerned individual inform Society personnel suspected of child abuse, the staff member should advise the information to report the concern to the Ministry for Child and Family Development.

3. **Every Person With "Reasonable Grounds":** Every person in British Columbia, who has "reasonable grounds" to believe that a child is in need of protection, is legally obligated under the Family and Child Service Act to report the circumstances immediately to the Superintendent of Family and Child Services, or his representative, through the Ministry for Child and Family Development.

Note: *No action may be taken against a person who reports suspected neglect or abuse in good faith, unless the report is malicious or without reasonable grounds.*

4. **Recognizing Signs of Possible Abuse:** Society personnel are expected to take seriously any comments or behaviour of children that may indicate abuse.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-7B

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 3 of 5	

All Society personnel will pay attention to detailed medical, emotional and behavioural signs of abuse and possible personality characteristics of abusers.

5. ***Child's Behaviour as an Indicator:*** With respect to recognizing a child's behaviour as an indicator of possible neglect or abuse, Society personnel should be concerned about a child who:

Neglect:

- Appears to be undernourished and/or has inadequate or no lunches,
- Has obvious medical needs that are unattended,
- Is frequently dressed inadequately for the season or weather with no discernable reason for the inappropriate dress.

Physical Abuse:

- Has physical injuries such as bruises, welts, cuts or burns and whose explanations seem to be incompatible with the nature or extent of the injury.

Sexual Abuse:

- Demonstrates unusual interest in, or preoccupation with, sexual acts or sexual language that is beyond the kind of interest or knowledge normally expected for their age.
- Makes statements indicating that they have been sexually abused.

6. ***Reporting Suspected Child Abuse – Society Personnel:***

- The person suspecting the abuse will compile a report containing the child's name, address and birth date, and name of the person(s) responsible for the child's care (i.e. parent or guardian).
- Record the nature and the extent of the circumstances leading to the suspicion that the child is victim of abuse, all physical and behavioural indicators observed, and the identity of the suspect(s), *where possible*, including as much information as possible.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

8-7C

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 4 of 5	

7. **Advising Ministry for Children & Family Development:** The person suspecting the abuse will inform the Ministry for Children & Family Development of their suspicions (*Director of Child Services or designate*). This discussion with MCFD will be recorded by the employee in the client's file and staff log.
8. **Advising the Program Manager:** The person suspecting the abuse will advise the Program Manager **immediately** that a report has been made to the Ministry for Children & Family Development (*except in those cases in which the Program Manager is the alleged offender*).

If the Program Manager is the alleged offender, the person suspecting the abuse will advise the Executive Director of the Society **immediately** that a report has been made to MCFD.

9. **Action by Program Manager:** Upon being advised of a possible child abuse situation by Society personnel, the Program Manager will notify the Executive Director of the Society **immediately** that a report has been made to the Ministry for Children & Family Development, and record all reported incidents in a confidential Society file.

Where the Program Manager is the **initiator** of the complaint, the Program Manager will discuss his/her suspicions with the Executive Director and notify the Ministry for Children & Family Development of his/her suspicions (*Superintendent of Family & Child Services, or his/her representative*).

Upon notifying the Ministry for Children & Family Development of his/her suspicions, the Program Manager will notify the Executive Director of the Society immediately that a report has been made to MCFD.

Where an employee of the Society is the alleged offender, the Executive Director will be advised immediately by the Program Manager/complainant after MCFD has been notified.

10. **Action by the Executive Director:** Upon advisement of suspected abuse, the Executive Director of the Society will advise the President of the Board of Directors of the circumstances, make recommendations for further action (*particularly in cases in which Society personnel are accused*), and record all reported incidents in a confidential file.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-7D

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDENSS SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 5 of 5	

11. **Action by Ministry for Children & Family Development:** MCFD will inform the police of the alleged abuse and provide them with the available details.

Investigation: MCFD will join with the police in the investigation of the alleged abuse.

NOTE: *The above described notification process is a matter of protocol only. By law, the responsibility for reporting suspected child abuse rests with the individual who has reasonable grounds to suspect abuse.*

This responsibility is not discharged by Society personnel reporting to any person other than the appropriate delegate of MCFD.

12. **Investigation and Interview:** The investigation of a report of suspected child abuse is the joint responsibility of MCFD **and** the police. MCFD will be responsible for assessing whether or not further intervention to protect the safety and well-being of the child is required.

Society Personnel Not Involved in Investigation: The investigative responsibility **must not** be assumed by Society personnel. **Under no circumstances** should any attempt be made by Society personnel to notify the alleged offender of the accusation or discuss the matter with the alleged offender.

Society Personnel will refrain from notifying parents and/or guardians of a suspected abusive situation, since this is the responsibility of MCFD.

Society Personnel, while offering support, should refrain from interviewing the child after the child's first disclosures.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-8

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS HOSTAGE TAKING	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 2	

POLICY: The primary consideration in determining any response to a Hostage Taking shall be the health and safety of Vernon Women's Transition House Society employees and clients.

All Vernon Women's Transition House Society employees will be advised of the appropriate behaviour in the event of a Hostage Taking in order to maintain their safety.

In the event of a Hostage Taking, Vernon Women's Transition House Society will attempt to provide accurate ongoing information to the public with regards to the incident and its outcome.

The Executive Director is the official spokesperson for information during times of crisis.

REASON FOR POLICY:

To provide Vernon Women's Transition House Society with guidelines that, in times of organizational crisis, minimize the potential public relations problems and liability risks to both Vernon Women's Transition House Society and its employees. Organizational crisis generally hits without warning and can draw immediate media attention and public scrutiny. Such incidents often result in inaccurate information about an organization.

PROCEDURE:

1. In the event a Vernon Women's Transition House Society employee is made aware of a potentially lethal situation, e.g. threat with a weapon, hostage taking, abnormally aggressive behaviour, etc.:
 - a) **Listen; be calm and courteous;** obtain as much information as you can.
 - b) Advise your Program Coordinator as soon as possible; **follow instructions;** call 9-1-1 if necessary.
 - c) The Program Manager is to advise the Executive Director.
 - d) Stay alert to direction from the Program Manager and/or Executive Director.
 - e) The Executive Director or designate is to follow-up with the Police Chief and/or Fire Chief, if appropriate, to ensure the appropriate response, and to advise any other related agencies or facilities which may be at risk.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-8A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS HOSTAGE TAKING	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 14, 2010	PAGE: 2 of 2	

2. STEPS FOR PROFESSIONAL AND SUPPORT STAFF:

- a) Call 9-1-1 (**if possible**) and contact Program Manager immediately, who will contact the Executive Director as soon as possible.
- b) Do your best to keep those involved (*Hostage Taker, clients, other staff*) as calm as possible.
- c) **DO NOT** try to overextend your role. **DO NOT** try to commandeer the situation. **DO NOT** antagonize the Hostage Taker.
- d) If a weapon is involved, **DO NOT** take any risks such as overpowering the Hostage Taker or trying to confiscate the weapon.

3. STEPS FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

- a) If not already done, Call 9-1-1. Then notify the President of the Board.
- b) Assess the situation for risk. Actions, including lockdown or evacuation, will be determined by the Executive Director or police.
- c) When police arrive, they must report to the Executive Director.
- d) Police will be in charge of the situation until everyone's safety is guaranteed.
- e) As the incident passes or falls under control, the Executive Director will convene a 'Crisis Team' to conduct follow-up procedures.

4. STEPS FOR KEY STAFF MEMBERS:

- a) All Vernon Women's Transition House staff, including secretaries and custodians, should know hostage situation procedures to follow.
- b) The *Executive Administrative Assistant* should know the whereabouts and contact phone number of the Executive Director if he/she is not in the Administration Office.

5. KEY HOSTAGE TIPS:

- a) Be patient. Avoid drastic action.
- b) The initial 45 minutes are the most dangerous. Follow instructions, be alert and stay alive.
- c) Don't speak unless spoken to and then only when necessary. Don't attempt to rationalize with the captor.
- d) Expect the unexpected, i.e. mood swings, irrational actions.
- e) **DO NOT** make quick or sudden moves.
- f) Be observant. The safety of others may depend on what you remember about the situation.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	CELL PHONE USE - SAFETY	
	POLICY DATE:	MARCH 15, 2005	PAGE: 2 of 2

POLICY: Employees must not conduct VWTHS business on a cellular phone while in the operation of a motor vehicle.

PROCEDURE:

An employee who receives a call on their cellular phone while conducting business for VWTHS must:

- ▶ Pull over and stop before answering the call.
- Or
- ▶ Let the call be answered by voice mail and return the call as soon as they have stopped the vehicle.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-10

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	LARGE SCALE DISASTER	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010	PAGE: 1 of 2	

POLICY: Vernon Women's Transition House Society staff will be trained to respond appropriately to large scale disaster emergencies that may occur during delivery of service.

OBJECTIVE: To reduce human injury and damage to property in an emergency.

PROCEDURE:

Large Scale Disaster Emergency Response Guidelines:

VWTHS Staff will:

1. **Try to stay calm** – The Executive Director will be looked upon for leadership.
2. Take a moment to assess the situation:
 - a) What has occurred?
 - b) How are other staff members?
 - c) What is your priority?
3. **Check for injuries** – provide First Aid.
4. **Seek assistance as appropriate;** be clear in your information and instructions.
5. **Check for safety** – check gas, water, sewer, electrical and structural integrity and know where and how to turn off if necessary.
6. Turn on radio and listen for instructions. *(If power is out, use battery powered radio)*
7. ALWAYS wear protective clothing when cleaning up any dangerous spills.
8. Do not use telephone except for emergency use.
9. Check food and water supplies.
10. **Prepare for evacuation:**
 - a) Collect together an evacuation pack:
 - I. Necessary medication, glasses, aids, etc.
 - II. Portable radio, food, fluids, area map.
 - III. Flashlights, personal items, and other items which may be helpful.
11. Stay where you are and await further instructions from Executive Director or designate.
12. If staff are forced to evacuate or leave the workplace to find a replacement:
 - a) Leave a note stating where you are going.
 - b) Take evacuation pack with them.
13. When in a safe location, staff members will contact the Executive Director or designate and inform them regarding their status.
14. After the disaster, if a staff member's priority is to return home, then they will inform the Executive Director or designate to let them know which route will be taken. However, **if they are able**, staff members should report to the Transition House so they can be assigned to assist with other possible emergency situations.

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-10A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	LARGE SCALE DISASTER	
	REVISION DATE: JULY 21, 2010		PAGE: 2 of 2

Team Leader/Program Manager:

1. Review the Emergency Response policy, procedure and guidelines with all new staff.
2. Encourage all staff to be up-to-date on Emergency First Aid, and CPR training either on their own or by attending the Agency organized courses; however, this is not compulsory.

Workers will:

1. Have a list of Emergency phone numbers at all times; list to include: office/Agency contact, Ambulance, Fire, Police, Poison Control, Crisis Centre, Natural Gas, Municipal Water.
2. Try to prevent any human injury or damage to property by:
 - a) Performing safety check of the environment.
 - b) **Knowing where and how to shut off gas and water** (*if applicable*).
 - c) Familiarizing themselves with escape routes.
3. In the event of natural disaster or emergency the worker will make every effort to assure a safe environment for themselves.

Executive Director:

1. After emergency is over, review staff's response and documentation, debrief with workers, Program Managers and Team Leaders and provide support.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

8-11

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	Working Alone – Travelling Away From the Office (Safety Call-In)	
	POLICY DATE:	MARCH 15, 2005	PAGE: 1 of 2

POLICY: A 'Safety Call-In' procedure will be in place for all Employees whose work requires them to travel away from the office alone for extended periods of time.

REASON: Employees who need to travel long distances in order to meet with clients may be at risk of violence or possible injury due to a vehicle accident when they are on the way too or from their destination.

PROCEDURE:

When travelling out of the office to meet with a **client in a perceived high risk or unknown situation**, the employee will notify a main contact person and inform them of the following details:

- Destination
- Estimated time of arrival
- Return time or date
- Contact information
- Mode of travel (public transit, car, plane, etc.) and,
- Alternate plans in the event of bad weather, traffic problems, etc.

Employee will also:

- Arrange to meet clients in 'safe' environment, ensuring that any possible offender(s) are not present.
- Wear comfortable, professional clothing and practical shoes which will enable them to leave quickly if necessary.
- Always wear or carry identification (i.e. business card). It will show that they are acting in an official capacity and that they are an employee doing their job.
- Carry only what is necessary. Large or numerous bags or cases are cumbersome.
- Always take their cell phone with them and keep it in a place that they can access it quickly, and will check in with designated contact persons according to their call-in schedule.
- Avoid having new work contacts walk them to their car.
- Be alert and make mental notes of their surroundings when they arrive at a new place.
- Maintain a 'reactionary gap' between themselves and the client (*e.g. out of reach of the average person's kicking distance*). Increase the gap by sitting across from each other at a table, if possible.
- If they are referring to written material, bring two copies so that they can sit across from the client, not beside.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

8-11A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	Working Alone – Travelling Away From the Office (Safety Call-In)	
	POLICY DATE:	MARCH 15, 2005	PAGE: 2 of 2

- Ask the client to come and meet them at the office if something makes them feel uneasy (*a “gut feeling”*). Tell their Program Manager and/or Supervisor regarding any feelings of discomfort or apprehension about an up-coming meeting.
- Keep records and indicate if the client, or someone close to the client, is known to be aggressive, hostile or potentially violent, noting any incidents that make them feel apprehensive.
- Ask a colleague or *“buddy”* to come with them if something makes them feel uneasy (*a “gut feeling”*). Tell their Program Manager and/or Program Coordinator regarding any feelings of discomfort or apprehension about an up-coming meeting.
- Keep records and indicate if the client, or someone close to the client, is known to be aggressive, hostile or potentially violent, noting any incidents that make them feel apprehensive.

Employee will NOT:

- Enter any situation or location where they feel threatened or unsafe.
- Carry weapons of any type, including pepper spray. Weapons can easily be used against them.

Program Manager will:

- Identify a contact at the office.
- Define under what circumstances the lone employee will check in and how often.
- Stick to the visual check or call-in schedule. There will be a written log of contact.
- Pick out a code word to be used to identify or confirm that help is needed.
- Develop an emergency action plan to be followed if the lone employee does not check in when she is supposed to.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	Violence in the Workplace – Locations With Only One Exit.	
	POLICY REVISED: SEPTEMBER 22, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 1	

POLICY: Vernon Women's Transition House Society Employees will take all necessary precautions in an attempt to prevent workplace violence.

RISKS IDENTIFIED: Employees may be required to perform work in areas where there is only one exit (i.e. one door).

PROCEDURE:

1. In case of emergency (i.e. act of aggression by resident), employees should not hesitate to get out of the area by whatever means possible and contact 911 immediately to ask for assistance.
2. Any threats toward a worker will be taken seriously and every attempt will be made by the worker to distance themselves from that threat.
3. Any new workers will be oriented on how to properly use the intercom system.
4. *Critical Incident Report* must be completed as soon as possible following any acts of aggression and/or threats towards an employee.

**Addendum: Critical Incident Report*

POLICY APPROVED

Executive Director

Date Approved

8-13

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	Exposure Control Plan in Response to H1N1 or any Infectious Diseases	
	POLICY DATE:	SEPTEMBER 16, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 5

POLICY: Vernon Women's Transition House employees will be educated with regards to the H1N1 virus and will follow all necessary precautions to prevent an outbreak in the workplace.

Employees will be encouraged to remain at home if ill to control the spread of the virus to other workers and clients.

Employees will act responsibly when faced with a possible H1N1 flu virus infection, in order to protect the clients of the Transition House, as many of these clients may have weakened immune systems and may be vulnerable to infection.

If an outbreak occurs, staff will follow appropriate procedures to minimize the spread of the virus.

EXPLANATION OF VIRUS:

H1N1 Influenza Virus also called H1N1 flu virus spreads from person to person in the same way as the seasonal flu, which is mainly through coughing or sneezing by people infected with the influenza virus. People may become infected by touching something with flu viruses or germs on it and then touching their eyes, mouth or nose. Germs on hard surfaces, such as counters and doorknobs can be picked up on hands and spread to the respiratory system when people touch their mouth or nose. **It is important to wash your hands frequently.**

PURPOSE OF POLICY: To prevent a possible outbreak of H1N1 at the Vernon Women's Transition House, Casimir Court (SYP), and its outlying programs and, in the event of an outbreak, to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken to quarantine those affected in an attempt to stop the spread of the virus to other clients and staff members.

THOSE MOST AT RISK: Employees most at risk of contracting the H1N1 virus would include front line staff, maintenance and housekeeping staff, Transition House administrative staff and individual counsellors.

In the event that our front line staff contract the virus their jobs may need to be back filled for the Transition House to remain operational.

The degree of risk is greatest among our front line staff and counsellors, due to their close working relationship with clients.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

8-13A

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	Exposure Control Plan in Response to H1N1 or any Infectious Diseases	
	POLICY DATE: SEPTEMBER 16, 2009	PAGE: 2 of 5	

PREVENTION PROCEDURE:

You can reduce the risk of getting any influenza strain, including the H1N1 flu virus by taking standard precautionary measures.

1. **WASH YOUR HANDS** or clean them with alcohol-based hand rubs frequently, especially after you cough or sneeze and before you eat.
2. **COVER YOUR NOSE AND MOUTH** with a clean tissue when you cough or sneeze, and throw the tissue in the trash immediately after you use it.
3. **COUGH AND SNEEZE INTO YOUR SLEEVE.**
4. **AVOID TOUCHING YOUR EYES, NOSE, AND MOUTH**, as infection can spread that way.
5. **IF YOU GET SICK, STAY AT HOME** and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

SYMPTOMS OF H1N1: Symptoms of H1N1 flu virus or human swine flue in people are similar to the symptoms of typical human seasonal influenza.

SYMPTOMS OF H1N1 FLU VIRUS	ADDITIONAL SYMPTOMS SOMETIMES REPORTED
• High Fever	• Nausea
• Cough	• Vomiting
• Sore Throat	• Diarrhea
• Headache	
• Body Aches	
• Chills	
• Fatigue	
• Eye Pain	
• Shortness of Breath	
• Lack of Appetite	

Symptoms or complications such as severe respiratory distress or pneumonia may develop in moderate or severe cases, as well as people with chronic health conditions.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

8-13B

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	Exposure Control Plan in Response to H1N1 or any Infectious Diseases	
	POLICY DATE: SEPTEMBER 16, 2009	PAGE: 3 of 5	

H1N1 FLU VACCINATION:

1. The Vaccine for the H1N1 flu virus will be made available to all Vernon Women's Transition House employees and clients at no cost.
2. All employees are encouraged to take part in vaccinations against the H1N1 flu virus, not only for their own protection, but also for the protection of our clients.
3. If an employee refuses to take part in the vaccinations they may be requested by management to commence a leave without pay or utilize vacation time until the risk of spreading infection at the workplace has been eliminated. *In certain circumstances, accommodations may be made in the workplace for an employee who is unable to receive vaccinations.*

PROCEDURE IF YOU ARE ILL:

1. Employees exhibiting symptoms of H1N1 will contact their Program Manager.
2. If the symptoms are quite severe and more symptoms become apparent, the employee will see their family physician for a more thorough checkup and *diagnosis of their condition (*this is only required in the more severe cases*). **If you are not sure whether you need to go to the doctor, call HealthLink BC at 811.**

**To diagnose swine influenza A infection, a respiratory specimen would need to be collected generally within the first 4 to 5 days of illness, during the time when an infected person most likely sheds the virus.*

3. VWTHS employees may request paid sick leave up to the amount they have accrued.
4. If/when all paid sick leave has been exhausted, employees would receive time off without pay.
5. Each case will be considered individually and according to the severity of symptoms.
6. Any planned travel arrangements by employees exhibiting the symptoms of H1N1 flu virus infection will be cancelled and, if possible, rescheduled for a later date.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

8-13C

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	Exposure Control Plan in Response to H1N1 or any Infectious Diseases	
	POLICY DATE: SEPTEMBER 16, 2009	PAGE: 4 of 5	

7. A medical certificate of fitness or some other form of documentation that provides reasonable proof regarding the employee's ability to safely return to work (*i.e. will their return to work be safe for other workers/clients*) may be requested prior to their return.

ISOLATION OF INFECTED CLIENTS: There may be a need to isolate someone if they have contracted the H1N1 virus. The virus is contagious for 24 hours before symptoms start and for about 7 days after symptoms start. Isolation means staying at home and not going to work, school, or other public places.

1. An infected client will be segregated to protect other clients and staff members from exposure to the virus, by moving the infected client to a room by themselves and having the client remain in their room for 7 days, even if the symptoms get better and their fever has gone. Visitors will not be permitted.
2. Employees and clients can avoid transmission of H1N1 through the use of gloves, masks and cleaning supplies where physical contact is necessary.
3. Clients who are ill will be instructed to keep a 2 metre (6 foot) distance if /when contact with other Transition House residents is unavoidable.
4. Employees will wear gloves and masks when assisting infected clients and will dispose of these items into the garbage when finished. **Wash hands well** after disposal of gloves and mask.
5. Everyone will wash their hands often, using soap and warm water.
6. Hand sanitizer will be available to supplement hand washing.
7. Soiled surfaces will be promptly cleaned with disinfectants (such as household bleach – dilute 1 part bleach to 10 parts water).
8. Mops will be rinsed in disinfectant, and disposable towels or tissues will be used.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved

8-13D

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY	POLICY GROUP:	HEALTH & SAFETY	
	POLICY TITLE:	Exposure Control Plan in Response to H1N1 or any Infectious Diseases	
	POLICY DATE: SEPTEMBER 16, 2009	PAGE: 5 of 5	

IN THE EVENT OF AN OUTBREAK IN THE COMMUNITY:

1. Visitor access to the Transition House and Casimir Court (Support to Young Parents) will be cancelled.
2. The Transition House and Casimir Court (Support to Young Parents) will have an ample amount of non-perishable and frozen food to sustain the clients in the event that those resources become unavailable for a period of time.
3. Outlying offices will keep a sufficient supply of bottled water. If bottled water delivery ceases, tap water is available at all locations.
4. Counselling programs such as Children Who Witness Abuse, Specialized Victim Services, Outreach Services, and Women's Counselling Services will be suspended in cases of an H1N1 outbreak.

POLICY APPROVED

 Executive Director

 Date Approved