



Ashford, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Chaplin, Eastford, Hampton, Killingly, Plainfield, Pomfret, Putnam, Scotland, Sterling, Thompson, Union, Voluntown and Woodstock

Workplace Conduct Policies

Employee Relations/Open Door Policy

Our employees have the freedom to speak for themselves and discuss their concerns, suggestions and problems with us. All employees should utilize NECCOG's Open Door Policy to raise all problems, complaints or concerns they may have regarding employment with NECCOG. NECCOG firmly believes we have much to offer and will continue to listen and endeavor to respond to the concerns and needs of our employees. If you have any questions, you are urged to talk with the Executive Director and/or his/her designee. NECCOG hopes that you take constructive advantage of this procedure. Employees will not be subjected to any form of discrimination or reprisal for identifying issues or raising a problem.

Conflict of Interest

This policy applies to **all** employees of NECCOG, without exception. This policy is important to NECCOG and should be taken seriously by all employees. Non-compliance or violation of these standards will not be accepted or tolerated, and will lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

1. During their employment, employees will not participate, directly or indirectly, in any other business activity that will interfere in any way with their ability to perform their duties and responsibilities at NECCOG without prior approval, regardless of whether such activity is pursued for profit, gain or other pecuniary advantage.
2. Outside Employment: An employee may engage in additional employment provided such employment does not interfere with the proper and effective performance of the duties of his/her position with NECCOG or result in a conflict of interest. If your financial situation requires you to hold a second job, part-time or full-time, or if you intend to engage in a business enterprise of your own, we would like to know about it. Please consult the Executive Director and/or his/her designee if you are unsure whether a situation might involve a conflict of interest.
3. All employees will be judged by the same performance standards and subject to NECCOG's scheduling demands regardless of any existing outside work requirements or interests. If NECCOG determines that an employee's outside work or activities interfere with his/her performance or ability to meet the requirements of NECCOG as they are modified from time to time, the employee may be asked to terminate his/her outside employment if he/she wishes to remain with NECCOG.
4. All employees have a responsibility to protect and safeguard NECCOG's assets against loss, theft and misuse. NECCOG assets include not only cash, but also physical articles such as computers, vehicles, tools, office supplies etc. NECCOG equipment, supplies and facilities are the sole property of NECCOG and, as such, may only be used for conducting NECCOG business or for other purposes expressly authorized by the Executive Director and/or his/her designee.
5. The following activities are prohibited, including, but not limited to:
 - Use of official position for personal gain, including the use of confidential information.
 - Performing outside work while on NECCOG time or premises.

- Use of NECCOG materials, resources, property or proprietary information for any non-NECCOG purpose.
6. Gifts, Gratuities and Entertainment. Employees may **not** provide and accept business amenities, such as advertising, promotional, or goodwill gifts (e.g., clothing, pens, mugs, calendars) of **any** value. It is acceptable for employees to participate in business-related functions, such as lunches or dinners. However, good judgment must be exercised regarding the cost, frequency and the intent to influence or appearance of being influenced.
 7. Employment of Spouse and Relatives. Hiring of spouse or other relatives as employees or consultants is permitted only with the knowledge and consent of the Executive Director and/or his/her designee. A spouse or other relative may not be placed in or accept a position involving a direct or indirect reporting relationship to the current employee.
 8. Political Activity. Employees who run for office, serve as a public official or campaign for a political candidate must do so on their own personal time. NECCOG assets and resources may not be used or deployed in support of personal political activity, nor will NECCOG reimburse employees for expenses incurred in support of personal political activity.
 9. Disciplinary Action. NECCOG is committed to operating according to the highest standards of business ethics and conduct. Employees have the responsibility to be alert and sensitive to actions by others that may be improper, unethical or illegal. If, or when, it appears that a fellow employee may be in violation of NECCOG's rules or regulations, employees have the obligation to bring that situation to his or her attention and, if not corrected, to the attention of the Executive Director and/or his/her designee.
 10. Keep in mind that while employees are encouraged to report known or suspected violations to NECCOG, information obtained through rumor or hearsay should be handled with care and good judgment.

Equal Employment Opportunity

It is our policy to provide equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color, sex (including pregnancy and sexual harassment), sexual orientation, transgender status, gender identity or expression) age, genetic information, physical disability, religion, national origin, ancestry, citizenships status, marital status, civil union status, veteran status, or any other criteria protected under applicable federal, state, or local law.

This policy applies to all areas of employment, including recruitment, advertising, hiring, training and development, classifying, referring, promotion, transfer, termination, layoff, compensation, and all other terms, conditions and privileges of employment in accordance with applicable federal, state or local laws.

Any employee that believes they are not being properly treated should contact the Executive Director and/or his/her designee (Finance Director) to initiate a complaint as soon as possible.

Workplace Harassment Policy

NECCOG depends upon a work environment of tolerance and respect. Workplace harassment including, but not limited to, verbal slurs, negative stereotyping, overt hostility and the distribution of written or

graphic material intended to attack someone based on their race, color, sex, age, disability, religion, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, marital status, or sexual orientation is prohibited.

NECCOG will respond promptly to complaints of workplace harassment and where it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to put an end to the conduct and take any action necessary, including discipline where appropriate.

While this policy sets forth our goals of having a workplace that is free of any form of harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to take disciplinary or remedial action for workplace conduct that we consider unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of workplace harassment.

1. Sexual Harassment:

Sexual harassment is a form of workplace harassment which adversely affects the employment relationship. Sexual harassment of employees occurring in the workplace or in other settings in which individuals of NECCOG may find themselves is prohibited by state and federal law. The law also prohibits sexual or other forms of harassment by or against any vendor, customer or member of the general public.

Definition of Sexual Harassment Sexual harassment refers to behavior that is not welcome by the individual, is personally offensive to him/her and interferes with the ability of the individual to work effectively. The following are some examples of conduct which, if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending upon the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature;
- Use of sexually degrading words;
- Jokes or language of a sexual nature;
- Conversation or gossip with sexual overtones;
- Obscene or suggestive gestures or sounds;
- Sexually-oriented teasing;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences;
- Verbal comments of a sexual nature about an individual's appearance or sexual terms used to describe an individual;
- Discussion of one's sexual activities;
- Comments, jokes or threats directed at a person because of his/her sexual preference;
- Unwelcome and repeated invitations (for lunch, dinner, drinks, dates, sexual relations);
- Physical contact such as touching, hugging, kissing, stroking, fondling, patting, pinching or repeated brushing up against another's body;
- Demands or requests for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's employment status or promises of preferential treatment;

- Deliberate bumping, cornering, mauling, grabbing;
- Assaults, molestations or coerced sexual acts;
- Posting or distributing sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons or other materials;
- Sexually-oriented letters or notes;
- Sending offensive or discriminatory messages or materials through the use of electronic communications (e.g., electronic mail, including the Internet, voice mail and facsimile) which contain overt sexual language, sexual implications or innuendo, or comments that offensively address someone's sexual orientation;
- Staring at parts of a person's body;
- Sexually suggestive gestures, leering; and

Keep in mind that:

- A man and/or a woman may be either the victim of sexual harassment and/or the harasser;
- The harasser does not have to be the victim's supervisor;
- The victim does not have to be of the opposite sex from the harasser; and
- The victim does not have to be the person at whom the unwelcome sexual conduct is directed. The victim may be someone who is affected by the conduct, even when it is directed toward a third person, if the conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment for the person or interferes with the person's work performance.

The Rule: It is against the policies of NECCOG for any individual, male or female, to harass another individual sexually, by making unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other uninvited verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

2. Individual Responsibilities for Preventing Workplace Harassment

Each individual of NECCOG is personally responsible for:

- Ensuring that his/her conduct does not harass any other person with whom he/she comes in contact on the job, such as a vendor, customer, or member of the general public;
- Cooperating in any investigation of alleged harassment by providing any information he/she possesses concerning the matter being investigated;
- Actively participating in efforts to prevent and eliminate harassment and to maintain a working environment free from such discrimination;
- Ensuring that an individual who files a harassment claim or cooperates in an investigation may do so without fear of retaliation or reprisal;

Any individual who believes he/she has been the subject of any form of harassment may object directly to the individual about the offensive nature of the conduct or action or bring the alleged incident or situation to the attention of EEO Grievance Officer or the alternate Grievance Officer.

3. Violation of Policy

Retaliation against an individual for filing a complaint of workplace harassment or cooperating in an investigation of a complaint is against the law. NECCOG will take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, against employees who retaliate against those who object to or report harassment or participate in an investigation.

4. Procedures for Complaints

- a. NECCOG has designated the Executive Director and/or his/her designee (Finance Director) as the EEO Grievance Officer. If any employee believes he/she has been subjected to workplace harassment, the individual should initiate a complaint by contacting the EEO Grievance Officer as soon as possible. The individual should file the complaint promptly following any incident of alleged harassment. The longer the period of time between the event giving rise to the complaint and the filing, the more difficult it will be for NECCOG to reconstruct what occurred. The individual may be requested to write out his/her complaint to document the charge.

If the individual is uncomfortable contacting the EEO Grievance Officer for any reason, the individual may contact the Chair of NECCOG.

- b. Upon receipt of the complaint, the EEO Grievance Officer or the alternate EEO Grievance Officer will promptly conduct an investigation into the matter. The charged individual will be asked to respond to the complaint. Additional investigation will be made to the extent appropriate in each case. If, after the completion of this investigation, it is determined that there is reasonable cause for finding a violation of this policy, NECCOG will notify the complainant and the charged individual of the finding verbally. This process will be confidential to the extent consistent with an effective investigation, subject to the business needs of NECCOG.
- c. After the investigation has been concluded, NECCOG will make a final decision. If NECCOG finds that the investigation substantiates the allegations in the complaint, NECCOG will discipline the charged individual. Disciplinary action will be appropriate to the offense and may include termination. The complainant may be notified in writing of the disposition of the investigation.

ANY QUESTIONS ON THIS POLICY SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE EEO GRIEVANCE OFFICER OR THE ALTERNATE EEO GRIEVANCE OFFICER

Workplace Violence Policy

NECCOG seeks to have a workplace free of violence and the threat of violence. **THERE WILL BE ZERO TOLERANCE OF ACTS OR THREATS OF VIOLENCE IN OUR WORKPLACE BY EMPLOYEES, CUSTOMERS, THE GENERAL PUBLIC, AND/OR ANYONE WHO CONDUCTS BUSINESS WITH NECCOG.** It is the intent of NECCOG to provide a workplace which is free from physical attacks, harassment, property crimes, threats, or any other violent act(s).

NECCOG has developed the following procedures and principles with regard to violence in the workplace. Each employee must familiarize him or herself with these policies and regulations in order to achieve the goals of NECCOG in this regard.

1. Definitions:

- a. For this policy "Acts of violence" or "threats of violence" are defined as:
 - i. Any act of physical violence including, but not limited to, pushing, shoving, punching, striking, pinching, biting, kicking, wrestling, slapping, or any other aggressive or unsolicited unwanted contact between two parties. By their nature, physical attacks often involve breaking criminal laws.
 - ii. A threat of immediate or future harm, made seriously or in jest, whether orally, in writing or by an employee's conduct or physical gesturing.
 - iii. Any implied threat, made seriously or in jest, made either orally or by an employee's conduct or physical gesturing.
 - iv. Harassment, often involving verbal abuse, including unwanted telephone calls, involves acts or language by a party that is designed to damage or harm another.
 - v. Vulgar or obscene language, racial or ethnic slurs.
 - vi. Threatening with a weapon, dangerous instrument or item construed to be or utilized as a weapon which may include but is not limited to firearms, models, replicas, or an object whose outline represents a firearm, knives, mace, bats, ammunition, clubs and other such items.
 - vii. POSSESSION OF ANY WEAPONS OR DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS BY AN EMPLOYEE DURING WORK HOURS AND/OR ON NECCOG PROPERTY IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN AND IS GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINE UP TO AND INCLUDING TERMINATION.
 - viii. Property crimes, including but not limited to sabotage, theft, abuse or destruction of NECCOG, customer or employee property, tools, or equipment;
 - ix. The willful, malicious and repeated following of another person and/or the making of a credible threat with intent to place the other person in reasonable fear for his/her safety.
 - b. "Workplace" is defined as ALL of NECCOG's property and even locations where an employee is assigned if not on NECCOG property.
2. Reporting Procedure:
- a. All personnel are responsible for immediately notifying the Executive Director and/or his/her designee of any threats which they have experienced or observed.
 - b. Call 911 (or 9-911) if you believe there is an immediate emergency.
 - c. Employees may sometimes be involved in personal disputes with family members, neighbors, etc. that can sometimes escalate to the point where injunctions, restraining orders, and other court orders are sometimes sought. We request that employees include their work location as well as their residence in the order. We suggest that the employee inform the Executive Director and/or his/her designee of the issuance of such an order and provide a description of the individual cited in the order. Even in the case where an employee has not secured a court order but fears for his or her safety, we request that the employee notify the police department immediately, and inform the Executive Director and/or his/her designee soon as practicable.
 - d. NECCOG (Police and/or Management, as appropriate) will assess and investigate the incident. In situations involving weapons, or in situations where the threat of bodily harm is immediate and

readily apparent, the Executive Director and/or his/her designee may suspend the individual(s) in question and provide a written summary of the incident to the Executive Director and/or his/her designee for further action. Each incident of violent behavior, whether the incident is committed by another employee or an external individual such as a customer, vendor or member of the general public, must be reported. Final disciplinary action, if any, up to and including termination, will be determined pending completion of the investigation.

- e. E. In situations involving physical altercations or weapons, the Executive Director and/or his/her designee may request the aid and presence of police personnel.

3. Discipline

- a. After each incident is evaluated a proper remedy will be provided based upon the nature of the offense, duration, totality of the circumstances and past offenses. Remedies could range from an oral reprimand to suspension or immediate termination depending upon the severity of the offense. The employee may be subject to criminal charges and penalties.
- b. Incidents involving weapons or other dangerous instruments are grounds for immediate disciplinary action up to including termination from employment.
- c. Any employee who acts in good faith by reporting real or implied violent behavior will not be subjected to any form of retaliation or harassment. Any action of this type, i.e., retaliation or harassment, resulting from a report of violence must be reported to the Executive Director and/or his/her designee for investigation and decision regarding proper action and sanction. Conversely, false or malicious reporting will also result in investigation and appropriate sanction.

4. Prevention

Prevention efforts include, but are not limited to, informing employees of this policy, instructing employees regarding the dangers of workplace violence, communicating the sanctions imposed for violating this policy, and providing a reporting system within which to report incidents of violence without fear of reprisal.

Attendance and Punctuality

The success of NECCOG depends on your good attendance. Absenteeism detracts from our high quality of service and causes an unfair burden for those employees who must fill in for absent employees. Most people will be late or sick at one time or another, but when short-term absences become frequent, they often signal personal or job-related problems. In regard to attendance, you are expected to:

1. Notify your supervisor or the Executive Director and/or his/her designee as soon as possible if you are ill or unable to report to work for any reason. It is understood that emergencies do occur. However, you are generally expected to notify NECCOG within one-half (1/2) hour prior to the start of the first work day and each morning thereafter that you are unable to report to work. If you are unable to call personally, have a friend or relative call for you.
2. Avoid letting minor inconveniences keep you from performing your jobs. At the same time, good judgment should be used with respect to contagious ailments which might have an adverse effect on other employees.
3. Attend to personal affairs during non-working hours.

4. Be at your appointed workplace, ready to work, at the regular starting time and remain at said workplace and at work until the regularly scheduled ending time.

Medical Certification. NECCOG reserves the right to request written verification from a health care provider at any time. Moreover, an employee must obtain written approval to return to work from his/her healthcare provider for absences in excess of five (5) consecutive work days and/or if the absence was the result of one or more of the following conditions:

1. Surgery was performed.
2. You were confined to a hospital or other treatment facility.
3. You had a communicable disease.
4. You suffered a fracture or dislocation.
5. You suffered a muscle strain or a sprain.

Excused absences. The following are considered excused:

1. Absences because of illness - However, for absences of five (5) or more successive days, the absence will only be considered excused if the employee complies with the Medical Certification policy set forth above.
2. Absence approved by the Executive Director and/or his/her designee in advance.
3. Absence because of death in the immediate family (See Paid Leave Section for Bereavement Leave).
4. Absence or delayed arrival because of extreme weather conditions.
5. Absence or delayed arrival because of a bona fide personal emergency as determined by the Executive Director and/or his/her designee.
6. Absence because of a work-related injury.

The determination of whether or not an absence is excused will be made by the Executive Director and/or his/her designee after a review of all the circumstances related to the absence.

Excessive Absenteeism or Lateness. While there may be times when an absence or lateness is unavoidable, there are also times when absences or tardiness is unacceptable. You will be counseled regarding absenteeism or tardiness if NECCOG determines that you have not met its expectations. If the problems persist, you may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The absence of an employee from work, including an absence for a single day, or portion of a day, that is not authorized, shall be deemed as absent without leave, unless otherwise prohibited by law. Excessive absenteeism, lateness or leaving early may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including, termination.

If you are absent for three (3) consecutive work days without notifying NECCOG, it is assumed that you have voluntarily abandoned your position with NECCOG and you will be removed from the payroll.

Communications Policy

This Communication Policy establishes the policies and procedures for the use of NECCOG electronic equipment and computers, as defined in the Policy, including but limited to, all computer hardware and software, Internet access, electronic mail (including the Internet), social media, telephone systems (including voice mail), cellular phones, handheld computers (e.g., iPads), cameras, facsimiles and scanners (collectively "Information Systems").

It is the policy of NECCOG to ensure effective business communications among all individuals within NECCOG and with others outside of NECCOG. It is important that all forms of communication, whether verbal, written or transmitted via NECCOG's Information Systems, promote an atmosphere of professionalism, courtesy and respect.

Violation of this Communication Policy may result in loss of access privileges and/or disciplinary action - up to and including termination of employment.

NECCOG Information Systems

NECCOG Information Systems are NECCOG-owned resources and are provided to employees to assist and facilitate NECCOG business communications. Employees are not allowed to use NECCOG Information Systems for personal use.

1. Users are responsible for using NECCOG Information Systems in an efficient, ethical, and lawful manner. Usage that conflicts with this policy is prohibited, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:
2. Supporting commercial interests not related to the work of NECCOG.
3. Intentionally introducing viruses, worms, Trojan horses or other malicious activity.
4. Tampering or interfering with the intended use of NECCOG Information Systems.
5. Engaging in any unauthorized activities that result in monetary charges to NECCOG.
6. Using NECCOG Information Systems to convey fraudulent, defamatory, harassing, obscene or threatening messages or material and/or any communications prohibited by law.
7. Intentionally bypassing spam filters or other security features on NECCOG's computers or the network.
8. Use of NECCOG Information Systems, including the Internet, to send (upload) or receive (download) copyrighted materials, trade secrets, proprietary financial information, or similar materials without prior authorization is prohibited.
9. Use of NECCOG Information Systems for peer-to-peer file sharing including, but not limited to, the exchange of music files.

NECCOG Communications

All communications regarding NECCOG policies, procedures and administration or which may affect NECCOG or its personnel as a whole, will either originate from or be approved by the Executive Director and/or his/her designee prior to distribution. No individual in NECCOG is to send or distribute any communication regarding NECCOG policies, procedures or administration to "All Personnel" or "All Users" without the authorization of the Executive Director and/or his/her designee. Within these guidelines, the Executive Director and/or his/her designee are authorized to send and/or distribute communications regarding NECCOG business. Should an employee need to call any matter of interest related to

NECCOG's business to the attention of "All Users," the employee must receive authorization from the Executive Director and/or his/her designee.

Electronic messages should be drafted with the same thought and care devoted to written or verbal communications. Employees should not transmit any form of communication that they would not be comfortable writing in a letter or memorandum. Good judgment must be exercised when using electronic communications. All individuals of NECCOG must adhere to the following, both while on NECCOG's premises and off-site, when using NECCOG Information Systems:

1. The following disclaimer should be incorporated into all outgoing e-mail:

"Please note: "The information contained in this e-mail and any attachments hereto are intended only for the personal and confidential use of the designated recipients. If the reader/recipient of this message is not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you have received this e-mail and all attachments hereto in error and that any review, dissemination, distribution or copying of this e-mail or any of its attachments is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify the sender immediately by e-mail and destroy the original message received. Thank you."

2. Use of NECCOG Information Systems, in particular cellular phones, to discuss NECCOG-related information must be done with extreme caution so as to eliminate the possibility of a breach of confidentiality and/or the inadvertent disclosure of confidential information.
3. Use of NECCOG Information Systems, in particular e-mail and the Internet, to evaluate or offer feedback regarding an individual's work performance is prohibited. NECCOG Information Systems may be used for administrative purposes (e.g., scheduling reviews).
4. Use of NECCOG Information Systems, in particular e-mail and the Internet, to evaluate or offer feedback regarding a candidate's application for employment is prohibited. NECCOG Information Systems may be used for administrative purposes (e.g., scheduling reviews).

Use of Computers, Electronic Mail, and the Internet

It is NECCOG's policy to protect computer hardware, software, data, and business information from misuse, theft, unauthorized access, and environmental hazards. In addition to adhering to this policy, employees are expected to follow NECCOG Information Systems security procedures to safeguard NECCOG equipment and information. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Depending on the nature of the violation, action may also include civil or criminal prosecution under federal and/or state law.

1. Computers. Computers, computer files, and software furnished to employees are NECCOG's property intended for business use. Employees should have no expectation of privacy when utilizing computers including, but not limited to, the internet and e-mail, which may be subject to monitoring by the Employer. This includes communications sent or received with NECCOG's equipment even if the employee marks a file as "private" and/or attaches a password. All electronic messages are public records and are subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Since messages may be retained at different locations or levels of NECCOG's Information Systems, users must remember that their messages can be retrieved. Therefore, discretion is an important consideration when using electronic messages to send, record and/or retain communications. NECCOG has the right to access, and does access, information on its Information Systems at any time to monitor the use of the systems in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws, including Connecticut General Statute § 31-48d. In this regard, NECCOG may require from employees passwords to files that have been password protected. Employees are responsible for safeguarding their passwords, which should not be printed, stored on line, or given to others. Employees should not use a

password, access a confidential file or retrieve any stored confidential communication without authorization. Moreover, use of another employee's password, without his/her authorization, to access information is prohibited. Further, employees are responsible for all transaction made using their passwords. The Information Systems shall not be used for the following purposes:

- a. Downloading into the Information Systems any material that is copyrighted and/or programs you are not licensed to use.
- b. Transmitting or distributing any software licensed to NECCOG.
- c. Hacking into the Information Systems that you are not authorized to use.
- d. Installing programs on any computer without the approval and/or assistance of a member of the technical staff.
- e. Illegal activities, including but not limited to threats, harassment, sexual harassment, slander or defamation.
- f. Transmitting or downloading obscene or suggestive messages or offensive graphic images.
- g. Political endorsements.
- h. Commercial activities (i.e., conducting a private business).
- i. Use for personal gain.
- j. Copying electronic files without permission.
- k. Distributing NECCOG private and/or confidential information to unauthorized users (such as confidential personal and/or medical information).
- l. Electronic communications cannot be sent that attempt to hide the identity of the sender or represent the sender as someone else.
- m. Fundraising activities.
- n. Chain letters, lotteries, games, etc.

NECCOG recognizes that employees cannot control communications received through the Internet or emails and some communication may be received that are against this Policy. Employees should delete the items and contact person(s) sending the item(s) to inform them that such items are unacceptable. You should understand that certain violations of these rules, e.g., copyright violation, may also constitute a violation of state and/or federal law.

NECCOG purchases and licenses the use of various computer software for business purposes and does not own the copyright to this software or its related documentation. Unless authorized by the software developer, NECCOG does not have the right to reproduce such software for use on more than one computer.

Employees may only use software on local area networks or on multiple machines according to the software license agreement. NECCOG prohibits the illegal duplication of software and its related documentation.

Employees are responsible for the content of all text, audio or images that they place and/or send over the Internet and for ensuring that the Internet is used in an effective, ethical and lawful manner. The transmission or downloading of any sexually explicit materials including abusive, profane or offensive language and/or images is prohibited. All messages created, sent or retrieved over the Internet are the property of NECCOG and should be considered public information. NECCOG reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files.

Unless permission is granted by the Executive Director and/or his/her designee, employees are not permitted to install or copy software on NECCOG equipment. Only software that is licensed to or owned by NECCOG is to be installed on NECCOG computers.

Employees should regularly (at a minimum of once a quarter) modify their passwords. Passwords should not be readily identifiable, but should be a combination of six (6) characters, i.e., letters and numerals. Do not share your password.

Use of Employee-Owned Computers and Equipment

There are many possible combinations of interaction among the software needed by the remote user and the average mix of programs on most home computers. Troubleshooting software and hardware conflicts can take many hours, and a complete reinstall of operating systems and application software is often the only remedy for problems. For these reasons, NECCOG will provide support for NECCOG-owned equipment and software only.

NECCOG will bear no responsibility if the installation or use of any NECCOG software on employee-owned computers causes system lockups, crashes, or complete or partial data loss on employee-owned equipment.

3. Electronic Mail ("E-Mail"). Employees should be aware that e-mail is not private and messages can be retrieved even after they are deleted. Most e-mail systems instantly make back-up copies of files and copies may be easily retrieved by computer experts. The following are guidelines to follow when utilizing e-mail:

The e-mail system is not to be used in ways that are disruptive or offensive to others or in ways that could be harmful to workplace morale.

There shall be no display or transmission of sexually explicit images, messages, or cartoons, or any transmission and/or use of cartoons and/or e-mail communications containing ethnic slurs, racial epithets, or anything that may be construed as harassment and/or disparagement of others based on their race, color, sex (including pregnancy and sexual harassment), sexual orientation, transgender status, gender identity or expression) age, genetic information, physical disability, religion, national origin, ancestry, citizenships status, marital status, civil union status, veteran status, or any other criteria protected under applicable federal, state, or local law.

- a. The e-mail system should not be used to communicate with others regarding commercial, religious or political causes or for any other reasons that are not work-related.
- b. All e-mail messages are records of NECCOG. NECCOG reserves the right to access and disclose all messages sent over its e-mail system for any purpose.
- c. Employees should not attempt to gain access to another employee's personal file of e-mail messages without the employee's express permission. However, NECCOG reserves the right to enter an employee's e-mail files whenever there is a need to do so.

- d. Employees must not initiate or propagate electronic chain mail, commercial mailings, or other mass mailings in violation of the CAN-SPAM Act of 2003.
 - e. All incoming and outgoing electronic mail messages must be deleted on an ongoing basis.
 - f. Employees should not accept, open or view e-mail from unknown persons or organizations. If an employee receives such e-mail, he or she should notify the Executive Director and/or his/her designee immediately to determine what action should be taken.
 - g. Any violation of NECCOG's policy on e-mail use will result in appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
4. Internet Access. Employees should not consider their use of the Internet to be private. NECCOG may implement software and/or systems that can monitor and record all Internet usage. Security systems are capable of recording (for each and every user) each World Wide Web site visit, each chat, news group or e-mail message and each file transfer into and out of our internal networks, and we reserve the right to do so at any time.

Additionally, NECCOG may utilize independently supplied software and data to identify inappropriate or sexually explicit Internet sites. NECCOG shall block access from within our networks to all such sites of which we are aware.

NECCOG reserves the right to inspect any and all files stored in private areas of our network and/or an employee's NECCOG provided computer in order to assure compliance with policy.

NECCOG's Internet facilities and computing resources must not be used knowingly to violate the laws and regulations of the United States or any other nation, or the laws and regulations of any state, city, province and/or other local jurisdiction in any way.

Any software or files downloaded via the Internet into NECCOG network and/or employee's NECCOG provided computer become the property of NECCOG. Unless specifically related to processing business transactions, file downloads from the Internet are not permitted unless specifically authorized in writing by the Executive Director and/or his/her designee.

Drug and Alcohol Use

It is the policy of NECCOG that its residents and fellow employees have the absolute right to expect that persons employed by NECCOG will be free from the effects of drugs and alcohol. The Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments has the right to expect its employees to report to work fit and able for duty, and not impaired by drugs or alcohol.

Prescription Drugs. If job-related and consistent with business necessity, NECCOG may require employees who use a prescription drug that may affect their ability to perform the essential functions of their position to report to the Executive Director when they are taking such medications.

Drug Testing. Where NECCOG has reasonable suspicion to believe that a current employee (1) is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, which at that time, adversely affected or could adversely affect the employee's job performance or (2) has abused prescribed drugs; or has used illegal drugs, NECCOG may require the employee to submit to alcohol or drug testing. NECCOG also may conduct drug tests for individuals seeking employment (prior to the date of their hire) or upon promotion to another position within NECCOG.

NECCOG requires that an employee notify the Executive Director within five (5) days after a conviction of any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring outside the workplace.

Employees with questions on this policy or issues related to drug or alcohol use in the workplace should raise their concerns with the Executive Director.

Hours of Work

NECCOG has normal hours of operations which are Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Employee work schedules vary throughout NECCOG. NECCOG reserves the right to schedule hours to accommodate the organization's needs.

The employee's supervisor will advise the employee of his or her individual work schedule. Starting times and the length of the workday can vary depending upon employee classification, job, or department. Staffing needs and needs of the organization may necessitate variations in starting and ending times, as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week.

Lunch Periods

Lunch periods are scheduled depending on the needs of NECCOG, but are generally at Noontime. Your supervisor will assign your lunch period schedule. Every hourly employee is required to sign in and out for lunch, regardless of whether or not you leave the building. You are expected to take your full allotted time for lunch. You are requested not to perform any work during your regularly scheduled lunch period, unless specifically requested to do so. In that event, your lunch will be rescheduled or you will be paid for the time that you worked.

Overtime

If you are a non-exempt employee (see "Glossary of Employment Terms") and you perform overtime work, you will be paid one and one-half (1-1/2) times your regular hourly wage for all approved hours actually worked over forty (40) hours in a seven (7) day work cycle. Paid leave shall not be considered hours worked when calculating overtime pay.

All overtime must be approved in advance by your supervisor or the Executive Director and/or his/her designee.

NECCOG reserves the right to require overtime work and employees may not refuse overtime assignments. Failure to work scheduled overtime or overtime worked without prior authorization may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Timekeeping

NECCOG wants to make sure that you are paid correctly every week. You may be required to input information into either an electronic or manual timecard (hereinafter "timecard"), or you may be required to punch a time clock. It is your responsibility to record your time accurately. The Attendance and Punctuality Policy described in this handbook must be adhered to.

Federal and State labor laws require that you maintain an accurate record of your working hours. You will do this using your timecard or by punching a time clock, as directed by your supervisor.

1. Record on/Punch your own Time Card/Sheet (and only yours) the days worked and the hours worked.
2. You must sign in at the beginning of a work period when you are prepared to work and out at the end of a work period. Lunch periods and time when an employee is away from his/her office/job assignment on business other than NECCOG business must be recorded in the same manner. The time away from the office should be listed as "other hours" on your Time Sheets with a reference below or a written explanation signed by your department head.
3. No one is allowed to punch the time clock for anyone else.
4. No one is allowed to enter time on another employee's electronic timecard.
5. If there is a problem with your time keeping, have your immediate supervisor or the Executive Director and/or his/her designee to correct the error immediately.
6. No one is to work overtime without authorization.

No one is permitted to work unless the work time is recorded. *There is no such thing as working "off the clock."*

If you falsify time records for yourself or another employee or work "off the clock," you may be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.

All time-sheets are due by the 10th of the next month. If you know that you will be away from work during the beginning of a month, you can work with the Finance Director and/or his/her designee to submit your timesheet earlier.

For salaried employees, your timesheet must account for all hours worked and indicate to which project the hours are allocated.

Dress Code

As an employee you are also a representative of NECCOG in the eyes of the public. Therefore, it is important that you exercise good judgment and report to work properly groomed and wearing appropriate attire. It is expected and a necessary part of your job duties that you dress neatly and in a manner consistent with the nature of the work you are performing. Any employee who reports to work inappropriately dressed may be asked to leave and return properly groomed and attired. Attire should be conducive to a professional environment, maintain office decorum and enable the employee to interact with the public and fellow employees in a professional manner. When determining appropriate dress, employees are expected to consider, among other factors, the following:

- ▶ The nature of work;
- ▶ The nature of public contact, if any, and the normal expectations of the public;
- ▶ The safety considerations of the work environment (e.g., safety shoes, eye and ear protection, hard hats, high visibility safety-wear , etc.) Employees are required to wear proper safety equipment at all times, with no exceptions; and
- ▶ Whether the appearance is distracting or disrespectful of other employees.

Acceptable attire includes slacks with shirts and sweaters or jackets for men and dresses, slacks or skirts with shirts, sweaters or jackets for women. For all employees, tee shirts, tank or halter tops, athletic shorts, sweat pants or other clothing more suitable for a gym, and worn or tattered clothing, including shoes or sneakers are not acceptable. All clothing should be clean and without rips or holes. If your

position entails outside work, closed toed or safety shoes should be worn as directed. Employees that are provided with a uniform are required to wear such uniform.

Drug and Alcohol Use

It is the policy of NECCOG that its residents and fellow employees have the absolute right to expect that persons employed by NECCOG will be free from the effects of drugs and alcohol. The Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments has the right to expect its employees to report to work fit and able for duty, and not impaired by drugs or alcohol.

Prescription Drugs. If job-related and consistent with business necessity, NECCOG may require employees who use a prescription drug that may affect their ability to perform the essential functions of their position to report to the Executive Director when they are taking such medications.

Drug Testing. Where NECCOG has reasonable suspicion to believe that a current employee (1) is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, which at that time, adversely affected or could adversely affect the employee's job performance or (2) has abused prescribed drugs; or has used illegal drugs, NECCOG may require the employee to submit to alcohol or drug testing. NECCOG also may conduct drug tests for individuals seeking employment (prior to the date of their hire) or upon promotion to another position within NECCOG.

NECCOG requires that an employee notify the Executive Director within five (5) days after a conviction of any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring outside the workplace.

Employees with questions on this policy or issues related to drug or alcohol use in the workplace should raise their concerns with the Executive Director.

Safety

NECCOG endeavors to provide safe working conditions for all employees, instructions concerning safe working methods, and to make available the necessary equipment required to protect employees against particular hazards. It is the obligation of each employee to observe the safety regulations, to use the safety equipment provided and to practice safety at all times.

Safety can only be achieved through teamwork. Each employee and management personnel must practice safety awareness by thinking defensively, anticipating unsafe situations, and reporting unsafe conditions immediately.

Please observe the following precautions:

1. Notify the Executive Director and/or his/her designee's Office of any emergency situation. If you are injured or become sick at work, no matter how slightly, you must inform the Executive Director and/or his/her designee's Office immediately.
2. Use, adjust, and repair machines and equipment only if you are trained and qualified.
3. Get help when lifting or pushing heavy objects.
4. Avoid overloading electrical outlets with too many appliances or machines.
5. Use flammable items, such as cleaning fluids, with caution.

6. Walk – don't run.
7. No Smoking in all buildings, grounds and working areas and all NECCOG vehicles.
8. Keep cabinet doors and file and desk drawers closed when not in use.
9. Avoid "horseplay" or practical jokes.
10. Start work on any equipment only after safety procedures and requirements have been explained (and you understand them).
11. Keep your work area clean and orderly, and the aisles clear.
12. Stack materials only to safe heights.
13. Watch out for the safety of fellow employees.
14. Use the right instrument for the job, and use it correctly.
15. Know the location of all alarms and fire extinguishers, and familiarize yourself with the proper procedure for using them, should the need arise. Know the locations, contents, and use of first aid equipment.
16. When you leave NECCOG's premises make sure that all entrances are properly locked and secured.

Reporting an Injury/OSHA

Federal law ("OSHA") requires that we maintain records of all recordable occupational injuries and/or illnesses which occur during the workday. The State of Connecticut Workers' Compensation Act also requires that you report any illness or injury on the job, no matter how slight. If you hurt yourself or become ill, please contact the Executive Director and/or his/her designee's Office for assistance. If you fail to report an injury, you may jeopardize your right to collect workers' compensation payments as well as health benefits.