

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

Revised May 26, 2017

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101 OVERVIEW

This Personnel Policy is intended for the information and guidance of all persons employed with the Yarmouth Association for Community Residential Options (YACRO).

YACRO is a unionized agency with permanent employees employed as Community Residential Workers being covered under a Collective Agreement between YACRO and NSGEU. Whenever there may be any confusion, the Collective Agreement will apply to permanent employees only.

* This policy refers to staff and employees throughout. Where only staff are referred to in the following articles, unionized employees should refer to their collective agreement for guidance.

102 MISSION STATEMENT

YARMOUTH ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL OPTIONS

MISSION STATEMENT

The Yarmouth Association for Community Residential Options, a not-for-profit Agency, provides residential support for children and adults challenged with disabilities. The Agency exists to enhance each person's potential to live, work and socialize within the community in the least restrictive, most inclusive manner.

We are Committed To

- *Advocating for recognition of the rights and dignity of all the people for whom we work.*
- *Delivering quality service with well-trained personnel, pro-active Board of Directors and effective cost-conscious management of resources.*
- *Providing for the physical, emotional, spiritual and social needs of the people taking part in our program.*
- *Supporting families through the delivery of a Respite Program.*
- *Encouraging family, friends and community involvement as an integral part of the lives of the persons for whom we work.*
- *Refraining from the use of aversive or overly intrusive techniques.*
- *Developing and encouraging self-advocacy and independence.*

103 PHILOSOPHY

Yarmouth Association for Community Residential Options (YACRO) exists to support, in residential settings, people who have been challenged with disabilities. We believe that everyone has a right to live in the community and be regarded as individuals, deserving of the opportunity to grow and develop to their fullest potential, and to find and be included in the life of their community.

The people we support are often very vulnerable. Sometimes this vulnerability has evolved from having very little or no control in their lives, being taught to be compliant in all aspects of daily living and developing very little sense of personal capabilities. Our mandate is to discover and provide the supports required to assist people in finding their own sense of personal power. Due to the vulnerability of the people we support, we must make every effort to provide a stable environment where people feel at home, safe, and can learn to trust the people around them. It is only in this type of environment that people can be encouraged to explore and become aware of their potential as human beings.

Our objective is to provide a setting structured to help support the individual as he/she requires. We accept people as whole individuals and do not believe there is something wrong with them that needs to be fixed. We wish to support people by providing trusting relationships and nurturing environments. Many of the people we support have learned many coping and defense mechanisms to help keep themselves safe. We believe that all actions are forms of communication, and it is our duty to learn what people are communicating through their actions and words, thus understanding and supporting their needs.

The people we support are adults and children who bring with them a lifetime full of various experiences. Many times people have not been encouraged, or allowed, to grow emotionally, spiritually, or intellectually and sometimes actions are not consistent with age. However, we always remember that the people we support are individuals who have specific support needs and the right to self expression.

To be able to support people within our Organization, we must be aware of their rights, their life experiences, their vulnerability, and their support needs. We must strive to create an environment which is based upon mutual understanding and respect, one which allows people to maintain their individuality, grow as human beings and always allows for varied forms of self expression.

104 PRINCIPLES OF OPERATION

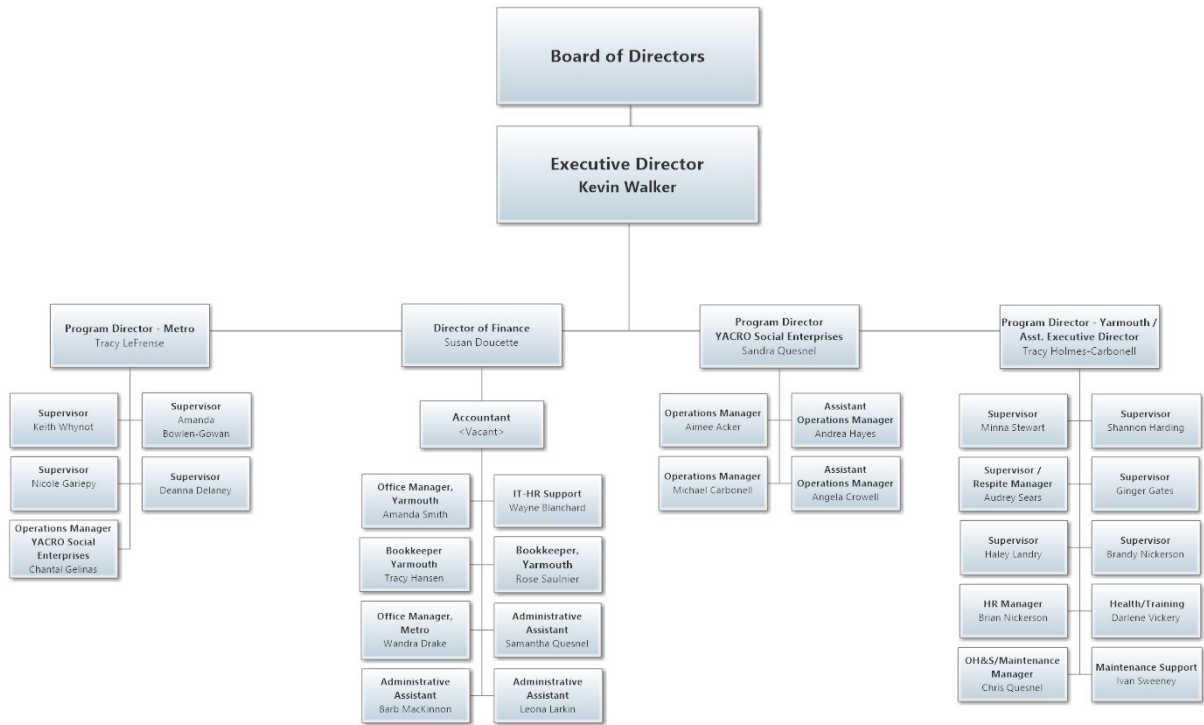
1. Normalization and Social Role Valorization (SRV): Yarmouth Association for Community Residential Options (YACRO) believes that the principles of normalization and social role valorization provide a framework for supporting the people in our homes. Normalization and social role valorization refer to “the use of culturally valued means to offer people life conditions at least as good as those of average citizens, and as much as possible to enhance or support their behavior, appearance, experiences, status, and reputation”. (Wolfensberger)
2. Personal Outcome Measures: YACRO promotes personal outcomes that support person-directed quality of life – self-determination, choice and self-advocacy. Personal outcome measures promotes Community Life, which fosters the bridging role of organizations (YACRO) in facilitating relationships between people and their communities and defines quality in the context of the Community rather than that of the organization.
3. Rights: YACRO wishes to ensure that the rights of those we support are respected, protected, and promoted; including the freedom of choice. These rights are accorded under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act.
4. Self Advocacy: Is a process whereby people who have been traditionally powerless and labeled in some way, are encouraged and supported in working to improve their social status and situation, individually and/or collectively, using a variety of advocacy approaches.
5. Individualization: Services will be provided in a manner that recognizes and respects each person’s uniqueness.
6. Flexibility: YACRO will remain open to the changing needs and wishes of those we serve.
7. Individual Support Development: YACRO offers opportunities for growth and development that are positive, respectful and meaningful to the individual. YACRO is cognizant of the value of interdependence.
8. Personal Relationships: YACRO will assist the people we support in fostering relationships with their families and with people in their communities.
9. Community Involvement: YACRO will encourage the people we support to participate in a variety of community activities.
10. Integration: YACRO will provide services in an integrated community setting. YACRO wishes to enable people to work, believing work to be an important means of integration.

11. Support Staff: YACRO will ensure that staff providing support will maintain a commitment to the agency philosophy, principles and mission.
12. Quality Assurance: YACRO will maintain ongoing internal evaluations and be open to external evaluation.
13. YACRO strives to work cooperatively with other services and professionals to extend and enhance the services we provide to individuals.

105 YACRO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairperson	Randy Saulnier
Vice Chair	Karen Crossley
Past Chair	Barry Wiser
Secretary	Nancy Lesser
Treasurer	Nicole Mackenzie
Members	Harold MacDonald Linda Sutton Donald Gillis Marilyn Moore Kevin Poole Allan Hamilton

106 **ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**



107 **COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL WORKERS**

- a. Staff members/employees employed as Community Residential Workers are covered under the Collective Agreement between YACRO and NSGEU. All pay, benefits and terms of employment for Permanent Community Residential Workers shall be as defined in this agreement. YACRO's Personnel Policy shall apply to all Permanent Community Residential Workers with regard to anything not specifically addressed in the Collective Agreement.

- b. Administrative, casual and management staff will be covered by this Personnel Policy.

108 INTRODUCTION – MESSAGE TO YACRO STAFF\EMPLOYEES

Welcome to YACRO, the Yarmouth Association for Community Residential Options!

As our Philosophy states YACRO exists to support, in residential settings, people who have disabilities. The people we support are often very vulnerable. Our objective is to provide a setting structured to help support the individual as they require. To be able to support people within our Organization, we must be aware of their rights, their life experiences, their vulnerability and their support needs.

As a YACRO staff member your job is to create an environment based upon mutual understanding and respect. One which allows people to maintain their individuality, grow as human beings and which allows for varied forms of self-expression.

This manual explains the policies and procedures of the Yarmouth Association for Community Residential Options. It provides you and your co-workers and your Employer with a document for clarifying your relationship and ensuring fairness.

Please read the Policy carefully. Feel free to ask questions. Additions and revisions to the policies and procedures will be made as the need arises. Your suggestions are welcomed.

We look forward to your contributions to your workplace and hope to contribute to your career development during your employment with the Yarmouth Association for Community Residential Options.

Sincerely,
Kevin Walker
Executive Director

SECTION 2 EMPLOYMENT/HIRING PROCEDURES

201 DEFINITIONS

1. **“Employer”** is an incorporated non-profit society, operating under the name Yarmouth Association for Community Residential Options (YACRO). YACRO is governed by a Board of Directors whose head office is located at 6 Thurston Street, Yarmouth, N.S.
2. **“Management”** means those staff delegated by the Board to act on its behalf including but not limited to the Executive Director, The Director of Finance, Program Directors, Accountant, Supervisors and Coordinators in Metro and in Yarmouth.
3. **“Employee”** means one who is a Permanent Full-Time, Permanent Part-Time, Probationary or Term Employee who is covered under the Collective Agreement between YACRO and NSGEU.
4. **“Staff Member”** is a person who is employed by YACRO but who is not covered under number (3) above. These members would include administrative, management and casual/relief workers as an example.
5. **“Service”** means date of hire to a permanent position.

202 RECRUITMENT

1. Job candidates will be recruited internally and externally. Staff members/employees are encouraged to recommend prospective applicants whom they believe to be qualified for employment.

Review of Applicants

The interview panel will interview the candidates. Consideration will be given for each individual’s job-related skills, knowledge, related experience, ability, efficiency, initiative and attitude; past job performance and productivity; and where required, results on tests of job-related skills. Service with YACRO will also be considered.

203 SELECTION

Interview Panel

Selection will involve only those with knowledge and skills necessary to make competent selections and will be completed without improper influence. Persons

involved in the selection and hiring process are to disqualify themselves when his/her objectivity would be compromised for any reason, including the fact that a candidate may be a relative or close personal acquaintance.

Interview panels will consist of the following personnel:

1. For the position of Executive Director: Four representatives of the Board
2. For Senior Staff Positions: The Executive Director and two other Senior Managers. A person with the necessary expertise could be invited as a resource.
3. For Full-Time Positions: Executive Director or Representative and one Supervisor
4. Permanent Part-time Positions: Program Director or Representative and/or 2 Supervisors
5. Casual Position: Program Director, Supervisor or Executive Director, or Representative
6. For Volunteers: Program Director, Supervisor or Executive Director, or Representative
7. For Persons on Grant Positions: Executive Director or Representative and Program Director or Supervisor

All interviews will be documented.

References and sources of information shall be checked during final consideration.

Reference checks will consist of phone calls to a minimum of three references. Within 15 days of the start date the staff member/employee will provide YACRO with a completed copy of the following documents if required: medical declaration form, criminal records check (including vulnerable sector screening), a child abuse registry check, proof of education, and/or training certificates. If after 15 days the person being hired has not submitted or provided proof of the above documents, he/she may no longer be eligible to work for the Agency.

Note: A member of the personnel committee of the Board or any Board member may be invited to join any interview panel.

Note: Relatives of staff members/employees are eligible for employment with Yarmouth Association for Community Residential Options provided:

1. The relative is not a member of the selection panel;
2. There is not a supervisory relationship between relatives;
3. He/she meets all selection standards and fulfills all job qualifications.

“Relative” means spouse, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son, daughter, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother, sister, aunt, uncle and cousin.

Documents supporting the hiring process of the successful candidate will be kept on file. Documents of unsuccessful candidates will be kept for six months at which point the management, at their discretion, may destroy the results of these competitions.

204 APPOINTMENT OF NEW STAFF

At the administrative orientation meeting, all new staff members will be advised of their position stating location, salary and supervisor. In addition, a Job Description, rules of work (which will be signed and placed on file) and a copy of the Collective Agreement (if required) will be presented. New staff will be referred to the personnel policy manual located at www.yacro.com. Each staff member/employee will make his/herself familiar with the personnel policy manual.

Before the first day of employment, the staff member will complete the following:

1. Staff Contract
2. TD 1 Form
3. Staff member/employee Data Sheet
4. Declaration of Confidentiality
5. Child Abuse Register Check and Police Check, including Vulnerable Sector Screening
6. Direct Deposit form for payroll
7. Drivers license information
8. Other forms which specify work requirements
9. Proof of certification

It shall be the responsibility of the Supervisor to provide all the new staff with orientation.

All new staff must complete and sign a medical declaration form, which will be kept on file.

All new permanent appointments are probationary for a minimum period of six (6) months.

New staff members who are on probation will be evaluated throughout the probationary period. If an acceptable evaluation is not forthcoming within the probationary period, employment may be terminated. In this event, the staff member will be advised in writing, or as stated in the Collective Agreement, where applicable.

205 ORIENTATION PROCESS

Orientation will be the responsibility of the immediate Supervisor and will include the following, according to the individual needs of the staff member:

1. An overview of the structure and history of the facility and of YACRO.
2. Introduction to the various affiliated agencies and services.
3. Information on Normalization, Social Role Valorization and Personal Outcome Measures.
4. Rules of Work within YACRO.
5. Instruction on recording/documentation.
6. Information on Confidentiality.
7. Introduction to other staff and residents.
8. Familiarization with policies and procedures, community living plans, house routines, and sign-offs indicating acceptance of the provincial standards.
9. Familiarization with Job Description and Duties.
10. Familiarization with Occupational Health and Safety Committee processes and responsibilities.
11. The shadowing of another staff member as deemed necessary by the Supervisor or requested by the staff member.
12. Orientation to the administration of medication administration process.

New Staff members may also be assigned pertinent reading and other resource material as part of the orientation process.

SECTION 3 PERFORMANCE

301 PERFORMANCE/POSITION REVIEW

Evaluation is a constructive process which is utilized to identify staff members'/employees' strengths and areas requiring growth and development. It is a process involving both the Supervisor and staff member/employee, with each party having the opportunity to contribute. Every evaluation should conclude with the identification of goals, the process by which they can be achieved, by whom, and within what stated period. While ongoing informal evaluation is expected, formal evaluation will be conducted.

The following minimal schedule of formal evaluations is required:

1. Informal evaluation during the probationary period.
2. After nine months of employment.
3. Once every twelve months thereafter.
4. At any time at the discretion of the Supervisor.

Each staff member's/employee's performance evaluation will be filed in the staff member's personnel file.

302 STAFF DEVELOPMENT – IN SERVICE TRAINING

YACRO requires each staff member/employee to undergo training viewed by the agency as necessary to meet the Standards as determined by the Department of Community Services and the standards established by the principles and philosophy of YACRO.

YACRO reserves the right to schedule a staff member/employee with his/her consultation for any training that is relevant to his/her position or performance.

Non-attendance at scheduled training will be treated as not showing up to a scheduled work shift.

303 STAFF DEVELOPMENT – TRAINING ALLOWANCE

Staff development is the responsibility of all Senior Staff and the YACRO organization as a whole. Staff training needs will be identified on an ongoing basis and appropriate opportunities will be arranged to meet these needs.

Such opportunities may include the following:

1. In-Service Training
2. Workshops
3. Conferences
4. Courses through an accredited educational institution

A staff member/employee may request a training allowance if:

1. He/she has successfully completed probation.
2. He/she has the approval of his/her supervisor.
3. The funds are used to develop or increase skills that YACRO views as relevant to his/her position or responsibilities.

The request must be made in writing to the appropriate Director. The written request must include the name, cost and duration of the workshop or course.

The Director will approve or reject the request based on the above criteria, as well as consideration of such items as staffing availability, needs of the program and availability of funds. The staff member/employee will be expected to share acquired skills and knowledge with co-workers.

304 ACTING POSITIONS

If a staff person/employee is requested to take on a more senior acting position for more than two weeks he/she shall receive appropriate acting pay and appropriate benefits which may include sick days, vacation days and statutory holidays but would not include the Benefit Package or the Retirement Plan, unless otherwise stated in the Collective Agreement.

305 CONFLICT RESOLUTION

To ensure the smooth operation of the Agency and continued healthy environment for the people we support, disagreements among staff will be resolved.

Disagreements and conflicts are a normal part of life and can be opportunities for positive change and growth. This can only happen when the disagreeing parties express their concerns and actively seek to resolve them through understanding, communication and problem solving. Open communication is vital to maintaining a healthy environment for all people within the organization. The manner or spirit in which a conflict is dealt with often dictates the end result. The following is a guideline for resolving interpersonal conflicts.

1. When a conflict arises, it will be brought to the attention of the other person

Involved. It is a good idea, when approaching someone, to say how one is feeling, describing how the situation impacts personally, rather than blaming the other or describing the other's actions as wrong. It is important for both parties not to become defensive but to try and listen to what the other is saying and understand their position. Often a conflict can be solved at this point if both parties listen to and understand each other. If a solution is reached at this stage, often it is a good idea to make a brief note for personal keeping of any agreement reached.

2. If a satisfactory solution cannot be reached, both parties can decide that the Issue is not that important and may decide to allow each other to disagree without hindering their working relationship.
3. If a satisfactory solution cannot be reached and either party feels it is important to resolve the issue, then the Supervisor or Program Director will be approached (preferably by both parties) and the issue explained. The Supervisor or Program Director will decide if it is an issue that she/he needs to deal with and can choose to act as a third party mediator. There are pitfalls in following this procedure; the Program Director or Supervisor may not be an unbiased third party and is the immediate supervisor to both parties and any decision reached could affect the team as a whole. However, this approach can be effective if both parties are looking for an authoritative decision to resolve the conflict and agree to abide by the Supervisor's or Program Director's decisions.
4. If, after a reasonable time, a satisfactory solution is still not found, then the Executive Director can be consulted regarding the issue. The decision of the Executive Director is final unless she/he refers to the matter to the Personnel Committee or to an independent, external party.

306 DISCIPLINARY ACTION

1. Failure of staff to comply with the terms of their job description or YACRO philosophies, policies, procedures or any inappropriate behavior or misconduct will result in the following disciplinary action being taken:
 - a. The non-compliance will initially be verbally discussed by the Supervisor with the staff member, with correct policy, behavior, etc. being explained and documented.
 - b. Continued non-compliance or inappropriate behavior will be documented by the Supervisor who will report to the Program Director or Executive Director. A letter will be prepared describing the unacceptable behavior. The staff member will receive a copy and one copy will be placed in the Central Office Personnel File. The staff member must sign the file copy indicating receipt of the same.
 - c. The Executive Director shall take appropriate action which could include:
 - i. Place the staff member on probation;

- ii. Referral to a monitored EAP program ;
 - iii. Initiate suspension;
 - iv. Proceed with dismissal procedures.
2. Failure of casual staff to abide by the philosophies, policies and procedures of the agency may result in immediate removal from the casual roster.
 3. The Supervisor may, with just cause, send a staff member/employee home. A report will be submitted to the Program Director and Executive Director within 24 hours.

307 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Permeant employees shall follow the procedures outlined in their collective agreement. Non-unionized staff members who feel that he/she has been unjustly treated or considers himself/herself aggrieved by an action or lack of action by the Employer shall follow the procedure outlined below.

1. Discuss the matter with the Supervisor as soon as he/she can after the incident. If following this discussion the issue in dispute is not resolved, the staff member may discuss with the Program Director and may then submit the grievance in writing to the Executive Director within ten working days following the discussion.
2. If after ten working days from the time of written submission to the Executive Director, the issue remains unresolved, the staff member may submit his grievance in writing to the Chairperson of the Board who will refer the issue to the Personnel Committee. The Chairperson will reply within 30 days.
3. The parties may agree to use the grievance mediation services of the Department of Labor or an alternative mediation process.

SECTION 4 – COMPENSATION

401 OVERTIME

Staff members may be required to work in excess of the average work week (40 hours).

Staff members who do work in excess of 40 hours, will be given time off in lieu of time worked or they will be paid straight time up to and including 48 hours per week at the discretion of the Employer.

Staff members will not work in excess of 48 hours per week except as directed or approved by the Employer.

402 COMPENSATORY TIME

1. Staff members may bank compensatory time by indicating on their payroll sheets the number of hours they wish to be put in their compensatory banks.
2. Staff members who wish to take time off in lieu must have approval in advance from the applicable supervisor.
3. Staff members may accumulate a maximum of 80 hours in compensatory time. Any hours accrued in excess of 80 shall be paid out. In exceptional circumstances, and upon written request to the Program Director, this accrual limit may be increased at the discretion of the Program Director. Any compensatory time remaining at March 31st will be paid out to the staff member.

403 TRAVEL EXPENSES

Administrative and management staff members who are required to travel on behalf of YACRO shall be entitled to the following allowances:

1. Mileage: 42.89 cents per kilometer.
2. Meals: If traveling outside the area, meals may be claimed at a total of \$55 per day \$15 for breakfast and \$20 for lunch and supper.
3. Parking: Actual costs which must be supported by receipts. (If Parking meters are used, an explanation of such on the travel claim)
4. Taxis: Actual costs which must be supported by receipts.
5. Buses: At standard rates.

- 6. Accommodations: Rates for accommodations will be approved on an “as required” basis and all costs must be supported by receipts. When private accommodation is used, \$30 per night may be expensed.
- 7. Tolls: At actual rate.
- 8. Incidentals: \$10 per 24 hour day.

The above expenses must be approved by the supervisor in advance of travel.

YACRO reserves the right to request further substantiation of claims, or disallow claims that are inadequately supported in its opinion. YACRO may disallow claims that have not been previously approved.

Any staff member found to have falsified costs/claims may have his/her employment terminated.

404 USE OF PERSONAL AUTOMOBILE

Mileage reimbursement for staff members will be paid at 42.89 cents per kilometer or the full cost of a rental vehicle plus any documented gas receipts.

405 SALARY DISBURSEMENT

Salaries shall be paid by-weekly on Thursdays and shall be deposited directly into each staff member/employee’s personal bank account. The number of pay periods in a year will total 26.

Overtime or additional monies will be calculated and paid on a bi-weekly basis.

406 SALARY SCALE REVISIONS

Salary scales for all non-union positions will be reviewed by the Executive Director and/or Board of Directors on a regular basis.

407 STORM DAYS

In fairness to all, only those who report to work during inclement conditions will be paid. The pay will be equal to the actual hours worked. Anyone who does not report to work will not be paid.

Staff members may elect to take vacation or comp time or a personal day to prevent loss of earnings.

In the event that staff members are sent home by YACRO, they will be paid for the hours they were scheduled to work that day.

When the staff member has no entitlement to accumulated paid leave, the staff member may, with approval of the Employer, make up the absent time as scheduling allows.

SECTION 5 BENEFITS

501 STATUTORY HOLIDAY

Full Time Staff

The following days shall be considered paid holidays for full-time staff. Holidays that fall on a Saturday or Sunday will be observed the following Monday unless notice otherwise is given to staff.

- a. New Year's Day
- b. Heritage Day
- c. Good Friday
- d. Easter Sunday
- e. Victoria Day
- f. July 1
- g. One additional day per year as designated by the town as a civic holiday currently deemed as being the first Monday in August.
- h. Labor Day
- i. Thanksgiving Day
- j. Remembrance Day
- k. Christmas Day
- l. Boxing Day

When the holidays listed above fall on a full-time staff member's scheduled day off, the staff member shall receive another eight (8) hour day off with pay at a time that is mutually agreed between the staff member and the Employer, or shall receive equal financial remuneration if the Employer is unable to grant compensatory time off.

Any staff member who is not full-time shall receive holiday benefits as determined by the Nova Scotia Labor code.

502 VACATION

Annual vacation entitlement shall increase by years of service in accordance with the following schedule for fulltime staff:

- Three weeks during the first five years of employment
- Four weeks after five years of employment
- Five weeks after ten years of employment

Requests to carry over a maximum of forty (40) hours to the next year must be submitted to the Director of Finance no later than March 1st of the fiscal year.

503 **SICK LEAVE**

1. YACRO is committed to providing a high quality of care. In order to meet this objective, staff member/employees' health is of prime importance. If staff members/employees are in good physical and mental health, they are better able to care for others.
2. YACRO recognizes that absence due to illness or emergency situations is often beyond the control of our staff members/employees. In light of this Management has developed and will work collaboratively in the administration of an absenteeism policy that will:
 - a. Ensure that there is a fair and equitable use of sick benefits
 - b. Ensure that the benefits of the current medical plan are safeguarded
3. Sick leave benefits are intended to be used only for legitimate medical reasons.
4. Definition:

Sick leave means the period of time a staff member is absent from work by virtue of being physically or mentally unable to perform one's duties, or because of an accident for which compensation is not payable under the Worker's Compensation Act. Physically or mentally unable to perform one's duties means that the staff member is unable to fulfill his/her staff member's obligations due to sickness.

5. Accrual of Sick Leave Hours

Full-time staff shall receive 1.5 days per month sick time

6. Illness During Vacation

A staff member may receive sick leave benefits instead of vacation when the staff member is on vacation, for the days that the staff member is hospitalized. Other occurrences of illness during vacation can be discussed with the Program Director.

If the staff member is entitled to sick leave benefits prior to commencement of vacation, the staff member's vacation, in whole or part, may be postponed and taken later at a mutually agreed time.

7. Illness on Days Off (Holidays)

If a staff member is on sick leave and a holiday occurs during that period and if the staff member is otherwise entitled to the holiday, then the staff member shall

receive the holiday and shall not receive sick leave for that day. In that case, the staff member will not have a sick day charged to the staff member's sick leave bank.

8. Illness at Work/Personal Emergency

If a staff member becomes ill during his/her work day or has a personal emergency, he/she is to contact their immediate supervisor.

9. Illness of a Family Member

Where no one other than the staff member can provide for the health needs of an immediate family member, a full-time staff member shall be entitled, after notifying the Employer in advance, to use a maximum of forty (40) hours during any one (1) fiscal year, so long as the staff member has the necessary sick leave benefits. Immediate family members shall mean the staff member's spouse, child, parent, or any relative residing with the staff member.

10. Personal Days

YACRO recognizes that circumstances may arise to make it necessary for a staff member to take a day off. A full-time staff member has the choice of using a sick day in this event. A full-time staff may use sixteen (16) hours per year.

11. Exhaustion of Sick Leave

Should a staff member exhaust his/her sick leave benefits, YACRO will not pay the staff for absences due to illness. However, in the case of illness of an extended duration, the staff will be provided with a Record of Employment upon receipt of a medical statement that he/she is unable to work. The staff could then apply for sick benefits under the Employment Insurance Act.

12. Notification of Absence

- a. If a staff member/employee is unable to work due to health reasons, the staff must notify his/her supervisor or delegate as well as their designated work location. This notification will be made as early as possible prior to the start of the shift. Upon return to work, a staff member must complete a verification of absence form indicating the date(s) absent from the workplace and the type of sick leave requested. This form must be submitted to the designated supervisor on the staff's first day back to work from sick leave.
- b. Notification must be done on a daily basis unless otherwise indicated by the supervisor.
- c. Failure to notify in accordance with the Article may result in loss of pay or disciplinary action.

13. Deduction from Sick Leave

A deduction shall be made from accumulated sick leave for all hours absent for sick leave.

14. Sick Leave Management

Sick leave is an essential part of the staff/employee compensation package. YACRO does however recognize that efforts must be taken to ensure that some staff/employees do not abuse this privilege to the detriment of the organization, the people we support and fellow team members. Sick time usage will be reviewed annually during the staff/employee's performance review. In any case where a Supervisor has determined that a pattern of abuse exists, an action plan will be developed with the staff member/employee in an attempt to reduce their usage. Excessive absenteeism will be taken into consideration during any interview process.

15. Proof of Illness

- a. The Employer may request proof of illness from a legally qualified health care practitioner for extended absences due to illness or where the Employer has concerns regarding the pattern of sick leave usage. Where the Employer has reason to believe a staff member/employee is misusing sick leave privileges, the Employer may issue to the staff member/employee a standing directive that requires the staff member/employee to submit a medical certificate for any period of absence for which sick leave is claimed. This standing directive shall remain in place until an individual's Program Director is no longer concerned about the pattern of sick leave usage.
- b. Staff are obliged to adhere to treatment plans to support the earliest return to work and the Employer may make reasonable enquiries to confirm that the staff member is sick and he/she is complying with reasonable treatment plans to support his/her earliest possible return to work.
- c. The Employer reserves the right to require a staff member to submit to an independent medical assessment and the Employer shall be responsible for paying the associated cost.
- d. If the documentation required is not completed and produced in a timely manner, the time absent from work shall be deducted from the staff member's pay.

504 MATERNITY & PARENTAL LEAVE

The *Labour Standards Code of Nova Scotia* and the *Employment Insurance Act* make provisions for staff members to receive leaves of absence for maternity and parental reasons. The following sections are excerpts from "Guide to the Labour Standards Code of Nova Scotia".

Maternity and Parental Leaves

- a. Maternity leave is an unpaid leave for pregnant staff members; it can last up to 17 weeks. The staff member can start the leave up to 8 weeks before the expected date of delivery. She must also take at least one week after the date of delivery. Staff members who have worked for an Employer for the last one year (600 hours of “insured work” in the last year) may qualify for this leave.
- b. An Employer can require that a staff member take an unpaid leave of absence if her pregnancy interferes with her work.
- c. The *Labour Standards Code* also allows parents to take parental leave to care for their newborn or newly adopted child(ren). This unpaid leave is 35 weeks and is available to every parent that qualifies for it. To qualify for the leave a staff member must have worked for the Employer for at least one year and must become a parent to the child as a result of its birth or adoption.

- d. **To Take Maternity or Parental Leave**

To take maternity or parental leave, a staff member must give the Employer at least four weeks’ notice of both the date on which he/she will be going on leave and the date he/she plans to return to work, if he/she plans to return early. If the staff member cannot give four week’s notice of his/her leave because the baby is born early, because of medical condition, or because of an unexpected adoption placement, then he/she must give as much notice as she can.

- e. An Employer can ask for proof of the staff member being qualified for maternity or parental leave. This can include a certificate from a doctor or adoption worker.
- f. If a staff member is taking both maternity and parental leaves, she must take them one right after the other and not go back to work between the two leaves. In this case, she can take up to 52 weeks leave.
- g. If a staff member is taking parental leave but not maternity leave, she/he can take up to 35 weeks’ leave in the time after the child is born or arrives in the home. The staff member loses this right if she/he doesn’t take the leave within 12 months after the child arrives. Staff members who do not take maternity leave but who do take parental leave include natural fathers and adoptive mothers and fathers.
- h. If a newly arrived child goes into the hospital for more than one week, the staff member can return to work and use the rest of the parental leave after the child comes out of the hospital.

The Staff Member's Rights During Leave

- a. During maternity and parental leave, an Employer must let the staff member keep up at her/his own expense, any benefits plan in which she/he belongs. The staff member must give 10 days' written notice before her/his option to keep up her/his benefits is no longer in effect.
- b. When a staff member returns from parental leave she/he must be accepted back into the same position or comparable one with no loss of seniority or benefits.
- c. Staff members who wish to continue the Group Insurance Plan and/or RRSP will pay the staff member's contributions by post-dated checks prior to the commencement of leave. Staff members have the choice of terminating their coverage while on leave.

Maternity and Parental Benefits

- a. Staff members may be entitled to Employment Insurance Maternity and Parental Benefits. Staff members who will be taking maternity and parental leaves can apply to a Human Resource Centre of Canada for Maternity and Parental Benefits under the Employment Insurance Act.
- b. While on maternity or parental leave, a staff member shall continue to accrue and accumulate service and seniority credit for the duration of the leave; however, vacation, sick leave or any other benefit which accumulates based on service shall not accumulate during the period of maternity or parental leave.

505 COURT LEAVE

- a. Leave of absence with pay shall be granted to every staff member who is required to serve on a jury or who is required to appear as a witness in a work-related case.
- b. Where witness or jury fees are paid to the staff member, this amount shall be deducted from his/her regular pay.

506 BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

- a. In the event of a death in the immediate family, a full-time staff member shall be entitled to a period of five consecutive calendar days leave, one of which is the day of the funeral.
- b. Immediate family is defined as the staff member's: Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, Spouse/Partner, legal guardian, Child, Stepchild and any relative permanently residing with the staff member.
- c. A full-time staff member shall be entitled to three consecutive calendar days leave, one of which is the day of the funeral, in the event of death of the staff member's

Grandparents, Father-in-law, Mother-in-law, Son-in-law, Daughter-in-law, Brother-in-law, Sister-in-law and Grandchild or any other close relative.

- d. Additional days may be granted for extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the Executive Director.

507 COMPASSIONATE CARE LEAVE

The Labour Standards Code of Nova Scotia provides for compassionate care leave.

Compassionate care leave is an unpaid, eight week leave for staff members/employees who need to care for a seriously ill family member who has a high risk of dying within 26 weeks.

To take compassionate care leave, staff members/employees must be employed for more than three months with the same Employer. Also, they must give their Employer as much notice as possible before taking the leave. An Employer can ask a staff member/employee to provide a medical certificate, from a medical doctor, stating that the staff member/employee's family member is seriously ill. The leave can be broken up into separate periods of no less than one-week blocks.

Staff members/employees who take a compassionate care leave may qualify for a six-week compassionate care leave benefit under the federal government's employment insurance program.

508 LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

- a. Granting of requests for leave without pay will be based on consideration of the circumstances surrounding the request and will normally only be considered if the staff member has exhausted all vacation and compensatory leave entitlements.
- b. The staff member must put the request in writing to their respective supervisor.
- c. The staff member and Employer portions of benefits will be paid by post-dated checks which must be submitted by the staff member, to the office, prior to the commencement of leave without pay. Leaves will not be considered to be "granted" until the finance department has received the post-dated checks.

509 EDUCATIONAL LEAVE

- a. Staff members who have worked with YACRO for a minimum of one year may apply for Educational Leave Without Pay, up to a duration of three months. Approval will be granted at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- b. Requests for leave exceeding three months may only be made by staff members who have worked with YACRO for a minimum of two years. Such approval will be granted at the discretion of the Executive Director.

- c. The staff member must put the request in writing to their respective supervisor.
- d. Article 508(c) will apply for payment of benefits.

510 GROUP INSURANCE

YACRO makes available a Group Life, Medical, Dental and Long Term Disability plan to staff members on a cost sharing basis.

Permanent staff members shall join the plan upon successful completion of their probationary period.

1. YACRO will administer a Group Insurance plan on behalf of all permanent staff members.
2. All eligible staff members must participate in the plan. Staff members who are covered under another benefit plan may opt out of medical and dental benefits, but must retain the long-term disability and life insurance portion of the benefit plan.
3. The cost of the plan will be shared between the Employer and the staff member.
4. Staff member contributions to the plan will be obtained through regular payroll deductions.
5. Staff members on Maternity or Parental Leave are responsible for her/his portion of the premium for the duration of the leave should they wish to continue to participate in the plan while on leave.
6. Staff members on an unpaid leave, with the exception of a WCB leave, are responsible for the entire premium payment should they wish to continue to participate in the plan. Staff members collecting Workers' Compensation benefits due to a workplace injury, will continue to be entitled to cost-shared benefits. In this event, staff members will be required to forward post-dated checks to the office for their share of the premium payments.
7. Staff members who are on leave, will forward to the office, their premium payments in the form of postdated checks prior to the commencement of the leave.
8. Any failure in premium payments while on leave could terminate the Group Life and Medical coverage of the staff member.
9. Consult the Insurance Company's manual for further details.

511 RETIREMENT PLAN

1. YACRO makes available a Registered Retirement Plan in the form of a group RRSP for permanent staff members.
2. All staff members who accept a permanent position must participate in the plan upon successful completion of their probationary period.
3. YACRO will contribute 5% of a staff member's regular salary and the staff member will contribute a minimum of 5% of their salary, unless otherwise approved by the board.
4. The RRSP is set up as a self directed plan where staff members may choose where their money is being invested, within the options of the plan.
5. Staff member contributions to the plan will be made through regular payroll deductions.
6. No contributions will be made to the Retirement Plan by the Employer while a staff member is on unpaid leave, other than maternity or parental leave.
7. Withdrawal of RSP savings may be made only under the following two circumstances:
 - a) 1st time home-ownership
 - b) full-time attendance at an accredited learning institution.

512 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PLAN (EAP)

YACRO's EAP is with Shepell•fgi (www.workhealthlife.com)

The plan offers an all-inclusive range of programs for all of YACRO's staff members/employees and their families.

The plan includes, but is not limited to:

- Mainstream counseling
- Child and elder care information, resources and referrals
- Work/Life information and consultation on legal, financial, nutrition and physical health
- On-line resource library

SECTION 6 HEALTH AND SAFETY

601 WORKERS' COMPENSATION

YACRO provides Workers' Compensation for all staff members. YACRO handles all staff member inquiries according to Workers' Compensation Board guidelines.

All injuries sustained by a staff member during the course of his/her duties will be reported immediately to his/her Supervisor, Office Administrative Assistant or on-call person.

When an injury on the job has occurred, the staff member will complete a Workers' Compensation Report as soon as possible (maximum of three days after the injury).

All WCB Reports will be forwarded to the Workers' Compensation Office within five working days of the injury (fax # 1-902-491-8001).

It is each staff member's responsibility to ensure that all injuries are reported to the Supervisor or Administrative Assistant without undue delay.

602 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

YACRO is committed to providing a healthy and safe working environment for its staff members and the people it supports. We strive to prevent occupational illness and injury.

The Board of Directors, the Executive Director, the Program Directors and all staff members/employees are committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace and home for the people we support. All persons in the organization take responsibility to ensure that all reasonable precautions are taken to prevent harm to anyone within the Organization. All levels are held accountable for ensuring that we use safe work practices and receive training to protect our health and safety. It is the duty of all to report as soon as possible any hazardous conditions, injury, accident, or illness related to the workplace.

YACRO through all levels of staff members/employees will cooperate with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety committee (see below) to create a healthy and safe working environment.

The Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee is composed of at least 50% non-management staff members. The function of this committee is to have Employers and staff members work together to improve Health and Safety in the workplace (see Occupational Health & Safety Act).

Duties of the Committee are to ensure that:

- a. Hazards are identified
- b. People comply with health and safety requirements
- c. Health and safety complaints are quickly dispatched
- d. Regular inspections take place
- e. Advice on personal protective equipment is offered
- f. Policies and programs needed to comply with the Act are reviewed in consultation with the committee
- g. Records and minutes of the Committee are kept

The Committees shall meet at least once a month unless its members agree to a different schedule.

603 SMOKE FREE WORKPLACE

Children and adults that YACRO serves and YACRO staff members have a right to not be exposed to second hand tobacco smoke.

- Smoking is not permitted in any building or program operated by YACRO.
- Smoking is not permitted in any YACRO vehicle.
- Smoking is not permitted in any staff member/employee's personal vehicle while being used to transport individuals that we serve.
- Smoking is permitted outside of YACRO buildings and programs at minimum distance of 13 feet from any door, window or air intake.
- Smokers are expected to dispose of their waste without littering and in a safe manner.

604 ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

YACRO supports efforts to protect our environment. Staff members/employees will reduce, reuse and recycle by using designated containers in the houses and the offices. Examples are as follows:

- Thermostats will be turned down when people are out of the homes.
- If heat is required to be on, windows and doors will be closed.
- Company vehicles will not be left idling.
- Refundables must be recycled.

SECTION 7 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

701 DRESS AND GENERAL APPEARANCE

All staff members/employees will wear appropriate clothing when at work or on agency business. They will wear clothing that reflects positively on themselves, the agency and the people with whom they work.

1. Staff members/employees are role models for the people living in the homes and will dress appropriately for the situation and circumstances of the day.
2. Staff members/employees will wear proper clothing and proper footwear to ensure safety when carrying out tasks related to their job.

Examples of inappropriate clothes are as follows:

- a. Pajama bottoms
 - b. Any shorts other than walking shorts
 - c. Any clothing which allows undergarments to be visible
 - d. Open-toed and/or open-heeled footwear for staff members/employees working directly with clients
3. All clothing will be neat and clean and in a good repair.
 4. Clothing will not contain profane language or obscene messages and will reflect the fact that staff are role models.

702 PHONE/INTERNET/ELECTRONICS/SOCIAL MEDIA

YACRO staff members/employees are expected to use electronic resources including YACRO phones, fax machines and computers responsibly and productively. Personal electronic devices are not permitted to be used during work hours, and should not be brought into the workplace. Personal phone calls should be kept to a minimum. Electronic text messaging via YACRO phones is not permitted.

The use of YACRO (Organization) electronic systems, including phones, computers, fax machines, and all forms of Internet/intranet access, is for Organization business and for authorized purposes only. Brief and occasional personal use of the electronic mail system or the Internet is acceptable as long as it is not excessive or inappropriate, occurs during personal time (lunch or other breaks), and does not result in expense or harm to the Organization or otherwise violate this policy.

Use is defined as "excessive" if it interferes with normal job functions, responsiveness, or the ability to perform daily job activities. Electronic communication should not be

used to solicit or sell products or services that are unrelated to the Organization's business; distract, intimidate, or harass coworkers or third parties; or disrupt the workplace.

Use of Organization computers, networks, and Internet access is a privilege granted by management and may be revoked at any time for inappropriate conduct carried out on such systems, including, but not limited to:

- Sending chain letters or participating in any way in the creation or transmission of unsolicited commercial e-mail ("spam") that is unrelated to legitimate Organization purposes;
- Engaging in private or personal business activities, including excessive use of instant messaging and chat rooms (see below);
- Accessing networks, servers, drives, folders, or files to which the staff member has not been granted access or authorization from someone with the right to make such a grant;
- Making unauthorized copies of Organization files or other Organization data;
- Destroying, deleting, erasing, or concealing Organization files or other Organization data, or otherwise making such files or data unavailable or inaccessible to the Organization or to other authorized users of Organization systems;
- Misrepresenting oneself or the Organization;
- Violating the laws and regulations of Canada or any local jurisdiction.
- Engaging in unlawful or malicious activities;
- Deliberately propagating any virus, worm, Trojan horse, trap-door program code, or other code or file designed to disrupt, disable, impair, or otherwise harm either the Organization's networks or systems or those of any other individual or entity;
- Using abusive, profane, threatening, racist, sexist, or otherwise objectionable language in either public or private messages;
- Sending, receiving, or accessing pornographic materials;
- Becoming involved in partisan politics;
- Causing congestion, disruption, disablement, alteration, or impairment of Organization networks or systems;
- Maintaining, organizing, or participating in non-work-related Web logs ("blogs"), Web journals, "chat rooms", or private/personal/instant messaging;
- Failing to log off any secure, controlled-access computer or other form of electronic data system to which you are assigned, if you leave such computer or system unattended;
- Using recreational games; and/or
- Defeating or attempting to defeat security restrictions on Organization systems and applications.

Using Organization electronic systems to access, create, view, transmit, or receive racist, sexist, threatening, or otherwise objectionable or illegal material, defined as any visual, textual, or auditory entity, file, or data, is strictly prohibited. Such material violates the Organization anti-harassment policies and is subject to disciplinary action. The Organization's electronic mail system, Internet access, and computer systems

must not be used to harm others or to violate the laws and regulations of Canada or local jurisdiction in any way. Use of Organization resources for illegal activity can lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal and criminal prosecution. The Organization will comply with reasonable requests from law enforcement and regulatory agencies for logs, diaries, archives, or files on individual Internet activities, e-mail use, and/or computer use.

Unless specifically granted in this policy, any non-business use of the Organization's electronic systems is expressly forbidden.

If you violate these policies, you could be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Ownership and Access of Electronic Mail, Internet Access, and Computer Files; No Expectation of Privacy

The Organization owns the rights to all data and files in any computer, network, or other information system used in the Organization and to all data and files sent or received using any Organization system or using the Organization's access to any computer network, to the extent that such rights are not superseded by applicable laws relating to intellectual property. The Organization also reserves the right to monitor electronic mail messages (including personal/private/instant messaging systems) and their content, as well as any and all use by staff members of the Internet and of computer equipment used to create, view, or access e-mail and Internet content. Staff members must be aware that the electronic mail messages sent and received using Organization equipment or Organization-provided Internet access, including web-based messaging systems used with such systems or access, are not private and are subject to viewing, downloading, inspection, release, and archiving by Organization officials at all times. The Organization has the right to inspect any and all files stored in private areas of the network or on individual computers or storage media in order to assure compliance with Organization policies and provincial and federal laws. No staff member/employee may access another staff member/employee's computer, computer files, or electronic mail messages without prior authorization from either the staff member/employee or an appropriate Organization official.

The Organization uses software in its electronic information systems that allows monitoring by authorized personnel and that creates and stores copies of any messages, files, or other information that is entered into, received by, sent, or viewed on such systems. Accordingly, staff members/employees should assume that whatever they do, type, enter, send, receive, and view on Organization electronic information systems is electronically stored and subject to inspection, monitoring, evaluation, and Organization use at any time. Further, staff members/employees who use Organization systems and Internet access to send or receive files or other data that would otherwise be subject to any kind of confidentiality or disclosure privilege thereby waive whatever right they may have to assert such confidentiality or privilege from disclosure. Staff members/employees who wish to maintain their right to confidentiality or a disclosure

privilege must send or receive such information using some means other than Organization systems or the Organization-provided Internet access.

The Organization has licensed the use of certain commercial software application programs for business purposes. Third parties retain the ownership and distribution rights to such software. No staff member/employee may create, use, or distribute copies of such software that are not in compliance with the license agreements for the software. Violation of this policy can lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Confidentiality of Electronic Mail

As noted above, electronic mail is subject at all times to monitoring, and the release of specific information is subject to applicable provincial and federal laws and Organization rules, policies, and procedures on confidentiality. Existing rules, policies, and procedures governing the sharing of confidential information also apply to the sharing of information via commercial software. Since there is the possibility that any message could be shared with or without your permission or knowledge, the best rule to follow in the use of electronic mail for non-work-related information is to decide if you would post the information on the office bulletin board with your signature.

It is a violation of Organization policy for any staff member/employee, including system administrators and supervisors, to access electronic mail and computer systems files to satisfy curiosity about the affairs of others, unless such access is directly related to that staff member/employee's job duties. Staff members/employees found to have engaged in such activities will be subject to disciplinary action.

Electronic Mail Tampering

Electronic mail messages received should not be altered without the sender's permission; nor should electronic mail be altered and forwarded to another user and/or unauthorized attachments be placed on another's electronic mail message.

Policy Statement for Internet/Intranet Browser(s)

The Internet is to be used to further the Organization's mission, to provide effective service of the highest quality to the Organization's clients and staff, and to support other direct job-related purposes. Supervisors should work with staff members/employees to determine the appropriateness of using the Internet for professional activities and career development. The various modes of Internet/Intranet access are Organization resources and are provided as business tools to staff members/employees who may use them for research, professional development, and work-related communications. Limited personal use of Internet resources is a special exception to the general prohibition against the personal use of computer equipment and software.

Staff members/employees are individually liable for any and all damages incurred as a result of violating Organization security policy, copyright, and licensing agreements.

All Organization policies and procedures apply to staff members/employees' conduct on the Internet, especially, but not exclusively, relating to: intellectual property, confidentiality, Organization information dissemination, standards of conduct, misuse of Organization resources, anti-harassment, and information and data security.

Personal Electronic Equipment

The Organization prohibits the use or possession in the workplace of any type of camera phone, cell phone camera, digital camera, video camera, or other form of image- or voice-recording device without the express permission of the Organization and of each person whose image and/or voice is/are recorded. Staff members/employees with such devices should leave them at home unless expressly permitted by the Organization to do otherwise. This provision does not apply to designated Organization personnel who must use such devices in connection with their positions of employment.

Staff members/employees should not bring personal computers or data storage devices (such as floppy disks, CDs/DVDs, external hard drives, flash drives, "smart" phones, iPods/iPads/iTouch or similar devices, mobile computing devices, or other data storage media) to the workplace or connect them to Organization electronic systems unless expressly permitted to do so by the Organization. Any staff member/employee bringing a personal computing device, data storage device, or image-recording device onto Organization premises thereby gives permission to the Organization to inspect the personal computer, data storage device, or image-recording device at any time with personnel of the Organization's choosing and to analyze any files, other data, or data storage devices or media that may be within or connectable to the personal computer or image-recording device in question. Staff members/employees who do not wish such inspections to be done on their personal computers, data storage devices, or imaging devices should not bring such items to work at all.

Violation of this policy, or failure to permit an inspection of any device covered by this policy, shall result in disciplinary action, up to and possibly including immediate termination of employment, depending upon the severity and repeat nature of the offence.

Social Media Use

While YACRO encourages its staff members/employees to enjoy and make good use of their off-duty time, certain activities on the part of staff members/employees may become a concern if they have the effect of impairing the work of any staff member/employee; harassing, demeaning, or creating a hostile working environment for any staff member/employee; disrupting the smooth and orderly flow of work

within the Organization; or harming the goodwill and reputation of the Organization among its customers or in the community at large.

In the area of social media (print, broadcast, digital, and online services such as Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, Plaxo, and Twitter, among others), staff member/employees may use such media in any way they choose as long as such use does not produce the adverse consequences noted above. For this reason, YACRO reminds its staff members/employees that the following guidelines apply in their use of social media, both on and off duty:

1. If a staff member/employee publishes any personal information about the staff member/employee, another staff member/employee of the Organization, the company, a client, or a customer in any public medium (print, broadcast, digital, or online) that:
 - a. has the potential or effect of involving the staff member/employee, their coworkers, or the Organization in any kind of dispute or conflict with other staff member/employees or third parties;
 - b. interferes with the work of any staff member/employee;
 - c. creates a harassing, demeaning, or hostile working environment for any staff member/employee;
 - d. disrupts the smooth and orderly flow of work within the Organization, or the delivery of services to the Organization's clients or customers;
 - e. harms the goodwill and reputation of the Organization among its customers or in the community at large; or
 - f. tends to place in doubt the reliability, trustworthiness, or sound judgment of the person who is the subject of the information,

the staff member/employee(s) responsible for such problems will be subject to counselling and/or disciplinary action, up to and potentially including termination of employment, depending upon the severity and repeat nature of the offence.

2. Use of social media that involves any kind of criminal activity or harms the rights of others may result in criminal prosecution or civil liability to those harmed, or both.
3. Social media access and use involving company equipment and resources are subject to YACRO's ["Internet, E-Mail, and Computer Use Policy"](#) at all times.

How a staff member/employee uses social media is not a matter of concern as long as it is consistent with the above guidelines.

703 COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

Only those Board Members and staff members/employees who have been formally authorized to do so, may officially represent the organization in matters relating to the media, speaking engagements, educational programs, computer and other technology, and publication or written materials.

All persons who are employed by or affiliated with YACRO are expected to ensure that communication with the public is accurate, consistent with the mission and beliefs of the organization, and conducted in a manner which enhances the understanding of the people we support and the public trust in YACRO.

1. Board Members, Staff Members/Employees, Students, Volunteers, and other designated individuals represent YACRO Residential Programs in a wide variety of ways. These include consultations with other organizations, professionals, discussions with neighbors and families, dealings with the business community, participation in conferences and training, to name only a few. Communication in its various forms is the vehicle by which such representation occurs. All persons who fall within this policy are expected to be aware of their communication and to ensure that it is accurate, consistent with the mission and beliefs of the organization, and conducted in a manner which enhances the public trust and the understanding of the people we support.
2. For the purposes of representing the organization in the five following categories, authorization is required.
 - a. Media
 - b. Speaking Engagements
 - c. Educational Programs
 - d. Computer and Other Technology
 - e. Written Material

Media

All requests from the media will be directed to the Executive Director or Chairperson. Only the Executive Director, the Chairperson of the Board or their designate are permitted to give interviews, answer questions or give information to the media. The Executive Director is required to advise the Chairperson of the Board of any such exchange of information which may impact the Organization.

Speaking Engagements

From time to time, YACRO is invited to speak to community groups. These invitations serve as good public relations opportunities. The Chairperson of the

Board and the Executive Director or those appointed by the Chairperson or the Executive Director are authorized to accept speaking engagements. In all cases, the Executive Director will be informed of any scheduled speaking engagements.

Educational Programs

From time to time, YACRO is invited to speak or make presentations at conferences, universities, colleges, and other training events. The Executive Director or those appointed by the Executive Director are authorized to accept speaking engagements. In all cases, the Executive Director will be informed of any scheduled speaking engagements.

Written Materials

YACRO produces brochures, manuals, forms, and other materials for its own use. All such materials are subject to approval by the Executive Director. This does not prevent Staff Members from developing and using tools to assist in the discharge of their duties. The objective is to provide consistency throughout the Organization.

704 ALCOHOL & DRUGS

Staff Members shall not use alcohol or other mood-altering chemicals during normal working hours. For the purpose of this policy, "normal working hours" include breaks and meal periods. This policy excludes a doctor's prescription used as prescribed. Staff Members shall not report for work unable to perform their duties as a result of using alcohol and/or mood-altering chemicals.

Each Staff Member is expected to act in a responsible fashion while representing YACRO in circumstances where alcohol is present.

In cases of substance abuse, the Employer shall recognize the Staff Member's addiction and willingness to seek medical help without fear of reprisal except if the behavior resulting from the abuse has had serious negative implication for YACRO, its staff or clients. If a second incident occurs, it shall be considered an incident forming part of the enumerated disciplinary list.

705 CONFIDENTIALITY

It is the policy of YACRO to expect all staff members, volunteers, Board of Director members and placement students to maintain strict confidentiality with respect to information obtained during the course of their affiliation with this agency.

Each new staff member will receive policy training and supervisory guidance regarding the principles and practice of maintaining confidentiality.

Each new staff member, volunteer, Board of Directors member or placement student must sign a Declaration of Confidentiality prior to placement with the agency.

YACRO's confidentiality guidelines apply to:

1. Any and all written/verbal information related to a person receiving service, his/her family, his/her individual circumstances;
2. All other material contained in each person's file;
3. Staff Member performance reviews and all other performance-related information;
4. Staff Member personal information (address, telephone number, etc.);
5. All other material contained in each staff member's file at the main office;
6. Any other written/verbal information/material specifically designated confidential by YACRO.

It is the responsibility of each new staff member, volunteer, Board member and placement student to seek clarification from the Executive Director when the purpose or the practice of maintaining confidentiality is unclear.

706 HARASSMENT

YACRO recognizes that staff members have a right to a work environment that is free of harassment.

Harassment in any form and at any level is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action against the perpetrator.

This policy applies to all staff.

Procedure for Complainant

1. Express disapproval to the offender immediately and clearly. This may either be verbal or in writing.
2. Keep a written record of all relevant information including dates of incidents, nature of the behavior and names of witnesses, if any.
3. File a complaint with the Program Director or the Executive Director.

If a staff member is not satisfied with the results of the investigation, he/she may file a complaint with the Board.

Procedure for Employer

1. Respond to the allegation promptly by assuring the complainant that it will be investigated immediately. The details of the complaint must then be forwarded to the Executive Director.
2. Investigation of the complaint will normally be handled by the Program Director with another member of Management. This additional person will be needed to comprise a two person panel of investigation, one male and one female if possible. The alleged harasser will be advised of the complaint as soon as possible, in writing. Information regarding the circumstances of the complaint will be provided as soon as possible.
3. The panel will interview as discretely as possible the following:
 - a. Complainant
 - b. Alleged harasser
 - c. Witnesses
 - d. Any other concerned party
4. If the panel feels it is necessary, a second interview will be held with both the complainant and the alleged harasser together.
5. The investigation panel will review and assess the evidence.
6. A decision will be reached based on the facts of the case.

Discipline

Harassment is grounds for discipline. The type of discipline will depend on the severity of the incident and past record for the staff member and may include dismissal.

False Accusations

To accuse someone falsely of harassment is a serious offense. When an allegation of harassment is found to be false, disciplinary action may be taken against the individual claiming harassment.

707 PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

It is the policy of YACRO to expect each staff member/employee to conduct him/herself in a manner that reflects positively on his/her position, co-workers, clients and the agency in general.

Every staff member/employee will render honest, efficient and appropriate service.

Every staff member/employee will be free of influences, interests and activities that may serve to prevent him/her from acting in the agency's best interests.

Every staff member/employee will be held accountable for adhering to agency policies, procedures, rules of directives.

It is incumbent on every staff member/employee that he/she not act in a manner that diminishes YACRO's effectiveness as a service-provider, or its standing in the community.

708 ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

YACRO's successful operation depends in large part on the regular attendance of each of its staff members/employees. Unnecessary, unexcused, frequent absences or tardiness affect operations and place an unfair burden on other staff members/employees.

Each staff member/employee is expected to be punctual for regular working hours. If, for any reason, a staff member/employee must be late or absent, she/he must notify his or her Supervisor. It is important to notify in advance whenever possible or at least an hour (depending on the circumstances) before you are expected to be at work.

Excused Absence

An excused absence occurs when you properly notify your Supervisor in advance that you will not be able to work a particular day (or part of a day) and your Supervisor approves your absence. Depending on the situation, you may use accrued sick or personal time to prevent loss of earnings due to an excused absence.

Unexcused Absence

An unexcused absence occurs when you are absent and do not properly notify your Supervisor or fail to get approval for the occurrence. You will not be paid for time missed due to unexcused absences. Unexcused absences will be documented in your personnel file and could reflect on your performance evaluation. You are encouraged to discuss any extenuating circumstances with your Supervisor. A staff member who fails to report to work for three consecutive days will be considered to have voluntarily terminated.

Frequent Absences

Frequent absences, either excused or unexcused, create a burden on all agency resources and may result in disciplinary action.

SECTION 8 TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

801 VOLUNTARY TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

A voluntary termination occurs when a staff member resigns or is separated from YACRO at his or her request. If you intend to resign or leave YACRO, you are normally required, under the *Labour Standards Code of Nova Scotia*, to give written notice. For periods of employment between three months and two years you must give one week's written notice. If you have worked more than two years, you must give two week's written notice. However, notice further in advance of the standard one or two weeks will be appreciated. You may give your written notice to the Executive Director.

The *Labour Standards Code* provides for a staff member to end employment without notice when an Employer breaks the terms and conditions of employment. For example, the Employer has failed to pay the staff member's wages.

Any unearned holidays, sick leave or annual leave already taken by the staff member must be repaid to YACRO, provided due notice has been given to the staff member.

All claims for monies owed to the staff member must be submitted by the staff member by the last day of employment.

For appeal procedures, refer to "307 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE".

802 INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Involuntary termination is a separation from employment that occurs without request by the staff member. Staff Members may be terminated involuntarily when performance does not meet expectations, when rule infractions occur or when reductions in the work force must be made. Under the *Labour Standards Code* a staff member whose employment is involuntarily terminated must be given written notice. For periods of employment between 3 months, but less than 2 years, YACRO must give one week's notice; between 2 and 5 years, two weeks' notice; between 5 and 10 years, four weeks' notice; more than 10 years, 8 weeks' notice. However notice further in advance of the standard may be given, if possible. YACRO may give pay in lieu of notice.

Where a staff member has not worked a shift for a period of 60 days, that staff member will be given a record of employment and will no longer be considered a staff member. When a staff member has not worked a shift for a period of 30 days their name will be removed from the call-out list and they will be required to meet with their Supervisor prior to working another shift. Should the person wish to be rehired he/she must reapply by submitting a resume and/or contacting the Executive Director.

The *Labour Standards Code* provides for an Employer to end employment without notice at times. Some examples include:

1. Behavior such as stealing
2. A person working for a set term or task no longer than 12 months
3. When there is a lack of work the Employer did not expect and could not avoid

803 LAYOFF AND RECALL

Should conditions necessitate a reduction in YACRO's workforce; one or more of the following steps will be taken:

1. Where staff members are to be laid off, the Employer will advise and consult with the Employee Association as soon as reasonably possible with a view to minimizing the adverse effects on the staff members and Employer.
2. No new staff members shall be hired until those who are laid off have been given an opportunity of recall.
3. Re-assign the job duties from a vacant position to other staff members in YACRO.
4. Reduce, either permanently or indefinitely, the current workforce by reviewing the performance of staff members and retaining them according to their seniority, performance level and the needs of YACRO.
5. Offering voluntary lay-offs, in which the staff members involved will be assured of their position upon recall with no loss of seniority. If, after the agreed upon amount of time is over and the situation has not been resolved, the staff on temporary lay-off will return to their original position, if available.
6. It is the objective of YACRO that a staff member whose employment is involuntarily terminated due to a reduction in staff will be given at least two weeks notice.

Recall

1. Staff Members who are laid off shall have a recall period of nine months from date of layoff. Staff Members on the recall list shall be recalled for available positions in accordance with sub para (4) of this Article. Right of recall shall terminate after nine months at which time the staff member shall lose all seniority and cease to be a staff member.
2. A staff member who refuses a recall opportunity shall lose all further recall rights unless the recall opportunity is not comparable to the position from which the staff member was laid off.

804 EXIT INTERVIEWS

Every staff member who leaves YACRO for any reason will have the opportunity for an exit interview.

805 **REFERENCES**

When a staff member is terminated voluntarily or involuntarily, the Executive Director will provide a letter confirming the duration of employment if requested. All inquiries from prospective Employers about a past staff member's employment record performance, or attendance must be referred to the Executive Director or Program Director. No one else is authorized to release information about a former staff member.

Any unauthorized release of information may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, as this may jeopardize the former staff member's right to privacy and may subject YACRO to legal action

SECTION 9 STAFF MEMBER/EMPLOYEE ABUSE OF CLIENTS

901 STAFF MEMBER/EMPLOYEE ABUSE OF CLIENT

YACRO is committed to ensuring that all clients are served in a climate of trust, dignity, respect, and confidence; therefore, any physical, verbal, emotional, or sexual abuse of clients is strictly prohibited.

1. Abuse is defined as any action, gesture, or verbalization which may adversely affect the physical or emotional well being of a client, or which may compromise the trust, dignity, respect, or confidence of a client.
2. Examples of abuse include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Unauthorized use of aversive behavioral techniques.
 - b. Excessive or unnecessary intensity of physical intervention or interactions.
 - c. Deprivation of meals.
 - d. Corporal punishment.
 - e. Use of profane language in reference to clients.
 - f. Sexual overtures toward, or contact with a client.
 - g. Gestures or verbalizations which may belittle, humiliate, intimidate, or embarrass clients.
3. Staff members/employees are required to follow the Provincial Child Abuse Protocol for Children under sixteen (16) years of age or the Protection for Persons in Care Act for clients who are sixteen (16) years of age or older.
4. The individual staff/employee who suspects abuse or who has received the disclosure shall fill out the applicable form accurately, documenting the disclosure of the allegation immediately.
5. The staff person/employee must immediately inform designated Supervisor or other management staff personnel that a report to the Department of Community Services has been made.
6. Upon receiving an allegation of abuse a report shall be made immediately to the Executive Director or delegate who shall:

- a. Decide whether to suspend the staff member/employee with pay pending investigation, and to advise the staff/employee of his/her right to representation at any meeting with management regarding this matter.

STAFF MEMBER ABUSE OF CLIENTS continued

- b. Notify the parent/guardian that a report has been made.
- c. Involve local police department as warranted.

RULES OF WORK

Yarmouth Association for Community Residential Options

1. Any abuse of the people who live in the homes or who are supported in their own apartments is prohibited.
2. Confidentiality of information about the people and their families will be maintained.
3. People in the small options homes will not be left unattended unless it is part of their support plan and has been approved by the Executive Director.
4. Agency gas cards may only be used to purchase fuel for YACRO vehicles without express direction from management representative (Supervisor or Director).
5. Petty cash, comforts, clothing, etc monies shall only be used to make purchases for individuals supported by YACRO and may not be borrowed or loaned at any time. Theft or intentional damage to property of individuals or of the agency is prohibited.
6. Staff/employees shall not report to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs and shall report the use of any prescription or other drug which may impair functioning or judgment on the job. Staff may only work while taking such prescriptions with the approval of their supervisor.
7. Staff/employees shall abide by all policies of the agency contained in the YACRO Personnel Policy and/or Collective Agreement as applicable, found at www.yacro.com.
8. Staff/employees shall adhere to agency policies regarding use of phones and electronic devices.
9. Staff/employees shall not have personal visitors while on the job without the approval of the supervisor.
10. Conviction for a criminal offence may result in the loss of one's job.
11. Any insubordination, including any refusal to comply with the directions of a supervisor is prohibited.
12. The use of abusive or profane language while on duty is prohibited.
13. All records shall be maintained in an accurate and legible manner. Omissions in recording or reporting shall not be accepted.
14. No staff/employee shall falsely represent the agency.
15. All staff/employees shall exercise clean hygiene and tidy dress in order to provide appropriate role models.
16. Staff/employees shall not dispense unauthorized medications to persons served by the agency.
17. Staff/employees shall be on time for a shift and shall not leave before being replaced.
18. Staff/employees must report absences from work as soon as possible, and at minimum, one hour before the start of their shift.
19. Staff/employees may not sleep on awake-night shifts.
20. Staff/employees may not work shifts in excess of 12 hours in a row (excluding sleep-overs) unless under direction of a management representative (Supervisor or Director).
21. Staff/employees may not work over 40 hours per week without approval from a management representative.
22. Staff/employees are responsible for the accurate recording of their shifts worked and shall not report any time worked while not physically present at their designated location or on authorized agency business.
23. Staff/employees are expected to work their scheduled shifts, including scheduled training, and shall keep requests for changes to a minimum.
24. Bullying or harassment of any kind shall not be tolerated.
25. All relationships in the workplace are to be maintained in a manner which enhances professionalism and reflects dignity at all times.
26. All staff/employees shall comply with the Principles and Philosophy of the Yarmouth Association for Community Residential Options and with all requirements of their job description.

I have read the YACRO Rules of Work and agree to abide by them at all times. I understand that any breaches of these Rules of Work may result in the immediate termination of my employment.

Electronic Data/Device Disposal Policy

All computer systems, electronic devices and electronic media must be properly cleaned of sensitive data and software before being transferred outside of YACRO either as surplus property or as trash.

The primary responsibility for sanitizing computer systems, electronic devices and media rests with the Information Technology Department.

- **Electronic Devices:** All electronic equipment that has a storage device or persistent memory, such as desktop computers, laptops, servers, personal data assistants (PDAs), cell phones, printers, copiers, routers, etc.
- **Electronic Media:** All media on which electronic data can be stored, including, but not limited to: hard drives, diskettes, CDs, DVDs and USB storage devices.

The approved procedures for software and data removal from electronic devices and media are:

1. **Electronic devices at the end of its life cycle** must have all storage devices or persistent memory removed before being transported to an authorized environmental depot.
2. **Electronic devices or hard drives temporarily leaving YACRO** for repair must have their data encrypted or removed.
3. **Electronic devices or media being transferred between staff members/employees** must have their data removed.
4. **Electronic devices being transferred outside of YACRO** must have their data removed.
5. **Disposal of electronic media at the end of its life cycle** must be by destruction.

