

# Proposed Updates to IDB Employee Manual

**Effective Date: July 1, 2018**

## **Proposed Addition To Preamble:**

The procedures and policies described in this manual are not conditions of employment. This manual does not create an express or implied contract between IDB and any employee.”

## **Reason For Change:**

This was a recommendation from our personnel officer. It is standard language included in many employee handbooks and inclusion would follow human resources best practices.

## **Changes to Definitions**

### **Current Text:**

0.04. Client means a blind person as defined in section 0.01 above who is a child or student receiving transition services; an adult client receiving Vocational Rehabilitation services, Rehabilitation Teaching services or Independent Living services from the Iowa Department for the Blind.

### **Proposed Change:**

0.04. Client means a blind person as defined in section 0.01 above who is a child or student receiving transition services; an adult receiving Vocational Rehabilitation services, Rehabilitation Teaching services or Independent Living services from the Iowa Department for the Blind.

### **Reason for Change:**

Just a point of clarity. We need to remove client from after the semicolon as we are defining the word with the word.

### **Current Text:**

0.11 Indirect service staff is a staff member who is not involved in instruction, case management, or supervision of instructors and case managers.

0.12 Direct service staff includes instructors, case managers, and those who supervise instructors or case managers and instructors

### **Proposed Change:**

0.11 Indirect service staff are staff members who are not involved in instruction, case management, or the provision of direct services to patrons

0.12 Direct service staff includes instructors, case managers, staff providing direct service to library patrons, and supervisors

**Reason for change:**

Some library staff have a substantial amount of contact with patrons and it is important that they receive the same level of training as other staff who have a high level of contact with blind individuals in order to provide the highest possible level of service.

**Current text:**

0.13 Violence is any act that is intended to intimidate, annoy, or alarm another person; or any act which is intended to cause pain or injury to, or which is intended to result in physical or personal contact that will be insulting or offensive to another, coupled with the apparent ability to execute the act.

**Proposed change:**

0.13 violence for the purposes of this manual is equivalent to the definition provided in the state employee handbook.

**Reason for change:**

To be in line with the state employee manual and stay in alignment if future changes occur.

**Current Text:**

0.23 a paper suspension is a paid suspension where the employee continues to perform their regular job duties.

**Proposed Change:**

0.23 a paper suspension is a paid suspension where the employee continues to perform their regular job duties. a paper suspension carries the same weight as a “non-working” or unpaid suspension. A supervisor will decide whether to issue a paper or non-working suspension.

**Reason for change**

It is important to be clear that this type of suspension is no less important than a typical unpaid suspension.

**Proposed Addition:**

0.25 learning shades, also called sleep shades, are a covering worn over the eyes to block all visual information.

**Reason for addition:**

Term had not previously been defined and lack of definition was confusing to people unfamiliar with adjustment to blindness training

**Proposed Addition:**

0.26 actively participate means to remain awake, listen to comments made by others, respond when spoken to,, and add at least one substantive comment or question to the discussion.

**Reason for addition:**

It has been asked what qualifies as active participation and this is meant to answer that question.

### **Proposed Addition:**

0.27 Business class is the daily group discussion of blindness related topics and philosophy conducted for center students and staff in training or receiving continuing education.

### **Reason for addition:**

This term was unclear to the Department of Administrative Services and others not very familiar with IDB operations.

### **Addition of 0.28:**

0.28 a written reprimand is a letter that serves as written notice of disciplinary action. It is placed in the employee's personnel file.

### **Reason for addition:**

To make sure the term is defined as it is the first step in the progressive discipline process outlined in section 9.

## **Changes to Section 1.**

### **Change to 1.05**

#### **Current Text:**

1.05. All IDB staff operate from an understanding that persons who are blind are normal people who cannot see and that blindness is a normal characteristic like the hundreds of others which, taken together, mold each of us into a unique human being. Based upon this fundamental truth, the staff person provides his or her blindness-related services with the high expectation that the blind client with whom he or she is working will be able to do what normal people do, upon completion of proper blindness training and services. Personal empowerment and complete integration into the broader society are the aspirational goals and objectives for clients and patrons of IDB services. The IDB staff strive at all times to help the client or patron achieve these objectives and become the very best that he or she is capable of becoming.

#### **Proposed Change:**

1.05 empowerment and complete integration into the broader society are the aspirational objectives for clients and patrons of IDB services. The IDB staff strive at all times to help each client or patron achieve these objectives and become the very best that he or she is capable of becoming.

#### **Reason for change:**

The word "normal" as it is used here gave the impression that blindness was abnormal. The paragraph is also being made clearer and less wordy.

## **Changes to 1.11**

**Current text:**

1.11 Because providing quality services to blind lowans is a priority of our agency, we are committed to staff training and continuing education. All IDB staff will participate in staff training that consists of orientation center training as outlined in section 1.12 and a new staff seminar as outlined in section 1.13. All instructors, case managers, supervisors, and the director will complete continuing education as outlined in section 1.14.

**Proposed change:**

1.11 Because providing quality services to blind lowans is a priority of our agency, we are committed to staff training and continuing education. All IDB staff will participate in staff training that consists of orientation center training as outlined in section 1.12, a new staff seminar and shadowing of staff in different work units as outlined in section 1.13, and continuing education as outlined in section 1.14.

**Reason for change:**

This change is made to be in agreement with the changes made below to 1.13 and 1.14.

**Changes to 1.12****Current Text:**

1.12.02 All direct-service staff must complete the following requirements under learning shades to satisfy their center training requirement:

- \* write one page of contracted braille with 90% accuracy using a slate and stylus.
- \* type and edit a one-page document using a computer with a screen reader.
- \* complete a solo bus travel route
- \* complete a small industrial arts project requiring the use of at least 3 different stationary machines
- \* prepare and serve a three course meal for at least 6 guests
- \* attend and actively participate in at least 34 business classes
- \* lead a business class with his/her supervisor in attendance
- \* participate in at least two center activities
- \* perform 20 hours of supervised teaching in the center

**Proposed Change:**

1.12.02 All rehabilitation counselors, employment specialists, library direct service staff, and supervisors must complete the following requirements under learning shades to satisfy their center training requirement:

- \* write one page of contracted braille with 90% accuracy using a slate and stylus.
- \* type and edit a one-page document using a computer with a screen reader.
- \* complete a solo bus travel route
- \* complete a small industrial arts project requiring the use of at least 3 different stationary machines
- \* prepare and serve a three course meal for at least 6 guests
- \* attend and actively participate in at least 40 business classes
- \* lead two business classes with his/her supervisor in attendance
- \* participate in at least three center activities

The following additional tasks are required for the completion of initial staff training. These tasks must be completed before the completion of the probationary period, but are not considered part of the center training requirement and are not required to be done under learning shades:

- \* attend at least one meeting of a local chapter of each of the consumer organizations
- \* observe one day of LEAP program training or a teen weekend retreat
- \* attend one meeting of the Iowa Commission for the Blind Board

1.12.03 All instructors must complete the following requirements under learning shades to satisfy their center training requirement:

- write one page of contracted braille with 90% accuracy using a slate and stylus.
- Orally recall or write all characters in the contracted braille code with 95% accuracy
- type and edit a one-page document using a computer with a screen reader.
- complete a solo bus travel route
- complete one drop off of at least one mile distance
- complete a small industrial arts project requiring the use of at least 3 different stationary machines
- prepare and serve a three course meal for at least 6 guests
- attend and actively participate in at least 34 business classes
- lead a business class with his/her supervisor in attendance
- participate in at least two center activities
- perform 20 hours of supervised teaching in the center.
- Demonstrate ability to teach all non-visual technology tasks listed in the IL manual (for IL teachers) or all tasks listed in the VR teacher technology training competencies list (for VR teachers and RTSs).

### **Reason for change:**

Experience has shown that while instructors need a higher level of attainment in regards to blindness skills teaching. Rehab counselors, Employment Specialists and Direct Contact Library Staff tend to benefit more from greater contact with blind people, participation in business classes and consumer group meetings All staff benefit from spending time with colleagues in other work units. These changes were made to make staff training more responsive to the needs of different types of staff.

## **Change to 1.13**

### **Current text:**

1.13 New staff seminar will be held at least twice each year. It will consist of 30 hours of small group classes covering the following topics:

- agency history
- consumer organizations
- discussion of agency mission and philosophy
- agency structure and purposes of each division

### **Proposed change:**

1.13.01 New staff seminar will be held at least twice each year. It will consist of 30 hours of small group classes covering the following topics:

- agency history

- consumer organizations
- discussion of agency mission and philosophy
- agency structure and purposes of each division

1.13.02 All new staff must spend at least one day with each of the following staff members as part of their new staff training: library staff, VR counselor, VR employment specialist, VR teacher, IL teacher, and rehabilitation technology specialist.

**Reason for change:**

It is important for new staff to learn about all areas of the agency and what different staff members do. This helps us to get to know one another and work together more effectively.

**Change to 1.14.**

**Current Text:**

1.14.01 All instructors (as defined in section 0.5) will be required to complete continuing education every five years. They will attend center classes for up to one month until they are able to demonstrate the following under learning shades:

- \* write one page of contracted braille with 90% accuracy using a slate and stylus.
- \* type and edit a one-page document using a computer with a screen reader and email that document as an attachment to their instructor.
- \* complete a solo bus travel route
- \* complete a small industrial arts project requiring the use of at least 3 different stationary machines
- \* prepare and serve a three course meal for at least 6 guests

1.14.02 Instructors may test out of class participation if they are able to complete the requirements without any additional training.

1.14.03 All instructors as defined in section 0.05 must also perform 20 hours of supervised teaching in the center every five years. To maximize efficiency, this may or may not be completed at the same time as the skill demonstration requirements listed in section 1.14.01 and/or the community participation requirements listed in section 1.14.04

1.14.04 All VR counselors, employment specialists, IL teachers, library staff with direct patron contact, VR teachers, OC teachers, Rehabilitation Technology Specialists, and supervisors will be required to complete the following continuing education requirements each year:

- \* attend and actively participate in at least 5 business classes
- \* Attend at least one meeting of each consumer group. This can be a local chapter or state convention
- \* Attend at least one meeting of a local support group.
- \* lead a business class with his/her supervisor in attendance

1.14.05 The director will complete all continuing education requirements for instructors and supervisors.

1.14.06 Failure to complete these continuing education requirements will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**Proposed Change:**

1.14.01 All instructors (as defined in section 0.5) will be required to complete continuing education every five years. They will attend center classes for up to one month until they are able to demonstrate the tasks required for completion of center training as listed in 1.12.03 under sleep shades:

1.14.02 Instructors may test out of class participation if they are able to complete the requirements without any additional training.

1.14.03 All instructors as defined in section 0.05 must also perform 20 hours of supervised teaching in the center every five years. To maximize efficiency, this may or may not be completed at the same time as the skill demonstration requirements listed in section 1.14.01 and/or the community participation requirements listed in section 1.14.04

1.14.04 All direct service staff as defined in 0.12 will be required to complete the following continuing education requirements each year:

- \* attend and actively participate in at least 5 business classes
- \* Attend at least one meeting of each consumer group. This can be a local chapter or state convention
- \* Attend at least one meeting of a local support group.
- \* lead a business class with his/her supervisor in attendance

1.14.05 All indirect service staff as defined in 0.11 will be required to complete the following continuing education requirements each year:

- \* attend and actively participate in at least 5 business classes

1.14.06 The director will complete all continuing education requirements for instructors and supervisors with the exception of the 20 hours of supervised teaching.

1.14.07 Failure to complete these continuing education requirements will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **Reason for change:**

- This makes sure that the new staff training requirements and continuing education requirements are the same. It makes the expectations more clear and easy to understand for everyone involved.
- Continuing education requirements for indirect staff were added in 1.14.05 and numbering was changed to accommodate this addition. We feel that it is important for all staff working at IDB to maintain a positive attitude about blindness and challenge negative beliefs or stereotypes. We feel that attending business class promotes this and feel that this will be five hours well spent for indirect service staff.
- The Director is sufficiently time constrained that completing the 20 hours of supervised teaching is very difficult to fit in. As the Director does not teach on a regular basis, the cost outweighs the benefit.

## **Changes to 2.03**

### **Current Text:**

2.03 This policy will be enforced Monday through Friday during scheduled work hours and other scheduled work activities with the exception of scheduled jean days. Those choosing to participate in scheduled jean days must pay \$5 to the sponsoring charity or group.

### **Proposed Change:**

2.03 This policy will be enforced Monday through Friday during scheduled work hours and other scheduled work activities with the exception of scheduled jean days.

## **Reason for change:**

This change is being made to put the manual in line with current practice. Jean days are currently being given to all staff free of charge. Contribution to office committees will be collected at all staff meetings and through various fundraising events throughout the year.

## **Changes to 2.14 and 2.15**

### **Current Text:**

2.14 First interviews will be conducted as outlined in the Managers and Supervisors Manual.

2.15 Second interviews may contain performance based testing. All candidates will be given the same tests and every effort will be made to make the conditions of every candidate's interview as similar as possible.

### **Proposed change:**

2.14 interviews will be conducted by a panel of at least 3 members whenever possible. At times, manager and staff schedules may necessitate a two member panel. After completion of all scheduled interviews, hiring managers may elect to conduct a second round of interviews or make an offer to a candidate.

2.15 Interviews may contain performance based testing. All candidates will be given the same tests and every effort will be made to make the conditions of every candidate's interview as similar as possible.

## **Reason for change:**

Interview formats are no longer covered in the [Managers and Supervisors Manual](#). Use of performance based testing in first interviews is being allowed in order to give hiring managers more flexibility and speed up the hiring process when appropriate.

## **Change to 2.18**

### **Current Text:**

2.18 Eligibility for step increases will be based on the number of points received by the employee on his/her annual evaluation using the following formula:

- \* An "exceeds" rating on a goal earns one point
- \* A "meets" rating for a goal receives 0 points
- \* A "does not meet" rating on a goal loses one point.

### **Proposed Change:**

2.18 Eligibility for step increases will be based on the number of points received by the employee on his/her annual evaluation using the following formula:

- \* An "exceeds" rating on a goal earns two points
- \* A "meets" rating for a goal receives one point
- \* A "does not meet" rating on a goal loses two points.

## **Reason for change:**



As our managers expect a great deal from those they supervise in order to give an “exceeds” rating, we wanted to also show appreciation for people who do good, solid work and consistently meet expectations as well. We feel this adjustment makes the system more balanced and helps managers give more realistic evaluations.

## **addition of 3.25**

### **Proposed Addition:**

3.25 IDB staff wishing to make a complaint regarding violation of this manual, the state of Iowa employee manual, or any other policy should use the following procedures

1. Report the complaint or concern to your immediate supervisor. If the concern or complaint involves your immediate supervisor, you may report the complaint directly to the IDB Director. If the complaint involves the IDB Director, it may be directed to a member of the Iowa Commission for the Blind. If the complaint involves a member of the Iowa Commission for the Blind, the complaint should be directed to the Governor’s Office.
2. Managers shall promptly investigate all complaints.
3. If you are not satisfied with the manager’s resolution to the complaint, you may take the complaint to the IDB Director.
4. Staff who wish to register a complaint of the State of Iowa EEO/AA and Anti-Discrimination Policy may also file a complaint with the Iowa Civil Rights Commission or the appropriate federal enforcement agency. (
5. Employees who believe there has been a violation of the State of Iowa Violence Free Workplace Policy (Included as an appendix to the State Employee Manual) may file a complaint directly with Employee Relations using Employee Complaint form #552–0318 available on the Iowa Department of Administrative Services website at the following link: [https://das.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/hr/documents/M-0318\\_Complaint\\_Form\\_fillable.pdf](https://das.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/hr/documents/M-0318_Complaint_Form_fillable.pdf).
6. All complaints regarding violations of the Violence Free Workplace policy made to managers or the IDB Director are required to be forwarded to the Iowa Department of Administrative Services—Human Resource Enterprise Employee Relations within 48 hours of receipt of the complaint.
7. There shall be no discrimination or retaliation against an individual because he or she files a complaint or who aids another individual in filing a complaint. An employee who has reason to believe that he or she has been retaliated against because of participation in an investigation of a discrimination complaint may also file a charge with the Iowa Department of Administrative Services – Human Resources Enterprise, the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, or the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, whichever is appropriate.

### **Reason for Addition:**

We need to establish a clear agency level complaint procedure to be in line with State of Iowa policies. Information regarding prohibition of retaliation is redundant with the State of Iowa Employee Handbook, but is important and deserves the added emphasis.

## **Changes to Section 4**

Numbers are being corrected as to remove numbering errors

### **Proposed Additions:**

4.22. All IDB issued cell phones must contain a complex passcode containing at least one letter rather than a 4 or 6 digit numeric passcode only.

4.23. All IDB issued cell phones must be set so that email messages, text messages, and other notifications potentially containing client information are not visible on the lock screen.

## **Reason for additions:**

Cell phones contain confidential information requiring adequate security. Information visible on the lock screen can be accidentally viewed by family members or other persons who should not have access to client information.

## **Change to 5.11**

### **Current Text:**

5.11 Pay periods end on alternate Thursdays. Employees are expected to report their time and attendance by 12:00 p.m. on the last day of the pay period unless otherwise instructed, e.g., when pay cycles involve a holiday. Untimely completion or approval may result in a delay in paying the employee.

### **Proposed Change:**

5.11 Pay periods end on alternate Thursdays. Employees are expected to report their time and attendance by 9:00a.m. on the last day of the pay period unless otherwise instructed, e.g., when pay cycles involve a holiday. Untimely completion or approval may result in a delay in paying the employee.

### **Reason for change:**

Changing manual to reflect change in practice due to DAS approval time frame requirements.

## **Changes to 5.18**

### **Proposed Addition**

5.18.1 No Leave slip should be considered approved until the employee receives an email directly from the supervisor stating that the leave has been approved.

#### Reason for Change:

We want to make it clear to all staff that they should not consider a leave slip accepted or vacation requests approved until they receive written confirmation that it has been approved.

## **Changes to 5.19**

### **Current Version**

5.19 When an employee needs to take unscheduled leave, the employee shall notify the supervisor, or the supervisor's designee if the supervisor is unavailable, by telephone, text message, or electronic mail as directed by his/her supervisor no later than 30 minutes before the start of the work shift for each day that an unscheduled absence will exist. If the employee makes notice less than 30 minutes before the start of the shift, the absence may be unapproved. A scheduled absence is defined as one occurring when the employee is absent and received the supervisor's approval in advance (at least 48 hours). An unscheduled absence occurs when the employee failed to obtain prior approval or failed to follow this policy regarding supervisor approval requirements.

### **Proposed Change**

5.19 When an employee needs to take unscheduled leave, the employee shall notify the supervisor, or the supervisor's designee if the supervisor is unavailable, by text message, telephone, or electronic mail as directed by his/her supervisor no later than 30 minutes before the start of the work shift for each day that an unscheduled absence will exist. If the employee makes notice less than 30 minutes before the start of the shift, the absence may be unapproved.

**Reason for Change:**

Redundant and somewhat misleading language regarding what constitutes an unscheduled absence is being removed. We want to make the difference between a scheduled absence, an unscheduled absence, and an unapproved absence very clear.

**Addition of 5.24**

5.24.01 IN order to create a positive and productive work environment, IDB has allowed for the creation of employee committees. These committees include: the Food Bank Committee, the Employee Recognition Committee (ERC), and the Toys for Tots Committee.

5.24.02 The committees listed in 5.24.01 will hold elections in July of each year to elect the committee chair or co-chairs of that committee. Each committee member as of June 30th will be allowed to vote in this election.

5.24.03 IDB staff are allowed up to 12 hours of work time per fiscal year to participate in any of the committees listed in 5.24.01. Any time beyond this will not be paid work time. Staff may choose to volunteer their own time to these committees as they wish.

5.25 One representative from each work unit will be selected to participate in the agency wide Communications Team. This is considered a work duty and not subject to the provisions concerning committee membership.

**Reason For Addition:**

These provisions are meant to answer questions and make sure that there is clarity and accountability regarding the status of IDB committees.

**Section 7.07**

**Current Version:**

7.07 When using social media for business purposes, employees must protect the privacy of IDB, its employees, consumers, suppliers, and vendors and are prohibited from disclosing personal employee and non-employee information and any other proprietary, confidential, privileged, or non-public information to which employees have access. Such information includes, but is not limited to, client or patron information and financial data.

**Proposed Change:**

7.07 When using social media for business or personal purposes, employees must protect the privacy of IDB, its employees, consumers, suppliers, and vendors and are prohibited from disclosing personal employee and non-employee information and any other proprietary, confidential, privileged, or non-public information to which employees have access. Such information includes, but is not limited to, client or patron information and financial data.

**Reason for change:**

The words “or personal” were added to make it clear that confidential and non-public information should not be made available via any social media for any purpose.

## Changes to Section 9

### Current Text:

9.01. It shall be a breach of this employee manual for any IDB staff member to violate any Section of any Principle set forth in this document concerning IDB staff member Core Values and Beliefs; Beneficence; Nonmaleficence; Autonomy, Privacy and Confidentiality; Duties; Justice; Veracity; and Fidelity.

9.02. An allegation of a violation of any Section of this manual shall be submitted to the IDB staff member’s supervisor. The supervisor will conduct an investigation and if warranted, pursue disciplinary action as outlined below and in the State of Iowa Managers and Supervisors Manual.

9.03 Supervisors will make every effort to provide coaching, guidance, and training to prevent job performance or work rule violations from occurring. Supervisors must document provision of coaching, guidance, and training provided to staff to show that every effort has been made to avoid resorting to disciplinary action.

9.04 Supervisors may issue work directives as part of the coaching and mentoring process to ensure that employees have a complete and clear understanding of expectations.

9.05 Violations of a work directive will result in progressive discipline as outlined in 9.06

9.06 The progressive discipline process that will be followed by all IDB supervisors is as follows:

- \* Step 1: When coaching, guidance, and training options are exhausted, the supervisor will issue a written reprimand to the employee. The written reprimand will clearly state that it is a reprimand and it will be accompanied by a copy of the work directive that has been violated. The reprimand will be placed in the employee’s personnel file.
- \* Step 2: One day suspension. Any violation of any work directive that occurs within 18 months of a written reprimand will result in a one day suspension. The supervisor will decide whether this suspension will be a paper suspension or non-working suspension.
- \* Step 3: Three day suspension and final warning of termination. Any violation of any work directive that occurs within 18 months of a one day suspension will result in a three day suspension. The supervisor will decide whether this suspension will be a paper suspension or non-working suspension. The suspension letter will state that if any violation of a work directive occurs within 18 months of this suspension, the employee will be terminated.
- \* Step 4: Termination

9.07 Management reserves the right to proceed directly to termination if a violation is sufficiently egregious. Examples of such violations include but are not limited to:

- \* a sexual relationship with a client
- \* a physical or sexual assault on a client, colleague, or supervisor
- \* theft from a client

### Proposed Change

9.01. It shall be a breach of this employee manual for any IDB staff member to violate any Section of any Principle set forth in this document concerning IDB staff member Core Values and Beliefs; Beneficence; Nonmaleficence; Autonomy, Privacy and Confidentiality; Duties; Justice; Veracity; and Fidelity. any violation may lead to discipline, up to and including termination.”

9.02. An allegation of a violation of any Section of this manual May be submitted to the IDB staff member's supervisor. The supervisor will conduct an investigation and if warranted, pursue disciplinary action.

9.03 IDB will generally follow a progressive discipline approach, and reserves the right to use any and all available discipline, up to and including termination,

9.04 IDB's progressive discipline process is as follows:

- \* Step 1: Written reprimand The reprimand will be placed in the employee's personnel file.
- \* Step 2: One day suspension.
- \* Step 3: Three day suspension and final warning of termination.
- \* Step 4: Termination

**Reason for change:**

These changes were recommended by our personnel officer to improve clarity and consistency as well as to put us in alignment with the most up-to-date human resource best practices..