

# **WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM**

## **EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

October 2009

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**WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM  
EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK****TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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## **SECTION I: WELCOME TO WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to Westchester Library System (WLS)! We are glad to have you aboard. You are an important member of a proud organization with many years of continuous and successful operation. WLS enjoys a fine reputation within our community and with our patrons. We are proud of the reputation and success of WLS, and feel very strongly that these accomplishments were achieved, in large measure, because of the dedication and hard work of our employees, and with the leadership of our supervisory and managerial staff. We are grateful for this effort, and pledge to do all we can to continue this tradition of excellence.

We operate with an "open door" policy, and all employees are encouraged to ask any questions they may have regarding any policies or procedures outlined in the employee handbook. Please do not hesitate to reach out to your immediate supervisor for clarification on the information outlined below.

Each of you is an integral part of WLS. To that end, it is imperative that we have the most qualified team of individuals working for us. Our future growth and prosperity depend on each other.

### **ABOUT WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM**

The Westchester Library System (WLS) is an independent, non-profit educational corporation chartered in 1958 by the New York State Board of Regents, under the New York State Education Law. It is a cooperative public library agency, having as members all 38 public libraries in Westchester County including their branches. Each WLS member is an independent library, financed locally and governed by a Board of Trustees.

The System is principally financed by State Aid, based on a formula in the State Education Law. Other sources of income include a contract with Westchester County and interest on invested funds. The System also acts as administrator for State Aid for Central Library (Mount Vernon Public Library) Development and Central Book Aid Funds. In addition, the System occasionally administers special project funds from federal, state and other sources.

The Westchester Library System is one of New York State's 23 public library systems. WLS is a member of the New York Metropolitan Reference and Research Library Agency (METRO); through which it also provides professional services to public, college, school and special libraries in Westchester County.

The System is governed by a fifteen member Board of Trustees, who is elected by the trustees of member libraries. For purposes of board representation, the county is divided into 15 districts, so that the trustees are representative of all areas in the county. Appointments are for a five-year term. The Board of Trustees appoints the Director, the Treasurer and the Financial Clerk.

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

Our basic philosophy is to provide recognition, opportunity and job satisfaction for deserving staff. To this end, we will:

- \* Respect to the utmost the individual dignity of each and every employee.
- \* Provide leadership in which all employees may have faith and confidence.
- \* Promote on the basis of demonstrated ability, and where possible, adhere to the practice of promotion from within.
- \* Provide training opportunities for all employees and encourage them to develop their capacities to the maximum potential.
- \* Provide and continually review and update a balanced program of employee benefits.
- \* Provide facilities and working conditions which are considerate of our employees' health, safety, and convenience.
- \* Provide free and open channels of communication and continuously seek ways of maintaining high morale through fair and equitable treatment of all employees.
- \* See that the personnel policies are administered fairly and consistently.

## ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook contains general information about employment at WLS and has been developed to help make your employment here a productive and meaningful experience. It is designed as a working guide for employees and supervisors and to provide you with general information on benefits, policies and practices. It is important that each employee reads and understands the information outlined in this handbook and should refer to it from time to time.

This handbook is not intended to be comprehensive or to address all the possible applications of, or exceptions to, the general policies, practices, or benefits described. Nothing in this handbook confers any rights or privileges upon any WLS employee. There are no promises or guarantees of any kind contained in this handbook, nor should it be regarded or construed by WLS employees as a contract between WLS and any of its employees. Many matters covered by this handbook are also described in separate official documents, which are on file with the Personnel Office and posted on the WLS webpage. These official documents are always controlling over any statement made in this handbook or by any supervisor or manager.

Please note that this handbook is subject to change and policies and procedures may be modified or discontinued at any time. We will try to keep you informed of any changes that may affect you. This handbook supersedes all previously distributed handbooks, manuals, policies, procedures, and practices.

## **SECTION II: EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**

### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT POLICY**

WLS is an Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity Employer. It is our policy to consider all applicants for employment on the basis of their qualifications for the job without regard to race, color, national origin, citizenship, religion, creed, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, veteran status, or any other trait or characteristic protected by law.

We actively pursue this policy in all aspects of employment including recruitment and hiring, promotion, transfer, termination, rates of pay, selection for training, and general treatment during employment. At WLS, equal employment opportunity is not only a legal principle; it is a moral commitment as well. Any employee who is in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

### **ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY**

WLS is committed to a work environment in which all employees are treated with respect and dignity. All employees have the right to work in a professional atmosphere that prohibits harassment based on any protected classification. Therefore, it is the expectation of WLS that all relationships among persons in the workplace will be business-like and free of bias, prejudice and harassment. This policy applies to all applicants and employees, and prohibits harassment and retaliation whether engaged in by fellow employees, by a supervisor or manager or by someone not directly connected to WLS (e.g., an outside vendor, consultant or customer). Conduct prohibited by this policy is unacceptable in the workplace or in a work-related setting, including business-related trips, meetings and social events.

Sexual harassment is a form of gender discrimination and is defined as “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when for example: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, (3) such conduct is so severe and pervasive that it has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance, or (4) such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.”

Sexual harassment may include a range of behaviors that may involve individuals of the same or different gender. The following are behaviors that constitute sexual harassment, but are not limited to:

- \* Unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors
- \* Sexual jokes and innuendo
- \* Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- \* Commentary about an individual’s body, appearance, sexual prowess, or sexual deficiencies
- \* Leering, catcalls or touching

- \* Insulting or obscene comments or gestures
- \* The use of profanity
- \* Unwanted touching
- \* Unwanted comments or compliments about one's appearance
- \* Display or circulation in the workplace (including through email) of sexually explicit objects or pictures
- \* Other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature

Harassment on the basis of any other protected characteristics is also strictly prohibited. Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion towards an individual because of his/her race, color, national origin, citizenship, religion, creed, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, veteran status, or any other trait or characteristic protected by law and that: (1) creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, (2) unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or (3) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

The following are behaviors that constitute harassing conduct, but are not limited to:

- \* Epithets, slurs, or negative stereotyping
- \* Threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts,
- \* Denigrating jokes, and display or circulation in the workplace (including through email) of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group

Any employee who feels that he/she has been subjected to harassment should immediately report the matter to their supervisor and/or the Director or any member of management. Individuals are not obligated to speak with their immediate supervisor first before bringing the matter to the attention of the Director or any other member of management. Employees can be assured that there will be no retaliation for either filing a complaint or participating in an investigation. WLS also recognizes that individuals may be concerned about the confidentiality of information they share, and will attempt to maintain confidentiality to the extent possible, consistent with an adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action. Any employee who is in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

### DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

WLS prohibits the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a drug or controlled substance; the sale, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of alcohol, except at officially sanctioned events; and being under the influence of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drug or controlled substance on WLS premises, whether during your working or non-working hours. The employment status of any person found to be in violation of this prohibition will be subject to a review by the Director and the immediate supervisor within the provisions of local, State and Federal Law as a condition of employment by WLS. Any employee who is in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

All employees must abide by the terms of this statement and notify the CFO or Deputy Director in writing of any criminal drug statute conviction under state or federal law no later than five days after such conviction. Failure to report the conviction will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

WLS maintains a policy of non-discrimination and will endeavor to make reasonable accommodations to assist individuals recovering from substance and alcohol dependencies, and those who have a medical history which reflects treatment for their substance abuse conditions. We encourage employees to seek assistance before their substance abuse or alcohol misuse renders them unable to perform essential functions of their jobs, or jeopardizes the healthy and safety of any employee, including themselves.

### WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

WLS is strongly committed to providing a safe work environment. The purpose of this policy is to minimize the risk of personal injury to employees and damage to company property. We specifically discourage you from engaging in any physical confrontation with a violent or potentially violent individual. We do expect you to exercise reasonable judgment in identifying potentially dangerous situations.

WLS will not tolerate threats, threatening language or any other act of aggression or violence made toward or by any employee. For purposes of this policy, a threat includes any verbal or physical harassment or abuse, any attempt at intimidating or instilling fears in others, menacing gestures, flashing of weapons, stalking or any other hostile, aggressive, injurious or destructive action undertaken for the purposes of domination or intimidation. WLS prohibits all employees from carrying a handgun, firearm, or dangerous weapon of any kind whether or not the person is licensed or permitted to carry the weapon. Weapons are not permitted on the company's premises.

All threats or potentially dangerous situations must be reported to the employee's supervisor. If you are the recipient of a threat, it is important for us to be aware of any potential dangers. All complaints will be promptly investigated. Employees can be assured that there will be no retaliation for either filing a complaint or participating in an investigation. WLS also recognizes that individuals may be concerned about the confidentiality of information they share, and will attempt to maintain confidentiality to the extent possible, consistent with an adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action. Any employee who is in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

### NO SMOKING

WLS complies with applicable federal, state, and city safety and health laws on smoking in the workplace. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the premises of WLS.

### **SECTION III: OPEN DOOR POLICY**

WLS is committed to providing the best possible working conditions for you. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any problem, complaint, suggestion or question receives a timely response from management. WLS strives to ensure fair and honest treatment of all employees. Managers and employees are expected to treat each other with mutual respect. You are encouraged to offer positive and constructive criticism.

If you disagree with established rules of conduct, policies or practices, you can express your concern through the problem-solving procedure. You will not be penalized, formally or informally, for voicing a complaint with WLS in a reasonable, business-like manner.

If you believe that a decision affecting you is unjust or inequitable, you should speak promptly with your immediate supervisor or if you prefer, with the Director.

### **PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCEDURE**

To ensure fair and equitable treatment of all complaints or employee concerns, a problem-solving procedure has been established, which you are encouraged to use. If you have a concern that you would like to have addressed, you should speak with your supervisor for further clarification. This informal discussion should be used with the goal being an equitable solution to the problem at the lowest level possible. If you would prefer to speak with someone who is not your immediate supervisor, follow the steps outlined below.

Employees who have discussed their concern with their immediate supervisor and feel their concern is still unresolved have recourse to our problem-solving procedure. Each step of the procedure is designed to provide employees with an easily accessible way to resolve any problem, and to foster sound employee-supervisor relations through communication and reconciliation of work-related problems. The following procedures are to be followed by any employee who wishes to bring an issue to the attention of management.

Step 1. The employee shall take the matter up with his or her immediate supervisor or Department Head (if different) in an attempt to agree on a satisfactory settlement.

Step 2. In the event a satisfactory settlement is not reached in Step 1 or if for some reason the employee does not wish to discuss the problem with the immediate supervisor, the employee may request a meeting between him/her, his/her immediate supervisor, the Department Head, and the Director. WLS will review and investigate the matter and attempt to find a mutually agreeable solution to the problem. The Director's decision will be final.

Information gathered during this procedure will be treated discreetly and confidentially by all parties involved.

## **SECTION IV: PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

### **ETHICS**

Standards of conduct are essential to the protection of WLS and its employees. WLS requires its employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. Employees are expected and responsible for applying appropriate standards of conduct to actions and working relationships involving clients, fellow employees, vendors, and all others who may associate an employee's activity with WLS and its interests.

Employees whose conduct is found to be illegal or against WLS guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action, up to including termination of employment.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

During your employment, you may come in contact with and have access to records or lists and other confidential information. This information is confidential and not public; therefore you should keep the information in strict confidence. No public statements concerning WLS operations, plans, policies or statistics should be made by employees to non-employees. All inquiries should be forwarded to the Director.

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

It is expected that you will not engage in activities that represent a conflict with the interests of WLS. Employees owe a duty of loyalty, which requires that in serving WLS they act solely in the interests of WLS and not in their own personal interests or in the interests of others.

### **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION**

WLS computers, including accessing the internet, voicemail, email and telephone systems are for business use only. Communications transmitted through these systems must have a business purpose. However in relation to telephone use, employees must exercise sound judgment and must limit the amount of incoming and outgoing personal calls.

All communication and information transmitted by, received from, or stored in these systems are the property of WLS. Employees are expected to maintain all documents in accordance with the WLS Record Retention Policy. Specifically, employees need to be aware that electronic communications are not private and are not their personal property. WLS may access its electronic communication systems and obtain the communications within the systems, including internet usage, with or without notice to the users of the system, in the ordinary course of business when WLS deems it appropriate to do so. Data that is composed, transmitted, accessed or received via the internet must not contain content that could be considered discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating or disruptive to any employee or other person.

Abuse or misuse of the electronic communication equipment provided by WLS in violation of any local, state, or federal law or WLS guidelines will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **PERSONAL MATTERS**

To facilitate the orderly conducting of company business, employees are asked to observe the following:

- \* Limit personal phone calls to only those that are necessary and keep each one brief.
- \* Do not have personal mail delivered to WLS.
- \* Discourage friends and family members from social visits during working hours.
- \* Get permission from management prior to bringing visitors on WLS premises.
- \* Properly secure any personal belongings as WLS is not responsible for loss, theft, or the disappearance of personal property.

### **SOLICITATION AND DISTRIBUTION**

In order to avoid unnecessary annoyances and interruptions from your work, solicitation by an employee of another employee is prohibited while either person is on working time.

Employee distribution of literature, handbills or other printed and non-printed materials in work areas is prohibited at any time.

Trespassing, soliciting or distributing literature by non-employees on our premises is prohibited at all times.

### **STAFF QUARTERS**

A kitchen/lounge is provided for employees to use during break and lunch time. In order for each employee to enjoy the use of this area, it is expected that all employees strive to maintain a clean and sanitary environment. Employees are responsible for keeping these areas neat and for washing dishes and cooking equipment which they have used.

## **SECTION V: ABOUT YOUR JOB**

### **NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION**

As you begin your job with us, we will do everything we can to get you started properly and fit you into your work as smoothly as possible. The scope of your duties and responsibilities will be explained, and we will acquaint you with the advantages and opportunities you will enjoy as an employee.

### **PERSONNEL RECORDS**

All matters relating to individual employees will be kept in the employee's personnel file. These records will be maintained in a confidential manner and only duly authorized persons will have access. Individual employees may have access to their personnel records upon written request, consistent with applicable law.

Employees are responsible for notifying WLS of any change in their status, such as address or telephone number changes, number of dependents, marital status, etc.

### **DRESS CODE/APPEARANCE**

WLS maintains a friendly and casual work environment. Although we do not have a strict dress code for its staff, all employees are expected to observe personal hygiene habits and wear clothing that is in good taste and that project a positive image for WLS.

### **CERTIFICATION OF PROFESSIONAL LIBRARIANS**

Before an appointment is granted as a librarian with WLS, you must have filed an application for certification with the State Education Department.

Information about filing for certification may be obtained from the Personnel Office.

### **PROMOTIONS AND TRANSFERS**

WLS's policy is to generally promote from within where, in the judgment of WLS, qualified employees exist. All decisions regarding promotions and transfers are made in compliance with WLS's EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) policy.

Employees are eligible for promotion after they have served at least six months, on a regular basis, in a lower grade position. An employee may be transferred from one position to another of the same grade. Transfers may be voluntary or at the discretion of the Director to maintain essential services.

Employees should constantly strive to upgrade their skills in their present job, and learn other areas of our operation and practices within WLS to be qualified for promotions when such occasions arise.

Employees may apply to transfer from one department to another when openings occur. Such requests will be carefully considered and honored when the employee is qualified for the new position, and the transfer is in the best interest of both the employee and WLS.

The following factors will be considered in transfers and promotions:

- \* Knowledge of work
- \* Quality of work
- \* Productivity
- \* Initiative
- \* Attendance and punctuality
- \* Cooperation
- \* Loyalty and conduct
- \* Length of service

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

WLS has a strong commitment to employee training and development. Annually funds are budgeted to support, at least in part, employee participation in conferences, workshops, and training. Emphasis is placed upon the employee receiving training within his/her department. In addition, general staff meetings and/or training sessions may be conducted. At the discretion of the supervisor and with the approval of the Director, an employee may be requested to attend, or encouraged to attend training outside his/her department.

Employees are encouraged to attend local, regional, state and national professional meetings whenever the subject matter is pertinent and scheduling is possible. Employees are encouraged to join local, state and national library organizations and to participate in their activities.

A request form for attendance at conferences and workshops must be filled out at least two weeks in advance for each non-WLS sponsored workshop and/or conference (whether local, state or national) where time and/or expenses is requested. The form (*CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE REQUEST*) may be obtained from the Personnel Office.

The Director, in consultation with the Department Heads, will authorize attendance at conferences and workshops and will determine the extent to which expenses will be paid and/or administrative leave approved when funds cannot be granted.

Reimbursement for expenses and leave with pay will not be authorized without a copy of the request form approved and signed by the Director. Reimbursement of expenses must be submitted within 30 days following the Conference.

**REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENDITURES**

Mileage

If a WLS vehicle is not available to take on authorized library business, an employee will be reimbursed for use of his/her own automobile at the prevailing rate. When using a personal vehicle, the employee must operate the vehicle in a safe manner and must abide by all traffic rules and regulations. Employees are expected to complete *LOCAL TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST* forms on a quarterly basis to obtain reimbursement. Reimbursement of expenses must be submitted within 30 days following the end of the quarter.

Expenses for Meetings, Workshops and Conferences

In general, reimbursable expenses include travel, tolls, meals, registration and other out-of-pocket expenses in connection with WLS functions and authorized professional meetings. Requests for advance payment for conference attendance must be submitted in time for the bill schedule and for approval by the Director.

## SECTION VI: WORK TIME

### WORK SCHEDULES

#### HOURS OF WORK

The standard workweek for WLS employees is a five day, 35 hour workweek. Hours may vary depending upon assignments. Some employees may be required to work evenings and/or Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. Special schedule adjustments may be made at the convenience of the department, as determined by the Department Head in consultation with the Director.

#### MEAL BREAKS

Employees usually get one hour or less for their meal break at a time convenient to WLS. Staggered lunch breaks may be necessary because of scheduling. Employees are not paid for their meal breaks.

#### BREAKS

Full time employees are allowed two paid fifteen (15) minute scheduled breaks during each seven (7) hour work day. One break should be taken in the morning and one in the afternoon, or one in the afternoon and one in the evening depending on the employee's work schedule.

Part time and hourly employees are provided one paid (1) fifteen (15) minute scheduled break for every 3 1/2 hours worked during a given day.

Break time may not be used at the beginning or the end of a work day, may not be accumulated or attached to meal periods and may not be used to make up lateness.

### EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

Based on the conditions of employment, employees of WLS fall into the following categories:

- \* Full-time Regular Appointment
- \* Part-time Regular Appointment
- \* Hourly Appointment
- \* Grant/Contract Appointment
- \* Temporary Appointment
- \* Volunteer Appointment

Full-time Regular Appointment

Individuals employed by WLS to work a normal full workweek of 35 hours per week. Employees in this classification are entitled to participate in WLS's health benefit program, life insurance, tax-deferred annuity plan (403b), retirement, and leave programs.

Part-time Regular Appointment

Individuals employed by WLS to work at least 20 hours in a normal workweek. Employees in this classification are entitled to participate in WLS's health benefit program, life insurance, tax-deferred annuities (403b), leave programs on a prorated basis, with retirement being optional.

Hourly Appointment

Individuals employed by WLS to work less than 20 hours in a normal workweek, on a schedule that may vary to meet the demands of WLS. Employees in this classification are only eligible to participate in tax-deferred annuities (403b) with retirement being optional.

Grant/Contract Appointment

Individuals employed by WLS to work in a position funded through a grant or contract to perform a specific job. Employees in this classification may be eligible for various benefits according to the terms of the individual grant or contract. Employees hired for these positions may have their employment terminated if grant funding or contract is not renewed.

Temporary Appointment

Individuals employed by WLS to work for the duration of a specific project or assignment. Employees in this classification are not entitled to receive any benefits from WLS.

Volunteer Appointment

Individuals employed by WLS to help provide extended library service and/or to assist in the performance of specific routines, services, and programs. Employees in this classification are not entitled to receive any benefits from WLS. Appointees to volunteer positions are not used to maintain the regular operation at WLS. This classification also includes interns who are students in an accredited education program.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Good attendance and punctuality is very important to the success of WLS. You are expected to arrive on time, including return from break and lunch, ready to work, everyday. Excessive and unreasonable levels of absence or tardiness will result in disciplinary action and may result in termination of employment.

ABSENCE AND LATE ARRIVAL NOTIFICATION

If an employee needs to take an unscheduled absence, he/she must call and inform their supervisor by 9am or within (15) minutes of the time scheduled to begin work. Employees may leave a message with the receptionist if the supervisor is not available. The receptionist must immediately notify the supervisor. If you are unable to speak with someone, leave a message for your supervisor on their voicemail indicating that you will not be at work.

If an employee knows that they will be unavoidably late, they should follow the same calling procedure. Lateness of more than (1) hour is considered an absence for non-exempt employees and will be charged to vacation or personal time. Lateness cannot be made up without the approval of the Department Head. Only non-exempt employees may be approved to “make up” time for their lateness.

### COMPENSATORY TIME

Individuals who are classified as non-exempt employees are eligible to receive compensatory time if they are required to work outside of the normally scheduled workday. Compensatory time is defined as time worked in excess of 35 hours and up to 40 hours per week. Employees must use the compensatory time hours within the same pay period by working fewer hours equal to the compensatory time accrued. Certain instances may arise when the accrued compensatory time cannot be used within the same workweek due to departmental or personal needs. In such cases, the employee will receive paid compensatory time.

Individuals who are classified as exempt employees are responsible for completing the duties of their position regardless of the number of hours required above the standard workweek.

### OVERTIME PAY

When operating requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours, employees may be required to work overtime. Individuals who are classified as non-exempt employees are eligible to receive overtime pay if they work in excess of 40 hours per week. Overtime compensation is paid at a rate of time-and-one-half. When possible, advance notification of overtime assignments will be provided. All overtime work must be directed or authorized by your supervisor.

Paid days such as holidays, paid vacations, paid sick and personal time, and paid bereavement or jury time shall be considered as hours worked in calculating eligibility for overtime pay.

## SECTION VII: SALARY PAYMENT

### PAY POLICY

#### PAY FREQUENCY/PAYCHECK

Salary payment is made bi-weekly for base salary due up to the pay date and paid every other Tuesday. Employees are generally paid for the current pay period through direct deposit. The pay period covers two weeks starting on Sunday and ending on Saturday. If a holiday falls on a Tuesday, employees will have access to funds on a Monday.

#### DEDUCTIONS

##### Federal, State, City & FICA Taxes

Automatic deductions are made for Federal, State, and FICA (Social Security) withholding taxes for all employees. City taxes will also be deducted where applicable.

##### Retirement

Employee contributions to the New York State Retirement Plan are deducted for those in Tiers 3 and 4 for the first 10 years of employment.

##### Health Coverage

For employees with family health coverage, their share of the coverage will be deducted from their paychecks.

##### FICA re Life Insurance

In accordance with IRS regulations, Group Term Life Insurance of \$50,000 or more is FICA taxable for both the employee and the employer. FICA deductions for term life insurance are taken from the first paycheck in December.

##### Voluntary deductions

Employees may also request deductions for annuity plans and credit union (loans and savings).

##### Garnishment of Wages

When garnishment of an employee's salary is ordered, the Director will notify the employee of the garnishment order. Any deductions are made in accordance with the provisions of law and the rule or regulation of the issuing agency.

### DIRECT DEPOSIT

WLS employees are required to have their salary electronically transmitted to their bank of choice. To activate direct deposit, employees must provide a voided check and/or a deposit slip noting the amounts to be deposited, if there are multiple accounts. This information should be submitted to the Payroll Clerk. Due to banking requirements, it may take several weeks for activation of the direct deposit.

## EXEMPT AND NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEE PAY

It is our policy and practice at WLS to accurately compensate employees and to do so in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws. To ensure that you are paid properly for all time worked and that no improper deductions are made, you must record correctly all work time and review your paychecks promptly to identify and to report all errors.

### Review Your Pay Stub

We make every effort to ensure our employees are paid correctly. Occasionally, however, inadvertent errors can occur. When errors do occur and are called to our attention, instructions to rectify the matter will be given and we will promptly make the necessary corrections. Please review your pay information regularly to make sure it is correct. If you believe an error has occurred or if you have any questions, please use the reporting procedure outlined below.

### Non-Exempt Employees

If you are classified as a non-exempt employee, you must maintain a record of the total hours you work each day. These hours must be recorded accurately via the NOVAtime Attendance Program. Each employee must submit his/her own timesheet to verify the reported hours worked are complete and accurate. Your timesheet must reflect all regular and overtime hours worked, any absences, late arrivals, early departures and meal breaks. At the end of each pay period, you should submit your completed timesheet to your supervisor for verification and approval. Review each paycheck to verify that you were paid correctly for all regular and overtime hours worked in each week.

Unless you are given permission by your supervisor, you should not work any hours that are not authorized. Do not start work early, finish work late, work during a meal break or perform any other extra overtime work unless you are authorized to do so and that time is recorded on your timesheet. Employees are not to “make up time” unless it is approved in advance by your supervisor. “Making up time” means working more hours on one day to cover hours not completed on a previously scheduled day. Any employee who fails to report or inaccurately reports any hours worked will be subject to disciplinary action, up to termination of employment.

It is a violation of WLS for any employee to falsify a timesheet, or to alter another employee’s timesheet. It is also a serious violation of WLS policy for any employee or manager to instruct another employee to incorrectly or falsely report hours worked. If any manager or employee instructs you to either (1) incorrectly or falsely under-report or over-report your hours worked, or (2) alter another employee’s timesheet to inaccurately or falsely report that employee’s hours worked, you should report it immediately to the Director.

### Exempt Employees

If you are classified as an exempt salaried employee, you will receive a salary that is intended to compensate you for all hours you may work for WLS. This salary is established at the time of hire or when you become classified as an exempt employee. While it may be subject to review and modification from time to time, such as during salary

review times, the salary will be a predetermined amount that generally will not be subject to deductions for variations in the quantity or quality of the work you perform. However, exempt employees need not be paid for any workweek in which they perform no work at all for the organization. Exempt employees will record their time and submit their completed timesheet to their supervisor via the NOVAtime Attendance Program.

Under federal and state law, your salary is subject to certain deductions. For example, absent contrary state law requirements, your salary can be reduced for the following reasons:

- \* Full day absences for personal reasons, sickness or disability
- \* Full day disciplinary suspensions for infractions of our written policies and procedures
- \* Family and Medical Leave absences (either full or partial day absences)
- \* To offset amounts received as payment for jury and witness fees or military pay
- \* The first or last week of employment in the event you work less than a full week

Your salary may also be reduced for certain types of deductions for employee benefits, such as health benefits; state, federal or local taxes, social security; or voluntary contributions to a 403b or pension plan. In any workweek in which you performed any work, your salary will not be reduced for any of the following reasons:

- \* Partial day absences for personal reasons, sickness or disability
- \* Your absence on the day before or after a paid holiday or because the facility is closed on a scheduled workday
- \* Absence for jury duty attendance as a witness, or military leave in any week in which you have performed any work
- \* Any other deductions prohibited by state or federal law

However, please note that it is not an improper deduction to reduce an employee's accrued vacation, personal or other forms of paid time off for full or partial day absences for personal reasons sickness or disability.

To Report Concerns or Obtain More Information

If you have any questions about deductions from your pay, please immediately contact the Controller and/or Personnel Clerk. All requests should detail the circumstances of the pay deduction and whether it has occurred on other occasions. If you believe you have been subject to improper deductions or your pay does not accurately reflect hours worked, you should immediately report the matter.

Every claim will be fully investigated and if the deduction was in fact improper, WLS will reimburse the employee as promptly as possible. In addition, WLS will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report alleged violations of this policy or who cooperate in WLS's investigation of such reports. Retaliation is unacceptable, and any

form of retaliation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to termination of employment.

## **SECTION VIII: JOB PERFORMANCE**

### **PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

At WLS, we recognize the importance of conducting performance evaluations. The objective of this is to allow you and your supervisor to discuss your performance and WLS's expectations including job knowledge, quality and quantity of work, oral and written communication, as well as other factors deemed appropriate by WLS.

Upon completion of four (4) months (two (2) months for newly promoted employees), your supervisor will review your performance and any other pertinent factors.

Performance evaluations of all employees are generally done annually. Additional evaluations may be done at any time if either the supervisor or the employee has reason to believe that the previous rating is no longer applicable.

All performance evaluations must be signed by the employee as an indication that he/she has read it. Signature of the employee does not necessarily imply agreement with the evaluation.

All performance evaluations become part of the employee's personnel file.

### **PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE**

To maintain an orderly, safe, and efficient work environment, WLS on occasion may have to respond to and correct inappropriate employee behavior or conduct. Depending on the level of deficient performance, misconduct or violation of WLS policy, the application levels of progressive discipline may apply and can vary. The purpose of discipline is to be corrective and is based on the premise that employees will be willing to change and correct behavior once the importance of misconduct has been emphasized.

In many instances disciplinary action will be progressive, beginning with an oral warning, followed by a written warning, culminating with termination of employment. These steps may not be followed in each instance. Depending on the circumstances and the nature of the matter, WLS may, for example, choose to issue a written warning without first issuing an oral warning, or terminate an employee without any warning. On other occasions, WLS may choose to issue more than one written warning. Employees have the right to respond to written warnings at the time the warning is issued.

By using progressive discipline, we hope that most employee problems can be corrected at an early stage, benefiting both the employee and WLS.

## **SECTION IX: BENEFITS**

WLS reserves the right, in its sole discretion and absolute discretion, to amend, modify or terminate, in whole or part, any or all of the provisions of the benefit plans described herein. The complete terms of all WLS employee benefit plans are contained in official plan documents and brochures, which are frequently updated. The official plan documents and brochures will govern in case of any conflict with the terms of this handbook. The descriptions in this handbook are for your general information only and describe benefits currently being offered by WLS.

### **PAID HOLIDAYS**

WLS observes the following holidays:

- (1) New Year's Day
- (2) Martin Luther King's Birthday
- (3) Lincoln's Birthday—**FLOATING HOLIDAY**
- (4) President's Birthday
- (5) Memorial Day
- (6) Independence Day
- (7) Labor Day
- (8) Columbus Day
- (9) Veteran's Day
- (10) Election Day (November)—**FLOATING HOLIDAY**
- (11) Thanksgiving Day
- (12) Christmas Day
- (13) 1 P.M. early closing on the work day immediately preceding the holiday observance of Christmas Day unless observance of Christmas Day falls on a Sunday or Monday.

Lincoln's Birthday and Election Day (November) are designated as Floating Holidays. The WLS Headquarters will be open these days; however, employees may substitute another day for each at any point in time during the course of the fiscal year with approval of their Department Head. If time for these two floating holidays is not taken within the fiscal year, no time will be compensated. Coverage for each department is the responsibility of the Department Head.

Employees may optionally choose to substitute Veteran's Day for the day after Thanksgiving, so long as the substitution is approved in advance by the Department Head.

Additional holiday leave may be granted at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

For holidays that fall on Saturday, the Friday immediately preceding, will be considered as the holiday. For holidays that fall on Sunday, the subsequent Monday will be considered as the holiday.

All WLS offices are closed on the above holidays and ordinarily no services are maintained. Any employee scheduled to work on a WLS legal holiday will receive overtime pay for the actual hours worked.

All full time employees are granted time off with pay for holidays. If an hourly or part time employee's normal work day falls on a holiday, he/she is paid for the number of hours normally scheduled for that day.

Time required for observance of religious holidays which are not legal holidays must be requested as personal leave or vacation.

If a holiday occurs during an employee's vacation, the holiday is not charged to vacation time.

If a holiday occurs while an employee is attending a convention which he/she has requested to attend, no compensatory time will be granted.

If a holiday occurs while an employee is attending a convention at the request of the Director, compensatory time will be granted.

**PAID VACATION**

Vacation leave with pay is granted to full time and part time (scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week) regular employees. Hourly employees (scheduled to work less than 20 hours per week) are not granted vacation with pay.

New employees beginning work after January 1, will earn vacation leave on a pro-rated basis in the first year of employment, and must have worked an entire month in order to earn vacation leave for the first month of employment.

A new employee is permitted to take vacation after 90 days of employment. Vacation time may not be taken before it is earned. Exceptions may be made only at the discretion of the Director.

Vacation allowance is granted on a calendar year as follows:

Full time professional staff .....	22 days per year	
(MLS or equivalent required for this position)		(154 hours)
Full time non-professional staff:		
1 through 5 years of service .....	15 days per year	
		(105 hours)
5 years and over of service .....	22 days per year	
		(154 hours)

Part time regular employees (scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week) are granted vacation on a pro-rated basis.

### Request For Vacation

Employees requesting vacation must complete a **WLS LEAVE REQUEST/ ABSENCE REPORT** card, and must submit it to the Department Head for approval. If approved, the Department Head must sign the card and forward it to the Personnel Department.

Earned vacation leave may be taken at any time in the year, subject to the staffing needs of the department and after fulfillment of the waiting period for new employees.

Earned vacation leave may be taken all at one time, or broken up into several parts. Employees are encouraged to request vacation in periods of weeks rather than days.

No more than one year's earned vacation leave may be taken at one time, except by special permission of the Director.

No more than two weeks vacation may be carried over from one year to the next.

### PAID PERSONAL DAYS

Full time employees are granted five (5) personal leave days (35 hours) each calendar year. Part time regular employees (scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week) are granted personal leave on a pro-rated basis. Hourly employees (scheduled to work less than 20 hours per week) are not granted personal leave.

Personal leave should be taken in half day increments (3.5 hours). Personal leave may not be carried over from one calendar year to the next.

Personal leave is allowed for religious observances or for transacting personal business which must be carried on during the normal work hours. In winter, personal leave may be used to cover absenteeism or lateness due to extreme weather conditions.

Personal leave may be taken the working day before or after a WLS holiday only at the discretion of the Department Head. The Department Head is responsible for seeing that the department is staffed adequately before permission can be granted.

Personal leave must be approved by the immediate supervisor at least 24 hours in advance except in emergencies. A **WLS LEAVE REQUEST/ABSENCE REPORT** form must be completed, and signed by the Department Head and forwarded to the Personnel Department.

No payment is made for unused personal days at anytime during the employee's employment or at termination.

### PAID SICK LEAVE

Full time employees are granted 12 days (84 hours) of sick leave per calendar year. Sick leave is earned at the rate of seven (7) hours per month after the month has been worked.

Part-time regular employees (scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week) are granted paid sick leave on a pro-rated basis. Hourly employees (scheduled to work less than 20 hours per week) are not granted sick leave with pay.

New employees, beginning work after January 1, will earn sick leave on a pro-rated basis in the first year of employment, and must have worked an entire month in order to earn sick leave for the first month of employment.

Sick leave may not be used until it has been earned. In emergency situations only, sick leave may be advanced with the approval of the Department Head and the Director.

Sick leave is to be used for personal illness or for doctor's or dentist's appointments. It may not be used for the illness of another member of the family.

A physician's certificate may be required for sick leave of three or more day's duration, or for sick leave that has been over-extended. In cases of a long illness a doctor's certificate may be required at intervals.

Employees returning to work after a long illness or an over-extended sick leave are required to furnish a doctor's certificate indicating their ability to return to full duty.

Employees are permitted to accumulate up to 165 days (1155 hours) of sick leave.

Upon retirement, up to 165 days of unused sick leave are applied as additional service credit (on a calendar day basis) by NYSERS in computing retirement benefits. (Please note that credit for unused sick leave is in addition to the time required for retirement and cannot be used to meet the requirements established by NYSERS.)

Employees can carry over their unused sick days into the following year or can be paid annually one day of regular pay for every three (3) full days of unused sick leave for the period of the prior December 1 to the current year November 30. Only one option can be chosen each year. This will only apply to sick leave accrued after December 1, 1994. This will apply only to employees with satisfactory personnel evaluations and employees who are eligible for sick leave.

Terminated employees will not be paid for unused sick time at termination.

### PAID BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Full time employees are granted five (5) consecutive working days for a death in the immediate family. "Immediate family" is defined as spouse, children, mother, father, step-mother, step-father, brother, mother/father-in-law, sister, or a member of the employee's household.

Part-time and hourly employees are granted the hours they were scheduled to work on these days.

One day is granted for a death of a "Near Relative." "Near Relative" is defined as grandparents, grandchildren, aunt or uncle not living in the employee's household.

Part-time and hourly employees are granted the hours they were scheduled to work on that day.

Personal leave may be used if additional time is desired, or for absences due to the death of a non-relative.

Special circumstances may be brought to the attention of the Director for possible leave.

A maximum of four working hours is granted to attend the wake or funeral of an employee, when it falls within the employee's normal working day.

### HEALTH INSURANCE

WLS offers the Empire New York State Health Insurance Plan (Empire NYSHIP) after satisfactory completion of the first three months of employment.

Full-time, part-time (scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week) regular employees, and grant appointees may participate in the Empire NYSHIP, provided that coverage is included in the terms of the grant/contract.

Detailed information is available from the Personnel Office.

#### Premium Payments - **REVISED 1/1/2011**

As a benefit to the employee, WLS contributes to the Empire NYSHIP plan for an employee and their dependents according to a table established by New York State.

Starting 1/1/2011, WLS employees will be required to make a 10% contribution by toward the cost of the individual health insurance coverage premium; and WLS employees opting for family health insurance coverage will contribute half the difference between the cost of the individual and family premium plus 10% of that difference.

The portion of the health insurance coverage paid by the employee for dependent(s) coverage is, with written authorization by the employee, deducted bi-weekly from the employee's paycheck.

### EYEGLOSS INSURANCE

WLS pays the full premium cost of eyeglass insurance coverage for the individual employee only. Dependents are not covered by the Eyeglass Insurance Plan.

### DENTAL INSURANCE

WLS pays the full premium cost of dental insurance coverage for the individual employee only. Dependents are not covered by the Dental Insurance Plan.

### PRESCRIPTION PLAN

The Empire NYSHIP provides prescription drug coverage for all employees enrolled in the plan. Co-payment is required for prescriptions filled with either brand name or generic drugs.

## LIFE INSURANCE

Full-time and part-time (scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week) regular employees are covered by term life insurance. For employees covered under this plan the amount of life insurance will be equal to double their gross salary in the previous calendar year. Included in this policy is also a provision for accidental death and dismemberment.

Employees who continue to work after age 65 are subject to the following regulations:

- At age 65 coverage is reduced by 35%
- At age 70 coverage is again reduced by 35%
- At age 75 coverage is reduced once again by 35%

Term Life Insurance coverage terminates upon an employee's retirement, resignation or termination.

## RETIREMENT PENSION

There are four (4) tiers of membership in the New York State Retirement System (NYSERS).

Employees hired before July 1, 1976 are in Tier 1 or Tier 2 and are not required to contribute to the Retirement Plan.

Employees hired from July 1, 1976 to September 1, 1983 are in Tier 3 and are required to contribute 3% of their gross salary to the Retirement Plan.

Employees hired on or after September 1, 1983 are on Tier 4 and are required to contribute 3% of their gross salary to the Retirement Plan.

All new full-time employees are required to join the New York State Retirement System. Membership in the retirement system is optional for part-time regular employees.

## TAX DEFERRED ANNUITY (403b PLAN)

All employees may elect to participate in a 403b Plan through payroll deductions. Contributions to the plan are taken from pre-tax salary and any interest and investment earnings accumulate on a tax-deferred basis until withdrawal or until paid as benefits. Several firms handle WLS's Program. WLS offers the choice of one or more of the plans offered by these firms. However, that right is accompanied by an important responsibility. Because the employee decides how to invest his or her funds, the employee is responsible for any losses that result from that decision.

## CREDIT UNION

All employees as well as any member of the employee's family may join the Hudson River Teachers Federal Credit Union, for the purpose of saving and/or borrowing money. Employees may request payroll deductions for deposits or repayments of loans. The credit union is a voluntary organization and its own rules and regulations govern its relationships with its members.

**PROFESSIONAL LEAVE (ATTENDANCE AT LIBRARY RELATED MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS AND WORKSHOPS)**

Administrative leave may be granted to an employee to attend library related meetings, conventions and/or workshops. Such leave will always be considered in light of WLS needs and work schedules and is granted at the discretion of the immediate supervisor, Department Head, and Director. (Please refer to the **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT** section for further information).

Before accepting a responsibility or an office which may require the use of work time, an employee should consult the Director.

Employees wishing to apply for administrative leave to attend library related meetings, conferences and/or workshops must fill out a form (**CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE REQUEST**) available from the Personnel Office and return it to the Director's office.

The Director may request employees attend meetings which he/she believes may be of value to the individual and/or the system.

**SOCIAL SECURITY**

During your working years, both you and WLS contribute to a government fund to provide for your future retirement benefits and health insurance under Social Security (FICA) and Medicare. Your contribution is deducted from each paycheck.

## **SECTION X: LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

### **JURY DUTY**

A leave of absence for jury duty will be granted to any employee who has been notified to serve jury duty. You must notify your supervisor when you receive the notice. During this leave, full-time employees will be paid their regular salary while on jury duty for a period up to fifteen days within a 12-month period. This time may be taken as full or part days, as the jury service necessitates. Employees must indicate that their employer is paying them for this time when serving jury duty.

An employee that reports for jury duty and is excused from serving before 12:00 (noon), must report to work for the afternoon, according to the work schedule of his/her department. However, the combination of Jury Duty and library work shall not amount to more than a normal work day.

Upon completion of jury duty service, you must submit a signed Certificate of Jury Service indicating the number of days served to their supervisor.

### **COURT APPEARANCE**

Leave with pay may be granted to an employee who is subpoenaed for a court appearance on a WLS (or WLS member library) related matter.

### **MILITARY DUTY**

If you enter the military service or are required to attend annual Reserve or National Guard duty, you will be entitled to unpaid time off and to reinstatement in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. You should give your supervisor as much advance notice as possible so that necessary staffing arrangements can be made. Employees, at their discretion, may elect to take any fully earned vacation at this time.

### **PERSONAL LEAVE** (For circumstances not covered by our Family and Medical Leave policy)

Under certain extenuating circumstances, WLS may, at its discretion, grant a personal leave of absence without pay. A written request for a personal leave must be presented to the Director at least two weeks prior to the requested start of the leave.

While you are on a personal leave of absence, you will not be entitled to receive or accrue benefits. If you wish you may continue insurance coverage by paying the appropriate premium. Upon your return to work, you will be eligible to accrue and receive all your benefits as usual.

We cannot guarantee reemployment upon the expiration of your personal leave. While you are on personal leave of absence, you will not be permitted to accept work for another employer. Failure to return to work because your leave must extend beyond that granted will be deemed a voluntary resignation of your employment as of the last day worked prior to commencing the leave.

## FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

### Eligibility

Employees of WLS who have been employed for at least one year and worked at least 1,250 hours during that year may be entitled to an unpaid leave of absence of up to 12 weeks during a 12 month period for any of the following reasons:

- \* The birth of a child and in order to care for such child.
- \* The placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care.
- \* To care for a spouse, child, or parent of the employee if such person has a serious health condition.
- \* Because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his or her position (including conditions qualifying for workers compensation or short term disability benefits).

Although family and medical leave taken pursuant to this policy is unpaid, you may, depending upon the reason for the leave, still be eligible for short term disability payments and/or worker's compensation benefits consistent with state law. Individuals are also not permitted to work for another employer while they are on family and medical leave. Please contact Personnel for further information on this.

### Notice To WLS

In any case in which the necessity for the leave is foreseeable, the employee should provide us with reasonable advance notice in order to allow proper time to plan for replacements, generally at least 30 days if possible. Medical certification is necessary prior to granting any leave related to the serious health condition of any employee, spouse, child or parent. Request for family or medical leave must be submitted to the Personnel Department. In the case of an employee's own illness, periodic updates will be required, generally on a monthly basis, regarding the status of your condition and your plans to return to work. In these periodic updates, employees should indicate the date they will be returning to WLS or if in fact the date is still to be determined.

### Reinstatement

Employees returning from family or medical leave of absence within the time constraints specified above will be restored to the position of employment held by the employee when the leave commenced or to an equivalent position. An individual who fails to return upon the conclusion of their approved leave will be considered to have voluntarily resigned. Employees returning from leave due to their own serious health condition must provide appropriate medical documentation prior to returning, certifying their ability to resume the essential functions of their job.

### Intermittent or Reduced Work Schedule Leave

Intermittent leave is leave taken in separate blocks of time. A reduced work schedule leave is a leave schedule that reduces an employee's usual number of hours per workweek or hours per workday.

Leave to care for a newborn or for a newly placed child or leave because of an employee's own serious health condition, or to care for an employee's spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition, may be taken all at once or, where medically necessary, intermittently or on a reduced work schedule.

If an employee takes a leave intermittently or on a reduced work schedule basis, the employee must, when requested, attempt to schedule the leave so as not to unduly disrupt WLS's operations. When an employee takes intermittent or reduced work schedule leave for foreseeable planned medical treatment, WLS may temporarily transfer the employee to an alternative position with equivalent pay and benefits for which the employee is qualified and which better accommodates recurring periods of leave.

### Health Insurance and Other Benefits

We will continue to provide health benefits under an existing group health plan for employees out on family or medical leave for up to 12 weeks on the same basis as prior to the leave. Employees who fail to return after a leave may be required to reimburse us for the entire cost of health insurance premiums unless their failure to return is due to a serious health condition.

WLS will require employees to use any or all accrued vacation, sick or personal times, in order to satisfy the initial period of the family or medical leave.

### Extensions

Extensions may be granted upon appropriate documentation directed to the Personnel Department and at the discretion of WLS. However, extensions are only available beyond twelve (12) weeks in the case of an employee's own disability or in the event of a birth or adoption (child care), not for other family-related leaves. Additionally, if a leave is granted beyond twelve (12) weeks, the employee will be responsible for the entire cost of continuing insurance coverage. Employees will not be permitted to extend a family or medical leave beyond the 12 week maximum by tacking on unused vacation or personal leave. Upon return from an extended leave of greater than 6 months, employees will be reinstated to a position within their job classification, subject to the staffing needs of WLS, but will not be guaranteed a return to their previous position.

### Part-Time Employees And Employees With Less Than One Year Of Service

Employees with less than 1 year of service and part-time employees working less than 1,250 hours a year, may also apply for a medical leave of absence for their own disability or serious health condition, but are not eligible for other types of family-related leaves. However, if granted, insurance continuation will be the sole responsibility of the employee and reinstatement will depend on our staffing needs at the time reinstatement is sought.

Disability forms and claims for New York State disability benefits are available from and should be filled out and returned to the Personnel Department.

If you have any questions with respect to our family and medical leave of absence policy, please contact the Personnel Department.

## **SECTION XI: SAFETY AND SECURITY**

### **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

Paid leave will be granted if WLS is officially closed for the following reasons:

- \* Extreme inclement weather.
- \* An extended breakdown of heating or air conditioning equipment.
- \* Other adverse situations which affect working conditions.

An employee who calls in an absence on an inclement day will be required to use his/her personal or other leave regardless of whether or not WLS closes anytime after opening.

Employees who elect to leave early in bad weather will also be charged personal time.

There is no change regarding previously scheduled time. If an employee has already scheduled time off for a day when WLS closes because of bad weather, the employee will still be charged for that time.

Part time and hourly employees are paid only for the time scheduled to work on the emergency closing day.

Administrative leave will not be granted to employees who were scheduled to be absent on the emergency closing day because of previously arranged time off.

The Personnel Office maintains an **EMERGENCY TELEPHONE LIST** for the purpose of notifying employees when a decision is made not to open WLS. Each Department Head is responsible for contacting the employees listed under his/her name in the Emergency Telephone List. Employees are responsible for keeping the Personnel Clerk and their supervisors informed of their current telephone numbers.

Finally, although we expect every employee to make an effort to get to work during inclement weather, there will be no onus placed on anyone who deems it too dangerous or unsafe to travel. We would rather have you use a personal day than be injured.

### **SECURITY**

All employees have responsibilities to keep WLS's workplace secure. Protecting and preserving all WLS property is everyone's concern. You are expected to be security-conscious about your personal safety as well as your belongings and the company's property. If you have property missing or lost, or if you become aware of an actual or suspected loss of company or personal property caused by theft, misappropriation, malicious destruction or other criminal act, notify your supervisor immediately.

## ACCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURES

At WLS, the safety and health of every employee is of primary importance. We strive to provide a safe and healthful working environment, free from occupational hazards. When work related injury or illness occurs, it is your responsibility to inform your supervisor immediately.

Employees who are disabled due to a work-related illness or injury are eligible to receive disability benefits under the Workers' Compensation policy. The amount of the benefit is dependent upon the disabled employee's compensation rate and guidelines established by the State of New York.

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Should you suffer a work-related injury, disease, or illness, you will receive benefits from our Workers' Compensation policy, paid for entirely by WLS. This program provides for coverage of medical expenses and weekly compensation payments. To ensure your physical well-being and the correct processing of these claims, you must notify your Supervisor immediately about any injury occurring during and as a result of employment, no matter how slight. When you seek medical attention, it is important that you indicate your injury was due to a work-related accident.

## **SECTION XII: SEPARATION PROCESS**

### **RESIGNATIONS**

A written letter of resignation, addressed to the Department Head, is required of all employees intending to resign.

To ensure a smooth transition, we ask that you provide as much notice as possible. WLS would like you to provide the customary two weeks prior written notice that you intend to leave. For positions at the managerial level and higher, longer than two weeks notice would be appreciated.

The Department Head is responsible for forwarding the letter of resignation to the Director. Letters of resignation are filed in the employees' personnel files.

### **RETIREMENT**

Notification of retirement should be made in the same manner as a resignation.

Employees contemplating retirement must be aware that the **New York State Employee's Retirement System** requires that they notify their office at least 30 days prior to the intended retirement date.

Employees having worked a minimum of 10 years for WLS, and are within 5 years of the date on which he or she is entitled to receive a retirement allowance, will be responsible for payment of any increase over the 2008 health care premium, which will be used as a benchmark in determining the amount retirees will be required to pay for 2009 and future periods. In accordance with the rules and regulations of the Department of Civil Service, the employee must pay the full Empire NYSHIP premium, with no break in coverage, from the time of separation until reaching age eligible for receipt of the pension.

WLS will also reimburse retirees for Medicare premiums, provided they are eligible for the Empire NYSHIP.

Information concerning State requirements for filing for retirement benefits may be obtained from the Personnel Office.

### **DISMISSAL**

Infractions of WLS policies, rules and regulations, or poor job performance may result in discharge from employment. Termination for misconduct will result in forfeiture of all termination benefits except those required by law. Final paychecks for resigning or terminated employees will be made available on the next regular payday or sooner, consistent with applicable law.

## **LAST WORK DAY**

Employees are responsible for ensuring that all paper and electronic files are accessible to WLS prior to their last day of employment. All information created by the employee for WLS is the property of WLS and cannot be shared with any parties outside the organization.

Employees are expected to return any WLS issued property by their last work day.

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**SECTION XIII: A FEW CLOSING WORDS**

**A FEW CLOSING WORDS**

This handbook is intended to give you a brief look and help orient you to Westchester Library System and its policies. WLS is dedicated to providing an environment that will provide you with opportunities for personal satisfaction, growth, and advancement in your career. We welcome you with the sincere hope that our association will be a successful and rewarding one.

If you have any questions regarding any of the information outlined in this handbook, please speak with your supervisor or contact the Personnel Department for further clarification.