



VIABLE OPTIONS

THE THIRD CHOICE

Policies & Procedures Manual

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Welcome to Viable Options!

Welcome! We are so excited to have you as a part of our team.

Without the investment of people like you, our vision to restore hope in the lives of those facing a pregnancy decision and to change the conversation surrounding unintended pregnancy would not be possible. Your commitment to the work of Viable Options is an essential component of our continued success, and we are so excited to incorporate your unique perspective and talents.

1. Purpose of the Manual & Non-exclusivity

1.1 Purpose of the Manual. As an organization, it is our mission, vision, and core values that shape our operations and drive everything that we do. This manual was written to communicate the big picture of our company culture—the “why” behind the “dos” and “don'ts”—as well as to equip you with some practical policies and procedures which help to uphold these values and to maintain a culture that fulfills our mission. It is neither exclusive in nature, nor intended to create contractual obligations of any kind.

The purpose of this manual is to establish policies, procedures, and working conditions that will be followed by all Viable Options employees, volunteers, agents, and representatives. For the purposes of this handbook, all references to ‘employees’ or ‘staff members’ will apply to all paid employees (including members of the executive team), unpaid volunteers, board members, advisory board members, independent contractors, and anyone working with or on behalf of the Organization. We value order and creativity in conjunction with the talents and abilities of our team, and foster an open, cooperative, innovative, and dynamic environment in which individuals at any level can thrive.

No provision in this manual may be waived without written permission from the CEO or designee. Such a waiver (if granted), applies for a single instance and only to the individual for whom the waiver was granted. Revisions and addendums to these policies may be implemented by the approval of the board of directors.

Any revisions or addendums made to the Viable Options Policies and Procedures will be emailed to all staff and volunteers and posted on Viable Options’ Employee Resources page (viableoptions.org/employee-resources).

Please read the policies, procedures, working conditions, and standards described in this manual. You will be asked to attest that you have read, understand, agree to abide by, and acknowledge your receipt of this manual via signature at the conclusion of this document.

1.2 Company By-laws & Statement of Principle. All employees are expected to know and adhere fully to the Viable Options by-laws and Statement of Principle. These documents are essential to maintaining the integrity of our organization, and will serve as a standard for all staff, volunteers, agents, and representatives of Viable Options.

1.3 Non-exclusivity. While this manual serves as an outline of the most essential aspects of our culture, expectations, and operations, it is certainly not an exhaustive list. It would be impossible for a single document to address every possible circumstance or answer every question that may arise.

While we have done our best to communicate our organizational standards and policies, we know that situations will likely arise in which they may be misunderstood or misinterpreted. We ask and encourage you to operate with flexibility and understanding as the executive team interprets these policies and practices in the way they deem best for the health of the organization and its workers. This interpretation will be considered final and binding.

2. Your Voice Matters

We care about how these policies and procedures impact the daily lives of our employees. You are important to us! Throughout your time with us, we encourage you to give us feedback on your experience and how the daily practices of our organization reflect and further our mission and vision.

Your honesty and constructive feedback will never be penalized. We are always eager to refine our organization and are open to any questions and concerns that are voiced in a respectful and appropriate manner through the proper channels.

Questions regarding the content of this document or concerns related to a particular policy should be referred to a direct supervisor.

3. Your Employment at Viable Options

3.1 At-Will Employment. This document is an advisory guide concerning the present policies, procedures, and practices of Viable Options. Neither this document, nor any other policy, procedure,

practice, or form (written or otherwise) shall be construed as a contract regarding any aspect of your employment with Viable Options. As an organization, we are constantly refining and improving our operations and practices, and, therefore, we retain the right to amend or replace any provision outlined in this document with or without notice, with exception to the At-Will nature of employment. We will provide our current staff notice of these changes whenever possible using whatever means are deemed most efficient.

We hope that your employment with us will be mutually beneficial. However, we recognize that needs and circumstances do change. In keeping with New York State's employment-at-will laws, either you or Viable Options may terminate your employment at any time and for any reason not prohibited by law. Though not required by law, as a courtesy, we do request that at least two weeks' notice be provided by you should you, at any point, wish to terminate your employment. (For supervisors, department heads, and executive staff, we request at least a month's notice prior to resignation.)

3.2 90-Day Probationary Period. Following your initial hire with Viable Options, you will be subject to a 90-day probationary period. During this time, you will have an opportunity to evaluate Viable Options as a place of work, and your direct supervisor will have the opportunity to evaluate you as an employee. During the probationary period, either you or Viable Options may terminate your employment without advance notice or cause, without implication of failure or wrongdoing, and without the standard exit procedure.

If you are relocating for this position, we recommend that you do not make any major purchases or agreements before the conclusion of this 90-day period. Such purchases and/or agreements may include, a home, a car, a multi-year lease, etc. Viable Options is not responsible to pay any penalties incurred by terminating a lease or purchase agreement made by you for the purposes of relocation.

At the end of this 90-day period, there will be an initial performance review, after which, should it be deemed in the best interest of all involved, you will enter into formal employment.

3.3 Orientation Period. The first 50 days of employment will be an orientation period, during which you will complete a 7-week training program. During this time, you will follow a daily schedule and complete assigned tasks and materials. All salaried employees will be compensated at their regular salaried rate during the orientation period.

The orientation material may not make up a 40-hour workweek. To help you to be successful as you integrate with the Viable Options culture and undergo the training process, you will be given extra time for reflection and processing. You may also be tasked with certain projects that are unrelated to your job description during the orientation period by your direct supervisor or the CEO, in order to help complete a 40-hour workweek.

In most cases, the job an employee was specifically hired for will not commence until after the completion of the orientation period.

Emails and phone calls representing Viable Options to anyone other than staff are strictly prohibited until the orientation period is complete.

3.4 Performance Evaluations. Following the initial 90-day probationary period, performance reviews will be conducted every quarter for the first year of employment by the CEO or direct supervisor. Following the first year of employment, performance reviews are conducted at the beginning of each new year.

These reviews provide an opportunity for us to evaluate your performance as an employee, to give you constructive feedback, and to communicate needed adjustments and/or improvements. They are also meant to provide an opportunity and a space for you, as an employee, to give us constructive feedback based on your experience, without fear of being penalized or jeopardizing your growth within the organization.

This evaluation is designed to highlight an employee's strengths and also point out ways to improve job performance. The evaluation may also contribute to determining any salary increases and possible job description modifications. Performance evaluations give an employee and supervisor the opportunity to review and discuss overall performance of job duties, contributing to the overall health of the working relationship and the organization as a whole. They serve as a neutral environment, where anything communicated by you related to criticism of the management and/or practices of the organization will in no way impact future promotion, pay, or employment.

We value hard work and diligence. We encourage and expect each staff member to take personal ownership in the organization and to add value by investing their unique insights, talents, and perspective into everything they do. We respect our employees and have a high expectation for their level of initiative and self-motivation.

3.5 Criminal Background Checks. In order to protect Viable Options and all those connected with it, we reserve the right to conduct criminal background checks for all new employees to determine suitability of employment. Those employees who have access to confidential information of the organization and its members may also be subject to a financial background check. Viable Options also reserves the right to conduct these criminal background checks on existing employees.

In the event a criminal record exists, consideration will be given to the relationship between the conviction and the responsibilities of the position that is or will be held. A relevant job-related conviction is grounds for non-selection of an applicant or termination of employment. "Conviction," as used in this section, is defined as including all felonies and misdemeanors, except minor traffic violations in relation to any position that does not require driving. Falsification of application material, including failure to disclose criminal convictions, is grounds for non-selection of an applicant or termination of employment.

All information obtained through a criminal background check will be considered confidential information and will not be released without written authorization by the individual who is subject to the inquiry, unless necessary as required by law.

3.6 Employee's Job Description. Upon your initial hire, you will be provided with a job description which will detail your title, direct supervisor, role, and specific duties. This aids Viable Options in developing and maintaining a clear structure of your job responsibilities, work activity, pay scale, and performance standards. Job descriptions are designed to give general job requirements and may be modified over time when deemed necessary. This determination is solely within the discretion of Viable Options, in consultation with your direct supervisor.

Employees may be asked to perform duties or responsibilities that are not part of their job description. In addition to the annual review, each job description, in consultation with your direct supervisor, may be updated to reflect changes if these new duties or responsibilities continue to be a consistent part of your job responsibilities.

3.7 Management Structure. Job descriptions will identify the specific leadership position to whom employees report as their direct supervisor. Unless otherwise specified, the CEO shall be the immediate supervisor of all staff. The CEO may assign supervisory responsibilities to other staff or individuals as needed, which will be determined upon hire.

3.8 Position Revision. The assignment of an employee may be revised to improve operational efficiency. When appropriate, the employee's direct supervisor will advise them of any changes, which may include the abolishment of a current position. When possible, a qualified employee may be offered another position. All positions may be reclassified and evaluated as responsibilities change.

3.9 Performance & Commitment Standards. At Viable Options, we maintain high standards of performance. You will be expected to demonstrate commitment, diligence, self-motivation, excellence, and creativity in everything that you do. We are eager for you to be successful as part of our organization and want your experience with us to be one that is mutually beneficial and enjoyable. You will be responsible for performing your job in the best and most efficient manner possible as the efficacy of our organization depends on the collaborative efforts of all staff.

Viable Options isn't your average desk job. Your involvement with us is not just about filling a position. You are joining with us to pioneer a brand new conversation that will forever change the way our community, nation, and culture respond to the issues of unintended pregnancy. What you do matters. Whatever the task, role, or position, everything that you bring to Viable Options as a member of our staff will in some way directly impact future generations – equipping them to model The Third Choice approach in their individual lives and spheres.

3.10 Your Representation of Viable Options. We recognize that the integrity of our organization and our continued ability to fulfill our purpose relies on those we recruit to our team. As an employee of Viable Options, you are an ambassador for our mission and give voice to our heart for the community. You represent the mission, vision, and values of Viable Options in everything you do, both in and out of the office. The way you carry yourself, your demeanor, dress, behavior, and speech are all a direct reflection on the organization.

Therefore, we expect a high level of excellence, teachability, and personal responsibility from our team. Our vision is for you to play a role in impacting our community, region, and nation through your hard work and creativity. We are eager to invest in you and your personal and professional growth throughout your time with us, but we must also prioritize the integrity of our organization at all times.

If an employee is found at any point to be a poor representation of Viable Options, and has either been unresponsive to feedback or has had difficulty in embracing the standards and values of our organization, the situation will be addressed by their direct supervisor or by the CEO of the organization. Such cases may be resolved by temporary probation or termination of employment.

3.11 Outside Employment. Viable Options does not limit an employee's activities during non-working hours, unless they interfere or conflict with the performance of their job or create a conflict of interest. Employees are required to advise their supervisor about all outside employment and how it may impact their service to Viable Options.

3.12 Changes to Personal Information. In compliance with insurance and tax requirements and to ensure that all official correspondence is received, a current record of every staff member's permanent address, primary phone, and emergency contact information must be maintained in company records. In the event of a staff member making changes to any of the above information, it is their responsibility to promptly notify their direct supervisor of the changes.

3.13 Personnel Records. Important events in an employee's history with Viable Options will be recorded and kept in their personnel file. Each employee's file will be maintained by their direct supervisor or the CEO. The only people authorized to access an employee's file are that employee's direct supervisor and the CEO. You may submit any written supplement you feel appropriate for your file. Examples of what each personnel file will contain are listed below:

1. Application for employment
2. Background checks
3. Payroll information
4. Salary agreement

5. Regular performance reviews
6. Changes to job description
7. Commendations
8. Corrective action warnings
9. Relevant medical documentation
10. Personality assessments
11. PTO accrual

**NOTE: Each employee's personnel file is the sole property of Viable Options. Employees may not have ready access to everything included in their file.

3.14 Anniversary Date. The first day you report to work will be recorded in your personnel file as your anniversary date and will be taken into consideration during assessment to any changes which include, but may not be limited to those regarding: pay, promotion opportunities, evaluation schedule, etc. Questions regarding this date should be directed to your direct supervisor.

4. Equal Opportunity & Reasonable Accommodation

4.1 Viable Options is committed to reflecting and expressing the inherent value of every person in all aspects of our service, practices, and company culture—ensuring that each individual feels continually loved and valued by Viable Options. These values are non-negotiable and should guide the actions of all staff and personnel.

4.2 Equal Opportunity. Viable Options has been and will remain an equal opportunity employer—demonstrating equal treatment in all practices relating to employment, which include, but may not be limited to decisions regarding: hiring, promotion, scheduling, benefits, and termination of employment. Viable Options provides fair treatment to all employees and complies with all applicable federal, state, and local labor laws for 501(c)3 organizations.

Equal opportunity means that all decisions relating to employment have been and will be made on a non-discriminatory basis. Viable Options will not discriminate against any person based on their gender, sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, ancestry, citizenship, pregnancy, age, physical or mental disability, military service, or any other protected classification or label, in total compliance with all local, state, and federal law.

4.3 Reasonable Accommodation. In the interest of equal opportunity employment, we will continue in our commitment to reasonable accommodation for disabilities, based on the discretion of Viable Options,

in due consideration of each individual case, and in accordance with applicable law. For otherwise qualified persons either currently employed, or potential applicants, we will ensure reasonable accommodation for physical and/or mental limitations, except in the case of undue hardship for the organization.

Notification of a physical and/or mental disability is the sole responsibility of the individual. For those cases that come to our attention, we will give due consideration and make reasonable accommodation wherever possible, consulting the individual in question in pursuit of a feasible and appropriate solution.

Official information from a healthcare provider may be necessary for the determination of a case for reasonable accommodation. This and all other information offered pursuant to this policy will be guarded as confidential and private, disclosed only when deemed necessary by the organization, and in accordance with applicable law.

Decisions made in regard to reasonable accommodation will likely vary dependent upon each individual case, the criteria and requirements of the applied-for position, and other factors deemed relevant to the situation.

Although requested accommodation is not guaranteed for every person, we will pursue fair and reasonable solutions to the extent of our ability, in order to ensure that every person has equal opportunity for employment.

5. Employee Wages & Pay Periods

5.1 Viable Options assigns pay scale and salary range based on the duties and responsibilities of each position as detailed in the job description. These pay scales take into account the prevailing rates in the community and in other, comparable organizations, the nature and scope of each job, and the relationship of job responsibility among all classifications and categories of positions within the organization. Approved salary within a pay grade scale can be based on several factors including education, performance, length of service, and work experience.

5.2 Employee Wages. Your specific rate of pay will be communicated to you at the time of hire. If at any time your rate of pay should change during your employment, due to a raise or decrease, the change will be discussed with you in person by your direct supervisor or the CEO.

Pay rates will vary for each team member, based on each individual's experience, performance, attendance, position, circumstances, time with the organization, attitude, and a variety of other relevant factors. Decisions regarding a potential increase in pay are also based on these and other factors.

Employee performance evaluations will be an opportunity for pay raises, though they are not necessarily guaranteed at that time.

5.3 Payroll. There are twenty-four pay periods in each calendar year. The company workweek begins Monday and continues through Friday. Employees are paid bi-weekly.

5.4 Paydays & Time Sheets. Employees are paid every two weeks. As a matter of policy, Viable Options does not provide paychecks in advance. Accurate reporting of actual hours worked in a designated timesheet is the responsibility of each hourly employee. Failure to turn in timesheets promptly may result in a delay in pay. Full-time employees are limited to 40 hours per workweek without prior approval from their supervisor.

5.5 Lost & Final Paychecks. Employees must report checks lost or otherwise missing to their direct supervisor immediately so that a stop-payment order may be initiated. Viable Options' accountant will determine when a replacement check can be issued. The final paycheck for employees who voluntarily resign or are involuntarily terminated will be available under the normal payroll cycle.

5.6 Eligibility for Salary Review. Periodic salary increases are not guaranteed to any employee. Increases, if provided, will be awarded on an annual basis. In order to be considered for an increase, an employee must have completed at least 12 months of service. Employees' salary changes will be considered during performance evaluations, and will be made in consideration of the outcome of these evaluations. In addition, any increase in pay will take into account changes to job description, length of service, and adjustments to the cost of living. The CEO and/or direct supervisor, in consultation with the board of directors, will review and approve changes to compensation within 30 days of the annual performance review.

5.7 Confidentiality of Compensation. To help foster a healthy work environment that is not driven or clouded by a comparison of wages earned—often resulting in a sense of competition and/or dissatisfaction—we strongly recommend that you refrain from disclosing your rate of pay to your fellow employees. The mission and vision of the organization should drive comradery, not the respective earnings of staff members. Should a choice to disclose your wages to a fellow staff member or members result in conflict within the team, the issue will be addressed by your direct supervisor or the CEO.

5.8 Overtime Pay. Forty hours constitutes a full week's work for hourly and salaried employees. All staff will be compensated at one and one-half times their hourly rate of pay for all time actually worked in excess of 40 hours by specific necessity or by the official request of their direct supervisor or the CEO. Any

time worked in excess of 40 hours must be officially approved to be eligible for overtime pay. Any time worked voluntarily in excess of 40 hours which is not officially approved will be considered volunteer hours.

5.9 Employee Benefits. Viable Options does not offer any employee benefits at this time.

6. Employee Hours & Scheduling

6.1 Attendance & Punctuality. All employees are expected to report promptly for work at their scheduled time. Consistent tardiness, early departure, and failure to report for work disrupt the efficient operation of the organization. If for any reason an employee is going to arrive after their scheduled time, it is their responsibility to notify their direct supervisor in advance.

Certain illnesses justify occasional and infrequent absence; however, consistent and habitual tardiness or failure to report for work when scheduled will not be tolerated for any reason, and will be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. A note from a doctor or medical office should document one or more absences due to illness. Without such documentation, the absence(s) will be considered unauthorized. Other authorized excuses such as court appearance will be accepted, but must be appropriately documented and promptly reported.

If an employee must be consistently absent or tardy due to health concerns or other serious, personal matters, they should report the situation to their direct supervisor or the CEO in order to determine the best course for securing an appropriate leave of absence.

6.2 Late Arrival & Early Departure. We ask that each member of our team demonstrates commitment and consistency in being present and prepared for normal working hours. That said, as long as commitment, consistency, and productivity are generally present, we're always happy to allow for flexibility in schedules should an employee need to arrive late or depart early.

6.3 Requesting Time Off. Viable Options values flexibility and productivity. If a staff member is on top of tasks, fulfilling responsibilities, and taking initiative, we're happy to accommodate them should they need to take time off. However, we do ask that, as a courtesy, at least one week's notice be given when possible in order to ensure a lack of disruption to operations. Employees can request time off by filling out the Time Off Request Form and submitting it to their direct supervisor for approval. We ask that employees exercise consideration of their responsibilities and contribution to operations when requesting time off. Should an employee be continually or excessively absent, even upon approval, it may be necessary to evaluate their commitment and value to the organization.

6.4 Excused Absences. Absences from work that are scheduled and/or approved, are considered excused absences, and generally will not lead to disciplinary action. Examples of excused absences

include, but may not be limited to: vacation, holidays, bereavement, jury or witness duty, military leave, and Workers' Compensation leave.

6.5 Recording Time Worked. In accordance with both state and federal wage laws, Viable Options requires honest and accurate reporting of all hours worked by hourly employees, as well as prompt and appropriate compensation for those hours. Upholding this policy requires that all staff members diligently and accurately record all hours actually worked for the organization, in full accordance with corporate policy.

Time worked for Viable Options may include situations outside of regular working hours, such as: attendance of company meetings and trainings, performing administrative tasks, curating company social media accounts, attending conferences, preparing for events, attending community meetings/coalitions, etc.

6.6 Time Verification & Correction. If at any point an employee makes or suspects an error in their time recorded after payroll information for the pay period has been submitted, it is their responsibility to immediately report this discrepancy to their direct supervisor, so that it can be promptly corrected. The employee will be asked to officially verify these changes in writing.

If a staff member believes that the amount on their paycheck does not accurately reflect the hours worked for that time period, they must report this to their direct supervisor immediately.

6.7 Fraudulent Hour Reporting. Should an employee knowingly falsify hours worked in a given pay period, or fail to correct inaccurate time recorded, this will be cause for immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Should such an issue come to the attention of the organization, it will be addressed by the entirety of the executive team.

6.8 Paid Time Off (PTO). We recognize that personal time away from your job is important for both your health and continued productivity. The advanced scheduling of all time off (paid or unpaid) is subject to the approval of the direct supervisor and is based on the current needs of the organization. Requests for PTO can be made via the Time Off Request Form on the Viable Options Employee Resources page. PTO will be awarded to each employee based on the nature and duration of their employment. This is detailed in the Viable Options PTO Policies & Procedures, available in PDF form on the Viable Options Employee Resources page.

When it comes to an extended leave of absence, your vacation benefits will not increase during your time away, and the time awarded for the year of your return will follow the percentages for the first year of hire, based upon the date of your return to work.

Accrued PTO will be applied to days taken off due to sickness or personal time for all salaried employees. Hourly employees can elect to use their accrued PTO for these days or to designate them as unpaid leave.

6.9 Employee Vacation. For personal vacation time, employees may use their accrued PTO. Requests for vacation should be made via the Time Off Request Form and submitted to your direct supervisor one month in advance. A submitted request does not guarantee approval. Your direct supervisor and/or the CEO will sign the request to signify official approval.

6.10 Federal Holidays. Viable Options is closed all federal holidays. These holidays will be paid for all full-time staff, and will not be deducted from accrued vacation time. We encourage you to spend that time with friends and family. However, if you're extra committed and want to come into the office on a holiday, feel free! We certainly won't discourage you from putting in extra time to keep things moving forward.

*Note: Should an employee elect to come into the office or to work remotely on Viable Options related tasks on a holiday, they will not receive holiday pay.

6.11 Severe Weather Procedure. Any decision to close Viable Options, other than for federal holidays, will be determined by the CEO and/or the executive team. Any changes to office hours or closure dates will be communicated to all staff and volunteers as soon as possible. However, should weather be severe and the office remain open, each employee is encouraged to use their best judgement to determine whether it is safe for them to travel. We care about our team, and urge that you always prioritize your health and safety in situations like this.

7. Office Procedures

7.1 Hours of Operation. Hours of operation run from 9-5, Monday through Friday. Employees should have arrived early and be ready to begin work by 9am each morning.

7.2 Opening procedure. The first team member to arrive in the morning is responsible for brewing coffee (see brewing procedure). Once everyone has arrived, all staff members will gather for a time of prayer and a brief team meeting. (Each team member will be given an entry code to the building upon hire.)

7.3 Closing procedure. The last team member to leave is responsible for turning off all lights, emptying and rinsing out the coffee pot, and locking the front door upon departure.

7.4 Lunchtime. Each day, a 20-30 minute lunch break will be taken, generally between 12-1pm. This is a valuable time to reconnect as a team and to refocus for afternoon tasks. Employees should bring lunch each day or store groceries in the kitchen, although grabbing lunch from an area restaurant is perfectly acceptable as well, so long as it does not detract excessive time from the day. While we like to maintain a routine, lunchtime is flexible in order to accommodate for variability in daily schedules. The entire team does not need to gather in order for lunch to take place. Please feel free to eat at anytime between the 12-1pm hour.

7.5 Kitchen Responsibilities. A clean and organized kitchen is a simple yet important part of our desire to demonstrate order and excellence. Food stored in the kitchen cupboards and refrigerator should be properly sealed, clean, and neat. Every employee is responsible for washing and putting away their own dishes—though we encourage pitching in and serving others—and for making sure all food is properly cleaned up, put away, or thrown out when spoiled.

7.6 Clean Workspace. We value an organic, communal work environment. This often means a lot of moving from place to place throughout the day. Wherever you work, whether it be at your own workspace or elsewhere, you are responsible for picking up after yourself, and for helping to keep the office neat and organized.

7.7 Employee Forms. All forms listed in these policies can be found in PDF form on the Viable Options Employee Resources page (viableoptions.org/employee-resources). If at any time you need to fill out a form for the purpose of requesting time off, appealing a decision, etc., as detailed in this manual, you can find the PDFs, print them, and submit them as directed.

7.8 Intellectual Property. Anything created or developed in relation to employment or volunteer service with Viable Options is “for hire”, and all intellectual property created and generated while employed with the organization will remain Viable Options property, including, but not limited to: books, articles, curriculum and training materials, recordings, videos, forms, marketing materials, designs, and any other material produced for the private or public use of Viable Options).

This policy applies without exception unless specifically expressed otherwise in written form prior to creation. An appeal can always be made to the executive staff, at which point negotiations will be held until an agreement is reached. Any transfer of the organization’s ownership in such intellectual property will be on a case-by-case basis and at the sole discretion of Viable Options’ executive team, with consultation of legal counsel, and evidenced in writing.

Any agreement between Viable Options and an individual employee or volunteer regarding copyrightable work will be recorded in writing in detail enough to identify the copyrightable work. The written document

will be signed by both parties with the individual maintaining one copy and the Organization maintaining a copy of the signed document on file.

8. Employee Performance Standards

8.1 The purpose of this section is to define Viable Options' general workplace expectations. By keeping employees informed of these expectations, both the organization and its staff will be able to operate in the most effective and healthy manner possible.

Viable Options holds a high standard of performance for all staff and will expect employees to adhere to them at all times.

The basic rule of the organization is very simple—if any employee engages in activity detrimental to the best interests of Viable Options, its members, or its employees, he or she will be appropriately disciplined. There will be consequences for improper behavior. The workplace guidelines listed in this manual should not be considered as exhaustive or all-inclusive, and should not be relied upon as a substitute for good judgement or common sense.

8.2 Excellence & Productivity. Viable Options operates at a high standard of excellence. All staff, volunteers, agents, and representatives of Viable Options will be expected to exhibit a commitment to creativity, resourcefulness, excellence, diligence, self-motivation and determination, and teachability. Furthermore, they must maintain professional etiquette and behavior in all they do. While we recognize that those on our staff will be skilled in different areas and have different expertise, we do expect and require each member of our team to be committed to improving their proficiency and performance in the areas that are important to Viable Options and its continued growth and effectiveness. While we will never demand perfection, we do require hard work, diligence, and a desire to grow.

At Viable Options, we endeavor to produce nothing less than the highest quality of excellence. All work done by employees should be done to the very best of their ability, with precision, forethought, and quality, always asking the question, *"How can I do this better?"* The standard of excellence for work produced at Viable Options is not up for individual interpretation. Knowingly settling for a lesser quality of work than what is expected by the Organization will be cause for disciplinary action, and repeated carelessness, flippancy, or knowing production of poor quality work will likely result in termination of employment.

We value collaboration and robust conversation. Should you have difficulty with a project or task, or find that you are unsure as to the standard of quality expected, be sure to communicate this to your direct supervisor, and to ask for assistance and feedback as needed. We would rather you ask a thousand questions and produce a quality product, than ask no questions and waste valuable time in producing something that is not useful to the organization or is not up to corporate standards.

8.3 Managing Correspondence. All employees are expected to be on top of their correspondence to their direct supervisor or the CEO at all times. This means responding promptly to emails, texts, and phone calls—especially during working hours. We understand that life gets busy and that these communications can often get lost, but when your direct supervisor, co-worker, or even someone from the community is relying on you to respond to their queries, it is your responsibility to be responsible and professional in prioritizing that correspondence to the best of your ability.

8.4 Carte Blanche Feedback. What we write and say is paramount. When it comes to any form of communication, whether written material, design, marketing, or presentations, every member of the Viable Options team, regardless of position or length of service, is entrusted with equal responsibility in enforcing a standard of excellence and clarity and giving unsolicited feedback whenever necessary. This applies especially when it comes to framing key concepts or wording used to communicate an important idea. The integrity of our mission is guarded and upheld by the vocabulary we use. Each employee is tasked with being vigilant when it comes to all areas of communication, and with bringing any concerns or suggestions to the attention of the department head or staff member working on a specific project, even if outside their purview. Should a concern persist, they should notify their direct supervisor and/or the CEO of any use of vocabulary that may potentially compromise the integrity of Viable Options' mission, message, and work.

8.5 Visits from Friends & Family. At Viable Options, we value community, friendship, and family. We want our office to be a place where people feel the freedom to come and go, and we want the friends, family, and community of our staff to feel welcomed and valued.

As long as productivity and commitment are continually evident in an employee's work, we have no qualms about allowing this type of flexibility. However, we do ask that certain guidelines be observed, in order to avoid excessive disruption to the focus and productivity of working hours. First, we ask that visits of a purely social nature be kept under 20 minutes. However, if the visitor is a current or potential donor to the organization, feel free to spend up to 45 minutes with them, and to take the opportunity to give them an update and to cast vision for what Viable Options is doing.

Individual employees receiving visitors during work hours are personally responsible for the visitors' conduct and safety for the length of their visit.

Secondly, the behavior of both the employee and the visitor must at all times reflect the values and service standards of the company, and any phone calls, customer visits, or work responsibilities must be given top priority at all times. Excessive breaks or social visits during working hours may be a cause for disciplinary action.

8.6 Personal Phone and Social Media Usage. Employees should generally keep personal calls and text messaging fairly brief and to a minimum during work hours. While we don't maintain a specific policy on this, we ask that each member of the staff prioritize productivity and maintain a high level of focus and excellence at all times. If you need to make or receive a longer phone call (15 minutes or more), obtain permission from your direct supervisor beforehand. When it comes to social media, we ask that you avoid any prolonged use of social media apps throughout the day and that any concentrated social media use (e.g. exceeding five minutes) be reserved for your lunch break.

8.7 Work Supplies. All employees should bring to the office a good quality, high functioning computer (preferably an Apple computer) that is fully updated. In the event that an employee does not have access to a personal computer, daily work may be completed on one of the Viable Options' office computers.

8.8 Printer Use. Ink and paper are expensive. When printing (particularly lengthy documents), employees should double and triple check that everything is correct in order to avoid unnecessary waste. When it comes to personal use, feel free to use Viable Options' printers for your own needs. We simply ask that you refrain from frivolous or excessive use and avoid printing documents more than 40 pages in length. As an organization, we do a lot of printing already, so let's try not to throw all caution to the wind.

8.9 Mileage Reimbursement. For all approved work-related travel, employees will be reimbursed for their mileage in accordance with applicable tax law, provided that an official mileage reimbursement form is submitted within six weeks of travel. All mileage reimbursement must be cleared in advance with your direct supervisor. Should a case arise where mileage is incurred on behalf of the organization unexpectedly and/or without prior approval or preparation, an appeal can be submitted via the Appeals Form to your direct supervisor.

8.10 Viable Options Events. All employees will be expected to participate in major Viable Options events as well as other activities throughout the year which are directly relevant to their role, or at which their presence may be deemed particularly valuable. We understand that schedules are often busy, and that it may not be possible for an employee to attend every event. However, we will do our best to give advance notice, and we ask that each member of our team prioritizes these events in their calendar whenever possible.

8.11 Personal Property. Viable Options is not responsible for any personal property that is lost, damaged, stolen, or destroyed while on company premises. Employees are encouraged to exercise discretion in what they bring to work, and should be mindfully responsible of anything that belongs to them while in the office.

9. Computer, Email, & Internet Use

9.1 Standards of Acceptable Use. We make company computers, email, and internet access available to employees and volunteers for tasks, activities, and research that is consistent with the furtherance of Viable Options' mission and work. These resources should only be used in a manner that does not create a risk of legal liability to the Organization or the users. This policy applies to all personal use as well.

9.2 Ownership & Access. The information created on, stored in, sent from, or received by a computer owned by Viable Options belongs to the Organization. Viable Options reserves the right to review, audit, intercept, access, monitor, sample, and disclose all such information, and intends to exercise that right when deemed in the best interests of the Organization.

Any information it obtains may be disclosed to any person, either within or outside of the Organization, without the permission of the employee. Thus, the confidentiality of any information created, stored, sent, or received using Viable Options' equipment, email, or network resources should not be expected or assumed. Employees expressly waive any right of privacy in anything they create, store, send, or receive via email using this equipment, email system, and/or network access. Even when information is deleted, it is still possible to retrieve and read it. Further, the use of passwords for security does not guarantee confidentiality.

Viable Options reserves the right to utilize software that makes it possible to identify and block access to websites containing sexually explicit content, or other material deemed objectively inappropriate or offensive.

9.3 Personal Use. All computers provided by Viable Options exist for the sole purpose of helping the organization to better accomplish its mission and objectives and are to be used for that purpose. The organization is aware that there are times when users would like to use computers for personal purposes and, provided that such use is in compliance with all other provisions of this policy, such personal use is permitted. Users must be aware that Viable Options retains the right to access, review, intercept, audit, monitor, sample, and disclose all information created, sent or received, or stored in all computers, as provided above, even in the case of personal use.

9.4 Prohibitions. All equipment available to users is to be used for the purpose of enhancing the work of the organization and should not be used in any way which would detract from that work or which may create the risk of any legal liability to the organization, or other users. Viable Options' policies on sexual and other types of harassment apply fully to the use of company computers, email, and internet network.

Prohibited use of computers, email, or internet network includes, but is not necessarily limited to: that which involves creating, storing, transmitting, receiving, or otherwise communicating or accessing:

- Pornography or images, text, or other information that contains pornographic or other sexually explicit materials (which terms will be broadly construed), including, but not necessarily limited to: the creation, transmission, receipt, retrieval, viewing, or storage of emails containing such materials, and accessing, retrieving, downloading, uploading, copying, or viewing of such text, images, or other information from the internet
- Information that creates an atmosphere that is sexually or racially abusive
- Information that is libelous, defamatory, or abusive
- Any message or other information that would violate any applicable federal or state laws, Viable Options' rules, regulations, or policies, or any message or other information that is unlawful or used for an unlawful purpose
- Any copyrighted materials or other information, or any trade secrets or other proprietary information or similar materials, in violation of law
- Any email or other information which the user knows is likely to contain a computer virus (e.g. a self-executing program), which corrupts the integrity of data or causes the loss of information to the recipient

In general, users should be aware that, despite its simplicity and convenience, digital communication is no less significant than written communication; and creation and transmission of emails should be approached with the same caution and care as is exercised when creating and sending written communications on behalf of the organization. Treat every person you write as if they are looking for opportunity to discredit the work of Viable Options, its employees, and The Third Choice approach, and remember that emails can be easily forwarded to an unlimited number of recipients.

9.5 Personal Software. The use of personal software on Viable Options' equipment is permitted only with the express written approval of the CEO or a direct supervisor. Loading personal software is the number one means of introducing viruses into a computer network. Valid software licenses are required for all software loaded onto the network.

9.6 Home Computer Use. Viable Options retains ownership of any software which is purchased in connection with it. This software cannot be copied or installed on personal computers for any reason not expressly approved by the CEO.

All data and information on company computers belongs to Viable Options and should not be copied or given to any person or loaded onto any other computer.

9.7 Violations. Employees who violate this policy or use a company computer for improper purposes shall be subject to the restriction or termination of their access to such equipment, as well as appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Anyone who becomes aware of a violation of this policy must immediately notify their direct supervisor or the CEO.

10. Employee Representation Standards

10.1 Attire. Excellence is an essential aspect of everything that we do at Viable Options. This translates to how each member of our team presents themselves while in the office or at any event where they are representing the organization.

Employees are expected to present themselves during working hours in attire that is professional and appropriate to their position and to the nature of work performed. Employees having personal contact with members of the community should be particularly conscious of maintaining dress, grooming, and hygiene standards.

While there is no specific dress code, there are certain things that we do expect from our employees. First, we ask that jeans, graphic tees, hoodies, shorts, leggings, hats, sneakers, flip-flops, and any type of visually overwhelming attire (e.g. sequins, sparkles, neon colors, etc.) be avoided. Attire at Viable Options should be business casual and professional. Well tailored clothing should be worn at all times and excessively tight or baggy clothing should be avoided. We also ask that shirts be long enough to cover the midriff.

Employees who are in doubt or have questions about specific personal appearance standards should consult with their direct supervisor. Any employee who appears for work in a manner that does not conform to these standards may be required to return home to correct the situation, and the period of absence will be treated as unpaid leave. We will do our best to clearly communicate Viable Options' standards and expectations regarding dress and deportment, and ask that our employees demonstrate patience and understanding as we endeavor to ensure a cohesive expression of excellence and professionalism throughout the Organization.

Any issues regarding attire will be addressed by your direct supervisor or by the CEO.

10.2 Travel & Conference Attire. When traveling on behalf of Viable Options, employees have the freedom to dress more casually than they would in the office—though they are asked to always bear in

mind that they are still representing the organization and should maintain a presentable and professional appearance.

When attending any event in relation to work for Viable Options, professional attire, as outlined in article 10.1, is required at all times, including any after-hour events at which you are still representing the organization. If you have any questions regarding attire for travel or conferences, you can bring it to the attention of your direct supervisor.

10.3 Personal Grooming & Hygiene. All employees are expected to exercise personal care and hygiene in order to maintain Viable Options' standards of professional excellence, adhering to the following standards at all times:

- Always arrive to work clean, bathed, and having exercised appropriate application of necessary deodorant
- Subtle fragrances are allowed (and encouraged), but should never be overpowering; all cologne, perfume, aftershave, hair products, lotions, etc. should be understated and never applied in excess
- Makeup should be understated, tasteful, and fairly natural in tone (bright colors, sparkles, or overly glossy substances should be avoided)
- Fingernails should be properly trimmed and cleaned. Fingernail polish should be relatively subdued in color and should be kept neat and properly maintained to the greatest extent possible
- Hair should be clean, kempt, and neatly worn
- Facial hair must be properly maintained

10.4 Political Activities. We value active citizenship and the right of each person to hold and express their own political views and convictions. We encourage our employees to be politically aware and engaged and to exercise their civic responsibility of voting, but ask that all political activities (e.g. blogs, articles, Facebook posts, demonstrations, volunteering, etc.) are kept fully private from the public.

Due to the political nature of the field in which we operate, Viable Options employees are prohibited from participating in political demonstrations of any kind. Such demonstrations include, but may not be limited to: rallies, protests, picketing, social media posts/conversations, and distributing literature which endorses a particular political party, candidate, organization, or platform.

Pins, hats, or other apparel which endorses a specific political candidate, party, or ideal must not be worn in public places. Staff members are also prohibited from producing, posting, or distributing leaflets, notices, posters, or other materials of any kind on Viable Options' premises, or while on Viable Options related business.

While we respect and value the right of each person to freely express their views and beliefs, we also recognize the compromising impact such activities may have on our status as a nonpolitical intermediary. Therefore, we ask that you refrain from any and all public or online political activities, including engagement

with politically charged posts or pictures on Facebook, while in the employment or volunteer service of Viable Options.

Questions or concerns regarding this policy can be brought to your direct supervisor or the CEO.

10.5 Religious & Social Activism. While representing Viable Options, employees are prohibited from wearing pins, hats, or other apparel which may promote a specific religious ideal or social cause. While we respect the views of our employees and fully encourage their right to independent thought and freedom of expression and religion, we recognize that such expressions by individuals, if made during working hours or while operating in an official capacity (including traveling to and from official Viable Options events), may be misconstrued as representing the views and beliefs of the Organization. Therefore, we ask that each member of the staff exercise discretion and consideration in all public or overt endorsements of their personal ideological, social, and religious views, and ensure that such expressions are made in a way which maintains the integrity of Viable Options' mission, message, and values.

Questions or concerns regarding this policy can be brought to your direct supervisor or the CEO.

10.6 Distribution & Solicitation. Engaging in solicitation of any kind is prohibited on company premises or while representing the organization. This policy applies to employees, volunteers, board members, representatives, and community members. Staff members are not permitted to engage in solicitation during working hours, unless on behalf of Viable Options.

11. Social Media Policies

11.1 We recognize that social media is an integral part of our daily lives, and is an efficient and enjoyable way to network with others. However, the use of social media carries with it certain risks and responsibilities, especially as relates to the work of Viable Options.

It is highly important to us that our representation to the community is professional and upholds the three pillars of our approach: being non-political, non-manipulative, and relational. Upon hire, employees will be asked to review all social media accounts, and either remove or change the privacy settings on any and all political, unprofessional, or inappropriate content. Should you have any questions or concerns about this policy, feel free to bring them to your direct supervisor or the CEO. During the orientation period, all employees will be advised regarding the specific guidelines for social media etiquette, and will have the opportunity to ask questions and gain clarity as needed.

11.2 Prohibited Use. To protect the integrity and reputation of the organization, certain forms of social media use are specifically prohibited for all employees, volunteers, and representatives. These include, but may not necessarily be limited to:

- Engaging in illegal activity (e.g. trespassing)
- Under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol
- Behaving in a manner that is excessively suggestive and/or disorderly
- Driving while using your cell phone
- Participating in a political demonstration protesting/endorsing a particular politician, policy, platform, and/or ideal
- Using excessive profanity or rude language
- Using religious language that could be condemning or misconstrued as inflammatory
- Engaging in activities and/or behavior that may affect your credibility as a representative of Viable Options, and by extension, the credibility of the organization itself

As an employee of Viable Options, you represent more than the organization, its mission, and its work. You also represent all Viable Options staff (past, present, and future), volunteers, representatives, board members, donors, and community supporters. Therefore, we expect from our employees a high level of professionalism and maturity in everything that they post to social media.

11.3 Work-Related Content. Any social media posts that are made of co-workers, office space, or work events (including travel to and from the event), must remain professional and follow strictly to all aspects of the social media policy. Any photos, videos, or recordings of staff or office space may not include any sensitive or proprietary information including, but not limited to: upcoming marketing campaigns; donor or financial info; personal client details; internal memos or documents; upcoming projects; whiteboard planning, etc. Any staff member, volunteer, or representative of Viable Options who fails to adhere to this standard will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

11.4 Honesty & Accuracy. Employees are expected to always be honest and accurate when posting information or news on social media. If a mistake is made, correct it as soon as possible and be honest about any correction, edit, or alteration made to a previous post. Information or statements you know to be false about specific individuals or organizations should never be posted. Employees are reminded that online posts are permanent and the internet archives almost everything. This means that even deleted posts can be searched and discovered.

11.5 Viable Options' Social Media Accounts. Only authorized personnel will be allowed to access the organization's social media accounts. All employees with said access will be expected to strictly understand and adhere to the official guidelines for use, which will be provided to them for their review and acknowledgement via the Social Media Policies & Procedures handbook. Violation of these policies in any way will be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

11.6 Prohibited Content. Viable Options' policies against sexual and other types of harassment apply fully to employees' personal use of social media. Employees are strongly encouraged not to comment on, share, or repost anything which displays sexually explicit messages, ethnic slurs, racial epithets, or anything that could be construed as harassment or disparaging to others. Should Viable Options be made aware of such online behavior, your direct supervisor will contact you to learn more about the post(s) in question and determine a course of corrective action.

11.7 Online Communication With Minors. Employees using their personal social media accounts to communicate with youth on behalf of the organization, should act at all times as if they were communicating in person. All communications should be made with transparency, in a group setting, or not at all. If an employee must send an individual message to a minor, they should, when appropriate, include an additional member of the staff and/or the child's parent, guardian, or youth leader. If a minor reaches out to you via social media, keep the conversation personable and professional. Don't engage with personal questions or respond to any solicitations not relevant to the organization. Employees must never initiate a one-on-one relationship with a minor in a casual manner through their work with Viable Options.

All online interaction with individuals who are underage must adhere to the policies contained in article 14.9.

11.8 Standards of Use. Unlike 2010, when social media was simply for enjoyment, today, it is a record that can be carefully combed through in order to discredit you as an individual, and, by extension, the organization.

Employees should be aware that, due to their affiliation with Viable Options, any statements made through social media could be interpreted by others as a representation of the organization, its beliefs, and its stance on a given topic or issue.

We recognize that, to some, this policy may seem invasive and/or unreasonably restrictive. However, Viable Options is operating in an extremely unique context, as a nonpolitical intermediary regarding an issue that is extremely politically divisive and controversial. Therefore, we will communicate this policy upfront, and will expect all Viable Options' staff and representatives to adhere to it strictly.

For the purposes of this policy, social media includes all means of communication or posting of information or content of any sort through electronic communications or on the internet. This includes, but may not be limited to: personal blogs, social networking websites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Vimeo, Instagram, Snapchat, Youtube, etc.), online bulletin boards, or chat rooms, regardless of their association with Viable Options.

12. Work Environment Standards

12.1 Honor & Civility. We value all persons and are dedicated to enriching the lives of our staff, volunteers, donors, and community. We will diligently model, cultivate, and maintain an environment in which every person is treated with integrity, dignity, honor, and respect.

We will show preference, hospitality, and civility in all aspects of our service and company culture, and require this same standard of behavior from all employees, volunteers, agents, and representatives of Viable Options.

12.2 Empathy. An important part of creating an enriching environment for our staff and community is practicing and exercising empathy for every person. Valuing others means showing deference and respecting and valuing their thoughts and feelings—even when we disagree. Every member of the Viable Options staff is expected to operate with empathy at all times and in all situations, and to endeavor to express an understanding of others' inherent value

12.3 Offenses. At Viable Options, we value accountability, mutual respect, consideration, and communication. We work hard to cultivate an enjoyable work environment; however, we recognize that we are all imperfect and that, from time to time and regardless of intention, feelings will be hurt and offenses will occur. In these situations, we fully expect each member of our team to exercise discretion, grace, consideration, and maturity in their response.

Should a team member experience an offense which interferes with their ability to work and/or interact with another member or members of their team, they should go directly to the offending party or parties and calmly, respectfully, and graciously attempt to resolve the issue with them. If this attempt is unsuccessful, they should involve their direct supervisor. Should this be unsuccessful, the issue will be brought to the CEO of the organization who will endeavor to resolve the issue promptly and appropriately.

12.4 Gossip & Slander. Gossip and slander will not be tolerated in any form (whether verbal, digital, written, or otherwise). It is extremely important to us that we provide a safe and encouraging work environment for all people. Should any employee have a grievance or concern relating to the organization or its members, it is their responsibility to bring these to their direct supervisor and/or the CEO of the organization in an appropriate and respectful manner.

If it is discovered that gossip and/or slander took place, the executive team will sit down with the employee in question to gain an understanding of the situation and administer proper disciplinary action as needed, based on the severity of the gossip and/or slander.

A single warning will be issued to any employee found in violation of this policy. Upon a second violation, the employee will be sent home on a three-day unpaid leave. Upon a third violation, they will be sent home on a one-week unpaid leave. And, upon a fourth violation, their employment will be terminated.

At Viable Options, we guard one another and ensure that we always speak well of all persons connected to the organization. This doesn't mean everyone is perfect or doing a perfect job. But, it does mean that we value corporate unity and strength above drawing attention to the faults and shortcomings of others—even when criticism seems warranted. We will always work diligently to refrain from exposing the mistakes and flaws of our team members and to extend grace wherever possible, and we fully expect our staff to operate with the same level of discretion and care toward the Organization and its staff at all times.

13. Communication & Problem Solving

13.1 Addressing Concerns. We do our best to communicate with our staff and to value each member individually. Because we place such a premium on relationship, Viable Options is structured to make communication as simple as possible. If you have a concern, bring it respectfully to your direct supervisor.

Here are the types of problems and concerns that we especially want to be made aware of promptly:

- Those concerning consistent mismanagement by a department head or a member of the leadership team
- Those concerning a policy or situation which makes it difficult for an employee to fulfill their responsibilities
- Any conflict or situation that interferes with a safe and enjoyable work environment, up to and including instances of harassment and/or violence
- Any interaction or situation that makes you feel uncomfortable and/or concerned

We value the feedback and perspective of all our staff and will always take seriously any grievances or concerns expressed to us. Such concerns will be promptly and appropriately addressed to the best of our ability. Employees may appeal any decision or express concerns to the executive team at any time.

13.2 Submitting Appeals. Should a decision be made or an action taken by your direct supervisor which you believe to be unfounded, inappropriate, or made without due consideration of all available facts, you may appeal that decision via the Employee Appeals Form (available in PDF form on the Viable Options Employee Resources page). These forms should be submitted to the direct supervisor and will be promptly reviewed by the executive team. This form may also be used should good cause exist for making an exception to a company policy.

13.3 Reporting Broken or Faulty Equipment. If a piece of equipment is broken or faulty, inform your direct supervisor immediately. If the problem goes unaddressed, be persistent and don't hesitate to contact the CEO directly. Proper care and maintenance of company equipment is essential in upholding our commitment to excellence of service.

If an employee breaks or damages a piece of company equipment (e.g. computer, phone, etc.), they are responsible to immediately report the incident to their direct supervisor.

14. Standards of Conduct

14.1 Integrity. Integrity is a core value at Viable Options, and is non-negotiable in any and all aspects of our operation. We fully expect and require all staff members, volunteers, and representatives of Viable Options to hold themselves at all times to a standard of honesty and moral character and to conduct themselves in a way which accurately reflects the values of the Organization. Should any staff member, volunteer, or representative of Viable Options be found in violation of these standards of conduct by operating dishonestly, knowingly mishandling their work responsibilities or official representation, or in any way endangering the reputation and/or operation of Viable Options, they will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

14.2 Ethical Decision Making. This handbook cannot account for the diverse, unique, and complex situations that may arise throughout the course of your employment with Viable Options. There may be times when a specific policy or applicable law clearly provides a suitable outcome. However, it is likely that many such situations may arise which will require the employee apply good judgement and principle in order to determine the best ethical decision.

In moments such as these, employees, volunteers, agents, and representatives of Viable Options are expected to adhere to the following principles:

1. Never engage in any activity that is 1) prohibited by federal, state, or local law, or 2) inconsistent with Viable Options' policies, practices, or values.
2. Duly consider how each potential action or decision may impact the Organization, its clients, its donors, its staff, and its relationship with the community.
3. Always avoid, when possible, actions or decisions that may have the appearance of dishonesty or wrongdoing—even if the action is innocent.
4. Always consult a supervisor when negotiating a complex ethical situation. Submitting such situations to the scrutiny of many advisors and authorities provides security and accountability which promote healthy decision making.

14.3 Falsification or Alteration of Documents. Falsifying or unlawfully altering any official document (whether physical or digital) pertaining to the Organization, its operation, its clients, its donors, or its staff, or providing false information in such documents is a serious offense and will be cause for immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and/or appropriate legal action.

14.4 Confidentiality. During the course of your employment with Viable Options, you may overhear, observe, or be given access to information of a highly sensitive and confidential nature. This information may be contained in organization records, official correspondence, donor lists, interoffice memoranda, conversations, or other similar documents. As an employee of Viable Options you are in a position of trust, and have an obligation to the Organization and to all persons connected with it to see that the confidentiality of this information is strictly maintained and protected in accordance with the Viable Options Confidentiality Policy Agreement. Disclosure of confidential information compromises both you and Viable Options and seriously erodes the confidence placed by others in our organization. You may not disclose, duplicate, or use this information except as required in the performance of your specific duties. This includes sharing proprietary information with fellow employees within the organization. Failure to adhere to these standards will most definitely result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. All outside queries concerning the operations of the organization, or to any of the areas outlined above, should be directed to the CEO or your direct supervisor.

14.5 Protecting Personal Information. Any information or documentation pertaining to the Organization, its operation, its clients, its donors, or its staff is categorized as confidential information and must therefore be treated with the utmost caution, discretion, and care. When handling, collecting, processing, recording, or storing such information, necessary precautions must be taken to ensure that it remains protected, proprietary, and confidential, in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, and with the policies and practices of Viable Options.

The following guidelines must always be adhered to when handling, collecting, processing, recording, or storing confidential information which meets the above criteria:

1. Take precautionary measures to prevent such information being accessed through external sources, where possible and consistent with best practices.
2. Anyone employed by or conducting business or providing services on behalf of Viable Options must sign the Organization's confidentiality agreement and adhere to its contents.
3. Information related to Viable Options' operations, clients, donors, or staff must never be shared with any person, persons, or entity outside of the Organization, except when permitted by law and corporate policy. And in the event that such a case arises, you are required to consult with your direct supervisor prior to the delivery of any information to an outside source.

14.6 Off-Duty Conduct. Generally, the off-duty activities of employees are their own personal matter. However, it is of the utmost importance that staff members are aware at all times of their role in representing Viable Options to the community, and should therefore hold themselves to a standard of excellence and professionalism in all activities that are visible to the community as long as they are employed by the organization.

Certain types of off-duty activities by employees pose particular concern. Employees who engage in or are associated with illegal, immoral, or harmful conduct which adversely affects or is in conflict with the standards and principles held by Viable Options and/or affects the employee's ability or credibility to carry out their employment responsibilities, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

14.7 Public Relations. The CEO or Director of Communications will be the official spokesperson for Viable Options in all matters of official comment. Unless expressly permitted to do so, employees should never speak to media professionals on behalf of Viable Options, or originate or release news concerning policies, procedures, operations, strategic planning, finances, or other official matters concerning the organization for use in any medium of communication without review and authorization by the CEO. All media inquiries should be referred directly to the Director of Communications or the CEO. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

14.8 Conflict of Interest. A conflict of interest exists when you are in a position that causes you to choose between your personal interests and the best interests of the Organization, its clients, its donors, and its staff. Independent judgment is critical to the performance of your job. To maintain that independence, avoid any employment, business dealing, relationship, or activity that could impair independent thinking and judgment.

You must always act in the best interests of Viable Options and aim to safeguard its reputation from the negative effects of conflicts of interest. Use prudent judgment to avoid any potential conflict of interest situations that might be subject to question. Even the appearance of a conflict can be interpreted negatively. You may know that you are behaving appropriately, but the mere fact that a question can be raised may hurt the Organization.

Employees must not initiate, approve, or participate in purchases from a vendor or service provider in which either the employee or a member of his/her family has a financial interest, without prior full disclosure to and approval by the CEO.

Employees must not accept employment, payment, gifts, tips, gratuities or kickbacks which would give the appearance of a conflict of interest or reflect negatively on Viable Options or its service to the community.

If a conflict of interest should develop or an employee has any doubts, the matter should be discussed with their direct supervisor. The CEO and board of directors have final authority on matters dealing with the above.

14.9 Inter-company Dating Policy. Viable Options values close community and inter-company friendships. However, clear boundaries are of the utmost importance for conducting a healthy environment and enhancing productivity. Although this policy does not prevent the development of close friendships or romantic relationships between co-workers, it does establish specific boundaries as to how such relationships are to be conducted during working hours, when representing Viable Options in the public, and within the working environment. Employees are asked to refrain from excessive displays of affection (whether physical or otherwise), both at work and while representing the Organization. They are also asked to refrain from discussing interpersonal matters during working hours.

Individuals in supervisory or managerial roles are subject to more stringent requirements under this policy, due to their status as authority figures, their access to sensitive information, and their ability to affect the terms and conditions of employment of individuals in subordinate positions.

As such, dating between a supervisor and a subordinate is prohibited. If such a relationship develops, the staff members involved are required to immediately disclose the relationship to their direct supervisor or the CEO. The situation will be processed thoroughly to consider the impact that said relationship would have on the Organization and work environment. If needed, one or both parties may be transferred to different departments and/or positions within the Organization.

Viable Options may also refuse to hire someone if doing so would cause a violation of this policy.

14.10 Issuance and Use of Company Property and Equipment. Any property and/or equipment belonging to Viable Options, including items personally issued to an employee to perform their jobs (e.g. keys, credit cards, computers, phones, etc.) remain the property of Viable Options. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that such property is properly maintained and not used for any activity which violates or fails to uphold the policies, procedures, mission, and/or corporate values of Viable Options.

Personally-issued items will be recorded in the employee's personnel file via an Issuance of Equipment Form, and must be returned to the organization at the time of the employee's resignation or termination.

14.11 Non-smoking Policy. While smoking is not directly prohibited by company policy, it is highly discouraged as a general practice, in order to maintain a standard of excellence in individual presentation, performance, and representation of the Organization. Smoking on company premises is strictly prohibited. Employees must restrict their smoking to outdoors during regularly scheduled breaks. All staff must wash their hands before returning to work following a smoke break. Employees are also asked not to smoke while representing the organization at public events, conferences, meetings, etc.

14.12 Substance Abuse Policy. Misuse of illegal drugs and alcohol is inconsistent with a safe, productive, and healthy work environment. Therefore, employees are required to report to work in an appropriate mental and physical condition in order to perform their duties in a satisfactory manner. When working, present on company premises, or representing the Organization, all staff members, volunteers, and representatives of Viable Options are prohibited from: use, possession, purchase, sale, manufacture, dispensation, or being under the influence of illegal drugs or unauthorized medical substances (any medication not officially prescribed by a doctor). “Under the influence,” for the purposes of this policy, is defined as an inability to perform work in a productive manner and/or being in a physical or mental condition which creates a risk to the safety and well-being of the affected employee, other co-workers, the public, or company property. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Viable Options reserves the right to require a drug test if drug use is suspected.

This policy also applies to other controlled substances not in accord with a valid prescription.

Viable Options does not prohibit the consumption of alcohol at community events, dinner meetings, and other settings in which it may be appropriate, present, and available. If alcohol is available at a business event or during business-related travel, employees and representatives of Viable Options should use wise judgement and be sensitive to the environment around them, as well as any negative perception that their consumption may create. In cases such as this, all staff members, volunteers, and representatives of the Organization are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with Viable Options’ standards of excellence and professionalism, and are expected to always err on the side of extreme moderation. Alcohol consumption that is considered excessive or inappropriate will be cause for disciplinary action.

This policy also does not prohibit employees from the lawful use and possession of prescribed medications. Staff members must, however, consult with their doctors about the effect of such medications on their ability to work safely, and promptly disclose any necessary restrictions to their direct supervisor. (Employees should not, however, disclose underlying medical conditions unless specifically directed to do so by their physician.)

If a team member is found in violation of this policy, they will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

If a team member finds that they are struggling with substance abuse, they are encouraged to speak to their direct supervisor in order to obtain assistance and support.

14.13 Sexual Misconduct And Child Abuse. An area of great concern is the possibility of sexual misconduct in regard to minors and children who may come into contact with the Organization. This type of behavior is strictly prohibited. Sexual misconduct includes, but may not be limited to: any inappropriate or illegal behavior of a sexual or violent nature directed toward or in the presence of children. This behavior is defined as consistent with the criteria described in Section 16 and in the Viable Options Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy (available in PDF form on the Viable Options Employee Resources page).

This type of behavior may also be the result of a mental health condition, such as paraphilia (including pedophilia, exhibitionism, or voyeurism). Employees with any of these conditions will not be allowed at any point to interact with children or the community. Any employee with any of the above in his or her history will be prohibited from interactions with children and youth, and will be strictly monitored throughout their employment.

To promote sensitivity to the complainant and justice to all parties, Viable Options will investigate all allegations of such inappropriate behavior promptly, thoroughly, and with the highest degree of confidentiality permitted by the circumstances. Any violation will be cause for immediate reporting to the proper local authorities, and will be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, pending the outcome of an official investigation.

All Viable Options' employees and those volunteers who work with minors are required to receive and certify completion of required training courses under the Child & Youth Protection Policies in article 14.14. Copies of certification will be made a part of the employee's personnel record.

14.14 Child & Youth Protection Policies. All staff, as well as non-paid volunteers in the service of Viable Options, are required to familiarize themselves with these policies as adopted and published by the Organization, and set forth in the Viable Options Policies & Procedures Manual. Those policies establish, among others, the following obligations of all employees, volunteers, agents, and representatives of the Organization:

1. To report directly to the CEO any violations of any of these policies and procedures by staff, volunteers, or others
2. To abide by public-reporting laws in the case of incidents of suspected child abuse or neglect, reporting to the county director of Department of Social Services promptly (such reports will be handled by the CEO)
3. To understand that any staff member will, under the policies, be placed on temporary unpaid leave or suspension if a credible complaint is made regarding staff violations of the Child & Youth Protection Policies. Any allegation of harm, injury, or other violation of any nature towards a minor will be investigated and credible violations of these policies will result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment and due legal process
4. To understand that violations of the policies, even those in which the executive team has conducted an investigation, do not preclude investigation and/or prosecution under applicable federal, state, and local law
5. To participate in staff training related to child sexual abuse prevention

6. To ensure all those working on behalf of the Organization in an official capacity have a completed background check on file and available for inspection, and that training and education on Viable Options' policies are conducted on a regular basis

14.15 Reporting Unethical Conduct. Viable Options' commitment to integrity demands a high level of accountability in all aspects of care, service, and operation. We expect all employees, volunteers, agents, and representatives of Viable Options to promptly submit any concerns that they have about potential unethical activity or conduct by any member of the Organization, including those in leadership. Such reports made in good faith will never be penalized or ignored, and, whenever possible, Viable Options will keep such reports anonymous and confidential. Retaliation against employees who report unethical conduct in good faith will not be tolerated and will be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

15. Disciplinary Action

15.1 Disciplinary Conditions. It is the policy of Viable Options to maintain a harmonious, productive, healthy, and positive workplace environment, and thereby make work relations an enjoyable experience for all. While casting a vision for company culture serves this goal, it is also necessary to establish specific standards of undesired conduct that are likely to result in disciplinary action, and to communicate them to all staff, in order to provide further clarity.

Examples of misconduct and unsatisfactory performance that may result in disciplinary action include, but may not be limited to:

1. Conduct or activities which are considered immoral, unethical, and/or in opposition with the Organization's bylaws and/or Statement of Principles
2. Destruction of, damage to, or unauthorized removal of Viable Options' property or the personal property of others
3. Consistently inefficient or careless performance of job responsibilities or inability to perform duties successfully
4. Failure to promptly report a work-related injury or accident
5. Negligence or any action that results in injury to one's self, a co-worker, a volunteer, or a community member, or which in any way endangers the health or safety of others
6. Intentional falsification of records required in the transaction of Viable Options' business, including payroll and employment records

7. Irregular attendance in the form of repeated tardiness, unreported or unexcused absences, or overstaying a leave of absence without written authorization
8. Insubordination, including refusal or negligent failure to perform assigned work or to follow the instructions of authorized personnel
9. Rude or discourteous conduct
10. Possessing or being under the influence of narcotics or illegal or illicit drugs
11. Aggressive and/or inappropriate physical or verbal altercation of any kind
12. Making malicious, false, or derogatory statements that may damage the integrity or reputation of Viable Options, its service, or persons connected with the Organization
13. Misrepresentation or withholding of pertinent facts in securing employment
14. Undermining the work of the Viable Options staff
15. Abuse of break times and lunch periods
16. Drama in the workplace: emotional outbursts, excessive sharing of personal issues, being inconsolable, or other behavior which detracts from a productive and enjoyable work environment
17. Distributing or posting information that is detrimental or in conflict with the general interest, culture, and principles of Viable Options
18. Bringing pets to the office
19. Unauthorized interaction with outside media and/or news groups
20. Divulging confidential information to unauthorized persons
21. Use of company vehicles without prior approval, or otherwise unlawful operation of said vehicle
22. Excessive displays of affection or any sexual activity on company premises
23. Encouraging or engaging in any work stoppage, slowdown, or walkout of work, or any other activity designed to restrict or delay the Organization and services offered by Viable Options
24. Directly or indirectly, either for one's personal benefit or for the benefit of any other person or organization, revealing any confidential information regarding the Organization, its staff, its clients, or its donors

25. Discriminatory or harassing conduct or actions against any other person, and/or violation of any policy, rule, procedure, or practice established by Viable Options relating to these behaviors
26. Immoral conduct or theft
27. Smoking on the premises, excessive profanity, and/or otherwise poor representation of the Organization
28. Contributing to or causing discord within the Organization
29. Violation of any law adversely affecting the Organization, or conviction in court of any crime which may cause the employee to be regarded as unsuitable for continued employment
30. Unauthorized interaction and/or offering of any form of advice to Viable Options clients

15.2 Progression of Disciplinary Action. Depending on the nature and circumstances of an incident, discipline will normally be progressive and bear a reasonable relationship to the violation. The types of discipline that may occur are as follows, in general order of seriousness:

- 1. Verbal Reprimand.** A verbal reprimand is a statement made verbally by the direct supervisor or CEO to the employee, usually pointing out an unsatisfactory element of job performance, and is intended to be corrective or cautionary. A verbal reprimand informally defines the area of needed improvement, sets up goals for improvement, and informs the employee that failure to improve may result in more serious actions. Notice of a verbal reprimand will be documented and placed in the employee's personnel file.
- 2. Written Reprimand.** A written reprimand is issued by the intended employee's direct supervisor with the approval of the CEO. A written reprimand formally defines the area of needed improvement, sets goals for improvement of defined issues, and informs the employee that failure to improve within a reasonable length of time as determined by the supervisor, may result in suspension or termination of employment. A signed copy of each written reprimand is sent to the CEO and documented and placed in the employee's personnel file.
- 3. Suspension or Termination.** Employees should be aware that their employment relationship with Viable Options is based on the condition of mutual consent to continue the relationship between the employee and the Organization. Therefore, the employee or the Organization is free to suspend or terminate the employment relationship at will, with or without cause, and at any time. Recommendations to suspend or terminate an employee are to be made confidentially to the CEO by their direct supervisor.

Viable Options reserves the right to operate outside of the progression as outlined above when deemed appropriate and necessary, and in proper proportion to the offense.

16. Non-Harassment, Non-Violence, & Workplace Safety

16.1 Workplace Harassment. Viable Options has not and will at no point tolerate any form of harassment toward any person. We are committed to providing a safe, respectful, and hospitable environment, and will guard the dignity of our staff, volunteers, donors, and community in all aspects of our service and company culture.

Unacceptable harassment includes, but may not be limited to: verbal, physical, digital, or written conduct that either intentionally or unintentionally disparages, degrades, or shows malice or hostility toward any person, or that which results in an environment that is in any way injurious.

Forms of harassment include, but may not be limited to: sexual harassment, and any harassment that is based on or because of a person's gender, sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, ancestry, citizenship, pregnancy, age, physical or mental disability, military service, or any other protected classification or label.

Our non-harassment policies apply to all persons connected to the Organization, regardless of the nature of their relationship and/or service to Viable Options. Persons subject to this policy include, but may not be limited to: employees, clients, donors, volunteers, community supporters, board members, or advisory board members.

It is the responsibility of each member of our team to protect their fellow employees and all persons connected with Viable Options, and we fully expect that any violation of these policies, whether flagrant or minute, be immediately reported directly to the CEO or board chair via the Workplace Violations Form (available in PDF form on the Viable Options Employee Resources page) so that it can be promptly and appropriately addressed.

16.2 Verbal or Written Harassment. Derogatory names, jokes, slurs, or other offensive and/or explicit language (written, verbal, digital, or otherwise) relating to a person's gender, sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, ancestry, citizenship, pregnancy, age, physical or mental disability, military service, or any other protected classification or label will not be tolerated in any form, whether intentional or unintentional.

16.3 Sexual Harassment. Sexual harassment in any form and by any person will not be tolerated. Forms of sexual harassment which violate our policy include, but may not be limited to: unwanted sexual advances, propositions, or assertions, inappropriate physical contact of any kind, intimidating or obstructing movements or physical conduct, offensive or explicit language relating to a person's body or

appearance, or any other inappropriate visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, agents, and representatives of Viable Options. All incidents of sexual harassment should be reported via the Sexual Harassment Complaint Form (available in PDF form on the Viable Options Employee Resources page) and submitted directly to the CEO or board chair. Our full policy can be found in Viable Options' Sexual Harassment Prevention Policies (available in PDF form on the Viable Options Employee Resources page), and trainings on these policies will be mandatory for all staff as they occur.

16.4 Harassment Reporting. Every employee, agent, and representative of Viable Options is responsible for reporting any and all behavior that violates or may violate our non-harassment policies. We will immediately and appropriately address any and all potential harassment violations that come to our attention; but we cannot address situations that we are not aware of. We are serious about the safety of our staff and fully expect each person to be responsible for ensuring total adherence to our non-harassment policies by promptly reporting potential violations.

Anyone who has been the recipient or witness of any form of harassment or other offensive and/or inappropriate conduct by a person or persons connected to the Organization, or who has otherwise learned of any such behavior, is responsible for immediately reporting these incidents by filling out the Workplace Violation Complaint Form and submitting it directly to the CEO or the board chair. Wilfully neglecting to do so will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Inappropriate retaliation toward any person who submits an honest concern or report relating to an instance of discrimination and/or harassment will not be tolerated. Such retaliation includes, but may not be limited to: visual, verbal, or physical conduct of an intimidating, hostile, threatening, or objectively offensive nature in response to the honest reporting of a discriminatory action, or other violations of our non-harassment policy.

16.5 Workplace Violence. Viable Options defines workplace violence as wilful encroachment, violation, and/or abuse of one's self or other persons, public or private property, and threat of violence (visual, verbal, or otherwise) made directly or indirectly toward any person or persons (including one's self).

Viable Options retains a zero-tolerance policy toward violence and/or threat of violence, in any form, toward any person or property. This is consistent with our commitment to promoting integrity, dignity, honor, and respect toward every person, and no violation of this policy will be tolerated under any circumstances.

Violations of this policy include, but may not be limited to: physical confrontation of a violent or potentially violent nature; any act of violence or threat of violence directed toward, affecting, or involving another person's life, wellbeing, family, or property; any act or threat of assault, battery, intimidation, harassment, stalking, or coercion; an act or threat of violence which endangers the immediate safety of any person; or

any verbal, physical, or visual conduct which demonstrates a potential for violence (e.g. destruction of property, threatening movements, etc.).

16.6 Violence Reporting. Every employee, agent, and representative of Viable Options is responsible for reporting any and all behavior that violates or may violate our non-violence policies. We will immediately and appropriately address any and all potential incidents of violence that come to our attention; but we require each person to be responsible for ensuring total adherence to our policies by promptly reporting any such incident which they may become aware of.

Anyone who has been the recipient or witness of any act of violence or threat of violence engaged in by or directed toward any person connected to or on the premises of the Organization, or who has otherwise learned of any such behavior, is responsible for immediately reporting these incidents by filling out the Workplace Violation Complaint Form and submitting it to the CEO or board chair. Wilfully neglecting to do so will result in appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Any employee, agent, or representative of Viable Options found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and/or appropriate legal action.

16.7 Workplace Safety. We take seriously the health, safety, and general wellbeing of everyone connected to Viable Options, including, but not necessarily limited to: staff, volunteers, and members of the community. It is therefore the policy of the Organization to strive constantly for the highest possible level of safety in all activities and operations. We have a high expectation for the work environment at our office, and we fully expect all staff members to diligently meet this expectation.

In order to ensure the protection of all staff, volunteers, and community members, we require all those employed by Viable Options to perform their duties with attention to detail and in a safe and efficient manner. By whatever means necessary, regardless of convenience, each employee should exercise appropriate judgement and precautions to guarantee the safety of their co-workers and community members.

In pursuance of this goal, all employees are expected to ensure that public areas and work areas are free of hazardous conditions and should adhere to the following guidelines, which include, but may not be limited to: thorough and prompt attention to all spills and slippery floor conditions; knowledge of the location of all fire extinguishers and first aid kits; refraining from all physical altercation and/or horseplay on the premises; immediate reporting to appropriate management: 1) any incident which may occur on the premises that causes or may cause injury of any kind; 2) all unsafe conditions or potential hazards; 3) all suspicious persons and/or activity.

We fully expect all employees to conduct themselves in a safe manner, to use good judgment and common sense in matters of safety, to observe any safety rules posted in various areas, and to follow all OSHA and state safety regulations.

Should an employee sustain an injury in connection with their work for Viable Options, regardless of the severity of the injury, the employee must immediately notify their direct supervisor, unless emergency conditions exist or notification is not practical. In such cases, it will then be the responsibility of the employee's direct supervisor to seek necessary medical attention and complete required reports as soon as possible. In any case of serious injury, employees are to receive prompt and qualified medical attention followed by the filing of necessary reports.

16.8 Workplace Searches. In reflection of our commitment to the safety, health, and wellbeing of all connected with the Organization, Viable Options reserves the right to conduct searches of workplace premises and/or employees' possessions when deemed necessary. Any and all personal property on our premises may be searched with or without cause, and at the discretion of Viable Options.

Potential situations where such a search may be conducted include, but may not be limited to: potential incidents of illegal activity (such as theft or illegal drug use); possession of prohibited items; and any other suspected illegal or prohibited activity.

Privacy is by no means guaranteed while on-duty and/or on company premises.

Illegal, unsafe, or prohibited items found in areas under the supervision and reasonable control of any staff member will be considered the responsibility of that staff member and may be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and/or appropriate legal action, even in the case of a first offense.

16.9 Office Investigations. Viable Options is committed to safeguarding the health, safety, and wellbeing of all staff, volunteers, donors, and community members, and will conduct prompt, thorough, and serious inquiry into any potential violation of our safety, discrimination, and harassment policies, taking appropriate disciplinary action whenever necessary.

Such reports and allegations are very serious. All employees will be required to cooperate fully with any and all inquiries of potential violations, or any attempted enforcement of these policies.

In addition, we will treat all such reports and allegations with confidentiality and discretion, sharing information only when deemed necessary for legal and/or investigative purposes.

Any confirmed violation of these policies will be immediately and seriously addressed with appropriate disciplinary action. Any team member found in violation of these policies will be subject to disciplinary action as proportionate to the offense, up to and including termination of employment and/or appropriate legal action.

Policy violations include, but may not be limited to: harassment, discrimination, retaliatory action, or refusal to cooperate with official inquiries regarding a potential incident of harassment, discrimination, or other inappropriate behavior which stands in opposition to these policies.

16.10 False Reporting. While good faith claims or reports of unlawful, harassing, violent, or otherwise unethical conduct will never be penalized, claims that are found to have been made falsely, maliciously, and/or without any effort to provide corroboration or available evidence are serious and will be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and/or appropriate legal action.

17. Employee Leave & Workers' Compensation

17.1 Jury & Witness Duty. At Viable Options, we highly value and encourage civic responsibility. We believe that fulfilling duties as a jury member or an official witness is a fundamental responsibility of the American citizen, and will abide by all federal, state, and local laws regarding time off for jury and witness duty. If an employee is officially summoned to serve as a jury member or witness during court proceedings, they will be given an unpaid leave of absence. Employees who need to request time off for jury or witness duty must promptly fill out the Time Off Request Form and submit it to their direct supervisor with proof of summons.

17.2 Workers' Compensation. In accordance with New York State laws, Viable Options provides all employees with insurance coverage for work-related injuries. This compensation may include coverage for medical expenses, restitution for lost wages, and/or vocational rehabilitation to help employees return to employment when suitable.

In order to receive workers' compensation for a work-related injury, you are required to:

- Immediately report the injury sustained to your direct supervisor and/or the CEO
- Seek immediate medical treatment to diagnose and treat the injury
- Provide a statement in writing which details the injury and the incident from which it resulted, as well as certification from your primary care physician which corroborates the necessity of compensation and leave

Eligible staff who are unable to work due to a work-related injury or illness will be placed on Paid Family Leave (and/or state medical leave) for the duration of their medically mandated leave, or until determined by state policies.

17.3 Reporting Fraudulent Claims. Viable Options is required by law to report any potential fraudulent claims to their insurance provider. Any person found to be making such a claim in a fraudulent manner with the use of false statements or misrepresentation in order to obtain or deny workers' compensation benefits may be guilty of a felony.

17.4 Paid Family Leave. Viable Options complies with all New York State Paid Family Leave policies. Eligible employees may apply for Paid Family Leave for the purposes of welcoming a newly born, fostered, or adopted child, caring for a close relative with a serious illness, or addressing familial needs in the event of a close relative being deployed abroad on active military service.

Employees with a regular work schedule of at least 20 hours per week are eligible for Paid Family Leave after 26 consecutive weeks of employment. Employees with a regular work schedule of less than 20 hours per week are eligible for Paid Family Leave after 175 days worked (these days do not have to be consecutive).

Any accrued PTO may be taken to supplement Paid Family Leave and the employee is not obligated to take any additional leaves concurrently. The cost of this leave is covered by a state regulated deduction from each employee's pay. Employees may fill out a waiver to forego the deduction and benefits if they choose. For all forms and documents related to this policy, including an official Paid Family Leave request form, visit paidfamilyleave.ny.gov/forms.

17.5 Pregnancy Leave & Reemployment. We value family and understand the critical importance of investing in one's children. Should an employee, prior to or soon after giving birth, deem it healthiest for them and their family to take an extended, unpaid leave of absence, Viable Options will guarantee re-employment after a period of one year or less. Requests for a leave of absence for pregnancy and/or maternity should be made by filling out a Leave of Absence form and submitting it to a direct supervisor. For an absence that exceeds one year, re-employment will be determined on a case-by-case basis. We will always endeavor to be as flexible as possible, and to allow our employees the time they need to properly care for the needs of their families.

17.6 Military Leave & Reemployment. We value and esteem the service of those employed in military positions and abide by all federal and state laws related to leave and reinstatement for staff members who must fulfill military obligations. Such requests should be made by filling out a Leave of Absence Form, accompanied by applicable New York State forms for Paid Family Leave, accompanied by applicable New York State forms for Paid Family Leave, and submitting it to your direct supervisor. We will allow flexibility for eligible employees who must take an unpaid leave of absence in order to perform their duties and responsibilities to their country. When applicable and appropriate, employees with military obligations will be placed on Paid Family Leave.

17.7 Bereavement. We understand how difficult the passing of a loved one can be and, in the case of such an event, we will work with you to provide a flexible schedule that allows you to grieve in a healthy manner. Each case will be individually considered by the executive team. Employees can request a leave of absence for bereavement by filling out the Time Off Request Form and submitting it to their direct supervisor.

17.8 Leave of Absence. Employees may request, subject to the sole discretionary approval of their direct supervisor and/or the CEO, a leave of absence without pay for a period not to exceed six months. Requests for a leave of absence should be submitted in writing via the Leave of Absence Request Form to the CEO and/or direct supervisor as far in advance of the anticipated leave date as possible. The leave request must be dated and signed by the employee, and should state the reason for the leave, as well as the estimated duration. Extensions of an initial leave of absence must follow the same procedure. Following an official leave request, your direct supervisor and/or the CEO of the organization will sit down with you to discuss the circumstances of the leave and to make official arrangements. We will always do our best to work with you in a situation where a leave of absence is necessary.

Upon expiration of a leave of absence, the employee may be reinstated in the position held at the time that the leave was granted, or an equivalent one, if such a position is available. However, there is no absolute guarantee of reemployment to an employee who takes a personal leave of absence upon returning from leave. Should an employee, following a leave of absence, choose not to return to work for any reason, the resignation procedure will be followed as detailed in section 18.1.

An employee who fails to report promptly for work at the expiration of a leave of absence, or who applies for and receives unemployment insurance while on leave, will be considered to have voluntarily resigned and will be called in for an exit interview and to return any and all company property.

17.9 Administrative Leave. An administrative leave may be given to an employee for two reasons:

- 1. When an employee is accused or named in an allegation that warrants or necessitates investigation.** Such leave is unpaid, and is intended to promote peace and harmony by temporarily separating the accused employee from his or her work environment while the employer performs the investigation. The leave can also assist the employee physically, emotionally, and spiritually, especially in a conflicted situation. All administrative leave will be administered and approved at the discretion of the CEO and will be documented and placed in the employee's personnel record. If an employee is found innocent as the result of a formal investigation, they will be reimbursed for any time actually lost due to the administrative leave. This compensation will take place during the next pay period after returning to work.
- 2. As disciplinary action for an employee who has been found in violation of any policies and procedures warranting a formal disciplinary response from the executive team.** Such action can be taken at any time at the discretion of the employee's direct supervisor, with the approval of the CEO and executive team, and will be documented and placed in the employee's

personnel record. Any administrative leave resulting from disciplinary action will automatically be unpaid and the employee in question will not receive any compensation for time lost.

17.10 Other Personal Time Off. Should an employee need additional time off for any extenuating personal circumstances that need their attention or which are impeding their ability to work, they should consult with their direct supervisor or the CEO to determine the healthiest solution for all.

18. Resignation & Termination of Employment

18.1 Resignation Procedure. In accordance with the At-Will nature of your employment, you are entitled to resign your position at any time and for any reason. However, failure to adhere to company resignation policies will impact the possibility of future re-employment, as well as references to potential employers, and will lead to the forfeit of paid time off accrued.

Viable Options' resignation policy is as follows. We request that all resigning employees:

- Give at least two weeks' notice of departure in writing
- Communicate the change to their direct supervisor before speaking of it to other staff members
- Return all company property
- Undergo an exit interview

In the instance of resignation, we request that notice be given as far in advance as possible under the circumstances of the change; however, this is not required by law.

18.2 Termination of Employment. In accordance with the At-Will nature of employment, Viable Options reserves the right to terminate any staff member's employment at any time and for any reason not specifically prohibited by law, with or without notice or cause. Upon termination of employment (whether voluntary or otherwise), employees will receive all payments due to them according to applicable law during the next pay period.

18.3 Layoffs. A layoff is a termination of employment that results from any change in circumstances which necessitates a reduction in staff, or in an inability to financially sustain a particular staff position. The CEO, in consultation with the board treasurer, will determine when a layoff should occur.

18.4 Exit Interview. All resigning or terminated staff members will be provided with an exit interview when appropriate and possible, in order to provide opportunity for mutual communication and feedback, and to address areas of concern where necessary.

The exit interview will be conducted with the CEO or COO.

18.5 Accrued Vacation Time. All persons leaving the employment of Viable Options, regardless of circumstances, without having completed 12 months of continuous employment, will forfeit all paid time off accrued. Terminated employees will not receive compensation for paid time off accrued. Resigning employees who do not go through the resignation procedure, including providing two weeks' notice and undergoing an exit interview, will not be compensated for any paid time off accrued. Employees who are eligible to receive compensation for accrued vacation time after following the proper resignation procedure (as defined in 18.1), will receive all compensation due to them within 30 days of resignation.

18.6 Return of Company Property. When an employee leaves Viable Options (voluntarily or otherwise), they will be expected to return any and all property belonging to the Organization on or before their last day of work, or at the time of their exit interview. Such property includes, but may not be limited to: credit cards, keys to company premises, official paperwork, and computers. The departing employee's final paycheck will not be issued until such property is returned.

If resignation does not follow the resignation procedure, the former employee will have 24 hours to return all company property that has been assigned to them.