

Southern Adirondack Library System
(SALS)
22 Whitney Place
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

EMPLOYEE

HANDBOOK

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Southern Adirondack Library System

Chartered in 1959, the Southern Adirondack Library System (SALS) is one of 23 public library systems in New York State. SALS service area covers 4,238 square miles. We are funded through New York State Aid to Education. We are governed by a 12-person Board of Trustees composed of representatives from each of the four counties we serve.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Southern Adirondack Library System is to improve and expand library service in the counties of Hamilton, Saratoga, Warren and Washington. The System will accomplish this by attempting to:

- Provide library services that meet the needs of individual member libraries, and
- Provide services at a cost below that which an individual library would incur to achieve the same end, and
- Provide services and coordinating activities which allow libraries to cooperate and share their resources easily and efficiently, and
- Provide expertise and staff development services which complement those of the individual library, and
- Provide direct services to persons or groups who are unable to use traditional public library services, and
- Act as a component of the statewide library network, and
- Provide leadership and advocacy on regional and statewide levels for public library matters for the benefit of the people in our area.

In cooperation with the Mohawk Valley Library System (MVLS), SALS produces a web-based catalog to give borrowers access to the holdings of all the public libraries in our service area and three of the four counties served by MVLS (Fulton, Schoharie, and Montgomery). Many electronic information resources are available as well.

Introductory Statement

This Handbook is designed to provide employees with information about working conditions, employee benefits, and some of the policies affecting their employment. Each employee is responsible for reading, understanding and complying with the provisions of this Handbook, as a condition of employment. It should not be construed as a contract or obligatory agreement between SALS and the employee, but as guidelines for current employment policies. This Handbook supersedes and replaces any and all personnel policies and manuals previously distributed or made available to employees. The current revision date of this Handbook is shown in the footer of each page.

SALS Board of Trustees reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portion of the Handbook, as it deems appropriate. Employees will, of course, be notified of such changes as they occur. The only exception to any changes is the employment-at-will policy. This means that regardless of any provision in this Handbook, either the employee or the Company may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause or notice, subject to applicable laws. Neither the employee nor SALS is bound to continue the employment relationship if either chooses, at its will, to end the relationship at any time.

Employee Acknowledgement Form

The Employee Handbook describes important information about SALS, and I understand that I should consult my supervisor, the Business Office or SALS Director, regarding any questions not answered in the Handbook. I have entered into my employment relationship with SALS voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no specified length of employment. Accordingly, either SALS or I can terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time, so long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law.

Since the information, policies, and benefits described here are necessarily subject to change, I acknowledge that revisions to the Handbook may occur, except to SALS' policy of employment-at-will. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the SALS Board of Trustees has the ability to adopt revisions to the policies in this Handbook.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this Handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I have received the handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this Handbook and any revisions made to it.

EMPLOYEE'S NAME (printed): _____

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

Employment Policies

Appointment

At the direction of the Board, the SALS Director makes permanent, part-time and temporary appointments. These appointments will be consistent with applicable state and federal laws and regulations relating to employment practices. Department supervisors will review the employee's job description and this Handbook with new employees. Employees will receive a tour of the building, a copy of the current [organizational chart](#) and an explanation of SALS' mission and services.

Equal Employment Opportunity

In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at SALS will be based on merit, qualifications, and abilities. SALS does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of an individual's age, race, color, national origin, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, military or veteran status, physical or mental disability, genetic information, arrest or conviction, pregnancy, domestic violence victim status, reproductive health decisions, or any other status protected by applicable law. This policy applies to all terms, conditions and privileges of employment, including recruitment, selection, job assignment, compensation, promotion, access to training and benefits, discipline and termination.

Employees with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of their immediate supervisor or SALS Director. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Pre-Employment Screening

SALS recognizes the importance of attracting and retaining employees who are honest, trustworthy, qualified for their position, and fit to carry out the duties of their role. As a result, SALS reserves the right to investigate an individual's prior employment history, educational background, criminal background, credit history, driving license, medical and physical fitness, as well as other relevant information as needed for its business purposes. Such reviews may be conducted pre-employment, and continued employment may be contingent upon successful completion of periodic post-employment reviews.

All information provided during the hiring process will be subject to verification as needed, and SALS may contact prior employers for reference checks. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in the exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the individual has already been hired, termination of employment.

Information regarding an applicant's protected status(es) learned of through social media or any other forum will not be considered in hiring or other employment decisions.

Business Ethics and Conduct

The successful business operation and reputation of SALS is built upon the principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct of our employees. SALS' reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and letter of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as a scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity. Employees should act in ways that will enhance the trust that member library staff, boards of trustees and users of library services put in SALS.

If employees have any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts, or leases, it is imperative that they disclose to SALS Director as soon as possible the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties. This is documented in the SALS Conflict of Interest Policy (see Appendix A). It must be filled out annually by staff and Board.

In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide employees with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. If a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of action, the matter should be discussed openly with the immediate supervisor and, if necessary, with SALS Director.

Job Postings

SALS will notify employees of new job openings through a job posting mechanism. All jobs posted, internally or externally, will include a pay rate or salary range, in accordance with applicable regulations. Employees applying for posted jobs will be considered together with external candidates, and positions will be filled with the best qualified applicant. Employees will be notified of the status of their application within a reasonable time frame, and those not being considered further for openings will be notified by the hiring manager or the Business Office.

Hiring of Relatives

The employment of relatives in an organization may cause serious conflicts and problems with favoritism and employee morale. In addition to claims of partiality in treatment at work, personal conflicts from outside the work environment can be carried over into day-to-day working relationships.

Except under specific approval of the Board of Trustees, SALS does not hire as permanent employees the immediate family members of SALS' employees, board members or other officials. Exceptions may be made by SALS Director for substitutes and temporary employees.

Immigration Law Compliance

SALS is committed to employing only United States citizens and noncitizens who are authorized to work in the United States and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin.

In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. Former employees who are rehired must also complete the form if they have not completed an I-9 with SALS within the past three years, or if their previous I-9 is no longer retained or valid.

Disability Accommodation

SALS is committed to complying fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, as amended) and ensuring equal opportunity in employment for qualified persons with disabilities, including those with a pregnancy-related disability. All employment practices and activities are conducted on a non-discriminatory basis.

Reasonable accommodations will be provided, upon request, for disabled employees unless the accommodation would cause an undue hardship on the operation of SALS business. It is the employee's responsibility to notify their supervisor or the SALS Director of the need for accommodation. Upon doing so, the employee may be asked for input on the type of accommodation believed may be necessary, or the functional limitations caused by the disability. Also, when appropriate, SALS may request permission to obtain additional information from the employee's physician or other medical or rehabilitation professionals.

SALS is also committed to not discriminating against any qualified employees or applicants because they are related to or associated with a person with a disability. SALS will follow any state or local law that provides individuals with disabilities greater protection than the ADA.

Access to Personnel Files

SALS maintains a personnel file on each employee. The personnel file includes such information as the employee's job application, resume, records of training, documentation of performance appraisals and salary increases, and other employment records or material regarding an employee's tenure with the organization. Documents will be placed in an employee file with the knowledge of SALS Director, the employee and the employee's supervisor. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, etc. allow individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency. Employees are responsible for notifying the Business Office of any changes to their personnel data.

Personnel files are the property of SALS, and access to the information they contain is restricted. Generally, only supervisors and management personnel of SALS who have a legitimate reason to review information in

a file are allowed to do so.

Employees who wish to review their own file should contact SALS Director. With reasonable advance notice, employees may review their own personnel files in SALS' offices and in the presence of an individual appointed by SALS to maintain the files.

Introductory Period

The introductory period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. SALS uses this period to evaluate employee capabilities, work habits, and overall performance. Either the employee or SALS may end the employment relationship at will at any time during or after the introductory period, with or without cause or advance notice.

All new and rehired employees work on an introductory basis for the first 90 calendar days after their date of hire. Any significant absence will automatically extend an introductory period by the length of the absence.

During the introductory period, new employees are eligible for those benefits that are required by law, such as workers' compensation insurance and Social Security. They will also be eligible for other SALS-provided benefits such as sick time, subject to the terms and conditions of each benefit program.

Performance Evaluation

Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis. Additional formal performance evaluations are conducted to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals. SALS makes every effort to create and maintain accurate job descriptions for all positions.

Supervisors review their direct reports on a periodic basis. The review process gives the employee and supervisor an opportunity for a private review of the employee's performance, workload and a frank discussion about anything that would affect working conditions, productivity and the accomplishment of the System's mission. Existing job descriptions will be reviewed and revised to ensure that they are current. Periodically, job descriptions may need to be rewritten to reflect changes in the position's duties and responsibilities. The SALS Director reviews supervisors' performance evaluations of their direct reports. See the SALS [organizational chart](#) for reporting structure.

The SALS Director will be reviewed as determined and recommended by the Personnel Committee of the SALS Board of Trustees.

All performance evaluation correspondence should be acknowledged by employee, supervisor and SALS Director and filed in the employee's personnel file.

Compensation Philosophy

It is SALS's policy to pay competitive wages and salaries to attract and retain qualified employees. SALS will strive to offer compensation that is internally fair and equitable, complies with applicable laws and regulations, and considers the labor market in which it operates. In accordance with applicable regulations, SALS will provide notice to new and existing employees regarding their wage, frequency of payment and other wage information, when required.

Employees will be paid a wage rate without regard to their gender on a job requiring equal skill, effort, and responsibility, and performed under similar working conditions. Payment of wages may differ based on experience, seniority, merit, or other relevant factors. When determining employee wages and periodic increases, the leadership of SALS will use its discretion, while operating within budgetary constraints. Pay increases are generally provided on an "across-the-board" basis, including cost of living adjustments. Although pay increases are not currently based upon employees' performance evaluations, such information may be considered at the discretion of the SALS Director.

Positive Discipline

It is SALS' responsibility to communicate its expectations and performance standards to all employees. These expectations are communicated through policy manuals like this Handbook, Job Descriptions, goal-setting processes, employee meetings and a number of other means. Despite best efforts to communicate expectations, employees occasionally are unable to meet SALS' high standards, and such situations must be addressed individually. SALS will approach these situations with an attitude of fairness and concern for the employee, and will generally use the following steps to address performance concerns:

- Clarification of expectations
- Notification that expectations are not being met
- Development of plan to correct deficiencies, including training where appropriate
- Frequent follow up with progress
- Additional warnings, if appropriate
- Employment action, including termination

In addition, employees may occasionally violate policies or standards of conduct, resulting in disciplinary action. The major purpose of any disciplinary action is to correct the problem, prevent recurrence, and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future.

SALS will generally employ a progressive discipline process, allowing an employee several opportunities to correct behavior. However, some violations may warrant an accelerated path, or may result in immediate termination of employment, without going through the usual progressive disciplinary steps, which may include oral counseling, written counseling, and ultimately, termination of employment.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. SALS will endeavor to objectively and thoroughly investigate instances of poor conduct, and management's response may involve any or all of the steps identified above, and will be dictated by the severity of the conduct. The following are examples of violations of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment:

- Violating any policy, practice, or procedure established by SALS, including those outlined in this Handbook.
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information about SALS, member organizations, or co-workers.
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment.
- Being discourteous, impolite, disrespectful, abusive or unhelpful to co-workers, visitors or members of the public.
- Being insubordinate or disrespectful to a supervisor.
- Theft, misappropriation or misuse of SALS or a co-worker's property.
- Falsification of employment or other records of SALS, including timekeeping records/time cards.
- Excessive absenteeism, tardiness, lack of productivity, sleeping on the job, substandard job performance, neglecting one's duties.
- Working under the influence of alcohol, marijuana or illegal drugs or other violation of the Substance Abuse policy.
- Fighting, arguing or threatening violence, or horseplay or disruptive activity in the workplace.
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives, firearms or weapons, in the workplace.
- Using profanity, abusive or suggestive language, or gestures.
- Gambling or soliciting on SALS property.
- Excessive no call / no shows, or job abandonment.
- Any other act or behavior deemed by management to be inconsistent with SALS' standards of performance.

Grievance Process

SALS encourages all employees to speak openly and directly with supervisors to ensure clear communication and positive attitudes. When a staff member has a grievance, the supervisor concerned will endeavor to resolve the issue. If no satisfactory solution is found, the staff member may appeal to the SALS Director. Failing a mutually satisfactory solution, the staff member may document the complaint in writing and request that the SALS Director present the complaint to the SALS Personnel Committee.

If an employee decides to file a grievance against the SALS Director, the employee should set forth the grievance in writing and send it to Personnel Committee Chair. The Committee Chair will provide a copy of the grievance letter to the Personnel Committee members. The Personnel Committee shall promptly inform the SALS Director of any formal grievance.

Formal grievances should specify the employer action complained of and the remedy sought by the employee.

The Personnel Committee will carefully review and consider a formal grievance. If a mutually satisfactory solution cannot be found, the Personnel Committee will refer the grievance, with a recommendation, to the full Board for a vote on the issue. Any decision by the full SALS Board will be final.

Resignation

Resignations should be submitted in writing to SALS Director. At least 20 working days notice is desirable from exempt staff and at least 10 working days notice from other staff. Failure to give a minimum notice of 10 working days may prevent payment for accrued but untaken vacation leave.

Dismissal/Termination

SALS Director has the authority to terminate an employee based upon employee misconduct or poor work performance. Dismissed employees will be eligible for all accrued but untaken vacation leave. There is no compensation for unused sick days or personal leave. Since employment with SALS is based on mutual consent, both the employee and SALS have the right to terminate employment at will, with or without cause, at any time.

Whistle-Blower Protection Policy

Southern Adirondack Library System requires its trustees, officers and employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of SALS, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Duty to Report

Each member of the SALS community has the responsibility to report actions that violate laws, regulations, and/or adopted policies of SALS. In keeping with SALS' commitment to fostering a community of integrity and staff support, SALS has created a means whereby staff members are to report any concerns they may have relating to such violations without fear of retaliatory action.

Examples of matters which should be reported under this policy include, but are not limited to, suspected fraud, theft, embezzlement, accounting or auditing irregularities, bribery, kickbacks, misuse of SALS' assets or suspected regulatory compliance violations.

Retaliation Prohibited

A member of the SALS community who makes a report is protected from retaliatory action, including, but not limited to harassment, victimization, and change in employment, up to and including dismissals that result from making the report. Managers must ensure that the procedures are available and known to all employees and that all employees have easy access to the mechanism for making a report.

Reporting Violations and Duty to Act in Good Faith

A member of the SALS community who suspects wrongdoing by a colleague should promptly report the alleged conduct to their supervisor. If for some reason the member is uncomfortable with bringing the matter to their supervisor's attention, the member should report the alleged conduct to the Business Office. Trustees may also contact the Business Office or the Chairperson of the SALS Board of Trustees' Audit Committee. Should the Business Office be suspected of wrongdoing, then the matter should be reported to the Executive Director.

Alternatively, any member may make an anonymous and confidential complaint about an alleged violation to the Business Office or the Executive Director by mailing a written report thereto by way of registered mail. All reports must be made in good faith. Any report determined to be not founded upon reasonable grounds or otherwise frivolous may result in disciplinary action against the member filing the report.

Investigation

The Business Office will promptly conduct a preliminary investigation unless they are the subject of a report, in which case the Executive Director will make the initial investigation. If the preliminary investigation reveals potential wrongdoing, the Business Office will submit the complaint and their findings to the Executive Director who will promptly perform any further investigation deemed necessary in the Director's sole discretion before reporting their findings to the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees. The Committee shall then determine if the matter requires further investigation, and, if so, seek the Board of Trustees' direction on any further investigation or action to be taken.

Confidentiality and Subsequent Reporting

The member making the complaint will receive general information on the progress of the investigation and its outcome unless doing so would jeopardize the investigation; provided however, that reports will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation, to comply with all applicable laws and to cooperate with law enforcement officials.

Anti-Harassment & Sexual Harassment Policy

All Unlawful Harassment Prohibited

Southern Adirondack Library Systems (hereinafter referred to as "SALS") strictly prohibits and does not tolerate unlawful harassment against employees, applicants for employment, interns (paid or unpaid), and additional covered individuals, based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, race, creed, color, national origin, military status, disability, pre-disposing genetic characteristics, familial status, marital status, criminal history, or status as a victim of domestic violence or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state or local law.

Purpose and Goals

SALS is committed to maintaining a workplace free from harassment and discrimination. Sexual harassment is a form of workplace discrimination that subjects an employee to inferior conditions of employment due to their gender, gender identity, gender expression (perceived or actual), and/or sexual orientation. Sexual harassment is often viewed simply as a form of gender-based discrimination, but SALS recognizes that discrimination can be related to or affected by other identities beyond gender. Under the New York State Human Rights Law, it is illegal to discriminate based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, race, creed, color, national origin, military status, disability, pre-disposing genetic characteristics, familial status, marital status, criminal history, or status as a victim of domestic violence.

Our different identities impact our understanding of the world and how others perceive us. For example, an individual's race, ability, or immigration status may impact their experience with gender discrimination in the workplace. While this policy is focused on sexual harassment and gender discrimination, the methods for reporting and investigating discrimination based on other protected identities are the same. The purpose of this policy is to teach employees to recognize discrimination, including discrimination due to an individual's intersecting identities, and provide the tools to take action when it occurs. All employees, managers, and supervisors are required to work in a manner designed to prevent sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace. This policy is one component of SALS commitment to a discrimination-free work environment.

Goals of this Policy:

Sexual harassment and discrimination are against the law. After reading this policy, employees will understand their right to a workplace free from harassment. Employees will also learn what harassment and discrimination look like, what actions they can take to prevent and report harassment, and how they are protected from retaliation after taking action. The policy will also explain the investigation process into any claims of harassment. Employees are encouraged to report sexual harassment or discrimination by filing a complaint internally with SALS. Employees can also file a complaint with a government agency or in court under federal, state, or local antidiscrimination laws. To file an employment complaint with the New York State Division of Human Rights, please visit <https://dhr.ny.gov/complaint>. To file a complaint with the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, please visit <https://www.eeoc.gov/filing-charge-discrimination>.

Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy:

1. SALS policy applies to all employees, applicants for employment, and interns, whether paid or unpaid. The policy also applies to additional covered individuals. It applies to anyone who is (or is employed by) a contractor, subcontractor, vendor, consultant, or anyone providing services in our workplace. These individuals include persons commonly referred to as independent contractors, gig workers, and temporary workers. Also included are persons providing equipment repair, cleaning services, or any other services through a contract with SALS. For the remainder of this policy, we will use the term “covered individual” to refer to these individuals who are not direct employees of the company.
2. Sexual harassment is unacceptable. Any employee or covered individual who engages in sexual harassment, discrimination, or retaliation will be subject to action, including appropriate discipline for employees. In New York, harassment does not need to be severe or pervasive to be illegal. Employees and covered individuals should not feel discouraged from reporting harassment because they do not believe it is bad enough, or conversely because they do not want to see a colleague fired over less severe behavior. Just as harassment can happen in different degrees, potential discipline for engaging in sexual harassment will depend on the degree of harassment and might include education and counseling. It may lead to suspension or termination when appropriate.
3. Retaliation is prohibited. Any employee or covered individual that reports an incident of sexual harassment or discrimination, provides information, or otherwise assists in any investigation of a sexual harassment or discrimination complaint is protected from retaliation. No one should fear reporting sexual harassment if they believe it has occurred. So long as a person reasonably believes that they have witnessed or experienced such behavior, they are protected from retaliation. Any employee of SALS who retaliates against anyone involved in a sexual harassment or discrimination investigation will face disciplinary action, up to and including termination. All employees and covered individuals working in the workplace who believe they have been subject to such retaliation should inform a supervisor, manager, or the SALS Director or SALS Board of Trustees. All employees and covered individuals who believe they have been a target of such retaliation may also seek relief from government agencies, as explained below in the section on [Legal Protections](#).
4. Discrimination of any kind, including sexual harassment, is a violation of our policies, is unlawful, and may subject SALS to liability for the harm experienced by targets of discrimination. Harassers may also be individually subject to liability and employers or supervisors who fail to report or act on harassment may be liable for aiding and abetting such behavior. Employees at every level who engage in harassment or discrimination, including managers and supervisors who engage in harassment or discrimination or who allow such behavior to continue, will be penalized for such misconduct.
5. SALS will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation that is fair to all parties. An investigation will happen whenever management receives a complaint about discrimination or sexual harassment, or when it otherwise knows of possible discrimination or sexual harassment occurring. SALS will keep the investigation confidential to the extent possible. If an investigation ends with the finding that discrimination or sexual harassment occurred, SALS will act as required. In addition to any required discipline, SALS will also take steps to ensure a safe work environment for the employee(s)

who experienced the discrimination or harassment. All employees, including managers and supervisors, are required to cooperate with any internal investigation of discrimination or sexual harassment.

6. All employees and covered individuals are encouraged to report any harassment or behaviors that violate this policy. All employees will have access to a complaint form to report harassment and file complaints. Use of this form is not required. For anyone who would rather make a complaint verbally, or by email, these complaints will be treated with equal priority. An employee or covered individual who prefers not to report harassment to their manager or employer may instead report harassment to the New York State Division of Human Rights and/or the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Complaints may be made to both the employer and a government agency.

Managers and supervisors are **required** to report any complaint that they receive, or any harassment that they observe or become aware of, to the SALS Director or SALS Board of Trustees.

7. This policy applies to all employees and covered individuals, such as contractors, subcontractors, vendors, consultants, or anyone providing services in the workplace, and all must follow and uphold this policy. This policy must be provided to all employees in person or digitally through email upon hiring and will be posted prominently in all work locations. For those offices operating remotely, in addition to sending the policy through email, it will also be available on the organization's shared network.

What Is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment is a form of gender-based discrimination that is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. Sexual harassment includes harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, self-identified or perceived sex, gender expression, gender identity, and the status of being transgender. Sexual harassment is not limited to sexual contact, touching, or expressions of a sexually suggestive nature. Sexual harassment includes all forms of gender discrimination including gender role stereotyping and treating employees differently because of their gender.

Understanding gender diversity is essential to recognizing sexual harassment because discrimination based on sex stereotypes, gender expression and perceived identity are all forms of sexual harassment. The gender spectrum is nuanced, but the three most common ways people identify are cisgender, transgender, and non-binary. A cisgender person is someone whose gender aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth. Generally, this gender will align with the binary of male or female. A transgender person is someone whose gender is different than the sex they were assigned at birth. A non-binary person does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. They might identify as both, somewhere in between, or completely outside the gender binary. Some may identify as transgender, but not all do. Respecting an individual's gender identity is a necessary first step in establishing a safe workplace.

Sexual harassment is unlawful when it subjects an individual to inferior terms, conditions, or privileges of employment. Harassment does not need to be severe or pervasive to be illegal. It can be any harassing behavior that rises above petty slights or trivial inconveniences. Every instance of harassment is unique to those experiencing it, and there is no single boundary between petty slights and harassing behavior. However, the Human Rights Law specifies that whether harassing conduct is considered petty or trivial is to be viewed from the standpoint of a reasonable victim of discrimination with the same protected characteristics. Generally, any behavior in which an employee or covered individual is treated worse because of their gender (perceived or actual), sexual orientation, or gender expression is considered a violation of SALS policy. The intent of the behavior, for example, making a joke, does not neutralize a harassment claim. Not intending to harass is not a defense. The impact of the behavior on a person is what counts. Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome conduct which is either directed at an individual because of that individual's gender identity or expression (perceived or actual), or is of a sexual nature when:

- The purpose or effect of this behavior unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. The impacted person does not need to be the intended target of the sexual harassment;
- Employment depends implicitly or explicitly on accepting such unwelcome behavior; or
- Decisions regarding an individual's employment are based on an individual's acceptance to or rejection of such behavior. Such decisions can include what shifts and how many hours an employee might work, project assignments, as well as salary and promotion decisions.

There are two main types of sexual harassment:

- Behaviors that contribute to a **hostile work environment** include, but are not limited to, words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation, or physical violence which are of a sexual nature, or which are directed at an individual because of that individual's sex, gender identity, or gender expression. Sexual harassment also consists of any unwanted verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory, or discriminatory statements which an employee finds offensive or objectionable, causes an employee discomfort or humiliation, or interferes with the employee's job performance.
- Sexual harassment also occurs when a person in authority tries to trade job benefits for sexual favors. This can include hiring, promotion, continued employment or any other terms, conditions, or privileges of employment. This is also called **quid pro quo** harassment.

Any employee or covered individual who feels harassed is encouraged to report the behavior so that any violation of this policy can be corrected promptly. Any harassing conduct, even a single incident, can be discrimination and is covered by this policy.

Examples of Sexual Harassment

The following describes some of the types of acts that may be unlawful sexual harassment and that are strictly prohibited. **This list is just a sample of behaviors and should not be considered exhaustive.** Any employee who believes they have experienced sexual harassment, even if it does not appear on this list, should feel encouraged to report it:

- Physical acts of a sexual nature, such as:
 - Touching, pinching, patting, kissing, hugging, grabbing, brushing against another employee's body, or poking another employee's body; or
 - Rape, sexual battery, molestation, or attempts to commit these assaults, which may be considered criminal conduct outside the scope of this policy (please contact local law enforcement if you wish to pursue criminal charges).
- Unwanted sexual comments, advances, or propositions, such as:
 - Requests for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning the target's job performance evaluation, a promotion, or other job benefits;
 - This can include sexual advances/pressure placed on a service industry employee by customers or clients, especially those industries where hospitality and tips are essential to the customer/employee relationship;
 - Subtle or obvious pressure for unwelcome sexual activities; or
 - Repeated requests for dates or romantic gestures, including gift-giving.
- Sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks or jokes, or questions and comments about a person's sexuality, sexual experience, or romantic history which create a hostile work environment. This is not limited to interactions in person. Remarks made over virtual platforms and in messaging apps when employees are working remotely can create a similarly hostile work environment.

- Sex stereotyping, which occurs when someone’s conduct or personality traits are judged based on other people’s ideas or perceptions about how individuals of a particular sex should act or look:
 - Remarks regarding an employee’s gender expression, such as wearing a garment typically associated with a different gender identity; or
 - Asking employees to take on traditionally gendered roles, such as asking a woman to serve meeting refreshments when it is not part of, or appropriate to, her job duties.
- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the workplace, such as:
 - Displaying pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional material, reading materials, or other materials that are sexually demeaning or pornographic. This includes such sexual displays on workplace computers or cell phones and sharing such displays while in the workplace;
 - This also extends to the virtual or remote workspace and can include having such materials visible in the background of one’s home during a virtual meeting.
- Hostile actions taken against an individual because of that individual’s sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, such as:
 - Interfering with, destroying, or damaging a person’s workstation, tools or equipment, or otherwise interfering with the individual’s ability to perform the job;
 - Sabotaging an individual’s work;
 - Bullying, yelling, or name-calling;
 - Intentional misuse of an individual’s preferred pronouns; or
 - Creating different expectations for individuals based on their perceived identities:
 - Dress codes that place more emphasis on women’s attire;
 - Leaving parents/caregivers out of meetings.

Who Can be a Target of Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment can occur between any individuals, regardless of their sex or gender. Harassment does not have to be between members of the opposite sex or gender. New York Law protects employees and all covered individuals described earlier in the policy. **Harassers can be anyone in the workplace.** A supervisor, a supervisee, or a coworker can all be harassers. Anyone else in the workplace can also be harassers including an independent contractor, contract worker, vendor, client, customer, patient, constituent, or visitor.

Sexual harassment does not happen in a vacuum and discrimination experienced by an employee can be impacted by biases and identities beyond an individual’s gender. For example:

- Placing different demands or expectations on black women employees than white women employees can be both racial and gender discrimination;
- An individual’s immigration status may lead to perceptions of vulnerability and increased concerns around illegal retaliation for reporting sexual harassment; or
- Past experiences as a survivor of domestic or sexual violence may lead an individual to feel re-traumatized by someone’s behaviors in the workplace.

Individuals bring personal history with them to the workplace that might impact how they interact with certain behavior. It is especially important for all employees to be aware of how words or actions might impact someone with a different experience than their own in the interest of creating a safe and equitable workplace.

Where Can Sexual Harassment Occur?

Unlawful sexual harassment is not limited to the physical workplace itself. It can occur while employees are traveling for business or at employer or industry sponsored events or parties. Calls, texts, emails, and social media usage by employees or covered individuals can constitute unlawful workplace harassment, even if they occur away from the workplace premises, on personal devices, or during non-work hours.

Sexual harassment can occur when employees are working remotely from home as well. Any behaviors outlined above that leave an employee feeling uncomfortable, humiliated, or unable to meet their job

requirements constitute harassment even if the employee or covered individual is at home when the harassment occurs. Harassment can happen on virtual meeting platforms, in messaging apps, and after working hours between personal cell phones.

Retaliation

Retaliation is unlawful and is any action by an employer or supervisor that punishes an individual upon learning of a harassment claim, that seeks to discourage a worker or covered individual from making a formal complaint or supporting a sexual harassment or discrimination claim, or that punishes those who have come forward. These actions need not be job-related or occur in the workplace to constitute unlawful retaliation. For example, threats of physical violence outside of work hours or disparaging someone on social media would be covered as retaliation under this policy.

Examples of retaliation may include, but are not limited to:

- Demotion, termination, denying accommodations, reduced hours, or the assignment of less desirable shifts;
- Publicly releasing personnel files;
- Refusing to provide a reference or providing an unwarranted negative reference;
- Labeling an employee as “difficult” and excluding them from projects to avoid “drama”;
- Undermining an individual’s immigration status; or
- Reducing work responsibilities, passing over for a promotion, or moving an individual’s desk to a less desirable office location.

Such retaliation is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. The New York State Human Rights Law protects any individual who has engaged in “protected activity.” Protected activity occurs when a person has:

- Made a complaint of sexual harassment or discrimination, either internally or with any government agency;
- Testified or assisted in a proceeding involving sexual harassment or discrimination under the Human Rights Law or any other anti-discrimination law;
- Opposed sexual harassment or discrimination by making a verbal or informal complaint to management, or by simply informing a supervisor or manager of suspected harassment;
- Reported that another employee has been sexually harassed or discriminated against; or
- Encouraged a fellow employee to report harassment.

Even if the alleged harassment does not turn out to rise to the level of a violation of law, the individual is protected from retaliation if the person had a good faith belief that the practices were unlawful. However, the retaliation provision is not intended to protect persons making intentionally false charges of harassment.

Reporting Sexual Harassment

Everyone must work toward preventing sexual harassment, but leadership matters. Supervisors and managers have a special responsibility to make sure employees feel safe at work and that workplaces are free from harassment and discrimination. Any employee or covered individual is encouraged to report harassing or discriminatory behavior to a supervisor, manager or the SALS Director or SALS Board of Trustees. Anyone who witnesses or becomes aware of potential instances of sexual harassment should report such behavior to a supervisor, manager, or the SALS Director or SALS Board of Trustees.

Reports of sexual harassment may be made verbally or in writing. A written complaint form is attached to this Handbook as **Appendix B** if an employee would like to use it, but the complaint form is not required. Employees who are reporting sexual harassment on behalf of other employees may use the complaint form and should note that it is on another employee’s behalf. A verbal or otherwise written complaint (such as an email) on behalf of oneself or another employee is also acceptable.

Employees and covered individuals who believe they have been a target of sexual harassment may at any time seek assistance in additional available forums, as explained below in the section on [Legal Protections](#).

Supervisory Responsibilities

Supervisors and managers have a responsibility to prevent sexual harassment and discrimination. All supervisors and managers who receive a complaint or information about suspected sexual harassment, observe what may be sexually harassing or discriminatory behavior, or for any reason suspect that sexual harassment or discrimination is occurring, are required to report such suspected sexual harassment to the SALS Director or SALS Board of Trustees. Managers and supervisors should not be passive and wait for an employee to make a claim of harassment. If they observe such behavior, they must act.

Supervisors and managers can be disciplined if they engage in sexually harassing or discriminatory behavior themselves. Supervisors and managers can also be disciplined for failing to report suspected sexual harassment or allowing sexual harassment to continue after they know about it.

Supervisors and managers will also be subject to discipline for engaging in any retaliation.

While supervisors and managers have a responsibility to report harassment and discrimination, supervisors and managers must be mindful of the impact that harassment and a subsequent investigation has on victims. Being identified as a possible victim of harassment and questioned about harassment and discrimination can be intimidating, uncomfortable and re-traumatizing for individuals. Supervisors and managers must accommodate the needs of individuals who have experienced harassment to ensure the workplace is safe, supportive, and free from retaliation for them during and after any investigation.

Bystander Intervention

Any employee witnessing harassment as a bystander is encouraged to report it. A supervisor or manager that is a bystander to harassment is **required** to report it. There are five standard methods of bystander intervention that can be used when anyone witnesses harassment or discrimination and wants to help.

1. A bystander can interrupt the harassment by engaging with the individual being harassed and distracting them from the harassing behavior;
 2. A bystander who feels unsafe interrupting on their own can ask a third party to help intervene in the harassment;
 3. A bystander can record or take notes on the harassment incident to benefit a future investigation;
 4. A bystander might check in with the person who has been harassed after the incident, see how they are feeling and let them know the behavior was not ok; and
 5. If a bystander feels safe, they can confront the harassers and name the behavior as inappropriate.
- When confronting harassment, physically assaulting an individual is never an appropriate response.

Though not exhaustive, and dependent on the circumstances, the guidelines above can serve as a brief guide of how to react when witnessing harassment in the workplace. Any employee witnessing harassment as a bystander is encouraged to report it. A supervisor or manager that is a bystander to harassment is required to report it.

Complaints and Investigations of Sexual Harassment

All complaints or information about sexual harassment will be investigated, whether that information was reported in verbal or written form. An investigation of any complaint, information, or knowledge of suspected sexual harassment will be prompt, thorough, and started and completed as soon as possible. The investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible. All individuals involved, including those making a harassment claim, witnesses, and alleged harassers deserve a fair and impartial investigation.

Any employee may be required to cooperate as needed in an investigation of suspected sexual harassment. SALS will take disciplinary action against anyone engaging in retaliation against employees who file complaints, support another's complaint, or participate in harassment investigations.

SALS recognizes that participating in a harassment investigation can be uncomfortable and has the potential to retraumatize an employee. Those receiving claims and leading investigations will handle complaints and questions with sensitivity toward those participating.

While the process may vary from case to case, investigations will be done in accordance with the following steps. Upon receipt of a complaint, the SALS Director or SALS Board of Trustees:

1. Will conduct a prompt review of the allegations, assess the appropriate scope of the investigation, and take any interim actions (for example, instructing the individual(s) about whom the complaint was made to refrain from communications with the individual(s) who reported the harassment), as appropriate. If complaint is verbal, request that the individual completes the complaint form in writing. If the person reporting prefers not to fill out the form, the SALS Director or SALS Board of Trustees will prepare a complaint form or equivalent documentation based on the verbal reporting;
2. Will take steps to obtain, review, and preserve documents sufficient to assess the allegations, including documents, emails or phone records that may be relevant to the investigation. The SALS Director or SALS Board of Trustees will consider and implement appropriate document request, review, and preservation measures, including for electronic communications;
3. Will seek to interview all parties involved, including any relevant witnesses;
4. Will create a written documentation of the investigation (such as a letter, memo or email), which contains the following:
 - a. A list of all documents reviewed, along with a detailed summary of relevant documents;
 - b. A list of names of those interviewed, along with a detailed summary of their statements;
 - c. A timeline of events;
 - d. A summary of any prior relevant incidents disclosed in the investigation, reported or unreported; and
 - e. The basis for the decision and final resolution of the complaint, together with any corrective action(s).
5. Will keep the written documentation and associated documents in a secure and confidential location;
6. Will promptly notify the individual(s) who reported the harassment and the individual(s) about whom the complaint was made that the investigation has been completed and implement any corrective actions identified in the written document; and
7. Will inform the individual(s) who reported of the right to file a complaint or charge externally as outlined in the next section.

Legal Protections and External Remedies

Sexual harassment is not only prohibited by SALS, but it is also prohibited by state, federal, and, where applicable, local law.

The internal process outlined in the policy above is one way for employees to report sexual harassment. Employees and covered individuals may also choose to pursue legal remedies with the following governmental entities. While a private attorney is not required to file a complaint with a governmental agency, you may also seek the legal advice of an attorney.

- New York State Division of Human Rights:

The New York State Human Rights Law (HRL), N.Y. Executive Law, art. 15, § 290 *et seq.*, applies to all employers in New York State and protects employees and covered individuals, regardless of immigration status. A complaint alleging violation of the Human Rights Law may be filed either with the New York State Division of Human Rights (DHR) or in New York State Supreme Court.

Complaints of sexual harassment filed with DHR may be submitted any time **within three years** of the harassment. If an individual does not file a complaint with DHR, they can bring a lawsuit directly in state court under the Human Rights Law, **within three years** of the alleged sexual harassment. An individual may not file with DHR if they have already filed a HRL complaint in state court.

Complaining internally to SALS does not extend your time to file with DHR or in court. The three years are counted from the date of the most recent incident of harassment.

You do not need an attorney to file a complaint with DHR, and there is no cost to file with DHR.

DHR will investigate your complaint and determine whether there is probable cause to believe that sexual harassment has occurred. Probable cause cases receive a public hearing before an administrative law judge. If sexual harassment is found at the hearing, DHR has the power to award relief. Relief varies but it may include requiring your employer to take action to stop the harassment, or repair the damage caused by the harassment, including paying of monetary damages, punitive damages, attorney's fees, and civil fines.

DHR's main office contact information is: NYS Division of Human Rights, One Fordham Plaza, Fourth Floor, Bronx, New York 10458. You may call (718) 741-8400 or visit: www.dhr.ny.gov.

Go to dhr.ny.gov/complaint for more information about filing a complaint with DHR. The website has a digital complaint process that can be completed on your computer or mobile device from start to finish. The website has a complaint form that can be downloaded, filled out, and mailed to DHR as well as a form that can be submitted online. The website also contains contact information for DHR's regional offices across New York State.

Call the DHR sexual harassment hotline at **1(800) HARASS3** for more information about filing a sexual harassment complaint. This hotline can also provide you with a referral to a volunteer attorney experienced in sexual harassment matters who can provide you with limited free assistance and counsel over the phone.

- The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces federal anti-discrimination laws, including Title VII of the 1964 federal Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e *et seq.* An individual can file a complaint with the EEOC anytime within 300 days from the most recent incident of harassment. There is no cost to file a complaint with the EEOC. The EEOC will investigate the complaint and determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that discrimination has occurred. If the EEOC determines that the law may have been violated, the EEOC will try to reach a voluntary settlement with the employer. If the EEOC cannot reach a settlement, the EEOC (or the Department of Justice in certain cases) will decide whether to file a lawsuit. The EEOC will issue a Notice of Right to Sue permitting workers to file a lawsuit in federal court if the EEOC closes the charge, is unable to determine if federal employment discrimination laws may have been violated, or believes that unlawful discrimination occurred by does not file a lawsuit.

Individuals may obtain relief in mediation, settlement or conciliation. In addition, federal courts may award remedies if discrimination is found to have occurred. In general, private employers must have at least 15 employees to come within the jurisdiction of the EEOC.

An employee alleging discrimination at work can file a "Charge of Discrimination." The EEOC has district, area, and field offices where complaints can be filed. Contact the EEOC by calling 1-800-669-4000 (TTY: 1-800-669-6820), visiting their website at www.eeoc.gov or via email at info@eeoc.gov.

If an individual filed an administrative complaint with the New York State Division of Human Rights, DHR will automatically file the complaint with the EEOC to preserve the right to proceed in federal court.

- Local Protections

Many localities enforce laws protecting individuals from sexual harassment and discrimination. An individual should contact the county, city or town in which they live to find out if such a law exists. For example, employees who work in New York City may file complaints of sexual harassment or discrimination with the New York City Commission on Human Rights. Contact their main office at Law Enforcement

Bureau of the NYC Commission on Human Rights, 22 Reade Street, 1st Floor, New York, New York; call 311 or (212) 306-7450; or visit www.nyc.gov/html/cchr/html/home/home.shtml.

- Contact the Local Police Department

If the harassment involves unwanted physical touching, coerced physical confinement, or coerced sex acts, the conduct may constitute a crime. Those wishing to pursue criminal charges are encouraged to contact their local police department.

Conclusion

The policy outlined above is aimed at providing employees at SALS and covered individuals an understanding of their right to a discrimination and harassment free workplace. All employees should feel safe at work. Though the focus of this policy is on sexual harassment and gender discrimination, the New York State Human Rights law protects against discrimination in several protected classes including sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, race, creed, color, national origin, military status, disability, pre-disposing genetic characteristics, familial status, marital status, criminal history, or domestic violence survivor status. The prevention policies outlined above should be considered applicable to all protected classes.

Safety in the Workplace

On the Job Injuries and/or Accidents

Each employee is expected to obey safety rules and to exercise caution in all work activities. In the case of accidents that result in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, employees should immediately notify the Business Office or SALS Director. Such reports are necessary to comply with laws and initiate insurance and workers' compensation benefits procedures. The injured employee must fill out a form. An accident involving a visitor to the System must likewise be reported, in order that insurance carriers can be notified.

Use of Equipment and Vehicles

When using SALS' property or vehicles, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all state and federal laws and operating instructions, safety standards. No smoking is allowed at any time.

Please notify the supervisor if any equipment, machines, tools, or vehicles appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair.

Smoking

Smoking or vaping, including (but not limited to) cigars, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vaporizers, chewing tobacco/snuff, etc. is prohibited on all SALS premises, including the building, garage, parking lot, and grounds.

Drug Free Workplace

It is SALS' desire to provide a drug-free, healthful, and safe work. While on SALS' premises and while conducting business-related activities off SALS' premises, no employee may use, possess, distribute, sell, or be under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs. Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment and forfeiture of benefits.

As part of its commitment to a drug free workplace, SALS reserves the right to require a clinical test to screen for the presence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or marijuana in accordance with New York Labor Law 201-D. SALS may require such tests when there is reasonable suspicion that an employee is unable to perform job duties due to an impairment which may be caused by the use of alcohol or controlled substances; as part of the investigation of a work-related illness or accident; or as a follow-up to completion of a rehabilitation program or recent positive drug test. Employees who refuse to participate in a test, or test positive, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Certain positions may require periodic physical examination, including drug testing, under state or federal guidelines. Also, employees assigned to certain projects or client work may be required to undergo drug screening as part of the contract.

SALS reserves the right to search persons and personal property for the purpose of determining whether any prohibited substance has been brought onto its premises in violation of this policy.

In addition, employees are expected to report any conviction under a criminal drug statute for violations occurring on or off Company premises while conducting Company business. This report must be made within 5 days of the conviction. Disciplinary action may be taken for drug-related crimes, regardless of whether they happened during working hours or on an employee's own time.

The legal use of prescribed drugs is permitted on the job only if it does not impair an employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the job effectively and is used in a safe manner that does not endanger other individuals in the workplace.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

In accordance with New York State's Emergency Preparedness Law (EPL), SALS maintains an Emergency Preparedness Plan that will be activated whenever the state government declares a state disaster or

emergency involving a communicable disease.

The detailed Plan is attached to this Handbook as Appendix C.

Visitors in the Workplace

To provide for the safety and security of employees, the facilities and equipment at SALS, visitors are expected to stop in the lobby to identify themselves to the receptionist. Authorized visitors will receive directions or be escorted to their destination. Employees are responsible for the conduct and safety of their visitors.

Security Door

The Southern Adirondack Library System (SALS) provides services to its 34 member libraries. It houses the servers that are used by libraries in SALS and the Mohawk Valley Library System. To provide security to servers and to comply with PCI standards, the building must be locked.

SALS hours of operation are Monday – Friday, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm. All employees will be issued a fob and a PIN (personal identification number) to allow access to the building. Employees may not share codes or fobs with other employees or non-employees. SALS Trustees may be issued a fob and PIN upon request.

Visitors are permitted in the building during normal business hours. Visitor access to the building will be through the front door, unless handicapped access is required, or attending a scheduled meeting, or a large delivery through the loading area. Meetings can be Board, Director’s Council, JA Council, or training workshops.

Visitors are encouraged to call ahead in order to gain access to the building. When scheduling meetings or appointments, include information on how to enter the building in the correspondences. Inform front reception area personnel of expected time of arrival of appointments or deliveries if possible.

Emergency Closings

At times, emergencies such as severe weather and power failures can disrupt SALS’ operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of the facility. When operations are officially closed due to emergency conditions, the time off from scheduled work will be paid for staff who work fully in-office. In cases where an emergency closing occurs after the work day has begun, fully in-office employees who failed to report for work at the start of that day, will not be paid for the time off unless they request a vacation or personal leave day. Staff who are approved for hybrid/remote work should work from home during SALS regular business hours, even if the SALS office has experienced an emergency closing. If the emergency conditions extend to an employee’s home office, staff should notify the Director, and with approval the time off from scheduled work may be paid.

Workplace Violence and Weapons

SALS prohibits and will not tolerate any form of workplace violence by an employee, supervisor or third party, including customers and visitors both at the workplace and at employer-sponsored events.

For purposes of this policy, workplace violence includes, but is not limited to:

- Making threatening remarks (written or verbal).
- Aggressive or hostile acts such as shouting, using profanity, throwing objects at another person, fighting or intentionally damaging a co-worker's property.
- Bullying, intimidating or harassing another person (for example, making obscene phone calls or using threatening body language or gestures such as standing close to someone or shaking your fist at them).
- Behavior that causes another person emotional distress or creates a reasonable fear of injury, such as stalking.
- Assault.

In addition, SALS prohibits all employees from possessing any weapons of any kind both at the workplace and at SALS-sponsored events. For purposes of this policy, the workplace is defined to include SALS building(s), outdoor areas and parking lots. Weapons include, but are not limited to:

- Guns.
- Knives.
- Mace.
- Explosives.
- Any item with the potential to inflict harm that has no common purpose.

Employees who witness or are subjected to any conduct that violates this policy must speak to, write or otherwise contact their direct supervisor or, if the conduct involves the direct supervisor, the next level above the direct supervisor as soon as possible. Reporting the violation constitutes filing a complaint under this policy.

Additionally, any manager or supervisor who observes any conduct in violation of this policy must report the conduct to the Director so that an investigation can be made and corrective action taken, if appropriate. If the conduct represents an imminent violent act or threat of an imminent violent act, immediately contact appropriate law enforcement then contact the Director or the Director's representative.

SALS will directly and thoroughly investigate all complaints of workplace violence and will take prompt corrective action, including verbal and written warnings, reprimand, suspension or possible termination of employment. SALS reserves the right to contact law enforcement, if appropriate. The alleged violence investigation will be handled by the SALS Director or SALS Board of Trustees in a confidential manner, to protect the privacy of the individuals involved. The parties to the complaint will be notified upon the resolution of the investigation.

SALS prohibits any form of discipline, reprisal, intimidation or retaliation for reporting incidents of workplace violence of any kind, pursuing a workplace violence complaint or cooperating in related investigations.

Work Time and Compensation Policies

Classifications of Employees

SALS intends to clarify the definitions of employment classifications so that employees understand their employment status and benefit eligibility. Each employee is designated as either NON-EXEMPT or EXEMPT from federal and state wage and hour laws.

Full-time: Employees who work a minimum of thirty-five (35) hours per week. The benefits described later in this Handbook are made available to Full-time employees.

Part-time: Employees who work, on average, less than 35 hours per week. Generally, these employees are eligible for only the benefits mandated by law.

Per Diem: Employees who work irregular schedules on an “on-call” basis, as needed. Generally, these employees are eligible for only the benefits mandated by law.

Temporary or Seasonal: From time to time, SALS may hire employees for specific periods of time or for the completion of a specific project. An employee hired under these conditions will be considered a *temporary employee* and may work on a full-time or a part-time basis. The job assignment, work schedule and duration of the position will be determined on an individual basis. Temporary employees are generally eligible for only the benefits mandated by law.

Non-exempt: Those employees who are NOT exempt from the laws applying to overtime compensation must be paid at a rate of at least time and a half for all hours worked over 40 hours per week. The SALS work week is officially 35 hours per week. If paid on a salary basis, non-exempt employees will receive the same salary each pay period, which will compensate them for scheduled hours each week up to 35 hours. Upon the request of a supervisor and with approval of SALS Director, a non-exempt employee may be required to work extra hours in a week. The non-exempt employee will receive compensatory time for any time over 35 and up to 40 hours per payroll week; for any hours over 40 per payroll week, the employee will be paid straight time for hours 35-40, and time and a half for hours in excess of 40. A non-exempt employee may accrue up to 21 hours of compensatory time before utilizing that time when mutually agreeable to the employee and the supervisor. Compensatory time may not be carried over from the preceding calendar year.

Exempt: Those employees who are exempt from overtime pay rules and who work in Executive, Administrative, Computer capacities or Librarians (with a Masters in Library Science). If exempt employees work more than the scheduled 35-hour work week, they may accrue compensatory time as determined by the direct supervisor and approved by the Director. Accrued time will be used when mutually agreeable to the employee and the supervisor. Unused compensatory time will not be paid upon resignation, termination or retirement.

Generally, Exempt employees will be paid a fixed compensation (salary) at the regular pay intervals, without regard to actual hours worked during the respective period or adjusted for variations in the quantity or quality of the work performed. However, deductions can be made when permitted by law. For example, an employee’s salary can be reduced for the following reasons in a workweek in which work was performed:

- Full day absences for personal reasons, including vacation, not covered by existing benefit time.
- Full day absences for sickness or disability, not covered by existing benefit time.
- Full day disciplinary suspensions for infractions of safety rules of major significance.
- To offset amounts received as payment for jury and witness fees or military pay.
- Unpaid disciplinary suspensions of one or more full days for significant infractions of major workplace conduct rules set forth in written policies.
- The first or last week of employment in the event less than a full week was worked.

In any workweek in which any work was performed, an employee's salary will not be reduced for any of the following reasons:

- Partial day absences for personal reasons, sickness or disability.
- Absence because the facility is closed on a scheduled work day.
- Absences for jury duty, attendance as a witness, or military leave in any week in which any work was performed.
- Any other deductions prohibited by state or federal law.

Although Exempt employees are not required to "clock in and out", certain time records may be kept to provide management information needed to monitor compensated absence balances and to provide the information needed to track costs for internal cost accounting and billing purposes.

It is expected that Exempt employees will work the necessary time to meet the requirements of their position. Due to the nature of the projects at SALS, each employee must work hours that are convenient for management, customers, suppliers, and other employees. The standard work day need not be adhered to strictly, provided that other employees are not inconvenienced by the deviation.

Work Schedules

The SALS office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Exempt and non-exempt staff work 35 hours, five days per week. SALS Director may authorize an employee to work a different workday, when appropriate. Coverage for computer support and services is available for times outside of regular business hours.

Timekeeping

Employees are required to fill out bi-weekly timesheets accounting for hours worked and for any leave taken and are to have them approved by the appropriate supervisor. Timesheets are emailed bi-weekly to all employees. Vacation time should be requested in advance and all time off should be recorded on the online staff calendars. Altering, falsifying and tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee's time record is prohibited and subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. It is the employee's responsibility to sign the time record to certify the accuracy of all time recorded.

Paydays

All employees are paid biweekly on every other Friday. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period.

In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a day off, such as a holiday, employees will receive pay on the last day of work before the regularly scheduled payday. If a regular payday falls during an employee's vacation, the employee's paycheck will be available upon his or her return from vacation.

Employees may have pay directly deposited to the bank of their choice if they provide advance written authorization to SALS. Employees will receive an itemized statement of wages when direct deposits are made.

Rest and Meal Periods

Each workday, full-time employees are provided with two 15-minute breaks. Since this time is counted and paid as time worked, employees must not be absent from their workstations beyond the allotted time. Part-time employees are entitled to one 15-minute break for each four hours of scheduled work.

All full-time regular employees are provided with one meal period of 60 minutes in length each workday. Supervisors will schedule meal periods to accommodate operating requirements. Employees will be relieved of all active responsibilities and restrictions during meal periods and will not be compensated for that time.

Business Travel Expenses

Pre-approved travel expenses incurred by employees while engaged in System business will be reimbursed. Mileage, meals, lodging and related expenses are eligible for reimbursement upon the filing of the proper travel expense form. Meals are reimbursable at the GSA per diem rate based on location. Go to: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/26429>

When employees are required to use their own vehicle, they will be reimbursed for mileage at the IRS standard mileage rate, providing prior approval of the System director has been secured.

If an employee must use their own vehicle, the mileage reimbursement will be calculated from the employees assigned work location that day, i.e., System headquarters in Saratoga or their home if telecommuting, to the destination.

When employees carpool to conferences, meetings, or site visits with staff from other systems, libraries or consultants, they may offer reimbursement to those driving if they have obtained prior approval of the SALS Director. The driver should submit an invoice to SALS for gas and/or tolls.

Continuing Education

SALS may occasionally require attendance at training sessions or other staff development sessions. With prior approval from SALS Director, conference fees and other related business expenses might be reimbursed upon completion of the appropriate expense reimbursement form.

Telecommuting / Remote Work

As technology and electronic accessibility permits, telecommuting, or the ability to work remotely from home, may be an alternative to traditional work arrangements. Employees in some positions may be permitted to work a hybrid schedule, a combination of remote and in-office work. The supervisor and employee will develop the schedule and post it on the SALS staff calendar. Some positions require accessibility to facilities, customers and co-workers, and are not appropriate for remote work arrangements.

In the occasional circumstance where weather or personal circumstances result in an employee's desire to work from home for the day, the employee should contact their supervisor and request the ability to work from home, thus not charging their paid time off. An employee may have a remote work assignment of a longer duration. Such arrangements are at the discretion of SALS, based upon a full assessment of the circumstances.

A home-based worksite is considered an extension of the workplace, while the employee is on the clock and using it for work. Employees working from home are expected to maintain their home workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. SALS reserves the right to assess the home workplace as needed. Injuries sustained by the employee in a home office location and in conjunction with their regular work duties are normally covered by SALS' workers' compensation policy. Telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary and customer information accessible from their home office. Equipment supplied by the organization is to be properly secured, maintained and used for business purposes only.

Employee Benefits

Health Insurance

Employees have the option of being covered by the health insurance plans SALS offers. The employee will receive a list of options when employment begins.

Employees may register for Individual or Family coverage. Dependents under Family coverage include spouse, domestic partner and children as defined in NYSHIP's current General Information Book. The System pays 100% premium for the individual and 35% for dependents. Individuals not wishing coverage may decline coverage.

Part-time employees (those working less than 35 hours per week) are not covered under SALS' health insurance benefit program.

Retiree Health Benefits

Employees hired prior to 6/20/06 that retire from SALS with ten continuous years of full-time service at SALS, SALS will pay 50% of premium costs for individual health insurance coverage and 35% for family coverage. For retirees with fifteen continuous years of full-time service at SALS, SALS will pay 100% of premium costs for individual health insurance coverage and 35% for family coverage. These benefits will not accrue to employees who retire after leaving employment at SALS, except under special circumstances in regard to NYSHIP. Consult with the Business Office for further details.

Employees hired after 6/20/06 that retire from SALS with fifteen continuous years of full-time service at SALS, SALS will pay 50% of premium costs for individual health insurance coverage and 35% for family coverage. For retirees with twenty continuous years of full-time service at SALS, SALS will pay 100% of premium costs for individual health insurance coverage and 35% for family coverage. These benefits will not accrue to employees who retire after leaving employment at SALS, except under special circumstances in regard to NYSHIP. Consult with the Business Office for further details.

Vision Insurance

Employees may enroll in vision insurance coverage as Employee Only, Employee and Spouse/Domestic Partner, Employee and Child, Employee and Children, or Family. The System pays 100% premium for all levels of coverage. Individuals not wishing coverage may decline coverage.

Benefits Continuation (COBRA)

The federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under SALS' health plan when a "qualifying event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Some common qualifying events are resignation, termination of employment, or death of an employee; a reduction in an employee's hours or a leave of absence; an employee's divorce or legal separation; and dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirements.

Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage at SALS' group rates plus an administration fee. SALS provides each eligible employee with a written notice describing rights granted under COBRA when the employee becomes eligible for coverage under SALS' health insurance plan. The notice contains important information about the employee's rights and obligations.

Workers' Compensation Insurance

SALS provides a comprehensive workers' compensation insurance program at no cost to employees. This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical, surgical, or hospital treatment. Subject to applicable legal requirements, workers' compensation insurance provides benefits after a 7-day waiting period. If the employee remains out longer than 7 days, the employee will be compensated from day one at 2/3 pay.

Employees who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses should inform their supervisor and Business Office immediately. No matter how minor an on-the-job injury may appear, it is important that it be reported immediately. This will enable an eligible employee to qualify for coverage as quickly as possible.

Upon the submission of a medical certification that the employee is able to return to work, the employee will be offered the same position, or one comparable to the position held at the time of leaving, if available. In some cases, employees may return to work under a temporary light duty assignment. If such a position is not available, an employee's return to work will depend on job openings existing at the time of scheduled return. There are no guarantees of reinstatement and return to work will depend on an employee's qualifications for existing openings.

New York State Short-Term Disability

SALS provides a New York State short-term disability (STD) benefits plan to full and part-time employees who are unable to work because of a qualifying disability due to an injury or illness sustained outside of work. Eligible employees may participate in the STD plan subject to all terms and conditions of the agreement between SALS and the insurance carrier. SALS encourages employees to use time off banks to supplement STD benefits.

Disabilities arising from pregnancy or pregnancy-related illness are treated the same as any other illness that prevents an employee from working. Disabilities covered by workers' compensation are excluded from STD coverage.

Upon the submission of a medical certification that the employee is able to return to work, the employee will be offered the same position, or one comparable to the position held at the time of leaving, if available. In some cases, employees may return to work under a temporary light duty assignment. If such a position is not available, an employee's return to work will depend on job openings existing at the time of scheduled return. There are no guarantees of reinstatement and return to work will depend on an employee's qualifications for existing openings. For details of the STD benefits plan including benefit amounts, when they are payable, and limitations, restrictions, and other exclusions, contact the Business Office.

Flexible Benefits Plan

SALS provides a Flexible Benefits program that allows employees to have pre-tax dollars deducted from their salaries to pay for eligible out-of-pocket expenses. The pre-tax contributions made to the FSA plan can be used to pay for predictable unreimbursed medical expenses (URM) and dependent day care (DDC) expenses during the plan year. Through the Flexible Benefits program, you can reduce your taxable income without reducing your real income, so that you can keep more of the money you earn.

Participation in the URM and/or DDC is optional and determined on an annual basis for the plan year. Employees must enroll for each plan year. Employees determine how much to contribute to the account, up to a specified maximum, based on anticipated expenses during the plan year. Employees may contribute up to the maximum annual allowable limit set by the IRS for the URM and DDC. Contributions are directed to the account through salary reduction on a pre-tax basis. This tax-free money is then available for reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses. The FSA allows for carryover of unused funds up to the maximum allowable limit by the IRS. Funds above that limit are forfeited, so take care not to overfund your account.

Contact the Business Office for more information on the Flexible Benefits program and to obtain enrollment and reimbursement forms and worksheets with examples of reimbursable and non-reimbursable expenses.

Other benefits provided under the plan include, but are not limited to:

- Pre-tax group medical insurance (employee portion premium)
- Dental insurance
- AFLAC short-term disability
- AFLAC cancer insurance
- AFLAC dental insurance
- AFLAC life insurance

NYS Deferred Compensation Plan

This retirement plan enables government employees to defer a portion (determined by current IRS

legislation) of their compensation free from current federal and New York State income taxation. The amount saved accumulates tax-deferred until the amounts are distributed, generally during retirement. For more information, contact the Business Office.

Retirement Plan

Employees are enrolled in the Employee's Retirement System of New York State upon completion of the application for Membership (RS5420) and its acceptance by the Retirement System.

- A. Employees who joined the NYS Employees' Retirement System prior to July 1, 1973 are classified as Tier 1 members; those who joined the System between July 1, 1973 and June 30, 1976 are Tier 2 members; those who joined between July 1, 1976 and September 1, 1983 are Tier 3 members; those who joined between September 1, 1983 and December 31, 2009 are Tier 4 members; those who joined between January 1, 2010 and March 31, 2012, are Tier 5 members; and those who joined on or after April 1, 2012, are Tier 6 members.
- B. Mandatory participation in the Employee's Retirement System of New York State is required of full-time employees. Participation is optional for part-time employees if they have not previously enrolled in NYSLRS.

There are a number of provisions in the Retirement Plan, some of which apply to all employees, and others that are dependent upon the employee's tenure with SALS. Employees should contact the Business Office for details regarding their anticipated benefits under the Plan.

Discounts on Personal Book Purchases

Our major wholesaler extends discounts on trade and some other books to our employees. See the Business Office for details.

Service Recognition Awards

In recognition of the longevity of SALS employees, staff receive an award of \$5 per year on each 5-year anniversary, beginning with the 10-year anniversary. SALS will "gross up" each award to cover required taxes and FICA, to ensure the employee receives the net amount of \$50, \$75, \$100, etc.

Time Away from Work Benefits

Leave Eligibility

Paid time away from work is available to full-time employees. Leave is pro-rated for part-time employees who work more than half time.

Sick Leave

SALS provides paid sick leave benefits to all eligible employees for periods of temporary absence due to illness or injury. Full-time employees earn one day a month, beginning with their date of hire. Sick leave may be accumulated up to 180 days (1,260 hours). 165 days of unused sick leave may be applied to the employee's retirement benefit.

Paid sick leave can be used in minimum increments of one-half hour. An eligible employee may use sick leave benefits for an absence due to his or her own illness or injury, or that of a child, parent, or spouse of the employee. Sick leave may be used for doctor's appointments for the employee or an employee's child, parent, or spouse.

Employees who are unable to report to work due to illness should notify their direct supervisor or SALS receptionist before the scheduled start of their workday if possible. If an employee is absent for three or more consecutive days due to illness or injury, the Director may request a physician's statement verifying the illness or disability and the statement for a disability should list its beginning and expected ending dates. Before returning to work from a sick leave absence of 5 calendar days or more, the Director may request a physician's verification certifying that the employee may safely return to work.

If sick leave is depleted, vacation time may be substituted, and must be substituted if the employee wishes to be paid for time out of work.

Unused sick leave benefits will not be paid to employees while they are employed or upon termination of employment.

SALS does not offer advances on sick leave time.

New York State COVID Sick Leave

If an employee or their minor dependent child are subject to an individual order of quarantine or isolation issued by any government entity authorized to issue such order due to COVID-19, they may be eligible for paid and/or unpaid leave.

SALS will provide employees with up to fourteen days of paid NYS COVID sick leave for days or work shifts the employee would otherwise have been working. After those days are used, the employee may be eligible for compensation for the remainder of the quarantine by applying for Paid Family Leave and/or Disability benefits. Employees are not eligible for leave if they are asymptomatic and physically able to work remotely or through other means. In no event shall an employee qualify for sick leave under this benefit for more than three orders of quarantine or isolation.

Please see the Business Office for more information on this benefit. This policy expires on July 31, 2025.

Vacation Leave

Full-time employees are eligible to receive Vacation time off, and begin accruing the time upon their hire date. Employees may take the time off as soon as it is accrued. Leave should be requested in advance, when possible, and approved by the employee's supervisor. Requests will be reviewed based on a number of factors, including SALS' needs and staffing requirements. Vacation time must be taken in units not smaller than one-half hour increments.

Employees are entitled to 144 hours of vacation per calendar year (accrued at 12 hours per month).

Vacation time is accumulated monthly up to the maximum allowed. No more than 10 days of vacation leave may be carried over from the preceding calendar year. SALS does not offer advances on vacation time, nor does it provide pay in lieu of vacation time.

Upon termination of employment, an employee will be paid the remaining balance of accrued but unused vacation time. However, employees who voluntarily resign must provide a minimum of ten working days of notice (and must work during the notice period) to receive their unused time.

Personal Leave

Each full-time employee earns 3 personal days on January 1 that must be used in the calendar year. New employees will receive 3 days on their date of hire. This time may be taken in one-half hour units and may not be carried over into a succeeding year.

NY Prenatal Personal Leave

In accordance with NY law, pregnant employees can take up to 20 hours of paid prenatal leave during any 52-week period. This leave may be used for the health care services received by an employee during their pregnancy or related to such pregnancy, including physical examinations, medical procedures, monitoring and testing, and discussions with a health care provider related to the pregnancy. Personal Time is to be used for this type of leave, and all other provisions of SALS' Personal Time apply.

Bereavement Leave

Full-time employees may receive up to 5 days of paid bereavement per loss. This leave can only be used in case of the death of an immediate family member. SALS defines "immediate family" as the employee's spouse/domestic partner, parent, child, sibling; the employee's spouse's/domestic partner's parent, child, or sibling; the employee's child's spouse; grandparents or grandchildren.

Bereavement leave will be granted unless there are unusual business needs or staffing requirements at SALS. Employees may apply to SALS Director to use other available paid leave for additional time off if necessary.

Holidays

SALS is closed, and provides Holiday pay to its full-time employees, on the following days:

- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (third Monday in January)
- Presidents' Day (third Monday in February)
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Juneteenth (June 19)
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- Columbus Day (second Monday in October)
- Veterans' Day (November 11)
- Thanksgiving (fourth Thursday in November)
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve (December 24)
- Christmas (December 25)

If one of these holidays falls on a Saturday, it will be observed on the preceding Friday. A holiday that falls on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday. SALS will grant paid holiday time off to all eligible employees. If an employee is required to attend a work conference on one of these holidays, the employee receives a floating holiday to be used at another time.

Jury Duty

SALS encourages employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by serving jury duty when required. However, if an employee's work required it, or his or her absence imposes a hardship, the System may ask to

have him or her excused from jury duty.

The System will pay the employee's regular salary. The employee should inform the court that they are being paid in full from their employer and do not require jury duty compensation.

Employees must show the jury duty summons to their supervisor as soon as possible so that the supervisor may make arrangements to accommodate their absence. Of course, employees are expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits.

Military Leave

A military leave of absence will be granted to employees who are absent from work because of service in the U.S. uniformed services in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Advance notice of military service is required, unless military necessity prevents such notice or it is otherwise impossible or unreasonable. Upon presentation of satisfactory military pay verification data, employees will be paid the difference between their normal base compensation and the pay (excluding expense pay) received while on military duty. The portion of any military leaves of absence in excess of 2 weeks will be unpaid. However, employees may use any available paid time off for the absence.

Continuation of health insurance benefits is available as required by USERRA based on the length of the leave and subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of the applicable plans for which the employee is otherwise eligible. Vacation, sick leave, and holiday benefits will not continue to accrue during a military leave of absence.

Employees on military leave for up to 10 days are required to return to work for the first regularly scheduled shift after the end of service, allowing reasonable travel time. Employees returning from military leave will be placed in the same or a similar position.

New York Paid Family Leave

SALS offers leave required by New York's Paid Family Leave (PFL) regulations. Employees may be eligible for Paid Family Leave if employed 20 or more hours per week for 26 consecutive weeks (or if working less than 20 hours per week, is employed at least 175 days prior to the leave). Employees not meeting the above eligibility requirements may waive the benefit (and related deductions), but if they ultimately become eligible, they must retroactively make up the payments.

Qualifying Reasons

PFL may be available for eligible employees to:

- Bond with a new born, adopted, or fostered child
- Care for a family member with a serious health condition* (family member is defined as spouse, domestic partner, child or stepchild, sibling or stepsibling, parent or stepparent, parent-in-law, grandparent or grandchild)
- Assist loved ones when a family member is deployed abroad on active military duty (spouse, domestic partner, child, parent)

*A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves:

- inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential health care facility; or
- continuing treatment or continuing supervision by a health care provider.

Please note that Paid Family Leave is not available for the employee's own serious health condition or their own military deployment. Other forms of leave may be available to address those circumstances.

Amount of Leave Available

Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks leave (continuous or intermittent) and receive 67% of their average weekly wage. That benefit is capped at 67% of New York State's average weekly wage. Employees may take the maximum benefit length in any given 52-week period, which begins on the first day the employee takes Paid Family Leave.

Applying for Benefits

Like Disability leave (see below), SALS's insurance carrier reviews applications, makes benefit determinations, and makes benefit payments. Employees are responsible for notifying the Business Office if they intend to claim Family Leave Insurance benefits. If the family leave is foreseeable, the employee must provide 30-days advance notice so it can plan for the absence. If the event was not foreseeable, the employee must notify SALS as quickly as possible.

Pay and Benefits While on Leave

PFL leave is paid, but it is at a fraction of an employee's regular earnings. Employees are not required to use paid time off for some or all of the PFL leave period, though they may choose to do so in order to supplement their income while on PFL. Employees' PFL leave time will run concurrently with FMLA, where applicable.

SALS will continue to provide access to group health insurance while the employee is on PFL leave, on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. The benefit may be cancelled if the employee fails to pay their share of the premiums when due. PFL leave will not result in the loss of any employment benefit accrued prior to the date on which the leave commenced. However, an employee on PFL leave does not continue to accrue service-related benefits while on leave.

Return to Work

At the conclusion of the leave, the employee will be returned to their same or equivalent position, unless they would have otherwise been terminated but for the PFL leave. If the employee does not return to work, they will be considered to have voluntarily resigned, thus forfeiting benefits and the right to restoration of their previous position.

Other Brief Forms of Leave:

Voting Leave

SALS believes that every employee who is a registered voter should have the opportunity to vote in any state or federal election, general primary or special primary. Any employee whose work schedule does not provide them four consecutive hours to vote while polls are open will be granted that amount of time off, including up to two paid hours, in order to vote. The amount of paid and unpaid time granted will be determined based upon the employee's shift and the times the polls are open. SALS reserves the right to select the hours during which the employee is excused to vote.

Employees must notify their supervisor of the need for voting leave two to ten days before the election. Employees returning from voting leave may be requested to present a voter's receipt to their supervisor as soon as possible.

Blood Donation Leave

SALS will provide up to three hours of leave per calendar year to regular full-time employees who wish to donate blood. Blood donation leave will be unpaid; however, eligible employees may choose to use their paid time off for this purpose.

Employees must give their supervisors advance notice of at least three working days prior to the day of leave. Employees taking leave to donate blood may be asked to provide their supervisor with written confirmation of attendance at the blood donation site.

Right of Employees to Express Breast Milk

SALS provides thirty (30) minutes of paid break time for their employees to express breast milk when the employee has a reasonable need to express breast milk. This benefit is provided for up to three years following child birth. Employees wishing to request a room or other location to express breast milk should do so by submitting a written request to their direct supervisor or the Business Office. SALS will make reasonable efforts to provide a private room or other location (other than a toilet stall) in proximity to the employee's work area for this activity, and will allow the employee to store expressed milk in a refrigerator, if available.

Bone Marrow Donation

SALS provides its employees who work at least 20 hours per week up to 24 hours of unpaid leave to donate bone marrow. The employee must provide SALS written physician verification of the purpose and length of each leave. This leave will be unpaid; however, eligible employees may choose to use their paid time off for this purpose

Victims of Crime or Domestic Violence

SALS provides reasonable time away from work for employees who are who are victims of a crime or domestic violence (or who meet certain other criteria) to attend or participate in legal proceedings pertaining to the crime, or to obtain other medical, counseling or legal services. This leave will be unpaid; however, eligible employees may choose to use their paid time off for this purpose. Affected employees must give the company reasonable notice that leave under this policy is requested.

Volunteer Emergency Responder Leave

Employees may be eligible for time off work to serve as a volunteer firefighter or ambulance service. Employees should contact their supervisor as soon as they are aware that they will be late to work, or unable to report to work due to the emergency dispatch. Upon request, employees must provide their supervisor with a statement from the appropriate department or organization documenting that they were responding to an emergency call. Such time off will be unpaid for nonexempt employees. Exempt employees will be paid in accordance with federal and state wage and hour laws.

Additional Leaves

The SALS Director or designee may grant additional unpaid leaves at their discretion. All such requests must be in writing and will include the reasons for the leave and the dates being requested.

Employee Conduct and Work Rules

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, SALS expects employees to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all employees and the organization and follow state and federal laws.

Attendance and Punctuality

To maintain a safe and productive work environment, SALS expects employees to be reliable and to be punctual in reporting for scheduled work. Absenteeism and tardiness place a burden on other employees and on SALS ability to be responsive. In the rare instances when employees cannot avoid being late to work or are unable to work as scheduled, they should notify their supervisor as soon as possible in advance of the anticipated tardiness or absence.

Poor attendance and excessive tardiness may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Personal Appearance

Dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the business image SALS presents to customers and visitors. Office attire is considered “business casual.” In general, acceptable attire may depend on the employee’s individual position or work circumstances, including safety considerations.

It is expected that any employee meeting with customers or outside parties will dress appropriately. SALS understands that in certain situations, it may need to make exceptions to this policy based on an employee’s religion, disability, or other characteristic protected under federal, state or local law. In accordance with all applicable laws, SALS will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodation to the employee requesting accommodation unless doing so would cause an undue hardship.

Supervisors are responsible for interpreting and enforcing this dress code policy within their departments, as well as work assignments outside of corporate headquarters. The Director will assist any supervisor or employee with questions regarding this policy. Any employee dressed inappropriately for their position, in a manner inconsistent with the safe or professional performance of their duties, or in an objectionable fashion, will be notified by their supervisor or the Director, and may be asked to leave the premises to change dress.

Furthermore, employees and visitors to SALS premises may have sensitivity and/or allergic reactions to various fragrant products. As a result, personal fragrant products (such as perfumes, colognes, lotions and powders) that are perceptible to others should be used in moderation, and with the understanding that if the scent negatively impacts other employees, such use will not be permitted. Other fragrant products intended to freshen or scent the air (like scented candles, potpourri, deodorizers) are also subject to the same constraints.

Use of Phone and Mail Systems

Employees should practice discretion when making personal local calls. Personal use of the telephone for long-distance and toll calls or faxes is discouraged. If it is unavoidable the employee must report the call and reimburse SALS for the cost. Personal cell phone use and texting for non-business purposes is also expected to be kept to a minimum. The use of SALS-paid postage for personal correspondence is not permitted. Postage and UPS services may be purchased from the Business Office in some circumstances.

Computer, Internet and E-mail Usage

SALS maintains computers, an electronic mail (E-mail) system and a system that allows access to the Internet. These systems are provided to assist employees in the conduct of SALS business. The computers, E-mail, Internet, and all related software and hardware are SALS property, and are to be used for business purposes only, and not for personal or commercial pursuits by employees.

Employees should have no expectation of privacy while using SALS-provided equipment or systems. SALS reserves and intends to exercise the right to review, audit, intercept, access and review all files stored on computers; messages created, received or sent over the E-mail system; as well as all traffic over the Internet system, without the permission of the employee.

Employees shall not install or delete software from their computers without authorization from management. Further, peripheral equipment (monitors, printers, etc) must be authorized by management and installed by authorized personnel.

As noted above, the E-mail and Internet systems are provided to assist employees in the conduct of Company business. The E-mail system is not to be used to transmit confidential information, or to create any offensive or disruptive messages, including messages which contain sexual references, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, violent references, or any other comment that violates Company policy. Excessive use of e-mail, chat rooms, Internet browsing and playing computer games are not a productive use of work time and should be avoided. Listening to music or other audio should be done with respect for surrounding employees, and headphones may be used, assuming the environment allows for their safe use.

Please refer to the MVLS / SALS Joint Automation Project Security Policy for further details on policies, procedures, and standards for the use and security of computer and related systems.

Use of Social Media

“Social media” is an umbrella term that defines the various activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and the construction of words, pictures, videos, and audio. Examples include blogs, vlogs, Facebook, LinkedIn, and similar tools. The absence or lack of explicit reference to a specific social networking tool does not limit the extent of the application of this policy.

This policy applies to all SALS employees and to all use of social media for other than authorized business purposes (“SALS authorized social networking”), whether such use occurs using SALS’ or personal technological resources.

SALS staff are expected to act in accordance with the following guidelines:

- If a SALS employee chooses to identify him/herself as a SALS employee on his/her website, social networking site, weblog or other social media, the employee is also expected to make clear that he/she is not authorized to speak on behalf of SALS, and that the views the employee expresses are his/hers alone and do not necessarily reflect SALS. The SALS employee may accomplish this by posting the following disclaimer in an “About Me” section of his/her social networking profile: “I am not authorized to speak on behalf of the Southern Adirondack Library System. The views expressed on this website/profile/blog are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SALS.”
- Maintain the confidentiality of the private or confidential information of SALS, including information about SALS’ patrons, suppliers, vendors, member libraries, and patrons. Employees are prohibited from posting internal business-related confidential communications.
- Information regarding an employee’s/applicant’s protected status(es) learned of through social media or any other forum will not be used to discriminate against them and will not be considered in hiring or other employment decisions.
- SALS staff are cautioned that, in many cases, social media posts may be viewed by anyone, including the SALS administration.
- Employees should take care in discussing work-related issues using online social media. Employees that have a workplace grievance should resolve it internally, as opposed to publicly. Employees who choose to discuss work on social media sites must refrain from posting comments and materials that could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening, intimidating, or that could create a hostile environment, as defined in this Handbook.

The purpose of this policy is to protect SALS' brand and prevent the disclosure of confidential information and other content that violates SALS policies. It is not intended to interfere with an employee's legal rights. Whenever state or federal laws govern an area of social media participation, policies should be interpreted as to comply with them.

Workplace Fraternization

SALS encourages a workplace in which employees are free to communicate and interact in a friendly and professional environment. Sometimes relationships between employees can become more than just professional, and can grow into personal or romantic relationships. Although SALS does not want to infringe upon employees' personal activities, romance in the workplace represents a potentially delicate, even legally precarious, situation that the organization must assess. SALS encourages any employees involved in romantic relationships with coworkers to notify the Director of the situation. Such a relationship between a supervisor and one of their direct reports is expressly prohibited.

Whether or not a direct or indirect line of authority exists, SALS may reassign and/or alter the responsibilities of parties engaged in a consenting relationship to diminish the professional contact they have with each other.

Recycling

SALS supports environmental awareness by encouraging recycling and waste management in its business practices and operating procedures. This support includes a commitment to the purchase, use, and disposal of products and materials in a manner that will best utilize natural resources and minimize any negative impact on the earth's environment.

Special recycling receptacles have been set up to promote the separation and collection of the following recyclable materials at SALS:

- File folders, office paper (all colors) mail, greeting cards and envelopes
- Corrugated cardboard, boxboard and paper cartons
- Newspaper and phone books
- Glass bottles
- Plastic containers
- Metal cans and empty aerosol cans (aluminum, tin, foil)

The simple act of placing a piece of paper, can, or bottle in a recycling container is the first step in reducing demand on the earth's limited resources. Success of this program depends on active participation by all of us. Employees are encouraged to make a commitment to recycle and be a part of this solution.

APPENDIX A

SALS CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

The Board of Trustees of the Southern Adirondack Library System, a corporation created by a charter granted by the New York State Education Department by the Regents of the University of the State of New York, on June 27th, 1958, approved the following Conflict of Interest Policy for Trustees, Committee members and Employees at their meeting on June 16, 2015.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Conflict of Interest policy is to protect the Southern Adirondack Library System's (SALS) interests when it is considering any transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interests of any SALS Trustee, Committee Member, or employee.

This policy is intended to supplement any applicable state and federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

II. DEFINITIONS

Covered Person: any member of the SALS Board of Trustees, SALS Board Committees and any SALS employee.

Interested person: any member of the SALS Board of Trustees, SALS Board Committees or any SALS employee having a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below.

Financial interest: a covered person has a financial interest if the person has, through business, investment, or family:

- a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which SALS has a transaction or arrangement;
- b. A compensation arrangement with SALS or with any entity or individual with which SALS has a transaction or arrangement. Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors.
- c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which SALS is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

III. PROCEDURES

Duty to Disclose: In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose that interest and present all material facts to the SALS Board of Trustees.

Recusal: Any covered person may recuse at any time from involvement in any decision or discussion in which he/she believes that there may be a conflict of interest, without going through the process for determining whether a conflict of interest actually exists.

Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest:

- a. After disclosure of all material facts, and after any discussion with the SALS Board of Trustees, the covered person shall leave the Board meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon.
- b. The SALS Board President shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
- c. After exercising due diligence, the SALS Board of Trustees shall determine whether SALS can obtain with reasonable efforts an equal or more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
- d. If an equal or more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the SALS Board of Trustees shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested trustees whether the transaction or arrangement is in the best interests of SALS and whether it is

fair and reasonable. Pursuant to that determination, the covered person shall be free to enter into the proposed arrangement or transaction.

Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy

- a. If the SALS Board of Trustees has reasonable cause to believe a covered person has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the covered person of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
- b. If, after hearing the covered person's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the SALS Board of Trustees determines the covered person has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action, up to and including removal and/or termination.

IV. RECORDS OF PROCEEDINGS

The Minutes of the Board and all Board committees must contain:

- a. the names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest;
- b. the nature of the financial interest;
- c. any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present;
- d. the Board's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed;
- e. the names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement;
- f. the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.

V. COMPENSATION

A covered or interested person who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from SALS is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to the compensation.

VI. ANNUAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY CERTIFICATION

Each covered person shall annually sign a statement which certifies:

- a. that they have received a copy of this policy and have read and understand this policy;
- b. that during the previous year they were not an interested person.

SALS CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that I have received a copy of the SALS Conflict of Interest Policy for Trustees and Employees, and that I have read and understand the policy.

This is to further certify that I am not now nor at any time during the past year have I been a participant, directly or indirectly, in any arrangement, agreement, investment, or other activity with any vendor, supplier, or other party doing business with the Southern Adirondack Library System that has resulted or could result in personal benefit to me.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed name: _____

SALS Position/Title _____

APPENDIX B

Complaint Form for Reporting Sexual (or Other) Harassment

New York State Labor Law requires all employers to adopt a sexual harassment prevention policy that includes a complaint form to report alleged incidents of sexual harassment.

If you believe that you have been subjected to sexual harassment or gender discrimination, you are encouraged, but not required, to complete this form and submit it to the SALS Director or Board of Trustees. No employee will be retaliated against for filing a complaint.

If you are more comfortable reporting verbally or in another manner, your employer should complete this form, provide you with a copy, and follow its sexual harassment prevention policy by investigating the claims as outlined at the end of this form.

For additional resources, visit: ny.gov/programs/combating-sexual-harassment-workplace

COMPLAINANT INFORMATION

Name:

Work Address:

Work Phone:

Job Title:

Email:

Select Preferred Communication Method: Email Phone In person

SUPERVISORY INFORMATION

Immediate Supervisor's Name:

Title:

Work Phone:

Work Address:

COMPLAINT INFORMATION

1. Your complaint of Sexual Harassment is made about:

Name:

Title:

Work Address:

Work Phone:

Relationship to you: Supervisor Supervisee Co-Worker Other (please specify)

2. Please describe what happened and include as many details as possible. You may use additional sheets of paper if necessary. If you have any relevant documents, please include them.

3. Date(s) sexual harassment occurred:

Is the sexual harassment continuing? Yes No

4. Please list the name and contact information of any witnesses or individuals who may have information related to your complaint:

The last question is optional, but may help the investigation.

5. Have you previously provided information (verbal or written) about related incidents? If yes, when and to whom did you provide information?

This is not required, but if you have retained legal counsel and would like us to work with them, please provide their contact information.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C
Emergency Preparedness Plan
(Under Construction)