



# **San Luis Obispo County Office of Education**

## **Employee Handbook**

**January 2020**



Dear SLOCOE Employee:

The Mission of the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education states that we will promote student success by supporting the work of local school districts, delivering specialized student services, and providing countywide leadership and advocacy for the needs of all children. As a SLOCOE employee, you play an essential role in accomplishing this Mission. We get our work done through people, and without your contribution, our work will not be effective.

This handbook will provide guidance and direction for a variety of employment-related items, which will benefit you as you gain a solid understanding of various SLOCOE protocols and professional standards. Additional information can be found in the CSEA and CTA collective bargaining agreements, Merit System Rules for Classified Employees, and the California Education Code.

Your direct supervisor will be meeting with you to continue the orientation process and answer any questions you may have. Please take the time to review the contents prior to your meeting. I look forward to personally meeting you at the New Hire Orientation.

Sincerely,

James J. Breschia, Ed.D.  
County Superintendent of Schools

## ***MISSION***

To promote student success by supporting the work of local school districts, delivering specialized student services, and providing countywide leadership and advocacy for the needs of all children.

## **CORE PURPOSES**

(What We Do)

*Support for Districts*

*Specialized Student Services*

*Countywide Leadership and Advocacy*

## **CORE SKILLS (TALENT)**

(What Defines Us)

*Expertise*

*Anticipation*

*Trust*

## **CORE AGREEMENTS**

(How We Work)

*Treat Others with Respect*

*Hold High Expectations for Ourselves and Others*

*Demonstrate Initiative, Collaboration and Continuous Improvement*

*Promote Clear, Frequent, and Open Communication*

## **COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT AND COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**T**he San Luis Obispo County Office of Education (SLOCOE) is governed by the elected County Superintendent of Schools and a five-member elected Board of Education. The County Superintendent develops personnel and program policy, and is the employer for all of the County Office of Education employees. The Board makes policy decisions related to county-operated programs in appropriate areas of budgeting, curriculum and planning, and manages the real property holdings of the County Office of Education. Another function of the County Board is to hear appeals related to student inter-district transfer requests, expulsion appeals, and authorization of charter schools.

*County Superintendent of Schools – Dr. James Brescia*

*San Luis Obispo County Board Of Education*

***Diane A. Jones, Trustee Area 1***

*Paso Robles Joint Unified School District*

*Pleasant Valley Joint Union Elementary School District*

*San Miguel Joint Union School District*

*Shandon Joint Unified School District*

***Paul Madonna, Trustee Area 2***

*Cayucos Elementary School District*

*Coast Unified School District*

*Templeton Unified School District*

***Joel Peterson, Trustee Area 3***

*San Luis Coastal Unified School District*

***Juan Olivarria, Trustee Area 4***

*Lucia Mar Unified School District*

***George Galvan, Trustee Area 5***

*Atascadero Unified School District*

**SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION**

**EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

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## WHO WE SERVE

School Districts in San Luis Obispo County

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Under the leadership of the County Superintendent and the County Board Of Education, SLOCOE serves as a link between the county's ten school districts and the California Department of Education. Funding and policy decisions are made at the state level, while day-to-day delivery of instruction is generally the responsibility of local school districts. SLOCOE provides a support infrastructure for local schools and districts that includes Administrative Services, Business Services, Student Programs & Services and Educational Support Services.

## WHY WE ARE IN BUSINESS

SLOCOE acts as a county-wide educational support agency primarily for the public schools and students in San Luis Obispo County. We provide necessary, mandated, and requested services to local school districts. We act as an intermediate educational agency between the California Department of Education (CDE) and the ten school districts in our county. We collaborate to build relationships with local educational institutions and other government and community entities to provide leadership, service and support for all learners.

### Administration/Human Resources

The County Superintendent of Schools serves as the Secretary to the County Board Of Education, the local chapter of the California School Boards Association and the County Committee on School District Reorganization. SLOCOE serves as a liaison between the school districts and county elections office for governing school board elections. Workshops are developed to provide training for district governing board of trustees.

The purpose of the local chapter of the California School Boards Association is to preserve, advance, and improve the local public schools. The Association may take formal votes that articulate its position on legislation, bond measures, or local ordinances that affect education in San Luis Obispo County. Such positions may be communicated to any appropriate persons or entities including legislators, boards, committees, associations, and the press.

The County Committee on School District Organization is the local initiator, coordinator, analyst, facilitator, and arbitrator for the reorganization of school districts. It formulates plans, responds to petitions, conducts public hearings, develops and releases information, and analyzes proposals throughout the approval process of reorganization.

The Human Resources Department is part of the Administration Division and the Chief Human Resources Officer reports directly to the Superintendent. The Human Resources Department is responsible for managing the personnel functions for all SLOCOE staff, managing the fingerprinting program for school employees and community-based programs, and issuing and monitoring credentials authorizing work within

the public education system in San Luis Obispo County. Additionally, the Human Resources Department supports school districts within San Luis Obispo County with any personnel assistance they may require.

The SLOCOE Human Resources Department works with the Personnel Commission in hiring, promoting, and retaining the most qualified staff for non-teaching positions. The Personnel Commission operates within the Merit System as developed through the Education Code for the State of California. The Human Resources Department is committed to serving all children within San Luis Obispo County by ensuring there are qualified and professional teachers and classified staff in front of all students every day of their school career.

### **Business Services Division**

SLOCOE monitors school districts' fiscal health, accounting for the public schools in the county annually. We assist school districts' business offices by providing fiscal oversight of the ongoing fiscal integrity of districts and by ensuring that districts meet reporting requirements in an accurate and timely manner.

SLOCOE is uniquely situated to bring together people, programs, and services within the county and offer the public schools in the county the benefits of cost containment and avoidance of duplication of services.

### **Student Programs & Services Division**

The Student Programs & Services Division operates specialized programs for students with severe disabilities at birth – 22 years-of age, and programs for at-risk students through the Juvenile Court and Community Schools. We provide leadership and expertise to the school districts, agencies and community organizations within San Luis Obispo County in support of success for all students. We implement legislative mandates focused upon positive school attendance, high academic expectations and accountability for all students.

Additionally, SLOCOE is the chartering agency for the Grizzly ChalleNGe Charter School operated in partnership with the California National Guard located at Camp San Luis Obispo.

### **Educational Support Services Division**

The Educational Support Services (ESS) Division provides a broad array of support to teachers, administrators, and other educational staff through specialized professional learning opportunities and advanced state-of-the-art technology.

ESS supports local districts in the development, selection, implementation, and evaluation of curriculum and materials through provision of a variety of curriculum, instruction, and assessment and accountability services. Instructional technology is enhanced through the use of the Educational Technology Center, the educational resources portal, and California Technology Project for training teachers and administrators in technology use.

All of the non-special education early childhood programs are operated by the ESS Division, providing much needed programs and services for low-income families. Through the two School Readiness Centers, one located at Oceano Elementary School and one located at Georgia Brown Elementary School, coordinated services are delivered to pre-kindergarten children and families in the areas of quality early care and education, health and social services, parental education/ involvement, and support.

Additionally, two induction programs are offered; one for new teachers and one for new administrators. The Clear Administrative Services Credential (CASC) Program is a CTC- accredited clear administrative services phase of the credential program to support the ongoing growth and development of our county's newest leaders. The Teacher Induction Program (TIP) is a collaborative endeavor between the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education, school districts, and institutions of higher education that provides a meaningful and valuable program to support and credential beginning teachers.

Rancho El Chorro Outdoor School, also in the Educational Services Division, provides hands-on learning opportunities for students to study science and ecology in a natural setting.

# PURPOSE OF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

This handbook is designed to familiarize employees with the practices of the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education (SLOCOE), and provide a reference to the rules and regulations regarding the employee-employer relationship at SLOCOE. Additional information for employees can be found in the Association contracts. Classified employees are covered under the CSEA contract unless specifically exempted in the recognition clause. Certificated employees are covered under the CTA contract unless specifically excluded under the recognition clause. Management employees are covered under the management section at the end of this handbook. These important documents will be referred to as “Association contracts” in the remainder of this document.

All classified employees not otherwise exempt in the Education Code are also covered by the merit system. The following are general principles upon which the merit system is based:

- Employment and promotion on the basis of merit
- Like pay for like service
- Impartial hearing of appeals from disciplinary actions
- Prohibition against discrimination

SLOCOE has a Personnel Commission with three Commissioners who have the responsibility for overseeing the merit system rules. These rules provide for procedures to be followed related to the Personnel Commission, Classification plan, Applications and Examinations, Employment Lists, and wage and salary provisions. For a complete copy of SLOCOE’s merit system rules, please refer to our website at [www.slocoe.org](http://www.slocoe.org). *(Reference: Education Code Sections 45240-45320)*

This handbook is the property of SLOCOE, and is intended for personal use and reference by SLOCOE employees. It explains some of our philosophies and beliefs, and describes, in general terms, some of our employment guidelines. We hope that it will serve as a useful reference document for employees throughout their employment at SLOCOE. Employees should understand, however, that this handbook is not intended to be a contract (express or implied), nor is it intended to otherwise create any legally enforceable obligations on the part of SLOCOE or its employees not otherwise found in California law. The policies found in this handbook supersede and replace all previous personnel policies, practices, and guidelines except as otherwise set out in the Superintendent and Board Policies.

SLOCOE reserves full discretion to add to, modify, or delete provisions of this handbook, or the policies and procedures on which they may be based, at any time without advance notice except for the specific and express terms of any agreement, including the Association Agreements, and the Educational Employment Relations Act. SLOCOE also reserves the right to interpret any of the provisions set forth in this handbook in any manner it deems appropriate except as limited above. For this reason, employees should check with the Human Resources department to obtain current information regarding the status of any particular policy, procedure, guideline, or practice. Similarly, to obtain information regarding specific employment policies or procedures, whether or not they are contained in this handbook, employees should contact the Chief Human Resources Officer. Similarly, suggestions or concerns regarding policies and practices should be brought to the attention of the Chief Human Resources Officer for consideration by cabinet and/or the appropriate association or committee. The Superintendent has the sole authority to enter into any employment or contracts on behalf of the County Office of Education. Any such modification must be in writing.

# EMPLOYMENT

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The policies and definitions listed in this handbook for employees at SLOCOE are the same for all certificated and classified employees except as otherwise noted.

## TYPES OF EMPLOYEES

### *Certificated Employees*

An employee in a position requiring certification under the California Education Code, and performing duties designated as certificated duties by the employer, is considered a certificated employee. Certificated non-management employees (such as teachers) having been employed by SLOCOE for two complete consecutive school years in a vacant position or positions requiring certification qualifications and designated as probationary shall be classified as a permanent employee. All other certificated non-management employees are classified as either substitute, temporary or probationary based on the circumstances under which the employee has been hired. Certificated managers do not gain permanent status and serve at the pleasure of the Superintendent.

*(References: Education Code 44006 and 44929)*

### *Classified Employees*

An employee in a position not requiring certification under the California Education Code, and performing duties designated as classified duties by the employer, is considered a classified employee. Classified employees, upon initial employment, shall serve a probationary period. During this probationary period, a classified employee serves at the pleasure of the Superintendent and may be dismissed at any time by the Superintendent or his/her designee. Upon successful completion of the probationary period, a classified employee shall gain permanent status in the position and shall be entitled to rights identified in the Education Code and the SLOCOE Merit System. Classified managers are subject to all provisions and protections of the SLOCOE Merit System.

*(Reference: Education Code 45105)*

### *Part-Time Employees*

A part-time employee works less than the number of hours or days identified for a full time position. All benefits provided to part-time classified employees are prorated based on the FTE (Full Time Equivalent) of that employee.

### *Limited Term Classified Employee*

Limited term classified assignments may be made for a period of six months or less, except in substitute assignments, which may not exceed the authorized absence of a regular employee. Limited term positions may be filled through the temporary promotion of a qualifying permanent employee or from any available eligibility lists.

*(Reference: Merit System Rule 4763.2)*

### **Provisional Appointments**

When no eligibility list exists for a position, an employee may be provisionally appointed to a position not to exceed 90 working days (except under specific guidelines listed in the Merit System rules).

*(Reference: Merit System Rule 4764)*

### **POSITION RECLASSIFICATION**

All classified positions will be reviewed on a periodic basis. Positions will be studied for potential changes to job descriptions and/or salary ranges. Requests for studying a position can be initiated by administration or by an employee. Certificated positions are approved by the Superintendent. Classified positions are subject to the terms and conditions of the Merit System. All classified job descriptions and salary ranges are approved by the SLOCOE Personnel Commission.

If a manager or supervisor feels that a position should be reclassified into a different job title, a request to review a position outside of the regular review cycle should be submitted to the Human Resources Department. The employee shall show evidence of the change in duties. The Assistant Superintendent of the employee's division and the Chief Human Resources Officer will review all requests for reclassification and make a recommendation to Cabinet if appropriate. Any employee who has been reclassified with his/her position or denied reclassification through a study or other internal process is ineligible to request a review for subsequent reclassification with the position for a period of at least two years from the initial action.

*(References: Education Code Section 45285; Merit System Rule 4634.3)*

### **REDUCTION TO PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

Pursuant to provisions of EC 44922 and EC 45139, an eligible employee may request a reduction to part-time employment status. Such request shall be made in writing to the Superintendent or Chief Human Resources Officer. Requests will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.

*(Reference: Board Policy 4175)*

### **RESIGNATION/TERMINATION**

Any employee who voluntarily resigns from a position shall provide a written resignation. Formal notice of resignation may be accomplished by completing a resignation form which is available on-line. The form shall be forwarded to the Human Resources Department. Resignations requested during a certificated contract period are granted at the discretion of the Superintendent. For classified employees, at least ten (10) working days notice shall be given in order to be eligible for reinstatement in the future. Upon resignation, the employee may request an exit interview with the Human Resources Department. Information regarding rights of retirement benefits, continuation of insurance coverage, and unemployment insurance benefits will be sent via certified mail. The employee shall be required to turn in all SLOCOE possessions such as: telephone, credit card, cellular phone, computers, keys to any premise or vehicle, and identification card.

## **NON-REEMPLOYMENT**

### ***Non-reelection***

Non-reelection occurs within the probationary period and due to performance issues. The supervisor shall notify a probationary certificated employee of the decision not to renew his or her contract no later than March 15th. Classified employees are subject to the terms and conditions of the Merit System. Classified employees may be dismissed for any of the causes listed in the Merit System.

*(Reference: Merit System Rule 4772.1)*

### ***Layoffs***

Layoffs are due to lack of work or lack of funds. If a reduction in force becomes necessary, reductions will be determined in accordance with the program needs of SLOCOE and as outlined in contract agreements. The Superintendent will make the final determinations based upon the recommendations of division heads. The procedures for classified employees regarding lay-offs are outlined in the Merit System and CSEA contract.

*(Reference: Merit System Rule 4771).*

## **PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS**

Performance evaluations provide formal opportunities for employees and supervisors to discuss performance regarding delivery of services provided by this office to its clients. The major purposes of the evaluation system are to establish annual goals, communicate excellence in performance, and discuss areas where growth has been realized and areas where improvement and growth may be necessary. Performance evaluations are the result of on-going communication between the evaluator and evaluatee and foster a learning environment that encourages personal and professional excellence. All evaluations are based on established job performance criteria for specific positions (job descriptions), following an established timeline and making use of designated evaluation forms. Evaluations process, timeline and forms can be found in the Association contracts and management handbook.

*(Reference: Board Policy 4108 and Merit System Rule 4769)*

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION PROCEDURE**

Every employee is expected to meet the standards as established by their job description and SLOCOE rules and regulations. Disciplinary action includes any action whereby an employee is subject to dismissal, suspension, disciplinary reassignment, or demotion. Employees are subject to the disciplinary provisions set forth in the Education Code and Association contracts. Classified employees are also covered by the Merit System Rules.

The disciplinary action varies with each case depending on the seriousness and frequency of the wrongful action, situations, or inaction. In the course of an investigation, an employee may be placed on administrative leave with pay. This system sets out a practice, not an expectation or contractual right. No employee shall be suspended, demoted, dismissed, or in any way discriminated against because of his or her real or perceived ancestry, race, color, religion, creed, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, genetic information, or medical condition related to childbirth, or association to someone in any of these protected classes, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws.

# **EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS**

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## **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO) / AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)**

The San Luis Obispo County Office of Education (SLOCOE) is an equal employment opportunities employer and makes employment decisions on the basis of merit. The employment and procurement in every department within SLOCOE will be on a fair and impartial basis. SLOCOE is committed to equal opportunity for all individuals in education. All programs, activities, and employment shall be free from discrimination based on his or her real or perceived ancestry, race, color, religion, creed, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, genetic information, or medical condition related to childbirth, or association to someone in any of these protected classes, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. SLOCOE is committed to compliance with all applicable laws providing equal employment opportunities. This commitment applies to all persons involved in SLOCOE operations and prohibits unlawful discrimination by any employee of SLOCOE.

## **REASONABLE ACCOMODATION**

SLOCOE will make reasonable accommodations for the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who is an applicant or an employee unless undue hardship would result. In order to determine whether an employee or applicant is a qualified individual with a disability, the employee or applicant is required to participate in the interactive process, which includes responding to requests for information. An applicant or employee that fails to respond to requests for information or participate in the interactive process may waive his/her right to a reasonable accommodation. A request for a reasonable accommodation should be made to the Chief Human Resources Officer.

## **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING**

SLOCOE recognizes the importance of child abuse reporting. In an effort to support existing laws and support personnel in reporting child abuse, SLOCOE has established the following procedures that offer direction in the reporting process.

IF YOU HAVE A REASONABLE SUSPICION THAT A STUDENT IS A VICTIM OF ABUSE, whether physical, sexual, or neglect, you are legally obligated to report it. You should:

1. Call Child Protective Services (CPS). (Note: Reasonable suspicion means that it is objectively reasonable for a person with your training and experience to entertain such a suspicion based on the facts, i.e., knowledge or observation, available to you.) The numbers for CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES are:

**San Luis Obispo County Child Welfare Services .....805-781-1700**  
**Emergency Response after hours and weekends.....800-834-KIDS (5437)**

2. Complete the Suspected Child Abuse Report Form and forward it to the appropriate agency within 36 hours. If possible, pictures of areas of injury shall be taken.

3. Employees who work directly with students are considered mandated reporters; are immune from prosecution; and cannot be sued for reporting a suspicion of child abuse, even in the event that it later appears not to have taken place. Employees under this mandate can be found guilty of a misdemeanor and confined in the County Jail for failure to report suspected abuse.
4. All employees should keep any reports made to CPS confidential, discussing the matter only with other employees who “need to know.”

#### TO MINIMIZE THE LIKELIHOOD THAT YOU WILL BE CHARGED WITH ABUSE:

1. Whenever possible, conduct dressing and toileting activities in the presence of another adult.
2. “High Fives,” handshakes, etc. are welcome contact for most students. A hug or pat on the shoulder may be appropriate for certain situations. It is best to hug and touch in the open, preferably with others around.
3. When working individually with a child, do so in an area that is open to other areas. If it is necessary to work in a quiet and private place, a good practice may be to keep a log of when and where you went and what activities the student was engaged in for that period or consider having another adult present.

### **EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION DOCUMENT**

Verification of the right to work in the U.S. is required by the Federal Government. Upon initial employment, the employee must show evidence of identity and employment eligibility when completing the I-9 Document. By law, proper identification must be provided within three business days of the date of employment. SLOCOE encourages employees to do this prior to starting employment.

### **FINGERPRINTS**

Each employee will be fingerprinted in compliance with the Education Code as a condition of employment. Fingerprints are forwarded to the Department of Justice for screening to ensure that no employee has been convicted of a prohibitive offense, thereby precluding employment by the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education. A conviction will not automatically bar an employee from employment. However, if an applicant fails to disclose the fact of a conviction, that failure will result in disqualification from the employment process. Education Code prohibits hiring individuals convicted of narcotics or sex offenses, or serious and violent crimes mandated under AB 1610 and AB 1612. Fingerprint criminal history clearance is required by law of all school employees prior to date of employment. SLOCOE will receive any subsequent arrest notifications from the Department of Justice for the duration of employment and reserves the right to take action as appropriate. Feel free to call the Chief Human Resources Officer for questions regarding fingerprinting. (*Reference: Education Code 45122-45125 and 44830.1*)

### **OATH OR AFFIRMATION OF ALLEGIANCE**

A signed Oath of Allegiance is required of all California public employees. The Oath refers to supporting and defending the Constitution of the United States and California. Persons employed by a state, county, or city agency or district are required to serve as disaster service workers during emergencies. A copy of this document is maintained in the personnel file.

*(Reference: Government Code 3100-3109; Education Code 44334, 44354)*

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome, or unsolicited sexual conduct imposed on a person who regards it as offensive or undesirable. When a person finds the conduct is unwelcome, it becomes illegal. If the employee or student states that she (or he) finds the behavior offensive, the actions are unwelcome. Often victims will seek to avoid confrontation or may fear reprisals and consequently do not clearly state their objection. Therefore, all employees must learn to be sensitive to how their actions may be perceived by others, no matter what they personally may believe or intend.

Employees who believe they are being sexually harassed, or observe inappropriate behavior in the work area or at any SLOCOE activity should contact the Human Resources Department. It is an employee's right to file a complaint under the Complaint Procedure and the duty of a management employee to report and investigate, as directed, allegations and incidents of sexual harassment.

*(Reference: Board Policy 4341)*

## **VERIFICATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY CARD**

SLOCOE requires a copy of each employee's social security card to be on file with the Payroll Department before any payroll warrants will be processed. Federal regulations require SLOCOE to use the information printed on social security cards to ensure that earnings reported to state and federal agencies are accurately posted and credited to the employee. The full social security number will not appear on any personnel documents, but it is required for payroll processing purposes. If an employee is paid under an incorrect name or social security number, SLOCOE may be subject to penalties.

# **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

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## **DISTRIBUTION OF PAY CHECKS**

Payday is the last business day of each month, except for the December pay warrant for certificated non-management employees which is paid on the first banking day in January.

1. An employee may choose to have Automatic Payroll Deposit (APD) to a financial institution. Forms to designate APD may be obtained through the Payroll Department. Once the forms have been received by the Payroll Department, it will take one month to process. This option will electronically post the employee's wages to a checking or savings account of the employee's choice each payday. The employee will receive a pay stub that looks like a regular payroll warrant with all of the tax and deduction information. To cancel an APD, the Payroll Department must be notified in writing at least ten days prior to payday.
2. All employee payroll warrants/APD notices will be sent via the U.S. Mail to the address that the employee has on file with SLOCOE. SLOCOE cannot assume responsibility for delays that may occur when mail is lost or delayed. A minimum of seven days is required to report a payroll warrant as lost in the mail.
3. If an employee has a special emergency situation, and needs to come in to the main office to pick up their payroll warrant, they should phone the Human Resources Department no later than noon on the date prior to payday. No payroll warrants will be released to employees prior to 8:00 a.m. on the payday.
4. If an employee has an emergency situation and they are unable to pick up their payroll warrant, the employee may designate, in writing, another adult to whom the payroll warrant may be released. The Payroll Department will require proper identification of the designated person.

## **PAYDAY AND DEDUCTIONS**

Employees are paid monthly, on the last working day of each month. Accompanying each payroll warrant will be a statement of earnings and deductions. The following deductions are required:

1. Federal and State Income Tax
2. Retirement Contributions\*
3. Survivor Benefit (currently \$2.00 monthly for PERS members only)
4. Employee portion of Medicare contribution (currently applies to anyone employed after March 1, 1986)

\*Retirement contributions are deducted before state and federal tax is calculated. Retirement contributions will be taxable when received at the time of retirement or withdrawal from the retirement system. Withdrawal prior to retirement or age 59-1/2 also may result in tax penalties.

5. State Disability Insurance for classified non-management employees only.
6. Association dues or agency fee, if applicable.

All other deductions are voluntary and require written authorization. If an employee chooses, deductions may be made for such things as: Credit Union payments or savings, Tax Sheltered Annuities and some charitable contributions.

Employees with questions concerning the amount of their payroll warrant, or wanting to report possible errors, should contact the Payroll Department immediately.

## **SALARY SCHEDULES**

All salary schedules and job descriptions are posted on-line at [www.slocoe.org](http://www.slocoe.org) under the human resources heading. All adjustments to the salary schedules are made through the negotiations process. Adjustments to the salary schedule do not affect probation status or anniversary dates. More information on salary can be found in the Association contracts. Step increases are implemented according to the rules identified in the Association contracts and management policies.

## **INITIAL PLACEMENT ON THE SALARY SCHEDULE**

An employee new to SLOCOE will be placed on the salary schedule according to the guidelines identified in the Association contracts or management policies. The Human Resources department will establish the initial placement on the salary schedule based on information obtained from the applicant.

## **WORK DAYS**

Each classification has a designated number of contract days, hours, or work year which is typically indicated on the appropriate salary schedule. Employees working less than the number of days or hours listed on the salary schedule will receive a prorated salary and service credit. Classified and management positions only reflect eight-hour work days.

## **PAY CALENDARS**

The purpose of the pay calendar is to provide a plan so that the employee will be assured of working the required number of days during the year and be paid according to the days worked. Employees will be assigned a pay calendar upon hire. Certificated employees have work days and unpaid non-work days. Classified employees have work days, paid holidays and paid vacation days, and have unpaid non-work days if working less than a 260 day work year days.

## **NON-WORK DAYS**

For employees not following a traditional school calendar, the supervisor shall be responsible for approving non-work day schedules. Time off shall be scheduled in advance so as not to interfere with the normal functions of the department. In addition to discussing absences with the supervisor, all employees are expected to report absences to the substitute system, regardless of whether a substitute is required or not (see leaves of absence section of handbook). These absences are tracked through the system and assist the Human Resources Department in adjusting leave balances.

## **HOLIDAYS**

San Luis Obispo County Office of Education facilities observe the following holidays:

January 1  
Martin Luther King Day

Lincoln's Birthday  
Washington's Birthday  
Memorial Day  
July 4  
Labor Day  
Veteran's Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Day after Thanksgiving Day  
December 25  
Two days during the Winter Break

Certificated employees are not paid for holidays. Classified employees are paid for holidays. More information about holidays can be found in the Association contracts and management policies as applicable.

## **HEALTH, DENTAL AND VISION INSURANCE**

Health, dental and vision insurance are available for the employee and all eligible dependents. A life insurance policy is also provided for all employees taking health insurance. All full-time employees are required to take insurance coverage. Employee must work a minimum .5 FTE (full time equivalent) to qualify for health benefits. Eligible part-time employees may decline coverage by filling out a Declination of Coverage form and returning it to the Human Resources Department.

It is the employee's responsibility to request a change form from the Human Resources Department to report changes in eligible dependents. All changes must be reported within 30 days in order to be eligible for a change of coverage.

SLOCOE pays a portion of the cost of benefits based on a negotiated cap, plus one-half of the amount over the cap for all full-time employees. If an employee works less than 50%, s/he is not eligible for benefits. The open enrollment period for changing insurance usually occurs during a 3 week period each summer with changes effective October 1 of each year. More information can be found in the Association contracts.  
*(Reference: Board Policy 4349)*

## **CONTINUATION OF BENEFITS (COBRA)**

Dependents who become ineligible due to age or marital status may purchase continuation of health, dental, and vision benefits for a limited period of time, if the Payroll Department is notified within 30 days of the date the dependent becomes ineligible. It is the employee's or dependent's responsibility to advise the Payroll Department upon expiration of eligible status.

An employee who becomes ineligible for paid health, dental and vision insurance coverage, due to reduction in hours or separation of employment, may purchase continuation of health, dental, and vision benefits for the entire family for a limited period of time. The employee will be notified of continuation options at the time of separation or reduction in hours. Employees who choose the option to continue health, dental and vision benefit coverage under COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985) will be responsible for making premium payments directly to SISC (Self Insured Schools of California).

## **CREDIT UNION**

All employees are eligible for membership in the School Employees of San Luis Obispo County Credit Union (SESLOC). The credit union operates in order that employees might conveniently save money through payroll deductions. It also enables employees to borrow money, which may be repaid through payroll deductions. Employees working less than twelve (12) months may receive equalized pay through options provided at SESLOC. To join the credit union, employees must go in person to apply at their office.

## **RETIREMENT COVERAGE**

### **PERS**

Membership in the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) is mandatory for classified employees working four or more hours per day on a regular basis or working 1000 hours or more in a fiscal year, unless they were previous members of the State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS). Retirement contributions are made through payroll deductions. These deductions are sheltered from taxation until an employee retires or withdraws the funds. In order to be eligible for retirement benefits, an individual must have attained age 50 and have five years of service. Upon separation, employees may request a refund of the contributions; leave the contributions on deposit until retirement age is attained; or roll over funds to a personal IRA. Unused sick leave at the time of retirement may be added to service to extend service credit.

Members of Public Employees' Retirement System are also covered by a "Survivor Benefit" program with a mandatory monthly deduction, which is not refundable. This provides an income for survivors in the event of the death of a member while in service before attaining retirement age. Employees may contact the Payroll Department or CalPERS directly for more detailed information regarding retirement benefits.

### **STRS**

Membership in the State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS) is mandatory for all certificated employees working at least 50% of a full-time position, unless they were previous members of the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS). Retirement contributions are made through payroll deductions. These deductions are sheltered from taxation until an individual retires or withdraws the funds. In order to be eligible for retirement benefits, an individual must have attained age 55 and have five years of service. Upon separation, employees may request a refund of the contributions plus interest; leave the contributions on deposit until retirement age is attained; or roll over funds to a personal IRA. The employee's contribution to STRS may be withdrawn upon resignation or termination from employment provided the employee does not plan to continue teaching or managing in another California school district. Unused sick leave may be added to service to extend service credit at the time of retirement. Employees may contact the Payroll Department or CalSTRS directly for more detailed information regarding retirement benefits.

## **SECTION 125 FLEXIBLE BENEFIT PLAN**

This plan allows for the use of "pre-tax" dollars to pay for the employee portion of certain benefits. Additionally, employees with dependent care or who contribute to health and dental insurance coverage, may set aside more pre-tax dollars to pay for these. Contact the Payroll Department for more information.

## **403(b) and 457 PLANS**

SLOCOE contracts with a third party administrator for the management of both of these tax-sheltered opportunities. Any employee wishing to contribute to a 403(b) or 457 plan would need to contact Envoy Plan Services at 800-548-8858 or visit their website at [www.envoyplanservices.com](http://www.envoyplanservices.com).

## **UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

State Unemployment Insurance benefits are provided to all employees as required by state law. Upon separation of employment, employees are eligible to apply for benefits through any State Employment Development Department. Eligibility for benefits is determined by circumstances related to each individual situation. Only the Employment Development Department can determine an employee eligibility status.

## **WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE BENEFITS**

SLOCOE, in accordance with state law, provides insurance coverage for employees in case of work-related injury or illness. Coverage is provided by participation in the Schools Insurance Program for Employees (Sipe). Any employee who is injured, or has an employee who is injured, must notify the supervisor immediately and complete the appropriate paperwork. The supervisor must contact Human Resources immediately for the necessary paperwork. See sections on leaves and safety for more information on what to do in cases of work-related illness and injury. *(Reference: Board Policy 3600)*

# LEAVES OF ABSENCE

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## REPORTING ABSENCES

Regular and prompt attendance is an important part of employment at SLOCOE. It is the employee's responsibility to report any absences by obtaining preapproval within the required timeline for planned absences, notifying the immediate supervisor, and by entering absences into Frontline Absence Management (Absence Management), the automated substitute placement absence tracking system used by SLOCOE. Absences, reported in hours, are defined as any portion of assigned days not worked. Absences must be reported for any of the following:

- Sick Leave
- Personal Necessity
- Vacation (Classified only)
- Bereavement
- Jury Duty (with verification attached)
- Military Leave
- Industrial Injury and Illness Leave (Worker's Compensation)

If illness causes an unplanned absence, it is the employee's responsibility to notify an immediate supervisor on the first day of the absence. If a physician indicates a specific period of absence will be required, and the immediate supervisor is advised of the anticipated period of absence, it will not be necessary to report daily during the specified period. Failure to notify the immediate supervisor may result in disciplinary action. When it is necessary to be absent because of an emergency, the employee shall notify the immediate supervisor as soon as possible. Notification procedures may vary at school sites. The division Assistant Superintendent or immediate supervisor will advise if an alternate procedure applies to that department or location. Absences must be reported with both a phone call to the supervisor or designee and a logged entry in the automated Aesop system.

### *Procedure for Reporting to Frontline Absence Management*

1. All absences should be logged into Frontline Absence Management by phone or computer using an employee log-on and pin #. Assistance and information can be obtained from the department/site executive assistant or administrative assistant (or from the Frontline Absence Management Coordinator in Human Resources @ (805) 782-7233).

Absence Management by Web

1-800-942-3767

Absence Management online:

<https://app.frontlineeducation.com>

2. At the end of the month, a printed summary of all absences logged into Frontline Absence Management must be submitted to the supervisor for approval, and sent to the Human Resources Department.

## **VACATION (Classified Employees Only)**

Vacations should be scheduled to provide adequate coverage of job responsibilities and staffing requirements, and must be approved in advance by the supervisor.

Only classified employees accrue vacation. Certificated employees receive a higher daily rate and their days off are called non-work days. See the CSEA contract for vacation accrual rates. School year employees receive a vacation payout at the end of the year for all unused vacation so as to minimize use during the school year. Vacation accruals for employees working year-round roll from year to year. Upon separation, a permanent classified employee will be paid his/her accrued but unused vacation at the rate of pay applicable to his/her last regular assignment. Classified employees working less than full time accrue a pro-rated amount of vacation days based upon the number of hours worked.

## **SICK LEAVE**

Sick leave is authorized for all employees. See Association contracts for more information on sick leave. Employees working less than full time will receive a pro-rated sick leave accrual.

Sick leave shall be cumulative from year to year, and may be used for an employee's own illness or injury, or that of an immediate family member. There is no limitation as to sick leave accrual. Subject to Education Code, accrued sick leave may be transferred to or from another school district or community college within California. Appropriate written verification from the previous employing agency is required. Upon resignation or retirement, accumulated sick leave will be reported to the applicable retirement system, but will not be reimbursed to an employee upon separation. (*Reference: Labor Code 233*)

## **PERSONAL NECESSITY LEAVE**

Personal necessity days are deducted from an employee's sick leave balance and are not carried over to the next fiscal year. However, unused sick leave may be added to service to extend service credit at the time of retirement. Personal necessity is defined in the Education Code as: Circumstances of an emergency or serious nature, which the employee cannot reasonably be expected to disregard, and require the attention of the employee during assigned hours of work. Whenever possible, employees must request this leave in advance to allow for adequate planning for coverage of duties. For more information on Personal Necessity Leave please see the Association contracts.

## **EXTENDED SICK LEAVE**

An employee who exhausts all available paid leave, and is still unable to return to work due to illness or injury, shall be eligible for extended sick leave. In order to be eligible for extended sick leave, the employee must provide certification from a health care provider stating the need to remain off work, and the length of time expected. Leave provided under extended sick leave will run concurrently with all other applicable leaves.

### ***Classified***

For classified employees when regular sick leave is exhausted, the employee is entitled to 100 days of 50% pay. (*Reference: Education Code 45196*).

### ***Certificated***

For certificated employees, the salary deduction in any month shall not exceed that which was actually paid a substitute, or the amount that would have been paid to a substitute had one been employed. For purposes of calculating the differential, the substitute pay shall not exceed the long-term substitute rate for non-management employees. See management policies for certificated management employees. The amount of extended sick (not including accrued sick leave) shall not exceed five school months.

*(Reference: Education Code 44977)*

### **BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

An employee will receive Bereavement Leave as indicated in the Association contracts or management policies. The employee may use personal necessity leave if additional time off is required. (See Personal Necessity Leave)

*(Reference: Education Code 44985 and 45194)*

### **JURY DUTY LEAVE**

If a summons for jury duty is received, it must be presented to the employee's supervisor immediately, in order for duties to be reassigned in advance of the absence.

### **MILITARY LEAVE**

Military leave of absence shall be granted and compensated in accordance with the Education Code and the Military and Veteran's Code. An official document or order stating the date the employee must report for duty shall be submitted prior to granting leave of absence under this rule. Employees will receive full pay for the first 30 days of military leave.

*(Reference: Education Code 45059; Military and Veteran's Code Section 389 and 395)*

### **INDUSTRIAL INJURY AND ILLNESS LEAVE (WORKER'S COMPENSATION)**

SLOCOE provides industrial accident and illness leave to all employees who sustain a work-related injury or illness during the course of employment. Industrial leave is not deducted from accrued sick leave. Such leave shall not be accumulated from year to year. SLOCOE has a return-to-work program so if the physician's return to work evaluation from the medical clinic states an employee can return to work, but the doctor has listed work restrictions, the employee may be able to work in a temporary modified duty assignment. If the doctor has placed an employee completely off work and the claim is accepted, the employee may be entitled to 60 days of industrial accident leave. However, Worker's Compensation has up to 90 days to investigate the claim. Therefore, until the claim is approved, the employee will be using accrued paid leaves, sick leave, vacation leave, etc. (based on the collective bargaining contract).

*(Reference: Board Policy 4160.3)*

Employees who are ill or injured as a result of a work-related incident, and who are eligible for family and medical leave under state and federal law (Family Medical Leave Act and California Family Rights Act) will be placed on FMLA/CFRA during the time they are disabled and not released to return to work. The leave under these laws runs concurrently with industrial accident leave, and eligible employees will be on FMLA/CFRA for a maximum of 12 weeks within a 12-month period.

A doctor's release to return to regular duties must be presented to Human Resources prior to returning to work from an industrial injury or illness leave. Whenever possible, SLOCOE will modify work assignments for a limited period to assist employees who are temporarily restricted from performing their regularly assigned duties due to a work-related injury or illness. Employees may be placed on a modified duty assignment if the treating physician provides a statement indicating the specific work restrictions, and the duration of the restrictions. Clarification regarding temporary restrictions may be requested of the treating physician. An employee may choose to accept or refuse the modified duty temporary assignment. However, an employee who refuses the modified duty assignment may not be eligible for any income benefits provided through the workers' compensation administrator, or industrial accident and injury leave.

*(Reference: Board Policy 4177)*

## **CATASTROPHIC LEAVE**

A catastrophic leave program is available to allow employees to donate available accrued paid leave benefits to another employee, when that employee or a member of his/her immediate family suffers a catastrophic illness or injury, and the employee has exhausted all available paid leave benefits. For more information on catastrophic leave, please refer to your Association contract or management policies and contact the Human Resources Department for specific rules and procedures.

## **GENERAL LEAVE**

Under limited circumstances, SLOCOE may grant a general unpaid leave of absence to employees. Approval will depend on SLOCOE's ability to fill the position with a qualified candidate.

If an employee is granted a general leave, SLOCOE will not continue to pay premiums for health insurance coverage during the leave. However, the employee may elect to self-pay the premiums as allowed under the provisions of COBRA.

*(Reference: Board Policy 4160)*

## **FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)**

State and federal family and medical leave laws provide up to 12 workweeks of unpaid family/medical leave within a 12-month period, under the following conditions:

- The employee has more than 12 months of service
- The employee has worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous 12-month period before the need for leave; and
- The employee is employed at a worksite where there are 50 or more employees within a 75-mile radius.

Leave may be taken for one of more of the following reasons:

- The birth of the employee's child, or placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform his or her job.

Any leave taken for the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of a child must be concluded within one year of the birth or placement of the child with the employee.

The 12- month period is measured forward from the date an employee's first leave began. All leave usage that qualifies under the terms of the FMLA leave shall be counted towards the available 12 workweeks within a 12-month period, including intermittent and reduced workload leaves. No carryover of unused leave from one 12-month period to the next 12-month period is permitted.

Supervisors and Human Resources should be notified at least 30 days before a leave is to begin, or as soon as is practical. Additional paperwork may be required before the leave is granted.

Under most circumstances, leave under the FMLA and the California Family Rights Act (CFRA) will run concurrently, and employees will be entitled to a total of twelve (12) workweeks of family and medical leave in the designated period. However, leave due to an employee's disability for pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition is not counted in the twelve weeks under California law (CFRA). Please refer to the section on Pregnancy Disability Leave (PDL) for additional information. Once the employee is no longer disabled under PDL, she may then apply for leave under CFRA (up to twelve weeks), for purposes of bonding with the baby.

Leave provided by FMLA in excess of available accrued paid leave shall be unpaid. When required by law, any available paid accrued leave shall be used prior to unpaid leave. SLOCOE will continue to pay its portion of the health insurance for the duration of the leave (up to twelve weeks under FMLA), or as long as the employee is on a paid leave.

Under most circumstances, upon return from FMLA leave, an employee will be reinstated to his or her original job, or to an equivalent job with equivalent pay, benefits and other employment terms and

conditions. However, an employee has no greater right to reinstatement than if he or she had been continuously employed rather than on leave.

If an employee fails to return from leave within the 12-week period, paid health insurance will cease unless the employee does not return because of the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition which would entitle the employee to FMLA leave; or other circumstances beyond the employee's control. Except as provided above, if an employee fails to return after expiration for eligibility for FMLA leave, the employee shall reimburse the full cost of coverage for health, dental, and vision benefits during the entire period of unpaid FMLA leave. Any amounts due under this section may be deducted from any sums due the employee (e.g. unpaid wages).

## **PREGNANCY DISABILITY LEAVE (PDL)**

Pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions will be treated like any other disability. The Human Resources department, upon notification of pregnancy by the employee, will provide PDL information.

If the need for PDL is foreseeable, employees must provide notification at least 30 days before the PDL is to begin. If 30 days advance notice is not possible, notice must be given as soon as practical. Upon request of an employee, and the recommendation of the employee's physician, the employee's work assignment may be changed if necessary to protect the health and safety of the employee and her child.

PDL usually begins when ordered by the employee's physician. Employees must provide SLOCOE with a certification from a health care provider. While the duration of the leave will be determined by the advice of the employee's physician, employees disabled due to pregnancy may take up to four months. The four months of PDL includes any period of time for actual disability caused by the employee's pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical condition. This includes leave for severe morning sickness and for prenatal care. The certification indicating disability should contain:

- The date on which the employee became disabled due to pregnancy;
- The probable duration of the period or periods of disability; and
- A statement that, due to the disability, the employee is unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of the position without undue risk to herself, the successful completion of her pregnancy, or to other persons.

Sick leave accrual and other sick leave available (see Extended Sick Leave) may be used during the period of actual disability as certified by a health care provider. In order to be eligible for Extended Sick Leave, the employee first must have exhausted all available accrued sick leave. Employees may also utilize accrued vacation. If additional time off is desired beyond the period of disability, it shall be without pay, in accordance with leave provided under FMLA/CFRA.

If an employee takes PDL, and is eligible under the federal or state family and medical leave laws, SLOCOE will maintain group health insurance for a minimum of twelve weeks. Beyond the twelve weeks, SLOCOE will continue to pay its portion of the health insurance as long as the employee is in paid status.

The maximum possible combined leave entitlement for both pregnancy disability leave under FMLA and CFRA leave for reason of the birth of the child is four months and 12 work weeks. This assumes that the employee is disabled by pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions for four months and then requests, and is eligible for, a 12-week CFRA leave for reason of the birth of her child.

*(Reference: Government Code section 12945, subdivision (b)(2))*

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

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## TOBACCO FREE ENVIRONMENT

Tobacco use is prohibited in all facilities owned and/or operated by SLOCOE, including indoors, outdoors and in all SLOCOE vehicles, whether located on or off the premises. Included in the prohibition is tobacco use in privately owned vehicles located on property owned and/or operated by SLOCOE. This policy applies to employees, students, and the general public.

*(Reference: Board Policy 4318)*

## DRUG AND ALCOHOL FREE WORKPLACE

SLOCOE is fully committed to maintaining a drug and alcohol-free environment for its students and employees. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispersing, possession or use of a controlled substance or alcohol is prohibited in all SLOCOE work places.

Employees who think they may have a drug/alcohol problem are required to seek assistance and get help immediately. SLOCOE will be supportive of those who seek help voluntarily, and equally firm in identifying and disciplining those who continue to be substance abusers and do not seek help. To this end, SLOCOE will act to eliminate any substance abuse (illegal drugs, prescription drugs or any other substance which could impair an employee's safety and ability to effectively perform the functions of the assigned job), which increases the potential for accidents, absenteeism, substandard performance, poor employee morale or damage to the reputation of SLOCOE. All employees should be aware that SLOCOE reserves the right to search all property owned or operated by SLOCOE and all property located in or at any work location. Violations of the Drug Free Workplace Policy will result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Employees adhering to the policies of a drug free workplace will not:

- perform job duties while impaired as a result of the use of illegal drugs or prescription drugs not prescribed by a doctor.
- report to work or be subject to duty while impaired by or under the influence of illegal drugs or prescription drugs, with or without a prescription.
- possess illegal drugs or prescription drugs obtained without a prescription during working hours or while subject to duty, on breaks, during meal periods or at anytime while on SLOCOE property.
- directly or through a third party sell or provide drugs to any person, including any employee, while on duty or subject to being called to duty.

As a condition of being employed to work under any federal grant received by the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education, employees are required to abide by the terms of this policy.*(Reference: Board Policy 4319)*

## **FIRE DRILL AND EVACUATION PLAN**

Fire drills are conducted monthly. Each site principal is responsible for seeing that the Fire Drill and Evacuation Plan is posted in a conspicuous place in each classroom to which the staff is assigned. Principals must assure that teachers are responsible for informing all students in each classroom of the evacuation plan for that room.

SLOCOE programs located on district campuses will follow the procedures and schedule established by the campus administrator. SLOCOE programs operating at independent sites have procedures and schedules established by the School Principals for Alternative Education or the Executive Directors for Special Education.

## **FREEDOM FROM TUBERCULOSIS**

Verification of freedom from tuberculosis is required upon employment and every four years thereafter. Employment candidates that have current TB test results provided for employment in another district will be accepted to meet this requirement. TB x-rays or intradermal skin tests no more than 60 days old, and verified in writing by the doctor or agency who administered the test, will be accepted. SLOCOE must have TB verification on file prior to commencing employment.

## **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS COMMUNICATION PROGRAM**

SLOCOE maintains a Hazard Communication Program that complies with Cal OSHA General Industry Safety Orders and California Code of Regulations. The full program is available on request to all employees or their designated representatives, Cal OSHA personnel and other authorized persons as required by California law.

*(Reference: California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 5194.*

SLOCOE believes that safety and health information should be shared openly with anyone using or working around hazardous substances and that all attempts should be made to minimize the use of hazardous substances.

The following is a summary of SLOCOE's Hazard Communication Program:

- SLOCOE will label, tag or mark all hazardous substance containers with the chemical make/contents and appropriate health and physical hazard warnings.
- SLOCOE will maintain a list of all hazardous substances in the workplace.
- SLOCOE will maintain in a designated book in each area, Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), recording when hazardous substances are used or stored.
- Before being assigned to handle hazardous substances and before new hazardous substances are introduced into the work area, employees shall participate in Hazard Communication Training.

## **INDUSTRIAL INJURIES/ ILLNESSES**

All employees are responsible for their own safety, as well as that of others in the workplace. To help us maintain a safe workplace, all employees must be safety-conscious at all times. Report work-related injuries or illnesses immediately to your supervisor. In compliance with California law, and to promote the concept of a safe workplace, SLOCOE maintains an Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP). A synopsis of the IIPP document is given to all employees upon hire and available for review at any time in the Human Resources Department.

*(Reference: Board Policy 4315, 4315.1)*

SLOCOE, in accordance with state law, provides insurance coverage for employees in cases of work-related illness or injury. It is imperative that the following guidelines be followed when an industrial injury or illness occurs:

1. Injuries on the job, regardless of how minor, should be reported to the supervisor immediately and cared for by first aid or, if necessary, by a doctor. It is the employee's responsibility to immediately report any accident/illness. Failure to report an injury/illness at the time it occurs may be grounds for disciplinary action.

Minor injuries (scratches, cuts, puncture wounds and contusions) should immediately be treated with appropriate first aid procedures on site. Failure to apply first aid to minor injuries can result in serious infections later. Reasonable precautions to prevent further complications are the responsibility of every employee.

If an injury or illness requires medical attention, Human Resources must be notified, and an employee will be instructed to seek treatment at one of SLOCOE's designated medical facilities. Whenever possible, a manager will accompany the employee to the designated medical facility. Unless an employee has received approval prior to sustaining an industrial injury/illness to seek medical treatment from a designated health care provider, SLOCOE has the right to designate the treating physician in all industrial injury and illness cases for the first 30 days of treatment. Employees should not seek medical treatment without authorization from a supervisor or the Human Resources Department. Proper procedure must be followed in order for SLOCOE to accept responsibility for an injury and related medical bills. Treatment at a hospital emergency room is only authorized when an actual emergency exists.

2. After 30 days from the date of injury, employees have the right to be treated by a physician of their choice, within a reasonable geographic location. Employees may contact Human Resources if they wish to change medical facilities during the course of treatment. A change in physicians must be authorized by SLOCOE's workers' compensation administrator prior to receipt of services provided by the newly designated physician.
3. Following treatment by a designated medical facility, employees should submit the Physician's Return To Work Evaluation form to the immediate supervisor. If modified work or time off is recommended, the restrictions should be discussed with the immediate supervisor and the Human Resources Department.
4. Questions regarding injury, status during time off, medical bills, etc., may be taken to the Human Resources Department. If necessary, the Human Resources Department may refer employees to SLOCOE's workers' compensation administrator.

(For additional information, see the *Industrial Injury or Illness Leave* and/or *Worker's Compensation Benefits* sections of this handbook and the Association Handbooks and management policies.)

## **INFECTIOUS DISEASES / BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS EXPOSURE CONTROL PLAN**

SLOCOE has adopted a Blood Borne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan in accordance with the OSHA. The following summary outlines SLOCOE Exposure Control Plan. The Safety Coordinator serves as SLOCOE's Exposure Control Officer.

*(Reference: OSHA Blood Borne Pathogens Standard 29 CFR 1910.1030)*

### ***Exposure Determination***

Occupational exposure means reasonably anticipated skin, eye, mucous membrane, or potential contact with blood, saliva, semen, vaginal secretions or other potentially infectious body fluids that may result from the performance of employment related duties.

The tasks/procedures that are considered potential routes of exposure for teachers, para-educators, support staff, nurses and specialists, custodial/maintenance staff, include: specialized healthcare procedures; interaction which results in a student spitting at, biting or bleeding on an employee; clean up of blood, saliva, semen or vomit; toileting or diaper-changing students; handling, repair or maintenance of equipment or tools that may be contaminated with blood, saliva or vomit; inspection of students for possession of weapons or drugs; rendering first aid.

Although administrative and clerical staff do not routinely perform tasks/procedures that are considered potential routes of exposure, they may occasionally perform any of the tasks/procedures listed above. Therefore, they are included in all aspects of the Exposure Control Plan.

### ***Implementation Methodology***

Each department with employees who are involved in activities that present potential occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens, shall provide the following:

1. A spill clean-up procedure for cleaning equipment;
2. Hand-washing facilities;
3. First Aid kits; and
4. Personal protection information and gear.

All surfaces contaminated by blood, saliva, semen or vomit must be decontaminated as soon as possible. A solution of one part bleach to ten parts water shall be used.

### ***Hepatitis B Vaccine***

All employees involved in activities that present potential occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens, are eligible for the Hepatitis B vaccine. The Human Resources Department, in cooperation with program managers, administers the Hepatitis B vaccine program. The vaccine shall be provided at no cost to the employees. The vaccine is a series of three injections administered over a six-month period. Contact the Human Resources department for locations and dates when the vaccine will be administered.

Employees have the right to decline the vaccination. Those who do so shall sign a declination form upon hire. Employees who initially decline the Hepatitis B vaccine and later wish to have it may then have the vaccine provided at no cost. Employees are encouraged to discuss any questions/concerns about the Hepatitis B vaccine with their personal physician.

#### ***Post-Exposure Evaluation and Follow-Up***

All exposure incidents shall be reported to the appropriate manager or Assistant Superintendent and the Human Resources Department immediately. Some examples of exposure incidents include: an employee bitten by a student; blood, saliva or vomit entering the eyes, nose, mouth or an open wound; clean up of blood, saliva, semen or vomit without personal protective equipment; a search resulting in a needle stick or cut by a contaminated sharp object. Employees who experience an exposure incident will be offered post-exposure evaluation and follow-up in accordance with the OSHA Standard.

#### ***Training***

Training will be provided to all employees involved in activities which present potential occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens. Employees will receive training upon hire, and then on an annual basis.

### **VIOLENCE-FREE WORKPLACE**

SLOCOE has adopted a Zero Tolerance Policy for workplace violence because it recognizes that workplace violence is a growing nationwide problem, which needs to be addressed by all employers. Consistent with this policy, acts or threats of physical violence, including intimidation, harassment, and/or coercion, which involve or affect SLOCOE employees or which occur on SLOCOE property will not be tolerated.

Acts or threats of violence include conduct which is sufficiently severe, offensive or intimidating to alter the employment conditions or to create a hostile, abusive, or intimidating work environment for one or several SLOCOE employees. Examples of workplace violence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- All threats or acts of violence occurring on SLOCOE premises, regardless of the relationship between the County Schools and the parties involved in the accident.
- All threats or acts of violence occurring off SLOCOE premises involving someone who is acting in the capacity of a representative of SLOCOE.
- All threats or acts of violence occurring off SLOCOE property involving a SLOCOE employee if the threats or acts affect the legitimate interests of SLOCOE.
- Any acts or threats resulting in the conviction of an employee or of an individual performing services for SLOCOE on a contract or temporary basis, under any criminal code provision relating to violence or threats of violence which adversely affect the legitimate interests and goals of SLOCOE.

Specific examples of conduct, which may be considered threats or acts of violence, include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Hitting or shoving an individual.
- Threatening an individual or his/her family, friends, associates, or property with harm.

- The intentional destruction or threat of destruction of SLOCOE property.
- Harassing or threatening phone calls or emails.
- Harassing surveillance or stalking.
- The suggestion or intimation that violence is appropriate.
- Unauthorized possession or inappropriate use of firearms or weapons.

SLOCOE's prohibition against threats and acts of violence applies to all persons involved in SLOCOE's operation, including but not limited to SLOCOE personnel, contract, and temporary employees and anyone else on SLOCOE property, or acting as a representative off of SLOCOE property. Violations of this policy will lead to disciplinary action (up to and including termination) and/or legal action as appropriate.

Every employee and every person on SLOCOE property is encouraged to report incidents of threats or acts of physical violence of which he/she is aware. Reports should be made to the Human Resources Department, the reporting individual's immediate supervisor, or another management employee if the immediate supervisor is not available. Nothing in this policy alters any other reporting obligation established in policies or in state, federal or other applicable law.

# SLOCOE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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## ALL MAIL

To guarantee the smooth and efficient processing of all mail passing through SLOCOE's Educational Technology Center (ETC) including interoffice and outgoing U.S. Mail, it is crucial that all employees take time to complete each of the following steps before depositing mail for courier pickup:

- Sealed and unsealed mail should be bundled separately, with unsealed envelope flaps touching the front of the envelope next to it. (Please do not place flaps one over the other – it causes extra delay in posting)
- Separate U.S. Mail and interoffice mail into different bundles.
- Place mailing labels in the center of envelopes.
- Place return-address stickers on a different line from the outgoing addresses.

All out-going US mail must have a SLOCOE return label, or ETC staff reserves the right to postpone posting until the addresser is located. SLOCOE returned address labels can be found on the SLOCOE website ([www.slocoe.org](http://www.slocoe.org)) under Employee Links – Forms – Guides. Use Avery label sheets #2160, and be sure to type your department or program name in the available slot.

Outgoing U.S. Mail is picked up three times per day at the SLOCOE main office, and once in the afternoon at the other SLOCOE campus locations (Student Programs & Services, Rancho El Chorro and Loma Vista). If you have mail that absolutely must go out same-day, the only way we can guarantee this service is if you make special arrangements with ETC in advance. If you require a same-day guarantee, notify ETC staff (X291, X290, or #297) in advance so special accommodations can be made.

## PERSONAL MAIL

Mail services at the ETC are for business purposes only. All mail received by SLOCOE is subject to inspection. Personal mail should not be sent to the business address. Similarly, personal mail may not be sent through SLOCOE's United States Postal Service (USPS) metering system. However, employees are welcome to place stamped mail in the ETC's outgoing U.S. mail bin. The USPS picks up mail from the ETC each business day.

## BULK MAIL

The ETC is not responsible for assembling, weighing, bundling, posting or delivering outgoing USPS bulk mail for SLOCOE divisions or departments. It is the responsibility of staff to contact the Bulk Mail Department of the USPS at the Dalidio Branch in San Luis Obispo (805) 543-2605 to obtain the forms and assistance necessary to process bulk mailings for their specific departments.

Specific guidelines and useful information are available on the SLOCOE website ([www.slocoe.org](http://www.slocoe.org)) under Employee Links > Forms > Guides, detailing steps to help staff prepare, organize and complete bulk mail projects in a timely manner. Visual instructions for preparing envelopes for SLOCOE's USPS metering system are also available.

Inquiries concerning mail service should be directed to the ETC at 782-7291.

## **ELECTRONIC MEDIA COMMUNICATION**

SLOCOE provides computers, internet and e-mail access to teachers, students, staff and managers. All electronic communications, including all software, databases, hardware, and digital files, remain the sole property of SLOCOE. To create a common expectation for the acceptable use of such communication devices, each user of such devices is expected to subscribe to and observe the Acceptable Use Policy, attached. This policy does not cover all required or expected behavior. Each user is expected to exercise sound judgment regarding appropriate conduct.

Employees are responsible for reviewing the Acceptable Use Policy carefully before signing. A signature on this document is legally binding and indicates acceptance and understanding of the terms and conditions. A copy of the signed document will be placed in each employee's personnel file. Questions about access to electronic communications or issues relating to security should be addressed to Information Technology Services.

## **TRAVEL EXPENSES**

With prior approval, SLOCOE will pay actual and necessary travel expenses incurred by employees in accordance with California Education Code and policies established by the County Board Of Education. The travel expenses must be incurred for activities legally required or authorized to be performed by the County Superintendent and staff members.

A claim form for travel expenses should be submitted, including the following information:

- The purpose of the trip
- Prior approval by the applicable Assistant Superintendent for the travel, conference, and accommodations
- Receipts or vouchers for the expenses

## **USE OF AUTOMOBILES**

All employees will be assigned a work location (home base). Employees will receive mileage reimbursement if traveling between sites during the day. Employees will be reimbursed for any mileage over the regular daily roundtrip from his/her residence to the assigned home base. An employee's assigned home base is determined by the manager and should be based upon the office location of the position.

A Mileage Expense Claim form (see Business Services Procedures Manual) should be used when an employee uses his/her own vehicle. Form 2214.2A (Use of Personal Automobile) must be on file in the Business Department before payment will be made. Information regarding minimum automobile insurance coverage for property loss, property damage and liability insurance must be provided. Mileage will be reimbursed at the current IRS rate.

## **CARE OF SLOCOE PROPERTY**

Every job in the organization requires the use of supplies and some type of equipment. All employees are charged with the responsibility of maintaining this property in the best possible condition and making the most efficient use of supplies issued to them. Employees can help keep costs down by exercising reasonable care over the property for which they are responsible.

## **COPY MACHINES**

Copiers are provided for official use only, and are not to be used for reproduction of personal material. In order to reduce excessive wear and staff time, large copying jobs may be outsourced.

## **PURCHASING**

In order to purchase items, a requisition must be processed through the QSS automated system and approved by the appropriate supervisor. Contact your departments Executive Assistant for assistance with this. A purchase order will be generated and provided to you or your department's Executive Assistant by the Business Services Buyer. Please review the Business Services Procedure Manual for detailed instructions. (This document can be found on the SLOCOE website at [www.slocoe.org](http://www.slocoe.org))

## **MAINTENANCE / REPAIRS**

Requests for maintenance repairs at SLOCOE's main office need to be directed to the Administrative Manager to the Superintendent or the Executive Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent for Business Services. Requests for maintenance repairs at SLOCOE school sites need to be reported to the Executive Assistant to the Director for Alternative Education or Special Education. Work orders are submitted electronically. Maintenance repairs considered to be an emergency or threat to student or staff safety, shall be reported immediately to the Director of Maintenance and Operations, followed by the completion of the "Maintenance Work Request" form. Please refer to SLOCOE's Business Services Procedure Manual for complete details on how to submit a Maintenance Work Request.

## **OFFICE EQUIPMENT REPAIR**

Copiers are generally under maintenance contracts and the vendor may be called directly using the contact information located on the copier. For any desktop copier that is not covered by a maintenance contract, contact IT and provide the SLOCOE IT Support # on the item. For all other office machines (ie: typewriter, binding equipment, etc.), contact the Business Services Buyer who can confirm the procedure. Provide the Business Services Buyer with the following information:

1. Make of equipment (Canon, HP, etc.)
2. Type of equipment (calculator, typewriter, binding machine, etc.)
3. Inventory tag number (SLOCOE IT Support #)
4. Model and serial number of equipment
5. Malfunction to be corrected
6. Location of equipment
7. Person to be contacted by repairperson

## **TELEPHONES**

The manner in which employees answer the telephone is important. Following are a few tips that will help in maintaining efficient, courteous service when receiving calls:

- Calls should be answered promptly.
- Employee should state name and department, followed by a courteous offer of assistance to the caller.
- Good customer service requires taking ownership of the phone call, handling what is required, or transferring the call to someone who can.
- Calls should be transferred with an introduction to the person who can handle the call, with an explanation of the situation, and a follow-up to the customer about the action. If the person is not available, the caller can be given the option of leaving a voicemail.

Employees making calls are reminded to:

- Identify themselves, their department and/or employer.
- Be courteous and friendly.
- Use office telephones for official business. When personal calls are necessary, they should be brief. SLOCOE is charged on the “Message Unit” rate structure, resulting in charges for local calls based on “connect time.”
- Personal long distance calls should be made on private cell phones or with a private calling card.

Employees must make sure their telephone is answered or covered by an updated voicemail message. When appropriate, calls may be referred to another individual who may be of assistance.

Employees needing to contact the main office from out of the area may utilize the toll free number that will connect them to the main switchboard. The number is (800) 563-4151.

## **TELEPHONE SYSTEM CHANGES OR REPAIRS**

Requests for both internal office phones and mobile phone changes shall be made to the ITS department. These include:

1. Need for adding or deleting phones
2. Any staff moves involving moving phones
3. Any reassignment of staff to a new extension
4. Repairs to telephones on SLOCOE system

## **CELL PHONES**

Some positions may require the use of cell phones. The applicable Assistant Superintendent will determine which positions are eligible for cell phone reimbursement. Upon approval, employees have two options available for reimbursement:

- a) Use a personal cell phone and receive a monthly stipend of \$39 (taxable income); verification by the division head is required; OR;
- b) Use cell phone issued by SLOCOE, which may be used for business calls only.

Effective July 1, 2008, the law prohibits individuals from driving a motor vehicle while using a wireless telephone unless that telephone is specifically designed and configured to allow hands-free listening and talking, and is used in that manner while driving. In addition, various scientific studies, using simulators, test-track, and actual road experience, have indicated that using cell phones while driving impairs the ability to operate a vehicle. The biggest danger is "cognitive capture" -- or being blind to driving cues because one is absorbed in conversations. A four-fold increase in risk is associated with using a cell phone while driving as compared to not using a cell phone while driving. Additionally, no difference in the level of safety was found for the use of hands-free compared to hand-held cell phones. As a result, SLOCOE employees are strongly discouraged from using hands free devices to conduct company business while driving.

## **EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION CARDS**

In the interest of safety and security at all SLOCOE facilities, all employees are expected to carry a SLOCOE photo identification 'badge'. Photos are taken at the time of employment orientation and sent to employees when ready. Replacement identification badges can be acquired through the Human Resources Department.

## **APPEARANCE AND DRESS**

The San Luis Obispo County Office of Education deals with the public. Common sense in personal appearance, should be considered in neatness, cleanliness, and clothing and should be followed by all employees.

Employees who interface with the public should give extra consideration to the appropriateness of their apparel and overall appearance. Employees who work in areas that require climbing, lifting, and kneeling should consider the safety factor and wear clothing that is compatible with the job function they are performing. Footwear is critical to employee safety and appropriate footwear must be considered daily. If needed, bring a second pair of shoes to change into for special functions/events that may require it (such as moving items from one location to another, etc.).

Inappropriate attire is identified as any item of clothing that causes a distraction to other employees, causes a break in the normal flow of office routine, or creates an unsafe situation for the performance of job duties. Extremes in fashion and leisure activity clothing should be reserved for wear during non-work time. Activities or environmental changes that have special requirements should be recognized by the supervisor.

## **CHANGE OF NAME OR ADDRESS**

Employees must report changes in name, address or phone number to their supervisor and to the Human Resources Department as soon as possible. Name changes will be processed only if accompanied by a Social Security Card reflecting the same name.

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

The maintenance of high ethical and moral standards in public business is the basis of effective government. Since public confidence is endangered when ethical standards falter, all officers and employees must act with unwavering integrity, absolute impartiality and devotion to the public interest.

Employees must observe the following principles:

1. There shall be no discrimination in any SLOCOE activity because of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, physical handicap or political affiliation.
2. No employee shall accept any fee, compensation, gift, payment of expenses, or any other thing of monetary value in circumstances in which acceptance may result in, or create the appearance of:
  - Use of position for private gain;
  - Preferential treatment of any person;
  - Impeding governmental efficiency or economy OR;
  - Any loss of complete independence or impartiality or any adverse affect on the confidence of the public in the integrity of the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education.
3. Persons in the public service shall not disclose confidential information acquired by or available to them in the course of their employment with SLOCOE or use such information for speculation or personal gain.

## **COMPLAINTS CONCERNING EMPLOYEES**

SLOCOE has adopted a formal policy in order to resolve complaints involving SLOCOE employees. The County Superintendent expects that employees and supervisors will make every effort to resolve complaints and disagreements informally before resorting to formal complaint procedures. Contact the Superintendent's Office to request a copy of the procedure and form.

*(Reference: Board Policy 4312)*

Complaints alleging discrimination or failure to comply with state and federal laws in certain programs should be filed using the Uniform Complaint Procedure adopted by SLOCOE. Contact the Human Resources Department to request a copy of the brochure.

## **CONVICTION OF NARCOTICS OR SEX OFFENSE**

Conviction of an offense related to sex, controlled substance or other serious or violent felony as defined in California Education Code will result in immediate termination of employment.

*(References: California Education Code, Sections 44010 and 44011)*

## **EMERGENCIES**

Each site has a disaster plan in case of an earthquake or other major disaster. Employees are to become familiar with the plan for their site, and review the plan with staff. In the event of a medical emergency, employees are to immediately call 911, and administer appropriate first aid (if trained) or make the individual as comfortable as possible without being moved until first aid can be administered. The immediate supervisor or the Safety Coordinator must be contacted as soon as possible. Additional information can be found in the Injury and Illness Prevention Plan.

All public employees are disaster service workers. In the event of natural, manmade, or war-caused emergencies that result in conditions of disaster or extreme peril to life, property, and resources, all SLOCOE employees are subject to disaster service activities as assigned to them by their supervisors.

## **EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES**

SLOCOE will not employ someone in a position where he/she is directly or indirectly supervised by a relative or member of his/her household. Additionally, SLOCOE will not employ relatives or members of the present household of a County Board of Education member or the County Superintendent of Schools. A relative is defined as a husband, wife, son or daughter (including in-laws), father or mother (including in-laws), brother or sister (including in-laws), grandchild or grandparent.

*(Reference: Board Policy 4109)*

## **GIFTS TO EMPLOYEES**

No employee is to receive any commission, expense-paid trip, or anything of value from individuals or companies selling equipment, materials, or services used in the operation of the public schools. This would include the purchase and use of all materials, supplies or other items needed for the repair, maintenance, or operation of school facilities, office or cafeterias, for school transportation, or materials used to conduct classes, activities, and organizations.

## **SOLICITATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE**

In order to ensure efficient operation of SLOCOE business and to prevent disruption to employees, SLOCOE has established control of solicitations and distribution of literature on SLOCOE property. No solicitors or salespersons will be permitted to sell or demonstrate their products in the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education facilities, unless specifically related to SLOCOE business.

Employees are not permitted to sell or promote items for personal gain at SLOCOE facilities or during work hours, except as utilized in the employee break room(s) during breaks, or during work hours. Employees may display fundraising activities in employee break rooms. Employees may not engage in activity soliciting support for their specific fundraiser during work hours. Employees may not act in a manner that would appear to apply pressure on other employees to support a specific activity.

*(Reference: Board Policy 4424)*

## **PERSONNEL FILES**

The personnel file maintained in the Human Resources Department is the only official and legal permanent record that can be maintained on employees. A major purpose of the file is to protect employees against arbitrary and prejudicial personnel decisions. The personnel file is governed by the California Education Code, which requires a procedure whereby employees can correct or rebut incomplete or inaccurate information in the hands of their employers that might affect their employment status. Additionally, no information of a derogatory nature can be entered or filed unless and until the employee is given notice and an opportunity to review and respond. Documents may include anything relating to an employee's performance, whether it is a formal evaluation, observation, report, memorandum, commendation, written warning, or reprimand.

*(References: California Education Code 44031; Board Policy 4314)*

Every employee has the right to inspect their personnel file upon request. All employee personnel files are confidential and are available only to the employee and to those who have authorized access.

## **POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

SLOCOE recognizes and encourages the right of all officers and employees to engage in political activities. Such activities however, must be conducted on an employee's own time and off the premises of SLOCOE.

*(Reference: Board Policy 4410)*

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Employees of the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education, have an important public relations responsibility. Work, attitude and appearance are all subject to close inspection by the public. In many cases, total judgment of the efficiency and character and performance of the organization may be based on individual public encounters with a single SLOCOE employee.

Employees may be approached for interviews or comments by the news media. Only specific staff designated by the County Superintendent may comment to news reporters on SLOCOE policy or events relevant to SLOCOE. All inquiries from the media are to be directed to the Administration Department.