**A black and white logo

Description automatically generated**

**Therapy Lab of OC**

**Employee Handbook 2024**

**Introduction and Overview**

**Purpose of this Handbook**

The purpose of our employee handbook is to familiarize you with the culture, expectations, and policies that shape our workplace.

It’s also important to explain a little bit about our company.

* We’ve been in business since March 1, 2023.
* We operate on the philosophy that every person deserves a voice, and each client and employee is an asset to our company.
* Our main goal is to provide excellent, evidence-based speech therapy to people of all ages.
* Our mission: To create an environment where every client learns the tools to effectively communicate.

**A Welcome from the CEO**

Welcome to the Therapy Lab of OC! You are a valued member of our team, and your work and dedication are greatly appreciated.

**An Overview of Therapy Lab of OC**

We are a speech clinic located in Fountain Valley, California. We proudly serve children and adults in the community. We serve people in their homes as well as in the clinic.

**Changes in Policy**

Our employee handbook is updated annually and/or as needed, and the policies stated in the current version of the handbook supersede the content of documents from prior years.

We encourage employees to provide feedback if you spot mistakes or inconsistencies in the document.

**Workplace Policies**

We have adopted these workplace policies, which apply to all employees as a way to create consistency and to clearly document the company's policies and procedures.

**Section 1: Equal Opportunity Policy**

It is the policy of the State of California to provide equal employment opportunity to all qualified job applicants and employees based on merit and to prohibit illegal discrimination in every aspect of personnel policies and employment practices, including recruitment, examining, hiring, promotion, training, work assignments, work environment, and other benefits and privileges of employment. Agencies and departments shall ensure that this policy is fully implemented and that no harassing or retaliatory actions are taken against applicants or employees for exercising their civil rights under this policy.

We have a non-retaliation policy for those who report discrimination, harassment, or inappropriate or offensive behavior, which includes immediate administrative action.

**Section 2: Accommodation Policy**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in everyday activities. The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability just as other civil rights laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. The ADA guarantees that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to enjoy employment opportunities, purchase goods and services, and participate in state and local government programs.

**Section 3: Non-Solicitation Policy**

Requesting money or other forms of support or participation in groups unrelated to the company is called solicitation. This also includes disseminating commercial, political, or religious literature.

We have a non-solicitation policy at the Therapy Lab of OC with clients and co-workers. However, there may be situations in which employees may solicit from their colleagues. For example:

* Organizing an event for another employee
* Seeking support for a charity or cause the company has authorized
* Inviting colleagues to authorized non-business events such as recreational activities or volunteer opportunities
* Soliciting participation in a legally protected employment-related body such as a union

**Section 4: Employment Relationship**

**Employment Types**

We have the following employment classifications at our company (e.g., exempt, non-exempt, temporary, regular full-time, regular part-time), including the average number of hours each type of employee works per week. An employee is considered to be full-time when he/she works 30 hours or more per week.

**Exempt and Non-Exempt Employees**

This section applies to American companies subject to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The FLSA and its regulations specify two types of employees: “non-exempt” employees who are covered by the FLSA’s requirements for minimum wage and overtime pay, and “exempt” employees who meet certain criteria that put them outside this category.

**At-Will Employment**

We are an at-will employer. Either the employee or the company may choose to terminate the employment relationship at any time for any non-discriminatory cause.

**Section 5: Recruitment and Selection**

Each candidate must submit a resume to be considered. Interviews are conducted for all candidates, references are checked, credentials such as licenses must be provided, each employee must pass criminal and FBI background checks, provide a current TB test, immunizations, proof of being physically fit for the position, and complete initial training.

**Section 6: Non-Compete and Nondisclosure Agreements**

Each employee must sign non-compete or nondisclosure agreements (NDAs) upon hire. These documents are part of the onboarding process.

**Section 7: Compensation**

**Compensation Policy**

Our compensation policy is designed to attract, retain, and motivate talented employees. Compensation includes base salary, bonuses, and other incentives.

**Wage and Hour Laws**

The company complies with all federal and state wage and hour laws. This includes payment for all hours worked, adherence to minimum wage laws, and the provision of overtime pay for non-exempt employees.

* **Minimum Wage**: The minimum wage in California as of January 1, 2024, is $16 per hour for employers with 26 or more employees, and $15 per hour for employers with 25 or fewer employees.
* **Overtime Pay**: Non-exempt employees are entitled to overtime pay at the rate of one and a half times their regular rate of pay for hours worked over eight in a workday or 40 in a workweek. Double time is paid for hours worked over 12 in a workday.

**Paydays**

Employees are paid bi-weekly on the 1st and 15th. If a payday falls on a holiday, employees will receive their paychecks on the preceding workday.

**Deductions**

The company will make deductions from employees’ paychecks as required by law, such as federal and state taxes, Social Security, Medicare, and any other mandatory deductions.

**Section 8: Benefits**

**Health Insurance**

We offer health insurance benefits to all full-time employees. Eligible employees may enroll in the company's health insurance plan upon completion of their probationary period. This is for employees working 40 hours or more.

**Leave Policies**

* **Sick Leave**: California law requires employers to provide paid sick leave. Employees accrue one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked, which can be used for personal illness or to care for a family member.
* **Family and Medical Leave**: The California Family Rights Act (CFRA) allows employees to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave for certain family and medical reasons.
* **Pregnancy Disability Leave**: Pregnant employees are entitled to up to four months of unpaid, job-protected leave.

**Retirement Plans**

We offer a 401(k) retirement plan to eligible employees. The company matches employee contributions up to a certain percentage, as specified in the plan documents. This is for employees working 40 hours or more.

**Section 9: Workplace Safety**

**Workplace Safety Policy**

The company is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all employees. We comply with all Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations.

**Reporting Injuries**

All workplace injuries, no matter how minor, must be reported to a supervisor immediately. The company will investigate the incident and take appropriate action to prevent future occurrences.

**Safety Training**

Employees are required to participate in safety training programs. Training includes proper use of equipment, emergency procedures, and best practices for maintaining a safe workplace.

**Section 10: Conduct and Discipline**

**Code of Conduct**

Employees are expected to maintain high standards of conduct and professionalism. This includes treating colleagues, clients, and visitors with respect, adhering to company policies, and performing job duties to the best of their ability.

**Disciplinary Actions**

Violations of company policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Disciplinary actions can include verbal warnings, written warnings, suspension, and termination, depending on the severity of the offense.

**Harassment Policy**

The company prohibits harassment of any kind. This includes harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other protected characteristic. Employees are encouraged to report any incidents of harassment to their supervisor or HR.

**Section 11: Employee Relations**

**Open Door Policy**

The company encourages open communication between employees and management. Employees are welcome to discuss any concerns or suggestions with their supervisor or HR.

**Grievance Procedure**

Employees who have a grievance related to their employment should follow the company's grievance procedure. This typically involves discussing the issue with a supervisor, filing a formal complaint with HR, and participating in a resolution process.

**Section 12: Training and Development**

**Training Programs**

The company provides various training programs to help employees enhance their skills and advance their careers. This includes on-the-job training, workshops, and external courses.

**Professional Development**

Employees are encouraged to pursue professional development opportunities. The company may offer financial assistance for courses and certifications relevant to an employee's role.

**Section 13: Performance Management**

**Performance Reviews**

Employees will receive regular performance reviews to assess their progress and provide feedback. Reviews typically occur annually but may be more frequent for new employees or those in new roles.

**Goal Setting**

During performance reviews, employees and supervisors will set goals for the upcoming period. These goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART).

**Section 14: Attendance and Punctuality**

**Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

Regular attendance and punctuality are vital to maintaining the company’s efficiency and productivity. Employees are expected to be present and on time for their scheduled shifts. Absences and tardiness can disrupt workflow and place an undue burden on colleagues.

**Reporting Absences**

Employees who are unable to report to work or will be late must notify their supervisor as soon as possible, preferably before the start of their shift. This allows the company to make necessary adjustments to cover the absence.

**Excessive Absenteeism and Tardiness**

Excessive absenteeism or tardiness may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The company defines excessive absenteeism as missing more than three days of work in a month without valid reason.

**Section 15: Use of Company Property**

**Company Property Policy**

Company property, including equipment, tools, and resources, should be used for business purposes only. Employees are expected to take care of company property and report any damages or malfunctions immediately.

**Personal Use of Company Property**

Limited personal use of company property is permitted, provided it does not interfere with job performance or productivity and is in compliance with company policies.

**Section 16: Technology and Internet Use**

**Technology Use Policy**

The company provides technology resources, including computers, email, and internet access, to employees for business purposes. Employees are expected to use these resources responsibly and in accordance with company policies.

**Personal Use of Technology**

Limited personal use of company technology is permitted, provided it does not interfere with job performance or productivity and is in compliance with company policies. The use of a cell phone is prohibited during times when you are conducting therapy. Your phone should not be in use at this time unless of an emergency. A write up may be applicable if you are found using your phone during a therapy session.

**Prohibited Activities**

Employees are prohibited from using company technology for any illegal, unethical, or inappropriate activities. This includes but is not limited to accessing or distributing offensive or obscene material, engaging in harassment, or conducting personal business during work hours.

**Section 17: Social Media Policy**

**Social Media Use**

Employees are encouraged to use social media responsibly. When representing the company on social media, employees should ensure that their posts reflect positively on the company and do not disclose confidential or proprietary information.

**Personal Social Media Use**

Employees are free to use social media for personal purposes outside of work hours. However, employees should avoid posting any content that could harm the company’s reputation or violate company policies.

**Prohibited Social Media Activities**

Employees are prohibited from using social media to harass, discriminate, or engage in any other inappropriate behavior. Employees should also avoid posting any confidential or proprietary company information.

**Section 18: Confidentiality Policy**

**Confidential Information**

Employees may have access to confidential information as part of their job duties. This includes but is not limited to client information, business plans, and financial data. Employees are expected to keep this information confidential and not disclose it to unauthorized parties.

**Non-Disclosure Agreement**

Employees may be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement as a condition of employment. This agreement outlines the employee’s obligation to protect the company’s confidential information.

**Section 19: Conflict of Interest Policy**

**Conflict of Interest**

A conflict of interest occurs when an employee’s personal interests interfere with their ability to perform their job duties impartially. Employees are expected to avoid any situations that could create a conflict of interest.

**Disclosure of Conflicts**

Employees should disclose any potential conflicts of interest to their supervisor or HR. The company will assess the situation and take appropriate action to resolve the conflict.

**Section 20: Drug and Alcohol Policy**

**Drug and Alcohol Use**

The company maintains a drug-free workplace. Employees are prohibited from using, possessing, or being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol while on company premises or during work hours.

**Drug Testing**

Employees may be required to undergo drug testing as a condition of employment or if there is reasonable suspicion of drug use. Refusal to submit to a drug test may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

**Section 21: Termination and Resignation**

**Termination Policy**

The company reserves the right to terminate employment at any time for any non-discriminatory reason. Termination may be the result of performance issues, policy violations, or other factors.

**Resignation Policy**

Employees who wish to resign from their position are expected to provide at least two weeks’ notice. This allows the company to make necessary arrangements to cover the employee’s duties.

**Exit Interviews**

The company may conduct exit interviews with departing employees. This provides an opportunity to gather feedback and address any concerns the employee may have.

**Section 22: Cancellation Policy Therapy Lab of OC**

**Late Cancellations**

Include any cancellation under a 24-hour notice.

**No-Show**

Includes when a client does not show up to the session after waiting 15 minutes.

**Cancellation**

Is anything over a 24-hour notice.

At the Therapy Lab of OC, our cancellation policy applies both when working at the clinic and virtually from home. We deeply value you as a part of our team and it is our hope that you will understand the necessity of having such a policy in place. It is important to understand that Therapy Lab does not get paid when most of our clients cancel and/or no-show, resulting in a loss of income for the business.

Any cancellation in which a client gives a 24-hour or more notice is taken off the schedule and the employee is not compensated. The employee is responsible for checking Simple Practice for cancellations/schedule updates prior to their shift. However, most of the time Kristin will send you a message to let you know.

If your first or last client late cancels at the clinic, they will be taken off the schedule without compensation, meaning your shift may start or end earlier. When working at the clinic and facing a late cancellation, you are expected to continue work, which may include prepping progress reports or evaluations for Easterseals clients. Proof of work completion is necessary to receive payment during cancellations. There is also a basket in the reception area with odds and ends that can be completed.

When working from home for telehealth sessions, you are expected to call the parents after waiting 5 minutes if they have not shown up for a virtual session. When working in the office, you are expected to notify Kristin and/or call the parent after 5 minutes of waiting. The parents’ contact information can be found in Simple Practice.

For virtual work from home, any late cancellations will not be compensated unless agreed upon by the CEO, Kristin Bruning. It is crucial for employees to understand the financial impact of cancellations on the business. If a client does not show up for the virtual session after 15 minutes, they are considered a no-show. In the case of virtual no-shows, you will be compensated for the 15 minutes that were spent waiting for the client when working from home.

For virtual no-shows when working in the office, after waiting the 10 minutes, you will be expected to begin office work/prep Easterseals progress notes/re-evaluations. Evidence of work will need to be provided for compensation.

For in home and/or in daycare sessions, it is your responsibility to confirm the appointments. If an in home/day care client cancels (either late and/or gives a 24 hour notice) you will not be compensated.

Employees are expected to support the company during these times, as the company supports them. Please respond that you have received this notification. Thank you for your support of Therapy Lab!

**Acknowledgment of Receipt**

I acknowledge that I have received and read the Therapy Lab of OC Employee Handbook. I understand the policies and procedures outlined in the handbook and agree to comply with them.

**Employee Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_