Requirements and Best Practices

Organizational Requirements and Best Practices

Non Profit Board of Directors

In a non-profit agency, the governing board is a board of directors whose main function is to establish policies, regulations and bylaws consistent with the purposes of the agency. The board is responsible, also, for resolving management issues, selecting and evaluating the performance of the executive director, and functioning in an advisory capacity to the executive director.

Equal Employment Opportunity Plans - **Annually** all organizations receiving Department of Justice funding are required to complete and file either an *EEO Plan and Utilization Report* or file the *Verification of EEOP Reporting Requirement* form using the online EEO Reporting system. For more information on EEOP requirements specific to your organization and to access the reporting tool, go to the Civil Rights EEOP website. Once you have complied with the EEOP requirement, you will need to upload documentation into Iowa Department of Justice Grants. Here are the instructions.

Civil Rights Training Certification- One person from each grant funded organization (the person who is designated the civil rights liaison or similar) must complete Civil Rights Training each grant cycle. The completed Civil Rights Training Certification form is to be uploaded into Iowa Department of Justice Grants on the organizational details page in the organizational profile. This is the link to the training videos.

Staff Vacancies

Grant funded vacancies should be reported to the assigned grant coordinator within 30 days of the vacancy. Once the vacant position(s) is filled the grantee MUST update the budget details form by submitting a name change request. Here are the instructions.

Time and Activity Records

Grant funded personnel must track their time and activities. This is done by using time tracking software or by keeping an activity log. Personnel costs charged to grants must be for actual time spent on allowable grant activities. Do not use estimates, proration or costs based on the grant budget. If personnel costs benefit more than one grant, costs must be allocated appropriately. At minimum time and activity documents must include:

- Date (day, month and year)
- Employee's name
- Position title
- Total daily hours charged to the project
- Activities related to the project
- Employee's signature
- Project director or supervisor's signature

- Funding source (Federal grant # when applicable)

*One-time salary supplements or bonuses, including severance provisions, may not be paid with federal and/or state funds.

Personnel Files Requirements

Staff and direct service volunteers should have personnel files which include the following:

- Documentation of verified character/employment references if conducted
- An agency application or resume'
- A signed release of information granting the organization permission to obtain a background check and to conduct reference checks
- Job description
- Documentation of training/certification received such as the topic, presenter, length of training, dates.
- Documentation of minimum job qualifications if not evident from application or resume
- Documentation of background checks according to agency policy
- Other personnel records or documents which align with agency policy, such as employee evaluation, disciplinary actions, awards, achievements, etc.

Iowa Department of Justice Grant Management System PROFILE Pages

Organizations with active grants are responsible for keeping contact and other data in their Iowa DOJ profile pages updated. Changes to contact information, such as emails, addresses, key personnel, etc., must be updated immediately.

Job Descriptions

If not included in an employee handbook, organizations are to have written qualifications and job descriptions for each position. This ensures people hired are qualified and have the required education or experience. Job descriptions are to be as detailed as possible. The Section reviews job descriptions to compare how written job descriptions match what is provided in the grant applications and to ensure job tasks align with allowable grant activities. For example, if an organization requests 100% of an advocate’s time charged as direct services the job description cannot include tasks which are not direct service tasks, such as fundraising.

Employee Handbook

An employee handbook is a vital document that outlines an organization's policies, procedures, culture, and code of conduct to ensure consistency and transparency. It acts as a guide for employees regarding their rights and responsibilities, while protecting employers from potential legal risks, such as wrongful termination or discrimination claims.

Key purposes of an employee handbook include:

- **Setting Expectations:** Defines behavior, performance standards, and workplace rules, including dress code, time-off, and safety procedures.
- **Legal Protection:** Helps defend the company against employment-related lawsuits by providing a written record of compliance with laws and company policies.
- **Communication of Culture:** Communicates the company's mission, values, and vision to new hires and existing employees.
- **Consistency:** Ensures management applies policies uniformly across the organization, promoting fairness.
- **Onboarding Tool:** Serves as a primary resource for new employees to understand company benefits, policies, and procedures.

An effective handbook is generally acknowledged in writing by employees to confirm they have received and understood the policies.

As part of your site monitoring, the Section’s grant compliance coordinators may request to review your entire employee handbook or select certain portions to review. Employee handbooks should include the following:

1. Work expectations – hours, conditions, remote, in office, parking, dress code
2. Pay and benefits – pay and paid time off, holidays, vacations, sick leave, and other leave time,

overtime, hazard pay (if applicable), post employment payouts describing how accrued paid time off is handled when employees leave, are laid off or terminated
3. Termination – include voluntary and involuntary termination
4. Supervision of staff
5. Time and activity tracking – employees must understand how to track and report their time if they are paid from multiple sources to alleviate duplication of pay
6. How to file complaints or grievances –
7. Training requirements or expectations
8. Background checks there must be a policy and or procedures in place to ensure compliance with all state and federal background requirements. At a minimum, this policy must include which agency positions require a background check and the type of check performed. Grantees must have written policies and procedures to address and define infrequent and occasional contact between adults and minors.
9. Adherence to state or federal laws such as texting and driving, seatbelt requirements.
10. Requirements for driving - such as insurance and driving record check

Here is a sample employee handbook you can download and edit for your organization.

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