



museum of  
innovation and science

# Staff Manual

Last Updated: March 2022

**Employee Handbook Acknowledgment**

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the miSci Employee Handbook and understand that it contains important information on miSci policies and on my privileges and obligations as an employee. I agree to familiarize myself with the material in the Employee Handbook and understand that I am expected to read the Employee Handbook and adhere to its guidelines.

miSci may change, rescind, or add to any policy, benefit or practice described in the Employee Handbook with or without prior notice. The policies and practices described in this Employee Handbook are provided to me for guidance only, and the Employee Handbook does not constitute a contract of employment or a legally binding agreement. I further acknowledge that my employment with miSci is at-will, which means that either I or miSci may terminate my employment at any time, for any reason, with or without notice or cause.

Employee Handbook format options (employee’s choice): [ ] Hard copy [ ] Electronic format

Date given to Employee: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Name (printed or typed): \_\_\_\_\_

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

Date Employee Signed: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

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## Letter from the President

Dear Team Member:

To those of you who are new to miSci, welcome! To our hard-working veterans, thank you! It has been quite the ride and we are moving forward, together. Each and every one of you are vital to the mission of miSci. You are miSci.

The mission of miSci is to inspire people to celebrate and explore science and technology – past, present, and future. Our vision is to build a scientifically literate community that sparks innovation. Science is an important human enterprise that spans all generations and draws on the past to inspire the future. At our core, we believe learning should ignite curiosity, be relevant and fun. We believe that if we are successful, our guests will want to learn more

Our shared celebration of learning of science, our passion for our work, our commitment to the people we serve, and our teamwork allows us to provide stellar memory-making, immersive, hands-on educational experiences, and customer service for all of our patrons.

This handbook is a guide to miSci policies, benefits, and general information. It is a living document and will be updated as necessary.

Please take some time to familiarize yourself with the material within. If you have any questions or concerns about the handbook, feel free to contact me or your supervisor.

Thank you for joining our team. All of us here at miSci look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gina C. Gould". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Gina C. Gould, PhD  
President

## **I. GENERAL WORKPLACE POLICIES**

- A. Professional Courtesy
- B. Shared Responsibility
- C. Appearance and Attire
- D. Attendance
- E. Email Accounts and Internet Access
- F. Use of miSci Identity
- G. Intellectual Property
- H. Conflicts of Interest
- I. Automobile Use and Travel
  - a. *Parking*
  - b. *Use of vehicles for miSci business*
- J. Care and Return of miSci Property
- K. Pets
- L. Drug and Alcohol Use
- M. Smoking
- N. Firearms and Weapons

### **A. PROFESSIONAL COURTESY AND RESPECT**

Employees of miSci should interact courteously and tactfully with customers, visitors, fellow employees, and volunteers.

All employees, regardless of position or status, are expected to conduct themselves professionally at all times, to treat one another with mutual respect, and to resolve disputes and disagreements that may arise cooperatively. Personal relationships between employees should be conducted in a way that does not interfere with other employees, customers, or with miSci business.

miSci is committed to serving our customers and relies on its employees to demonstrate this commitment. Each employee is expected and encouraged to share in responding to the needs of miSci customers and guests and should exercise particular care for the welfare of children who are attending miSci programs.

Employees who are in a public-facing position should not wear earbuds or headphones at any time. In addition, use of personal mobile devices, as well as online activity should be kept to a minimum.

### **B. SHARED RESPONSIBILITY**

All employees share responsibility for miSci's day-to-day operations and are expected to make themselves available to assist with any aspect of miSci business as may be necessary. All employees are expected to clean up after themselves in the offices, studios, auditorium, gift shop, lobby, patio, restrooms, gallery, planetarium, and all common work areas and to share responsibility for maintaining miSci grounds and property as needed.

**C. APPEARANCE AND ATTIRE**

miSci staff are expected to reflect high professional standards in their appearance, while wearing clothing suitable to the type of work being done. To assist you, miSci will provide you with two (2) comfortable, albeit professionally branded shirts (polo, t-shirt, man- tailor/blouse) that are to be worn during your work hours. These should be accompanied by:

- dark blue/black slacks/non-pretreated jeans, skirts and/or shorts no more than 3” above the knee
- miSci staff, including Science Communicators and volunteers, should always wear a nametag on the right side when interacting with visitors.
- Casual business attire shoes are required in doors; appropriate shoes are required in all outdoor areas.
- Beards and hair should be clean and neat; facial hardware and/or potentially offensive body artwork should be removed or covered while working with students, customers or in professional public arenas.
- Staff should be conscientious about personal hygiene.

**D. ATTENDANCE**

Employees are expected to arrive on time and be ready to work as scheduled. Planned time off from work should be arranged and approved ahead of time with your supervisor according to our time off policies.

Employees who are unable to report for work as scheduled should notify their supervisor as soon as possible prior to the start of their shift. Employees should speak directly with the supervisor, if possible, or send a text message. Check with your supervisor for his/her cell phone in advance.

Your supervisor is responsible for adjusting schedules as needed and for considering extenuating circumstances to determine whether the absence is excused and whether leave should be recommended and arranged to accommodate the employee’s situation. Unexcused and unjustified lateness or absence may be grounds for disciplinary action.

Failure to report to work for two consecutive workdays without notice or justification may be considered a voluntary resignation.

**E. EMAIL ACCOUNTS AND INTERNET ACCESS**

Employees may be provided an email address on miSci’s email system for use with internal and external communications. Employees are required to check email each workday, and business-related email should be conducted to and from miSci email address if one is provided.

Internet and email access are provided to assist employees in conducting work-related business. It is understood that employees occasionally need to conduct personal business during work hours. Employees should keep personal business during work hours to their breaks and lunch hour; it should not interfere with work-related obligations.

All internet data and emails that are composed, transmitted, or received via our computer communications systems are considered business records of miSci. Employees should not expect their emails, internet site connection records or computer files sent, received, or stored on the miSci system to be confidential or private, and they are subject to disclosure to law enforcement or other third parties. Consequently, employees should always ensure that the information contained in internet-related communications, email communications and other transmissions is accurate, appropriate, ethical, lawful, and consistent with the conduct standards of miSci.

miSci electronic resources may not be used to view, distribute, or download any threatening, obscene, pornographic, or otherwise offensive material, or for any activity prohibited by law or inconsistent with miSci policies. Employees should not download or install any programs on miSci computers or on the network without prior authorization.

#### **F. USE OF MISCI IDENTITY**

To avoid confusion between personal and business-related communications, employees should not use the miSci logo, letterhead, or email for personal, nonwork-related communications, or otherwise speak on behalf of the organization outside of official miSci business communications without prior authorization from their department manager or the President.

#### **G. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

All work created by you for miSci during and in connection with your employment with miSci, or created using miSci time, facilities, or materials, is the property of miSci, and miSci will retain its right to exclusive use of this property unless expressly agreed otherwise.

#### **H. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

A conflict of interest exists whenever the interests or concerns of a miSci employee may be seen as competing with the best interests of the museum. Examples include any outside employment or consulting work that could constitute a conflict, any board membership or affiliation with other organizations that could constitute a conflict, and any transaction with miSci that could constitute a conflict. Employees should strive to avoid, to the greatest extent possible, even the appearance of a conflict which might raise questions concerning the propriety of miSci's operations.

All material facts concerning any transaction or situation which might be viewed as a conflict must be disclosed by the employee to the miSci board of directors and shall be subject to board approval. Form for disclosing conflicts of interest is available from the Business Manager. In addition, employees may not take part in any decision or action by miSci which would directly or indirectly benefit the employee or any relative, business partner, or organization with which the employee has a formal relationship without approval by the board.

Employees should not accept personal gifts valued at \$25 or more from individual vendors with which miSci does business. Accepting such gifts may place an employee in a compromising position, which is not in the best interest of miSci or the employee. Any promotional items or unsolicited gifts should be reported to the President.

## **I. AUTOMOBILE USE AND TRAVEL**

### *Parking*

Free parking is available to employees on miSci property. In busy times, such as winter and spring breaks or during special events, employees are expected to park in the upper lot or at Zion Lutheran Church on Nott Terrace. miSci is not responsible for loss, damage, or theft of your vehicle; therefore, it is strongly suggested that you lock your vehicle.

### *Use of vehicles for miSci business*

Employees in positions where the operation of a motor vehicle is an essential duty of the position must present and maintain a valid driver's license and acceptable driving record to our insurer. Changes in your driving record must be reported to your supervisor immediately.

Violations of this policy may result in immediate termination of your employment.

When employees use their own vehicle for miSci business, the employees' own insurance is primary for any damage to the vehicle or for any liability. When using an employee vehicle for miSci business, the employee must follow all state laws, including those relating to cell phone/smartphone use, seat belts and speed limits.

Employees may not use their own vehicles to transport customers of miSci, unless immediate transport is required by an emergency, and as authorized by the President or the manager in charge on an emergency basis.

Employees will be reimbursed for mileage based on the current federal rate.

## **J. CARE AND RETURN OF MISCI PROPERTY**

Employees are responsible for all miSci property and materials issued to them or in their possession or control. Employees must use reasonable effort to care for all miSci property, including equipment and facilities, and report damage or loss as soon as possible. Personal use of miSci equipment and property is prohibited without direct permission of your supervisor. Any shop equipment used by non-facility employees, must be signed out. Employees may be responsible for the cost of damaged or missing property that was under their control.

## **K. PETS**

Customers may not bring dogs or other pets onto miSci property, except for active service dogs or by prior arrangement with the President. Only approved service animals are allowed in the gallery with their owners. Staff may bring dogs to the museum with prior permission from the President, but no dogs are allowed in the exhibit galleries or collections and archives. Dogs on miSci property must be restrained at all times.

#### **L. DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE**

miSci does not tolerate the presence of illegal drugs or the illegal use of legal drugs in the workplace. Any employee involved in the unlawful use, purchase, sale, manufacturing dispensing or possession of controlled substances, illicit drugs, or alcohol on miSci premises, or working under the influence of such substances, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal and referral for prosecution. If you need to take a prescription drug that affects your ability to perform your job duties, discuss your condition and possible accommodations with your supervisor.

Consistent with its fair employment policy, miSci maintains a policy of nondiscrimination and reasonable accommodation with respect to recovering addicts and alcoholics and those having a medical history reflecting treatment for substance abuse conditions. We encourage employees to seek assistance before drug or alcohol use renders them unable to perform their essential job functions or jeopardized the health and safety of themselves or others. miSci will attempt to assist employees through referrals to rehabilitation, appropriate leaves of absence or other measures consistent with the museum's policies and applicable federal, state and local laws.

#### **M. SMOKING**

miSci is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for employees and visitors. Per New York State law, smoking is not permitted inside miSci or on the patio. Employees may only smoke in the back of the parking lot by the trash dumpsters. This includes, but is not limited to, e-cigarettes and tobacco products.

#### **N. FIREARMS AND WEAPONS**

Possession, use or sale of weapons, firearms, or explosives on work premises or while engaging in miSci business off-site is forbidden except where expressly authorized by miSci and permitted by state and local laws. Employees are prohibited from bringing firearms onto miSci property. This prohibition applies to the possession of all firearms, whether or not a lawful permit might have been issued for ownership, possession, or use. Employees who are aware of violations or threats of violations of this policy are required to report these violations to their supervisor immediately. Any violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **II. WORKPLACE SAFETY**

- A. Safety and Injuries
- B. Sickness at Work
- C. Emergency Response Guidelines
- D. Airborne Infectious Disease Plan
- E. Weather and Emergency Closing Procedures

### **A. SAFETY AND INJURIES**

Please do not hesitate to ask your supervisor about any part of your job that may seem hazardous or unfamiliar. All injuries to an employee or visitor should be reported to your supervisor and the President/Business Manager. If a guest is injured, offer first aid (bandages, ice pack, etc.), if applicable, and aid them in filling out an incident report. Incident reports should be filled out for any major injury. Insurance coverage may depend on proper reporting.

### **B. SICKNESS AT WORK**

Employees are expected to notify their supervisor if they have an illness or injury which interferes with their ability to work safely and productively or which may be contagious or present a threat to fellow employees or to miSci guests. Employees should make use of sick or other leave, if applicable, and request a modified schedule if necessary.

If you get sick while at work, tell your supervisor what is wrong, and he or she will assist you in getting proper aid and will arrange to get someone else to cover your duties if necessary.

All staff are required to have the COVID vaccine to ensure the safety of our guests.

### **C. EMERGENCY RESPONSE GUIDELINES**

All staff should review miSci Emergency Action Plan (see attached addendum) for guidance on responding to emergency situations.

### **D. AIRBORNE INFECTIOUS DISEASE PLAN**

As required by the Health and Essential Rights Act (HERO Act) of 2021, miSci has developed an Airborne Infectious Disease Plan. The airborne infectious disease exposure prevention plan must go into effect when an airborne infectious disease is designated by the New York State Commissioner of Health as a highly contagious communicable disease that presents a serious risk of harm to the public health. The purpose of the NY HERO Act is to protect employees against exposure and disease during a future airborne infectious disease outbreak. Should such a designation be made, and the airborne infectious disease plan be implemented, you will be notified by miSci's Safety Committee and your role in the plan will be explained.

### **E. WEATHER AND EMERGENCY CLOSING PROCEDURES**

Occasionally, miSci may delay openings, close early or be closed entirely due to weather or other emergency situations. Notification of these events will be made via TEAMS/phone/text tree. It is imperative that your supervisor has your cell phone or other contact number. Please make your supervisor aware of any changes to your number. If you do not have a contact number, you must give your supervisor another option to contact you, such as a personal email. Closings or delays will be made at the discretion of an executive staff member.

### **III. COMPENSATION AND WORKSCHEDULES**

- A. Paychecks
- B. Time Sheets
- C. Overtime for Hourly Employees
- D. Break Time

#### **DEFINITIONS**

##### *Hourly Employee*

An employee paid at a specific rate per hour for the number of hours worked each pay period. Hourly employees are paid one and half times their regular hourly rate for all hours worked over forty (40) hours per week. miSci workweek is Monday through Sunday.

##### *Salaried Employee*

At a fixed annual rate, an employee will be paid in twenty-six (26) pay periods. Employees in this category have work schedules that assume an average of forty (40) hours per week, are exempt from overtime requirements unless designated otherwise, and are not eligible for any extra pay if the job requires more than forty (40) hours per week.

#### **A. PAYCHECKS**

Payroll is processed on a biweekly schedule, resulting in twenty-six (26) pay periods per year. Paychecks are distributed every other Thursday. All employees should have direct deposit.

#### **B. TIME SHEETS**

miSci is required by law to maintain accurate records of the hours worked by all employees. Notify your supervisor immediately if you have any difficulty in recording your time or if you forget to record your time via the digital time clock. Under no circumstance should an employee punch in or out for another employee. Only supervisors or managers may change an employee's time sheet and notify the employee of the change. Violation of this requirement may result in disciplinary action.

#### **C. OVERTIME FOR HOURLY EMPLOYEES**

Hourly employees will receive "overtime" at one and a half times their regular hourly rate of pay for any time physically worked over forty (40) hours in a workweek. Non-working holidays and leaves of any type do not contribute toward the forty (40) hours used in calculating overtime. An employee may work overtime only with a supervisor's prior approval. Salaried employees do not receive overtime pay but may receive time off from their regular schedule to compensate for working an unusually busy schedule.

#### **D. BREAK TIME**

Employees who are scheduled to work a shift of six hours or more extending over a meal period are allowed a 30-minute break to eat. Other breaks may be given at the discretion of your supervisor. The usual practice for break periods is one (1) fifteen-minute break every four (4) hours worked, depending on workload, and these breaks are counted as time worked. Personal phone calls, emails, and guest visits should be limited to break periods and must not interfere with the work environment.

## IV. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

- A. Eligibility for Insurance and Related Benefits
- B. Group Health Insurance Plans
- C. Retirement Plan
- D. Holidays
- E. Vacation Time
- F. NY Paid Sick Leave
- G. Memberships

### DEFINITIONS

#### Full-time Employee

An employee assigned to work a usual schedule of forty (40) hours per week. "Full-time" status is based on the employee's normal assigned workload and is not affected by occasional furloughs due to fluctuations in business.

#### Part-time Employee

An employee assigned to work a usual schedule of fewer than thirty-five (35) hours per week. "Part-time" status is based on the employees' normal assigned workload, and part-time employees may occasionally work thirty-five (35) or more hours in a week.

#### Types of Employment

*Regular:* Employment of an indefinite duration or time period.

*Seasonal:* Positions with duties limited to a single program season (Summer and Break Week Classes, or On-Call).

### A. ELIGIBILITY FOR INSURANCE AND RELATED BENEFITS

miSci benefits are available to full-time regular employees, as follows:

- Regular employees who are employed full-time on a *salaried/exempt basis or hourly basis* are eligible for miSci's all group insurance plans, retirement plan, paid holidays, vacation, and sick leave.
- Out of State Remote employees who are employed full-time on a *salaried/exempt basis or hourly basis* are eligible for miSci's retirement plan, paid holidays, vacation, and sick leave. Out of State Remote employees are not eligible to participate in the group insurance plans and will be eligible to receive reimbursement for having coverage elsewhere.

Employees hired on a part-time, seasonal, or on-call basis are only eligible for NY Paid Sick Leave.

## **B. GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS**

The following list is intended as a summary only. The full details of our current group health insurance plans, including enrollment applications, descriptive brochures, and current monthly premium rates for all insurance options, are available from miSci's Business Manager. miSci reserves the right to change insurance carriers and to modify or discontinue any of the insurance offerings as needed, with or without notice.

Employees are responsible for notifying the Business Manager that they have elected to participate in benefit programs and for completing and submitting all necessary applications.

### Group Health Plan

- Waiting period: 1st day of the month following 60 days of continuous employment.
- Employee, employee and spouse, employee and child(ren), or family coverage is available.
- miSci will contribute 50 percent of Employee Only monthly premiums.
- miSci will reimburse Out of State Remote Employees up to a maximum of \$6,500 for having coverage elsewhere during the plan year March - February. To receive the reimburse, employees will be responsible for submitting proof of coverage and payments each month to miSci's Business Manager. Reimbursements will be considered taxable income for the employee in the calendar year in which it is paid.

### Dental Insurance

- Waiting period: 1st day of the month following 60 days of continuous employment.
- Employee, employee and spouse, employee and child(ren), or family coverage is available.
- miSci will contribute 50 percent of Employee Only monthly premiums.

### Vision Insurance

- Waiting period: 1st day of the month following 60 days of continuous employment.
- Employee, employee and spouse, employee and child(ren), or family coverage is available.
- miSci will contribute 100% of the monthly premiums.

### Life Insurance

- Waiting period: 12months
- Group term life insurance is available for only vice presidents and above equal to two times your estimated annual wage, rounded to the nearest thousand dollars.
- miSci will contribute 100% of the monthly premiums.

## **C. RETIREMENT PLAN**

- Waiting period: 1st day of the month following 30 days of continuous employment.
- miSci is considering other options beside the current TIAA Kref 403P
- miSci is currently not providing employer contributions.

**D. HOLIDAYS**

Holiday time is provided to all full-time and salaried employees. The holiday time calendar runs from March 1 to February 28 (or February 29 during a leap year) annually.

The following three days are observed as paid holidays for eligible employees who are employed on a full-time basis:

- New Year’s Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day
- plus, four floating holidays

Holiday time must be requested in writing four weeks in advance of anticipated time off to your immediate supervisor. Request forms are available in the Business Office. Please refer to your hire letter, as each department has “black-out days” where no time off will be permitted due to miSci’s busy seasons. Any unused holiday time as of Feb 28<sup>th</sup> will be forfeited.

If employment is terminated for any reason (including, but not limited to, voluntary resignation, involuntary termination, job elimination, or retirement), the employee will forfeit any unused holiday time, and holidays will not be paid out.

**E. VACATION TIME**

Vacation time is provided to all full-time and salaried employees. The vacation time calendar runs from March 1 to February 28 (or February 29 during a leap year) annually.

During the first year of employment, vacation will be given on a pro-rated basis based on the month you start.

*Full-time employee accrual is as follows:*

<b>Years of Service from Employment Date</b>	<b>Vacation Accrued</b>
2 Years or Less	2 Weeks
3 Years	3 Weeks
5 Years	4 Weeks

*Salaried employees:*

Vacation is determined at the time of hire but is not to exceed four (4) weeks.

Vacation time must be requested in writing four weeks in advance of anticipated time off to your immediate supervisor. Request forms are available in the Business Office. Please refer to your hire letter, as each department has “black-out days” where no time off will be permitted due to miSci’s busy seasons. Any unused vacation time as of Feb 28<sup>th</sup> will be forfeited.

If employment is terminated for any reason (including, but not limited to, voluntary resignation, involuntary termination, job elimination, or retirement), the employee will forfeit any unused vacation time, and vacation will not be paid out.

**F. NY PAID SICK LEAVE**

New York State requires employers of all sizes to provide a certain amount of paid or unpaid sick leave to be used for certain medical and employee safety-related reasons effective January 1, 2021.

All W-2 employees are eligible under this policy.

miSci will provide up to 40 hours per benefit year which runs from March 1 to February 28 (or February 29 during a leap year) annually. Unused time may be carried forward, however a maximum of 40 hours may be used in the benefit year. Employees may be eligible to use additional accrued sick leave with approval from the President and Business Manager.

Covered reasons for taking sick leave under the law include:

- the need for diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness or preventative care of the employee or the employee's family member; and
- certain needs related to the employee or the employee's family member being the victim of domestic violence, sexual offenses, stalking, or human trafficking, including obtaining services from a domestic violence shelter, rape crisis center, or other services program; participating in safety planning; temporarily or permanently relocating; meeting with an attorney or participating in legal proceedings; enrolling children in a new school; or taking other actions to increase the safety of the employee or employee's family members

For purposes of this leave, a "family member" includes an employee's child (including foster child, legal ward, or equivalent legal relationship), spouse, domestic partner, parent (including a step- or foster parent, legal guardian, or equivalent legal relationship), sibling, grandchild, grandparent, and the child or parent of an employee's spouse or domestic partner.

A doctor's note will be required after three (3) consecutive days of using sick days and for all successive days absent from miSci.

If employment is terminated for any reason (including, but not limited to, voluntary resignation, involuntary termination, job elimination, or retirement), the employee will forfeit any unused sick time, and sick leave will not be paid out.

#### **G. MEMBERSHIPS**

Employees, who work more than 20 hours per week will receive a miSci membership at a level that pertains to their family situation. All memberships include the standard membership perks, including a 10% discount in the gift shop.

## **V. LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

- A. Administrative Leave
- B. Jury Duty
- C. Voting
- D. New York Paid Family Leave (NYPFL)
- E. Unpaid Leave

### **A. ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE**

During administrative leave, an employee is temporarily relieved of duties. Administrative leave is granted solely at the discretion of miSci and may be granted for the benefit of the employee, or miSci, or both.

Depending upon the circumstances, administrative leave may be paid or unpaid; the employee may be required to first exhaust available vacation/sick leave; and the employee's position may or may not be held for reinstatement. When administrative leave is unpaid, employees who are participating in the group health plan will be responsible for paying the amount of the premium that would otherwise be deducted from their paycheck.

An employee's request for administrative leave should be submitted to the employee's supervisor in writing and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. When reviewing a request for leave, miSci may consider such factors as the employee's performance, responsibility level, length of service, the reason for the request, whether other employees are out on leave, and the potential impact of the leave on miSci business.

Failure to return to work at the agreed-upon date for conclusion of the leave period may be considered voluntary termination of employment.

### **B. JURY DUTY**

Employees are entitled to a leave of absence for any period of jury duty. If you are called for jury duty, you should notify your supervisor immediately of the anticipated dates of absence. A copy of the jury notice should be provided to the miSci Office.

Hourly employees serving on jury duty during assigned working hours are eligible to receive the first \$40 of their regular pay for any previously scheduled work during the first three days of jury duty, pursuant to New York law. Absence for jury duty exceeding three days shall be treated as unpaid leave, during which time employees may use accrued vacation time if they choose.

### **C. VOTING**

Employees are granted up to two hours of paid leave from work to vote during the time the polls are open unless the polls are open four or more hours prior to or after the employee's scheduled work time. Employees should give their supervisor at least two days' notice that leave under this policy is required.

**D. NEW YORK PAID FAMILY LEAVE (NYPFL)**

New York’s Paid Family Leave provides job-protected, paid time off so you can:

- Bond with a newly born, adopted or fostered child,
- Care for a close relative with a serious health condition, or
- Assist with family situations when a family member is deployed abroad on active military service.

You can continue your health insurance while on leave and are guaranteed the same or comparable job after your leave ends. If you contribute to the cost of your health insurance, you must continue to pay your portion of the premium cost while on Paid Family Leave.

Before receiving benefits, workers must serve a seven-day non-payable waiting period. PFL cannot be used if the employee receives full pay, performs any work or is receiving Disability or Worker’s Compensation.

Please contact miSci’s Business Manager for assistance with the request process.

**E. UNPAID LEAVE**

In addition, miSci follows federal and state law with regard to providing leave for donation of blood and bone marrow; participation in legal proceedings; and leave for military personnel and their spouses. Please check with the miSci Business Office for a complete description of available, unpaid leave.

During approved unpaid leave, employees will not receive their regular pay. Exempt, salaried employees, however, may be provided time off with pay when necessary to comply with state and federal wage and hour laws. Employees who are participating in the group health plan will be responsible for paying the amount of the premium that would otherwise be deducted from their paycheck, if their paycheck is insufficient to cover their premium deduction due to a period of leave. Employees will not be paid for any unused available unpaid leave on termination of employment.

## **VI. EMPLOYMENT GUIDELINES**

- A. Employment At Will
- B. Background Checks
- C. Job Performance Evaluation
- D. Fraternalization and Relationships in the Workplace
- E. Disciplinary Action and Involuntary Termination of Employment
- F. Resignation
- G. References

### **A. EMPLOYMENT AT WILL**

Although we hope your employment relationship with miSci will be long term, the museum hires with the clear understanding that the period of employment is not for a guaranteed length of time, and that employment may be terminated at the will of the employee or miSci, with or without notice or cause. Nothing contained in this handbook shall create an express or implied contract of employment or an employment relationship on other than an “at-will” basis.

### **B. BACKGROUND CHECKS**

Because miSci hosts school groups and runs daylong programs for children at its facility, it is our policy to conduct a criminal background check on prospective employees and consultants who are 21 years old or older, who will work onsite on a regular basis, as a condition of employment or hire. Background checks may also be conducted on current employees as a condition of continued employment if a substantial amount of time has passed since the prior check. In conducting a background check, miSci does not consider arrest information that has not resulted in a conviction and considers only those offenses which have a direct bearing on the employee’s fitness or ability to perform his or her job or which indicate that continued employment would present an unreasonable risk to property or to the safety or welfare of others.

The information provided by employees and the result of the background check are used exclusively for the purpose of determining suitability for employment or hire, are kept confidential to the extent permitted by law, and are accessible only to select individuals on a strictly “need to know” basis.

### **C. JOB PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

Supervisors and employees are encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis. It is the goal of miSci to conduct formal performance evaluations at least once each year to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, encourage and recognize strengths, identify areas for improvement or development, clarify expectations, and discuss positive approaches for meeting goals. Any suggestions you have to improve your job effectiveness or job satisfaction, and any concerns you have, should be discussed with your supervisor.

**D. FRATERNIZATION AND RELATIONSHIPS IN THE WORKPLACE**

Intimate or family relationships between co-workers may cause issues or distractions in the workplace, whether the relationships are new or already established. Couples and family members must make every effort to be sensitive to this potential issue and be responsive to concerns raised by peers or supervisors.

Couples and family members may be hired separately but find themselves working together. If the highest level of professional performance is not maintained, miSci reserves the right to intervene and correct any problem with reassignments, modified schedules, or disciplinary action if appropriate.

miSci discourages supervision of employees by an immediate family member, or by someone with whom the employee has an intimate relationship. The nature of any such relationship between an employee and a supervisor must be disclosed to miSci's President. miSci reserves the right to reassign employees, modify schedules, or to take any other action it deems appropriate and necessary to uphold this policy.

**E. DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

Each employee is responsible for the duties in a written job description for his or her position, and for demonstrating continuing satisfactory performance on the job.

miSci reserves the right to discipline employees, at its discretion and as it sees fit, for performance-related problems, for violations of miSci rules and policies (including policies contained in this Handbook), for any conduct that interferes with or adversely affects the workplace (including insubordination, dishonesty, theft, or other intentional misconduct), and for behavior that miSci deems unacceptable. Involuntary termination for intentional misconduct is a basis for an employee to be designated as ineligible for rehire.

Examples of potential corrective and disciplinary actions include oral warnings, written warnings, and termination of employment. This list of potential disciplinary actions is non-exhaustive, and determinations as to the type of disciplinary action to be taken are within the sole discretion of the miSci and will be based on the particular circumstances at issue. miSci may use disciplinary measures to address performance-related issues in a progressive and corrective manner when appropriate, to encourage employees to improve their performance so that they may continue their employment with miSci. However, corrective measures will not be used where miSci, in its sole discretion, determines that the circumstances warrant termination.

**F. RESIGNATION**

A written notice of two (2) weeks is requested if you resign. Employers checking references often ask if the person they are considering gave adequate notice.

This courtesy allows for continuity in staffing and assures you that final payment for all moneys due will be paid in a timely manner. It also permits time for processing changes in insurance coverage if the COBRA option is desired. Failure to give notice of termination is a basis for an employee to be designated as ineligible for rehire.

You may be asked for or request an exit interview when your employment concludes.

## **G. REFERENCES**

In order to protect the privacy of miSci staff members, employees should refrain from providing information about other miSci employees to outside entities. Inquiries about current or former employees of miSci should be directed to the Business Manager, and in response to inquiries it is miSci's policy to disclose only dates of employment, positions held, rate of pay, and whether a former employee is eligible for rehire.

## **VII. FAIR WORKPLACE POLICIES**

- A. Equal Employment Opportunity Statement
- B. Policy Against Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment
- C. Responsibility of Supervisors and Management
- D. Complaints and Investigations
  - a. *Complaints*
  - b. *Investigation Procedures*
- E. Whistleblower Policy
- F. Protection From Retaliation

### **A. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT**

miSci recruits, hires, retains, promotes, terminates, and otherwise treats all employees and job applicants without regard to the individual's age; disability; race/color; religion; gender; military status; national origin; sexual orientation; predisposing genetic characteristic; marital status; domestic violence victim status, or any other characteristic protected by state, federal or local law. Equal employment opportunity will be extended to all qualified individuals in all aspects of the employer-employee relationship, including training, promotion, transfer, layoff, recall and termination. miSci will provide reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified disabled employee or applicant.

### **B. POLICY AGAINST WORKPLACE VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

It is the goal of miSci to maintain a work environment free from bullying, threats, or violent acts. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to: intimidating, threatening or hostile behaviors; physical/verbal abuse; vandalism; arson; sabotage; use of weapons; carrying weapons onto our premises; or any act, that in management's opinion, which interferes with maintaining a professional, courteous, or safe workplace. In addition, bizarre and offensive comments regarding violent events and/or behavior will not be tolerated.

miSci is committed to providing a workplace free from discrimination and harassment. This policy prohibits harassment, as well as offering or denying benefits of employment, based on any characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.

“Harassment” includes communicating, sharing, or displaying written or visual material or making verbal comments or engaging in any other conduct which is demeaning, derogatory or intimidating to a person, including conduct intended as humor. The use of misci facilities, property, or equipment to disseminate, duplicate or display such materials is prohibited. miSci prohibits harassment of its employees by anyone, including supervisors, co-workers, and customers.

Sexual harassment includes making unwelcome or unwanted sexual advances, requesting sexual favors in exchange for favorable treatment or continued employment, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which is made a condition of employment. Sexual harassment also includes any type of sexually-oriented conduct, including conduct intended to be friendly or humorous, which is unwelcome and unreasonably interferes with an employee’s work performance, or creates a work environment that is intimidating, hostile, offensive or coercive. Sexual harassment is not limited to male-female interaction but may involve male-male interaction or female-female interaction.

### **C. RESPONSIBILITY OF SUPERVISORS AND MANAGEMENT**

Every supervisor and manager are responsible for promoting a workplace free from intimidation, discrimination and harassment and ensuring that those under his or her supervision are aware of miSci’s policies. This responsibility to eliminate discrimination and harassment is an important part of supervisory and managerial performance evaluations, and disciplinary measures may be taken against supervisors and managers who knowingly allow a violation of these policies to continue.

Any supervisor or management personnel who learns of or suspects a violation of miSci’s discrimination or harassment policies must give immediate attention to the situation by notifying the President, Business Manager, or the miSci Board.

### **D. COMPLAINTS AND INVESTIGATIONS**

#### *Complaints*

If you believe a decision affecting the terms and conditions of your employment is discriminatory, or that you are being subject to bullying or harassment, notify your supervisor, miSci’s Business Manager or President.

The line between acceptable social conduct and harassment is not always clear. For that reason, if you feel you are being harassed, you are encouraged first to tell the offending party that the conduct is unwelcome, unwanted, offensive, intimidating or embarrassing, explain how the offensive behavior affects your work, and ask that the conduct stop. If you are uncomfortable with taking direct action, or have done so but the conduct has not stopped, contact your supervisor, miSci’s Business Manager or President.

#### *Investigation procedures*

The policy of miSci is to investigate complaints promptly and to take appropriate remedial action. All employees are required to cooperate in any investigation by or on behalf of miSci.

The investigator may ask the individual complainant to provide details such as the identity of the alleged offending party and the date(s), location(s), and nature of the alleged misconduct. As soon as possible thereafter, the investigator may meet individually with the alleged offending party to inform him or her of the substance of the complaint and provide him or her with an opportunity to respond. If there is a significant dispute of fact, the investigator may give each party an opportunity to identify persons who can support or corroborate his or her version of the facts. The investigator may also investigate the matter further by contacting other individuals whom the investigator feels may have additional information regarding the issues raised in the complaint.

The matter under investigation will be handled with as much confidentiality as possible under the circumstances, and with due regard to the rights and wishes of all parties. Please note that miSci has an obligation to respond appropriately to allegations of misconduct and may be required to investigate a complaint even if the employee who raises the complaint wishes to remain anonymous.

If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, miSci will take prompt corrective action designed to remedy any discrimination or to stop the harassment and to prevent its recurrence. Such action may include discipline up to and including termination from employment.

Termination of employment for conduct in violation of miSci's fair workplace policy is a basis for an employee to be designated as ineligible for rehire. In addition, miSci will endeavor to prevent the harassment of its employees by persons who do not work for but are on the premises or doing business with or for miSci.

The complaining employee will be notified when the investigation is completed and will be encouraged, through follow-up contacts, to report further incidents.

#### **E. WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY**

miSci is committed to maintaining a work environment where employees and other staff, including directors and officers, are free to raise good faith concerns regarding potential wrongdoing and to report suspected violations of law or of miSci's policies.

It is the responsibility of all employees and staff to comply with this policy and to report suspected violations when they arise.

Any person may report allegations of suspected illegal activities or policy violations. Allegations should be made in writing so as to convey a clear understanding of the issue(s) raised. Reports should be factual and contain as much specific information as possible to facilitate inquiry and investigation.

Every effort will be made to protect the reporting individual's identity. Allegations also may be reported anonymously. However, this policy encourages reporting individuals to put their names to allegations because appropriate follow-up questions and investigation may not be possible, or may be impaired, unless the source of the information is identified.

Ordinarily, reports should be made as follows:

- Reports from employees or other staff (including volunteers) should be made to the reporting individual's immediate supervisor or other appropriate administrator; and
- Reports from directors should be made to the chair of the board of directors.

If these reporting relationships are impractical or inappropriate under the circumstances, then reports may be made to another individual whom the reporting individual reasonably expects to have the authority to review the alleged activity or violation on behalf of miSci, such as the President or Business Manager.

The action taken will depend on the nature of the concern expressed in the report. Initial inquiries will be made to determine whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, the form it should take. Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation.

#### **F. PROTECTION FROM RETALIATION**

miSci prohibits any form of retaliation, including harassment, intimidation, or adverse employment action, against any employee who, in good faith, raises a complaint of discrimination or harassment, raises a suspected violation of law or policy, or cooperates in any investigation of a complaint. Any director, officer or employee who engages in retaliation will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination or removal.

Malicious and untrue allegations may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination or removal.

Any individual who believes that he or she has been subjected to, or affected by, retaliatory conduct for raising a complaint should report such conduct in the same manner as for any other violations of miSci's fair workplace policies.