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**October 26, 2012**

Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC

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Welcome to Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC

Dear Employee:

Congratulations on your employment with Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC. You have joined a team that is committed to providing excellent patient care in a professional environment. As a Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC employee you have the opportunity to make a difference every day by providing efficient, effective and quality services and ensuring excellence at all levels.

In order to have a successful work environment, it is essential for you to have a clear understanding of the rights, responsibilities, policies and benefits that govern our workplace. The Employee Handbook along with your job description provides you with the framework for success. It is important for you to be familiar with the information in this handbook, so please review it carefully.

This handbook is not intended to address every detail about employment with Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC. However, it does provide a comprehensive overview and serves as a useful guide. Your supervisor and the human resources contact person can provide additional details and assistance relating to your employment, should you have further questions.

Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC is faced with many opportunities as we move into the future with a changing environment in healthcare. Only through the commitment, dedication and hard work of our employees will we be able to meet these challenges. I wish you success in your new position and hope you will enjoy a long and rewarding stay with Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC

*Brett Gerwin, MD*

Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC

**Introduction**

The employee handbook provides a ready reference for new and experienced Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC employees when questions arise relating to the terms and conditions of employment. Because of limitations of space, this handbook provides an abbreviated version (in some instances) of the rules, policies and benefits that govern our work place.

This handbook is for informational purposes only and it ***does not constitute a contract with the employees of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC or in any manner change the employment at will status*.**

If you have questions regarding any of the policies, rules, or benefits covered in this handbook, you are encouraged to contact your supervisor or human resources representative. The information in the handbook is current as of the publication date and no handbook supersedes it, but is subject to change as policies, rules, and benefits are added, deleted or modified.

About Our Company

Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC was established in 2012 with a vision to provide the highest standard of care to patients with diseases of the retina and vitreous and tumors of the eye and ocular adnexa. The founder of our company, Brett Gerwin, MD, is a medical doctor specializing in ophthalmology and eye surgery. He has additional specialization in the areas of vitreoretinal medicine and surgery, ocular trauma, as well as ophthalmic oncology. Providing the best possible medical and surgical care is the top priority of the practice. However, our founder and company are committed to education and research. Therefore, during your employment you may be involved in the education of other doctors, medical students, residents, or other healthcare professionals. You may also be involved in research projects or clinical trials.

Many of the patients cared for at Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC have very complicated health problems. Their diseases may or may not be limited to the eye, and in some cases, may threaten their life. Most of our patients have previously seen other medical doctors or optometrists and are referred in for specialized care. Therefore, our desire is not only to have satisfied patients, but satisfied referring doctors. The practice is largely dependent on referrals from other doctors and maintaining and growing these referral relationships is of utmost importance. Being easily reachable and available is crucial as we wish to offer the most accessible vitreoretinal & ophthalmic oncology services in the region.

Teamwork and maintaining a positive attitude and cheerful work environment are necessary to provide for the delivery of the highest quality medical care. Attention to detail cannot be stressed enough. All interactions with patients, family members, staff, or outside doctors should be done in a pleasant and inviting yet efficient manner. Each patient should be treated with kindness, dignity, and respect.

EEOC Policy

We are an equal opportunity employer. As such, every individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. We expect that all relationships among employees will be business-like and free from bias, prejudice, and harassment. It is our policy to ensure that all employment decisions, including hiring, termination, promotion, compensation, hours worked, lay-off and participation in benefit programs will be administered without regard to an employee or applicant’s race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, citizenship, national origin, or veteran status.

**Confidentiality Agreement**

The nature of services provided by Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC requires information to be handled in a private, confidential manner. Information about our business or our employees or patients will only be released to individuals or other companies outside of RST with our prior approval and written consent. Violation of this confidentiality agreement may result in disciplinary action, termination of employment, and/or legal action. A confidentiality agreement and maintaining strict confidentiality of information regarding all aspects of the business is a condition of employment with RST.

Patient consent is required for the release of confidential medical information and only to those parties designated by the patient or the patient's legal guardian or representative. Following legal or regulatory guidelines provide the only exceptions to this policy. All reports, memoranda, notes or other documents will remain part of RST confidential records.

The names, addresses, phone numbers, or salaries of our employees will only be released to people authorized by the nature of their duties to receive such information and only with the consent of management. You will be asked to sign the last page of this handbook as acknowledgment of understanding our confidentiality agreement.

**Employment**

**Proof of U. S. Citizenship and/or Right to Work**

Federal regulations require:

* Before becoming employed, all applicants must complete and sign Federal I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification Form
* All applicants who are hired must present documents of identity and eligibility to work in the United States.

At Will Employment

Employment with Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC shall be considered to be on an employment at will basis. That means that employment is for no definite period of time and that either you or the Company may terminate the employment relationship at any time with or without cause without incurring any liability to the other party.

**Outside Employment**

Outside employment may not interfere with normal work responsibilities of our practice. An employee is prohibited from spending time at work involved in activities that involve a second job or other personal interests. An employee will not be permitted to work on an outside job which requires use of company equipment or company facilities. Employees taking a leave of absence, if offered (except military leave), will not be permitted to work for another employer during such leave, and if they are found to do so, will be deemed to have resigned their employment with our company.

**90 Day Trial Period**

Your first ninety (90) days of employment at Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC are considered an introductory period. During such period you will not accrue benefits except length of service. This introductory period will be a time for getting to know your fellow employees and the tasks involved in your job position, as well as becoming familiar with Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC services.

This introductory period is a trial period for both you as an employee and Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC as an employer to determine the suitability of continued employment. During this introductory period, Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC will evaluate your suitability for employment, and you can evaluate us as well. At any time during these first ninety 90 days, you may resign without any detriment to your record. If during this period your work habits, attitude, attendance, or performance do not measure up to our standards, you may be terminated. If you take more than five workdays of approved time off during the introductory period, the introductory period may be extended.

You will be given an evaluation at the end of your 90-day trial period. During the course of the discussion, you are encouraged to express your honest opinion as to any matters of concern or suggestions for improvement.

Please understand that completion of the 90-day trial period does not guarantee continued employment for any specified period of time, nor does it require that an employee be discharged only for "cause". A former employee who has been rehired is considered a new employee, and therefore the introductory period discussed above is applicable

**Employee Classifications**

At the time of hire, you are classified as a full-time, part-time, or temporary employee and are advised as to whether you qualify for overtime compensation. Unless otherwise specified, the benefits described in this Employee Handbook apply only to regular full-time employees. If you are unsure of your job classification, please ask your supervisor for clarification.

**Regular Full Time Employees**

An employee who has successfully completed the 90 day trial period of employment and regularly works over thirty (30) hours per week is considered a regular full-time employee.

**Regular Part Time Employees**

An employee who works thirty (30) hours per week or less, is considered a regular part-time employee. If you are a part-time employee, you are not eligible for benefits described in this Employee Handbook, except as granted on occasion, or to the extent required by law.

**Temporary Employees**

Occasionally, Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC may hire employees for specific periods or for the completion of a specific project or set of projects. An employee hired under these conditions is considered a temporary employee. The job assignment, work schedule, and duration of the position will be determined on an individual basis. Normally, a temporary position will not exceed six (6) months in duration, unless specifically extended. If you are a temporary employee, you are not eligible for benefits described in this Employee Handbook except as granted on occasion or to the extent required by provisions of state and federal laws.

**"Non-Exempt" Employees** (Hourly Employees)

Hourly employees are those employees whose positions are covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and are paid on an hourly basis. These employees are paid overtime at a rate of one and one-half hours for each hour worked in excess of forty hours in a given forty-hour work week. Our work week is Monday through Sunday.

“Exempt” Employees

Exempt employees are supervisors, executives, professional staff, technical staff, officers, directors, owners, and others whose duties and responsibilities allow them to be "exempt" from overtime pay provisions as provided by the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act and any applicable state laws. If you are an exempt employee, you will be advised that you are in this classification at the time you are hired, transferred, or promoted.

**Job Descriptions**

We maintain a job description for each position at Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC. You will be given a copy of your job description and it will be reviewed with you after you are hired. From time to time, you may be assigned duties and responsibilities outside of your usual duties and responsibilities. Furthermore, you should consider being able to help cover and perform the responsibilities and duties of other employees whether they are present or absent as part of your job description.

**Timekeeping and Payroll**

**Work Hours & Work Week**

Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC regular office hours are from 8:00 AM. to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Clinics will be scheduled on Saturdays and employees will be notified in advance of this.

 Everyone is expected to be at work on time each day. If you are late, someone else will have to perform your duties. Although we try to close the office on time, patient demands and your own job responsibilities occasionally require the need to stay late or begin early. When these occasions arise, we expect you to perform your job responsibilities as required. Everyone is expected to take a lunch break depending on patient workload. Employees may not schedule their time so that they work straight through lunch without a lunch break. Everyone will be required to keep an accurate record of their hours worked. Depending on the employee and office, actual hours worked each day may be listed on a time sheet or logged into a computer or other timekeeping device. All hours missed must be made up during the same workweek unless a specific exception is made.

**Attendance and Punctuality**

Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC expects all employees to conduct themselves in a professional manner during their employment. This includes practicing good attendance habits. All employees should regard coming to work on time, working their shift as scheduled, and leaving at the scheduled time (unless asked to stay as noted above) as essential functions of their jobs. Good attendance habits form an integral part of every employee's job description.

Among other things, "good attendance habits" mean the following:

* Appearing for work no sooner than 10 minutes prior to the start of the shift and no later than the start of the shift;
* Being at your work station ready for work by the start of the shift;
* Remaining at your work station unless the needs of the job require being elsewhere, except during authorized breaks (including restroom breaks);
* Taking only the time normally allowed for breaks;
* Remaining at work during your entire shift, unless excused by a supervisor;
* Not leaving work until the scheduled end of your shift, unless excused by a supervisor;
* Leaving promptly at the end of your shift, unless you have been given advance permission from your supervisor to work past that point; and
* Calling in and personally notifying your supervisor or another member of management if you are going to be either absent or tardy, unless a verifiable emergency makes it impossible for you to do so (see "Notice of Absence or Tardiness" below for details).

**Notice of Absence or Tardiness**

Under some circumstances, absence or tardiness on your part may be excused, but only if you give proper notice of such a problem before the start of your shift. Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC needs advance notice of attendance problems so that other arrangements can be made to cover your absence, if necessary. "Proper notice" means that you call RST prior to the start of your shift and personally notify your supervisor or another member of management about the problem, unless a verifiable emergency makes it impossible for you to do so. It is not sufficient to call in and leave a message with a coworker or someone else that is not in a supervisory position. Office staff have been instructed to route all such calls to supervisory personnel. All supervisors and managers have been advised to make themselves available to take calls such as these. If you fail to give proper notice of attendance problems in advance as explained in this policy, you may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and possibly including discharge. Sending an email or text message is not adequate.

If you are absent without notice for three days in a row, you will be considered as having abandoned your job, and we will process your work separation as a voluntary resignation on your part.

**Notice of planned Absences**

When planning an absence from work (vacation or medical appointments, for example), the employee must notify his or her immediate supervisor and obtain advanced approval for the absence. When advance notice is not possible (because of sudden illness or emergency), the employee must call his or her immediate supervisor on the day of absence and give the reason for the absence and the projected date of return to work. Employees who are physically unable to personally contact their supervisors should have someone else call the supervisor for them

**Additional Attendance Policies**

You are expected to be at your work area and ready to work at the beginning of your assigned daily work hours at the specified location. You are also expected to maintain responsibility for your duties until the end of your assigned work hours, except for approved breaks and lunch. When your work takes you away from your work station, please let appropriate parties know where you are going and how long you expect to be gone. Be aware that excessive time away could lead to disciplinary action.

From time to time, it may be necessary for you to be absent from work. We understand that emergencies, illnesses, or pressing personal business which cannot be scheduled outside your work hours may arise. If you know in advance that you will need to be absent, you are required to request this time off directly from your supervisor. If you are unable to report to work or if you will arrive late, please contact your supervisor directly. When your supervisor is unavailable, please make all efforts to let your supervisor know of your situation via indirect methods. Notifying the receptionist or a fellow employee is not sufficient. You are still required to speak with your supervisor during the day. It is very important to maintain good communication whenever there is lost time, regardless of the reason.

When you call in to inform us of an unexpected absence or late arrival, give your supervisor as much time as possible, but no later than half an hour before the start of work that day, to arrange for someone else to cover your position until you arrive. For late arrivals, please indicate when you expect to arrive for work. If you are unable to call in because of an illness, emergency, or for some other reason, have someone call on your behalf.

Be aware that excessive absenteeism, tardiness, or leaving early may lead to disciplinary action, including possible dismissal. In general, three (3) absences or tardy arrivals in a 90-day period, or a consistent pattern of absence or tardiness, may be considered excessive, and the reasons for the absences or tardy arrivals may come under question. Tardiness or leaving early is as detrimental to Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC as an absence. Three (3) such incidents in a 90-day period will be considered a "tardiness pattern" and will count the same weight as an absence. Other factors, like the degree of tardiness, may be considered.

**Breaks and Lunch**

To promote an effective and productive workplace, each employee working over four (4) hours in a given day is allowed to take a 10 minute break. The company recognizes that there may be circumstances at times, such as a critical deadline for a project, a busy clinic, or emergency, which dictate working through breaks. However, such situations should be on a limited and isolated basis. This maintains the integrity of this policy, which is intended to promote a psychologically and physically healthy workplace.

If you work longer than six (6) hours, you will be given an unpaid rest break or meal period of a minimum thirty (30) minutes and expected to take that full time for lunch. The time when lunch periods are scheduled varies among departments, depending on the needs of each department. Your supervisor will give you your lunch period schedule.

You are requested not to perform any work during your regularly scheduled lunch period, unless specifically requested to do so by your supervisor. In such event, your lunch time will be rescheduled. You may not "work through lunch" in order to arrive late, to leave early, or to work extra time, unless this schedule change has been previously approved by your supervisor.

**Compensation and Pay Practices**

Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC maintains job classification and pay grade structures consistent with its equal opportunity philosophy. Compensation is based on the nature of the employee’s job, required qualifications, training and experience, individual performance, the financial resources of the company, external job market, and other relevant factors. Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC has established and continues to review positions, salary ranges, and rates of pay within these ranges.

**Pay Day**

Regular non-exempt employees are paid biweekly. The biweekly pay period is based on two consecutive workweeks. Pay day is on a Friday for the previous two weeks. Exempt employees are paid monthly. The monthly pay period begins on the first day of the month and ends on the final day of the month. Monthly salaries are paid on the final working day of the month.

**On-Call Policy**

Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC on-call policy applies to non-exempt employees only. The following guidelines apply:

* An employee assigned to on-call status shall receive compensation in the amount of $24 per day, plus appropriate wages for all hours worked. On-call pay shall be included in the computation for overtime wages.
* The employee must be accessible at all times and must immediately notify his/her supervisor if inaccessible. If inaccessible, on-call pay shall be forfeited.
* An employee cannot be designated on-call for more than seven consecutive days, however he/she may be on-call for 24 hours on each of those days.
* An employee who is assigned to on-call status and cannot be reached within 20 minutes of being contacted or does not report within one hour of being directed, may face disciplinary action and shall not receive on-call pay for that day
* An otherwise eligible employee will not receive on-call compensation if performance of the duties is an extension of the regular workday or workweek.
* Essential employees are not automatically assigned to on-call status.
* On-call assignments will be allocated among eligible employees on a rotating basis.

**Payroll Deductions and Garnishments**

It is the policy of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC to comply with applicable laws with respect to the payment of wages and benefits to employees, including the Fair Labor Standards Act, as amended. We will not make pay deductions that violate either federal or state law. If an employee believes that the company has made an improper deduction, the employee should notify his/her supervisor or the Human Resources Representative. Reports of improper deductions will be promptly investigated. If it is determined that an improper deduction has occurred, the employee will be promptly reimbursed.

If a court orders a garnishment against an employee’s wages, Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC will comply with the order and deduct appropriate payments from wages earned as designated by the garnishment notice.

**Employee conduct and General Policies**

**Personal Use of Company Equipment and Property**

Personal use of the company property is at the discretion of the owner. You must have written permission before removing the equipment or tools from Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC property. You understand and agree that Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC is not responsible for personal injury incurred during the use of our property for personal projects. As an employee of RST, you accept full responsibility for all liabilities for injuries or losses that occur or for the malfunction of equipment. You are responsible for returning the equipment or tools in the same condition as they were at the time you began using them at work or at the time that you removed them from RST premises. Furthermore, you agree that you are required to pay for any damages or loss that occur while using the equipment, tools, or RST owned vehicles for personal uses.

**Reimbursements**

You must get authorization from your supervisor before incurring an expense on behalf of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC. To be reimbursed for all authorized expenses, you must submit an expense report accompanied by receipts and have it approved by your supervisor.

If you conduct company business using your personal vehicle, you will be reimbursed at a rate within that approved by the IRS. Please submit this expense on your monthly expense report. All mileage records must include beginning and ending odometer readings as well as an account of destinations travelled. Should you be required to make an overnight trip on company business, you should contact the corporate office for coordination of reservations and an advance, should that be appropriate. Meals and entertainment for customers incurred during said trip shall be reimbursed as any other approved customer related expense incurred by the employee.

All expense reports are due on the second working day of each month for the previous month. This should include the expense report, the mileage and travel log, and all receipts identified by a number corresponding to that which identifies the receipt on the expense report.

**Weather Policy**

It is the intent of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC to be open and provide work for any employee willing to and reporting to work during periods of inclement weather. During such periods, each employee should evaluate the weather conditions in his or her community and make a responsible decision regarding his or her ability to arrive safely at work.

Because of the nature of our business, our practice is called upon to be available 24hours a day, seven days a week. In order to facilitate this 24 hour operation, certain employees may be designated as “emergency employees”. These designated employees must report to work as scheduled at all times, or as directed, regardless of inclement weather or other adverse conditions.

When conditions dictate, Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC may modify the normal work schedule of employees not designated as “emergency employees” by permitting early departures from work, by excusing late arrivals to work, by permitting the discretionary use of paid leave, or by closing the facility in part or entirely.

If severe weather conditions exist and management of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC decides to close Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC for the remainder of the day and/or subsequent days, you will be notified as soon as possible by your supervisor. If you are sent home, you may be paid for the day depending on the circumstances.

In the event of inclement weather, please call your supervisor for instructions on whether we are open.

**Notice of Legal Matters**

Any employee who is contacted by a member of federal, state or local law enforcement or a private attorney or firm regarding a legal or judicial matter which involves or could involve the Practice should notify the Owner or Administrator about the matter as soon as possible. Employees should not provide information to any governmental agency, outside lawyer or firm, or law enforcement official without first notifying management of the request for information.

**Standards of Conduct**

The work rules and standards of conduct for Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC are important, and the Company regards them seriously. All employees are urged to become familiar with these rules and standards. In addition, employees are expected to follow the rules and standards faithfully in doing their own jobs and conducting the Company’s business. Please note that any employee who deviates from these rules and standards will be subject to corrective action, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

While not intended to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace, the following are examples of rule infractions or misconduct that may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

* Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property.
* Falsification of company records including timekeeping records.
* Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
* Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace.
* Distribution, sale, transfer, misuse, or abuse of prescription medications in the workplace.
* Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace.
* Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace.
* Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of company-owned or client-owned property.
* Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct.
* Violation of safety or health rules.
* Smoking in the workplace.
* Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment.
* Excessive absenteeism, tardiness, or any absence without notice.
* Unauthorized use of telephones, or other company-owned equipment.
* Using company equipment for purposes other than business (i.e. playing games on computers or personal Internet usage).
* Unauthorized disclosure of business “secrets” or confidential information such as business practices, business operations, treatment methods, trade secrets, patient lists, patient volume, practice methods, financial status, etc.
* Violation of personnel policies.
* Unsatisfactory performance or conduct.
* Solicitation of other employees during work time
* Distribution of literature in work areas or during work time.
* Making a false statement to avoid application of a work rule.
* Sleeping on the job.

**Termination/Severance Pay**

Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC does not provide severance pay. When you leave Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC you will be paid for actual time worked.

**Dress Code**

Employees are expected to dress and groom themselves in accordance with accepted social and business standards. Each supervisor is responsible for establishing a reasonable dress code appropriate to the job you perform. However, dresses that are low cut in front, with bare backs, or exposed shoulders are not appropriate. Men's undershirts, t-shirts, or shorts for men or women are not appropriate in the office areas. Undergarments should not be visible. Examples of professional clothing for men include slacks or dress pants with either a button-down or polo style collared shirt. For women, a blouse or shirt, excluding those that are low-cut in front, and either long pants or a skirt that extends no higher than the knees. Scrubs are acceptable for both men and women. Solid colors are preferred. Uniforms may be implemented in the future. Open toe shoes are not permitted. Clothing should be professional in appearance, free from stains, clean and without odor. Clothing should be free from advertising or slogans, pictures or distasteful illustrations or logos.

Employees are not permitted to have visible tattoos. Employees are not permitted to wear jewelry such as "body piercings" with few exceptions. Unacceptable jewelry includes jewelry or "piercings" in the nose, ears (women may wear no more than two earrings per ear), lip, eyebrow or other visible locations. Acceptable jewelry includes wristwatches, rings (such as class rings and decorative rings, wedding or engagement rings), bracelets, and necklaces. An excessive amount of jewelry is not permitted. Jewelry that is distasteful in appearance is not permitted. Any question regarding acceptable jewelry should be directed to your supervisor.

A neat and tasteful appearance contributes to the positive impression you make on our customers and patients. You are to be suitably attired and groomed during working hours or when representing Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC at any time. When working at a customer's work site, please observe what the customer is wearing and dress appropriately. When at a customer's work site, you are expected to comply with their established dress codes. This would include prohibitions on open-toed shoes or bare legs as well as compliance with requirements for safety glasses, gowns, gloves, respirators, or other safety equipment as applicable. No hats, shirts, sweatshirts, jackets, or other clothing is to be worn that has writing or advertising on the clothing.

If your supervisor feels your attire is out of place, you may be asked to leave your workplace until you are properly attired. You will not be paid for the time you are off the job for this purpose. Your supervisor has the authorization to determine an appropriate dress code, and anyone who violates this standard will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

**Phone Usage Policy**

Phone lines are an important resource in the performance of our business. It is extremely important that efficiency be maximized in the usage of our phone systems. Each employee should be aware of the number of lines available in their office and work to assure that phone lines remain available for the business purposes of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC. Though we should never be rude to patients, doctors, clients, or applicants, phone calls should be kept as short as possible and to the point.

Please keep all personal telephone calls to a minimum. They must not interfere with your work or restrict your fellow employees from access to necessary resources (phone lines). You are permitted to make limited local calls on company telephones for essential personal business during break times. Please do not abuse this privilege. Emergency calls may be made at any time. Should you need to place a personal long distance call, you may be asked to reimburse the company for the expenses of those calls. This would usually be done as a deduction from your monthly expense check.

**Cell Phone, Text Messaging, and PDA/Tablet Computer Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to prevent disruption of workplace productivity and eliminate potentially unsafe conditions that cell phone and personal electronic device usage could create. This policy is not applicable to company approved or issued cell phones or devices while on the company premises.

This policy is also not applicable to suppliers, sales representatives, and contractors whose work brings them into our business operations.

Cellular phones, PDAs, and other electronic computing devices may only be used for personal uses during employees’ break and lunch time provided their use does not create a safety hazard such as using the device while walking or disrupting/interfering with work time of others. Otherwise, such devices must be turned off or on silent.

**Recording Devices**

Our Practice is dedicated to protecting its patients’ confidential information, the Practice’s trade secrets, business information, employment data, and other confidential materials. Absolutely no records or materials may be taken from the Practice’s premises without the prior approval of management. If you have any questions about this policy, please ask your supervisor. Video recording, photographing, audio recording, or any electronic recording on any worksite or work events is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes the audio recording of conversations between, among, or involving employees or staff. Similarly, the possession or use of any video recording, photographing, or audio recording equipment while on the Practice's premises is strictly prohibited. Any video or audio recording made in violation of this policy that is discovered on the RST’s premises may become the property of the Practice. Violations of these rules will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge and potentially including legal action.

**Social Media Policy**

SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Social media, including networking sites and blogs, are increasing in popularity and activity. Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC believes that social media can assist in raising visibility and support for the business development efforts of our employees and practice. We are also aware that social media will not be used exclusively for company business and that many are utilizing blogs and social networking sites for personal use. However, it is important to keep in mind that what is posted is traceable and permanent.

When employees create their own blogs, comment on a blog, create a LinkedIn profile, work on the Company’s LinkedIn page, Twitter, MySpace, or use Facebook and/or contribute to or through any of the other online media (i.e., Wikis, blogs, chat rooms, Internet forums, electronic mailing lists, etc.), they are impacting their personal image and potentially impacting the Company. If your online profile indicates that you work for Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PPLC, then that activity is associated with the company. Therefore, we are asking all employees to follow the guidelines below regarding online behavior.

The sites covered in this document include any electronic form of communication, including social networking sites such as FaceBook and MySpace; professional networking sites such as LinkedIn; and live blogging tools like Twitter, as well as your personal blogs and those hosted by other organizations that you either author or where you post comments.

Follow these guidelines when creating and/or publishing work-related or non-work related content online:

* Maintain Company confidentiality. Never divulge proprietary or confidential information about the Company, our employees or our clients.
* Represent yourself accurately. If you are participating in an online community and commenting on topics related to our business, you must make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the Company.
* Be accurate. When posting content, your overall goal should be providing value through accurate information. You may not post anything that is knowingly false.
* Be respectful. Respect the opinions of others. You may have disagreements, but please make your opinions respectfully. We do not tolerate intimidating or threatening comments.

Please keep the following guidelines in mind regarding your online identity and internet use:

* If you are assigned a company email account, it should only be used for company business and your login and password must be kept confidential.
* All company logins and passwords are confidential and employees should not share logins or passwords with other RST employees, with business associates of RST, or with any other individuals or businesses. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action including termination.
* Even when using social media sites on a personal basis, please remember to follow the Company’s policies prohibiting threats and intimidation.

The company is not interested in limiting your ability to participate in personal social networks with a personal email address outside of the workplace. However, what you publish on these sites should never be attributed to the Company. Please make it clear that you are speaking for yourself. Furthermore, even if you do not mention Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC, that information is readily ascertainable and could reflect poorly upon you and the Company. Please use common sense when making online comments, even if you intend for them only to be personal in nature. If you choose to use your work affiliation on a social network, then you should regard all communication on that network as you would in a professional network. - Be aware of your association with Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC in online social networks. If you identify yourself as a company employee, ensure your profile, photographs and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues and clients. In particular, if your name on Twitter is related to our business, be sure that the majority of your “tweets” are on this topic. - Being they are in the public domain, the company reserves the right to monitor social media sites and blogs.

Nothing in this policy, or any other policy, should be interpreted in a manner that unlawfully prohibits the right of employees to engage in protected concerted activity under the National Labor Relations Act (“NLRA”). The Company has and always will comply fully with its obligations under the NLRA. - Any violators of these guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Please note that the use of computers at Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC by employees is intended for business purposes only. Any use of social media, networking sites, or blogs for personal uses should be conducted by employees outside of work. Computers at Retina Specialists of Tennessee should not be used by employees for social media, networking, reading or posting blogs, online shopping, emailing, or other purposes unless specifically authorized or directed by your supervisor. Visiting adult or pornographic websites is strictly prohibited. Violation of these rules may subject an employee to disciplinary action including possible termination and/or prosecution.

**Bulletin Boards and Solicitation**

It is the policy of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC that all company bulletin boards are to be used only for the purpose of posting company business items. Any other postings should be submitted for approval prior to posting. Unapproved or personal postings on company bulletin boards or attached to any wall, surface or structure on company property are not permitted.

The company doesn’t allow solicitation and distribution of materials in the workplace by non-employees and limits employees’ abilities to do the same. We realize that many employees participate in events outside of work. You must ask permission from the owner before distributing or posting anything non work related.

**Non-Smoking Policy**

Smoking anywhere inside company premises by any employee, customer, or visitor is prohibited at all times. This includes office areas, facilities, and company vehicles. Outside our facility, there are specific areas that have signs for designated smoking area.

**Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace Policy**

Substance abuse has an adverse impact on an employee’s work, personal, and family lives, as well as on the ability of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC to fulfill its mission to provide the highest quality services to its customers and patients. It can cause poor performance and decreased productivity, and it can create safety and health hazards. Consequently, Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC is committed to establishing and maintaining an alcohol and drug-free workplace. Help us achieve this commitment.

* **Illegal Drugs** - The use, distribution, sale, offering for sale, possession, purchase, manufacture, or trading of illegal drugs is strictly prohibited. An employee caught violating this rule shall be subject to immediate discharge. This rule prohibits all illegal drug activity while on company time or off-duty. A positive drug test performed in accordance with the Company's drug and alcohol testing program shall be deemed conclusive evidence of the use of drugs.
* **Alcohol** - Employees are not permitted to report to work or work while under the influence of alcohol. Employees may not consume alcohol while on Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC premises, client premises, or while conducting Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC business. An employee with a blood alcohol content of .04 BAC or greater shall be conclusively deemed to be under the influence.
* **Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs** - Employees are prohibited from the misuse or abuse of prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drugs. Employees who are using such medications for an existing medical condition are obligated to inform the Company of the use of any such medications to the extent that the use thereof may alter or hinder job performance or alter an employee’s mental or physical faculties or both.

Employees violating this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

As a condition of employment with Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC, you may be asked to consent to drug/alcohol screening under any of the following circumstances:

* As a condition of hire
* On a random basis
* For probable cause
* For all job related injuries

**Drug Policy**

**DRUG TESTING**:

Offers of employment by Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC are conditional and based on the applicant successfully passing a drug test. Employees that are recalled to work after a lay off will be required to successfully pass a drug test. Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC may conduct random drug testing, with or without cause. Employees who are suspected of drug use will be asked to submit to drug testing. All employees that are involved in a work related accident will be required to submit to drug testing immediately after the accident or during the time they are receiving medical attention if applicable. Employees that test positive for any illegal substances will be terminated from Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC.

**Disciplinary Policy**

Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC believes that disciplinary actions should serve the purpose of changing behavior, not as punishment. It is our hope to not be put in a position where we must terminate an employee because of their behavior or performance. This process of corrective actions/responses is designed to address employee performance problems in a positive way by placing emphasis on correction or improvement of the employee’s behavior or performance while allowing the employee to maintain his or her self-respect and dignity during the process. This is usually achieved through a progressive series of measures allowing enough notice of the problem and opportunity for correction that the next level may be avoided. We strive to be fair and consistent in the treatment of employees, basing our decisions with consideration to factors including length of employment, employee’s work record, seriousness of the action, intent, effect on other employees, and/or business action taken by Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC in similar situations. By making decisions on a case-by case basis, respect for the individual and their contribution are maintained.

A description of each of the progressive levels of corrective action is as follows:

* **Verbal Reminders**: This is a simple conversation between a supervisor and an employee. This is used when an employee has a minor problem that should be corrected by bringing it to the attention of the employee. Documentation of this conversation and the date may be placed in the employee’s file depending the specific circumstances.
* **Written Reminder**: This is used when an employee does not correct a problem previously discussed in a verbal reminder or the employee’s behavior is serious enough to warrant skipping the verbal reminder. This level involves a conversation similar to the verbal reminder along with written documentation of the conversation plus the future expectation of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC. Written reminders will be placed in the employee’s file.
* **Termination**: The final level of corrective action is termination. Each employee is a tremendous investment of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC’s time and resources. There are those times when termination of an employee is necessary. If an employee refuses to respond to the progressive steps above or if the employee’s behavior is sufficiently serious, the employee will be terminated from Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC.

The above listed steps are not intended as punishment. It is the hope of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC that through appropriate guidance and training, issues of performance or behavior may be addressed and each employee is given every reasonable opportunity for professional success. The Company reserves the right to determine the appropriate disciplinary action to be taken in each case and may skip steps when in its judgment the more serious discipline is warranted.

**Harassment Policy**

Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC is committed to providing a positive atmosphere and working environment in which each employee is respected as an individual and can realize his or her full potential with equal opportunity for advancement and growth. In accordance with this commitment, the company strictly prohibits all forms of harassment in the workplace. Harassment based on an individual's age, race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or any other basis prohibited by federal, state, or local laws, will not be tolerated. Any person who is found to have engaged in harassing activities, within or outside of the work environment, will be subject to immediate investigation and appropriate corrective action. Harassment of fellow employees is not limited to hours of work or the physical locations of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC.

If you feel that you have been subjected to any form of harassment by your supervisor, your fellow staff members, members of our temporary staff, an employee of a client company, or any person connected with your employment with Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC, you should bring the matter to the attention of your supervisor or management immediately.

Any complaint of harassment will be treated confidentially to the extent consistent with an investigation. No employee will be punished or suffer any adverse or retaliatory employment action as a result of bringing any good faith harassment complaint to Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC's attention. Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC prohibits any retaliatory behavior by any staff member as a result of such a claim. However, incidents of false accusations or allegations, regardless of intent, will not be tolerated.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

* Verbal harassment: making jokes or comments that refer to certain ethnic groups, race, sex, nationality, age, or other protected group; the use of derogatory comments, slurs or epithets; the use of vulgar or profane words or expressions; the use of language or comments that may be construed as threatening;
* Physical harassment: assault, blocking, impairing or otherwise physically interfering with an individual's normal work or movement;
* Visual forms of harassment: derogatory or offensive posters, cartoons, or shirts;
* Sexual harassment, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct when such conduct is made a term or condition of employment, a basis for employment decisions, or creates a hostile or offensive work environment.

**Complaint Investigation**

Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities, as well as one that prohibits sexual harassment, unlawful harassment of any kind and other discriminatory practices. Therefore, the company requires that all relationships among employees will be professional and free of unlawful harassment. Every employee has the responsibility to contribute to a work atmosphere that has zero tolerance for unlawful harassment Sexual Harassment is illegal. It is our policy that no employee shall make sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or engage in other conduct of a sexual nature when:

* Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the employee's employment,
* Submission or rejection of such conduct by an employee is used as the basis for employment decisions, or
* Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Harassment is prohibited by federal, state and some local laws. Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her legally protected status, which can include race, color, religion, sex (gender), sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, marital status, and/or citizenship status that

* Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating hostile or offensive work environment;
* Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or
* Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities. Harassment encompasses a range of physical or verbal behavior including, but not limited to, emails, text messages, voice mails, sexual comments, epithets, touching, jokes, written or pictorial material, or sexual advances.

Harassment may also include inappropriate comments or conduct between or among individuals of the same gender, race, religion, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, or age group. Unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation will not be tolerated. Such unlawful conduct is considered grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related circumstances outside the workplace, such as during business trips, business meetings, and business-related social events. The company requires employees to report incidents of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation whether they are the object or the observer of such conduct. If an employee has concerns or feels that he/she or a co-worker has been the subject of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, the employee must contact the appropriate persons as set forth below to report the situation. The company will take immediate action by conducting a thorough investigation. To the extent possible, the company will respect the confidentiality and privacy of all individuals involved. The company also prohibits any type of retaliation. Unlawful retaliation would include threatening, harassing, or taking adverse employment action against an employee because he/she has:

* Filed a complaint or charge of discrimination or harassment with the EEOC and/or other Federal/State agencies.
* Reported or filed an internal complaint of discrimination or harassment in good faith.
* Participated in an investigation of a report or complaint of unlawful discrimination or harassment.
* Reasonably opposed an employment practice that would constitute unlawful discrimination or harassment.
* Requested accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act or similar law.
* Requested leave under the Family Medical Leave Act or similar law.
* Pursued or received worker's compensation benefits in accordance with applicable law.
* Engaged in protected whistleblower activity.

**REPORTING PROCEDURES:** All managers are required to take responsibility to eliminate conduct amounting to unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation within the company. Furthermore, each employee is responsible to assist in maintaining a work environment that is discrimination-free, harassment-free, and retaliation-free. All employees are essential in helping the Company maintain an environment that is conducive to productivity, growth and development of all employees. In the event you become aware of unlawful discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, or retaliation in the workplace, please notify your immediate supervisor or manager of the situation or contact your Human Resources representative.

However, for a variety of reasons, sometimes that may not be appropriate. Any person identified above may be an appropriate person to contact. Especially in cases involving electronic communication, such as e-mail, immediate reporting is critical to effective investigation. The company has developed this policy to ensure that all its employees can work in an environment free from unlawful harassment, discrimination and retaliation. If you have any questions regarding this policy you should direct them to the Human Resources representative or your supervisor.

**Employee Recourse Policy**

Any employee who feels subjected to discrimination or harassment should immediately report it to management. Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC encourages employees to freely report such incidents to any and all of these people and prohibits retaliation from making or being a witness to such report. Such retaliation will not be tolerated, whether or not we believe the complaint was justified. Knowingly or intentionally making false reports of harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated and could subject an employee to disciplinary action and/or termination. Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC will investigate such reports thoroughly with regard to confidentiality as much as possible. However, witnesses may be interviewed and the complainant's identity may have to be revealed. If the report has merit, disciplinary action will be taken against the offender. Depending on the severity of the misconduct, the disciplinary action could range from a warning to termination.

Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC believes in equal employment opportunity, because it makes good business sense and because it is appropriate and morally right.

**Personnel File**

Your official personnel file is maintained. Your file includes personnel action documents, mandatory employment forms, performance evaluations, and documentation of disciplinary action. Your file may also include letters of commendation, training certificates, or other work-related documents that you or your supervisor has requested are included in your file. You may request to view your personnel file at any time during your employment by contacting your supervisor or human resources contact.

Employee access to personnel files will only be granted in accordance with applicable state and federal law. Your employment records are maintained in accordance with company policy and state and federal law and are the property of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC

Keeping your personnel file up-to-date can be important to you concerning pay, deductions, benefits, and other matters. If you have a change in any of the following items, notify your supervisor as soon as possible:

* Legal name;
* Home address;
* Home telephone number;
* Mobile phone number;
* Person to call in case of emergency;
* Number of dependents;
* Marital status;
* Change of beneficiary;
* Driving record or status of driver's license, if you operate any Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC vehicles;
* Military or draft status;
* Exemptions on your W-4 tax form

Pay, tax deductions, coverage or benefits you and your family may receive under Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC's benefits package could be negatively affected if the information in your personnel file is incorrect.

We refer to your personnel file when we need to make decisions in connection with promotions, transfers, etc. It is to your benefit to be sure your personnel file is complete. This includes information about completion of educational or training courses, outside civic activities, and areas of interest and skills that may not be part of your current position with the company.

**Employee Leaves of Absences**

 **Family Medical Leave Act**

During FMLA leave, the employer must maintain the employee’s health coverage under any "group health plan" on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work.

Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee’s leave.

* **Eligibility Requirements**

Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least one year, for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles. Presently, employees of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC are not eligible for FMLA leave.

* **Definition of Serious Health Condition:**

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee’s job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment

* **Basic Leave Entitlement**

FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:

* For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
* To care for the employee’s child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
* To care for the employee’s spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
* For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee’s job.
* **Use of Leave**

An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer’s operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis

* **Enforcement**

An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer. FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement which provides greater family or medical leave rights.

FMLA section 109 (29 U.S.C. § 2619) requires FMLA covered employers to post the text of this notice. Regulations 29 C.F.R. § 825.300(a) may require additional disclosures.

* **Unlawful Acts by Employers**

FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

* Interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under FMLA;
* Discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.
* **Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave**

Employees may choose or employers may require use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, employees must comply with the employer’s normal paid leave policies.

* **Employee Responsibilities**

Employees who are eligible for FMLA leave must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When a 30 day notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with an employer’s normal call in procedures.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the employer to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions; the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform the employer if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

* **Employer Responsibilities**

Covered employers must inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice must specify any additional information required as well as the employees’ rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for the ineligibility.

Covered employers must inform employees if leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee’s leave entitlement. If the employer determines that the leave is not FMLA-protected, the employer must notify the employee.

**Military Leave**

Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC grants leaves of absence to employees for service in the United States Uniformed Services. Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC also reemploys individuals in compliance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, as amended. Covered employees may be re-employed if they have provided advance notice of their service; they have five years or less of cumulative uniformed services while with Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC; they return to work or apply for reemployment in a timely manner after conclusion of service; and they have not been separated from service with a disqualifying discharge or under other than honorable conditions. Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC complies with the provisions of federal and other laws regarding military leaves of absence and re-employment. Employees who are called for active duty should contact the supervisor as soon as possible for instructions and information.

**Military Family Leave Entitlements**

Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period. A covered service member is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the service member is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list. Please check with your supervisor to determine if you are an eligible employee for military family leave entitlements.

**Election Day and Voting**

We encourage you to exercise your voting privileges in local, state and national elections. However, since the polls are open for long periods, you are encouraged to vote before or after regular working hours or cast absentee ballots rather than miss work. If it should be necessary, you may take up to two hours of leave from work to vote in a governmental election or referendum. You will be expected to notify your supervisor of such absences at least one week in advance. Whether such an absence will be paid should be discussed with your supervisor in advance.

**Jury Duty**

In the event you receive notice to report for jury duty, please notify your supervisor within 48 hours so that arrangements can be made to have your duties covered until you return to work. We follow all Tennessee guidelines for employee jury duty. The employee must return to work for any reasonable time the court is closed during normal work hours. No adverse employment action will be taken against employees or applicants due to their service as a juror in state or federal courts.

**Employee Benefits**

**Health Benefits**

The details of our current health benefits, including employee eligibility, are available from your supervisor or human resources contact. In the event of any inconsistencies between this handbook or any other written or oral description of benefits and a formal plan document, the formal plan document will govern. Continuous full time employment for 90 continuous days is necessary before eligibility for health benefits is achieved.

**COBRA**

Employees of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC covered by group medical benefits have certain legal rights to choose continuation of coverage. These rights apply if you or your dependents lose coverage due to a reduction in hours of work, termination of employment for reasons other than gross misconduct, and for other events which might otherwise cause a loss of coverage. Certain other qualifying events may enable your dependents to continue their coverage. It is essential that you keep your Administrator informed of changes in dependent’s status, including divorce, etc. The Practice will adhere to the requirements of the law governing continuation of health insurance benefits, COBRA. Presently, employees are not eligible for COBRA coverage.

**Holidays**

The office is closed for the following non-religious holidays: New Years Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Day after Thanksgiving Day.

The office may be closed for some religious holidays. Employees will be notified in advance regarding office closure. These religious holidays include: Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Hanukah, Passover, Yom Kippur, and Rosh Hashanah.

As a general rule, if an office holiday occurs on Saturday, the prior Friday will be observed as a holiday. If the holiday occurs on Sunday, the following Monday will be observed as a holiday.

New Years Day and Thanksgiving Day will be paid holidays for full time employees past the initial 90 day trial period. Full time employees past the initial 90 day trial period will also be eligible for one day per calendar year of paid time off on a major religious holiday.

**Paid Time Off**

In addition to paid holidays as described previously, eligible employees are granted the following number of paid time off days per calendar year based upon the length of continuous active employment and service to the Practice:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Months 7-12 | 4 days |
| Months 12-48 | 10 days |
| Months 49-108 | 15 days |
| Months 109+ | 20 days |

An employee is eligible to take paid vacation leave following six (6) months of continuous employment. Vacation days may be taken in full-day or half-day (four-hour (4)) increments. We prefer that vacations be taken when the physician(s) is out of town or on vacation.

Employees should forward requests for use of vacation leave to their supervisor. The Practice is flexible in approving time off when doing so will not interfere with operation of the Practice. The dates and duration of your vacation leave should be submitted to the practice manager in writing at least six weeks in advance. The practice manager will approve or deny the request based on the Practice resources and in light of other requests for vacation time already received. In case of a scheduling conflict, the employee who submits the request for utilization of vacation time first will be given preference.

Since vacations provide a period of needed rest and recreation, each employee is expected to take his/her allotted vacation during the year in which it is earned. Unused vacation time cannot be carried over into the next year. The Practice will not reimburse employees for lost vacation days. The Employee shall not be entitled to any additional compensation for days of leave not taken in any calendar year or in any partial year due to termination.

**Unpaid Time Off**

Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC understands and expects that employees may occasionally have outside responsibilities or illnesses that require them to miss work. To minimize disruption of the practice and patient care, it is important to accomplish personal responsibilities outside of RST work time. When approved, RST grants full time employees past the initial 90 day trial period two and a half days (20 hours) of unpaid time off for each half of the calendar year (six month period).

Unpaid time off does not carry over from one six month period to the next. Time may be used in half day (4 hour) increments. Unpaid time off for personal reasons should be requested in advance from management six (6) weeks in advance when possible. Requests for unpaid time off should be submitted to your supervisor for approval. Documentation from your health care provider may be requested when work is missed due to illness.

**Bereavement**

Bereavement leave will be approved on a case-by case basis. Approval should be sought by the employee and submitted to management as soon as possible. Approved employees will be given up to one (1) day off for regularly scheduled workdays missed due to the death of an immediate family member. Immediate family members shall be defined as husband, wife, parent, step-parent, child, step-child, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandparent or grandchild. Any time in excess of one (1) day will be counted against other time off days. Excessive time off may result in disciplinary action or dismissal. Documentation of an immediate family member’s death may be requested.

**Workers' Compensation**

Employees of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC who are injured while in the course and scope of employment may be entitled to Workers’ Compensation benefits. Workers’ Compensation insurance covers medical expenses and a percentage of lost wages as a result of a work-related injury or occupational illness. Benefits are governed by the state of Tennessee. An employee who sustains injury or illness while at work at Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC should report the situation to his or her supervisor as soon as possible. The supervisor will notify the Workers’ Compensation representative, submit a Supervisor’s Report of Injury Form, and inform the employee about eligibility for Workers’ Compensation benefits.

**Safety Rules**

Safety is the responsibility of every employee. Safety is to be given primary importance in every aspect of planning and performing all Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC activities. We want to protect you against injury and illness as well as to minimize the potential loss of productivity.

Please report all injuries, no matter how slight, to your supervisor immediately, as well as anything that needs repair or is a safety hazard. The Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) requires the company to keep records of all illnesses and accidents that occur during the workday. The State Workers’ Compensation Act also requires that you report any illness or injury on the job, no matter how slight. If you hurt yourself or become ill, please contact your supervisor for assistance. If you fail to report an injury, you may jeopardize your right to collect worker’s compensation payments, as well as health benefits. OSHA also provides for your right to know about any health hazards that might be present on the job. If you have questions or concerns, contact the Human Resources representative or your supervisor for more information.

Listed below are some general safety rules. Your supervisor or department head may post other safety procedures in your department or work area:

* Avoid overloading electrical outlets with too many appliances or too much equipment.
* Use flammable items, such as cleaning fluids, with caution.
* Report to your supervisor if you or a co-worker becomes ill or injured.
* Ask for assistance when lifting heavy objects or moving heavy furniture.
* Smoking. See Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC Smoking Policy.
* Keep cabinet doors and file and desk drawers closed when not in use.
* Wear a seat belt at all times when in a company vehicle.
* Avoid “horseplay”.
* Start work with a piece of equipment only after safety procedures and requirements have been fully explained to you and you understand the procedures.
* Keep your work area clean.
* Watch out for the safety of fellow employees.
* Operate motorized equipment only if authorized by your immediate supervisor.
* Keep doors and windows locked to prevent entry by unauthorized personnel.
* Handle medical waste and sharps appropriately utilizing appropriate precautions.
* Take appropriate precautions to avoid the spread of infectious diseases. This may include taking advantage of vaccinations.

Failure to adhere to any of these rules will be considered a serious infraction of safety rules and will result in disciplinary action.

**Security Checks**

It is the responsibility of every employee to maintain the security of Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC buildings and vehicles. Each employee should develop habits that insure security as a matter of course. For example:

* Always keep cash properly secured. If you are aware that cash is insecurely stored, immediately inform your supervisor.
* Always keep assigned equipment properly secured. If you are aware of equipment or tools that are insecurely stored, immediately inform your supervisor.
* Under no circumstances are you to loan Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC property to others.
* Know the location of all alarms and fire extinguishers and familiarize yourself with the proper procedure for using them.
* When you leave Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC premises, make sure that all entrances are properly locked and secured and that all equipment, pharmaceuticals, and prescription pads are secured and behind locked doors when applicable.

**Emergencies**

In case of fire or other building emergencies, assist all patients and family members in exam rooms or waiting in the lobby to the appropriate exit to leave the building. Depending on the location, follow the emergency procedures distributed by those facilities. All employees need to know the emergency procedures for the office that they are working in. Please be observant of patients and their families and assist if an emergency situation occurs. Emergency medical services and the on-site physician should be notified immediately in the event of a medical emergency. Emergency care should be offered immediately.

**Employee Handbook Acknowledgement and Confidentiality agreement**

The employee handbook describes important information about Retina Specialist of Tennessee, PLLC. I understand that I should consult my supervisor or manager regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. My employment relationship with the company is voluntary, and I acknowledge that there is no specified length of employment. Accordingly, either the company or I can end the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time, as long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law.

I understand that the company reserves the right to amend, supplement, rescind, or revise any policy, practice, or benefit described in this handbook, other than employment-at-will provisions, with or without notice, as it deems appropriate in its sole and absolute discretion. Only the Owner of Retina Specialist of Tennessee, PLLC has the authority to approve any revisions to the policies in this handbook.

This handbook describes portions of company policies, procedures, and benefit plans. If any conflict arises, the official policies, procedure, and benefit places are the ruling documents. I understand that the employment policies and procedures covered in this handbook have been adopted for and apply to the employees of Retina Specialist of Tennessee, PLLC.

My signature below indicates that I have received a copy of the employee handbook. I understand that it is my responsibility to abide by its contents.

The nature of services provided by Retina Specialists of Tennessee, PLLC requires information to be handled in a private, confidential manner. Information about our business, practice methods, finances, employees, business partners or associates, patients, or clients will only be released to outside individuals or businesses with the owner’s written consent. Violation of this confidentiality agreement may result in disciplinary action, termination of employment, and/or legal action.

Patient consent is required for the release of confidential medical information and only to those parties designated by the patient or the patient's legal guardian or representative. Following legal or regulatory guidelines provide the only exceptions to this policy. All reports, memoranda, notes or other documents will remain part of RST confidential records.

The names, addresses, phone numbers, or salaries of our employees will only be released to people authorized by the nature of their duties to receive such information and only with the consent of management or the employee.

Print Your Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Your Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_