

# Research Properties, Inc.

## Employee Handbook

Welcome new employee!

On behalf of your colleagues, we welcome you to Research Properties, Inc. (“Research Properties” or “Company”) and wish you every success here. We believe that each employee contributes directly to Research Properties' growth and success, and we hope you will take pride in being a member of our team. Research Properties, a Kentucky company, was incorporated in August, 1985. The foremost goal of the company has been and remains that of providing our Residents with clean, comfortable and attractive apartment homes. This should result in a stable and quiet community. Thus, to the extent which is consistent with company policies and managerial directives, all employees are instructed to give priority to the reasonable needs and wishes of the residents, and in so doing, to conduct themselves at all times in a professional and courteous manner. This handbook was developed to describe some of the expectations of our employees and to generally outline the policies, programs, and benefits available to eligible employees. Employees should familiarize themselves with the contents of the employee handbook as soon as possible, for it will answer many questions about your employment with Research Properties.

Although this handbook will be helpful, it is not, nor should it be considered, an agreement or contract of employment, express or implied, or a promise of treatment in any particular manner in any given situation. This handbook states only general Company guidelines. The Company may at any time, in its sole discretion, with or without notice, modify, add to, or vary from anything stated in this handbook, except for the rights of the parties to terminate employment at will, which may only be modified by an express written agreement signed by both you and the President of the Company. **No officer, employee, or agent of Research Properties is authorized to make any promises to you regarding your employment with the Company, with the exception of the Company President, who may do so only in a written document signed both by you and the President.**

We hope that your experience here will be challenging, enjoyable, and rewarding.

Again, welcome!

Sincerely,

Management

**Introductory Statement** - This handbook is intended to acquaint employees with Research Properties and provide them with general information and some of the policies affecting your employment. Employees should read, understand, and comply with all provisions of the handbook. Your cooperation in action and in spirit is essential. It describes many of an employee's responsibilities and outlines the programs developed by Research Properties to benefit employees. No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policy. Employees are expected and encouraged to clarify any questions regarding policies addressed in this handbook or other employment related questions with a member of management. The need may arise, and Research Properties reserves the right, to revise, supplement, or rescind any policy or portion of the handbook from time to time as it deems appropriate, in its sole and absolute discretion. A current copy of the handbook and policies will be available and accessible to all employees at each property. Employees have the obligation to be familiar with current policies and communications. The only exception to any changes is our employment-at-will policy permitting employees or Research Properties to end our relationship with or without cause or notice at any time.

**Resident Relations** - Residents are among Research Properties' most valuable assets. Every employee represents Research Properties to our residents and the public. The way we do our jobs presents an image of our entire organization. Residents judge all of us by how they are treated with each employee contact. Therefore, one of our first business priorities is to assist any resident or potential resident. The importance of being courteous, friendly, helpful, and prompt in the attention employees give to residents cannot be overemphasized. Our personal contact with the public, our manners on the telephone, and the communications we send to residents are a reflection not only of ourselves, but also of the professionalism of Research Properties. Positive resident relations not only enhance the public's perception or image of Research Properties, but also pay off in greater resident loyalty and increased profit. **Keep in mind; it is better to under promise and over deliver.**

**Nature of Employment** - Your employment relationship is based on an at-will basis. Employment at-will means the employment relationship is at the mutual consent of both the employee and Research Properties and can be discontinued, at any time, by either the employee or Research Properties, at will and with or without reason or advance notice. While this handbook is intended to provide employees with guidelines regarding our policies, it is not an employment contract and cannot be construed to create contractual obligations, express or implied, of any kind. Nothing in this employee handbook limits either the employee or Research Properties to end the employment relationship if either chooses, at its will, at any time. No officer, employee, or agent of the Company is authorized to make any promises to you regarding your employment with Research Properties, with the exception of the Company President, who may do so only in a written document signed both by you and the President. In order to retain necessary flexibility in the administration of policies and procedures, Research Properties reserves the rights to change, revise, or eliminate any of the policies and/or benefits described in this handbook, except for its policy of employment-at-will.

**Employee Relations** - Research Properties believes employees and the Company are best served by maintaining direct communication with one another. Research Properties is committed to maintaining a relationship with all employees that promotes dignity, personal achievement and mutual respect. Research Properties strives to provide work conditions, wages, and benefits that are competitive with those offered by other employers in this area and in this industry. Employees with concerns about work conditions or compensation are strongly encouraged to voice these concerns openly and directly to their supervisors. Employees should feel free to discuss any matter, regardless of how large or small, with their supervisor or another member of management. Our experience has shown that when employees deal openly and directly with supervisors, the work environment can be excellent, communications can be

clear, and attitudes can be positive. Note, however, that employees must follow the specific reporting procedures contained in the Handbook's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and Harassment Policy to report incidents of discrimination and/or harassment. Employees may be required to put their complaints in writing if requested by the supervisor on any complaint. Research Properties is dedicated to treating employees fairly and responding effectively to employee concerns and questions.

***Equal Employment Opportunity*** - Research Properties is an equal opportunity employer. In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at Research Properties will be based on a reasonable assessment of relative merit, qualifications, productivity and competence. Research Properties does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, pregnancy, genetic disposition, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law. This policy governs all aspects of employment, including selection, job assignment, compensation, discipline, termination, and access to benefits and training. Any employees with questions or concerns about any type of unlawful discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of the Company President or the Bookkeeper. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

***Business Ethics and Conduct*** - The successful business operation and reputation of Research Properties is built upon the principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct of our employees. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and letter of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as a scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity. The continued success of Research Properties is dependent upon our residents' trust and we are dedicated to preserving that trust. Employees owe a duty to Research Properties and its residents to act in a way that will merit the continued trust and confidence of the public.

Research Properties will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects its employees to conduct business in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct. In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide employees with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. If a situation arises in which it is difficult for an employee to determine the proper course of action, the employee should discuss the matter openly with his or her immediate supervisor and, if necessary, with the President for advice and consultation. Compliance with this policy of business ethics and conduct is the responsibility of every Research Properties employee. Disregarding or failing to comply with this standard of business ethics and conduct may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

***Hiring of Relatives***- For purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood, marriage, or cohabitation. Although Research Properties has no prohibition against employing relatives of current employees, we are committed to monitoring situations in which such relationships exist in the same area. In case of actual or potential problems, Research Properties will take appropriate action in order to address the situation as the Company deems appropriate. This can include reassignment or, if necessary, termination of employment for one or both of the individuals involved.

***Immigration Law Compliance*** Research Properties is committed to employing only United States citizens and persons who are authorized to work in the United States, and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin. All employment is conditional upon receipt of documentation establishing identity and authorization to be employed in the United States. This

documentation must be produced at the time an employee is hired and as otherwise required by law. Employees with questions or seeking more information on immigration law issues are encouraged to contact their supervisor. Employees may raise questions or complaints about immigration law compliance without fear of reprisal.

**Outside Employment** - An employee may hold a job with another organization as long as he or she satisfactorily performs his or her job responsibilities with Research Properties. All employees will be judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to Research Properties scheduling demands, regardless of any outside work considerations. If Research Properties determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance or the ability to meet the requirements of Research Properties or is otherwise unacceptable, the employee may be required to terminate the outside employment if he or she wishes to remain with Research Properties.

**Confidentiality Policy** - The protection of confidential business information and trade secrets is vital to the interests and the success of Research Properties. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- Employee or employer names and contact information
- Compensation data
- Resident lists and/or rent roll
- credit card information
- Resident privacy matters, including discussing company business with residents.
- Financial information, credit card numbers, social security numbers, etc.
- Marketing strategies and occupancy
- Pending projects

All employees may be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement as a condition of employment. Employees who improperly use or disclose confidential business information will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and legal remedy, even if the employee does not actually benefit from the disclosed information.

## **Cardholder Information Security**

**Employee Responsibility** - The Point of Sale terminal (POS) is vital to the operations of the business. The data being processed is a significant asset to both Research Properties and a credit/debit card user. The loss or corruption of data could affect both the business and the cardholder. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every Research Properties employee to protect customer cardholder information from unauthorized access, modification, duplication, destruction or disclosure.

### **Passwords**

The ability to allow an employee to use the POS device is based on passwords. All passwords must be unique and have a specific number of characters. Passwords should never be written down, always be kept confidential and never sent through any type of communication.

### **POS Terminal Access**

Only those employees designated by the management of Research Properties will have access to the POS terminal. Employees are never to leave the terminal in the middle of a transaction.

### **Cardholder Receipt Security**

Cardholder receipts are maintained for 180 days for charge back purposes. During the 180-day period receipts are kept secure. After the 180-day period has elapsed, cardholder receipts are shredded. No employee may have access to historical receipts without prior written authorization of management.

### **Vendor Access**

All vendor contracts must insist that the vendor is Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliant and understand

their PCI responsibilities for safeguarding cardholder data.

### **Secure Work Area**

If cardholder information must be maintained for business purposes, employees must ensure that the information is kept locked and secured and that the work area is free of all cardholder information.

### **Incident Response Plan**

In the event of robbery or employee theft of cardholder data (also known as skimming), employees should immediately report the incident to the Supervisor. The event will then be reported to the National Processing Company's Risk Department or the National Processing Company's Compliance Department. Either department will take the appropriate steps to file the necessary documents with the card associated and advise Research Properties on how to proceed with local authorities. It is extremely important that all employees adhere to every aspect of this policy. Violation of these guidelines may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Theft of cardholder data is punishable by law.

**Disability Accommodation** - Research Properties is committed to complying fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and all applicable federal, state and local laws concerning the treatment of individuals with disabilities. All employment practices and activities, including terms, privileges and conditions of employment are conducted on a non-discriminatory basis. If an employee has or develops a disability and feels a reasonable accommodation is necessary to safely and efficiently perform some or all of the essential functions of his or her job, the employee should request assistance from the immediate supervisor. It is the employee's responsibility to request any reasonable accommodations believed to be medically necessary in order to perform one or more of the essential functions of the job. Once an employee requests a reasonable accommodation, Research Properties will evaluate the disability and essential functions of the position to determine if a reasonable accommodation can be made. Employees may be requested and required to provide medical information or submit to a medical examination by a physician chosen by Research Properties to assist the Company in evaluating and accommodating a disability. It is the employee's responsibility to assure the necessary medical information supporting the accommodation requested is provided to Research Properties in a timely manner.

**Employment Categories** - It is the intent of Research Properties to clarify the definitions of employment classifications so that employees understand their employment status and benefit eligibility. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time. Accordingly, the right to terminate the employment relationship at will at any time is retained by both the employee and Research Properties. Each employee is designated as either NONEXEMPT or EXEMPT from federal and state overtime laws. NONEXEMPT employees are entitled to overtime pay under the specific provisions of federal and state laws. EXEMPT employees are excluded from the overtime provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws. An employee's EXEMPT or NONEXEMPT classification may be changed only upon written notification by Research Properties management.

In addition to the above categories, each employee will be classified as regular full-time or regular part-time: REGULAR FULL-TIME employees are those who are not in a seasonal status and who are regularly scheduled to work Research Properties' full-time schedule; that is, thirty-eight (38) or more hours per week. Generally, these employees are eligible for Research Properties' benefit package, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program. REGULAR PART-TIME employees are those who are not in a seasonal status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than thirty-eight (38) hours per week. Generally, part-time employees are not eligible for Research Properties' benefit package, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program. SEASONAL employees are those who are hired as interim replacements, to temporarily supplement the work force, or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Employment assignments in this category are of a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in

employment status. Seasonal employees retain that status until notified of a change. While seasonal employees receive all legally mandated benefits (such as workers' compensation insurance and Social Security), these employees are ineligible for any of Research Properties' other benefit programs.

**Access to Personnel Files** Research Properties maintains a personnel file on each employee. The personnel file includes such information as the employee's job application, resume, records of training, and other employment records. Personnel files are the property of Research Properties, and access to the information contained is restricted.

**Employment Reference Checks** - To ensure that individuals who join Research Properties are well qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, it is the policy of Research Properties to check the employment references of all applicants. All requests for reference checks or verification of employment or income regarding current or past Research Properties employees should be directed to the Supervisor. Typically, requests should be submitted, and replied to, in writing and only dates of employment and position(s) held will be confirmed. Generally, requests for salary verification should contain the signature of the employee, or former employee, of the inquiry. Employees, other than the Supervisor, responding to or making inquiries for reference checks, reference letters or income verifications without authorization will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

**Personnel Data Changes** - It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify Research Properties of any changes in personnel data. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, number and names of dependents, individuals to be contacted in the event of emergency, educational accomplishments, arrest record, criminal convictions and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times. Employees should notify the Supervisor of any changes in personnel data.

**Employment Applications** - Research Properties relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in the exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

**Performance Appraisal** - Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals, as well as employee expectations, on an informal, day-to-day basis. Communication between supervisors and employees is encouraged to provide both the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals. As a part of the appraisal system, employees may also be periodically asked to complete self-appraisals of their work performance as well as their expectation of the Company. Employees may be required to immediately provide written documentation of any serious conflict they have with other employees, residents or the Company to the supervisor and/or President.

**Wage Administration** - Research Properties strives to achieve consistent pay practices and comply with federal laws and state laws. Research Properties is committed to provide an Equal Employment Opportunity, and offer competitive wages within our labor market. Because recruiting and retaining talented employees is critical to our success, Research Properties seeks to pay employees equitable wages that reflect the requirements and responsibilities of their positions and are comparable to the pay received by similarly situated employees in other organizations in the area. Compensation for every position is determined by several factors, including the essential duties and responsibilities of the job and individual performance. Research Properties periodically reviews its wages, and merit-based pay adjustments may be awarded in conjunction with superior employee performance. However, pay

increases are not guaranteed and are at the discretion of the Company. Employees should bring their pay-related questions or concerns to the attention of their Supervisor.

**Employee Benefits** - Eligible employees at Research Properties are provided a range of benefits. A number of the programs (such as Social Security, workers' compensation, state disability and unemployment insurance) cover all employees in the manner prescribed by law. Benefits eligibility is dependent upon a variety of factors, including employee classification. Supervisors can help employees identify the programs for which employees are eligible.

The following benefit programs are available to eligible employees:

- Vacation
- Holidays
- Workers Compensation
- Medical Leave
- Military Leave
- Bereavement
- Jury Duty

Some benefit programs may require contributions from employees. Any brief description of the benefit plans in this handbook is not a substitute for the complete plan documents, contracts, summary plan descriptions, etc. In the event of a conflict between the provisions of this handbook, the summary plan description and the plan documents, the plan documents will govern. Research Properties reserves the right to modify, add or discontinue any and all Company sponsored benefits at any time.

**Vacation** - Vacation time off with pay is available to eligible employees to provide opportunities for rest, relaxation and personal pursuits. Regular full-time employees are the only employment classification eligible to earn and use vacation time as described in this policy. The amount of paid vacation time employees receive each year increases with the length of employment as shown in the following schedule:

- An employee with one (1) year of eligible service with Research Properties is entitled to five (5) vacation days during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of eligible service.
- An employee with three (3) or more years of eligible service with Research Properties is entitled to ten (10) vacation days during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year of eligible service.
- An employee with five (5) or more years of eligible service with Research Properties is entitled to fifteen (15) vacation days during the 6<sup>th</sup> year of eligible service and each year of eligible service thereafter.

The length of eligible service is calculated on the basis of the anniversary of the employee's hire date. An employee's vacation benefit may be prorated for any leave of absence, with the exception of programs governed by state or federal law. Once an employee enters an eligible employment classification, he or she begins to accrue paid vacation time according to the schedule. Accrued vacation time is available for use in the anniversary year following its accrual. Paid vacation time can be used in minimum increments of one day (e.g., eight hours). To take vacation, employees should request advance approval from their supervisors. Employees may not schedule more than five (5) consecutive business days of vacation outside of Research Properties' medical leave policy. Requests will be reviewed based on a number of factors, including business needs and staffing requirements. Vacation time off is paid at the employee's base pay rate at the time of vacation. It does not include overtime or any special forms of compensation such as incentives, or bonuses. Vacation pay is not considered "worked time" for purposes of calculating overtime, and is therefore excluded in this calculation. Vacation cannot be "carried or rolled over" to the next anniversary year. However, with Supervisor and management approval, employees may be paid in

lieu of using vacation time. Employees who wish to have vacation time paid to them instead of taking the time off should make the request to the Supervisor in writing on the current time sheet. Upon termination of employment, employees will be paid for accrued unused vacation time.

**Holidays** - Research Properties will grant holiday time off to eligible employees on the holidays listed below:

- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- Thanksgiving Day (fourth Thursday in November)
- Christmas Day (December 25)

Research Properties will grant paid holiday time off to all regular full-time employees who have completed 90 calendar days of full-time service. Holiday pay will be calculated based on the employee's base pay rate (as of the date of the holiday), times the eight (8) hours per eligible holiday. If a recognized holiday falls during an eligible employee's paid absence (such as vacation), holiday pay will be provided instead of the paid time off benefit that would otherwise have applied. An employee will not be paid for a holiday if he or she misses work, or is on any form of unpaid leave, the day before or the day after the holiday. An employee can, however, take a vacation day either before or after the holiday. If a full-time nonexempt employee works on a recognized holiday, he or she will be paid for hours worked and will also receive holiday pay. Holiday pay is not considered "worked time" for purposes of calculating overtime.

**Workers' Compensation Insurance** - Research Properties provides a comprehensive workers' compensation insurance program at no cost to employees. This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical, surgical, or hospital treatment. Employees who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses must inform their supervisor immediately. No matter how minor an on-the-job injury may appear, it is important that it be reported immediately. Neither Research Properties nor the insurance carrier will be liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for injuries that occur during an employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social or athletic activity sponsored by Research Properties. Research Properties does not discriminate or retaliate against employees who have filed workers' compensation claims.

**Medical Leave** - Regular full-time employees are eligible for unpaid medical leave after one year of continuous employment with Research Properties. Employees must be under a qualified physician's care or direction to be eligible for this medical leave benefit. The employee's physician will determine the length of time he or she will be eligible for the benefit, based on medical necessity, up to a total of 30 days per rolling 12-month period. Employees are required to use any available vacation time while on unpaid medical leave. After vacation is exhausted, time taken on the medical leave will be considered unpaid. When foreseeable, the Company requires at least two weeks' written notice in advance of the anticipated date of departure due to a medical leave of absence. While not guaranteed, upon the employee's return from medical leave, the Company will make every effort to provide the employee with his/her previous or similar position with the same status, pay and length of service credit. Vacation time does not accrue while on medical leave. Holidays are not paid while on medical leave. Employees unable to return to work within the specified period will be considered by Research Properties to have voluntarily quit.

**Request Procedure** - A written request, using the "Leave of Absence Request" Form should be submitted at least two weeks (10 working days) in advance of any time not worked which is expected to

exceed ten days off work due to personal medical reasons, except in cases of emergency. Any leave request must include an expected date of return. Where “emergency” circumstances exist in which the employee is unable to request a medical leave of absence, after two weeks of absence, the Company may choose to place the employee on a medical leave of absence until verification can be received from the employee/employee’s physician. As requested by the Company, employees may be required to provide periodic documentation from their physician indicating the necessity for the continuation of the medical leave of absence, as well as documentation indicating the employee is fully released to return to full duty.

***Military Leave*** - Research Properties will comply with state and federal laws regarding leaves of absence due to military duty. Employees who need to request military leave should contact their supervisor. Your rights and duties regarding continuation and accrual of benefits during leave, notice of return to work, and reemployment will vary depending on the length and type of military service you perform. For this reason, you should consult your supervisor or the Bookkeeper as soon as you are aware of your need for military leave.

***Bereavement Leave*** - Employees who wish to take time off due to the death of a family member or close friend should notify their supervisor immediately. Up to 3 days of unpaid bereavement leave may be provided to regular full-time employees. Bereavement leave will normally be granted unless there are unusual business needs or staffing requirements. Employees may, with their supervisor’s approval, use any available vacation time off. Research Properties reserves the right to require verification of the need for leave.

***Jury Duty*** - Research Properties encourages employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by serving jury duty when required. All employees are given time off without pay when summoned for jury duty. If desired, employees may use any available vacation during jury duty. Employees must show the jury duty summons to their supervisor as soon as possible so that the supervisor may make arrangements to accommodate their absence and to produce proof of service when their period of jury duty is completed. Of course, employees are expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits. Research Properties will not attempt to have your jury service postponed unless, in Research Properties’ judgment, business conditions necessitate such action. Vacation and holiday benefits will continue to accrue during unpaid jury duty leave.

***Timekeeping*** - Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every employee. Federal and state laws require Research Properties to keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits. Time worked is all the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties. Non-exempt or hourly employees are not paid or compensated for sick days. Nonexempt employees should accurately record the time work began and the time work ended, as well as the beginning and ending time of each meal period. Employees should also record the beginning and ending time of any split shift or departure from work for personal reasons. It is imperative that all time worked is recorded, including times when employees must return to work after hours for a project or assignment. On the rare occasion when the time clock cannot be accessed, the employee must document and initial the time on their timesheet prior to the timesheet being turned in for payroll. At no time should employees perform work for Research Properties without recording the time. Likewise, all overtime work must always be approved before it is performed. Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee’s time record may result in termination of employment. Employees must not clock in before their scheduled work time and must clock out at their scheduled stop time unless their Supervisor has provided express, prior authorization. It is the employees’ responsibility to sign their time records to certify the accuracy of all time recorded. The supervisor will review the time record before submitting it for payroll processing. If time has not been entered and an adjustment is to be made, the

supervisor must initial the time card. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

**Overtime** - When operating requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours, employees may be scheduled to work overtime hours. When possible, advance notification of these mandatory assignments will be provided. All overtime work must receive the supervisor's prior authorization. Reasonable attempt will be made to distribute overtime assignments as equitably as practical to all employees qualified to perform the required work. Overtime compensation is paid to all nonexempt employees in accordance with federal and state wage and hour law. Overtime pay is based on actual time worked over forty hours in a one-week pay period. Time off on vacation, holiday, or other paid time off will not be considered time worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations. Failure to work scheduled overtime or working overtime without prior authorization from the supervisor may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

**Paydays** - All employees are paid bi-weekly on alternate Fridays. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period. In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a day off such as a weekend or a holiday, employees will typically be paid on the first day of work following the regularly scheduled payday. Generally, if a regular payday falls during an employee's vacation, the employee may receive his or her earned wages upon return from vacation.

**Employment Termination** - Termination of employment is an inevitable part of personnel activity within any organization, and many of the reasons for termination are routine. Below are examples of some of the most common circumstances under which employment is terminated:

- Resignation - voluntary employment termination initiated by an employee. Research Properties requests at least two weeks' written resignation notice from all employees.
- Discharge - involuntary employment termination initiated by the organization.

Since employment with Research Properties is based on mutual consent -- that is, employment-at-will -- both the employee and Research Properties have the right to terminate employment at will, with or without cause or notice, at any time. Employees will receive their final pay in accordance with applicable state law.

**Administrative Pay Corrections** - Research Properties takes all reasonable steps to ensure that employees receive the correct amount of pay in each paycheck and that employees are paid promptly on the scheduled payday. In the unlikely event that there is an error in the amount of pay or deduction the employee should promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of the Supervisor or Bookkeeper so that corrections can be made as quickly as possible. Research Properties prohibits the making of improper deductions from the salaries of exempt employees.

***Deductions from Wages of Exempt Employees; Complaint Procedure.***

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) is a federal law which requires that most employees in the United States be paid at least the federal minimum wage for all hours worked and overtime pays at time and one-half the regular rate of pay for all hours worked over 40 hours in a workweek. However, Section 13(a)(1) of the FLSA provides an exemption from both minimum wage and overtime pay for employees employed as bona fide executive, administrative, professional and outside sales employees. Section 13(a)(1) and Section 13(a)(17) also exempt certain computer employees. To qualify for exemption, employees generally must meet certain tests regarding their job duties and be paid on a salary basis at not less than

\$455 per week. Job titles do not determine exempt status. In order for an exemption to apply, an employee's specific job duties and salary must meet all the requirements of the Department's regulations.

**Salary Basis Requirement** - To qualify for exemption, employees generally must be paid at not less than \$455 per week on a salary basis. These salary requirements do not apply to outside sales employees, teachers, and employees practicing law or medicine. Exempt computer employees may be paid at least \$455 per week on a salary basis or on an hourly basis at a rate of not less than \$27.63 per hour. Being paid on a "salary basis" means an employee regularly receives a predetermined amount of compensation each pay period on a weekly, or less frequent, basis. The predetermined amount cannot be reduced because of variations in the quality or quantity of the employee's work. Subject to exceptions listed below, an exempt employee must receive a full salary for any workweek in which the employee performs any work, regardless of the number of days or hours worked. Exempt employees do not need to be paid for any workweek in which they perform no work. If the employer makes deductions from an employee's predetermined salary, i.e., because of the operating requirements of the business, that employee is not paid on a "salary basis." If the employee is ready, willing and able to work, deductions may not be made for time when work is not available.

**Circumstances in Which the Employer May Make Deductions from Pay** - Deductions from pay are permissible when an exempt employee: is absent from work for one or more full days for personal reasons other than sickness or disability; for absences of one or more full days due to sickness or disability if the deduction is made in accordance with a bona fide plan, policy or practice of providing compensation for salary lost due to illness; to offset amounts employees receive for military pay; or for unpaid disciplinary suspensions of one or more full days imposed in good faith for workplace conduct rule infractions (see Company policy on penalties for workplace conduct rule infractions). Also, an employer is not required to pay the full salary in the initial or terminal week of employment; or for penalties imposed in good faith for infractions of safety rules of major significance. In these circumstances, either partial day or full day deductions may be made. It is our policy to comply with the salary basis requirements of the FLSA. Therefore, we prohibit all company managers from making any improper deductions from the salaries of exempt employees. We want employees to be aware of this policy and that the company does not allow deductions that violate the FLSA.

**What To Do If An Improper Deduction Occurs** - If you believe that an improper deduction has been made to your salary, you should immediately report this information to the Bookkeeper or your supervisor. Reports of improper deductions will be promptly investigated. If it is determined that an improper deduction has occurred, you will be promptly reimbursed for any improper deduction made.

**Safety** - To assist in providing a safe and healthful work environment for all employees, Research Properties has established workplace safety guidelines and rules. These guidelines and rules are a top priority. The Supervisor has responsibility for implementing, administering, monitoring, and evaluating the safety compliance. Its success depends on the alertness and personal commitment of all. Research Properties provides information to employees about workplace safety and health issues through regular internal communication channels such as supervisor-employee meetings, bulletin board postings, memos, or other written communications. Material Data Safety Sheets (MSDS) are maintained for each property and accessible to every employee as part of the Company's records. Employees who feel the need for additional or specific safety training in order to perform their jobs in the safest manner possible should bring this need to the attention of their Supervisor.

Some of the best safety improvement ideas come from employees. Those with ideas, concerns, or suggestions for improved safety in the workplace are encouraged to raise them with their Supervisor. Reports and concerns about workplace safety issues may be made anonymously if the employee wishes. All reports can be made without fear of reprisal. Each employee must obey safety rules and exercise

caution in all work activities. Employees must immediately report any unsafe condition to the appropriate supervisor. An employee who violates safety standards, who causes hazardous or dangerous situations, or who fails to report or, where appropriate, remedy such situations, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. In the case of accidents that result in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, employees should immediately notify their Supervisor. Such reports are necessary to comply with laws and initiate insurance and workers' compensation benefits procedures.

**Personal Safety Rules** - Research Properties takes the personal safety of all employees very seriously. Because employees have frequent contact with the public when showing apartments and performing routine maintenance or housekeeping, it is very important the following safety rules be observed at a minimum to enhance personal safety:

- 1) When showing an apartment, do not allow yourself to get backed into a corner. For example, in a closed kitchen, stand to the side of the entry and point out the features and benefits. On stairs, invite the prospects to go in front of you. An employee should never let a prospect get between him or her and the door. While walking across the property with a prospect, an employee should always be beside him or her, never ahead. Leave the front door to an apartment open during a tour. If the door has a deadbolt lock, turn the lock so that the door remains ajar.
- 2) Always let someone know where you are going. When you are leaving the leasing office, mention to another employee which apartment(s) you are going to show and how long you will be out of the office.
- 3) Use the "buddy" system and invite another member to join you on your tour if you detect alcohol or any suspicious behavior, which causes you to feel uncomfortable with your prospect. Rely on and listen to your instincts!
- 4) Carry a cell phone with you whenever possible.
- 5) Never directly confront unruly residents or guests who create a feeling of threat to your safety. If a person(s) is not safely approachable, you should call the police.
- 6) To perform maintenance in occupied apartments, use your door hangers to alert residents of you being in their home before they enter and both of you are startled.
- 7) Work performed in the office at times other than normal business hours should be performed with the doors locked.
- 8) All work performed in apartments should be completed with the doors and windows locked.
- 9) Do not leave keys hanging in the door of the office or any apartment at any time. Valuables such as keys, money orders, checks, cell phones and purses should be out of sight and not laying on the desk.
- 10) Never wear shoes that would prevent you from running.
- 11) Never wear tight fitting clothing that may restrict movement and prevent you from evading an assailant.
- 12) Never wear revealing clothing or flashy jewelry that may attract unwanted attention.
- 13) Never show an apartment after dark if you are alone. Call for the assistance of another employee. When en route to an apartment, the most visible and clearly lit route should be taken.
- 14) You are to NEVER get into a car with a prospect or permit a prospect to get into a car with you, as doing so makes you very vulnerable.
- 15) Never give a customer your personal phone number or address.
- 16) DO NOT give keys to an occupied apartment to police officers without a copy of the search warrant. You may verify a resident's address and identity to the police. Do not provide copies of resident's paperwork. In any case involving a police officer, ask for the officer's business card.
- 17) DO NOT personally open occupied apartment doors for police.
- 18) A valid US Picture ID should be placed in the apartment file along with the apartment application to confirm identity. The staff should use this ID to properly identify a person requesting to be let into their apartment in case of a lock out, particularly when the ID is locked in the apartment with their

keys. Do not let anyone in an occupied apartment that is not listed as a leaseholder or occupant and confirm their identity.

- 19) If a person acts in an aggressive manner in the office and you sense any kind of danger to yourself or others, call the Police.
- 20) When closing the office at the end of the day, make sure doors and windows are locked and the security alarm is set. When arriving early or staying late, employees should be certain the office is locked and secure.
- 21) Keep all business interactions with prospects and existing customers strictly professional. Never release information on a resident to another resident or participate in gossip.
- 22) It is Research Properties policy to never accept cash as method of payment to reduce the likelihood of theft or robbery.
- 23) Wear appropriate personal protective equipment, boots, hats, gloves, goggles and hearing protectors when performing work that has potential for injury.
- 24) Keep all work areas clean, orderly and aisles clear.
- 25) Watch out for the safety of fellow employees.
- 26) Smoke only in designated outdoor smoking areas with cigarette receptacles.
- 27) Promptly report to your manager if you or a co-worker becomes ill or is injured so arrangements can be made for medical and/or first aid treatment.
- 28) Use flammable items, such as cleaning fluids with fresh air ventilation and extreme caution.
- 29) Keep cabinet doors, file and desk drawers closed when not in use.
- 30) Report anyone under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. No one shall be allowed on the job while in an impaired condition.
- 31) Avoid overloading electrical outlets and using damaged electrical cords.
- 32) Avoid "horseplay", practical jokes and any comments or behavior that could be demotivating to co-workers.
- 33) Promptly report behavior by residents and any others that may negatively affect safety.
- 34) Ask for assistance when lifting heavy objects or moving furniture.
- 35) Obey all safety rules and signs.
- 36) Be sure you are aware of the location of the fire extinguishers.
- 37) Be sure you are aware of the location of the first aid kit.
- 38) Be sure you know how to contact the police, fire and emergency medical services.
- 39) Promptly report any lighting that is not working properly.
- 40) Report any deficiency such as a trip hazard, broken glass, damaged door hinge, loose hand rail, pothole, etc. which may create a safety hazard.
- 41) Report anyone driving recklessly or speeding on the property.
- 42) Report broken and damaged tools. Do not use items such as a damaged ladder or spliced extension cord.
- 43) Do not wear headphones or earbuds to listen to personal music players while working; doing so may prevent you from hearing a safety warning.

We want to do everything in our power to promote safety, while treating everyone fairly, consistently and in compliance with fair housing laws. Keep in mind that we should put safety first when providing equal and consistent service to all customers.

**Work Schedules** - Work schedules for employees vary throughout our organization. Supervisors will advise employees of their individual work schedules. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate variations in starting and ending times, as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week.

**Use of Electronic Equipment & Mail Systems** - Computers, computer files, the e-mail and fax systems, mail system and software furnished to employees are Research Properties' property and are intended for business use. They are not to be used for personal activities, recreation, or correspondence. Employees should not use a password, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication without authorization. To ensure compliance with this policy, computer, e-mail and fax usage may be monitored. To the extent that passwords may be used, they are solely for Research Properties' protection. Passwords cannot be used to protect employees' information from Research Properties, and employees cannot have any expectation of privacy in their use of Research Properties' computer systems and equipment.

Research Properties strives to maintain a workplace free of harassment and sensitive to the diversity of its employees. Therefore, Research Properties prohibits the use of computers and the e-mail system in ways that are disruptive, offensive to others or harmful to morale. For example, the display or transmission of sexually explicit images, messages and cartoons is not allowed. Other such misuse includes, but is not limited to, ethnic slurs, racial comments, off-color jokes or anything that may be construed as unlawful harassment of others. The Company's e-mail and fax systems may not be used to solicit others for commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations or other non-business matters. Also, employees are not to subscribe to email solicitations from vendors, retailers or newsletters without authorization from management. Research Properties purchases and licenses the use of various computer software for business purposes and does not own the copyright to this software or its related documentation. Unless authorized by the software developer, Research Properties and Research Properties' employees do not have the right to reproduce such software for use on more than one computer. Employees may only use software on local area networks or on multiple machines according to the software license agreement. Research Properties prohibits the illegal duplication of software and its related documentation. Additionally, Research Properties prohibits the installation or downloading of programs, applications or software that have not been approved by management.

**Internet Usage** - Internet access to global electronic information resources on the World Wide Web is provided by Research Properties to assist employees in obtaining work-related data and technology. The following guidelines have been established to help ensure responsible and productive Internet usage. All Internet data that is composed, transmitted, or received via our computer communications systems is considered to be part of the official records of Research Properties and, as such, is subject to disclosure to law enforcement or other third parties. This includes any correspondence or information that the employee may consider to be personal in nature. Consequently, employees should always ensure that the business information contained in Internet e-mail messages and other transmissions is accurate, appropriate, ethical, and lawful.

The equipment, services and technology provided to access the Internet remain at all times the property of Research Properties. As such, Research Properties reserves the right to monitor Internet traffic, and retrieve and read any data composed, sent or received through our online connections and stored in our computer systems. Employees can have no expectation of privacy in such communications and materials. Data that is composed, transmitted, accessed or received via the Internet must not contain content that could be considered discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating or disruptive to any employee or other person. Examples of unacceptable content may include, but are not limited to,

sexual comments or images, racial slurs, gender-specific comments or any other comments or images that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, age, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or any other characteristic protected by law. The unauthorized use, installation, copying or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked or patented material on the Internet is expressly prohibited. As a general rule, if an employee did not create material for Research Properties' benefit, does not own the rights to it or has not gotten authorization for its use, it should not be put on the Internet. Employees are also responsible for ensuring that the person sending any material over the Internet has the appropriate distribution rights.

Abuse of the Internet access provided by Research Properties in violation of law or Research Properties' policies will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees may also be held personally liable for any violations of this policy. The following behaviors are examples of previously stated or additional actions and activities that are prohibited and can result in disciplinary action:

- Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing or threatening messages or images;
- Using the organization's time and resources for personal gain;
- Copying, faxing, emailing or any other disclosure of any business information which is intended for internal, proprietary or confidential business use.
- Stealing, using or disclosing someone else's code or password without authorization;
- Copying, pirating or downloading software and electronic files without permission;
- Sending or posting confidential material, trade secrets or proprietary information outside of the organization;
- Violating copyright law or engaging in any other illegal activities.
- Failing to observe licensing agreements;
- Engaging in unauthorized transactions that may create a cost to the organization or initiate unwanted Internet services and transmissions;
- Sending or posting messages or material that could damage the organization's image or reputation;
- Passing off personal views as representing those of the organization;
- Participating in the viewing or exchange of pornography or obscene materials;
- Sending or posting messages that defame or slander other individuals;
- Attempting to break into ("hack") the computer system of another Research Properties account, or another organization or person;
- Refusing to cooperate with an investigation; or
- Sending or posting chain letters, solicitations, or advertisements not related to business purposes or activities;
- Sending or posting email or electronic communication with an attempt to hide the identity of the sender or to represent the sender as someone else;
- Using the Internet for political causes or activities, religious activities, gambling, games, Face book, MySpace, shopping, chat rooms or personal banking;
- Jeopardizing the security of the organization's electronic communications systems;
- Sending, posting messages, or blogging that disparages Research Properties
- Sending out resumes or seeking other employment on company computers.

**Company Telephones** - Personal use of the company's telephone for long-distance and toll calls is not permitted. Employees should practice discretion when making local personal calls and will be required to reimburse Research Properties for any charges resulting from their personal use of the telephone. To ensure effective telephone communications with Research Properties' residents, employees

should always use the approved greeting, and speak in a courteous and professional manner. Please confirm information received from the caller, and hang up only after the caller has done so. Employees should be advised that conversations and phone calls may be recorded.

**Cellular Phone Usage** - Research Properties provides cellular telephones to certain designated employees as a business tool. They are provided to assist employees in communicating with management and other employees, residents and others with whom Research Properties conducts business. Cell phone use is primarily intended for business-related calls. However, occasional, brief personal use is permitted within a reasonable limit. Cell phone invoices may be regularly monitored. The use of personal cell phones during working hours should be limited to lunch and/or break time only. As a Research Properties representative, cell phone users are reminded that the regular business etiquette employed when speaking from office phones or in meetings applies to conversations conducted over a cell phone. Employees are responsible for exercising judgment if using cell phones in vehicles. Under no circumstances should a cell phone be used in a moving vehicle unless it can be safely done.

**Workplace Monitoring** - Workplace monitoring may be conducted by Research Properties to ensure quality control, employee safety, security and resident satisfaction. All places (except restrooms and changing areas) and things on Research Properties' property are subject to surveillance, recording, and inspection at any time. Computers furnished to employees are the property of Research Properties. As such, computer usage and files may be monitored or accessed and an employee should have no expectation of privacy with respect to information contained on Research Properties computers, in data files, discs or in whatever other form computer data is maintained and stored. Employees can have no expectation of privacy in their use of Research Properties' computer systems and equipment. Phone conversations may also be recorded for quality assurance and employees should have no expectation of privacy while using company phones. Because Research Properties is sensitive to the legitimate privacy concerns of employees, every effort will be made to guarantee that workplace monitoring is done in an ethical and respectful manner.

**Smoking** - Smoking is not allowed in the workplace or in offices except in those locations that have been specifically identified as smoking areas. Smoking is never permitted in the maintenance shop or maintenance areas. This policy applies equally to all employees, residents and visitors. At no time should a Research Properties employee smoke in a resident's apartment.

**Meal Periods** - Generally, all employees are provided with one meal period of 30 minutes in length each workday. Supervisors will schedule meal periods to accommodate operating requirements within the framework of applicable state law. Employees will be relieved of all active responsibilities and restrictions during meal periods and will not be compensated for that time, and must clock out at the start of their lunch period and clock back in prior to resuming work.

**Use of Equipment** - Equipment essential in accomplishing job duties is expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using Research Properties property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance and follow all operating instructions, safety standards and guidelines. Please notify the supervisor if any equipment, property, machines or tools appear to be damaged, defective or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of damage, defects and the need for repairs could prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees or others. The supervisor can answer any questions about an employee's responsibility for maintenance and care of equipment used on the job. The improper, careless, destructive or unsafe use or operation of equipment can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. At no time should an employee remove Research Properties equipment or supplies from the premises.

**Company Materials** - Employees are not permitted to remove any company materials, documentation or supplies from Research Properties. Taking materials from the company to recycle for

personal gain is strictly prohibited. This includes making unauthorized copies of documentation without Supervisor approval.

**Company Leases** - Employees are responsible for reviewing and being familiar with the Research Properties lease agreement. Any questions regarding the leases should be directed to their Supervisor.

**Emergency Closing** - Research Properties' Emergency Closing policy is intended to give employees a reasonable and safe alternative to traveling in inclement and dangerous weather. Under most conditions, Research Properties will remain open during scheduled hours. Even if weather is bad and road conditions are poor, employees are expected to make a reasonable effort to come to work. However, Research Properties does not expect employees to take risks or travel in threatening situations. Employees may decide, for reasons of personal safety, not to come to work, to arrive later than regular starting time, or to leave early. In any of these situations, it is the employee's responsibility to personally notify his or her Supervisor of the decision as soon as possible. Employees are expected to exercise reasonable and mature judgment relative to missing time for inclement weather. Any decision to close the office will be made by the President.

**Visitors in the Workplace** - All authorized visitors, such as vendors and repair technicians, should enter Research Properties at the office location. Authorized visitors will receive directions or be escorted to their destination. Employees are responsible for the conduct and safety of their visitors. Restricting unauthorized persons helps maintain safety standards, protects against theft, ensures security of equipment, protects confidential information, safeguards employee welfare and avoids potential distractions and disturbances. Employees are not to have unauthorized visitors during working hours. If an unauthorized individual is observed on Research Properties' premises, employees should immediately notify their supervisor or, if necessary, direct the individual to the main entrance.

**Workplace Violence Prevention** - Research Properties seeks to prevent workplace violence and to maintain a safe work environment. Research Properties has adopted the following guidelines to address intimidation, harassment or other threats of (or actual) violence that may occur during business hours or on its premises. All employees, including supervisors and temporary employees, should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, "horseplay," or other conduct that may be dangerous to others. Firearms, weapons and other dangerous or hazardous devices or substances are prohibited from the work place facilities of Research Properties without proper authorization. Conduct that threatens, intimidates or coerces another employee, a resident, or a member of the public at any time, including off-duty periods, will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes all acts of unlawful harassment, including harassment that is based on an individual's sex, sexual orientation, race, age, religion, national origin, disability or any characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law. Employees should report all threats of (or actual) violence, both direct and indirect, as soon as possible to the immediate supervisor and the President both verbally and in writing. This includes threats by employees, as well as threats by residents, vendors, solicitors or other members of the public. When reporting a threat of violence, employees should be as specific and detailed as possible. All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor. Employees should not take action to place themselves in personal danger. Employees should report the incident to their supervisor immediately or if necessary, contact the local police department (911) and report the incident. Research Properties will promptly, impartially and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of (or actual) violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as is practical. Anyone determined to be responsible for threats of (or actual) violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt

disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Legal ramifications may also apply. Research Properties encourages employees to bring their disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of their supervisors before the situation escalates into potential violence. Research Properties is eager to assist in the resolution of employee disputes, and will not discipline employees for raising such concerns.

***Incident Reporting*** - An incident report must be completed and filed for all incidents that occur on Research Properties premises. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Slips and Falls (of employees, residents or guests)
- Employee Injuries
- Resident Injuries in Common Areas
- Noise Complaints (Resident Complaint Form should be completed)
- Resident Conflicts/Complaints (Resident Complaint Form)
- Staff Conflicts which disrupts cooperation and the ability to work

The incident report should include the facts of the incident, the necessary response, and the statements of those involved as well as those of any witnesses. For example, if a resident slips on ice and maintenance responds by shoveling and salting the sidewalk, the response of shoveling and salting the sidewalk should be documented. **If a resident complains about noise or any problem with a neighbor, the employee should assist the resident in completing a Resident Complaint Form. A copy of the complaint signed by the resident should be placed in their lease file and a copy in the file of the resident they are complaining about.**

***Premises Maintenance*** - While Research Properties does employ a maintenance staff to take responsibility for significant upkeep of its properties, **it is the responsibility of every employee to notice defects, problems or blemishes in the condition or appearance of the premises and to take action to enhance safety and appearance.** Common premise defects to be addressed include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Trash or litter on grounds
- Broken mini-blinds or window areas (keep in mind that blinds should always be lowered on vacancies)
- Broken down or abandoned vehicles on property (flat tires, wrecked, expired tags, leaking oil)
- Vehicles parked in fire lanes, grass, sidewalk, in front of dumpsters or in any other drive lane
- Loose or broken bumper blocks in parking lot (including exposed rebar)
- Damaged doors, door hardware, weather-strip or handrails
- Malfunctioning laundry equipment (either leaking water or soap)
- Raised or uneven sidewalks and pot holes in asphalt
- Broken or vandalized signs or signs with peeling paint
- Peeling or faded paints on exterior trim, railing and doors
- Exterior lights not working properly (staying on during day or not coming on at night)
- Flood lights not properly aligned (lights should be aimed at sidewalks and parking areas, not straight toward the ground or up against the building)
- Graffiti on sidewalks, signs, buildings or dumpsters
- Holes in ground or sod (such as from rain, digging, or moles)
- Any signs, flags, or other materials exposed from within windows (only windowblinds should be visible)
- Loose, broken or missing downspouts or splash blocks

- Weeds, vines or trash in bushes or mulch beds
- Bushes which need to be trimmed (especially around office)
- Broken or low hanging tree limbs (tree limbs should be at least 8 feet off the ground; those below should be trimmed flush with the trunk of the tree)

Employees should be alert to notice needed repairs and high priority safety hazards. If such a repair or hazard is noticed, it should be documented and given to the manager so that the repair can be scheduled. If an employee is working in an area with obvious property defects and fails to notify the manager, that employee will be considered to be deficient in their duties and will face disciplinary action. **Managers should walk the property weekly and be alert to identifying property deficiencies.**

***Mold Management Plan*** - Research Properties is committed to providing residential environments free from harmful molds and fungal materials that can be damaging to the health of employees and residents. Mold infestations are a major problem because they cause structural damage that may require expensive repairs and, more seriously, toxic molds cause human health problems. Successful mold prevention depends on the joint efforts of the Supervisor, building maintenance staff, all employees, and residents. The Mold Management Plan at Research Properties follows the following outline:

- I. Risk Factors: Establish the Facts (Symptoms develop depending upon the following)
  - a. The nature of the fungal material
  - b. The amount and duration of exposure, which depends upon the setting, whether it be residential, occupational or both
  - c. The susceptibility of the exposed person, which may be influenced by such things as genetic predisposition, age, state of health, or any concurrent exposures
- II. Determining Exposure: Ascertain the Following (There are four basic requirements for the survival of mold)
  - a. A temperature range between 40 degrees and 100 degrees Fahrenheit
  - b. A nutrient base
  - c. The presence of mold spores
  - d. Moisture
    - i. Humidifiers
    - ii. Cooking and dishwashing
    - iii. Bathing
    - iv. Plumbing leaks
    - v. House plants
    - vi. Unvented clothes dryer / indoor clothesline
    - vii. Improper venting of combustion appliances
    - viii. Flooding
    - ix. Rain or snow melt
    - x. Seasonal high humidity
    - xi. Ground moisture
    - xii. Wet building materials
- III. Strategies for Preventing and Controlling Mold (Visual Inspection)
  - a. If mold is present it should be dealt with immediately
  - b. Special attention to ceiling tiles, sheetrock, paper, cardboard and other surfaces that may contain cellulose
  - c. Periodic reviews of plumbing structures
    - i. Fix plumbing leaks, drips or sweating pipes
  - d. Inspection of leaking foundations
    - i. Maintain roof and gutter/downspout system

- ii. Prevent leakage around windows, doors, flashing
    - iii. Waterproof foundations
  - e. Improve air movement in poorly ventilated areas
  - f. Increase fresh air ventilation when outdoor air is not humid
  - g. Limit sources of indoor humidity / dehumidify indoor air
- IV. Identify and Resolve Mold (An immediate response within 24-48 hours is taken to identify any water damage in order to limit mold growth)
  - a. Identify moisture source and correct problem
    - i. Keep in mind that mold may be hidden
    - ii. Investigate mold with caution
    - iii. Consider hiring an experienced professional if hidden mold is suspected
    - iv. Molds can be toxic; personal protective equipment can be used to avoid excessive mold exposure during the clean-up process
  - b. Remove mold by cleaning and disposal
    - i. Porous materials should be removed, bagged and discarded
    - ii. Non-porous materials may be cleaned with non-ammonia detergent and scrubbing
    - iii. Disinfect using 1/3 cup bleach per gallon of water
  - c. Dry thoroughly
    - i. Use fans and de-humidifiers to speed up the process
    - ii. Keep in mind that wet building materials take time to dry completely

***Purchase Orders and Requisitions*** - A purchase order or requisition must be completed before purchasing or ordering any supplies or equipment. The manager should place all orders. All major expenditures (carpet replacement, appliances, vendor contracts, contractor expenditures) must be approved by the Supervisor or President prior to purchase.

***Work Orders*** - When a work order is written, the employee documenting the work order request should clearly print the apartment number, date, phone number, name, work order number and work request details to enable the work order to be completed as efficiently as possible. Confirm permission with the resident to enter the apartment to complete the work in their absence and note any special instructions (such as “do not let the cat out”). The residents’ phone number should be confirmed and noted. Technicians may not choose which work orders to complete or trade work orders once the orders have been assigned. Residents must be notified if the maintenance or repairs will not begin as scheduled. The time started should be noted by the person handing out the work order. The technician is to write down the time of completion, the work performed, and sign and date the work order form on both copies before leaving one copy, which is to be placed on the kitchen countertop of the serviced apartment. The technician is to leave the apartment clean after the repair with the front door locked. When the completed work order is returned to the office, management should call the resident and confirm the satisfactory completion of the job. The completed work order should then be filed in the corresponding apartment file.

***Employee Conduct and Work Rules*** - To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, Research Properties expects employees to follow rules of conduct with a good attitude that will protect the interests and safety of all employees and the organization. It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable or uncooperative in the workplace. The following are examples of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment:

- Unauthorized removal or possession of property that does not belong to you; (stealing,

borrowing, recycling, etc.)

- Falsification of timekeeping records or wasting time on the job
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or legal drugs improperly obtained or legal drugs properly obtained and being improperly used
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer or use of alcohol or illegal drugs or legal drugs improperly obtained or legal drugs properly obtained and being improperly used in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating vehicles or equipment
- Fighting, disruptive activity or threatening violence in the workplace
- Boisterous, contentious, name calling, argumentative and/or use of foul language
- Improper or careless conduct leading to damage of employer or resident property
- Insubordination, disrespectful conduct and/or refusing to follow instructions
- Violation of safety, health, Handbook rules and/or common practices
- Smoking in prohibited areas and excessive work time dedicated to smoking
- Violation of the Company's Harassment Policy including inappropriate sexual communication or behavior with employees, residents, guests, or contractors
- Possession of weapons, explosives or firearms within the workplace facilities
- Any dishonest communication or behavior and/or uncooperative attitude
- Wearing casual or any attire which is not appropriate for the workplace
- Having family members or pets in the workplace, including attempting to watch children while working, without prior approval of Supervisor
- Failing to report suspicious activity of another employee or contractor that could or does violate Standard Rules of Conduct and anything in the Employee Handbook
- Unlawful discrimination against any employee, applicant, vendor or resident
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness, or any absence without notice
- Unauthorized absence from work station or premises during the workday
- Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system or other employer-owned equipment
- Unauthorized disclosure of business "secrets" or confidential information
- Unauthorized disclosure of names, phone numbers and contact information for Supervisors, Corporate Share holders or Owners to residents or others
- Violation of anything in the Employee Handbook and/or normal practices
- Unsatisfactory performance, misbehavior, and/or uncooperative attitude/behavior
- Frequent misunderstanding(s) and making excuses for not following instructions
- Threatening to quit, asking to be fired, walking off the job or turning in keys
- Making exaggerated or false complaints about co-workers
- Rude or disrespectful attitude with residents

Employment with Research Properties is at the mutual consent of Research Properties and the employee, and either party may terminate that relationship at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice.

***Dress Code*** - It is Research Properties' policy to expect employees to maintain a neat and well-groomed appearance at all times. Please understand that employees are expected to dress and groom themselves in accordance with accepted social and business standards, particularly if their jobs involve dealing with residents or visitors in person. A neat, tasteful appearance contributes to the positive impression employees make on our residents and fellow employees. Employees are expected to be suitably attired and groomed during working hours or when representing Research Properties. Where appropriate, uniforms may be worn and/or required. The Company expects employees to start work each day having adhered to appropriate and commonly accepted hygiene standards, with clean clothes that are free of tears, free of stains, and fitted appropriately. Employees are expected to bathe and brush teeth daily to keep themselves free of body odor. Extreme attention getting hair styles and head wear, revealing

clothing and excessive jewelry are strongly discouraged. Shorts, lounge-wear, exercise-wear, clothing with print messages, or other casual attire that shows midriffs or undergarments are not appropriate for work. While this list is not all-inclusive, it will provide employees a general guideline of what is and is not acceptable attire and presentation at Research Properties:

- No shorts, flip flops, loungewear, fitness clothing, exposed undergarments
- Tattoos should be covered whenever possible
- Facial piercing must be limited to ears while working
- No mini-skirts or anything suggestive and/or restrictive to movement
- Shirts and shoes must be worn at all times
- Shirts, blouses, and dresses must not show cleavage, backs, or midriffs during the course of normal movement or be excessively tight fitting
- No restrictive clothing or shoes that inhibit mobility such as extra high heels
- Lifeguards must wear swimwear that is appropriately fitted; trunk style swim shorts for men and one-piece full coverage suits for women

Research Properties has established a dress code in order to help the Company and all employees maintain a professional image and promote safety. It is the belief of the Company that individuals who dress professionally and respectfully will receive professional courtesy and respect from residents and potential residents. It is also important to understand that when showing a potential resident an apartment or assisting a resident with a problem in their apartment, it may become necessary to stretch, kneel, crouch, stoop, etc. in order to show an amenity or access something that must be serviced. Employees should keep this in mind each day when dressing for work. Proper clothing and shoes can be also be helpful in an emergency should quick movement or running be required.

If an employee's supervisor believes attire and/or grooming is inappropriate, the employee may be asked to leave the workplace until properly attired and/or groomed. Employees will be required to clock out during the time it takes to change or modify their dress or grooming. Employees who repeatedly violate dress code standards will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

***Drug and Alcohol Use*** - It is Research Properties' desire to provide a drug-free, healthful and safe workplace. To promote this goal, employees are required to report to work in appropriate mental and physical condition to perform their jobs in a satisfactory manner. No employee may consume or be under the influence of alcohol while on Research Properties' premises or while conducting business-related activities off Research Properties premises. For purposes of this test, "under the influence" is defined to mean reporting for work in a condition that results in a positive result on any drug or alcohol screening test. No employee may use, possess, distribute, sell or be under the influence of illegal drugs or legal drugs improperly obtained or legal drugs properly obtained and being improperly used. The legal use of prescribed drugs is permitted on the job only if it does not impair an employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the job effectively and in a safe manner that does not endanger the employees or other individuals in the workplace and only with the knowledge and approval of the supervisor. Research Properties reserves the right to request employees to take a screening test at any time to determine the presence of drugs, narcotics and/or alcohol. Refusal to submit to such a screening test will result in disciplinary action and may result in termination of employment. A violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action and may result in immediate termination of employment.

***Fair Housing Nondiscriminatory Operating Policy*** - Research Properties firmly believes that choosing a home directly impacts the hopes, dreams, aspirations and economic destiny of those involved. It is for this reason that Research Properties is committed to the letter and spirit of the

Federal Fair Housing Act and all other federal and state laws enacted to guarantee a housing market free from discrimination.

The Federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing because of:

- Race or color
- National origin
- Religion
- Sex or sexual orientation
- Familial status (including children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians; pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18)
- Mental or Physical Handicap (Disability)

***In the Rental of Housing:*** Research Properties will **NOT** take any of the following actions based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, familial status or handicap:

- Refuse to rent or negotiate for housing
- Steer prospective residents to a particular area or type of apartment
- Make housing unavailable or deny a dwelling
- Set different terms, conditions or privileges for sale or rental of a dwelling
- Provide different housing services or facilities
- Falsely deny that housing is available for inspection, sale or rental
- Deny anyone access to a facility or service related to the sale or rental of housing
- Threaten, coerce, intimidate or interfere with anyone exercising a fair housing right or assisting others who exercise that right
- Advertise or make any statement that indicates a limitation or preference based on applicant being a member of a protected class.

***Disabled Persons' Policy:***

**If a rental applicant**

- Has a physical or mental disability (including hearing, mobility and visual impairments, chronic alcoholism, chronic mental illness, AIDS, AIDS Related Complex and mental retardation) that substantially limits one or more major life activities
- Has a record of such a disability; or
- Is regarded as having such a disability

**Then Research Properties will NOT:**

- Refuse to let them make reasonable modifications to their dwelling or common use areas, at their own expense, if necessary for the disabled person to use the housing. However, the Company may permit changes only if tenant agrees to restore the property to its original condition when they move.
- Refuse to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices or services if necessary for the disabled person to use the housing.

However, housing will not be made available to a person who is a direct threat to the health or safety of others or to anyone who knowingly uses illegal drugs.

***Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment*** - Research Properties' goal is to prevent unlawful sexual or other harassment by prohibiting any conduct that may possibly be construed as unlawful sexual or other harassment. Offensive actions, words, jokes or comments based on an individual's sex, race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation or any other legally protected characteristic is prohibited. Sexual harassment includes unwanted sexual advances and visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition includes many forms of offensive

behavior and includes gender-based harassment of a person of the same sex as the harasser. The following is a partial list of sexual harassment examples:

- Unwanted sexual advances.
- Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors.
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances.
- Visual conduct that includes leering, making sexual gestures or displaying of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons or posters.
- Verbal conduct that includes making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs or jokes.
- Verbal sexual advances or propositions.
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations.
- Physical conduct that includes touching, assaulting, patting, pinching or impeding or blocking movements.
- Displaying or possessing in the workplace sexually suggestive, revealing or pornographic objects, pictures, graffiti or cartoons.

Unwelcome sexual advances (either verbal or physical), requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when; (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; (2) submission or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for making employment decisions; or, (3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. All employees have the responsibility, having experienced or witnessed sexual or other unlawful harassment in the workplace, to report it immediately to the Company President and/or the Bookkeeper. Employees may raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal or retaliation.

All allegations of harassment in violation of this policy will be promptly investigated. To the extent practicable under the circumstances, the Company will strive to protect the confidentiality of the complainant and that of any witnesses and the alleged harasser. Any employee or supervisor who becomes aware of possible sexual or other unlawful harassment must immediately advise the President or the Bookkeeper so that it can be investigated in a timely and confidential manner. Retaliation for reporting suspected harassment will not be tolerated and employees who participate in any investigation of suspected harassment are also protected from peer or other retaliation as a matter of policy. An employee who knowingly brings forth false and unsubstantiated claims of harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Anyone engaging in sexual or other unlawful harassment or retaliating against anyone for reporting such, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

***Attendance and Punctuality*** - To maintain a safe and productive work environment, Research Properties expects employees to be reliable and to be punctual in reporting for scheduled work. Absenteeism and tardiness place a burden on other employees and on Research Properties. In the rare instances when employees cannot avoid being late to work or are unable to work as scheduled, employees should notify the Supervisor as soon as possible in advance of the anticipated tardiness or absence. Poor attendance and excessive tardiness are disruptive. Either will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. If an employee does not report to work and does not call in for two (2) days he or she will be considered to have abandoned his or her position and will be considered a voluntary resignation.

***Return of Property*** - Employees are responsible for all Research Properties property, materials or written information issued to them or in their possession or control. Employees must return all Research Properties property immediately upon request or upon termination of employment. Employees are not allowed to borrow equipment. Where permitted by applicable laws, Research Properties may withhold from the employee's check or final paycheck the cost of any items that are not returned when required. Research Properties may also take legal action to recover or protect Company property.

***Security Inspections*** - Office desks, storage and other places and things may be provided for the convenience of employees, but remain the sole property of Research Properties. Accordingly, Research Properties can inspect them, as well as any articles found within them, at any time, either with or without prior notice. Research Properties also may inspect persons entering and/or leaving the premises and any packages or other belongings in their possession. Any employee who wishes to avoid inspection of any articles or materials should not bring such items onto Research Properties' premises.

***Solicitation*** - In an effort to ensure a productive and harmonious work environment, persons not employed by Research Properties may not solicit or distribute literature on Research Properties property at any time for any purpose. Research Properties recognizes that employees may have interests in events and organizations outside the workplace. However, employees may not solicit or distribute literature concerning these activities on Company premises at any time.

***Progressive Discipline*** - Although employment with Research Properties is based on mutual consent and both the employee and Research Properties have the right to terminate employment at will, with or without cause or advance notice, Research Properties may use progressive discipline at its discretion. Disciplinary action may call for any of four steps -- verbal warning, written warning, suspension with or without pay, or termination of employment -- depending on such factors as the severity of the circumstances and the number of occurrences. There may be circumstances when one or more steps are bypassed. Research Properties reserves the right to terminate employment immediately, without any progressive discipline, in its sole discretion.

## EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

(Company Copy)

The employee handbook provides important information about my employment with Research Properties, and I understand that I should consult the Supervisor regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. I have entered into my "at will" employment relationship with Research Properties voluntarily and acknowledge that I am not guaranteed employment for any specified length of time. I understand and agree that either I or Research Properties may terminate the employment relationship at will, with or without cause and with or without notice, at any time, so long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law.

Since the information, policies and benefits described here are necessarily subject to change, I acknowledge that the Company may modify, add to or vary from anything stated in this handbook (except for the policy of at-will employment), in its sole discretion, with or without notice, at any time. I acknowledge that if I owe the Company any sums of money at the time of my termination, Research Properties is authorized and directed to deduct those sums of money, any and all outstanding amounts, including reimbursement for unreturned or damaged tools or other Research Properties equipment from any wages owed to me by the company, except to the extent prohibited by applicable state or federal law.

I acknowledge that this handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I have received the handbook and I understand that it is my responsibility, as a condition of employment, to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it. **I understand that no officer, employee, or agent of the Company is authorized to make any promises to you regarding your employment with Research Properties, with the exception of the Company President, who may do so only in a written document signed both by me and the President.**

EMPLOYEE'S NAME (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Return signed copy to employee

## EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

(Employee Copy)

The employee handbook provides important information about my employment with Research Properties, and I understand that I should consult the Supervisor regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. I have entered into my "at will" employment relationship with Research Properties voluntarily and acknowledge that I am not guaranteed employment for any specified length of time. I understand and agree that either I or Research Properties may terminate the employment relationship at will, with or without cause and with or without notice, at any time, so long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law.

Since the information, policies, and benefits described here are necessarily subject to change, I acknowledge that the Company may modify, add to, or vary from anything stated in this handbook (except for the policy of at-will employment), in its sole discretion, with or without notice, at any time.

I acknowledge that if I owe the Company any sums of money at the time of my termination, Research Properties is authorized and directed to deduct those sums of money, any and all outstanding amounts, including reimbursement for unreturned or damaged tools or other Research Properties equipment, from any wages owed to me by the company, except to the extent prohibited by applicable state or federal law.

I acknowledge that this handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I have received the handbook and I understand that it is my responsibility, as a condition of employment, to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it. **I understand that no officer, employee or agent of the Company is authorized to make any promises to you regarding your employment with Research Properties, with the exception of the Company President, who may do so only in a written document signed both by me and the President.**

EMPLOYEE'S NAME (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## Wage Deduction & Authorization Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree that, in the event my employment shall terminate, either voluntarily or involuntarily, and I am due any sums of money at the time of my termination, Research Properties is hereby authorized and directed to deduct from those sums of money any and all outstanding amounts due Research Properties, except to the extent prohibited by applicable state and federal law.

Present Deductions include:

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Type	Amount
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Type	Amount
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Type	Amount
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Employee Signature	Date
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Research Properties Management Signature	Date
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## Medical/Military Leave of Absence Request Form

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**Employee Name (Printed)**

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**Date**

Type of Leave of Absence	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Medical Reason:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Military

---

**Start Date of Leave**

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**Return to Work Date**

**All Medical Leaves of Absence require certification from a doctor to return to work.**

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**Employee Signature**

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**Date**

---

**Supervisor Signature**

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**Date**

*Return a signed copy to the employee*

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